

The Household.

Home Influence in the Training of Children.

BY L. N. REED.

I shall make no pretence of showing you or trying to show you, any model way of training children; but will give you some of my thoughts on the subject.

Solomon has told us to train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. But just what that way is he has failed to make plain to us. And we do know there are children trained in the way they ought to go, and when they are old they have departed from it. He speaks also of sparing the rod and spoiling the child. Now I believe there are more children spoiled by the frequent, or daily use of the rod, than were ever from the sparing of it.

The use of the rod might have been justifiable in Solomon's case, for if he had children according to the number of wives—which were seven hundred—he must have felt obliged to use harsh measures to keep them in subjection. When we come to realize fully this just law of nature and of God, of visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, we shall comprehend more clearly our relation to them, and feel a greater responsibility in training our children in a proper way than most of us do now. We shall not then use modes and means that will cause a predominance of the selfish and animal propensities, but will hasten with unceasing care to cultivate their moral and intellectual development; knowing that if we instill into their minds a love of all that is good and pure, intellectual and refined, the germ has been planted that will develop into the noblest type of manhood and womanhood this earth can produce.

The question now is: How shall we, in our humble way, and limited circumstances, find means for the qualification of this higher development, this culture and refinement for which we have so much need? I would say, first, by every means at our command we should try to perfect those virtues and traits of character in ourselves which we would like to have developed in our children; knowing, by the immutable laws of nature from which there is no escape, that if we indulge ourselves in the use of vulgar language and brutal passions, or any of the low vices of the age, letting the animal gain ascendancy over higher faculties in our natures, the sin will be visited upon our children, and upon our children's children, even to the third and fourth generation.

There are many ways of training children in the way of the good and the beautiful, the educated and refined, that are inexpensive and within the means of all. We can teach them honesty and truthfulness; a reverence for old age, and a sympathy for the infirm and afflicted of body and mind; habits of industry and frugality, respect for their parents, and a respect for themselves that will prevent them from indulging in any of the vices and dissipations that allure so many of our young men and women to swift destruction. We can teach them refinement, by surrounding them with objects and influences that will act as educators in that direction. In no way can this influence be brought

to bear upon them more directly, than in an atmosphere of refinement invading our homes. This atmosphere should not be confined to the interior of our homes, but the surroundings should be made to show clearly to every stranger who passes the door, if true refinement dwells within.

And in nearly every instance the opinion formed from surroundings of houses, in regard to the interior, will be a correct one. I say in nearly every instance, because in some cases it would not be correct. The wife and daughters may possess ever so fine a taste and love for beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers, when they cannot have it gratified without aid from the husband and sons. And if the preparation of the ground is left to a woman, and that woman an over-tasked farmer's wife, there will quite likely be no large display of flowers; for it is nearly impossible for a farmer's wife, with a family and dairy on her hands, to cultivate a flower garden, or have any great variety of flowers, even though she have the strength, and ever so great a love for them.

But a certain amount of good taste ought to be displayed in the home where we expect to train up our children. If we can't have a flower garden we can plant a rose bush in a jar, and set it in our window; and if we have not the fairest flowers of the garden from which to fill our vases—though we should not have even the vases—we can send the children to cull the violets and clover blossoms and place them on our tables in cracked tumblers. If we cannot afford oil paintings, or chromos framed in rose-wood or gilt, we can take steel engravings and set them in home-made frames of cone or leather; or take wood cuts and encircle them with a wreath of autumn leaves or evergreen, and place them on our walls as educators of taste and beauty.

Every farm-house should have a well-filled library of interesting and instructive books, and a bountiful supply of newspaper and magazine literature, so that our children, though somewhat isolated in country homes, may yet gain access to, and hold converse with, the greatest minds the world has ever known. I am inclined to believe that the reading furnished by parents for their children, exerts a greater influence in the formation of their characters, than all other influences combined. And I am strengthened in this belief when I read the biographies of some of our most noted men and women whose whole education was gained almost entirely by reading books selected from public and private libraries, and newspapers and magazines furnished them at home.

All that is necessary to keep flowers fresh, says the Budget, is to keep them moist and cool. Instead of dipping flowers in water, they should simply be wrapped up in a wet newspaper, which will keep them fresher over night. A wet towel or napkin is too heavy, and will crush the blooms too much; besides it would allow the moisture to evaporate too easily. Boston florists pack rosebuds in wet paper, and send them as far west as Chicago, or even St. Louis, where they are taken out even fresher than when they came off the bush.

A young man sent twelve stamps to an advertiser to learn "how to make money fast," and was advised in reply to glue a five dollar bill to the bottom of his trunk.

In Summer, Remember

1. That infectious diseases generally are due to filth in some form—most of them directly to divers kinds of microscopic plants (bacteria), which gain entrance into the system through the lungs or the stomach. Invading the wonderful laboratories of life,—the infinitesimal cells,—they disorganize these just as the yeast-plants, multiplying to countless millions, disorganize every particle of the dough—or would do so, if not themselves killed by the heat of the oven.

2. Remember that the best preservative against them is high health, which either digests them in the stomach, or repels them from gaining a foothold, and eliminates them from the system.

3. Remember that the next best preservative against infectious diseases is a free and strong circulation of pure air through the house from cellar to attic. The danger is when large numbers of bacteria gain admittance. There is slight probability that a foothold will be gained by these invaders when their numbers are small.

4. Remember that in our cities and large towns the sewers, constantly receiving the excreta of the sick, are never free from infectious bacteria; that these readily pass up into dwellings through every open connecting pipe; and that these pipes should be kept closed when not in use; and that they should, in no case, enter a sleeping room, but only into a well-ventilated water-closet.

5. Remember that, in the country, wells are dangerous when they are within one hundred feet of a privy or cesspool.

6. Remember that while boiling may purify infected water, mere filtering never renders it safe.

7. That all water-closets, cesspools, etc. should be frequently disinfected, copperas (sulphate of iron) being a good and cheap disinfectant for the purpose.

8. That a deodorizer is not necessarily a disinfectant. We may kill a bad smell, and not kill the bacteria.

No Home.

There are thousands who know nothing of the blessed influences of a comfortable home, merely from the want of thrift or from dissipated habits. Youth was spent in frivolous amusements and demoralizing associations, leaving them at middle age, when the intellectual and the physical man should be in his greatest vigor, enervated and without one laudable ambition. Friends long since lost, confidence gone, and nothing to look to in old age but a mere toleration in the community where they should be ornaments. No home to fly to when wearied with the struggles incident to life, no wife to cheer them in their despondency, no children to amuse them, and no virtuous household to give zest to the joys of life. All is blank, and there is no hope or succor except that which is given out by the hands of public or private charities.

When the family of an industrious and sober citizen gather around a cheerful fire of a wintry day, the homeless man is seeking shelter in the station-house, or begging for a night's rest in the outbuilding of one who started in life at the same time, with no greater advantages; but honesty and industry built up that house, while dissipation destroyed the other.