

Family Circle.

EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

I wish, then, briefly to point out the probable influence upon the country, of the prevalence, to some extent, of home education; and what I mean to affirm is this—that, even if schools, and large schools, were granted to be generally better adapted to the practical ends of education than private instruction, and that the majority of all ranks should receive their mental culture in that mode, nevertheless, that the welfare of society, on the whole, demands the prevalence, to some considerable extent, of the other method, and that a portion of the community—a portion of every rank of the middle and upper classes especially, should come under that very different and more intimate process of culture of which home must be the scene. The school-bred man is of one sort—the home-bred man is of another, and the community has need of both: nor could any measures be much more to be deprecated, nor any tyrant of fashion more to be resisted, than such as should render a public education, from first to last, compulsory and universal.

It is found, in fact, that a quiet, but firm individuality—a self-originating steadiness of purpose, a thoughtful intensity of sentiment, and a passive power, such as stems the tide of fashion and frivolous opinions, belong, as their characteristics, to home-bred men, and especially to such of this class as are self-taught. Now we affirm that, whatever may sometimes be the rigidity or the uncompromising sternness of men of this stamp, a serious, and perhaps a fatal damage would be sustained by the community, if entirely deprived of the moral and political element which they bring into the mass. As the social machinery must come to a stand if all possessed so fixed an individuality as to think and act without regard to the general bias of opinion; so would it acquire too much momentum, if none were distinguished by habits of feeling springing from themselves.

In schools, and especially in large schools, the two lessons learned by boys—sometimes by two classes of tempers, and often by the same individuals at different stages of their course—are the lesson of domination, and the lesson of abject compliance with tyranny. Even the degree in which, of late, public attention has been directed towards the evils whence so much mischief has been proved to arise, has not availed to alleviate them more than to a very small amount; nor can it be doubted but that the habit of tyrannizing, as well as the habit of yielding servile submission, notwithstanding the correction they may receive on entering upon life, will, more or less, continue to affect the dispositions of men, and must in a real, if not in a very conspicuous manner, exert an influence over the political temper and movements of the community.

But a very different class of feeling belongs to young persons educated at home, and who, although perhaps they may not be prompt to contend for the foremost positions in society, are wholly unprepared to cringe before arrogance and oppression. They have moreover acquired in seclusion that decisive individuality of temper which impels them on all occasions to search for a reason satisfactory to themselves, before they bow to the dictates of those who have no right to their submission. Moreover, the bosoms of young persons who have been well trained around the gentle influences of the domestic circle, and have lived in the intimacy of intelligent and ingenious parents, and of other adults, are likely to be fraught with profound and delicate sentiments—with the love of truth, of justice, and of honor; and they are, therefore, equally disinclined either to exercise despotism, or to yield to it. Young men so nurtured under the paternal roof, when, for the first time, they encounter the rude wilfulness and the selfish violence of vulgar spirits in the open world, may perhaps recoil, and be tempted to leave the field in disgust; but they presently (if not naturally feeble-minded) recover their self-possession, and place their foot firmly in the path where what is just and good is to be maintained against insolent power.

The substantial liberties of a community involve much more than the bare protection of persons and chattels; for there is a liberty of thought and of speech which may be curtailed, or almost destroyed, in countries that are the loudest in boasting their freedom. There is a liberty, moral and intellectual—the true glory of a people—which consists in, and demands the unrestrained expansion of all faculties, the exercise of all talents, and the spontaneous expression of all diversities of taste, and of all forms of individuality. But this high liberty of mind, forfeited often in the very struggle of nations to secure or to extend political liberty, must assuredly be favored by whatever cherishes distinctness of character; and it must as certainly be endangered by whatever breaks down individuality, and tends to impose uniformity upon the whole.

In this view, a systematic Home Education may fairly claim no trivial importance, as a means of sending forth among the school-bred majority, those with whose habits of mind there is mingled a firm and modest sentiment of self-respect—not cynical, but yet unconquerable—testing, as it will, upon the steady basis of personal wisdom and virtue. It is of this men

stamp who will be the true conservators of their country's freedom.—*Home Education.*

AN APPEAL TO MOTHERS.

In the vicinity of Philadelphia, there was a pious mother, who had the happiness of seeing her children in very early life brought to the knowledge of the truth; walking in the fear of the Lord, and ornaments in the Christian church. A clergyman who was travelling, heard the circumstances respecting this mother, and wished very much to see her, thinking there might be something peculiar in her mode of giving religious instruction which rendered it so effectual. He accordingly visited her, and inquired respecting the manner in which she discharged the duties of a mother, in educating her children. The woman replied, that she did not know that she had been more faithful than any Christian mother would be in the religious instruction of her children. After a little conversation, she said: "While my infants were on my lap, as I washed them, I raised my heart to God that He would wash them in that blood 'which cleanseth from all sin;' as I clothed them in the morning, I asked my Heavenly Father to clothe them with the robe of righteousness; as I provided them food, I prayed that God would feed their souls with the bread of heaven, and give them to drink the water of life. When I have prepared them for the house of God, I have prayed that their bodies might be fit temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in; when they left me for the week-day school, I followed their infant footsteps with a prayer, that their path through life might be like that of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day; and as I committed them to the rest of the night, the silent breathing of my soul has been, that my heavenly Father would take them to his embrace, and fold them in his parental arms."

Here is the influence of the silent, unseen exertions of a mother, an influence which will be felt when those external accomplishments and fleeting enjoyments which many labor to give their children, shall be forgotten or remembered only as the means of smoothing a rapid descent to the world of sorrow.—*Sabbath School Treasury.*

"I INSTRUCTED NAPOLEON."

From the Mothers' Magazine.

This was the exulting, dying exclamation of a Corsican school-master. He had shaped the early mental developments of him whose victorious armies drove the veteran troops of the allied monarchies from many a bloody battle-field, whose terms were dictated in the palaces of conquered kings—of him who became the terror of all Europe. In his dying hour this school-master found strange comfort in the reflection that he had moulded the energies of such an illustrious pupil. "My honor! my honor! I instructed Napoleon!"

If it be so great an honour to shape the early aspirations of military genius—to educate a hero whose laurels are gathered on fields of blood—how transcendently honourable does he appear who has given direction to minds whose maturity of thought and action, have been consecrated to God in self-denying efforts for the salvation of men.

If it be an honour to have given impress to the character, to have directed the energies, and to have elicited the genius from the capacious mind of a Napoleon, who purchased glory with the blood of men, how much more honourable to have had, like Mary, the mother of Washington, the instruction of a true patriot and hero—a friend to his country, a blessing to the world. And yet how much greater honour is his, who educates a soldier of the cross—who fights under the banner of the King of kings for liberty to the consciences of men, and to release them from their abject slavery to sin.

What mighty power is his, who can control a mind! How great his responsibility! What glory may be his, if he guide it aright!

The Corsican school-master may be responsible for all the human misery and suffering of which Napoleon was the instrument.

The mother of Washington may be entitled to all the honour of the good deeds which he achieved.

Archimedes sought in vain to find a fulcrum upon which he could move the world; but he who has a mind upon which to work, may control the lives and shape the destiny of the whole human family.

You who have children committed to your care, see to it that you fulfil your obligations to them and to the world—that you may give an account of your stewardship—that God may reward you as faithful servants.

HERE A LITTLE AND THERE A LITTLE.

Impressions are made on children, as on rocks, by a constant dropping of little influences. What can one drop do? You scarcely see it fall; and presently it rolls away, or is evaporated; you cannot, even with a microscope, measure the little indentation it has made. Yet it is the constant repetition of this trifling agency, which furrows, and at length hollows out the very granite.

Geographic and Historic.

DESCRIPTION OF A SUNDAY IN MEXICO.

"Whatever may be the impression of a stranger in Mexico as to the gaiety of the city during the week-days—though comparison in this particular may be much in favor of many cities in Europe of equal size—yet to one can doubt, that, in extent and variety of diversions and dissipations, Mexico, on a Sunday, can more than compete with the most festive of them.

"As soon as you awake, you are saluted with the sounds of military music, in which the Mexicans possess a decided excellence. Regiments of soldiers, assembled in the Plaza Mayor, are reviewed, and on this day they exhibit a neat and cleanly appearance, which is more than can be affirmed on any other day. On this day the cathedral is crowded with the fashionable and wealthy of the city. By far the greater proportion of the visitors are the fair sex, and there is here presented a display of beauty and elegance which cannot fail to impress the most insensible.

"The service over, you pass into the street, where ever and anon a religious procession crosses your path, accompanied with all the parade that rich dresses, gilded images, and gold and silver church furniture can afford. The houses, too, are decorated, the inhabitants exhibiting from the balconies their most costly ornaments and dresses. All is bustle and animation. At a corner of the great square are suspended huge placards, on which the nature of the day's amusements is depicted in every variety of color. Here is a pictorial illustration of the most prominent attraction at the great theatre, which, in common with all the rest, is open twice on this day. A little further on, is a full-length figure of *Figaro*, which draws your attention to the fascinating allurements of the opera. The bull-fights next solicit your notice, announcing the most terrific particulars.

"Nor are the minor theatres behind-hand in presenting their attractions. Endless varieties of other exhibitions put forth their claims. A balloon ascension is advertised for the afternoon. One would suppose, too, that the Roman gladiatorial shows were revived, for at one spectacle is a contest between a man and a bear. Cock-fights, dog-fights, and findangos are announced in every quarter of the city. Horse-racing, the circus, jugglers, posture-masters, tumblers, fire-eaters, concerts, coffee-gardens, fencing-matches, pigeon shooting, gymnastic exercises, country excursions, and balls graduated to every pocket, form but a fraction of the entertainments to which this day is devoted. In the afternoon, the public promenades are thronged, and the long array of equipages, with the rich and gay dresses of the senoras, is calculated to convey an impression of the wealth and luxury of the city. In the evening, the theatre presents a spectacle which probably few theatres in the world can parallel. The beauty, elegance, wealth and luxury of Mexico seem concentrated into one brilliant focus.

"The finale of the day is generally wound up by a splendid display of fire-works; and thus concludes a Mexican Sunday; and in no other part of the world probably is a Sunday so spent—not even in Italy."

CAFFRE ARMS AND MODE OF FIGHTING.

It is now pretty generally admitted that the Caffres belong to the negro race of mankind, but the characteristic peculiarities of that race, with the exception of the woolly hair, are less strongly marked in them than in the natives of Guinea or Mozambique; the lips are less thick, the nose less flat, the lower part of the face is not remarkably prominent, and the forehead is often as high and as amply developed as in Europeans. The color of the skin appeared to me, in most of the individuals, I saw, to be a dark amber brown, frequently approaching to black, while in others it had a tinge of yellow or red; but the skin is so often smeared with red ochre, that it is not easy to judge accurately of its real native tint. The Caffre men are in general tall, though not gigantic, and extremely well proportioned; indeed, their fine forms and easy attitudes often remind one of ancient statues; but they are more remarkable for activity than for strength, and, it is said, have generally been found inferior in muscular power to British soldiers. They wear no clothing except the skin cloak or *kaross*, and this is worn only as a protection against weather, not with the view of concealing any part of the body. The skins of which these cloaks are made are dressed in such a manner as to be soft and pliable as glove leather, and acquire a red-brown color, which is not at all displeasing to the eye. The Caffres call these cloaks *ingubo*; *kaross* is, I believe, a word borrowed by the Dutch from the Hottentots. Many of the chiefs wear mantles of leopard's skin, prepared with the hair on. They ornament their hair on great occasions with red ochre, which is applied in a very elaborate manner, the hair being twisted up into a multitude of little separate knots or lumps, and every knot carefully covered over with grease and ochre. This process, which is performed by the women, is said to be very long and tedious; but the appearance which results from it, though whimsical in our eyes, is considered by them as highly ornamental. In truth, I do not see that this practice is in any degree more barbarous or irrational than that of covering the hair with white powder, which not long ago was so fashionable in the most civilized parts of Europe. The Caffre women, as I have already mentioned, are inferior in personal appearance to the men, and differ from them, in point of costume, by constantly wearing a cap of dressed leather, shaped a little like a turban, and decorated with beads and brass buttons. Their cloak, which is usually much ornamented with the same articles, is arranged more decently than that of the other sex, being in general wrapt close round them, and covering them from the throat to the ankles; but the unmarried women sometimes fasten it round the waist in the manner of a petticoat, leaving the upper part of the person exposed. All the Caffres at Block Drift, with the exception of their chiefs, were armed with their national weapon, the light spear or javelin, which they themselves call *unkondo*, but to which the colonists have given the name of *assagai*. It has a slender shaft, about five feet long, made of the tough and elastic wood which the Dutch call *assagailhout*, and an iron head or blade somewhat like that of a lance, generally without any barb, but sharp at the edges as well as at the point. The whole thing is very light, and is but a paltry weapon for warfare against European troops; it can be thrown fifty or sixty yards with effect; but beyond that distance they have no certainty of aim. Another weapon used by the Amakosa is the *kirrie* or *keerie*, which is simply a thick stick of a very hard and heavy wood, with a knob at one end: this is likewise used as a missile, and it is said that they can bring down birds on the wing with it. A considerable number of these people are now provided with fire-arms; and though, as yet, few are expert in the use of them, there seems to be no reason why the Caffres should not in time become as skilful marksmen as the North American Indians. They will in that case be truly formidable enemies in the bush.—*Bunbury's Residence at the Cape of Good Hope.*

ROCKS OF PETRA.

Here I should not omit to notice what, every traveller has been struck with, and what, in fact, particularly in this range of tombs and on this side of the city, forms one of the most striking peculiarities of Petra—I mean the colouring of its rocks; which is wild, fantastic, and unique, as indeed is everything else about the place.—The general tinting of the sand stone mountains environing, the city is very fine; the broad rich red and grey stones such as the artist revels in; but, in addition, the surface of the rocks is veined after the manner of watered silk, with a most indescribable and startling variety of hues—white, saffron, orange, vermillion, pink, crimson, and violet, in endless shades and tints; in some places, forming combination really beautiful; in others, grotesquely strange, like sections of meat or of brawn, but so wildly thrown about the irregular surface of the crags, and so capriciously drawn in minute veins and strips across the façades of the tombs, as infinitely to add to the marvellous and romantic singularity of this wonderful region.—*Barlett's Forty Days in the Desert.*

THE NITRE LAKES OF EGYPT.

In the midst of this sandy waste, where uniformity is rarely interrupted by grass or shrubs, there are extensive districts where nitre springs from the earth like crystallized fruits. One thinks he sees a wild overgrown with moss, weeds, and shrubs, thickly covered with hoar frost. And to imagine this wintry scene beneath the fervent heat of an Egyptian sun, will give some idea of the strangeness of its aspect. The existence of this nitre upon sandy surface is caused by the evaporation of the lakes. According to the quantity of nitre left behind by the lake do these fantastic shapes assume either a dazzling white colour, or are more or less tinted with the sober hue of the sand. The nitre lakes themselves, six in number, situated in a spacious valley, between two rows of low sand-hills, presented—at least three which we visited—a pleasing contrast, in their dark blue and red colours, to the dull hues of the sand. The nitre which forms a thick crystallized crust, upon these shallow lakes, is broken off in large square plates, which are either of a dirty white, or of a flesh colour, or of a deep dark red. The Fellahs employed upon this labour stand quite naked in the water, furnished with iron rods. The part which is removed being speedily renewed, the riches of its produce are inexhaustible. It is hence that nearly the whole of Europe is exclusively supplied with nitre, and this has probably been the case for ages; for Sicard mentions, at the commencement of the last century, that 36,000 cwt. of nitre were broken annually for the grand signior, to whom it yielded 36 purses. By the sides of one of the lakes, piled in large layers, was heaped the produce of the last week's labors. My companion had occasion to find fault with the result of the work of one of the villagers—the sheikh of the village stood before us—he sharply rebuked him, and to give greater effect to his words he crossed his naked shoulders two or three times with his whip of elephants-skin. The sheikh sprang as nimbly as a gazelle into the lake, and received his further instructions beyond arm's length. Such was the impressive discipline which even the Italian, who was a man of gentle manners, considered it necessary to adopt towards these Fellahs.