

## PRACTICAL PAPERS.

## OVER-INDULGENCE IS NOT TRUE LOVE.

Many parents imagine they are model guardians of their little ones because they are willing to give their whole life to the unrestrained indulgence of all their whims and fancies. It does not take long for even a new-born infant to learn that it is to be the chief ruler in the house. To be sure it will be years before the babe can reason about it, but instinct, if nothing stronger, will soon teach it that crying is all powerful. Before one short month passes over its head, the nurse, the mother, and all in the house are perfectly drilled to instant and unhesitating obedience. Every one understands that there will be no peace unless the little tyrant is rocked to sleep, or constantly in the arms when awake. The hired nurse rejoices when her time of service expires, and she is free from the "little imp's" exactions. That will be the term by which she will designate her late charge; but the mother's love sees only a "cherub," an "angel," "the sweetest, most perfect blessing in the world."

Truly, a mother's love covers a multitude of sins, and clothes her idols with celestial charms. She never feels that she is ruining her own health, and is unconscious of fatigue while gratifying her child's most unreasonable demands. If any one ventures to hint that so much indulgence is injurious, and will not add to the comfort or happiness of the recipient, how the mother resents it. We have heard misguided parents say:

"I will not have my children restrained while young. They shall never be denied any indulgence or pleasure that I can provide at any cost. They will have troubles and trials in plenty when they have grown up without knowing any in youth that I can ward off."

This is the way some mothers manifest their love. What a mistaken idea! What will their children be when they pass out from their parents' care? How can they bear life's burdens if they have never learned that there are any, until, without warning, they find themselves encompassed with them? What power of resistance, what strength of purpose can they be expected to have, what efforts toward a useful life can children thus reared ever make with any semblance of success?

For the child's own good, to show the true, perfect love, those who from birth are committed to their parents' guardianship must be made to "bear the yoke in their youth," so that in riper years the yoke may be easy and the burden light, or be found to be a pleasure and no cross at all.

There is exquisite pleasure in devoting one's self to the baby in our arms, "the toddling wee thing" that plays at our side; the rosy curly-headed darling who follows us about the house with rippling laughter or chirping like a bird in its merry play. It is hard to refuse their soft pleadings, even when we know they plead for that which is not for their real good. This is hard if one looks only for present enjoyment. Oh, if mothers could bear in mind that they must look beyond babyhood if they would insure their children's best good, a happy, noble, honourable maturity. For "so surely as the years drift by, and life is spared, so surely will the world with its stern discipline take all our tender fledglings under its tutelage. With dancing feet and gay laughter life's problems may be solved for some; or with sorrowful heart and tearful eyes may come the elucidation for others. But whether the days troop by in gladness or go leaden-paced in sorrow, the riddle must be, in the end, for individual reading. The young must for themselves chase empty bubbles and see them perish in the grasping before they will learn that the alluring is not the enduring."

"All that the parents can do is to stand with ready counsel, seeking to guide the wandering footsteps in safety past the shoals and quicksands until, happily, this tender watch and care shall see them treading the paths of pleasantness and peace."

"The teachings of childhood are the corner-stones on which to build the foundations of character. If these are laid in wisdom and faithfulness we may look to see the superstructure rounded and beautified by the lessons of life's experience. But the mother who fosters childish vanity, and aids to develop the chrysalis into a butterfly of fashion, fails no more signally in fulfilling her trust than she who with tender love, but mistaken kindness, guards childhood and

youth from every duty and exertion as well as from all self-denial and care. Such over-indulgence will surely result in dwindled faculties, buried talents and a disfigured character, the bane of happiness to its possessor and a blessing to none. Though the inheritors of millions, children spoiled by over-indulgence are defrauded of their rights."

In after years, through great suffering and sorrow, if to such cruelly-indulged children there should come an awakening, still the character is shorn of half the strength it should have had, and what is left of life will be passed in the shadow, and burdened with daily repining and sorrow for a misspent youth.

If parents would learn in time that over indulgence in childhood brings to their children in later life only an inheritance of regret and disappointment, how many lives would be made happy and cheerful that now, through over-indulgence, are utterly wrecked and useless ready to turn upon their parents with reproaches, instead of rising up to call them blessed.

*Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher in "Christian Union."*

## IN-DOOR PLEASURES.

These winter evenings ought to be made attractive in our homes. We cannot confidently expect that the boys and girls will delight in their own domiciles if life there be dull, monotonous, and humdrum. The older people may, most of all, enjoy the opportunity for repose and quiet which the long evenings bring, but the young "hear the days before them," and the tumult of their lives, and they cannot be satisfied to sit still and dream. In many things the parents of young ladies and gentlemen ought to continue the practice of the same kinds of self-sacrifice which were easy when the young ladies and gentlemen were babies in arms. Not now can the mother gather them close to her bosom and kiss away all their troubles. The father can no longer lift and carry these grown-up children over all the rough places to which they come. Trials, temptations, great evils, they must meet and face alone, but for the help which frail mortality receives only from God. Still, in this critical period of their being there is much that parents can do to guide the younger ones and facilitate their progress. One great safeguard around an immature life is a happy home. I do not mean one which is a mere negation, but a home that has emphasis, colour, tone, sprightliness, and an air of being alert and alive. Something going on, something in which everybody can share, is an immense benefit to the eager lad or lass who has begun to pine for the stimulus of more exciting pleasures than the daily round of living imparts.

A craving for constant excitement is, of course, morbid and unwholesome, and is apt to be followed by weariness and disgust. But a spice of innocent fun is like the flavor in a cake. It redeems the mass from sweet insipidity. While it is very pleasant to see a family united in loving bonds, and satisfied with each other's company, still a sort of neighbourhood sociability is a most desirable thing. Let the young people of a place form an association, and meet weekly for mutual enjoyment and mental cultivation. They will have an organization of some sort, for though nothing is helped by too much machinery, nothing succeeds which is not managed by some co-operative ability. They will select a president, a secretary, and other officers, and they will have their committees for music, for literature, and for business. Such a band of young people will find many ways in which they can improve themselves, and in which they can have good times. They will have essays, debates, musical soirees, and festive reunions in each other's homes. They will so use the winter that they will feel that solid gains have been accumulated when it has passed away.

In the home circle games and innocent diversions may be encouraged. The family who love music will find in it a never-failing source of interest. The cabinet organ and the piano are blessings to many a household. Once and for all, let me urge on the heads of families the beneficence of light, plenty of light, these winter evenings. Economize where you will, but do not cut off the supply of gas or kerosene. Gloomy, vault-like living-rooms, passages through which you grope in the dark, are wonderful helpers of Satan. Light the great lamp and let its cheerful beams scatter the shadows from hearts as well as walls. Bring in the nuts and apples, or the basket of spice-cakes, before the evening is over. The act of eating in common has always a charm about it, and the com-

ing in of refreshments usually does away with stiffness in the stiffest of social parties.

As years pass on and family circles are broken and scattered, the remembrance of happy times at home will be very delightful. In Whittier's lovely pastoral "Snow-bound," nothing is more beautiful than his description of one and another who, sitting by the radiant fire, told stories of childhood or of wild adventure. Life goes on, and we drift apart, but the thought of a hearthstone where father and mother, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbors met, will shine like a star over its desert places.

Every household is in a certain sense a pioneer, even though it exist in a close, crowded city street. It can go out and make ways of its own. The pattern it sets will be repeated and improved upon, perhaps on the other side of the globe. No home lives only to itself. It lives for all humanity. The evenings you and your children spend this winter may set things in motion which will go on, and on, and on, till the books are opened before the great white throne above.

## A PRETTY ORNAMENT.

In one corner of my room I have a shelf, which, to me, is prettier than many a costly bracket. It is about thirteen inches wide in the middle, and is of plain wood, unpainted and unvarnished. Across the front is fastened a strip of pasteboard even with the shelf on its upper edge, and reaching about five inches below, to cover the unsightly pieces of wood which are fastened to the wall for the shelf to rest on. This pasteboard I covered with the beautiful gray lichen, found in such quantities on rocks in old pastures. Then a good-sized flower pot was set in the centre of the shelf containing a splendid Maidenhair fern. The soil was such as ferns delight in—leaf mould from their native woods, mixed with a little sand, and plenty of charcoal in the bottom of the pot. On each side of this centre-piece I placed a small pot of German ivy. I fastened one end of a long piece of hoopskirt wire to the outside of one pot of ivy, then bent the other end down and fastened it to the outside of the other pot for an arch over the fern. To cover up the flower pots, I arranged a fortification the whole length of the shelf, consisting of sheets of green moss, bits of old stumps covered with air-like lichen, small white stones, and as many dainty little "red cups" as I could find. The ivy soon covered the arch prepared for it, and then rambed over the moss and lichens, finally hanging down in graceful festoons several feet below the shelf. The whole cost was exactly forty cents, the price of three flower pots.—*Floral Cabinet.*

## MILK TAVERNS.

There is obviously no reason why a tavern should be devoted to the sale of intoxicating drinks. The original idea of a "victualer" is more intelligibly realised in the case of a purveyor who sells a nutritive beverage than one who supplies what is, speaking generally, rather stimulating than nutritious. Milk is, in a special sense, sustaining. It forms a prominent element of ordinary food, and comprises most of the elements by which the tissues consumed in exercise may be replaced. It is, moreover, a popular beverage, and one which women and children may share, while few men would fail to appreciate it. Tea and coffee are luxuries in which many do not care to indulge at odd times, nor, as a matter of experience, do they answer the purpose of refreshment in all cases so effectually as milk. Again, milk is the cheaper beverage; it costs less, and it serves a more useful purpose in the economy than any other fluid which can be taken to assuage thirst; while in the case of persons afflicted with not a few forms of disease, it plays the part of a medical restorative, and as a remedy alone, may with advantage be extensively employed. Why not, then, provide "milk taverns" in the public streets? We venture to predict for enterprising tradesmen who will open these establishments on a liberal scale, in good situations, success of a very high order. To make the experiment a fair one, the house should be as handsome, well-appointed, and commodious as a gin palace, and the position chosen as prominent as can be selected. We should like to see the movement inaugurated as a pure trade, selling milk only—with the usual accompaniments of bread and cheese or butter and biscuits, as in ordinary taverns and the description "Milk Tavern" ought to be adopted to distinguish the establishment from a cafe or tea-shop.—*Lancet.*