

Woman and the Home

The Love for Children

By Eva J De Marsh

The sweetest, truest thing in God's universe is the love of a pure woman for a little child. God pity her whose pulses never quicken with a sense of responsibility at the touch of baby fingers and the sound of childish voices, into whose eyes no loving soul looks for counsel and guidance.

Perchance you and I must walk life's path alone, but none the less we can love and be loved. By the thought of the little dream children which alone can be ours shall we give our love and sympathy to each child we meet, and most of all to those children to whom mother-love is denied.

Alas for the woman who, having paid the price of her soul for love, dare not wear the crowning glory of motherhood who must abandon her child to unknown care. Let us gather to our hearts and mold aright these little out-cast ones. Bright and sweet and loving are many such children. Heredity, though strong, is not so potent a factor in our lives as many suppose. Right training can do much to overcome or modify undesirable qualities. Begin early, very early, and the child-soul will expand and develop much as you will.

One of the sweetest, brightest children I ever knew was a homeless waif reared from infancy in a good, Christian household. Her clear eyes, depths held no shadow of sin; no taint of weakness or lawlessness was in her manner, and to every one she was a constant source of joy.

One of our greatest moulders of public sentiment during the past century was but a doorstep foundling. God had a work for him to do and not by chance did he lie at a good man's door. For, given other environments, and who shall say that this man might not have been as potent a factor for evil as he has been for good?

Not for a moment would I sanction unbridled yield to passion, but I cannot find it in my heart to crush one of God's creatures nor to allow any of His lambs to wander unloved and uncared for. Human souls are too precious.

We owe the world all the beauty of face and form and soul that we can encompass. Not to ourselves alone do we live; only as we give do we receive. What nobler task than to turn deformity into perfection, out of the slime of sin to bring forth the beautiful lily of grace? Not by loud rantings or the applause of multitudes are our highest laurels won. The unfading crown is hers who, hour by hour, day by day, year by year, walks hand in hand with God, whose gentle influence falls softly though none the less surely, on husband and children and who is satisfied that earth holds no fairer gift than to be the mother of brave sons and pure daughters. It is to women such as these that the world owes its saints and heroes. The wide-spread influence of good mothers—who dares say how far they reach, through how many vistas of years?

The demand for equal rights and privileges, the decrying of manhood, the belittling of wifehood and motherhood, the seeking for public applause, are in most cases but the outward manifestation of a vague unrest whose source is not understood or, being understood, is ignored. Because wifehood and motherhood have been denied her, or because in some way she has been disappointed, many a woman seeks surcease through accounting these things of little worth. Because her own heart aches, she seeks to crush all hearts as well. Intellectual and spiritual gifts are to be cultivated. All honor to the women who by voice and pen stir the world. We need them—but the sweet, loving, motherly woman, how we should miss her. Men can be good and kind, but there is nothing quite like the touch of a woman's hand, the smile that comes from her heart, the tender voice that soothes a baby's woes, or the loving fingers that bind up bruises.

Many mothers from the old country do not seem to realize that this is a

different climate. I have seen well dressed mothers go down street with their children who wore low socks and their little bare legs were purple with cold.

Most of our summer evenings here are too cold for socks. It will create stomach trouble later. Their little legs should not be subjected to the cold.

Never frighten children into obedience. The mother who holds up the "bogy man," "big dog," etc., as objects of terror to her children cannot be too harshly dealt with, for they may be destroying a fine mind. More than one child has been made a nervous wreck through fear.

Don't Trample on a Child's Feelings

In a certain home there were two little girls, Gladys, aged seven, and Winnie, five. It was plain that Winnie was the mother's favorite. This was probably

The matter came up again, in the presence of the children, and this time the mother said: "I guess Winnie will have to go, for Gladys has no clothes ready. She can never go anywhere; she can't keep her clothes looking decent. But I don't know how I can ever get along without Winnie. She looks after the baby so well, and does all the errands for me. Now Gladys could go and I would never miss her, for she's not a bit of good around the house."

Poor child! Every word cut like a knife into her sensitive little soul. And from day to day, in the home life, one could see that she was growing up with the feeling that no one needed her or cared for her. The mother, who of all others should have been her child's comforter and confidante, was unthinkingly almost breaking that child's heart and blighting her whole life.

And not only was the mother doing an injustice to this child and injuring her life; but, moreover, her treatment had a serious effect upon the favored child. She soon acquired a self-righteous feeling, showing by her conduct that she thought

really could not go on and finish—"but I supposed your son was as thoughtful as mine."

Yet as she hung up the receiver, she remembered the years of training that had made her own boy's action in telephoning to her inevitable. The moment the storm had ceased, his message had come.

"All right, mother. We're here at Ray's farm-house on the pike—over by White Bridge, you know. Say, that was a real thunder-shower, wasn't it? We're not very wet. You needn't worry. We're going to start right back now. Teddy and the twins are with me. I got three bass."

Tom's mother lifted the writing-tablet that hung beside the telephone, and tore off its last scribbled page. On it were several of the hurried but tranquilizing messages that it was the family habit to jot down for the common convenience.

"Committee meeting called for five o'clock. May be a little late," in her husband's rapid scrawl, "but will meet you at Harry's."



All Sydney turns out to cheer Australian Volunteers on their way to embark for Egypt.

because she was the prettier and more outwardly attractive of the two. She had beautiful flaxen curls, and her mother delighted to keep them in perfect order. It was much easier, too, to keep her looking dainty and neat, for somehow she was never so hard on her clothes, as Gladys was; and it appealed to the mother's own vanity to have people comment approvingly on the child's appearance. Consequently, Winnie received most of the new clothes and always the prettier ones. But the mother forgot that the two children were constituted differently, and that one child had been given an active nature which loved free, childish sport and play, and rejoiced in all bodily activity, while to the other was given a quieter disposition that cared more for gentle home amusements.

On one occasion an aunt visited their home, and wishing to take one of the children home with her for a few weeks, suggested it should be Gladys. Both the children were present as their mother replied: "Oh, I could not think of sending Gladys; she would make so much work for you all. She would keep somebody busy mending her clothes all the time, for she is never happy unless romping about—always on the tear. Now Winnie is different; a dress will last her a whole week." Gladys only hung her head and was silent, but her feelings were hurt.

herself superior to her sister. She was continually running to her mother with stories about something wrong that her sister had been doing; and the mother, instead of upbraiding the child for "telling tales," rather encouraged it.

These are but two of many such cases, and unfortunately we need not go far to look for more. Let us all, then, beware of trampling on a child's feelings, and let us cultivate the grace of thoughtfulness, especially with little children.

The "Tablet Habit"

The telephone-bell rang sharply, and Tom's mother answered it.

"O Mrs. Hobart," came her neighbor's troubled voice, "do you happen to know whether my boy went off anywhere with your boy? I think perhaps he went fishing, and he's not home yet, and this thunder-storm has been so terrible—and I'm so anxious—"

"The boys are all right, both of them," said Mrs. Hobart, cheerfully breaking into the sentence. "Tom just telephoned from over by White Bridge. Your boy and the Rogers boys are with him. They're pretty wet, but they're all right, and hurrying straight home. I'm sorry I didn't think of telephoning you, but I—"

This and the others below it had all been jotted down while she had been taking her nap, and she smiled happily now at the thought of the pleasure the notes had given her when she found them.

"Uncle Harry has telephoned for me to help auntie get ready for this evening, so I'm flying."

That was Betty's cheerful scrawl. And even Joan, whose afternoon out it was, had added her contribution: "The fruit did not come yet, but I will see about it when I go up-town, so you needn't worry, Mrs. Hobart."

How much of intimate comradeship, of happy family fellowship, had been fostered by the use of that little tablet—how much saving of stairs, and callings to and fro, and long discussions as to when and where and why it had spared them all! Once Tom had rebelled at the "bother" of it.

The door banged open, and a flushed and radiant Tom, proudly dangling a string of silvery fish, burst into the hall.

"Wasn't that an awful storm, mother?" he exclaimed. "Struck two barns out on the pike. Ray says it's the worst in forty years. I was mighty glad you knew where I was, and I telephoned you the first minute I could."

"Yes," thought Mrs. Hobart, "the tablet habit has certainly paid."