

The Habits of Children.

Prevention is better than cure, in habits as well as in sickness. With wise treatment, habits begun in peculiarities or accident may be prevented before they become fixed. Singularity of gesture, or freak of facial expression, should be promptly treated, without attracting the attention of the child to its difficulty, in a playful manner, and without speaking of the object in view.

The turning in of toes, shrugging of shoulders, hanging of the head, and sucking of the thumb may be corrected before the muscles are so contracted as to render the change of action difficult. If the child is shy, and these gestures arise from an over-consciousness of hands and feet, draw his attention to external objects by your own interested observation of them; encouraging him to imitate animals and their motions.

The child who plays at being a restive colt, tossing his head and prancing in his harness, gets valuable aid in the carriage of his own body. However, keep in mind the safeguard of a new interest to prevent repetition of the muscular movement.

A little girl who had a well-fixed habit of sucking her thumb, was corrected by being kept employed in bead-stringing, knitting, etc.; and when the trial of bedtime arrived, the thumb was called the sleepy baby, and was playfully rocked in the crib of mamma's palm until the little mother slept.

Telling Fortunes by the Teacups.

"Fine dots in a long line reaching halfway around the cup mean a journey to be taken. A very large group of dots and figures in a compact cluster at the end of a 'journey line' of dots may mean that one is to attend a large gathering or visit a large town or city.

"A succession of large dots in a line indicates many difficulties to overcome. If there are many fine dots interspersed, confusion and unfriendliness may be expected.

"Drops of tea in the bottom of the cup mean tears to be shed. If the rim of the cup is clear the future of the person whose fortune is being read will be prosperous and happy. If by chance a leaf folds over the rim, something unpleasant will probably occur."

"But do you believe all this?" inquires one of the party.

"By no means. I neither believe nor disbelieve. I merely give you the formula that has been handed down in my family for several generations. One thing is sure: you can help along your hostess many a time when a meal hangs heavily upon her hands; for, silly as it may

seem, the subject is one that interests everybody. Learn the art of reading fortunes in teacups for the sake of the help you can give by entertaining others, if for no other reason."

The following "jingle" is a transcription of an old Chinese chia (tea) song, which answers well for present use:

"One 'ground' alone, alone you'll be;
Two together, the priest you'll see;
Three in groups, your wish you'll gain;
Four, a letter from loving swain;
Five, good news the letter'll bring;
Six in a row, a song you'll sing;
Seven together, great fortune waits
For you, so say the teacup fates.
Tea leaves short and tea leaves tall
Bring you company great and small.
Tea leaves many and dotted fine
Are of bad luck the surest sign.
Tea leaves few, and clean the rim,
Your cup with joy o'erflows the brim."

The revival of telling fortunes by the grounds in one's teacup must, however, only be considered in the light of an amusement. Sensible young people need no word of warning against placing dependence upon any form of fortune-telling.

One of the Family.

What a pretty home picture is this! and what a chord it must touch in many a heart upon the farms of our big Northwest, where such a scene is doubtless again and again reproduced. The many-paned window, with its useful ledge for plants, granny's knitting and mother's mending-basket, the door with its movable upper-half, through which Dobbin can look and plead for dainties—all tell us it is a scene in rural England, and the home that of a well-to-do yeoman in the dear Old Land. Father is reaching for the keys of the stable, where Dobbin will be made comfortable before his master takes the vacant chair or helps himself to a big slice from the huge pie placed before it. Granny is the bread-cutter still, an office she is loath to relinquish, whilst she has a wary eye upon Bobbie, who is her more especial charge. Sturdy Jim has no eyes for any member of the family but his hungry young self. Jenny stretches out her well-filled palm, with a shout of welcome, whilst mother, taking her foot off the rocker of baby's cradle, leans back with the slice of bread which is Dobbin's share of the family fare, taking, very properly, no notice for the moment of Rover, the jealous, who will have more bones than he can eat when she has cleared the table at the end of the meal.

H. A. B.

Resolve.

As the dead year is clasped by a dead December,
So let your dead sins with your dead days lie.
A new life is yours, and a new hope. Remember,
We build our own ladders to climb to the sky.
Stand out in the sunlight of Promise, forgetting
Whatever the Past held of sorrow or wrong.
We waste half our strength in useless regretting;
We sit by old tombs in the dark too long.

Have you missed in your aim? Well, the mark is still shining.

Did you faint in the race? Well, take breath for the next.

Did the clouds drive you back? But see yonder their lining.

Were you tempted and fell? Let it serve for a text.
As each year hurries by let it join that procession
Of skeleton shapes that march down the Past,
While you take your place in the line of Progression,
With your eyes on the heavens, your 'acc' to the blast.

I tell you the future can hold no terrors
For any sad soul while the stars revolve,
If he will stand firm on the grave of his errors,
And instead of regretting, resolve, resolve.
It is never too late to begin rebuilding.
Though all into ruins your life seems hurried,
For see how the light of the New Year is gilding
The wan, worn face of the bruised old world.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Hymns Up-to-date.

An old gentleman of eighty-two, whose occasionally cynical speeches are always tinged with good humor, was asked his opinion of modern church music.

"It's all very fine," he said dryly, "and I like to hear it; but there's one thing I've noticed. It may be just chance, but I've noticed it a good many times.

"When I was a boy the people went to two services a day, and sometimes three, and they sat on hard seats with straight backs, and sang with all their hearts,

"My God, the spring of all my joys."

"Now the congregation lean comfortably back in softly cushioned pews and listen to the choir singing,

"Art thou weary, art thou languid?"

I may be mistaken, but it comes home to me every now and then, that hymnology is changing to suit the times."



ONE OF THE FAMILY.