

# Church Observer

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"ONE FAITH,—ONE LORD,—ONE BAPTISM."

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## Family Circle.

### HOME GOVERNMENT.

I am speaking to parents whose children are young; with characters unformed, with faculties undeveloped. Don't turn away, saying to yourself, "I can't get time to read or plan. I have burdens heavy enough daily, and I don't want to be lectured." Softly, softly! It may be possible that, if I can't relieve you of any of your burdens, I can help you to bear them. Those little ones, the flowers of the hearth, the sunbeams in your dwelling, are worth to you and themselves all your anxieties, cares, and toils, and they will, if rightly trained, repay a thousand-fold all they cost you. Remember that you are to your child a friend, a ruler, and a teacher.

To control him, readily and fully, you must at all times govern yourself.

If the child sees that you are irritable, hasty, ill-tempered, and passionate, he will understand this very early. I shall not now explain the reason why it is so; but the fact is undeniable, and he who would control others must control himself. If, then, you act and decide, say "Yes" or "No," smile or frown, according as you happen to feel at the moment, you make your child feel you are as liable to treat him with injustice as otherwise.

He can't respect passion or temper. You lose in his respect, and also in his love. And your observation will teach you that, among all your acquaintances, you can't think of one instance where parents have good home government, who cannot govern themselves.

Insist on prompt, cheerful obedience, and that without giving the reasons.

It is a very common mistake to appeal to the reason of your child, and show him how reasonable your command is. The child's reason must grow out of the experience of life. It is undeveloped as yet; and God has placed him in subjection to you, because you have reason which he has not. The child loves to discuss the matter, and debate the why and wherefore; and if permitted, will often overpower the reason of parents by the most puerile assertions. You may cultivate the reasoning faculties of your child as much as you please, but it is not the time to do it when you have laid a command upon him. Some try to gain obedience by appealing to love, or shame, or the good opinion of others, but never seem to think that their commands are all the reason the child needs. God lays His commands upon us, without assigning the reasons why we should obey them. What a volume of the rights of property may be written under the command, "Thou shalt not steal!"

In home government it is very important that parents should sustain each other.

The child will early learn which parent yields soonest to importunity; and he will, therefore, if refused by the sterner one, never rest till he has tired the weaker. I shall not say which of the parents is oftener the soonest to yield. But when the child makes a request which you see fit to deny him, and he says, "Well, I'll go and ask father; I know he will let me," that father, if he does so, is making a great mistake. The mother, shut up, worn and troubled, wearied and discouraged by the constant supervision of her children, needs all the aid and support which the authority of a father can give her. The child should never feel that there is an appeal from the decision of one parent to the good nature of the other. Even if you don't feel that the decision has been the wisest possible, don't let the child know that you feel so. Take it for granted that the decision has been right. Draw together, and let the voice of one be the voice of both.

Try to develop your children slowly.

The tendency of the age is to do things quickly. We can't wait for trees to grow naturally. We must stimulate them, and then boast how early we made them bear fruit, forgetting that they must decay as

early. We can't build a house; we must "run it up." We can't build a bridge that will last for ages; we must "throw one over the stream," and in a few years see it again. We don't want to have boys and girls; they must leap from infancy to manhood. We must stimulate the child, see that we can cram and excite the brain, and develop the man in him. Hence we must have premature and immature and obscure men—all from the most promising and precocious children. Whereas the perfection of education is slow development.

When you see the fond parent trying to show you how "forward" his child is, how "quick" he is, how he excels in his class, and when you see him trying to "show off" his darling, I beg you to commiserate the child, and write it down in your book that the child will never be much of a man. Willows sprout early and grow fast. The oak puts out its leaf late, and grows slowly. The one is woven into baskets, the other is bolted into ships. Don't feel elated because your child is precocious; don't feel discouraged because he seems slow to acquire. In the end, the turtle almost invariably beats the fox in the race. We could give examples enough to prove this.

You will find that a great deal of character is imparted and received at the table. Parents too often forget this. Instead of swallowing your food in sullen silence, instead of brooding over your business, instead of severely talking about others, let the conversation at the table be genial, kind, social, and cheering. Don't bring disagreeable things to the table in your conversation any more than you would your dishes. For this reason, too, the more good company you have at your table, the better for your children. Every conversation with company at your table is an educator of the family. Hence the intelligence and the refinement and the appropriate behaviour of a family which is given to hospitality. Never feel that intelligent visitors can be anything but a blessing to you and yours. How few have fully got hold of the fact, that company and conversation at the table are no small part of education!

One thing more. There is one thing that will aid you to govern yourself, to decide rightly, to be kind and yet firm, to govern your children, and to meet the responsibilities of life, beyond all that I have said, and that is, daily, humble, earnest prayer. This is the mightiest aid you can seize. Without it, you will fail; but with it, you can hardly be disappointed. —Our Own Fireside.

## For the Young.

### KING LAZY-BONES AND QUEEN BUSY-BODY.

BY M. S. R. S.

Mr. Lenox lived at Ashleigh, a fine old mansion surrounded with stately elms, beautiful maples, and tall evergreen trees. He was a grave, silent man, who had known much sorrow; as a Christian he bore all his trials meekly and patiently, ever looking forward to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

The household consisted of his daughter Isabel, who was just entering her twenty-second year, and two younger children, Wilfred and Essie, about nine and seven years of age. Mrs. Lenox, the mother of these two children, had been a great invalid, and, since her death, her step-daughter Isabel had devoted herself entirely to her father and to the care of her little brother and sister. When her own mother, whom she remembered well and had loved passionately, died, she was not nearly as old as Essie; her aunt had taken charge of the little motherless girl. Miss Lenox was a kind-hearted, but precise maiden lady, unaccustomed to the ways of children, who soon found that Isabel had been completely spoiled, and that she could

not even attempt to govern such a child. Determined to rid herself quickly of this little responsibility, she placed her at a boarding-school during her father's absence. He was travelling in search of health, and, as his absence was prolonged for years, Isabel remained at school until her fourteenth summer, spending all her vacations there also; as after her first disastrous essay, Miss Lenox never attempted to bring her niece to her own home. Mr. Lenox had kept up a regular and long correspondence with his daughter, and at length a letter came, telling her of his marriage of the dear mother who would soon come with him to see and welcome their child.

Isabel's proud heart swelled with resentment; she had so often pictured to herself her father gladly returning to claim her, when she would preside in his home the sole object of his love; how proud he would be of her appearance and accomplishments, introducing his only daughter to his friends. No! she had never dreamed of another person coming between herself and her father's love; poor girl! her heart was filled with bitterness towards this unknown lady, who had dared to fill her dead mother's place.

The first year, at home, was a time of sore trial to both. Young Mrs. Lenox was a true-hearted, good woman, and strove earnestly to win the wayward girl's affections; but Isabel, strong in her prejudice and dislike, never gave her step-mother a pleasant look nor a kind word; her father's commands compelled her respect and obedience; more she did not would not yield. Naturally feeble in health, the constant striving with a provoking Mrs. Lenox too severely; she became seriously ill, and when her little boy was born, they said he too would soon be motherless.

Isabel saw the distress of her father, the sad faces of the faithful attendants, and still she remained unmoved—silent and stern in her lonely room; at length the utter stillness of the house aroused her, she could no longer endure the suspense. Softly she crept down the stairs, listening for some faint sound; she dared not seek her father in his grief, her conduct, she well knew, had turned his love away from her. Tremblingly she entered the library, and, for the first time, looking into her own heart, she saw and felt how wicked she had been and realized the goodness of the mother who was about to leave her. Suddenly the door was flung open, and her father, pale and excited, entered and, grasping her by the arm, almost dragged her into the sick-room.

"Unhappy girl," said he; "see what your conduct has done, you have killed your mother!"

With a cry, Isabel sank on her knees by the bed, "Mother! mother, only live, only forgive me!"

It was all she could utter; but she saw the pale eyelids unclose, and felt the touch of the feeble hand on her head, as she fell fainting on the floor.

Mr. Lenox lived, and oh! how precious had he grown to Isabel; fervent in her love, as once bitter in her dislike, every look and every sign was obeyed; truly, she had given her whole warm heart to that mother whom she had so long treated coldly. Together they rejoiced over little Wilfred, as he grew strong and beautiful; and when, two years later, a baby sister was added to the family circle, their happiness was complete.

Alas! very soon after Essie's birth, a fatal insidious disease was developed, and Mrs. Lenox bore many severe attacks with great fortitude. During six years of suffering Isabel devotedly nursed this now tenderly-beloved mother, receiving a blessing from her dying lips.

Mr. Lenox never rallied from this last sorrow, and on his daughter now devolved the care of the two little ones. Time soon restored their childish gaiety and Isabel's cheerfulness, though the shadow of their

loss made her sweet face grow more grave and earnest in its expression. Thus she looked, as she sat reading one sultry summer's afternoon, when little Essie rushed towards her, exclaiming:

"Dear Belle, do speak to Willie! he has been lying on the grass for two hours, and I have begged him in vain to swing me, help me fly my kite, make soap-bubbles, and weed my garden."

She stopped, gasping for breath. Isabel laid down her book and, tenderly parting the thick curls that almost hid the heated little face, kissed her sister's crimson cheek. Then she looked round and saw Master Wilfred stretched at full length, his heels in the air, laughing heartily at poor Essie's discomfiture.

"Come here, Will," and the boy rose slowly, and rather unwillingly approached her. Essie had nestled herself within her sister's arms, glad to rest her tired head upon Isabel's shoulder.

"Suppose you each tell me what you have been doing to-day. You shall begin Willie."

"Well," said her brother, who had again found an easy position on the grass at her feet, "I am sure I don't know what I have done, but I am tired to death; it seems as if I had been hard at work, and yet everything has gone wrong."

"You were late at breakfast this morning Will, and that made you late at school, when I suppose you missed your lessons."

"I was only a few minutes past nine o'clock," grumbled Wilfred, his handsome face beginning to look sulky; "teacher need not be so particular, he might give five minutes grace; and as to the lessons, they were so long and hard, I was certain to miss them."

"Yes," said his sister, gravely, "if you had not tried to learn them. Oh! Will, Will! you idled away yesterday afternoon and slept all the evening on the couch in the library; I do not think you even looked at your lessons."

"None of the boys were perfect, so it was a real shame to keep me in after school hours. I am tired enough now, and the lessons won't fare any better to-morrow!"

"Were you so tired, doing nothing, that you could not oblige little Essie with a swing?"

Will looked a little ashamed as he said "I would not mind swinging Essie, but she is such a restless little thing; she never leaves me in peace, always wanting to be busy. I believe she thinks it is wicked to keep quiet."

"Oh! Willie," exclaimed Essie with glistening eyes, "I only like to run about and do things, and you are so lazy—"

"My dear little brother and sister," interrupted Isabel, "if you will listen, I will tell you a story, you shall each think about it for yourselves, and perhaps to-morrow may be more satisfactory, and a happier day for you both:

"In a beautiful land, not very far off stands a marble palace, the King of the country lives in it and reigns over a great many subjects. His rule is very easy and light, for from his accession to the throne until the end of time, the King will never punish or oppress his people. The chief amusements in this land, where people only live for enjoyment are, eating and sleeping; and if it were not that a Queen, equally powerful, shares his majesty's throne, the grass would grow in the streets; no work of any kind would be accomplished, there would be no progress in anything; for all the inhabitants would become like the attendants of the "Sleeping Beauty" in the Fairy tale, sunk in a lethargic sleep. This King is aptly called "King Lazy-Bones;" the title is not aristocratic, but it describes his majesty exactly. How he manages to rule jointly with Queen Busy-Body, no one can tell; multitudes of their subjects are content to follow the example and live under the government of King Lazy-Bones; as many more are devoted adherents of the bustling Queen. By her commands, splendid buildings, churches, railroads,