

Woman and the Home

The Divine Heritage of Childhood

By Louis Schneider.

JUST now our educators are much concerned with the question of what to do regarding the prevalence of love affairs among children at school. These affairs, they say, keep the children from giving due attention to their studies, lower their averages, and in the end have a tendency toward creating a condition conducive to their moral decadence, leading to their ultimate ruin.

That this is in a measure true, there is small doubt, and there are but few parents who will deny that such a condition exists to quite a marked extent, but it is always the children of other parents, and not their own who are culpable. That their own children may be involved in such affairs they are loath to admit, even when short-comings are specifically pointed out, often giving recognition of the terrible facts only when they are thrust upon them to their shame and sorrow.

And then they will probably ascribe the fault to baneful influences absolutely beyond their sphere of control. What would these good folk say if one were to tell them that the cause of these conditions can be traced directly to themselves?

And yet it is often too true. There is nothing under the sun more utterly foolish than the habit some people have of talking to children scarcely out of their cradles about "beaux" and "sweethearts." And yet the habit is widespread, and indulged in by many who are otherwise discerning folk. As soon as the child is old enough to distinguish between children of the opposite sex it is subjected to such banterings as, "Your little sweetheart is coming to see you to-day," "Kiss your little sweetheart good-bye," and others equally silly. It gives them a distorted view of things, one altogether out of keeping with their understanding of life as it is, and by the time they have attended school several terms it is small wonder that they have arrived at the condition of which there is at present so much complaint.

Still it may be that a boy or girl has escaped in earlier years only to fall a victim after having attained a close degree of companionship with some girl or boy.

It is to be doubted if there are many who have not known of if they have not actually been guilty in, at least one instance where the fine companionship of a boy and girl has been marred by this ill-advised practice. A single offence is bad enough, but if the course is persisted in, it will not be long before the frank, open comradeship of the children is gone, for there has been forced upon them a disquieting glimpse of something of which the latent germ stirred at the suggestion, something of which they had not until then known, and so could not understand. And not being able to understand they could never again meet on the same footing, and they drifted apart, the girl to join a clique, of "He said," "I said," gigglers, the boy to find companionship among a group of boys who by the same tactics have had forced upon them a cognizance of sex distinction before knowledge has had an opportunity to combine with wisdom and discretion.

Many causes have been assigned to the prevalence of the social evil, but if the precise signification of the various causes could be ascertained, or the great primal cause determined, it would not be surprising to know that the judgment had fallen near, or even upon, this custom, for its malign influence is thrust upon the children at an earlier time than any other. Their immature understanding is again and again confronted with the suggestion that there is something in this companionship of boy and girl that is not right. Their power of perception is intensified before their power of reasoning and knowledge of themselves has been sufficiently developed, and great harm is done, whereas, if left to themselves, the normally constituted boy or girl would innately deem the other worthy of all the kindness, courtesy, and consideration of which each is capable. To force upon them in even

the remotest degree the thought that these attentions are anything but natural—to pervert, exaggerate, or clothe them with an equivocal meaning is nothing short of pernicious, and the practice should not be tolerated. Every offender should be tactfully, yet in a manner not to be misunderstood, rebuked.

Nature will take care of this matter in due time and in her own good way, and the one who tries to hurry or pervert Nature in this respect is robbing childhood of its finest rights—the pleasure of play and growth of the young as child with child. Insist that your children be allowed to grow into strong manhood and pure womanhood in a perfectly natural manner. It is their divine heritage.

Baby's Little Stomach

By An M. D.

I wonder how many mothers have a good conception of the size of a baby's stomach. If the number were not small, I am sure babies would not be overfed so often.

In the first three weeks of life the average capacity of the infant's stomach is about one ounce. At the end of four weeks, by means of a surprising transformation, it has attained a capacity of two and one-half ounces. At eight weeks we find its capacity a little over three ounces, while at the twelfth week its capacity is still below four ounces, and, what is more, it continues below up to twenty weeks. From these figures, which are probably accurate, one can see how easy it is to overfeed infants in the first few months of life,

overfeeding being at the bottom of a very large per cent of all the ailments of these little ones, as well as of children of a "larger growth," for that matter.

It is to be noted that the stomachs of bottle or artificially-fed infants are relatively larger than those of breast-fed infants, and it is significant as showing the results of overfeeding, namely, dilation of these tiny stomachs, nature's method of finding storage for quantities she does not need. Artificially-fed babies are the more in danger of being overfed.

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Anna Case

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This photograph shows Miss Case actually singing in direct comparison with Edison's Re-Creation of her voice.

