

Woman and the Home

What She Learned

An Easy to Make and Practical Model—2074—Ladies' "Coverall" Apron—Striped seersucker was used in this instance; checked gingham, drill, percale, linen or alpaca are equally attractive. The belt may be omitted. The pattern is cut in 4 sizes: small for 32 and 34 inches bust measure; medium for 36 and 38 inches bust measure; large for 40 and 42 inches bust measure; and extra large for 44 and 46 inches bust measure. It requires 5½ yards of 36-inch material for a medium size. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents in silver or stamps.

Boys' Rompers with Sleeve in Either of Two Lengths—2077—This makes an ideal play or beach suit for warm weather. It may be finished with a collar, or with neck in square outline. The model is good for serge, flannel, gingham, chambray, seersucker, percale, galatea or linen. The pattern is cut in 5 sizes: 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 years. It requires 2½ yards of 36-inch material for a 4-year size. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10 cents in silver or stamps.

Do you ever visit your children's school? No? Well, I didn't either, once upon a time. But when I saw that the children would do things for their teachers that they wouldn't for me, I began getting jealous, and determined to see how they did it! From that first visit I carried home three ideas: That my discipline was too lax, that there was a great fascination about complete rows of gilt stars after one's name—an idea that had seemed to me especially foolish,—and a remark of the principal's to one of his pupils, "Always do the hardest thing first!"

Well, I went to work on those three ideas. All of our children seemed inclined to shirk responsibility. I didn't like this as a principle, neither did I enjoy doing their neglected work day after day. So I laid a plan.

From heavy cream paper I made little books containing twelve pages. Each page had four rows of little squares, seven squares in each row. For these

books I made lovely pink covers, because I suddenly remembered that all children love pink. At a kindergarten supply store I purchased a quantity of gilt star plasters.

One evening I had a little talk with the children. I said: "Now we all have some duties to perform. And there is one in particular that we dread doing more than anything else. I wish you would all tell me what yours happens to be."

They told me, eagerly. "Here is a new rule," I continued, "that I learned at your school; Always do the hardest thing first. Then, instead of having to dread it for hours, it is done and we may enjoy ourselves. Now I am going to give each of you a little book and every day that you do the hardest thing just as soon as you can, we will put a star in that space. At the end of every week we will show the books to father."

"Why!" cried the children, "do you have a book too, Mother?"

"Those dreadful dinner dishes that

come just as the mail does!" I answered, laughing.

The children hugged me in glee to think I too was in the game.

On Saturday night we took our books to their father for inspection.

"Why," said he, "there hasn't been a miss this week! And you find it works pretty well?"

We all expressed our satisfaction. Even I could not bear to leave a vacancy in my rows of stars! And I found that it really did pay, too, to do the unpleasant task just as soon as it could be done.

At the end of every month my husband gave all the faithful ones—and the exception occurred but once—some treat. When the books were filled the children had learned a habit of promptness to duty, that not all the talking in the world could have produced. And they had also learned one of the first principles of success.

Since then I have visited the schools regularly.

There are, of course, good teachers, and poor ones; but many times they have an insight into childish interests and methods that never occur to busy mothers. It pays in a great many ways to get acquainted with your children's schools and their teachers.

The Boy Problem

The problem of the boy is the problem of the state. It is a many-sided problem, capable of as many modes of treatment. It is treated here from the standpoint of the mother.

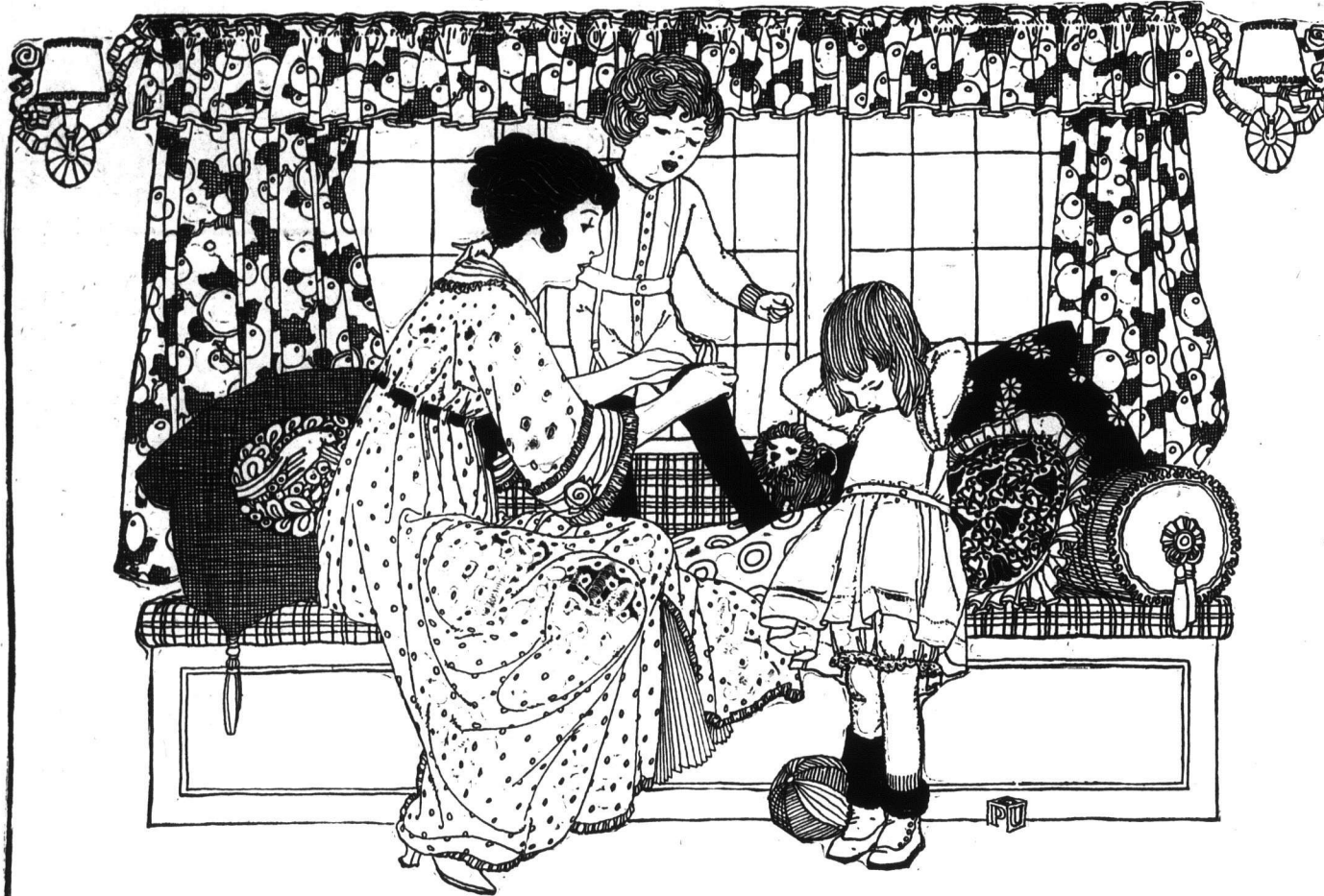
For a boy there are three worlds: the world of home, the world of school and the world at large. Every boy, as he attains manhood, must take his place and act his part in the great seething sea of human affairs. Whether this part be prominent or obscure depends chiefly upon the individual; but the nature of such prominence or obscurity is largely decided by his early training. This training begins at home. In the solving of the problem it is, therefore, with the factor of home life that we have first to deal. Of what sort shall that life be, and how long shall it continue in its integrity? In other words, how should boys be treated at home, and at what age should they be sent to school?

Here, at the outset, I would lay down my first principle. To be a success, a boy's pre-scholastic career must be influenced and guided throughout by one consistent will—and only one.

Father and mother must reach their decisions by means of earnest, unselfish consultation, and, once reached, they must enact those decisions as with one heart and one soul. Or, the mother alone must think out her plan of procedure carefully and largely, and then it is necessary for her to cling to consistency as the chief jewel in her crown.

The mission of this parental will is not to dwarf and thwart the child's will, but to direct and encourage it. Will power is a man's spiritual muscle. If it is ever to amount to anything it must be allowed free exercise within reasonable limits, and those limits must be constantly extended to suit the developing power. Judgment is the collective reactionary force of experience. Every child has a right to his own experience as fast and far as he is prepared to meet and profit by it. The difference between a child who is properly cared for and one who is not is that the first meets his experiences intelligently, bears them philosophically and profits by them invariably, while the second bumps against them in the dark and wonders what it was that hit him, and why. It takes several bumps to knock in from the outside what might have been met half-way by wise and loving preparation.

Children of normal parents are born neither selfish nor unselfish. The ability for good or evil lies latent at first, but develops and extends, like blood-circulation, wherever channels are provided. With the first hour of motherhood begins a mother's responsibility. She has not to gain her influence: it is hers as soon as the child is hers. But she has to maintain, deserve and constantly increase it by making her own life, in every important particular, the model of what she would have his life to be. Love compels love; truth compels truth; nobility compels nobility. Love your children and they will love you in spite of all

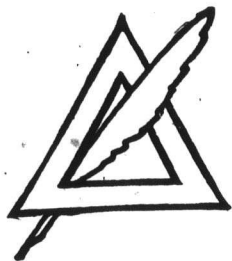


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