

The Wrong and Right Way.

How parents provoke their children?—by unreasonable commands, by perpetual restriction, by capricious jerks at the bridle, alternating with as capricious dropping the reins 'altogether; by not governing their own tempers, by shrill or stern tones where quiet, soft ones would do, by frequent checks and rebukes, and sparing praise. And what is sure to follow such mistreatment by father or mother? Bursts of temper, for which the child is punished and the parent is guilty, and then spiritless listlessness and apathy. 'I cannot please him, whatever I do,' leads us to a rankling sense of injustice, and then to recklessness—'It is useless to try any more.' And when a man or child loses heart, there will be no more obedience. Many a parent, especially many a father, drives his child into evil by keeping him at a distance. He should make his boy a companion and playmate, teach him to think of his father as his confidant, try to keep his child nearer to himself than anybody else, and then his 'authority will be absolute, his opinion an oracle, and his lightest wish law.—'Christian Globe.'

'Oil Yourself a Little.'

An old Quaker was once visited by a garrulous neighbor who complained that he had the worst servants in the world, and everybody seemed to conspire to make him miserable.

'My dear friend,' said the Quaker, 'let me advise you to oil yourself a little.'

'What do you mean?' said the irritated old gentleman.

'Well,' said the Quaker, 'I had a door in my house some time ago that was always creaking on its hinges, and I found that everybody avoided it, and although it was the nearest way to most of the rooms yet they went round some other way. So I just got some oil, and after a few applications it opened and shut without creak or a jar, and now everybody just goes to that door and uses the old passage. Just oil yourself a little with the oil of kindness. Occasionally praise your servants for some thing they do well. Encourage your children more than you scold them, and you will be surprised to find that a little sunshine will wear out a lot of fog, and a little molasses is better than a great deal of vinegar.' Be courteous.—'Christian Intelligencer.'

Constant Good Company.

The most charming companion I ever met was a plain little woman, whose life for years had been entirely given up to the care of an invalid demented father, an old man who demanded her constant presence in his darkened room during his waking hours, in the few spare moments she had while going through the usual routine of household duties.

Poor, living in the backwoods, where she never saw anybody, she gained a depth of mind and a power of expression far superior to many of her old schoolmates, who had shown greater promise, and had possessed every advantage. Indeed, she was neither 'smart' nor particularly studious at school, but excessively fond of fun, excitement and company.

One day I asked her the secret of the change. She laughed. 'I have been enjoying constant, pleasant company for the last few years.'

I stared, mystified. She drew from her pocket a little quotation book, and, pointing to two quotations, 'My thoughts are my companions,' and 'They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts.' There were several other quotations written on the margin, and the pages were well thumbed. She said, earnestly: 'Looking back over my girlhood, I know that there is a fatal defect in the training of our girls; our words, our actions receive attention; we are given advice and instruction in every point but in our thinking. I did not even have a conception of entertaining myself by my own thoughts; I wanted all the time to be amused by something or somebody outside of myself. Then came that plunge into poverty, sadness and loneliness. At first, I believed I should become insane, then God must have directed me to this little book, too worthless to be sold

when our library went. One other quotation chained my mind. "Our thoughts are heard in heaven," and I began recalling my thoughts. How disgusted I was with them! Round and round, in a weary rut of repining they had travelled, or even if not repining, how stupid, how unelevating they had been! From that hour I determined my thoughts should be inspiring companions. When sewing up a seam they should not be, "So long and tiresome; wonder how long before I am done?" and so on and so on, over and over again. Why, I would take a little trip while sewing up that seam!

'When washing the dishes, I discuss with myself different national questions; when picking beans, I decide whether optimism or pessimism is winning the day; sweeping the room, I review the last book I read, or perhaps, a book read years ago; every duty not requiring concentration is enlivened in this way.

'Not more than an hour a day can I ever read. Our books scarcely number a dozen, but since I began to think, one verse of the Bible will unfold and unfold, until it blossoms into a wonder-revelation, and I hope bears fruit. Before, I did not take time to wait for the unfolding and fruit-bearing.'

'But I cannot control my thoughts,' I objected; 'they will dwell on any trouble or worry I have.'

'Paul tells us that in our warfare our weapons are "mighty to cast down our imaginations," "bringing into captivity every thought;" that promise is a great help when I feel despairing over my wrong thoughts. To keep down the disagreeable ones, to shake myself free from the servitude of daily fretting tasks, I drill myself into meditating on pleasant subjects, just as I would drill my tongue in company to make pleasant speeches.

'Tell the girls you teach and write to how true it is that "The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the great art in life is to have as many as possible;" also that this art cannot be learned when the feebleness of age has weakened the control of the mind.'

When she had left me, I remembered she was the only person who had not made inane remarks about the weather. Do you suppose it was because thoughts had occupied her mind, not empty turning of the mental wheels?

If the mill grinds not grist, it will grind itself; if the mind feeds not on thoughts, it

preys upon itself, and is its own destroyer.—'Christian Work.'

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