

The atmosphere and elements of motherhood in which a child is cradled and reared do more for it than all else beside. Let MOSES be nursed by his own mother, a believer in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and she will do more for his life in its essential principles of faith in God and love to his people than all the learning of Egypt is able to touch, far less obliterate. Let JOSEPH be taught by Rachel till he is a lad of fifteen years and his character is so matured that he can endure the fiercest assaults, as seeing Him who is invisible.

John Newton's mother died when he was seven years old, but he testified that to her care he owed that bias to religion which with the co-operating grace of God, reclaimed him and brought him back to the paths of peace. Dr. Johnson relates that he never could forget the pious injunctions of his mother, given when he was too young to remember anything else. Sir Charles Read bears witness with special feeling to the same experience. *This is the rule:* no doubt there are exceptions, but they are exceptions—and we believe, very few. The characters written early on the clear tablet of the heart by a mother's love are never erased, never obliterated: Never! They are like letters cut in the bark of a young tree, they grow larger, longer and broader every year. They are like impressions made on glowing iron, which when the iron is cooled, are held fast with all its mighty strength.

Now this fact, undisputed and indisputable, touching a mother's influence, is suggestive of some important considerations. And the first is, *that the mother should be careful of her own Spiritual life.* I say Spiritual life because that is the foundation of all her life. It is on that that the whole outer and upper superstructure is raised. The precept has the profoundest meaning when applied to her. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life"—not thine own merely but thy child's also. Thy heart is where the child is cradled and schooled and cultured. The COLORS and FORMS and FACTS that afterwards beautify and embellish, or darken and destroy his life are all determined by yours. Your heart gives the atmosphere and sunshine in which the child grows and develops. Remember that, and it will enforce this consideration constantly.

I often think that more care is taken of flowers than of children. How they are cared for and nurtured! They are planted in prepared soil, kept in a suitable atmosphere, preserved against insects, and scorching heat and freezing cold, that they may grow and bloom. And yet that is the very kind of nurture the child needs. He is a tender sensitive plant in the garden of life, and requires to be enfolded in an atmosphere of love, and carefully preserved from every hurtful influence. Little things affect him mightily, for he is but a little thing himself. The least defects in the Spiritual life of the home touch him deeply and tell upon all his future. How much need there is for a sweet, healthful warm, pure Spiritual energy in the heart of the mother, which may make the surroundings of the child all that they ought to be!

A second consideration is this, *that the child should be kept constantly under the influence and authority of the Word of God.* We have often read of fathers and mothers taking their children to celebrated men that they might lay their hands upon them and speak to them some word of wisdom that might influence all their after life. Against this I have nothing to say. Only I would urge that the mother should let the child FEEL the hand of God upon his head, and HEAR the voice of God speaking in his ear, whose hand is more magnetic and WHOSE voice is more wise and tender and loving and inspiring than all others. Canadian mothers may hear with the greatest advantage and profit what was spoken long ago to Hebrew mothers on this point (Deut. vi. 6-9). God's law was to be the theme of conversation—the primer and second and third book—for the child. The mind was to be preoccupied by it—filled with the light and love of it—charmed through it into godliness. *The word may be sown and not spring up immediately and bear fruit, but we must ever remember that it is incorruptible*—"The incorruptible seed of the word;" and if that is sown by the hand of motherly affection it will surely some day bless the heart.

A third consideration is this—*That unceasing prayer should be made for the child.* In other words, he should be committed to God, placed by prayer in his hands. For the supreme wisdom alone sees all evil and can protect him against it, and KNOWS all the future and can prepare him for it, and under-

stands what is best, and will confer that upon him. Prayer is no mystery to the mother; she sees deepest of all into its very heart. At night while she sleeps her infant cries, and like a larum bell it wakes her at once. The child-cry is always heard, and the great God with his mother nature hears our every cry, and answers quick and lovingly. I only mention this, for I believe with Mrs. Browning, that "in a mother undefiled, prayer goeth on in sleep as true and painless as the pulses do." But let me mention one fact that gives a wide and wonderful significance to prayer. It is that fact which is the very central thought of the book of Job, that which all the book was written to illustrate and set forth, namely, that the current of man's natural life is liable to the interference of spiritual agencies, that there are creatures above our ken, intelligences of vast power and wisdom who come in as factors in human existence and of which we have no knowledge. How necessary is it then to commit the child to God who knows all! Under his care only is he safe—perfectly safe. Give him as Hannah did, plead for him as the mothers of Richard Knill and Samuel Budgett pleaded, whose prayers were influential in their conversion. Prayer never fails, never fails.

Summing up, every instruction may be put into this short rule, namely:—"BE YOURSELF WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE YOUR CHILDREN BE." This is the greatest power in training a child: *Example*; and as the proverb has it, "example is stronger than precept;" that is, precept is only in word, but example is armed with all the energy of the life, and life-power is greater than all other. If you would have your child to be pious, be pious yourself. If you would have your child to be prayerful, truthful, gentle, pure in thought and speech, generous in heart, noble in action—then practise these virtues yourself.

Dorothea Trudel, of Manendorf, known all over the world now, as she who wrought wonders by simple prayer, tells us that it was her mother's example that taught her the mystery. She saw what she learned, living before her eyes. She walked in the presence of it and it fell upon her like the sunlight, and penetrated and filled her whole nature. Ah, that is the great secret in home culture.

We are to seek graces in our children through the gracious power of our own life, and let me assure you there is no grander work here; NONE that repays so well; NONE that BLESSES our own hearts so much! Of such a mother it is written "Her children arise up and call her blessed." They are a monument to her praise.

Children so trained are the greatest aid the Sunday School can have! Hence, mothers are either helpers or hinderers of this work. They send either the rock to the plough and the seed, or the prepared soil, that soon is covered with luxuriant fruitage. Mothers, I ask you to-day to be earnest, devoted co-workers with your Sunday School band, that you may all rejoice together over the conversion of the children.

CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH.

The article under the above heading in the last issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN I read with great interest, in which the remissness of the Church towards her young members is clearly set forth. It is surely not creditable to the Church in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, that the position of children in the Church remains undefined by her, or rather that she fails to recognize their position as assigned them by the Head of the Church. As you truly observe, the Saviour's declaration "surely settles the question;" and your reasoning as to their right of being recognized as members, I think is incontrovertible. While agreeing with you thus far, I felt great disappointment at the meagreness of the remedy you propose. Surely if they are recognized by the head of the Church as members, their right to be enumerated in the Church's records as forming part of her membership is indisputable. If they are members in virtue of their birth and baptism, should not the Church hold them amenable to her discipline until for immorality or contumacy they are cut off? And since the Church has judged them fit subjects to be participants in one of her sacred ordinances, where is her scriptural authority for depriving them of the privilege of participating in the other? From the first part of your article in which you shew the Church's deficient treatment of her young members, I expected to find you advocating a liberal policy—one establishing them in all their rights

of membership, instead of which, your remedy is only to the extent of permitting them to be "spectators from the gallery or some other convenient place," with an occasional word addressed to them by the pastor. Poor comfort this to the lambs of the flock, to be permitted only to behold from afar the feast of the fat things distributed from their Father's table, surely that is not following the example He set his disciples as to the manner in which they were to receive and treat the lambs of the flock. Where, I might here ask, is the distinction between the baptized child of the believer, and the unbaptized? Are the latter not to be permitted a seat in the gallery? By such treatment, the baptized child of the Christian is placed in an inferior position to the child of the Jew under the Mosaic dispensation, for they were not only permitted but commanded to participate in religious ordinances, the nature and meaning of which they could not understand. If then the Jewish child was a fit subject for participating in a commemorative ordinance, how is the child of the Christian unfitted for the like duties, and where is the scriptural authority for depriving them of that privilege? I am aware that that passage in 1 Cor. xi. 29, will be brought forward, and their want of ability to "discern" urged as a reason why they should be excluded. A candid examination of that passage will show that the rights of children to all the privileges of membership was not the theme of the Apostle. Adults were the transgressors; therefore adults were the parties addressed. Again, it was not the want of mental capacity to "discern," but the perversion of that capacity that was condemned by the Apostle. This passage and Mark xvi. 16, should be explained by the same rule of interpretation; both were addressed to adults, and therefore it is a misapplication to apply their restrictions to children.

The Church by admitting children to all the privileges of membership would thereby put in practice the commands of her Divine Head, for his last instructions were to make "disciples of all nations," and "then teach them to observe," etc., whereas our Church of the present day reversed this order, by insisting upon their being taught first, and then when a certain amount of instruction has been received, making them disciples. Were the scriptural order followed, great benefits would result to the Church, the children of members would be trained up to feel that they were an integral part of the Church, and not mere spectators of her sacred rites and ceremonies; it would have a hallowed influence in restraining them in the hour of temptation, and they would also be kept from straying into other communions when they grew up. To those who will say that this system would destroy the distinction between the Church and the world, and fill the church with the unconverted, I would say does the present system keep the unconverted out? The Lord will know His own when He comes in to inspect the guests. The servants' duty is to fill the guest chamber, and not to sit in judgment whether or not every guest has put on the wedding garment.

King, Oct. 8th, 1877.

EQUITY.

NOTES FROM ELORA, WELLINGTON CO.

(By an OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Wellington—there is magic in the word, and one at once thinks of the rattle of musketry and roar of cannon, and goes back in thought to a time when the destiny of nations was decided. Whether the name given to this splendid county has any connection with the hero whose name it bears, I am not sufficiently informed to say, but one thing sure is that when the history of Canada will be written the County of Wellington will occupy no unimportant page. The history of this county dates back to 1829, when the woodman's axe begun to do duty, from which time its progress has been rapid and uninterrupted. Wellington County contains a population of about 65,000, of which about two-thirds are Canadians, the others principally are British settlers and Americans.

For a sample of a healthy, active, industrious Canadian, this county will probably furnish the best. The farms are well fenced and exhibit a high state of cultivation, while the dwelling houses are substantial and comfortable, and many of them costly and ornamental. Guelph is the county town, and from its progress of late years I expect to hear of its ambition being shortly gratified by being gazetted a city.

ELORA

is an important town, within thirteen miles of Guelph,