

It might work a most beneficent change in the relation that we all consider most sacred—the relation of a mother to her children.

The immense force of habit, second only to the original type of constitution, and often overpowering even the original tendencies, is, nevertheless, formed by the silent working of influences, hour by hour and day by day, that are invisible and cannot be measured, that seem absolutely valueless, taken item by item, in the long account, and yet in the aggregate they will save or ruin the body and soul. A mother may instil the love of reading or the love of dress; she may form the habit of out-door exercise or the habit of gossip not by the set precept or even formal regulations, but by her own tastes unavoidably moulding the tastes of her children, and flowing out naturally into these external arrangements that inevitably reflect the ruling spirit or affections of the individual. Did the mother possess a hearty interest in the wonders of field and forest, of sea and sky, what a treasury of delightful intercourse might be found in the varied environs of our city! A mother's love joined to the broad tastes and knowledge would never weary of the ceaseless questioning of childhood; the older the child, the closer and more influential would be the companionship. The holiday by the sea-side or amongst the mountains, so wasted now in idleness and frivolity, might be a rich harvest-time of delightful knowledge drawn from the treasures of land and water.

It is, then, because of the great value that