

MOTHER'S INFLUENCE

IT IS POTENTIAL IN FORMING HER DAUGHTER'S CHARACTER.

AS IS ONE, SO IS THE OTHER

Importance of This Fact Emphasized in the Formation and Development of a Pure and Noble Womanhood—How the True Wife and Mother Should Live If She Would Have Good Daughters.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1903, by William Bailey, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Chicago, May 31.—In this sermon the preacher illustrates the potential influence of the mother upon the character of the child and the importance of that influence being of a kind that goes to the formation and development of a pure and noble womanhood. The text is Ezekiel xvi, 44, "As is the mother, so is her daughter."

The Philadelphia mint is one of the chief sights for the traveler in the Quaker City. It has many wonderful pieces of machinery, not the least of which are the power-stamping machines, cutting the gold and silver bars into pieces the size of a ten cent piece or a dollar. Then, with one terrific pound, they stamp them into United States coins. These stamping machines are powerful enough to crush the hard metal into forms of eagles bearing the impress of the Goddess of Liberty, and yet they are capable of doing very delicate work. If a plain piece of wet tissue paper is placed under their stamp they can cut out of that wet paper a round piece the size of a silver dollar more neatly and accurately than could be done by any sewing girl's scissors or any surgeon's knife.

It is wonderful that a machine should have the power of thus producing from the hard metal thousands of coins exactly alike, each bearing accurately the same impression; but I want to speak to you to-day of something still more wonderful in our social and family life. It is the power inhering in every mother to mold her daughters into her own image and to impress upon them her own characteristics.

The mother's life is inevitably produced in the lives of her little girls whom she rocks in the cradle. This will happen whether she is conscious of it or not. How important then is it, for the sake of those whom they in their turn will influence, that the influence of the mother's life should be of the wholesome and beneficent kind! The girls will be like her as they grow up, and her faults will reappear in them. Therefore, the object of your childhood? Is it nothing to you when they are sick or in financial trouble? Is it nothing to you when they are dead? Why, some mothers who think they are good and true mothers never pretend to have any affection for their parents or brothers and sisters or for their nephews and nieces. The inevitable result will be that some day your own children will cease to love each other. Ah, my friends, blood ought to be thicker than water. The ties which bind the human heart to the home of childhood ought to be as strong as links of steel.

To-day the sacred memories of the past are calling many a mother to her nobler and truer self. A short time after her marriage a young wife told me of a vision she had that was so vivid it was difficult to believe that it was not real. As she lay in bed in the early morning of the day when she was to leave her father's home her thoughts were busy with her past life, in which her mother, then six months dead, occupied a prominent place. What, she thought, would that dear mother say to her if she were then living? The beloved form, the tender tones of her voice, were well remembered. As she dwelt on the memory it seemed to her that her mother stood beside her. She had the same dear old face, the same look of love. Dressed in pure white, she came and stood at the foot of the bed. "I was not in the least frightened," said the young girl. "I felt and knew that I was awake. I raised myself upon my elbow and said, 'Is that you, mother?' 'Yes, daughter,' the mother answered. 'It is I. I have come back to have a few parting words before you start out on your new life.' Then, after talking awhile, the mother said: 'Daughter, be true to yourself; be true to your new home; but, daughter, also be true to your old home. Never forget or neglect your old father. He is alone now. Never cease to love your brothers and sisters. You cannot be true, my daughter, to your new home unless you are true to your old.' Then the strange vision slowly turned and disappeared." So to-day the sacred memories of the past plead for a noble motherhood which will be true to the old loves and which will therefore be doubly true to the new.

The true mother goes forth in life and sees the miseries and the sufferings and the troubles which are everywhere self evident. Her heart bleeding with sympathy, she returns home and begins to plan how she can help the poor. When her children would destroy their old clothes she turns and says: "Daughter, that is a sinful waste. That dress may not be useful to you, but it may clothe some little girl and keep her warm all winter. I wish that you would wrap it up in a bundle and take it to Mrs. So-and-so's house. Her husband is out of work, and I fear she is having a hard time to get along. I was in to see her to-day." When that little girl carries that dress to the home of destitution and there sees the poverty sticking out through cracks of the humble cottage and the grateful tears of the mother who received the dress she learns a lesson of heart love she could learn in no other way. Do you wonder that every mother teaches her children the laws of gentleness and sympathy and Christian kindness when she herself is ready at any hour of the night to go to the sick neighbor's home or to place flowers on the white casket of a neighbor's child?

The true mother is also always the true church member. Nearly all are ready to grant that the church of Jesus Christ is the great purifying, the great moral and spiritual teacher and developer of every community in which it exists. It is the thrashing floor where the grain which has been raised in the nurseries of Christian homes is separated from the chaff. It is the holy of holies at whose sacred altars multitudes are convicted of sin and led to humbly kneel and publicly confess their faith in God. Many have been brought up in Christian homes who would never have given their hearts to Jesus Christ except through the church's influence.

God develops true motherhood in many ways. The factory's machinery may seem to the untrained eye to be working uselessly and in ridiculous confusion. There are some wheels running from right to left others from left to right. There are sagging belts, and great piston rods moving up and down, and strong steel bars whirling round and round. There are tanks where the goods are soaked and places where the raw goods are chewed into pulp. But after awhile, under the explanation of the superintendent or guide, the visitor to the factory finds that every belt and every wheel and every cylinder of the machinery is put there for a purpose. All the different parts of that machinery are working together for good, for the completion of a finished article. So God in the great human factory for the creation of a consecrated motherhood has many wheels and at times seemingly conflicting duties. They all have a purpose, not the least of which is the influence resulting from the right performance of the duty a wife and mother owes to her childhood's home.

My sister, how can you honestly expect your children to respect you if you are stony hearted and refuse to honor the many wrinkles and the bedimmed sight of an aged parent? Can your mother breathe forth the bitter lamentation of the neglected old woman who said, "When I was young my children used to tread upon my feet; but now, when I am old, they are treading upon my heart." Are you going to show the selfish spirit of the brutal people of the Pacific islands, who were accustomed to behead or bury alive their fathers and mothers as soon as they became crippled with age? Are you a heartless woman, going to tear your parents from your thoughts and affections, merely because you can get no more service out of them? How can you expect your little children to love each other after you are gone when you yourself have nothing to do with the brothers and sisters of your childhood? Is it nothing to you when they are sick or in financial trouble? Is it nothing to you when they are dead? Why, some mothers who think they are good and true mothers never pretend to have any affection for their parents or brothers and sisters or for their nephews and nieces. The inevitable result will be that some day your own children will cease to love each other. Ah, my friends, blood ought to be thicker than water. The ties which bind the human heart to the home of childhood ought to be as strong as links of steel.

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