

We notice that children at certain stages, up to seven or eight years of age at least, have very vivid imaginations,—more vivid than they are a few years later. The reason that they are so vivid is just because the child is not disturbed by the unreality or absurdity of the pictures which his imagination creates. The most impossible things can happen in the child's day dreams, and he never stops to question whether they are real. When he reaches the "story" stage and has to be told the story of Silverlocks, or Red Riding Hood, he is not at all concerned about the impossibility of what he hears, and the more absurd and fantastic the story happens to be, the better he is satisfied.

But in later childhood when the necessities of real life come to be all important, the making of new pictures is checked and his imagination does not run riot as before. But it does not cease to exist: it merely takes more practical forms. The imaginative picture now takes the shape of a new plan for the holiday, arrangements for the picnic or party, or perhaps the preparation for the next day's work at home or in school. If the imagination in such cases plays false, of course things do not turn out as expected, and there is disappointment or failure as a result. This use of the imagination in making plans is what most people in practical life try to cultivate, and the thrifty housewife, the practical teacher or preacher, and the hard-headed business men alike owe their success to the possession of this kind of imaginative power.

But there is another way in which imagination works, that is more important still. In our best moments, even in childhood, we are constantly putting into shape our thoughts and feelings as to how we ought to live and what we would like to become. In so doing we piece together the best things from our past lives,—from the people we have met, the books we have read, the things we have seen,—and we form new pictures which we call our *ideals*. The creating of ideals is the highest form of imagination, for it is upon our ideals that our conduct largely depends; and in forming high ideals we must not forget that the raw materials upon which the

imagination works must be the purest and best,—good friends, good homes, good books, good surroundings, and above all, the stimulating example of good men and women of all time, and better than all, the life of Christ Himself.

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For Mother's Sake

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A.

Little Kenneth was ill. He found the bed and the medicine and the pain in his throat all very disagreeable. A nurse had to wait upon him because his mother, who had no help, was burdened with the other children and the many needs of the home. Kenneth did not like the strange nurse and he cried often for his mother. Also he was hard to attend, and begged for impossible things, and screamed when they were forbidden him. His mother would frequently run up to his room and sit beside his bed. Oh, how good it was to have her near! Her hand was so gentle and so cool, her stories were so good, and her smile was so bright that Kenneth was very brave when she was with him. But when she would go back to her work, Kenneth would cry and rebel and worry the nurse very much.

After he had been in bed for a week, the mother took ill and the nurse had to spend part of her time in the mother's room. Immediately a great change took place in Kenneth. He was still very ill; but he never complained nor cried nor refused his medicine. He lay so quiet and still, and was so obedient that nurse asked him how he had grown so contented. "Oh", said Kenneth, "I'm trying to get along without you so that you can do more to help mother to get well again. I just thought of it myself. Does it help any?" "Yes, yes", said the nurse, "it does help. I could not have done as much as she needed unless you had thought of this way of helping. It is very brave and good of you, and mother is quite proud of her son." "I want to help you because I love her", said the sick boy as he took his medicine without any coaxing.

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