

If the bird house is empty they come back and build again. Get some wrens quickly to live there, and the sparrows will stay away. They are the bad thoughts, you know, and the wrens are the good ones.

This illustration appealed to the boys because we see a yearly struggle between wrens and sparrows for a bird house on our place. Then I told them the story of King John and the Abbess Ana, with the quick and true retort of the abbess:

'We cannot hinder the passing
Of a wild-winged bird overhead;
But well may we keep her from building
Her nest in our garden,' she said.

In telling I was careful to adapt it to their understanding, and they were much interested and amused by these lines, which they repeated after me.

'But how can I make myself think good thoughts?' persisted the elder boy.

'Pretend you are taking a railroad trip, and think what you can see from the car windows,' I suggested, 'or read in one of your books or do some work just as hard as you can.'

'I don't see why you need to ask Mother such questions when she is tired,' remarked the younger boy indignantly, sitting bolt upright in his bed. 'There's lots of interesting things to think about. You might make believe you are a frog. I like to do that.'

Both boys say, 'It isn't any fun to think or say low things. Only,' they add, 'some of the boys say them when we are around, and then we can't forget.'

The older boy once asked a question and answered it himself as follows: 'Who invented all the bad words? Perhaps it was Cain. I suppose he was about the worst man, and he lived so long ago he could get them started.'

This suggested heroic measures to the younger brother, and he said: 'I tell you what I think would be a good thing, Mother. Just kill all the bad people, and then there wouldn't be anybody to spoil our being good, don't you see?' I am not sure that I made them understand that moral fiber comes by

resistance of evil, not by isolation from it, but I did my best. Poor little victims of the depravity of others! How much vigilance and skill is required of parents to rob such evils of their fascination! And how necessary it is that the first childish attempts at conversation about such things should not be discouraged by scathing rebukes or a simple injunction not to talk about 'such dreadful things.' My little boy was right when he added to a remark of mine that 'it is God who makes people good.' 'Yes, I know it's God, but mothers help a lot!'

Cause of Nervous Breakdown.

The main causes for this wreckage of the nervous system—for wreckage it amounts to in the majority of cases—are too heavy meals and too little sleep and repose. Babies scarcely old enough to walk alone are permitted to sit up to late dinners—are encouraged to eat strong meats—to quote the Biblical phrase, and are allowed to frolic long after lamplight; then the mother or nurse wonders at the wakefulness, the fretfulness and the waywardness of her small charges. The only wonder is that so many of them manage to sanely reach adult years under such a regime.

To get at the root of the evil—nervousness, one should begin with the infant at the day of its birth. Do not have a swinging cradle for it, but a comfortable crib, into which the little one should be placed at regular hours for naps without being rocked or sung to. Feed the tot at regular hours also, and permit no between-meal lunches. Do not over-excite the little brain by boisterous play, and never under any circumstances permit a child to be teased. The pouts and little scowls may be very funny to the observers while the pouting and scowling one is so tiny that it is nothing but a doll, but two or three years hence, when the doll has developed into a fractious screaming boy or girl, the onlookers, although they may be the very ones who assisted in the making of the crosswise disposition, will be prone to observe on the bad bringing up of the little one.—Delineator.

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