

HOUSEHOLD.

A Talk to Fathers.

How often are men heard to say, 'I leave the training of my children entirely to my wife'; or, 'I never interfere with the discipline, my wife attends to that.' Another type of father still, assumes in his family the role of lord high executioner.

'If you don't stop that,' says the fond, foolish mother, 'I will tell your father on you.'

In some families there is no threat so dreadful, and I have known a father to tell laughingly, as if it were a good joke, of the poor scared little faces which were lifted to his when he appeared suddenly among them with a rattan in hand, inquiring whether there were 'any whippings to be dealt out that afternoon.'

Alas, how far away these poor earthly fathers are from the fatherly ideal which is set forth in the Bible! And how can they illustrate to a child anything of the fatherhood of God?

A father ought to be friendly with his children; he ought to be interested in every interest of theirs, right down to their dollies and their bats and their balls. Nothing which concerns them should be too trivial for his notice. A father ought not only to love his children, but he should show that he loves them. He ought to prove this so convincingly that, whatever happens, they can never doubt their father's affection for them.

I was waiting at a railway station for a friend one Christmas eve, when I noticed a tall, fine-looking man of perhaps fifty years, who was pacing up and down the platform, evidently waiting for the same train as I was. As the train glided into the station, his eyes scanned the cars till they alighted upon a handsome lad of about eighteen, who also was gazing eagerly at the crowd.

'Here I am, Tom,' cried the gentleman, joyously.

The boy's face glowed and he sprang from the platform almost before the train had stopped moving.

'Father!' said he, and in an instant he had the grey-bearded man by the shoulders and kissed him. Then he pushed him away a little, and looked him lovingly in the eyes. 'I'm awfully glad to see you,' said he, 'how's mother?'

I looked at them wistfully as they walked away together. Oh, I thought to myself, if there were more fathers like that, there would be fewer young lives wrecked upon the treacherous rock of sin, for a father's love will hold a boy when the sternest commands and the most rigid training would be of no avail.

Said a middle-aged woman to me, 'I have known what the text, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," meant ever since I was ten years old. At that time I had a kitten, a pretty little creature, which I loved as a little girl with all my heart. But, alas, one spring morning Sprite, stole a young chicken belonging to a neighbor and ate it before the man could rescue it. He came to our house at once, very angry, and demanded that the cat should be killed; but I begged for Sprite's life so pathetically that he promised to spare him, if he sinned no more. In a few days, however, the cat was seen lurking near the coop, and soon made off with another chicken. The neighbor gave chase, of course, but the cat hid. So he came over and demanded the cat's life as soon as it should appear. My mother felt that it was just and promised that I should bring Sprite over as soon as he came home. In a short time he came purring up to me, and I had to take the dear little fellow up in my arms and carry him to his doom. The neighbor drowned him forthwith. I did not complain before anyone, but my little pillow was wet with tears every night for my lost comrade. My father was from home at the time and I carried my trouble alone until his return. After he had kissed us all round and heard various items of interest, he turned to me and said, "How is Sprite?" and I told him what had happened. I shall never forget how he caught me in his arms, and put me on his knee, as he said, "Poor child! That is too bad! If I had been here it never should have happened"; and I sobbed out my grief on his breast and was comforted. It was a little thing, a mere trifle compared

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with the sorrows of my life, but perhaps some of the things which we grieve over now seem quite as trivial to the eyes of Omnipotence, yet none the less our Heavenly Father is quick to comfort us.'

A father cannot shirk the responsibility of his children. God will hold him equally accountable with the mother for them and if they go astray through any lack of fatherly care or affection, he will one day find himself terribly to blame.—'The Presbyterian.'

Offending the Little Ones.

(By Eugene L. Beckwith, in 'S.S. Times.')

'No,' said my little German friend, 'I should never make a child wear something that I hated. When I was a little girl my aunt sent my mother some cloth to make me an apron. I can see the pattern clearly before my eyes after twenty years. It was a white ground, over which ran little curly-tailed pink pigs. "How pretty and amusing!" exclaimed my mother. But with me it was a case of hate at first sight. With a black shadow hanging over my heart I watched mother cut the cloth into a long, sleeveless apron. When it was finished, to my dismay mother said I was to wear it to school.

'With tears, I begged that I might not; but my firm mother did not believe in yielding to the notions of a child.

'Arrived at school, my teacher noticed my red eyes, and called me to her, making me trot all those little pigs the length of the room.

"Are you sick, Rosa?" she asked.

"No."

"Does something trouble you?"

"Yes, but I can't tell you about it."

"The girls began to whisper and smile, and point at the tiny pigs on my apron, and my little seatmate—my best friend—drew away her dress, and said, "I don't want to sit with pigs."

'After school, I hurried home ahead of my sisters. At table my father noticed my red eyes, and said, "What aileth my merry little Rose? Has she already found thorns in her path?"

'I could only sob and silently point at the unconscious offenders sprawling their baby pinkness all over my apron. My heart was full of a great dread of the reprimand I should receive from my kind father. But he only said:

"Oh! it's the apron—is it? Well, take it off, and put on another, and then I'll have my merry Röschen back again."

'But I suffered so much from the time the cloth came into the house until my mother gave the apron to a little girl, who was made happy by the gift, that I have always said I would never make a child wear something that it hated.'

A Frequent Mistake.

(Mrs. L. A. Gullickson, in American Paper.)

'Can't I help you?' said the pleading voice, and the child's eyes sought the mother's face questioningly.

'No! No!' the hasty answer given; 'I'm too busy to bother; you'll hinder far more than you will help.'

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USE BABY'S OWN SOAP

'But just to set the table,' girlie went on, but a glance into her mother's face told her she need plead no longer, and she gathered her books under her arms, and went out beneath the trees.

'That child is more bother, with her whys and wherefores,' the weary mother said at tea time. 'I can't have her fussing around when I am busy, even if she is eight years old.'

By reason of almost unendurable heat and increased work for hired help the little mother awoke one morning with a dull pain in her eyes and head.

'I'm going to have one of my sick headaches,' she said. She managed to get through the long hot day, until tea time. 'I declare,' said she, 'I cannot stand it another moment; girlie must come and help.'

Girlie came and did her best; she burned her fingers lighting the fire, but tied them up and set bravely to work. She spread the table-cloth neatly and smoothly, but the knives and forks were scattered hap-hazzard and the creamer, sugar bowl and spoon-holder were at various points of the compass, the salt-cellar bore traces of greasy fingers and the cups and saucers were thrown together carelessly. She was compelled to ask about this thing and that and that and to bring the tea to mother to measure. But who can wonder or blame the little child, who would have known just how to do all, had the mother taught her? Mothers do you find the moral?

NORTHERN MESSENGER

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Publishers, Montreal.

THE 'NORTHERN MESSENGER' is printed and published every week at the 'Witness' Building, at the corner of Craig and St. Peter streets, in the city of Montreal, by John Rodpath Dougall and Frederick Eugene Dougall, both of Montreal.

All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son, and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'