

## THE LOVE-LETTER.



MAIDEN with the sunny eyes,  
 In which the glad light's beaming,  
 While many a varying sunbeam flies  
 Across thy bright face gleaming !  
 Why stand you on the old oak stair,  
 While morning sunlight's glancing  
 On snowy breast and golden hair,  
 And o'er thy rich dress dancing ?

What do you there, with stealthy tread  
 So sily onward gliding,  
 Half turning round in gleeful dread,  
 The panelled oak back sliding ?  
 What seek you in the wainscot there,  
 Your little hand round creeping ?  
 Take care, take care, O maiden fair,  
 Lest some one should be peeping !

The glad light in your face tells plain  
 You've found what you were seeking ;  
 Then push the panel back again—  
 Hark ! hark ! The old oak's creaking !  
 There's a step upon the stairs close by ;  
 Quick now, O joyous maiden,  
 And far from danger swiftly fly,  
 With Love's fond missive laden !

Ah, Love ! you've been at work again—  
 One never finds you sleeping ;  
 And they will only watch in vain  
 Who guard 'gainst thee are keeping !  
 But better so—for without thee  
 All would in life grow weary ;  
 Without the sun the changeless sea  
 Would soon be sad and dreary ! G. W.

## HOW I MANAGED MY CHILDREN.



H dear ! who would be an old woman and live in a shoe, and have so many children she don't know what to do ?" said Mrs. Hendon—a friend upon whom I was calling one day. "There's my Harry ; I have worked so hard to get his suit finished, and just when he had got it on, and it looked so well, he fell backwards into a bowl of soap-

suds, and it is quite spoilt. His stockings are always through at the knees, and his clothes are never fit to be seen—"

"In fact, he feels his life in every limb," said I.

"In every limb—say rather in every fibre of his body. The child might be made of quicksilver—"

At this moment, the Master Harry in question rushed into the room. He was a fine little fellow, evidently brimful of animal spirits, but without the slightest regard to politeness or decorum, and with a dress which certainly showed no traces of his mother's care and work. He took no notice of me, but fixing his eyes on the table, called out loudly, "I want some cake—I want some cake !"

"Do you see a lady is in the room, my darling ?" said his mother ; "why don't you shake hands with her ?"

"I want some cake," persisted the young gentleman.

"Well, just a little piece then, dear ;" and Master Harry disappeared.

In a few moments three other children broke into the apartment, all whining and grumbling, saying that Harry had some cake, and they wanted some. A slice was administered to each, and the mother shut the door upon the little tribe, telling them to go into the nursery and be good children. We had no sooner resumed our conversation, however, than one of the children returned, saying that Harry's piece was larger than his, and he wanted some more. A little more was given to him, when the other children wanted the same. This Mrs. Hendon refused, when there arose a perfect hubbub of whining and grumbling, which brought down the nurse, who vainly entreated the children to be good. Mrs. Hendon at last lost all patience, and administered a sounding box on the ear to the least noisy of the delinquents, who happened to be the nearest to her, and this sent the rest flying upstairs.

The mother resumed her seat, looking hot and uncomfortable. "I don't know how it is," she said, half-apologetically, "I never can get my children to behave properly before people. They are always the worst when any one is here. Sometimes I feel almost inclined to wish that I had no children—they are such a trouble."

"Oh, no ! do not say so. After all, it is very true that children are the heritage of the Lord, and their presence, more than any other blessing, tends to make a home bright and happy."

"Ah ! you may say so ; it seems natural to your children to be polite and obliging."

"Indeed, I can assure you I have had a good deal of difficulty with them," I answered, as I rose to take my leave.

As I walked home, I began thinking over the many

different families among my acquaintance where the children seemed to be, as Mrs. Hendon said, more of a trouble than anything else; and I could not but conclude that it was due in a great measure to the way in which they were brought up. In some houses they usurped all the parents' attention, and were the sole subject of conversation and interest; their every whim indulged, and every remark applauded, until they were almost unbearable; while in others they were left almost entirely to the charge of nursemaids, who might or might not be judicious and conscientious. Some children were forward, others rough and boisterous, others affected and foolish, others greedy and grasping; and I could only think of one or two instances where they were simple, unaffected, polite, obliging, and considerate for others. Then I thought of our own experience. When the hope of a family first came to me, I used to picture to myself how I would bring up my children, and seeing as I thought I did most clearly the mistakes other people made, I used to resolve that I would never fall into the same.

My children, I determined, should obey a look. They should always be tidy and neat, should behave beautifully both before strangers and in private, and so reflect credit on their admiring and devoted mother. They should begin at a very early age to go to bed awake, and should fall asleep instantly. As they grew in years, they should grow in politeness, amiability, and every other virtue, until, as men and women, they became useful and ornamental members of society, ascribing all their success and goodness to the excellence of the precepts which were taught to them, and the example which was held up to them in early life.

This was my dream; but how very different was the reality! I found, as so many young mothers have found, that it is much easier to criticise the conduct of other people than it is to act superlatively oneself.

"I have been to see Mrs. Hendon, Jack."

"Well, that is more than I shall do at present," said Jack. "I don't intend to go and see Hendon again until his wife has learnt to manage her children."

"Oh, that will come in time. Remember our early troubles."

"I don't know," said Jack. "Some people never seem to find out how to treat the young ones. I would not stand second to any one in loving and admiring children; but they want keeping in their places, and they should be taught to obey."

And this, in my opinion, is the secret of making a child happy, and of finding happiness in a child. He or she must be taught to obey; and, in ordinary cases, this difficult lesson should be learnt before a child is two years and a half old. Jack and I have had *one* struggle with each of our children, and with us that struggle has never had to be repeated. The little one was given thoroughly to understand that his will must give way to ours; and when that was accomplished, the great work was done. Afterwards, the watchfulness necessary was chiefly over our own conduct. We tried never to allow ourselves to give any order that we did not see was obeyed; never to make any threat that was not carried into effect, nor any

promise that was not fulfilled. It is marvellous how a child knows when a parent's word can be relied on. I know very well (no one better) how difficult it is for a mother to keep herself sufficiently up to the mark to see that her wishes are attended to. It seems so much easier, for the moment, to let things slide, and it entails so much difficulty afterwards. The trouble is really the greatest at the beginning; for if a child forms while young a habit of obedience, and if the younger ones see that the elder ones obey, comfort and happiness seem to follow, almost as a matter of course. There is no doubt that obedient, well-conducted children are by far the happiest. Once begin trying to give a child everything he wants, and the old story is soon repeated—he asks for the moon, or something equally inaccessible.

Our way of punishing small offences was to withdraw the permission to do little services for Jack or myself; and a very heavy punishment, indeed, was to send the child to bed before papa came home. This always caused terrible grief. Our rewards were books and toys, not impure sweets and vapid buns. It is such a pity to bring up a child to think that something to eat is to be the reward of virtue. Far better give him a pretty book, which will interest and amuse him when the sweets and buns have done their mischievous work and are gone. Mothers can do so much to instil into their children's minds a reverence and love for books, which will be a blessing to them as long as they live.

We never allowed a child to be punished by any one but ourselves. I gave my servants to understand, when I engaged them, that instant dismissal would follow a blow given to any of the children. The necessity for making a rule like this may be known by any one who cares to watch the conduct of most respectable-looking nurse-maids to their young charges in any of our large towns. We ourselves never whipped a child for any less offence than deceit, or telling a lie. It seems to me such a wrong thing to be constantly boxing a child's ears, the punishment being oftener called forth by the parent's bad temper than by the child's offence. We tried to teach them, too, that they were not to expect to have a share in everything they saw. What was good for them they had without asking; what was not good for them would not be obtained by importunity.

Another plan which we found answer excellently was to give them little duties to perform—of course not anything at all arduous, but enough to make them feel themselves useful small members of society. Even a baby two years of age would put his little boots in their proper place, or get papa's slippers ready for him, and feel quite proud of the achievement.

And these plans were very successful. Even after making a due allowance for a parent's partiality, I think I may say that ours were very good children. I do not mean to say that they were perfect. They did not speak in a whisper, or walk in a straight line, or look as if they had stepped out of a band-box, but they behaved like well-conducted children, and we did not desire any more. Young folks must shout and run

about. The lungs have to be expanded, and the limbs strengthened; only they should do so at proper times, and in proper places—in the garden or the play-room, not in the drawing-room, or when in the company of grown-up people who wish to talk quietly.

This leads me to speak of their physical well-being. Our children were constitutionally healthy, though not robust; and I soon learned not to make them delicate by over-care. They were warmly clad, and well shod; they had plenty of plain, wholesome food, at regular hours; they were liberally bathed in cold water (excepting in severe weather, when the little ones had the chill just taken off); their rooms, though warm and free from draughts, were well ventilated; and then they took their chance. They went out every day when it was at all possible to do so. I took no pains to shield them from every breeze or every variation of temperature, and I think we were as free from coughs and colds as most people. During the first three or four years of our married life we had a good lengthy doctor's bill every Christmas; then we began to think we might just as well be without it, and certainly the change was as advantageous to the health of the children as it was to our pockets.

It is *not* good to be eternally dosing children with medicine. If they are not strong, let them have plenty of good air, good food, and good water; and these, with judgment and care, will in nine cases out of ten

bring them all right. If more is required, a little simple medicine taken in good time will very likely prevent greater mischief. When a woman has had three or four children, she ought to have acquired sufficient experience to act as doctor for her own family; and she will soon be able to tell when they are only a little out of sorts, and when really ill. Of course, I am not now speaking of cases of severe illness, but of the little ailments to which every child is liable. As to the medicines: allopathic doses of homœopathy and homœopathic doses of allopathy amount to very much the same thing. I recommend every mother to procure a good Handy Guide to Domestic Medicine, of which there are many to be had, both allopathic and homœopathic; by its help she may get through many small illnesses without calling in medical aid at all.

As our children grew older they grew stronger, and were unceasingly a comfort and a joy to us; and though I am thankful for my own part that their number was limited to six, yet we would not for the world have been without one of them. So far from sympathising with our American cousins in their horror of a family, a feeling I am sorry to see growing even in England, I am not ashamed to confess that I am sufficiently old-fashioned to feel that a woman has no more sacred "rights" than those enjoyed by a happy wife and mother. PHILLIS BROWNE.

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### MY LITTLE MARCH LAMB.

**B**LOW, blow, March winds, blow;  
Sing a song to my darling;  
Drive away care,  
Blow, breezes fair,  
To bring good gifts to my darling.

Shine, shine, March sun, shine;  
Open the flowers for my darling—  
Hyacinths bright,  
Narcissus white—  
To make a crown for my darling.

Play, play, lambkins play;  
Whistle, March birds, for my darling;  
Let the bees hum,  
And buttercups come,  
To brighten the meads for my darling.

Gay, gay, be as ye may,  
Ye will not compare to my darling—  
My baby fair  
With golden hair,  
My little March lamb, my darling.

JULIA GODDARD.

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## THE GATHERER.

### Thirst at Sea.

Thirst on land is bad enough, but thirst at sea, with water everywhere, yet not a drop to drink, is ten times worse. Of the agony which it occasions we may form some conception when we read, as in the case of a late shipwreck, of the survivors of a boat's crew greedily drinking the blood of their dead comrades. No one knows what his evil fortune may one day bring him to endure. For the benefit of the reader, therefore, we make a note of the following question put by the Board of Trade Examiners to the candidates for certificates of competency as mates in the merchant

service:—"What would you do in order to allay thirst, with nothing but sea-water at hand?" The answer is, "Keep the clothes, especially the shirt, soaked with sea-water." Drinking salt water to allay thirst drives the sufferer mad, but an external application of it gives relief, if it does not quite satisfy the demands of craving nature. It is a pity that this simple yet truly scientific remedy is known to but few of those who tempt the treacherous main.

### Motionless among the Billows.

There is no doubt about it; it is the motion of a vessel which produces sea-sickness. If we could only