

PRACTICAL PAPERS.

BEFORE AND AFTER MARRIAGE.

When a young man begins to feel especially drawn toward a maiden - and by more intimate acquaintance this interest ripens into affection—all the politeness and respect he can command will be manifested when in her presence. The best traits of his character are called out to entertain and honor her; to draw closer the bond of union he desires to see established. Both, if the interest is mutual—perhaps with no intention or desire of making a false impression—are in that exalted state of mind which shows them to the greatest advantage. Particularly is this true as regards the lover. To gratify the slightest wish of his chosen no effort is felt to be wearisome—no labor a burden. All self-denial for his lady-love is accounted as a joy and honor. His very life seems too small an offering.

But how is it when the prize is secured, and the twain are made one? Are those graceful courtesies, sweet amenities, kind and watchful attentions, through which the coveted prize was led to an exalted estimate of the lover's character, to be continued by the husband, growing brighter and holier as the years roll on? Will the respectful attention and honor which a true gentleman yields to *woman* be more scrupulously accorded, be held more sacred, when bestowed on the *wife*? "Then will sweet peace wreath her chain round them forever," and the love which budded in youth, and grew deeper and broader with the after years, will be matured and perfected in old age, holding them as one till separated by death, they meet again in that better world whereof Love is the light.

But if marriage brings indifference, or a feeling of ownership which is supposed to exonerate a husband from all attention to his wife to release him from the commonest civilities—which he dare not refuse to other women, then there is little hope of true happiness in that household. The first year of married life, is doubtless in some respects the most critical. No young people ever become fully acquainted with each other during the period of courtship, or engagement. There is a glamour over them that hides any disagreeable or inharmonious peculiarity, and every one has some, that will not show well in a strong light. We daily see young people accept the mutual duties of the married state profoundly ignorant of the life upon which they have so thoughtlessly entered. The husband may understand what is right or honorable among men, but without the first idea, especially if he has not been brought up with sisters, of what respect and attention a wife has a right to expect, and he is bound to give as an honorable gentleman.

We claim for wives a degree of respect and attention beyond what a true gentleman gives any other lady, but we also claim that wives shall be governed by the same rule. Both should be affable, courteous and kind to all with whom they associate, but for each other there should be a deeper respect and deference than is ever seen in their intercourse with others, however worthy; yet in far too many cases politeness and good breeding are folded away with the wedding finery. But till the children that are growing up around us, are taught the sacredness of the obligations those assume whose hands are joined in wedlock, the horribly disgusting records of cruelty and crime that fill our daily papers will continue, and happy homes be "like angels visits, few and far between."

Aside from the present misery and strife, what will be the condition of society, or of our country, when the children of these unhappy marriages come to the front and take their places as rulers of our country and fashioners of society? If the mother is vain, foolish, irritable and self-willed, in nowise seeking to make home happy, never yielding to her husband's judgment or caring for his pleasure; or if she seeks to live peaceably and make her family happy, but every effort is met by coldness, indifference or sneers from her husband, will not the fruits of such examples be shown in the future character and lives of their children?

There can be no happy marriages or happy homes if love, pure and sanctified, is not the foundation. So few young people know what love is! A little romance, a good deal of pride or ambition, hovers about them, and they call it *love*. "Of all the sad things in this world the saddest is the leaf that tells what love *meant* to be, and the turning of the leaf to tell what love *has* been. One all blossoms, the other ashes, one all smiles and gladness, the other all tears and

sadness. Nothing is so beautiful as the temple that love builds; nothing is so miserable as the service of that temple if God be not in it."

"If there be anything that young wedded love should have as its first vision, it should be a vision of a ladder between the earth and heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending, and God over all blessing it. *Then there is hope* Begin your household life, begin your wedded life, with a firm hold upon God and purity and heaven, and there is hope for you; otherwise, sad is your fate!" *Christian Union*.

WHAT TO READ AND HOW?

There are books that were made and books that were born. Some are like garments, old and out of date, but renewed in form and fashion by a species of mechanical art. They are put on the market and sold for something more than they are worth. Then there are books which come forth out of the fulness of genius, scholarship, and wisdom. They are vital with thought. They have internal substance and vigor. They educate and impart knowledge to their readers. No one can read all the books, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers that make up our current literature. The question then must be considered, What shall one read? The answer will be shaped by the aim of the particular reader. If amusement, entertainment, emotional excitement be the object of desire, why then of course reading will result in throwing a mass of undigested and indigestible matter on torpid brains and jaded sensibilities. The more one reads in that way and for such an end, the worse becomes his or her mental and moral condition.

Without attempting to classify, we may perhaps characterize the kind of reading that is worthy of commendation. It should have substance to feed the mind with knowledge. As the body cannot live on comfits, bonbons, or light dessert, so neither can the mind be wholesome or strong that does not seek the materials for its discipline, growth, and vigor. In the next place good reading has suggestiveness. It compels thought to go beyond the page that is before the eye. It arouses curiosity and begets a disposition to find out more than any single book contains. That is a dull book that merely draws attention along over herbless wastes of oft-repeated common-places, and begets no single throb of desire to soar into higher altitudes. An author whose words can at once charm, and vivify the mind is a benefactor. Such authors there are, abundant enough to drive out of the field herds of mere bookmakers, who attempt scarcely anything more than to turn over and over again heaps of weather-stricken chaff from which the wheat has been winnowed.

Then again reading should be in the direction of one's own needs. It should have a definite object and be informed by a clear purpose. The general reader knows nothing in particular. He is an illustration of the nebular hypotheses, in which there may be misty diffusion, shapeless and void. In these days, specialists, in art, literature, and science, are as much in demand as they are in the various handicrafts. No one can master the circle of the sciences, or compass the whole realm of literature. There must be eclecticism for those who intend to convert reading into personal advantage.

At the bottom and top of this matter of reading stands the urgent argument in favour of close and constant reading of the Bible. It has every element of power. It enlarges the understanding, exalts the imagination, fortifies reason, imparts integrity to the conscience, lends support to the noblest motives, and supplies fuel to the holiest ambition. No one can read wisely or well who neglects the Book that is the parent of the best literature and the creator of the highest style of human character.

How? Never read for mere pastime. Life is brief, and one cannot afford to trifle with all that constitutes the essential value of life. Topical reading is best. Pursue subjects and follow an aroused curiosity. When one really wants to know all he can about a given matter, he will keep on its track like a hunter after a deer.

Reflection is indispensable. Swallowing until one becomes gorged results in heaviness and decay of power. Better read one book a year, inwardly digesting it, than skim through a hundred volumes. The bee may travel far in a summer's day and visit many flowers, but lingers not save where honey can be had to carry homeward to the cell.

Skilful reading should if possible be connected with intelligent conversation thereon. This is not in all cases attainable, but where it can be had, conversation will ensure to precedent reading a new and living value. Where the habit exists or can be introduced into a family of talking over the subject matter of daily reading there will be found immense advantages, both in the elevation of thought and in the exclusion of trivial gossip.

All real personal excellence is obtained through prayer. "*Ben. orasse est bene studuisse.*" Earnest prayer puts the stamp and superscription of heaven upon the spoils of knowledge, and all the best acquisitions that can be secured from books. An earnest purpose will be enforced by a judicious taste—a hunger for the food of immortality.—*Chris. Intelligencer*.

KITCHEN TYRANNY.

Don't you believe in magnetism, and electric force, and the power of mind over matter, dear friends? And do any or all of these things account for the dominion exercised by a *cook* over her mistress? Is it mind or magnetism which causes the luckless matron who employs Bridget to avoid occasions of offence to Bridget? to do her fault-finding so delicately that it loses its point—to hint her preferences so timidly that they are seldom remembered—and to allow herself to be *snubbed* unequivocally whenever she enters her own kitchen?

Who hasn't had such an experience at some time, and who can be brave enough to throw off the yoke in the very presence of the tyrant? It is all very well to *talk* about being the mistress of one's own house, and ruling one's servant properly, and all that, but experience proves that our finest theories are not always reducible to practice, and that human nature (meaning the mistress) is apt to be weak. *He* are not ashamed to confess that we are in a complete state of subjugation at this very time, and that we accept with due meekness many things which are by no means satisfactory. In fact these queens of our kitchens are so often uncertain in their moods, and so seldom impartial in their rule that very little, if any, benefit is gained by a revolution and a consequent change of dynasties. Of course one has the satisfaction of having vindicated one's authority, but that is an empty triumph—when the kitchen is empty too.

Exactly *why* these things are so is the problem about which we are exercised. Could Huxley or Spencer help us, do you think? Has the puzzle any connection with molecular changes, or the correlation of forces, or—let us whisper it carefully—has Biddy's strength of muscle generated strength of mind, and are we to be governed of necessity?

Well, our best hope lies in the possibilities of the future. Some day some clever genius will invent a mechanical cook, and our trials and sorrows will be ended. We will wind up our cooks as we do our clocks, and when they refuse to do our bidding we shall put them into the hands of their constructors to be repaired and made useful again. What a glorious day that will be for the housekeeper! No more inconvenient cousins in our kitchens, no more suspicions of unlawful dealings with the soap-fat man; no more misgivings as to the consumption of tea and sugar! Why, the very millennium of housekeeping will dawn upon us with our patent mechanical cooks!

POWER OF THE WAVES.

Those who have never lived on a stormy coast, nor been to sea, can form no adequate idea of the effect that can be produced by the impact of a succession of waves, or of a single wave. What has happened at Wick, on the extreme northern coast of Scotland, where a breakwater has been building for some years past, may give an idea of what is meant by wave-power. It was found that stones of ten tons weight were as pebbles to the waves, which have been measured to be here forty-two feet from the crest to the bottom of the trough. The outer end of the breakwater, where the storms beat most violently, was built of three courses of one hundred ton stones laid on the rubble foundations; next above these were three courses of large, flat stones, and upon this a mass of concrete, built on the spot of cement and rubble. The end of the breakwater was thought to be as immovable as the natural rock; yet the resident engineer saw it slowly yield to the force of the waves and swing round into the less troubled water inside the pier. It gave way not in fragments but in one mass, as if it was a monolith. The displaced mass is estimated to weigh about 1,350 tons.