

### Make the Home the Centre for the Boy.

(By John Collins, former Chief of Police of Chicago, in the 'Mother's Magazine'.)

A police officer, more than the doctor, minister or lawyer, knows what the boy is doing who does not care to stay at home or is not permitted to stay at home.

I say 'not permitted to stay at home' advisedly, because I have known, in a long police career, many boys whose mothers constantly urged them to find their amusements in the streets rather than have them 'in the way' at home. The average boy who does not care to stay at home, when closely questioned by a police officer will almost invariably explain that his surroundings are 'stupid.'

The boys with whom the police have the least trouble, of whom they know the least, are those whose mothers make the home a centre for them; who make the boy feel that home is the most attractive spot when at school or work.

Since I am talking to mothers, I can best illustrate what I have to say by several anecdotes. A boy stoned and severely cut a switchman in a switch yard. The brakeman caught and spanked him. The boy ran home. Ten minutes later he was back in the switch yard. The brakeman caught him again, and the boy said: 'My mother won't let me stay at home.'

The brakeman took the boy home, and, finding the mother, said:

'If you do not keep this boy at home, I will have him taken to the Juvenile Court.'

She replied: 'Well, if that's the case, I suppose I'll have to keep him home, but he does make such a muss!'

Now, that attitude of a mother toward a boy just starting into mischief makes him, in a very few years, a subject for police supervision, if not police trial and imprisonment. And the responsibility for his start on the wrong road is traceable to no other source than his home.

One of my officers caught a young boy maliciously breaking glass in a public building. The officer was a thoughtful man, and instead of arresting the boy, took him to his mother, told her of the wrong, and said the glass must be paid for.

The mother paid for the glass, but filed charges against the officer. When the boy was put on the stand it developed that, out of the twenty-four hours of the day, except when he slept, he was at home only for his three meals, and that he had orders from his mother not to spoil things about the house and to keep out of it all he could. The officer, of course, was acquitted. The boy, two years later, went to the reform school for burglary, and I have no doubt his mother is wondering to this day why he went wrong.

If these two cases were isolated ones they would not be so serious, but every police officer knows, every detective knows, and every lone marshal in a small town knows that altogether too many boys are driven out of the home by the ignorance or thoughtlessness of the parents.

Let me add this, too: that the great ranks of our young and well-dressed criminals are not recruited from the slums, but from the social scale where education, good breeding and Christianity are supposed to prevail. The petty sneak thief may come from the slums, but our dangerous young criminals are drawn largely from the so-called 'good homes.'

On the other hand, I know five boys whose mother makes their home schoolroom, playroom and workshop for them. Whatever they boys plan to do is planned to be done in the home, and the mother is a part of the doing. If they go to a baseball game, 'mother' goes with them. If they think of other amusement 'mother' is figured into it. Saturday night, when three of them receive pay, they come home and lay the money in her lap. If her home duties become too heavy, there is a boy at each to help her out.

A natural and loving partnership exists between this mother and her sons, and the father shares in its delightful benefits. Such boys never need police supervision.

This mother began in the babyhood of her first child to have it think that she was the

centre of the earth. She is a woman of firm will, and she exacted obedience from the boys, but in return she gave them a legitimate run of the home, the right use of all in it, and her companionship.

'Oh, Mr. Collins,' she said to me one day, 'I never have to worry about my boys. We are partners.'

When I see a home filled with books, music and pictures, no matter how little they cost, when I see the mother interested in every move the boy makes, when I find the boy is looking to his mother for advice and entertainment, I dismiss all thought of his becoming a police character.

A boy will not stay at home unless home is made as attractive from his point of view (not your point of view) as what he can find outside.

If he is good-looking, if he is well-dressed, if he has a little money, if he can tell a good story or sing a song well, he will find plenty of bright if not honest people to throng about him and urge him on. Then, for every mother influence over him in the past, ten outside influences are taking him the downward way. The mother is stunned. She realizes too late that this future man has gone from her.

Hard, strenuous police experience has driven the truth straight into my soul that if a young boy is to be kept right until he reaches the years of judgment, his happiest resort, his best loved spot, must be his home, and his mother, to him, the brightest object in it.

Reform institutions are fair in their way, churches do much good, philanthropic people help many. But the biggest work that can be done with a boy to keep him manly, to keep him out of the way of the police, is in the home and by the mother.

Mothers who doubt this need only avail themselves of an opportunity to spend a month in the office of the chief of police and learn the misery, the tragedy, the agony of boy-lives to whom the word 'home' never had a true meaning, to whom the word 'mother' means only a parent!

Theories about boy training look very acceptable on paper, they sound well in lectures, but there is nothing that will get hold of a boy's heart so quickly and influence him so strongly for his future good as a partnership with his mother and a home in which he can rationally do what he likes; in which he is part master, part servant, part guest, but always son.

### Selected Recipes.

**A NEW SALAD.**—Cut two dozen balls from tart, well-flavored apples with a vegetable scoop, marinate at once with French dressing. Make a dozen cream cheese balls, slightly larger, first mixing the cheese with a teaspoonful of Worcestershire sauce, a table-spoonful of chopped pimentos, a teaspoonful of salt and one of paprika. Serve on a bed of chicory leaves; garnish with pimentos.

**HOMINY GRIDDLE CAKES.**—To a pint of warm boiled hominy add a pint of milk or water and two cups of flour. Add half a teaspoonful of salt and two or three well-beaten eggs. These are very good.

**FOAM GRIDDLE CAKES.**—Take half a pint of sour milk and a pinch of salt, yolk of an egg and butter the size of a hickory nut. Add enough flour to make a batter and beat together five minutes. Then add a third of a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a table-spoonful of boiling water and last of all the white of the egg beaten to a stiff froth and stirred slowly into the batter, as for sponge cake. Bake immediately on a hot griddle.

**INDIAN GRIDDLE CAKES.**—Take one cup of Indian meal and one of flour, three cups of scalding hot milk, two eggs, half a teaspoonful of salt, two teaspoonfuls baking powder and one tablespoonful brown sugar. Have the milk scalding hot and pour it over the meal gradually. Sift the flour, salt, sugar and baking powder together and when the milk is cool add to it the flour and eggs, well beaten. Bake on a hot griddle and serve with maple syrup.

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