

## Family Circle.

## A Word to Mothers.

BY MRS. M. A. DENNISON.

If a mountain of books has been written upon woman's duties and responsibilities,—it matters not to us; there is yet room to write a mountain more; if everything has been said that can be touched upon, it will do no harm to say it all over again: good stories bear repetition; good advice does not lose by being often inculcated; and because what we write and say cannot be all original, we need not lay down the pen in despair and murmur, "I can do nothing."

A woman who has a family of children, and who is anxious to do her best by them, to train them up so that they may become valuable additions to the world, is willing to read something every day touching the paternal relation; she will pause in the midst of her busiest moments to hear or peruse a simple paragraph that may lead her mind to take new or better views of her responsibilities; she will catch eagerly at any new method that may seem better adapted to the purpose she has in view.

We have heard the exclamation made more than once "oh! it is so difficult to know just how to do." The mother sat with her blue-eyed babe upon her knee, while clinging to her arms was another, almost a babe, with the rich locks of sunny brown falling over its fair cheeks, yet restless, weary and fretful. Near by, a young and beautiful creature, a little fairy of some seven years, was already perched up at the mirror, pulling at her long curls, and practicing little graces that told how vanity had begun to assert its supremacy in her young heart. A noisy boy, had just come in with a ready excuse for delaying his return beyond the appointed time, and another, still younger, through a great excess of animal spirits, was constantly trespassing on some often reiterated injunction, and as often sorry, yet repeatedly sinning. Well might the mother exclaim, "it is so difficult to know just how to do."

The influence of woman has never been over estimated; it is impossible that it should be; it has been compared to many priceless things, yet there is nothing but would lose by comparison. In saying this much we do not eulogize our sex; it is but the oft-repeated declaration of the wise and good of all ages; for it cannot be denied that the world has owed many of its greatest men, its patriots, its rulers, its philosophers and Christian sages, to the mothers of enlightened lands. John Adams once and often said, "to my mother I owe all I am;" could a higher tribute be paid by a better man to the memory of a beloved parent?

Thus in her trust and holiest state the province of woman is home; her privileges far outweigh her cares and trials, and if she safely guides the young immortals within her household, to the age of maturity, she is, indeed, blessed among women; she is like one that addeth diamonds to fine gold, each being enriched and beautified by the richness and costliness of the other. But it is sad to think that through the remissness of one single duty, all may be lost; she may indeed send seeming perfection in form and mind from her side, to cope with the strong besetments of this harsh world. Her children, lovely and loving, may make homes in many hearts, until the ever poised shaft of sin shall pierce that part of the soul, unshielded by a mother's voice or warning, and the poor fallen victim, still tender in beauty and youth, feels that henceforth there is no resting-place for her but in the grave, where, sometimes, oblivion covers shame.

We write now especially of woman as mother and daughter; woman, the fairest part of God's creation, but alas! the foulest stain upon society, when crime has laid his blackening hand upon her, and what would be virtue has cast her forth from every gentle influence, as the unclean of old were banished without the walled cities.

It is not so much that contagion is feared; unlike the leprosy, the sight of such a desolate soul does not infect the moral

sense; a wretched, ruined woman can seldom gain the ear of an innocent one;—she is rather a warning—a living reproach—an awful monument of degraded passions that, if it have any effect, will lead the virtuous to shun so dreadful an example of impurity.

In reading the case of Margaret Garretty, the young woman who was recently tried in New York State on charge of murder, and acquitted, we were led to inquire what can be the real causes why so many females in city and country annually go astray from the paths of rectitude? and we cannot but conclude that it is by a sad neglect on the part of parents, who, from motives of false delicacy—a delicacy that seems to us unnatural to the pure in life, withhold advice, whose importance is only second to, and indeed, should be inculcated with the religion of Jesus Christ. A mother should not be contented with an outward display of goodness: she should not be satisfied if her daughter, unfolding from day to day some new charm in feature or manner, is obedient, sweet tempered, and as far as she can conceive, without probing the heart, innocent in thought and intention; she should not congratulate herself that she is innocent and artless and unsophisticated, for ignorant of the wiles of the wicked, it is easy to become entangled in their subtle snares.

Too often, through utter ignorance, the cherished idol of the parental hearth falls from her high estate. The example of a good mother may be constantly before her; of friends and relatives, none are immortal; home is a place of sanctity; she is guarded as sacredly as were the vestal fires upon less holy altars; yet one thing is neglected; one crime and its incentives are never broached; one particular class of allurements is never allowed to defile, as some parents fear it may, the ear of a delicate girl.

This is neglect more terrible than desertion; and the voice of a wild despair, never hushed, cries up from the hillock of many a melancholy grave where naught but faded grass and faded wild flowers bend above the wreck of innocence and loveliness; where the tears that the silent morning, and the sad evening shed upon the trembling leaves, are the only tears that the sun has ever kissed from those desolate resting-places.

Does not the light fall to-day upon thousands of such spots? and has not the ocean bleached many a form that once revelled high in hope and glowed with beauty in the lighted halls of pleasure? Has not the foul murderer's knife quenched the beaming of eyes, that all unholly as were their glances, have once looked up innocent and pure, into a mother's smiling face, as an angel might look? Then, be careful, mothers; the brightest the tenderest, the most cherished have fallen, through the neglect upon the part of parents, of one imperative duty.

Some children conceal all their thoughts and feelings: these should be drawn out into unreserved confidence and frankness; others pour all that is told them into a parent's ear; there is less danger that the latter will become corrupted. Fiction is not the only channel through which deleterious knowledge is communicated; the companions that may be thrown in the way of every school girl, are, many of them, to be dreaded more than hosts of novels.—True, not every child is to be suspected; for, as one little cloud in the evening sky covers many stars, one girl of superior endowments and corrupted mind may sully the morals of a multitude.—Such a one will distort what is innocent into hideous vice—she will pour into the too willing ear of youth that which none but a mother should communicate, and in such guise that the child would shrink from confidence in the parent, even if it is solicited. The parent thinks there is time enough to warn her daughter of the dangers that may beset her, while all the noxious weeds are gathering strength and nutriment from her heart. Should a miserable creature cross her path, she is taught to shrink from her presence, to loathe her sight, but she is not told, gently yet decidedly, how she became the thing she is. Her dreadful abode, where in dim garrets some poor wretch amid

loathsome corruptions may be gasping and dying, is not painted to the shuddering child, nor is she told how the outcast was once a truthful, happy girl like herself, lured by flattery, by neglecting to confide in her dearest friends, to the brink of the destroyer which is worse than death.

Then is it not woman's all-engrossing duty to watch her daughter with a steady eye? to make not menials, nor yet playthings, but companions of them? to treat them as rational beings, as future wives and mothers? to shield them carefully from ignorant domestics? to ask them from day to day what they have heard? by whom been instructed? to tell them how they may become good and virtuous, or miserable and polluted? to paint vividly the snares to which they will be exposed, and teach them how to distinguish between the pure and impure.

Fortified by such advice, the daughter may move in the midst of deceivers unscathed by their influence; the libertine, awed, not encouraged by her smile, will stand upon the other side, nor dare pour his base-born aspirations upon a heart so barred and bolted against his blandishments. Her very gestures, her tones will all partake of the sweet serenity of her soul; there will stand forth a woman such as God meant woman to be, and she will throw the charm of goodness upon all within reach of her example.

Such should be the women of our country, and God grant that the mothers who read this article may be induced to direct the minds of their offspring, that they shall not in after days become a curse and a reproach to the parents that bore them, but rather blessings and ornaments to them and to the world.—*Boston Olive Branch.*

## Dr. John Leyden.

It is long since Dr. Leyden died, and the record of his life may be considered old; is not so, for the example of his energy and the greatness of his genius are too precious to humanity to be allowed to wane into the shades of forgetfulness. Besides, his eccentricities and enthusiasm invest his personal history with an interest that is always new.

He was born one of the poorest of Scotland's poor peasantry, and his early life was passed in superlative indigence, yet the vigour of his fame, and the majesty of his intellect, lifted him triumphantly above the depressions of his condition, and eventually placed him amongst the chiefs in the republic of letters. Leyden attended the parish school, where he obtained the rudiments of his education with naked feet, and he took his position on the forms of the University of Edinburgh in the coarsest of homespun. This poor boy, who supported himself by teaching, and who faithfully prosecuted his studies as a student to theology, contrived in the course of his probation to acquire the mastery over eleven languages. It was Bishop Heber that first stumbled on him, in an old book-store in Edinburgh, and led him from his modest obscurity. An introduction to Sir Walter Scott was his admission into the highest literary circles of the Scottish Metropolis.

The eccentricities of Leyden were very marked, and sometimes most disagreeable, but his noble independence, his spotless virtues, his kindness of disposition, and his remarkable genius rendered him a favourite with all who knew him. When about thirty years of age, and after he had received his license as a preacher of the Gospel, he formed the determination of proceeding to India for the purpose of studying its languages and dialects, and of presenting a re-script of its literature to the West. No arguments could shake this resolution, and at last his reluctant friends applied to the Government for an Indian appointment for him. Lord Melville had none at his disposal but that of assistant surgeon, and of course, it was supposed, that Leyden could not avail himself of this. But what are circumstances before an ardent genius? It was six months before the appointment should be made, and six months to Leyden were worth six years to an ordinary man.

You do not mean to stand an examination, said a friend to him one night at a party, when the time drew near. I do, in faith, was Leyden's reply; and taking a

skeleton hand from his pocket he demonstrated the closeness and constancy of his study. Examined before a board of surgeons, he triumphantly obtained a diploma, and with his appointment as surgeon's mate, set out to explore the unknown world of Indian literature, in the wake of Sir William Jones. The fervour of Leyden's genius drank up the springs of his life. Unable to refrain from study, he bent over his books for ten hours a day, while the Indian fever was preying on his life. He died, after giving promise of far out-rivalling Sir William Jones in the extent and amount of his Oriental learning and knowledge. The story of the triumphs of his energy, talent, genius, and will, over the most depressing circumstances, should be told in every lonely home as an inspiration and example to the young.—*Worcester Spy.*

## Perseverance.

Let not the failure of your first efforts deter you. Alexander Bethune's first effort for print was a contribution to the "Athenaeum;" but the lady at whose request he wrote it, advised him not to send it. He wrote an article for "Blackwood," and it was declined. A host of others have tried, and they have failed; but where there has been a firm and settled purpose to succeed, they have tried, and tried and tried again, and in the end they have been successful.

Let not the unfavourable opinion of others deter you. Xenocrates was a disciple of Plato, and a fellow student with Aristotle. Plato used to call Xenocrates "a dull ass that needed the spur," and Aristotle "a mettlesome horse that needed the curb." When, after the death of Plato, the Chair of Instruction in the Academy was vacant, the choice of a successor lay between Aristotle and Xenocrates; the honour was conferred upon Xenocrates.

"If it should please God," said a father once, "to take away one of my children, I hope it will be my son Isaac," as he looked upon him as the most promising. That child became the truly eminent Dr. Isaac Barrow. Such was the character of Sheridan, in his earliest days, that his mother regarded him as "the dullest and most hopeless of her sons." In spite of the unfavourable opinion which others had formed of these men, they rose, and so may you. Be as resolute, be as diligent, be as patient, be as persevering as they were, and success will as certainly put its seal upon your efforts as upon theirs.

## A Picture in the Room.

Mr. Hazlett has said, somewhere, of the portrait of a beautiful female with a noble countenance, that it seems as if an unhand-some action would be impossible in its presence.—Most men of any refinement of soul must have felt the force and truth of this sentiment. And therefore we have often thought that the picture of the beloved mother or a devoted wife, hung up in the room where we spend our leisure hours, must constantly exert a mighty influence upon the feelings and thoughts. Cowper's picture of his mother was a living presence, whose speaking countenance and beaming eye, appealed, as no living mortal could, to his inmost soul and stirred its profoundest depths.

But what is it that gives this power to the inanimate resemblance of loved and departed ones? Their virtues, their moral graces and excellencies, as remembered by the affectionate survivor. In these dwell the charm, the power to stay the passions of the soul, and lure the heart to right and noble sentiments.

It may seem an odd thought, but we cannot help suggesting it to every female reader—to every sister, wife, and mother, that it is a worthy ambition for each of them to labour to be both now and when dead, that "picture in the house," before which vice shall stand abashed, confounded, and in whose presence every virtuous and manly heart shall glow with every honourable and lofty sentiment. So live, that even your mute picture, when the original is in the grave, shall eloquently and irresistibly urge the love of goodness and truth upon the beholder.

## Home

Parents, I ren from th them unspot out place kindly word nans, and le falness on Sisters, if ya brothers, at them, treat t graces whic ed in the soc tance; be treatment of ers, he kind may know t In after ye no longer he fection will children, me home a cle cher," for - it is not ma subtle And good an the bla But oh! if th the bla Have gentle v tual is

CHARACTE might influ health, do ra every trifly, character, do

## Re

Mr DEAR in a rightly e either omitt the sense of ter—so may period of tim and unexpect you in my la the extremi anxiety and I before their c House was a the lessening miles distanc ding evening

But on the to ponder I while fast on the freight, tr the str and e forded but lit tiring to rest, fatigued, busy of the mind, v and setting in stated in m apprehension, entertained, t probability be was owing to Scarcely a br water consequ pidly lessenin Providence w state of thing my deep inde tior, that not the slight to myself or t of gratitude I of Israel's Ke freshed both i my journey b the Peticodia comfortably, t within me a d soundness of who thanked he had never he could acco

Acquainted this Province your informat that varying t ed me on ever tween St. Jol does through exceeded for is essentially scape with pe plied by the l