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MIRAMICHI ADVANCE

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THE ONION CURE.

Onions are a kind of all-round good medicine. A whole onion eaten at bedtime will, by the next morning, break the severest cold. Onions make a good plaster to remove inflammation and hoarseness. If an onion is mashed so as to secure all the juice in it it will make a most remarkable smelling substance that will quiet the most nervous person. The strength of it inhaled for a few moments will dull the sense of smell and weaken the nerves until sleep is produced from exhaustion. It all comes from one property possessed by the onion, and that is a form of opium.

CHINA'S FAST CRUISER.

The fastest cruiser in the world has recently been completed for China. The new cruiser is to be known as the "Hai Tien," of 4,000 tons, and, under natural draught, will have a speed of 23.6 knots per hour. At this rate she could cross the Atlantic in about four and one half days,

About the House.

LITTLE FEET.

Two little feet so small that both may nestle
In one caressing hand;
Two little feet upon the untried border
Of life's mysterious land.
Dimpled and soft and pink as peach-tree blossoms
In April's fragrant days,
How can they walk among the briary tangles
Edging the world's rough ways?
Ah! who may read the future? For our darling
We crave all blessings sweet,
And pray that He who feeds the crying ravens
Will guide the baby's feet.

TRAINING YOUR BOY.

The second of men's seven ages which may be reckoned as beginning when he puts on long trousers, is the most critical for the boy and the most responsible for the mother, writes a correspondent. During its course the youngster is subjected to many temptations, feels the awakening of many thoughts and ideas before unknown to him and catches his first glimpses of the world's evil. His attitude toward these new factors in existence, be they subjective or objective, is a matter of much greater influence than appears to him at the time. Nor is it an easy matter to point out the true character and relation of the new forces with which he comes in contact. He is impatient of advice or restraint. Having been permitted to toddle unsupported he fancies that he can run alone. It is this fact that makes the mother's task so difficult, and calls for the greatest exercise of tact and loving judgment. There are two general methods, two schools, one may almost say, of treating boys during this age. The more prevalent method, the larger school, is that which shields him from every temptation from every evil association, and from every unrighteous act and thought. Judging it by the large, and in the light of its results as I have observed them, I must say that in my opinion it is a failure. It may be successful while it is possible for the treatment itself to continue, but it bears ill fruit later on.

Sooner or later, usually all too soon, the boy must come to the knowledge of good and evil and must choose between them, not in two forms nor in a score, but in a thousand. If his eyes have not been trained to see clearly the ugly shape beneath the pleasing exterior, if he knows not the principles on which to base his choice, if he cannot receive and parry subtle thrusts from unexpected quarters, he is as ill prepared for the battle of life as would have been a knight of old going out to mortal combat clad in silken armor.

There is no time when a boy's moral fiber and early training are more thoroughly tested than when he goes away to school or college, or when he leaves home to enter some business establishment. There he is certain to meet temptations of many kinds. There, also he must stand alone, with no reliance but that which his early training has given him.

If his home training has been ignorance of all that is unpleasant or evil in its consequences the boy is to be pitied. He is likely to be called a "softy" by his companions, and there is no delight known to the hardened youth so great as that of shocking or tormenting or destroying the illusions of a "softy."

They themselves know, perhaps, when to stop, when to draw back, when to turn away, but they do not think to point out the danger line to their untutored companion. It seems so unnecessary. He shrinks back at first, perhaps, but at length he takes the plunge, and when he does he plunges far.

There is an intoxication in first knowledge, be it good or bad when it comes at first hand. Therein lies the "softy's" peril, for it is marvelously easy for him to go beyond his depth, to lose the poise which is the governing gear and safety valve of humanity. It is true, as proved by all experience, that nobody can go to the devil at such a galloping gait as one of these same "softies." Nobody can sow a larger and more deadly crop of wild oats than the boy whose ears have been shielded from the very mention of all that such a sowing involves.

The other method of youthful training, which is less in favor now than formerly, consists in encouraging the boy to know the apple of evil by its taste. It is the Spartan method. It says: "Let the fox tear at his vitals. If he survives it will make him stronger for the next contest."

This plan might succeed admirably if it were true, as the poets have told us, that vice is a monster hateful at first view. Unhappily, it is true that the gay trappings of vice are often more attractive than the sober garments of virtue. The first slip may only whet the appetite for deeper draughts.

It seems to me that the most successful plan to follow is not a combination of these two, but a compromise between the two. Teach your boy what he must expect, what he must meet in life. Show him to what he should oling and of what he should beware. Caution him against sin and folly, not commandingly, but reasoningly. Point out how they will warp his nature and spoil his life. Unfortunately, every community affords living object lessons for such instruction. Remember that he has reached an age of independent intelligence and that your strongest hope lies in appealing to his intelligence.

If you find that he is committing some venial fault, is doing something that he would not have you know, do not upbraid him; reason with him—strongly, intelligently, convincingly and—reasonably. Some persons will say that this can be of no avail. Their belief is the doctrine that wickedness is inherent, but it is not. If you have done your earlier work well and have led your boy to have a high and through respect for the competence of your judgment and the thoroughness of your own knowledge, you can convince him and direct him and help him over a few of the roughest places in life's roadway.

I can feel to-day, through the lapse of long years, the awful sense of humiliation and contrition that came to me one day in my own boyhood when my mother took me to her room and pointed out the evil possibilities of one bad habit that I had begun in secret, as I thought, from her. I had known that it was something not to be approved else I should not have hidden it but I did not realize why it was to be avoided with the overwhelming conviction that her gentle tones of warning impressed upon me with a vividness that remains to this day. Neither coaxing nor command could have made the same impression.

The point that I seek to impart by this instance, and that will be borne out by others which these suggest to you, is this: Teach your boy to avoid evil. Do so, not by screening him, but by helping him to walk past it with head erect and feet unwavering, to look it in the face with a clear eye and to quell it by the strength of honest purity. Then alone will he be safe.

WHERE FASHION FAILS.

To look her best is every woman's duty, old and young, and the plain and the elderly ought to make the greatest effort. The trouble is that most of us begin by wanting to be in the fashion, and unfortunately the fashion often takes away every chance of bettering our appearance and increases all our defects.

For instance, just now, when the fashion takes its model, as a witty woman has pointed out, "from a feather duster," we are made painfully aware of how few women have beautiful figures and how badly many of us walk. To have a close sheath drawn over our hips and a mass of ruffles fall around our feet so that we cannot take a free step, and then with an aching arm to hold up the awkward thing as we walk, is ruinous to grace or beauty. And where the slender purse says that only one good walking dress is possible, what a grief it is to feel that this arrangement makes it sure to be spoiled in a very short time and forbids any hope of alteration.

CHILDREN'S EYES.

The Dangers of Over-Strain Pointed Out - Increase of Myopia.

Of all the ready methods of measuring the health standard of a people, there are few on which reliance can be more safely placed than on the number of those whose vision is impaired. Judged by this rule, the average health of school children is far below what it should be. The use of glasses is not in itself objectionable, on the contrary, it is to be commended; but the increasing demand for glasses among those who have hardly passed their first youth is a matter which calls for serious consideration. Much of this mischief is caused by the conditions of school life. Imperfect light, bad print on unsuitable paper, impure atmosphere, faulty ventilation, overheated and crowded school rooms, unwholesome water supply, lack of suitable recreation halls and ground, ill-fitting school furniture and too long continuous study hours are among the most fertile causes of the impairment of the muscular tonicity so indispensable for acute visual efficiency. School children, to be cheerful and healthy, must have plenty of light and good ventilation in which to study; and it is owing to the frequent absence of these that the general health of the children is far below what it should be, and consequently that myopia, or near-sightedness, increases with the attendance of schools. The desks should be arranged so that the light from the windows falls upon them from behind, and a little from the left. There should be plenty of light, and the windows should be so large that it can not be materially diminished or obstructed by the walls of tall buildings immediately adjoining. The paper of text books should be of pure white or cream white and without glaze. They should be clearly printed in plain type, with very black ink. A shiny blackboard is an abhorrence. It is often allowed to become so smooth as to reflect light almost like a mirror, when viewed at certain angles. This glaze should be subdued by rubbing the surface with coarse sandpaper. Only white crayons should be used. There is nothing likely to bring on serious injury to the sight of the child more quickly than too long study hours. Children under 14 should never be allowed to study, in school and out, more than five or six hours. The eyes can be rested by lifting them from the book and looking at distant objects, or closing them for a few minutes. The school work should be also broken up at frequent intervals in order to practice breathing or exercises. This prevents the strain of study being too continuous, besides relieving the eyes. Finally, all school children should be examined as to their eyes, and any defects of vision should be remedied by means of glasses, which adopted thus early, may save much trouble in after years. Most people imagine that those who do not require glasses with advancing age have very strong eyes. This, on the contrary, is proof positive of the existence of myopia, although as a rule in such cases, it is hard to convince the patient of the fact.

LITTLE CIVILITIES.

If, as the old saying has it, civility costs nothing, it certainly gains much, both in the way of liking and of kindness; therefore, it seems a great pity that so many people dispense with it in small matters of daily life. There are, no doubt, very few people who are actually and actively rude and uncivil, but there are, on the other hand, many who are, if we may use the term, passively impolite. They do not, that is, commit a downright rudeness but they omit a vast number of little civilities.

If it is manners that "maketh man," it is most certainly woman who both makes and mars men's manners, for there is no man, however rough and uncouth in manner, who is not influenced, and to some degree softened, by contact with a courteous and gracious mannered woman.

A LOST RIVER.

One of the most remarkable freaks of nature occurs in Mexico. It is a river that is not a river. The bed of it lies in a valley between the Rio Grande, and Pecos Rivers. It is not a dead or dried-up stream. It is simply lost. Numerous big tributaries flow into it from the neighboring mountains. Immediately, however, they reach the bed of the main stream they disappear from sight. Thus, for some reason or another, a river which should be 300 miles in length has no existence which could be proved.

BATTLES AND RAIN.

It is a curious fact—well known, however, to weather experts — that heavy firing will generally cause rain, even though the sky was clear before hand. At Waterloo rain came down in torrents. The tremendous concussion shakes the little globules of water which are always present invisibly in the atmosphere together, and so brings them down.

MRS. GRAY'S VISITORS.

If there is a time trying to housekeepers it is the period called spring-cleaning.

Farmer Gray's wife was no exception—good, motherly soul that she was. She was up with the lark day after day, and gave little rest to those working under her supervison. But as paint which never showed signs of soil shone with new gloss and even the possibility of dust was removed from where no traces of dust could be found, her eyes brightened, and a happy thought would go flitting through her brain.

"It will be all over, everything ready, before Reuben comes home."

Reuben was her pride—the boy who, utterly regardless of the clean, sanded floors, would walk bodily in where no other foot dared tread, leaving his imprint in mud to mark his course—the boy for whose future she had woven such wonderful air-castles.

He must be a lawyer, a great man, one whose name she should some day see in the public prints. This seemed to her the very height of ambition.

Reuben was coming home—a college graduate—to spend with them his vacation, and then back to the Metropolis to earn fame. Was it any wonder the floors, the walls, the ceilings, must give evidence of their mute delight?

Trudging along at a slow jog-trot, occasionally speaking a word of encouragement to the tired mare, Farmer Grey was nearing home. But a troubled look rested on his face, very different from the bright cheeriness generally found there, and ever and anon his eyes wandered stealthily to a little figure perched on a high seat at his side.

One could see only the face—a pinched, worn little face, from which two great brown eyes peered out, and seemed to take in every blade of grass by the roadside, every leaf upon the trees, as some wonderful heaven-sent vision accorded her.

"You mustn't mind, my dear, if Mrs. Gray seems a little put out like, when she first sees you. It's house-cleanin' time, and she don't much like strangers botherin' her; but she'll soon find out you won't be in the way, and when she sees the roses comin' back to your cheeks she'll be happy enough. Only don't worry her if at first she's a wee bit flustered."

"Oh, I'm sorry you brought me, if she won't like it!" answered the child—for child she seemed, sitting there, though seventeen summers had passed over her head.

"There, there, now! She will like it, I tell you; and when she once sees you, and feels sorry for you, you'll find Gray kind and good she is," said the farmer, striving, with the remembrance of duty done, to reassure his sinking heart as he came in sight of his own pasture-land.

He had gone bright and early that morning to the doctor's in the market town, to tell his old friend of the honors his boy had won, and that soon Reuben was coming back to them; and after giving him a few words and a warm hand-shake of congratulations, the doctor had added:

"I was thinking of you, wishing for you, as you entered. There is a little girl here who is dying for the want of pure country air and a little nursing in the way of food. She needs plenty of milk, and liberty to roam all day in the fields. Take her back with you, Gray; it will be the making of her, and I am coming down soon to see how she's getting along."

"It's house-cleanin'," answered the farmer, and a world of meaning was in that short sentence.

Both men looked grave, but the doctor spoke again:

"We can't let the girl die if it is. I tell you, Gray, she is starving for country air, for green fields and the music of the birds. Let her go. Mrs. Gray won't turn her out."

So it was decided. But Farmer Gray's "Whoa!" rang out a little less loud than usual, as he reined up the old horse at his own door; but the quick housewife's ears caught it, and it brought her speedily to the door to bid him welcome and see that his boots were fit to tread her spotless floors. The tracking on them with mud must be left for Reuben.

Poor Mrs. Gray! She was hot and tired, though she would not have acknowledged it. Her feet were weary, for all the day they had borne her weight.

"What have you got there, Seth Gray?" questioned she, in tones shrill and sharp. "Company, I declare, and it's house-cleaning!"

Then, as the farmer tenderly lifted down the girl in his strong arms, she continued:

"A child, I declare! Well, all I can say, Seth Gray—you must stay at home and take care of her!"

She turned away, forgetting, in her indignation, even her floors.

"Never you mind," said the farmer, as he noticed two great tears swimming in the large brown eyes, and trembling, ready to fall, on the jetty lashes, while the delicate mouth quivered. "It's just her way. She don't mean it. Come now, dear——"

"You'd better show her the spare room," interrupted the shrill tones again, as they entered.

Then, as her husband returned alone from his errand, his wife's wrath broke its bounds.

"Are you mad, Seth Gray, to put any more care on my shoulders at this time? You can take another ride to town to-morrow, and take the child back where she came from. My hands are full enough."

"The doctor said we could save her life, mother. I thought we wouldn't let her die for the want of tryin'."

Mrs. Gray said no more, but that evening, when she was washing her favorite china with her own hands, and a little figure, stealing up beside her, whispered; "Let me help you," though she answered, "Such as you cannot help," all remonstrance ended there, and soon the little fingers were deftly wiping the smoking dishes, and, with careful haste, putting each in its appointed place.

Somehow, as the days wore on, Mrs. Gray found she had more time to sit and rest; that, instead of added care, it seemed lessened, while a little fairy-like figure flitted here and there and everywhere, like a burst of sunshine.

House-cleaning was over now; her voice had lost its harshness, her brow, its frown; and as Hope—who had rushed to her own room at the sound of wheels—watched her from a window open her motherly arms to welcome her boy and saw her happy, tear-dimmed eyes, the girl wondered how she could first have regarded the woman with such dread.

Hope's own eyes did not seem so big now; a faint peach-bloom had stolen into her cheeks; her figure had lost its angular lines in rounded curves, and all day a thanksgiving seemed to come bubbling to her lips in song.

"Why, who's that, mother?" questioned the tall, handsome young man, as he turned his laughing blue eyes out through the open window and saw the little figure flitting among the flowers.

"She's a child Dad brought me home in house-cleaning. I wasn't over-glad to see her but I think I shall miss her when she goes."

An amused smile overspread the listener's face. He could appreciate that welcome at so inopportune a season as house-cleaning time.

Reuben wondered, as the days lengthened into weeks, why his home-coming had never been so pleasant before.

He, too, began to think he would miss Hope when she went away. Somehow the parlor had lost its look of stiffness, and even had an air of habitation, with its fresh flowers in every available receptacle.

"Well, I suppose we have done all we can for Hope," said the farmer one day. "Poor child! she's an orphan, and will have to win her daily bread. But she's got back some of her strength, and the color has found its way back to her face again; and you must be tired of havin' the care of her"—this with a quizzical expression, while he narrowly watched his wife's face.

"You'll do no such thing, Seth Gray! Just like a man—when the girl's beginning to pick up to whisk her off to the hot town again. She's learned my ways now, and she's not much in the way. Besides, she's company for Reuben."

So it seemed, as out in the queer-roofed arbor they sat side by side, she listening, with downcast eyes and a happy, tearful smile, while he told her how different his home had seemed since she had entered it, and how in solving the enigma, he had discovered his love for her.

"But what will mother say?" asked the sweet voice—for, since Reuben came, she had learned to say "mother," too. "She has such great and wonderful dreams for your future and thinks that somewhere some princess, clad in shining robes, is waiting for you."

"I have found my princess, Hope!" he answered, placing his arm about her. "She is here, and her soul is clothed in such beauty—such glory shines through its windows, your eyes, —that she needs no outward embellishment! Only say you love me, darling, and I have no fear but that the mother who has ever smiled upon my boyish folly will not frown upon the first wisdom of my manhood."

So hand in hand, as the sun was sinking in magnificence, they entered the house together, and he led the shrinking girl to his mother's side.

"We have come to ask your blessing, mother," said Reuben, in his honest, manly tone. "Hope has made me very happy by promising to be my wife."

In mute bewilderment Mrs. Gray looked at them both, a sense of her own folly smiting her as with a sharp sword, and bringing with a crash all her castles to the ground.

But she looked from the calm, resolute face of her son to the sweet, fair girl whose hand lay in his, and, drawing Hope down, she kissed the young, red lips, and uttered no word of her disappointment.

Farmer Gray heard the news with a shake of the head and a twinkle of the eyes, as much as to say he had predicted it from the first.

But when the good doctor came, later, to tell them that they had not, as they had supposed, given their son a dowerless bride, but that he, her guardian, represented a snug little fortune for her—though, in his proud love and young ambition, Reuben would almost have wished it otherwise—as the farmer whispered to his wife: "Blessings in disguise sometimes come even in house-cleanin', my dear," the last frown left her still comely face, and there is no one in the world so dear to her as Hope, her son's wife, and the little children whose feet bring dust or dirt, without reproach, upon the still spotless floor.

INDIAN MAGIC.

Wonderful Feat Performed Before the Late Lord Lytton.

The following story of Indian magic was told me by the person to whom it was told by the late Lord Lytton, says a writer. I give it in my own words, for the excellent though humiliating reason that I have mislaid the MSS. When in India, Lord Lytton often sought out conjurers but never saw any but the usual feats, such as the mango tree trick and the basket trick. The method in each case is known, or, at all events, plausible explanations have been given by Mr. Maskelyne and other experts. On one occasion Lord Lytton liked something in the looks of the conjurer who was performing in the open space before his house. After the ordinary exhibition his Lordship asked the magician if he could not do something more out of the common way. The man said he would try, and asked for a ring, which Lord Lytton gave him. He then requested an officer to take in either hand a handful of seeds—one sort was sesame. The name of the other sort my informant did not know. Holding these seeds, and having the ring between his finger and thumb, the officer was to go to a well in the corner of the compound. He was to dispose of the seeds in a certain well, into the depths of which he was to throw the ring. All this was done, and then the magic asked Lord Lytton where he would like the ring to reappear. He answered "in his dispatch box," of which the key was attached to his watch chain, or at all events he had it with him on the spot. The dispatch box was brought out, Lord Lytton opened it and there was the ring. This trick would be easy if the British officer was a confederate of the juggler's, and if he possessed a duplicate key to the dispatch box. In that case he would not throw the ring into the well, but would take it into the house, open the box and insert the ring. But this explanation involves enormous improbabilities, while it is unlikely again, that the conjurer managed to insert a duplicate ring into the dispatch box beforehand. Lord Lytton then asked the juggler if he could repeat the trick He answered in the affirmative, and a lady lent another ring. Another officer took it, with the seeds, as before, and dropped the ring into the well The countenance of the juggler altered in the pause which followed. Something, he said, had gone wrong, and he seemed agitated. Turning to the second officer he asked: "Did you arrange the seeds as I bade you?" "No," said the officer, "I thought that was all nonsense, and I threw them away." The juggler seemed horrified. "Do you think I do this by myself?" he said, and, packing up, he departed.

The well was carefully dragged, and at last the lady's ring was brought to the surface. That ring, at least, had certainly been in the water. But had the first ring been as faithfully consigned to the depths? Experts will be of various opinions as to that—yet the hypothesis of confederacy and of a duplicate key to the dispatch box is difficult.

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