

The Home

Life's Foundation

The foundation of life is truth. Truth is the foundation of home life, business life, church life, society. Without it there is no stability, because there is no confidence. Even careless thinkers admit this; and the one who least regards it in practice, sometimes in his innermost soul values it most. While the value of truth as a basis of living is acknowledged, too frequently mothers are the ones who first introduce a child to falsehood. The other day a little child was brought into a kindergarten for the first time. She absolutely refused to remain without her mother, a woman of wealth, and one who might have commanded leisure had she wished, but who preferred filling her time with charitable and social engagements. The timid little girl held her mother a prisoner the entire morning. The second morning the child was a little more accustomed to her surroundings, and did not cling so tightly to her mother's dress. The mother took advantage of this, and said: "If you let me go out for a little while, I will come back and bring you a box of candy." "No, you won't," said the little girl, looking in her mother's face with perfect fearlessness; "I know you won't." "Oh, yes, I will," responded the young mother; "if you just let me go for a little while, I will come back with a box of candy for you." The child consented, but her expression made it very plain to the teachers in charge that she had very little confidence that her mother would keep that engagement. She sat by and watched her little companions, and after a time joined in the games and work. When her nurse came for her, she was overheard to say: "Mamma said she would come back and bring me a box of candy, but I know'd she wouldn't." And the nurse gave no evidence of surprise. The mother appeared the next day apparently with not the slightest recollection of the stain which she had put upon her own character the day before. How can that child have any regard for truth, when the being whom she loves most on earth cares so little for it?



The Ministry of the Mother

By Jeannette T. Mabie

To attempt to define wherein the mother's ministry should consist is to tread on holy ground; and as the most vital truths are often taught us by our errors, it is through mistakes and failures that mothers learn to see clearly the ideal to be attained. Of all the forms of woman's ministry by which lives are strengthened and inspired, the mother's is most divine, because it is the only one which is in any sense creative. Standing at the gate of life, she receives the precious gift, and her work for it begins while it is still part of her own being. By the pre-natal influences with which she surrounds it, and by the strength and purity of her own spiritual life, she modifies the character of her child, and determines whether it shall be strong to meet the experiences of life or handicapped by the limitations of an inharmonious temperament. If the mother's ministry is to approach its true completeness after conscious life begins, it must be entered upon, as was Mary's, from the moment when the heavenly message comes. As "the handmaid of the Lord," she must work with Him to realize His will for the child to be intrusted to her. If we can think of our children, not as ours to be forced and molded according to our pleasure, but as God's, sent to fulfill their own richest possibilities, we shall be less likely to mar His purposes by our blind interference.

A child comes into our arms full of unknown and beauti-

ful capacities. It should be nourished and watched as a gardener would care for a rare new plant, supplying to the best of his intelligence the right conditions for development, and waiting to see what the growth and flowering will be. Taking his method as a type of that which the wise mother will adopt toward her child, we shall see that freedom to expand according to the law of its being, conditions which will stimulate a strong and vigorous growth, and sunshine, which in the child-life means love, are the things to be supplied. If the first is to be insured, there must be recognition of the child's right to its own individuality, and a continual effort to remove all obstacles to its natural growth. Constant repression in the natural forms of expression, and lack of interest in the little things which to a child seem so important, result, if long continued, in blight and discouragement. The new life sends out tender shoots, which, if trained and guarded, will make of it "a thing of beauty." If space and freedom are denied, the natural development is checked, and, if the child is sensitive or timid, permanent injury is done.

Every opportunity and every influence which strengthens the better part of a nature is, at the same time, crowding out and killing the lower part. Every fault has its corresponding virtue, and it is the mother's part to address herself to the good which she can commend rather than the failing which she must correct. If a child is selfish, better results will follow from suggesting and encouraging generous actions, rejoicing with it at every victory over self, than by calling attention continually to the unlovely strain in its nature.

But all that the most conscientious mother can do will fail to achieve the best results if she does not surround her child with the perpetual sunshine of a loving atmosphere. Without this, the life, however rich in opportunities, must be filled with a sense of loss and loneliness. With it, all losses and deprivations can be endured. In the warmth which love supplies, the child-life expands spontaneously and happily, and is made strong by its influence to rightly meet the demands which maturity will make upon it. The mother who illustrates God's law of love in her own life, and rules her home by it, has given her children the highest and best conditions for a true development, even though her work for them is done under many limitations.

The character and helpfulness of the mother's ministry will depend more upon the strength and sweetness of her own personality than upon the special method she may follow. It is through the inspiration which comes to us from other lives that we unfold our best selves, rather than by rule and precept. The truest ministry is that of a life which, by its clear and steady light, shows us the way and fills us with an ardent desire to follow it. There must be harmony between what a mother is and what she teaches if her children are to be strongly influenced by her.

The fact that she cannot give more than she herself possesses will make a true mother anxious to grow continually, that she may be equal to the increasing demands made upon her. Her unselfishness and devotion, which prompt her to give up her whole life to those she loves, must be restrained, or she will have spent herself at the beginning of her work. Her life must be kept in touch with outside interests, and some portion of her time given to self-improvement, if she would not have her children emerge from the nursery to find that the mother who has been their guide thus far must be left behind as they enter the larger life.

The best education is that which not only helps the child to reach its highest individual development, but also trains it to minister in its turn to others. Obedience and self-control are the fundamental lessons which must be learned before the child passes beyond the narrow circle of the home life. The beauty of service and helpfulness to others will be best understood by those to whom as children they were taught by the practical lessons of daily life. It is specially important that the mother who must take the entire care of her children should demand some corresponding service from them, or she will find, to her sorrow, as the years go on, that her loving care is accepted as a matter of

course. "Not only to minister, but to be ministered unto," should be the reading of the text for hosts of unselfish women.

There are many parables from nature which will teach us helpful lessons if our minds are open to receive them. A chrysalis which had been kept in a warm room gave up its new life one early spring day. We were responsible for its untimely awakening, for, by the conditions we had made for it, it had developed before the outside world was ready to receive it. The beautiful insect, with its wings all crumpled and folded, was helpless for a time, but gradually tried to expand them by short flights. It was too cold outside to set it free, and the lamp toward which it was attracted was an equal source of danger. To save it from the flame, it was shut into a box for the night. Our well-meant endeavor to shield it proved its destruction, however, for in those hours of confinement the wings stiffened; not spreading, as they should, but hanging in useless folds. The time for development had come and gone under such conditions that it was lost, and the life which should have been spent in airy flights must be forever blighted. Let us look to it, when a soul is brought into the world through our instrumentality, that we do not impose upon it such conditions that it can never reach its true and happy development, but, like the butterfly which is its emblem, find itself shut in from the light until it has lost the power to reach it.



Hints on Banking

A reader has sent us the following selection of quotations from "Hints on Banking:"

Many women do not understand the details of banking, and to them everything connected with financial transactions seems to be enveloped in mystery.

There is nothing mysterious about a bank.

Do not feel hurt if a number of questions are asked you.

Do not be disappointed if, when you visit the bank a second time, the officers and clerks do not seem to recognize you.

Do not get out of patience if there are two or three ahead of you in line.

Do not destroy certified checks.

Probably there could not be a clearer object-lesson placed before women as to their total lack of training in business methods. The fact that a large banking house felt compelled to issue a pamphlet for the instruction of its women depositors is enough in itself to call the attention of the mass of women to their lack of training. That the instructions should be so elementary is but further proof of the necessity of the possession of the knowledge of business methods by women. Is not the secret of their ignorance expressed by one of Charles Egbert Craddock's heroines when she says, "I 'ain't got no call ter know nothin' 'bout the law, bein' a woman an' naterally ignorant"? It is not the fact that the woman cannot learn, but that so many women are never called upon to exercise any practical knowledge in the business world, that is responsible for the ignorance of the sex as a whole. A woman, unless forced into the business world or of exceptional mental activity, lives a life as remote from the world of finance as her children, and men thoughtlessly permit the women of their household to remain in ignorance on this most important question, who would blush if in conversation these same women should reveal ignorance in even the use of technical terms in discussing art, or misplace an accent in pronunciation. If there was a law of life which would insure these women a trained financial protector for their lifetime, there would be a certain justification for the method pursued; but, alas! too often they are left the easy victims of sharp methods plus their own ignorance. Alas for the ivy when the support is struck by lightning!



No man is born into this world whose work is not born with him; there is always work, and tools to work withal, for those who will.—James Russell Lowell.

Responsibility of the Citizen

Certain accounts of epidemics in country towns and villages, traced to impure water supply and carelessness in cases of contagious diseases, force us again to call attention to the responsibility of every intelligent individual for the condition of the public health in the community of which he is a member. Diphtheria is epidemic in a town in central New York. In the town is a paper-mill. This mill received a large shipment of rags which were so stored as to be of easy access to a number of children living in the neighborhood of the mill, and the outbreak of diphtheria is traced to this source. This is the second outbreak of diphtheria in this town in three years, and the same cause is given by the medical authorities for both: contaminated rags. Ordinary intelligence demands that the owners of that mill, of every mill using rags, should subject them, as soon as delivered, to fumigation. A room or building should be set apart for this purpose, and the local board of health should see to it that no rags are put in storage in the town until they have been disinfected.

Medical science is always on the alert: that is only stating that it is a science. The New York Health Board has been investigating the possibility of contagion from membranous croup, and this is the report:

During the last four months bacteriological examinations have been made in thirty-six cases of membranous croup. In all of these the membrane was either confined entirely to the larynx or, at most, only slight deposits existed in the throat, while there was very extensive exudation in the larynx. In thirty of the cases the Loeffler bacillus of diphtheria was abundantly present. These cases, therefore, were really cases of laryngeal diphtheria. In six cases no Loeffler bacilli were found; these were, therefore, cases of catarrhal pseudo-diphtheritic inflammation of the larynx, and are to be considered analogous to similar pseudo-membranous inflammations (non-diphtheritic) in the pharynx.

In five of the laryngeal cases in which the Loeffler bacillus was found, cases of pharyngeal diphtheria both preceded and followed within a week in the immediate vicinity. In three other instances the cases of croup were preceded by cases of true diphtheria, and in seven instances were followed by cases of true diphtheria.

In the remaining fifteen cases of membranous croup, pharyngeal diphtheria neither preceded nor followed in the immediate vicinity. None of the six cases of croup in which no Loeffler bacilli were found were followed or preceded by cases of diphtheria.

During the last four months, therefore, nearly eighty-four per cent. of the cases of so-called membranous croup referred to this department for bacteriological examination have proved to be diphtheria.

Every rational householder, whether he is convinced of the truth of this decision or not, will take the precaution of isolation during illness, and of a private funeral in case of death. To doubt in this case may mean to invite death.

A noted scientist of Europe says that the spread of consumption is due to carelessness; that if the rooms, clothing, and vessels used by consumptives were properly disinfected, there would be a marked decrease in deaths from that disease. The United States should have a good health record; it had, in 1880, one physician to every six hundred inhabitants; in England the census gives one to every one thousand; in France, one to every two thousand.

It is not the medical profession that must bear the blame for the spread of contagious diseases, but the selfishness, the thoughtlessness, and the ignorance of the people. There are people who seem to resent it as a personal affront for a physician to insist on isolation of the family during contagious disease in the house, and only under compulsion will they fumigate.



Who would imagine that toads should ever be articles of commerce—items in a bill of lading! Yet such is the fact. Recently there were delivered at Hawaii eighty toads that had been ordered from California. These toads were introduced into a garden and groves on the Makiki slope to destroy the insect pests.