

Woman and the Home

Let the Child Make His Own Decisions

Encourage the boys and girls to make their own decisions in such matters as their pleasures, their outdoor pursuits, the choice of their clothes. Make them feel due responsibility in the preparation of their studies. Nothing of all this is incompatible with parents and children being on terms of intimate friendliness. The mother or father should always be ready to be consulted, to aid in reaching a conclusion—but first let the child work the problem out on his or her own lines and then refer to the parent for approval or disapproval of the solution, but not for assistance in finding the solution itself.

Such drill as this and such custom of ruling one's life and one's self is of good stead in the inevitable battles of life that the most loving parents cannot ward off from their children.

"You weren't terribly lonely and blue because I was away?" I persisted.

"Why, of course not," she laughed. "I missed you, and it is lovely to have you now, but I wasn't unhappy just because I was alone."

"A wave of thankfulness rose in my heart," said my friend. "I had struggled hard to teach my girl self-reliance and I had won for my daughter what I had had to learn for myself through bitter fights—the ability to get along by herself."

The Too-Dependent Child Must Suffer.

A lesson well worth while for any man or woman! The woman who has been child-like dependent upon her parents, wretched when they were away, the prey to agonizing homesickness when forced to leave them for a day, has sorrow and loneliness ahead of her when she is obliged to rely upon herself. Being a woman, she may sit in her own room

judgments, to stand for their own individualities, to rely upon their own powers, need not in the process have refused tenderness and confidence, encouragement and faith. But they have supplied their children with a fund of strength which will abide when the parents have passed beyond and left the younger generation to draw upon its own resources.

Said a mother to me the other day, "I do not wish my children to depend upon me so much that when I die after they are grown they will be heartbroken and feel that their lives are blasted. I hope they will always remember me and love me and feel that my life is a dear memory and an influence for good—but no more than that."

Courage was her portion, and courage of a high sort is required to enable parents to take this point of view. To appreciate that since the children must live their own lives they should be trained to do this, to be independent growths, not parasites—here is a task which makes a demand upon the reserve forces of fathers and mothers, blots out selfishness and incites to high endeavor. How many parents are equal to the charge?

my brain could be kept unaffected by any of the tempting errors of the age, and my heart centered in the adoring love of God, all would be well with me in perpetuity. He was still convinced that by intensely directing my thoughts he could compel them to flow in a certain channel, since he had not begun to learn the lesson, so mournful for saintly men of his complexion, "that virtue would not be virtue, could it be given by one fellow-creature to another."

I was docile, I was plausible, I was anything but combative: if my father could have been persuaded to let me alone, if he could merely have been willing to leave my subterfuges and my explanations unanalyzed all would have been well. But he refused to see any difference in temperament between a lad of twenty and a sage of sixty. He had no vital sympathy for youth, which in itself had no charm for him. He had no compassion for the weaknesses of immaturity.

Families, happily, are no longer divided by such keen religious differences as that of Gosse and his father, but similar clashes are occurring every day all around us, whenever a father of limited intelligence and positive temper attempts to "form" a son of greater power and



Fruit Trees Flowering in British Columbia

Not only of the strength to meet temptations to evil do I think when I reflect upon the necessity for children learning to get along without their parents. One great consideration which moves me is the thought of the heart-sickening loneliness they will be spared if early in life they are taught to take it for granted that they must rely upon themselves. I recall the testimony of a friend upon this subject—a friend who had all her life suffered from the effects of having during her girlhood been "tied to her mother's apron string."

"When my eldest daughter was thirteen she went for a visit to the home of an old friend in the country. Her father and I were called out of town unexpectedly at the time fixed for her return, and by a series of misunderstandings there was no one at home to welcome her when she came back. A comparatively new maid was the only person in the house. I returned the next morning full of sympathy for my lonely child.

"Were you very unhappy when you came home last night and found no one here?" I asked.

"Not a bit," she said. "Of course I was a little grouchy at leaving Aunt Jenny's, for I had a beautiful time, but that was all."

and eat her heart out in solitude. The boy who has been similarly reared has equal pain, equal eagerness to get away from it. He also has that which she lacks, the opportunity to escape the hurt, to go on the street, to seek companions of any sort—good, if they are at hand; if not, anything he can find to help him forget his heart hunger.

"It is the exacting parents who are loved," said some one to me once when I commented upon the fact that the children of a certain self-sacrificing mother seemed to get along about as well after her death as before. "Yes," she went on in reply to my exclamation of surprise. "I have often remarked it. Notice the mothers who make door mats of themselves for their children and never let them do anything for themselves, and you will see those mothers are not the most cherished or considered. But if you will observe those who keep their children up to the mark, who demand a high standard, you will find they are the mothers who make the deepest impression and wield the strongest influence."

The "Door-Mat" Mother is Not the Most Loved.

There is a good deal in this. The parents who have taught their sons and daughters to arrive at independent

When the Boy is the Better Man of the Two

The mistake of the hard-and-fast fathers is in accepting themselves as the normal standard of all that is right and desirable and proceeding to trim or stretch their boys to conformity with the model. And when the boy is the better man of the two the worst of it is that he will conform or tend to conform, outwardly and only too readily with whatever model is set before him. He may be rebellious at heart but is unable to express himself, and therefore is forced to surrender at discretion to save any peace of his life. Later when he comes to himself he may rebel and escape; or the habit of conformity may be so strong that he will be crushed under it and spend his life in vain regrets; in either case the mistake will have yielded a full measure of tragedy in several lives.

We have a pathetic record of such a clash of temperaments in Edmund Gosse's "Father and Son"—a book which, if I could, I would put into the hands of every father. The elder Gosse was a man of the profoundest religious convictions and these convictions colored his whole life. "My father then believed," writes the son, "that if

more perception. We no longer fight about religion, but we do fight about money and questions of money.

Women need to learn to ignore petty and narrow perfections, to get the effect without the detail, to save the force some women expend on morbid scrubbing and scouring and apply it in bringing entertainment and enlightenment, and good, old-fashioned fun into the household. Most good women are too conscientious, and I have known "earnest" women to drive people to drink.

I despise bad housekeeping, and so many "bright" women are bad housekeepers. They think they are great enough to live above unwashed dishes and untidy rooms. I hope never to attain this pinnacle of greatness, but I do wish my sisters would abolish standards of painful excellence with their consequent worry and nagging for an unvarying standard of cheerfulness and humorous treatment of daily mistakes and bits of "bad luck" that one might quite as well laugh as cry over.

Soft corns are difficult to eradicate, but Holloway's Corn Cure will draw them out painlessly.