



WOMAN'S INFLUENCE.—Woman exerts a far greater power than that exerted by the ballot. If her influence is exerted to bring souls to Christ, it is a mighty influence for good. God has made her the teacher and guardian of children, from infancy until they start out in life for themselves. Children always go to the mothers for sympathy, to share their griefs and joys, and look to them for advice. Every mother has the power to teach her son to be true to himself, his God, and his country.

THE PRINCESS MATHILDE.—Princess Mathilde, who has gathered around her all the Bonapartists and literary notabilities of Paris at her Sunday evening receptions for many years, is debarred by failing health from resuming them on their wonted brilliant footing this winter. She will open her salons as usual, but her invitations will be limited to old and intimate friends belonging, for the most part, to the world of arts and letters. The doctors disapprove of her stirring out of doors in the evening, but she means to make an exception to M. Edmond de Goncourt, who is a particularly valued friend.

WEDDING NOVELTIES.—The latest novelty at fashionable weddings is for the bridesmaid to carry satin shoes filled with flowers, and the result is charmingly pretty. At one wedding the shoes were of *eau de Nil* satin and were filled with blush-pink roses. At another there was a very effective combination of pink satin and maize-coloured roses, while the delicate structure depended from the bridesmaid's arm by pink satin ribbons, like a veritable miniature hanging garden. At a third the shoes were pink satin and the flowers were golden-brown chrysanthemums, toning from dark brown to pale yellow.

THE PRETTY GIRLS OF IRELAND.—The Irish ladies are perhaps the prettiest in the wide world. Their features, it is true, are less regular than those of English women, but they triumph over them with their soft, creamy complexions, their large, appealing grey-blue eyes and long lashes, and a sort of indefinable charm and demure coquetry, yet thoroughly modest manners. "Every third Irish woman," wrote the Queen in her diary when last visiting the country, "is beautiful, and some of them remarkably so. Their hair and eyes are simply lovely." Apart from personal charms, it is impossible not to admire the gentle grace and dignity of the wives and daughters of the Emerald Isle.

A PERFECT HOME.—The late Helen Hunt, writing of a perfect home, said: "The most perfect home I ever saw was a little house into the sweet incense of whose fires went no costly things. A thousand dollars served as a year's living for father, mother and three children. But the mother was the creator of a home; her relations with the children was the most beautiful I have ever seen; every inmate of the house involuntarily looked into her face for the keynote of the day, and it always rang clear. From the rosebud, or clover leaf, which, in spite of her hard housework, she always found time to put beside our plates at breakfast, down to the story she had in hand to read in the evening, there was no intermission in her influence. She has always been, and always will be my ideal of a mother, wife and homemaker."

RICE BREAD.—One quart of rice flour, one quart of milk, one tablespoonful wheat flour, three tablespoonfuls butter, four eggs, one teaspoonful soda dissolved in milk, two teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, sifted with the flour. Bake in shallow tins in a quick oven.

MUTTON STEAKS, FRIED.—Make a batter of grated bread crumbs, milk and one egg. Put it into a shallow dish. Have some mutton steaks cut from the loin, with bone cut short. Have ready in a frying pan hot butter or dripping. Dip each steak twice in the batter, then fry them brown and send to table very hot.

HELEN.

"Vaccinate the boys! Bless my soul, Helen, what do you mean?"

"Just what I have been saying every day to you, father, for the last two weeks. I want you to let Dr. Dupont come and have the boys done. We are only thirty miles from Montreal, and I hear there was a case of smallpox brought up on the market boat Saturday."

"And if there were a dozen cases, I would not have them 'done,' as you call it. Haven't I told you, time and time again, that I don't believe in vaccination, never did, and never intend to!" Major Bruce rapped fiercely on the verandah floor with his huge gold-headed cane to add emphasis to his already sufficiently emphatic words.

"But smallpox is increasing so much in the city and is rapidly spreading to the country. See, father. Yesterday's *Gazette* says": (Helen read from the Montreal paper she carried in her hand)

"It is evident that the present forces are inadequate to cope with the fell disease now ravaging our city. Every day brings with it an increase in the number of deaths, and during the past week the average has been sixty-five per day. Nothing but the most vigorous measures will suffice, not only to put down the epidemic within the city limits, but to prevent its further spread. Vaccination must be made compulsory."

"Stop, Helen, stop! Do you think that I am in my dotage, to be guided by what the newspapers say?" and the gold-headed cane rapped again so savagely that it would have alarmed any other than the irascible old major's fair-faced daughter.

"No, father, dear, you don't really mean what you say. You will let me have the boys 'done,' won't you?"

"Mean what I say? Bless my soul! I never was more determined in my life. I'll have no vaccination business here, mind that!" and fearing further entreaty, the Major strode down the gravel walk with that soldierly bearing even his twenty years' retirement from active service had not lost him.

Helen stood looking after her father as he went up the street—the one street of the little French-Canadian village, with its whitewashed houses and quaint little gardens, where blossomed old-fashioned flowers of sweet smell and odd colour—thinking, with a momentary sign of bitterness, that the old Major bore his seventy-five years more lightly than she her nineteen summers.

She was a dainty picture to look upon, standing in the September sunshine, her pink gingham gown, belted neatly round her slim figure, setting off its graceful curves. Her face, with its delicately modelled features, was pure and sweet, and expressive of so much that was good that one almost forgot its lack of any vivid colouring.

Major Bruce had married late in life upon his retirement from the army, and soon after, obeying a long cherished wish, he brought his delicate young wife to Canada. Wandering about in search of a home to their taste, they had stumbled on St. Pierre, an obscure French-Canadian village, so called, though it was scarcely large enough to be dignified by the name. It had nothing to recommend it to the strangers but the wonderful beauty of the surrounding country, but that was sufficient for Mrs. Bruce.

Many years had passed since then, and for three summers now the pretty fragile wife—so ill-fitted to manage the tribe of unruly boys which somehow fell to her share—had lain at rest beneath the waving pine trees in the old graveyard on the hill.

Helen, recalled from school in Montreal to watch by the bedside of her dying mother, when all was over, took up with a heavy heart the reins of government, which had fallen so easily from those white hands. It was hard to relinquish all her girlish ambitions, her school, her much loved music, and to leave all her pleasant dreams of going abroad to improve her voice, of which her masters already promised great things, behind, and settle down to the sober duties of caring for her father and little brothers, the oldest of whom was then only a year old. Her's, however, was

not a nature to repine long. She saw her way clearly and followed it bravely, not without some false steps, some bitter tears, but always with an anxious desire to "do the right." She loved her brothers with a love mother-like in its intensity, but it was little wonder if sometimes her courage almost failed and she felt that the burdens laid upon her were greater than she could bear.

There were four of the young brothers, strong, healthy boys, loving mischief almost as much as they did their sister—Donald, the eldest; Tom and Charlie, the twins, and chubby-faced Dickey, the baby.

Helen's thoughts were grave ones as she stood this morning in the September sunshine, feeling older than the gruff old Major, who left everything to her charge and spent the days in quiet enjoyment, after his own fashion, rowing, fishing, reading, or discussing politics with the one or two friends the narrow circle of society in St. Pierre afforded him. Not that the Major intended to be selfish, or that he even remotely realized how many parental duties he shirked, or what a heavy weight of care he was resting upon his daughter's young shoulders, only he had grown into the habit of leaving everything to Helen—in short, he was getting, he thought, too old to be "bothered with the boys."

Helen was roused from her sombre reveries by the merry voices of her brothers, as they came, shouting, down the village street with the letters from the post-office, little Dickey toddling some distance in the rear.

"Oh, Helen, I've got a letter for you from your chum—a great, big, fat letter!" shrieked Donald, as soon as he caught sight of his sister. "Ain't you glad?"

The letter was from her old schoolmate and chosen friend, Lucy Brymner, of Boston. Helen was expecting her shortly to pay a long promised visit to St. Pierre, a visit to which she had been looking forward for months, with the keenest anticipations of pleasure. How delightful it would be to talk over their old school-days together, to indulge in happy reminiscences of those brief blissful weeks. Helen had spent the Christmas before her mother's death in Lucy's beautiful Boston home to discuss the last books they had read, to practise duets together, to learn new songs. Helen felt the visit would repay her for much that was hard to bear in her daily lot, but she was to be disappointed, and her eyes filled with tears as, hastily tearing open her letter, she read:

"I cannot tell you, my dearest Helen, how dreadfully sorry I am that I cannot go to you, but mamma is so afraid of the smallpox that she will not allow me to pass through Montreal, or indeed to think of going to Canada at all this fall. I promised to be vaccinated again, to saturate myself in camphor and carbolic acid, but all in vain. She will not consent. Oh, Helen, dear, do take care of yourself and the boys, we read in the paper such terrible accounts of the disease," etc., etc.

Helen finished her letter, and for a few minutes, absorbed in her grief and disappointment, she forgot everything else. Then a thought flashed through her mind. She raised her head and looked anxiously at her little brothers. Yes! She must take care of them. St. Pierre was in daily communication with Montreal; their danger was great; she *must* have the boys vaccinated, despite her father's belief. She shuddered as she looked down the river—the beautiful blue Ottawa—the sound of whose murmuring waters had been music in her ears since first she could remember. Not so many miles away, but a little space below where it joined the broad St. Lawrence, lay the plague-stricken city, with its desolate streets, its hushed noises, its ominous placards, with the words "Smallpox!" "La Picotte!" standing out in great letters on many a sorrowing house, that all who read, English and French alike, might flee; its dreary black vans, its sad funeral processions, so small, so frequent.

She had never seemed to realize it before, and a sudden chill passed over her. Oh! if her father would only consent to have the boys vaccinated. But she must accomplish it some way.

Tom had been complaining the last few days of a pain in his back. He thought at first he had hurt it falling off a tree, but it grew worse, and