

the incidental peevishness of remark, the mind would not have been so speedily or so pleasantly brought into its desired state. Or had the mother taken no notice of the occurrence, the disposition of the child would have been injured by the allowed increase of the ill humour, and in all probability, a quarrel might soon have ensued. Constant watchfulness on the part of the mother will soon enable her to foresee many dangers, and prevent many difficulties.

Never punish when the child has not intentionally done wrong. Children are often very unjustly punished; things which are really wrong are overlooked, and again punishment is inflicted on account of some accident when the child is entirely innocent; such a course of procedure not only destroys in the mind of the child the distinction between accident and crime, but is in itself absolutely iniquitous. The parent has all the power, and she may be the most relentless tyrant, and the child can have no redress; there is no oppression more cruel than that often thus exercised by passionate parents over their children. It is not unfrequently the case that a mother who does not intend to be guilty of injustice, neglects to make a proper distinction between faults and accidents; a child is playing about the room, and accidentally tears its clothes, or breaks a window with a ball; the mother, vexed with the trouble it will cause her, hastily punishes the poor child. A child may be careless, and so criminally careless as to deserve punishment; in that case it ought not to be punished for the accident, but for the carelessness, which is a fault. This injustice is far more extensively practised than is generally imagined. The most common cause of unjust punishment is confounding the accidental consequences of an act, with the real guilt which a child incurred while performing that act. We are all too much inclined to estimate guilt by consequences. A child who has been permitted to climb upon the chairs, and take things from the table, accidentally pushes off some valuable article. The mother severely punishes the child. Now, where did this child do wrong? You never taught him that he must not climb upon the table. Of course, in that there was no disobedience, and he was not conscious of doing any thing improper. If merely a book had fallen, probably no notice would have been taken of it; but the simple fact that one thing fell instead of another, cannot alter the nature of the offence. If it had been the most valuable watch which had fallen, and thus been entirely ruined, if it had occurred purely through accident, the child deserves no punishment. Perhaps some one says, there is no need of arguing a point which is so clear; but is it not clear that such acts of injustice are very frequent? And is not almost every mother conscious that she is not sufficiently guarded upon this point? A mother must have great control over her own feelings—a calmness and composure of spirit, not easily disturbed,—or she will be occasionally provoked to acts of injustice, by the misfortunes of which her children are the innocent cause.

Does any one ask what would be done in such cases as the one referred to? The answer is plain. Children ought to be taught not to do what will expose property to injury; and then if they do what is