

it was called—how the old names came crowding back!—where some cousins had lodged, adding thereby greatly to the delights of one holiday season. This must be it, close to the wayside, with the old quaint cross carved into the porch; but a smart glass conservatory now bulged at the side, and *Ste. Croix* in big gilt letters shone on the little white gate. The “mile or so” seemed short; the village, straggling down in shop and villa towards the ivy-grown square-towered church, had grown to meet us; and the post-office—which, we recalled, had even then the germ of a “store” in its diamond-paned windows—had now wondrously developed into a distinct and recognisable plate-glass type of the species. We went into the smart Wottonville Hotel, the modest Wotton Arms of our youth, for our much-needed cup of tea, which was brought to us in an æsthetic tea-pot, and with a willow-pattern plate-full of the most wafer-like bread-and-butter in place of the crusty loaf on its wooden platter and the yellow pats of former days. The elegant, emasculated repast nevertheless gave us courage for further quest of long-forsaken haunts, and turning down the lane we went in search of the game-keeper’s cottage in the Park, which, summer after summer, a quarter of a century since, had let to us its front parlour, and, I believe, all its available bedrooms. And here time and change stood still. The Park, we heard, had passed into other hands: but the trees, unheeding, shimmered their green waving shadows as of old, and the stream sang its little siren song, and the wild pansies peeped up from the grass, and the brown earth gave forth its sweet smell just as in the day when the first story was planned by the brook, and the first dream was dreamed by the stile.

It was something of a shock to find the cottage shut up; to see the clematis clinging to boarded windows, and some geese run cackling across the grass-plot where we grey-haired folks had played. But the Park with its green restfulness was reviving, and we were passing out of the chief lodge gate in a peaceful, not to say complacent, “Don’t you remember” sort of mood, when some one came out into the porch, shading her eyes from the sunshine with a gesture that seemed somehow familiar. The lodge-keeper in the old days had been a great crony of the children at the cottage, and though this portly personage bore but little suggestion in her ample lines of the comely figure we

dimly recalled—yet, could it be her mother? we thought, and in another minute determined that it might well be herself, plus “the burden of many years,” and, as the dame wished us good day, the slow, soft, country tones made us certain of her identity. Would the recognition be mutual? we wondered, we hoped, but the hope waned and the wonder grew as we fell into talk. “Yes, she had lived at that lodge nigh on five-and-forty year,” she told us, “and had seen a many changes”—with an eye quicker to note change than likeness, was our inward comment. We grew impatient to be recognised. “You *must* know me,” I insisted at last, and I took off my hat as I spoke; but, alas! the gleam of silver in the still thick locks seemed to have none of the stimulating powers usually attributed to silver. She shook her head with a polite persistency that was pitiful too, and at last, in despair, I named some of the old names. Then indeed came my reward, in shape of start and ejaculations, and pressing offers, as of old, of cowslip wine, and a hundred halting homely questions concerning the absent, the distant, and the past. “The boys? how were *they*? and where?” We could not tell her how, for us, that word had no longer a plural, but perhaps the kind soul guessed, for she took to stroking my hand in the old comfortable fashion, and “Oh,” she presently all but moaned, “what changes time do bring! Oh, deary, *deary* me! And you did promise to be so pretty!” It was impossible not to laugh; and though it was in no sense my fault that I had not kept my word, I felt the unmerited reproach in her tones, and I doubt if ever laugh conveyed more genuine sorrow for quite involuntary sin. “No! I never *should* have known you,” continued the old dame, every flower and ribbon in her cap nodding in mournful confirmation, as she stood surveying me; “deary, *deary* me! I can see you now, against that elder-berry-tree, with your long brown curls and your big blue eyes.” And as she spoke I saw it too—standing up slim and straight in the warm sunlight—the ghost of my vanished youth. What was there in its bright brown hair and its honest blue eyes to scare one so? But I shivered, and fled from it, that poor slim little ghost, with quick farewell hurrying down the hill, to find the work-a-day world lying at our feet, some of its ugliness charmed out of it in the rays of the golden sunset.

K. MAGNUS.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

FIRST PAPER.

“**E**VERY mother should keep a journal.” Dr. Pater said that in one of his lectures; and so much, at least, I can do. It is odd how things you appear to have forgotten come back when you want them. All this month past, and, indeed, before baby was born, things he said about the “Minds and Bodies of Children” are

constantly coming into my head. John and I have been parents just a month. It is very wonderful when you come to think of it, that we two should have a human being—some day, please God, to be a man—all of our very own.

But there Dr. Pater steps in: it seems to me, by the way, he will come so often into my journal that he

must lift the latch and walk in without being announced. It will be easy enough to tell which is he, and which I. All the wise, learned, *general* things are his, and the little foolish remarks about my Oswald, as if he were the first baby ever born, are made by his mother. How nice "mother" looks written, and how pleasant it is to say!

But I am wandering already. I was going to write down, while I think of it, what Dr. Pater said about children belonging to their parents. That is the mistake many parents make: they think the children are theirs to do what they like with, and that how they bring them up is their own business, and concerns nobody else. Now, parents are really put in charge of their children, to bring them up for the good of the country, and, after that, for the good of the world. When you come to think of it, this is not unreasonable. A neighbourhood must be the better or the worse for every person in it, and the neighbourhood is but a bit of the country, as the country is of the world. But all that is a long way off. I am glad I am not a Spartan mother, to have my child taken from me at six years old, and really brought up by the State; but I suppose the Spartans must have had Dr. Pater's notion, that people do not belong altogether to their own families. I must think that out some day when there is no danger of headache.

Nurse is certainly right: baby is like his father. If he grows up as good a man as my husband, I think the country and Dr. Pater, and everybody else, may be satisfied; his mother will, for one.

* * * * *

I am afraid this will not be a journal, after all—that is, if a journal should be written every day. It is eight weeks since I opened it, such busy weeks! Nobody knows how many things go wrong in a house when the mistress is out of the way. And then baby has been so delightful, and has wanted a great deal of attention, though he is as healthy as healthy can be. He certainly begins to take notice, and knows his mother quite well. But what droll mistakes the little fellow makes! I was standing with him at the nursery window just now, when he held out his arms and made great efforts to get the butcher's horse in the street below. He plainly thought the horse was near enough for him to touch, and small enough for him to hold. It is all very well to read in books or hear in lectures that the infant has no notion of size or distance, that large and small, far and near, are all one to him; but it is a different thing to see with your own eyes that a cow in a picture and a cow in a field are quite the same to baby. Such ignorance of the world we live in is beyond belief; and when you think that the little fellow's tongue must be trained to say words, and his ear to understand them, and that his feet must learn to walk—an art as new to him as tight-rope dancing would be to his mother—it is marvellous how much a child has to learn in the first two years of his life. If he only went on at the same rate, he should know all the languages and all the sciences, and everything else, by the time he is twenty. Can we help him, I wonder? We must do what we can,

but Dame Nature will be his best governess, and she has the knack of making his lessons pleasant. Baby is as pleased as Punch when he can do a new thing, if it is only rattling a bunch of keys.

* * * * *

Well, it is over, and glad am I that it is!

"Ma'am," said nurse, "if you don't take that blessed child up, I must, and will, if you was to give me notice this very night! No female with a heart could stand it."

"No, Jane, you shall do no such thing! The master knows what he is about, and we must do as he says." (It really was rather mean of John, though, to go and "look in on Chapman" when he knew the struggle was coming off.)

"Why, whatever does a gentleman know about babies, I should like to know? And there are you, ma'am, as white as a sheet and scarce able to stand, because you know the poor little dear wants his mamma!"

I made no answer, for I really did feel ill. The child was in his crib, screaming quite dreadfully; the door stood ajar, and Jane and I were listening. My secret fear was, fits! and I was just on the point of sending Jane to have a hot bath ready, when the screaming stopped; a few quiet sobs, and then the little fellow went off into a lovely sleep.

This is how it happened. I had always put baby to sleep in my rocking-chair or walking about the rooms, and tiresome enough it was. If a cinder dropped, or the door opened, or any one spoke, up he was, lively as a cricket, quite ready to begin life again for another day. I could see it fidgeted John, who wanted me to read and talk, or have a little music, as we used before baby came. So when I came down one evening, I said, not foreseeing the consequences—

"Do you know, John, Dr. Pater declares that children should always be put to bed in the dark and broad awake."

"Don't they scream, though?"

"He says they scream only because they don't like their habits to be broken. It is not that they really care about having their mother or nurse or a candle, and all that, but if you accustom them to these things it puts them out dreadfully to interfere with their habits."

"Whew! that's it, is it?"

"What have you there?" I said, when he came in to dinner next day with three or four dry-looking volumes under his arm.

"Nothing that would interest you, wife;" and though he pored over them the whole evening, I did not take much notice, for it was my day for writing home, and dear mother likes to hear of all baby's doings. Now, this is one difference between John and me. I often know things in a general way, and never think of acting on what I know; but give John what he calls a practical notion, and he never rests till he tries it. Those heavy-looking books were about physiology, and that kind of thing. John meant to get to the bottom of infants' habits.

I had forgotten the whole subject—habits, and

heavy reading, and all—when, about a week later, John broke out with—

“Look here, wife, it all lies in a nutshell!”

The dear fellow does not like to be teased with little jokes when he has anything on his mind, so I just waited to hear what lay in a nutshell; he looked as excited as if he were on the edge of a great discovery, but kept me waiting for a minute to arrange his ideas.

“You were quite right about habits. His habits are the one thing an infant is attached to. To break him of a habit is like tearing a limpet off a rock. It is not that he likes or dislikes his mid-day sleep, for instance. But get him used to it, and it becomes his nature, because his body and brain shape themselves to the habit you give him.”

“They say ‘Use is second nature,’” said I, wondering why John was so excited.

“Yes; but, Annie, you don’t see how much this means. Why, we can make anything of the boy! I had no idea so much power was put into the hands of parents. Don’t you see, my dear girl, we have only to give him the *habit* of the right thing all the way through, and we shall have, at any rate, given him a fair start in life.”

I confess I did not quite see, nor do I see yet, what there was new in all this. But then, it never occurred to me to act on it. It rather took my breath away when John went on—

“Now, about this ‘getting baby to sleep,’ for instance: the young of all animals, except man, put themselves to sleep, and sleep just so often and so long as is good for them; but the putting of ‘Herr Baby’ to sleep is quite a solemn function, during which the affairs of the house stand still. Why, it’s the greatest piece of folly. It’s pampering a little being who has come to us in a state of nature—treating him like some old Nabob who must needs be fed upon curry. No, I am not saying that you do give the child curry. It’s the pampering I’m talking of. You may say he doesn’t know; and neither does he. But it is not the things we know and think about that do us either harm or good. It’s what we get ‘used to.’ This is what grows into us, body and mind, and makes us the creatures we are. Pamper an infant, say I, and he will grow up to pamper himself. Then, besides, all this soothing and singing, and the occasional sudden starts, have a bad effect on the child’s nerves. It’s like opium-eating: the more you have the more you want. The nerves refuse to do their own work if you do it for them, and the little shocks you cannot save a child from if you ‘put him to sleep’ do real harm in other ways. The thing is, I believe, to put the child in the proper conditions for sleep, lay him in a darkened and quite silent room at precisely the same hours every day, and the rest will take care of itself. Nature will see that he sleeps.”

“Why, John, you’re as wise as Dr. Pater himself, and a deal warmer!”

“That’s because I’m new,” said he, with a twinkle. “Don’t you know it’s the new converts to a faith who are ready to go all lengths.”

I “felt in my bones” that John would have me put

baby into a dark bedroom wide awake, and leave him there, whatever came of it. This was rather dreadful to think of, so I tried a little fencing.

“It’s a pity we didn’t *begin* on this tack with baby; for, as you say, to break a child of a habit is like tearing a limpet from a rock. As we’ve begun, I suppose we must go on.”

John laughed barbarously. “Is it possible that this is all the boasted common sense of the best of women comes to? Why, don’t you see that on your principle nobody can ever be any better than he is already, and that efforts to improve the world are sheer waste of time?”

I was beginning to get cross. “I’m not talking about everybody and everything, but about baby and his bed. And I don’t see what you are driving at; one minute you speak as if habit were lord of all, and the next as if changing a habit were as easy as changing a pinafore.”

“’Tis true, my dear” (I never can bear John to say “my dear,” it always means that he is going to preach to me), “‘Custom is King of All,’ but then you, madam, are Queen of Custom. I never said it was easy to change a habit, but it can be done, and you can do it. It is not easy to break a habit, but it’s very easy to form one. Well, the thing is, form a new habit, and the new habit itself breaks the old that runs contrary to it. Get the child used to the new way, and he will soon give up fretting after the old.”

“And how long do you suppose it takes to get a child into a new habit?”

“Oh, a few days—a week at most. You begin tomorrow, and we’ll see how long it takes. By the way, suppose we keep a little book of the habits we try to form in Oswald, and the length of time we are about each. What do you say?”

Well, I never really oppose John, and besides, I knew that he was only trying to carry out the theories I had thought so wise and wonderful in Dr. Pater’s lectures. So with sinking heart I waited for baby’s bed-time next day. What happened I have already written down. The next evening—it was the 15th of May—as Oswald’s bed-time was approaching, John said in an innocent, casual sort of way—

“I must look up that fellow Brown, and see what he is doing with his aquarium. I think we must have one.”

“No, John,” I said; “I am not going to take the responsibility of such another scene as I had yesterday. If you intend your child to die in convulsions, you shall, at any rate, be there to see. Besides, who is to run for the doctor if you are out of the way?”

I could see John was in a fright; the “doctor” was too much for him. He was on the point of giving way with, “Well, have your own way; put him to sleep how you like,” when something—conscience, I think—hindered him, and he only said—

“All right, I won’t go out.”

Of course I was pleased, but really it was a little aggravating—instead of the terrific screams of the night before, we only had a little quiet crying, which lasted off and on about ten minutes.

"Ah, the new habit is taking!" said John, with a look of glee, when I got down-stairs. I nearly wished he had gone to the Browns.

Well, to make a long story short, baby cried more or less for four or five nights, then followed a little whimper as I went off with the candle. But within a week the little fellow let me leave him with wide-open eyes, and never a fret; and in five minutes or so, when I looked in, there he was, smiling like an angel in his sleep. I took sides with John, for I didn't choose to have him triumphing over me about it. Besides, it really was a comfort not to have to go through what John called "the solemn function" of putting baby to sleep every evening, and I could see it was better for the child. Henceforth we mean to go in for bringing up Oswald according to science, which means, John says, according to nature.

* * * * *

We are more intimate with the Browns than with anybody. Mr. Brown was John's friend before we were married, and Mrs. Brown is *nice*. All the same, she was a little trying. If she had been an experienced mother of half a dozen well-brought-up children, I think I could have borne it well enough; but as she had been a married woman only a year longer than I, I really did not profit much by the way she laid down the law both before baby came and since. I am a bit ashamed to confess it, but I do believe one reason why I threw myself so readily into John's notions about baby was that we should have something quite new to show Mrs. Brown when she came back from Wiltshire, where she has been staying with her mother. She returned last week, and on Wednesday they were to spend the evening with us. I thought a good deal beforehand about the effect our new ideas would have on her, but when it came to the point, Mrs. Brown was so simple and ready to learn that I forgot to "show off," and was only anxious to let her see how reasonable our plans were.

"Oh, how pretty you have made your nursery! Simple and plain though everything is, it might be a drawing-room, the colours harmonise so well, and the ornaments and pictures are so really artistic; and then the room smells so fresh. Is it that nice cool India matting?"

"Partly. We like it because it can be so easily taken up, and the room done out with a wet mop, if not scrubbed, while baby is out of the way. But John is very particular that the nursery should be bright and pretty, and that everything in it should be in good taste and good of its kind. He says that at no time of his life will Oswald take more notice of his surroundings than while he can do no more than crawl about the nursery floor, and that if we want the boy to grow up cleanly, orderly, tasteful, even artistic in feeling, we must see to it that the images stamped on his brain from the very first should be pleasing and harmonious. From the way John talks about the child's brain, you might think it was of molten metal, and every sight and sound a sort of die, fixing its image for ever in the hardening substance."

"Ah, that reminds me, I notice how softly and

how correctly your nurse speaks; she has improved wonderfully in the last three months."

"Jane is a good girl, and really fond of us. So we just tell her all we know and think about the training of baby, and you can't think how good she is about it. She tries to improve herself for his sake, and it's quite an education for her. At first she laughed, and said, 'Law, ma'am, he takes no notice, bless him!' But now I think she would rather appear before her master with a dirty apron and a rough head than before his Serene Highness Herr Baby."

"All this is interesting; I had a loose notion that these little refinements of life were only noticed by grown-up people. But truly, if Mr. Jervis is right, the nursery is the most important room in the house. What a fine big rug you have before the fire! and what is that large screen for?"

"Ah! that's another notion of John's. You have no idea what an oracle he is becoming about baby-life. He says that even of those who survive, a third 'enjoy poor health' all their lives because they were so barbarously clothed in their infancy. The natural thing is, he says, that the child's skin should be freely exposed to the atmosphere, if our climate and habits would allow of it. As they do not, we make a compromise. We let him have a couple of hours every day in his skin (or nearly so), morning and evening, after his bath; and when he is dressed, it is in such clothes as shall interfere least with the free action of the skin."

"Oh, I see; you let him tumble about on the rug, before the fire, and put up the screen to shield him from draughts."

"Yes, and we have delicious games, roll him and toss him, work his arms and his legs, do everything but put him on his feet: that, you may well believe, we carefully avoid; it makes one's heart ache to see so many bow-legged, rickety children in the streets."

"And what have you model parents invented about his clothes? I noticed he had on a soft little woollen frock, and nothing starched about him. Ah, there it is, and all his little garments, hanging out like a doll's washing! You surely don't keep that line across the nursery all day?"

"Oh dear, no; it unhooks, and is wound round a reel in the morning. But there's reason in that, too; the child's skin is giving off the waste of his body all day long, and his clothes get saturated with this waste, even when we don't see what we call perspiration; so we just turn the little garments inside out and spread them on the line, that this waste matter should pass into the air."

"I suppose there's something in it; and one's own clothes really have a slight odour when they are being got ready for the wash. But children are so sweet and wholesome."

"All the same, a child's skin throws off waste, unwholesome to have about, just as ours does. But let us go down to the gentlemen. I'm rather foggy about the *raison d'être* of the clothes, and John will explain it better than I."

"Has my wife been boring you, Mrs. Brown, with

all our new lights about Oswald?" was John's greeting.

"Dazzling me, rather. I make my humble obeisance to such highly-illuminated parents. By the way, you are deputed to instruct me, Mr. Jervis, as to why Oswald wears nothing but woollens."

"Oh, that's easily told; a child's skin is punctured all over with little ducts for the purpose of letting out moisture and other waste of the body; woollens, being porous, allow free passage to all this *débris* of the body, which would clog the ducts if allowed to remain on the skin; also, woollens are absorbent, take up perspiration like a sponge, and so relieve the skin. Again, woollens are bad conductors of heat, do not

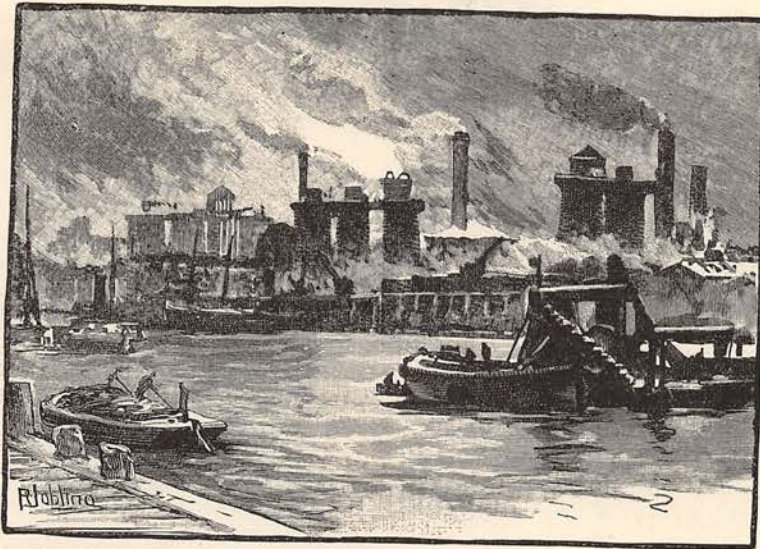
allow the heat of the body to pass off suddenly and be succeeded by a sudden chill. You mothers are behind the times. Whoever saw men playing cricket or tennis in cotton or linen? and, worse than all, in *starched* cottons, where whatever there was of a porous nature in the material is stopped up? No, take my word for it, starch should be eschewed in the nursery, and 'Oo! a' oo!' as the Scotchman said, should be the only wear."

"Nice woman, Mrs. Brown," said John, as he was locking up.

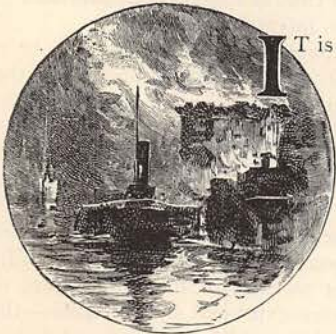
"Yes; but I hate to feel as if I had done nothing but boast the whole time."

"Don't be fanciful, my dear."

IRONOPOLIS AND ITS PEOPLE.



BLAST-FURNACES FROM THE RIVER.



BLAST-FURNACES AT NIGHT.

It is less than sixty years since a farmer received at his hospitable table, almost within a stone's-throw of the river Tees, a dweller in a town some miles above. The guest told his host that he had heard that the Quakers at Darlington were about buying the farm to build a town. The farmer was incredulous, and added that it was as likely that it should be turned into a public-house. It was a

solitary farmstead near the river; "the silence and solitude were only broken by grey-headed seals" in the river, or women with shrimping-nets on the banks. But on the spot was begun a town which has spread itself for miles; whose productions are in all parts of the world; whose market largely rules the price of iron; and whose people—gathered from many corners of the world—have abundant energy, pluck, perseverance, and belief in the future of the town in which they dwell. In the year 1830 a body subsequently known as the "Middlesbrough Owners" bought some 480 acres of land—farming land and salt marshes on the side of the Tees; and out of the purchase by Joseph Pease, Thomas Richardson, Henry Birkbeck, Simon Martin, Edward Pease, and Francis Gibson, sprang the town of Middlesbrough. The first house built—a modest

POOR HUGH! THE CRYING CHILD.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.



HY, Annie, what's the matter? You look as fagged as if you had been slaving at a desk all day!"

This was nearly too much; but I didn't break down, for John hates to see me crying.

"I've had a bad day with the child, dear: I dare say it's

his teeth, but Hugh has done nothing but fret all day; he cries about anything or nothing; and if he *should* happen to get a crumpled rose-leaf under him, his screams are enough to bring the house down."

"Poor girl! Never mind, he is off now, and we'll have a pleasant evening."

And we had. I don't know whether John was treating me as he meant me to treat baby; but all went brightly, and I felt as gay as in the delicious days before we were married. Not but that I am a great deal happier now. I would a thousand times rather be John's wife than have him for my lover; but gaiety and happiness are not exactly the same thing. But we were gay enough that evening. We both laughed at the most foolish little jokes. We played chess, and I won, though John did *not* give me the queen; then he asked me to sing him some of the old songs while he smoked; and as we sat on the sofa for a last chat before bed-time, it was more like the days of courtship than the sober doings of married folk. Dear John! I wonder if any other woman has such an old tenderheart for a husband! I know what it all meant. He saw I was done up, and he was just nursing me into happiness.

Life looked cheerful enough the next morning, and Hugh was in the most roguishly bewitching of moods. What a blessed thing it is that every day is rounded off by its own night, and you wake up in the morning full of hope and courage, whatever the trouble of the day before! At least, I always do; but that may be because I am well and happy. On this morning the little rogue was too delicious; laughing out in his glee, splashing, and showing off his bright eyes and lovely dimpled limbs with their firm pink flesh; certainly baby is healthy. I don't wonder nurse wants to play with his feet and tickle him and all that sort of thing; but I am very particular that he should be just lifted out of his bath into the bath-towel, wrapped all over, and then rubbed until he is all in a glow.

* * * * *

But I did not mean to write all this about baby's bath. What I do want to keep a note of is the talk I had with John that morning—Sunday it was, happily, so we had time to sit over breakfast.

"My dear, we must put a stop to this crying. I must not come home on another Saturday to a worn-out wife."

"Oh, I shall get used to it, and not mind. I'm afraid I worried you, poor old boy!"

"Of course; woman is born to bear! Now, I venture to class my wife amongst the most enlightened of her sex, but shall I be able to cure her of the notion that there is virtue in putting up with what might be mended?"

"I don't quite see what you mean. You men may laugh—lordly creatures that you are! But it's quite true; women need a great deal of patience."

"Indeed it's true; and that's why we bow in our hearts before the lowliest woman who does her part in life. But what I complain of is, that you bear what it would be far better for you and others that you should conquer. This crying, for example; wouldn't it be far better for our noble boy (pretty good for an adjective, madam: will it pass, or shall I add *most*?)—for our noble boy, as I said, if you broke him of these crying fits, instead of putting up with them?"

"Don't let yourself be absurd, John. Who would willingly go through such a day as I had yesterday? And then to be accused of bearing for the mere sake of enduring, as if I could have stopped the child's cries at any minute! You may believe me, that is much easier said than done."

I'm afraid I should have said more, for I was really put out, but the recollection of John's sweet kindness last night curbed this tiresome tongue.

"Doubtless, doubtless; but my contention is that 'tis a right thing to do for the child's sake, and, therefore, it can be done. But *how*, is another matter; and that it is our business to find out."

"Now, Johnnie, you can't deceive me; and 'tis no use to lug me in politely as if the finding out and the doing all rested with me! Don't I see in your eyes that you've thought it all out, and have a neat little plan, all cut and dried, and ready for me to put in practice? Own up, am I right?"

"When are you otherwise, most sapient of women? 'Tis no use beating about the bush; I do think I see my way to the 'cos why,' and so to the cure."

"Go on, dear. Though I am cross and ugly sometimes, you know I believe in you, and do my little best to work out your theories."

What followed here, is nobody's business but our own, so I don't see why I need set it down; for this journal may some day get into our boy's hands. Who knows? But perhaps he would understand by that time. If so, I need not write it; he will guess.

"Well, let's see; Hugh is rather in doubt just now as to the whereabouts of his centre of gravity; he trundles along like an unsteady hoop, and then—down he comes, flop! When he's in luck, he finds himself sitting at his ease, and only howls moderately; but as often as not he accomplishes the feat face forwards; behold, bumped forehead, scratched knees, and a hullabuloo to wake the Seven Sleepers!"

"Well, what would you have? I'm sure it's a blessing the dear child does cry when he's hurt. Think what it would be if he came by some bad accident, and gave us no warning!"

"There's something in that; only, unfortunately, the bad accident would leave him without a howl to his name."

"Oh, John, don't be horrid! It makes me quite ill to hear you talk in that unfeeling way, just as if you did not care two pins for the little cherub! Just go straight on, and if he is *not* to cry when he's hurt, pray tell me how to prevent it. I do believe the best of men haven't much feeling."

John looked a little hurt, and I was ashamed of myself the moment the words were out; for don't I know him?

"Never mind, Johnnie; you know I don't mean it: please tell me what I must do."

"Just notice how a fond and ignorant mother behaves to her child in such a case. She runs to help him when he falls, kisses the place to make it well, purrs over him, pities him, fondles him, and all with a face a deal more long and serious than if she were hurt herself."

"Well, and what would you have? I would not give a fig for a mother who did not feel, really *feel* in her own flesh, every pain of her child!"

"By their fruits ye shall know them. Love would see that the child is being made a fool of, and would sooner cut off its right hand than do such damage to the defenceless."

"I suppose you are right. Certainly a child will cry so long as you pity him. I wonder why."

"Why, the fact is, the child measures his woes by the length of his mother's face. So long as she pities, he frets; thinks of his hurt, and, therefore, feels it. It's so with grown-ups. The chances are ten to one in favour of a patient with a cheerful nurse as against him whose nurse—his wife, say—gazes at him as if the world were coming to an end. And if we are influenced in this way, just think what it must be for the child whose only means of knowing how much he is hurt is by the faces about him!"

"But surely that is nonsense! Do you think children and frogs don't feel pain?"

"They feel pain, no doubt; but the sense of suffering comes as the thoughts measure and dwell upon the hurt. It is so with soldiers on the field of battle, with firemen in a burning house; the wounds and burns they get hurt afterwards, when they have time to think of them. Now this shows at once what is to be done with a hurt child. Give him something else to think of, and don't let him see that you are concerned about his troubles."

"But what a hard-hearted wretch of a mother one would be!"

"Now, my dear, don't confound seeming and being! Don't you see? When you seem tenderest, you are really most unfeeling; and when you seem hard-hearted, you are truly loving."

"It's a new idea, but I dare say I shall take it in, in time. But about Hugh; he certainly has a way of

running to me with a pitiful face when he is hurt, or, if it's bad, screaming till I come."

"Oh, yes, and you rush up in a great fuss, seize him in your arms, with 'Where is mother's little boy hurt?' and so on, and so on, until he thinks he is very bad. I have watched the whole process many times. As for nurse, she is worse than her mistress: whips the 'naughty table,' or 'naughty chair,' that has done the mischief, until the boy takes up the cudgels for himself and beats the offending article. A sweet spirit of revenge for Christian parents to foster!"

"Oh, John, have you seen all this, and laughed at us, or worse, blamed us?"

"Don't be concerned; I am only beginning to understand, and constantly make far worse mistakes than yours. And we must talk it over with Jane. She is a good girl, and will take a hint."

"Well, so far as I understand, the thing is, not to let him see by our faces that we think there is much the matter. He is to fall on the gravel and scratch his poor knees badly, and no one is to run and pick him up; but you or I must chirrup cheerfully, 'Up again, Hugh! What made you tumble? Pick up your ball and come to mother!' And when he looks pitifully at the bleeding knees, cry out, more lively than ever, 'Why, Hugh's knees are bleeding! We must tie them up in two handkerchiefs, and then what a funny fellow he'll look!' It's all very wise, I dare say, but I should not like to harden Hugh at the cost of his love."

"Never fear it; every year will add esteem to his love for the mother who took the pains to restrain her emotions for his sake. And how well you have caught what I have in my head, though you make believe to laugh at it all! That is just how Hughie's scratched knees and other pains should be treated if we want to make a man of him. 'Pick up the ball' is a capital idea. It is a great thing to give a child something to do, whether he cries from pain or temper. When you give him something to do, you give him something else to think about, and that's the great secret. A plaything or a message, something to do or something to see, or to say, it does not matter what, so long as you 'change his thoughts,' as the nurses say; get a new idea into the little head filled with sense of pain and injury. Nothing is easier; the sweet infant mind is open to all new thoughts—that is, unless the child have been spoiled by his elders—and the new idea once in, the old pain is forgotten. I'm quite sure that a crying child—even when the child is sickly or suffering—is the handiwork of his parents."

I write all this down that I may not forget it. I do believe John is right, and Hugh shall not be a crying child if I can help it. Now, Hugh "howls," as John would say, for a variety of reasons: he howls when the cat runs away with her tail, when his porridge is too hot, when I don't take him up the moment I enter the nursery; indeed, whenever his feelings are hurt—which they are many times a day. He howls when the baby over the way won't speak to him; when he has a pain or an ache of his own; when he believes

that mother or nurse has pains ; because he may not pull over him the contents of the cream-jug ; when he tumbles—and for reasons inscrutable to the dull “big” people about him. Now, it seemed to me that John’s notion of changing his thoughts, and not letting him see that we pitied him, could not possibly fit all these.

Next morning the poor little man got up out of sorts, ready to cry on the least provocation. The morning’s bath was attended by bad symptoms, but

difficult things than this ; and if they are caused to wash their little persons bit by bit on succeeding days until at last they can do the whole—a feat to be rewarded by an ante-breakfast of ripe fruit or figs—why, the morning bath will be made a delight instead of a torment. Besides, they will be getting into two good *habits*—the enjoyment of the *feel* of water about them, and real pleasure in personal cleanliness.

Our dear two-years-old Hugh must wait for this ; but in the meantime his bath, the little simple cooling



“ON THIS MORNING THE LITTLE ROGUE WAS TOO DELICIOUS” (p. 238).

nurse got over these by telling him how the mother camel washed the baby camel in the hot sandy desert : “Now this eye, and the baby camel never cried ; now this ear,” and so on, until the baby camel and the little boy were both washed, and the latter ready for the splashing and sponging, over which much laughter goes on. I had never asked nurse how she came to invent this story of the baby camel—an unfailing favourite—but it struck me now that she was unconsciously carrying out my husband’s theory about “changing his thoughts ;” in the interest of the baby camel’s washing Hugh never thought of the inconveniences of his own.

By the way, so soon as his fifth birthday comes, Hugh shall be taught to take his own bath, and to make himself perfectly clean. Children do more

draught I gave him, and the cooling food he had all day, helped him to a better state of mind. But never believe we were without squalls, for quite half a dozen of the reasons I have mentioned, to say nothing of others beyond us. We got over a bad fall down four steps, with bumped head and a small wound from the little cart he carried, by taking it briskly and cheerfully, and treating arnica and sticking-plaister as excellent fun. Then, nurse told me, she stopped in the act a squall raised by my being suddenly called out of the nursery, by saying, “Hughie, *could* you open that drawer and find nurse a clean apron ?” In fact, that one day’s experience was enough to prove to my mind that, after all, John was right, and it was our own fault if every one’s comfort—his own most of all, poor little man—was spoiled by a crying child.

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

character, we find the system is much bound ; and to a lesser but a very uncomfortable degree study has the same effect. So has worry of mind (*i.e.*, *brain*, in this case).

A cause of dryness in the mucous membrane but seldom thought of is hard water used for drinking or cooking purposes. See to that at once, if you are a sufferer. Better send for water for your tea, coffee, or soup, to a well miles away than endure misery that may lead to a total break-up of the system.

Excessive tea and coffee drinking also tends to dry the system. Many other causes lead to the same, especially among the weaker sex.

So much for the mucous membrane. Now for the muscular. It is weakness alone that this will suffer from, and want of exercise is an all-pervading cause. All the muscles of the body are strengthened by exercise, which tends to the proper flow of all the secretions of great glands, such as the liver, pancreas, and kidney ; determines the elimination of poisons from the blood, such as bile and urea ; and keeps the skin in splendid working order. But the reader will readily perceive that if it be the mucous coat that is in fault, exercise, though it may assist Nature, will not cure the complaint as long as any of the causes above mentioned are allowed to hold sway.

The muscular coat is weakened from the want of a sufficiency of good and easily-digested food, or from over-eating. Again, if the mucous coat is long out of order, the muscular has extra work and strain in forcing onwards the over-dry contents of the canal.

For the same reasons, too, the fibrous coat will be weakened, and, as too often happens in people advanced in years, it gets stretched and to some extent useless.

I may add that if too much of green vegetables is taken, as is sometimes the case, flatulence and fermentation take place, and distension of the canal, which tends greatly to weaken both the muscular and fibrous coats.

And this leads me to add still another cause of torpor—namely, the abuse of aperient pills and aperient medicines generally. These may be needed occasionally, but to *keep on* taking them is certain to lead to the most distressing debility of the digestive canal,

which is known to end at times in complete obstruction, and this seldom fails to end all.

The primary symptoms of constringency or torpor of the digestive canal are well known (the very names I have given the complaint are sufficient to describe them), but the secondary symptoms are not so easily distinguished ; and, indeed, the case is often treated as if the torpor were a mere symptom, when it is something considerably more. The patient after a time becomes torpid himself, life loses all charm, he suffers from headaches or fulness in the head, is drowsy and stupid after meals, sleeps heavily at night without being over-much refreshed, has cold feet and maybe hands as well, is nervous, gloomy, and generally dyspeptic.

Digestion is performed very slowly, and he is apt to peptonise himself, if I may so call it, under the impression that the gastric and pancreatic juices are not in sufficient force. One week he takes tonics, the next diuretics or aperients. In a word, he is all in a muddle, and knows it, but cannot help himself.

Now the cure of all this trouble may be described in a few words. The sufferer must have—to the greatest extent possible—permanent and complete change. He must remodel his method of living ; lay down strict laws for himself, and abide by them for some time to come.

Stimulants, sauces—even tea and coffee, except in most moderate quantities—must be avoided.

He must get up in the morning when he wakes, nor sleep on too soft a bed. Hard walking exercise, or plenty of cycling, is part of the cure. He must encourage Nature by regularity in everything.

A glass of cold water before breakfast should be taken with the juice of half a lemon in it.

Foods such as bacon for breakfast, oatmeal or groats, and a moderate amount of green vegetables with dinner, all do good. Fruit for breakfast and dinner does good.

Medicine : I do not intend to prescribe drugs. Rational hygienic cures are before medicinal. The cure, indeed, lies in the sufferer's own hands. And, in conclusion, let me earnestly impress on all the fact that long-continued torpor is highly dangerous, and truly somewhat more than a symptom, for, if neglected, it may lead to a breaking-up of the constitution.

MY SULLEN CHILD

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.



T is not easy to keep up with the children in a journal. You are ill, or they are ill ; and, behold, many blank pages ! I find many scattered notices of Lucy in the last two or three volumes of my book, and I always write of her, I find, as "poor Lucy." Now, I wonder why ? The child is certainly neither unhealthy nor unhappy—at least, not with any reason ; but again and again I find this sort of entry :

"Lucy looked so little pleased at the children's 'garden party,' that I said she should stay within and play with her dolls."

"Lucy displeased with her porridge ; says nothing, but black looks all day."

"Hugh bumped against his sister : by accident, I truly believe, but Lucy can't get over it ; speaks to no one, and looks as if under a cloud."

Well, I need not go on ; the fact is, the child is

sensible of many injuries heaped upon her ; I think there is no ground for the feeling, for she is really very sweet when she has not, as the children say, the black dog on her shoulder.

It is quite plain to me, and to others also, I think, that we have let this sort of thing go on too long without dealing with it. We must take the matter in hand. How to account for it? Alas! that is easy enough ; though John says, "Nonsense, dear ! You have not a grain of sullenness in your composition !"

But, please God, our little Lucy must not grow up in this sullen habit, for all our sakes, but chiefly for her own, poor child ! What if she marry a man of like mind ? She might easily do so, for I think no one suspected this secret life of sullen rage in me—at least, not since I left the nursery. That's the worst of it ; people do not really know what misery they may transmit to their children, and allow them to grow up in ; for, after the nursery and the first days of school life, we learn to control our feelings outwardly, to walk through life with quietness and self-restraint ; and our parents and friends say, "Ah ! that child has outgrown his ugly temper," or his idleness, or sullenness, or whatever may be the bad place in his life. But suppose two such marry ! How hateful in another is the evil trait which you have been trying to mask in yourself !

Well, I felt that in this matter I might be of more use than John, who simply does not understand a temper less sunny and open than his own.

I pondered and pondered, and at last some little light broke in upon me. I thought I should get hold of one principle at a time, work that out thoroughly, and then take up the next, and so on, until all the springs of sullenness were exhausted, and all supplies from without stopped. I was beginning to suspect that the laws of habit worked here as elsewhere, and that if we could get our dear child to pass six months, say, without a "fallen countenance," she might lose this distressing failing for life.

I meant to take most of the trouble of this experiment on myself, but somehow I never can do anything without consulting John. I think men have clearer heads than we women : that is, they can see *both* sides of a question, and are not carried off their feet by the one side presented to them.

"Well, John, our little Lucy does not get over her sulky fits ; in fact, they last longer and are harder to get out of than ever !"

"Poor little girl ! It is very unhappy for her and for all of us. But don't you think that it is a sort of childish *malaise* she will grow out of ?"

"Now, have you not told me, again and again, that a childish fault left to itself can do no other than strengthen ?"

"'Tis true ; I suppose the fact is, I am slow to realise the fault. But you are right ; from the point of view of *habit* we are pledged to deal with it. Have you made any plans ?"

"Yes, I have been trying to work the thing out on your lines, just like curing a crying child. We must watch the rise of the sullen cloud, and change her

thoughts before she has had time to realise that the black fit is coming."

"You are right ; I do think the identical treatment might be followed with much success. If we can only keep the child for a week without this settling of the cloud, the mere habit would be somewhat broken."

We had not to wait for our opportunity. At breakfast next day—whether Hugh's porridge looked more inviting than her own, or whether he should not have been helped first, or whether the child had a little pain of which she was hardly aware—suddenly, her eyes fell, brows dropped, lips pouted, the whole face became slightly paler than before, the figure limp, limbs lax, hands nerveless—and our gentle child was transfigured—become entirely unlovable. So far, her feelings were in the emotional stage ; her injury, whatever it was, had not yet taken shape in her thoughts ; she could not have told you what was the matter, because she did not know ; but very soon the busy brain would come to the aid of the quick emotions, and then she would be sulky of fixed purpose. Her father saw the symptoms rise, and knew what they would lead to ; and, with the promptness which has many a time saved us, he cried out—

"Lucy, come here, and hold up your pinafore !" and Lucy trotted up to his side, her pinafore held up very much, to receive the morning dole of crumbs for the birds ; presently, back she came radiant with the joy of having given the birds a good breakfast, and we had no more sulky fits that day. This went on for a fortnight or so, with fair but not perfect success : whenever her father or I was present we caught the emotion before the child was conscious of it, and succeeded in turning her thoughts into some pleasant channel. But poor Jane, who has less time now than in Hugh's earlier days, has had bad hours with Lucy ; there would sit the child, pale and silent, and with fallen countenance, the day through, doing nothing because she liked to do it, but only because she was made. And, once the fit had settled down, thick and steady as a London fog, neither her father nor I could help in the least. Oh, the inconceivable settled cloudiness and irresponsiveness of that sweet child-face !

Our tactics were at fault ; no doubt they helped so far as they went. We managed to secure bright days that might otherwise have been cloudy, if we were present at the first rise of the sullen mood. But it seemed impossible to bring about so long an abstinence from sullen fits as would eradicate the *habit*. We pictured to ourselves the dreary life that lay before our pretty little girl : the sort of insulation, the distrust of her sweetness which even one such sullen fit would give rise to : worse, the isolation which accompanies this sort of temper, and the anguish of repentance to follow. And then, I know madness is often bred of this strong sense of injured personality.

It is not a pleasant thing to look an evil in the face. Whether or not "a little knowledge is a dangerous," certainly it is a trying thing. If we could only have contented ourselves with "Oh, she'll grow out of it

by-and-by," we could have put up with even a daily cloud. But these forecasts of our little girl's future made the saving of the child, at *any* cost, our most anxious care.

"I'll tell you what, Annie: we must strike out a new line. In a general way I do believe it's best to deal with a child's faults without making him aware that he has them. It fills the little beings with a ridiculous sense of importance to have anything belonging to *them*, even a fault. But in this case I think we shall have to strike home, and deal with *the cause* at least

You women are sensitive creatures. Why, do you know, it never occurred to me that it might be all *my* fault. Well, I will not laugh at the fancy. Let us take it seriously, even if, as it seems to me, a little morbid. Let us suppose that this sad sullenness, of which I hear so much and see so little, is indeed Lucy's inheritance from her sweet mother—may she only inherit all the rest, and happy the man whose life she blesses! The question is, not 'How it has come?' but 'How are we to deal with it?' Equally, you and I. Poor things! It's but a very half-and-half kind of matrimony if each is



"LUCY'S PEAR WAS NOT TOUCHED" (p. 338).

as much as with *the effects*, and that chiefly because we have not the effects entirely under our control."

"I'm not sure I quite see what you mean," I said, for I had a shrinking dread that John was going to uproot some horror both in Lucy and her mother. Her sullen temper was, I became more and more certain, an inherited trait. And though I had really made great efforts to make him know the worst that was in me, it was a different thing to have him poking about amongst the roots of our being—my poor little girl's and mine—and fetching the ugly thing up between his fingers! "But, John, what if there is no cure? What if this odious temper were *hereditary*—our precious child's inheritance from those who should have brought her only good?"

"Poor little wife! so this is how it looks to you.

to pick out his or her own particular bundle of failings, and deal with it single-handed. This poor fellow finds the prospect too much for him! Nay, as a matter of fact, I believe that every failing of mind, body, temper, or what not, is a matter of inheritance, and that each parent's particular business in life is to pass his family forward freed from that particular vicious tendency which has been his own bane—or hers, if you prefer it."

"Well, dear, do as you will; I feel that you know best. What it would be in these days of greater insight to be married to a man who would say, 'There! that boy may thank his mother!' for this or the other failure! Of course the thing is done now, but more often as a random guess than otherwise."

"To return to Lulu. I think we shall have to show

her herself in this matter—to rake up the ugly feeling, however involuntary, and let her see how hateful it is. Yes, I do not wonder you shrink from this. So do I; it will destroy the child's unconsciousness."

"Oh, John, how I dread to poke into the poor little wounded heart, and bring up worse things to startle her!"

"I am sorry for you, dear, but I think it must be done; and don't you think that you are the person to do it? While they have a mother, I don't think I could presume to poke too much into the secrets of the children's hearts."

"I'll try; but if I get into a mess you must help me through."

The opportunity came soon enough. It was pears this time. Hugh would never have known whether he had the biggest or the least. But we have told Jane to be especially careful in this matter. "Each of the children must have the biggest or best as often as one another, but there must be no fuss, no taking turns, about such trifles. Therefore, very rightly, you gave Hugh the biggest, and Lucy the smallest pear." Lucy's pear was not touched; there the child sat, without word or sob, but all gathered into herself, like a red anemone whose tentacles have been touched. The stillness, whiteness, and brooding sullenness of the face, the limp figure, and desolate attitude, would have made me take the little being to my heart, if I had not too often failed to reach her in this way. This went on all day, all of us suffering, and in the evening, when I went to hear the children's prayers before bed, I meant to have it out.

We were both frozen up with sadness, and the weary little one was ready to creep into her mother's heart again. But I must not let her yet.

"Well, my poor Lucy, so you have had a very sad day?"

"Yes, mother," with a little quivering sob.

"And do you know we have all had a very sad day—father, mother, your little brother, nurse—every

one of us has felt as if a black curtain had been hung up to shut out the sunshine."

The child was sympathetic, and shivered at the thought of the black curtain and the warm sunshine shut out.

"And do you know who has put us all out in the dark and the cold? One little girl drew the curtain, because she would not speak to any of us, or be kind to any of us, or love any of us all the day long; so we could not get into the sunshine, and have been shivering and sad in the cold."

"Mother, mother!" with gasping sobs, "not you and father?"

"Ah! I thought my little girl would be sorry; now, let us try to find out how it all was. Is it possible that Lucy noticed that her brother's pear was larger than her own?"

"Oh, mother, how could I?" and the poor little face was hidden in her mother's breast, and the outbreak of sobs that followed was too terrible. I feared it might mean actual illness for the sensitive little soul. I think it was the right thing to do; but I had barely courage enough to leave the results in more loving Hands.

"Never mind; don't cry any more, darling, and we will ask our Father above to forgive and forget all about it. Mother knows that her dear little Lucy will never love Lucy best any more. And then the black curtain will never fall, and we shall never be a whole long day standing sadly out in the cold. Good-night for mother, and another sweet good-night from father."

The treatment seems to answer. On the slightest return of the old sullen symptoms we show our poor little girl what they mean. But the grief that follows is so painful that I'm afraid we could not go on with it, for the sake of the child's health; but, happily, we very rarely see a sulky face now; and when we do, we turn and look upon our child, and the look melts her, until she is all gentleness, patience, and love.

THE TRYSTING-PLACE.

I.

WESTWARD over the pale green sky
 The rosy pennons of sunset fly;
 Nestward slowly the great rooks hie,
 With cawing and laboured flapping;
 The bushes blend in a vagueness dark,
 And the further trees stand tall and stark;
 I hear the rushes whisper and shake,
 As a flutter of wind begins to wake,
 And louder grows
 In the quick repose
 The sound of the river's lapping.

II.

Still half an hour, by the abbey-chime!
 I come to the tryst before the time;
 I hearken the river's rippled rhyme,
 And the sedge's rustled greeting;
 And I cheat my heart with feignèd fears,
 And sigh as I wait (for no one hears),
 To make the joy more rich and vast
 When I feel his lips on my own at last,
 And hear no sound
 As the world goes round
 But the throb of our two hearts meeting.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

unto you." Very happily has this distinguished authoress expressed the real feelings of many of her fellow-countrymen. Their charming behaviour in society is, we are convinced, in a large number of instances, much more than a thin veneer, covering a hollow, selfish nature. When we see, as we often may, the poorest men and women respectful and considerate to each other in the casual intercourse of life, as well as towards their superiors, and when we find them ready to put themselves to considerable inconvenience to serve or direct a foreigner, without any hope of reward, we cannot doubt that such acts are dictated by genuine kindness of disposition.

At the same time there is sometimes a comic side to the picture. For those who are fond of statistics it might be an interesting question to compare the profits derived from the hat trade in France and in England. Considering the amount of wear and tear to which the requirements of etiquette must expose them, we should suppose their manufacture to be a most lucrative business. It would not be easy to enumerate all the occasions where the hat plays a part in the owner's daily life. Does a Frenchman meet a lady of his acquaintance, not content with raising his hat at the beginning and end of the conversation, he will patiently stand in all weathers with uncovered head until the fair one is pleased to bring the interview to a close. Do men, not on intimate terms, wish to exchange civilities, off go both hats again. Whenever, too, they enter a house, or a shop, or an office, or a public conveyance, there is the same inevitable ceremony, or offence may be given. Even if a strange lady passes a gentleman on the staircase of an hotel or private house, a slight elevation of the hat must mark the deference due to her sex. Much of this may appear to us matter-of-fact folks almost puerile and superfluous. Most, however, will admire, and be inclined to imitate, the reverence for sorrow and death expressed by uncovering the head at the sight of a passing funeral. There

is a delicate touch of nature in this simple act which needs no comment.

Moreover, in the Frenchman's exuberant politeness to ladies, we can hardly fail to recognise another elevating principle—a chivalrous respect for woman. It may seem odd to us that a French lady will never be the first to salute a gentleman, but always waits to be saluted. We allow our ladies this privilege as a protection against the intrusions of strangers; but the French, with a somewhat happier idea, consider the man's respectful greeting as an act of knightly homage. A similar sentiment suggests the jealous care exercised over young unmarried ladies, forbidding them to visit or go out alone. For the same reason, a lady will never offer her hand to a gentleman in the street or at home except he be a very intimate friend, or a relative. She receives him with a graceful bow, and at his departure may deign, as a mark of favour, to shake hands. This studious regard to the dignity of woman is also seen in correspondence. A letter from a gentleman to a lady, unless he can claim the privileges of relationship or age, would be inadmissible which did not conclude with some assurance of homage or respect. So ingrained is this feeling into the Gallic mind that a Frenchman, writing in English to an English lady and thinking to combine the etiquettes of both nations, has been known to subscribe himself as "Yours very affectionately and respectfully."

But here we must pause on the threshold of a wide and interesting subject. Enough, perhaps, has been said to show that Frenchmen are not the mere creatures of impulse which some have represented them to be, but are a remarkably logical and methodical race. Their politeness, too, is not such an empty, vapid form as it is sometimes supposed to be. Rather, in very many instances, is it the natural outcome of a kind and generous heart. Indeed, in these and other national characteristics we may find not a little worthy of imitation.

WILLIAM BURNET.

VOLATILE EFFIE.

A LEAF OUT OF A YOUNG MOTHER'S JOURNAL.



UT now for the real object of this letter. (Does it take your breath away to get four sheets?) We want you to help us about Effie. John and I are at our wits' end, and should most thankfully take your wise head and kind heart into counsel. I fear we have been laying up trouble for ourselves and our little girl. The ways of nature are, there's no denying, very attractive in all young creatures; and it is so delightful to see a child do as "'tis its nature to," that you forget that nature, left to herself, produces a waste,

be it ever so pretty. Our little Effie's might so easily become a wasted life!

But, not to prose any more, let me tell you the history of Effie's yesterday—one of her days is like the rest, and you will be able to see where we want your help.

Figure to yourself the three little heads bent over "copy-books" in our cheery school-room. Before a line is done, up starts Effie—

"Oh, mother, may I write the next copy, S H E L L? 'Shell' is so much nicer than K N O W, and I'm so tired of it!"

"How much have you done?"

"I have written it three whole times, mother, and I really *can't* do it any more! I think I could do SHELL; 'shell' is so pretty!"

By-and-by we read; but Effie cannot read: can't even spell the words—don't scold us; we know it is quite wrong to spell in a reading lesson—because all the time her eyes are on a smutty sparrow on the topmost twig of the poplar; so she reads, "WIHT, birdie!" We do sums; a short line of addition is, to poor Effie, a hopeless and an endless task. "Five and three make—nineteen!" is her last effort, though she

Effie's dawdling ways, her restless desire for change of occupation, her always wandering thoughts, lead to a good deal of friction, and spoil our schoolroom party: which is a pity, for I want the children to enjoy their lessons from the very first. What do you think the child said to me yesterday, in the most coaxing, pretty way? "There are so *many* things nicer than lessons! Don't you think so, mother?" Yes, dear aunt, I see you put your finger on those unlucky words, "coaxing, pretty ways," and you look, if you do not say, that awful sentence of yours about sin



"EYES AND EARS FOR EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS BUT HER OWN."

knows quite well how to add up figures. Half a scale on the piano, and then, eyes and ears for everybody's business but her own. Three stitches of hemming, and idle fingers plait up the hems or fold the duster in a dozen shapes. I am in the midst of a thrilling history talk, "so the Black Prince—" "Oh, mother, do you think we shall go to the sea this year? my pail is quite ready, all but the handle, but I can't find my spade *anywhere!*"

And thus we go on, pulling Effie through her lessons somehow; but it is a weariness to herself and all of us, and I doubt if the child learns anything except by bright flashes. But you have no notion how quick the little monkey is. After idling through a lesson, she will overtake us at a bound at the last moment, and thus escape the wholesome shame of being shown up as the dunce of our little party.

being bred of allowance. Isn't that it? It is quite true; we are in fault. Those butterfly ways of Effie's were delicious to behold, until we thought it time to set her to work, and then we found that we should have been training her from her babyhood. Well,

"If you break your plaything yourself, dear,
Don't you cry for it all the same?
I don't think it is such a comfort
To have only oneself to blame!"

So, like a dear, kind aunt, don't scold us, but help us to do better. Is Effie constant to anything? you ask. Does she stick to any of the "*many* things so much nicer than lessons?" I am afraid that here, too, our little girl "is unstable as water." And the worst of it is, she is all agog to be at a thing, and then, when you think her settled to half an hour's pleasant play, off she is, like any butterfly. She says her "How

doth the little busy bee" dutifully; but when I tell her she is not a bit like a busy bee, but is rather like a foolish, flitting butterfly, I'm afraid she rather likes it, and makes up to the butterflies as if they were akin to her, and were having just the good time she would prefer. But you must come and see the child to understand how volatile she is.

"Oh, mother, *please* let me have a good doll's wash this afternoon. I'm quite unhappy about poor Peggy! I really think she *likes* to be dirty!"

Great preparations follow, in the way of little tub, and soap, and big apron; the little laundress sits down, greatly pleased with herself, to undress her dirty Peggy; but hardly is the second arm out of its sleeve, than, *presto!* a new idea: off goes Effie to clean out her doll's house, deaf to all nurse's remonstrances about "nice hot water," and "poor dirty Peggy!"

I'm afraid the child is no more constant to her loves than to her play; she's a loving little soul, as you know, and is always adoring somebody. Now it's her father, now Juno, now me, now Hugh; and the rain of warm kisses, the soft clasping arms, the nestling head, are delicious, whether to dog or man. But, alas! Effie's blandishments are a whistle you must pay for; to-morrow it is somebody else's turn, and the bad part is that she has only room for one at a time. If we could but get a little visit from you, now, Effie would be in your pocket all day long; and we, even Peggy, would be left in the cold. But do not flatter yourself it would last; I think none of Effie's attachments has been known to last longer than two days.

If the chief business of parents is to produce *character* in their children, we have done nothing for Effie; at six years old the child has no more power of application, no more habit of attention, is no more able to make herself do the thing she ought to do, indeed has no more desire to do the right thing, than she had at six months old. We are getting very unhappy about it: John feels strongly that parents should labour at character, as the Indian gold-beater labours at his vase; that *character* is the one thing we are called upon to produce. And what have we done for Effie? We have turned out a "fine animal," and are glad and thankful for that; but that is all; the child is as wayward, as unsteady, as a young colt. Do help us, dear aunt. Think our little girl's case over, and, if you can, get at the source of the mischief, and send us a few hints for our guidance, and we shall be yours gratefully evermore.

* * * * *

And now for my poor little niece! Her mother piles up charges against her, but how interesting and amusing and like the free-world of fairy-land it would all be were it not for the *tendencies* which, in these days, we talk much about and watch little against. We bring up our children in the easiest, most happy-go-lucky way, and all the time talk solemnly in big words about the momentous nature of every influence brought to bear upon them. But it is true; these naughty, winsome ways of Effie's will end in her growing up like half the "girls"—that is, young

women—one meets. They talk glibly on many subjects; but test them, and they know nothing of any; they are ready to undertake anything, but they carry nothing through; this week so-and-so is their most particular friend, next week such another; even their amusements—their one real interest—fail and flag; but then, there is some useful thing to be learnt: how to set tiles or play the banjo! And all the time, there is no denying, as you say, that this very fickleness has a charm so long as the glamour of youth lasts, and the wayward girl has bright smiles and winning, graceful ways to disarm you with. But youth does not last; and the poor lassie, who began as a butterfly, ends as a grub, tied to the earth by the duties she never learnt how to fulfil—that is, supposing she is a girl with a conscience; wanting that, she dances through life whatever befalls; children, husband, home, must take their chance. "What a giddy old grandmother the Peterfields have!" remarked a pert young man of my acquaintance. But, indeed, the "giddy old grandmother" is not an unknown quantity!

Are you saying to yourself, a prosy old "great-aunt" is as bad as a "giddy old grandmother"? I really have prosed unconscionably, but Effie has been on my mind all the time, and it's quite true you must take her in hand.

First, as to her lessons: you *must* help her to gain the power of attention; that should have been done long ago, but better late than never, and an aunt who has given her mind to these matters takes blame to herself for not having seen the want sooner. "But," I fancy you are saying, "if the child has no faculty of attention, how can we give it to her? It's just a natural defect." Not a bit of it! Attention isn't a faculty at all, though I do believe it is worth more than all the rest put together; this, at any rate, is true, that no talent, no genius, is worth much without the power of attention; and this is the power which makes man or woman successful in life.

Attention is no more than this—the power of giving your mind to what you are about; the bigger the better, so far as the mind goes, and great minds do great things; but have you never known a person with a great mind—"real genius," his friends say—who goes through life without accomplishing anything? It is just because he wanted the power to "turn on," so to speak, the whole of his great mind, he could not bring it all to bear on the subject in hand.

"But Effie?" Yes; Effie must get this power of "turning on." She must be taught to give her mind to sums and reading, and even *dusters*. Go slowly—a little to-day and a little more to-morrow. In the first place, her lessons must be *interesting*. Do not let her scramble through a page of "reading," for instance, spelling every third word, and then waiting to be told what it spells, but see that every day she learns a certain number of new words—six, twelve, twenty, as she is able to bear them; not "spellings"—terrible invention!—but words that occur in a few lines of some book of stories or rhymes; and these she should know, not by spelling, but by *sight*. It

Does not matter whether the new words be long or short, in one syllable or in four, but let them be *interesting* words. For instance, suppose her task for to-day were "Little Jack Horner," she should learn to know *by sight* thumb, plum, Christmas, corner, &c., before she begins to read the rhyme—make "plum" with her loose letters, print it on her slate, let her find it elsewhere—in her book—any device you can think of, so that "plum" is brought before her eyes half a dozen times, and each time recognised and named. Then, when it comes in the reading lesson, it is an old friend, read off with delight. Let every day bring the complete mastery of a few new words, as well as the keeping up of the old ones. At the rate of only six a day, she will learn, say, fifteen hundred in a year—in other words, she will have learned to read! And if it does not prove to be reading without tears, and reading with *attention*, I shall not presume to make another suggestion about the dear little girl's education.

But do not let the lesson last more than ten minutes, and insist, by brisk, bright determination, on the child's full concentrated attention of eye and mind for the whole ten minutes. Do not allow a moment's dawdling at lessons.

Having got through ten minutes' real *work*, send her off for ten minutes' play, something really "nice" to do, for herself and the rest.

I would not give her rows of figures to add yet; use dominoes, or the domino cards prepared for the purpose—the point being to add or subtract the dots on the two halves in a twinkling, or at a glance; you will find that the three can work together at this as at the reading, and the children will find it as exciting and delightful as "Old Soldiers." Effie will be all alive here, and will take her share of work merrily; and this is a point gained. Do not, if you can help it, single the little maid out from the rest and throw her on her own responsibility. 'Tis a "heavy and a weary weight" for the bravest of us, and the little back will get a trick of bending under "life" if you do not train her to carry it lightly, as any Eastern woman her water-jar.

Then vary the lessons: now head, and now hands; now tripping feet and tuneful tongue; but in every lesson let Effie and the other two carry away the joyous sense of—

"Something attempted, something done."

No droning wearily over the old stale work, which must be kept up all the time, it is true, but rather by way of an exciting memory game than as the lesson of the day, which should be always a distinct *step* that the children can recognise.

You have no notion, until you try, how the "now-or-never" feeling about a lesson quickens the attention of the most volatile child; what you can drone through all day, you will; what *must* be done, is done. Then there is a by-the-way gain besides that of quickened attention. I once heard a wise man say that, if he must choose between the two, he would rather his child should learn the meaning of "must" than inherit a fortune. And here you will be able to bring moral force to bear on wayward Effie. Every lesson must have its own time, and no other time in this world is there for it. The sense of the preciousness of time, of the irreparable loss when a ten minutes' lesson is thrown away, must be brought home.

Let your own unaffected distress at the loss of "golden minutes" be felt by the children, and also be visited upon them by the loss of some small childish pleasure which the day should have held. It is a sad thing to let a child dawdle through a day and be let off scot-free. You see, I am talking of the children, and not of Effie alone, because it is so much easier to be good in company; and what is good for her will be good for the trio.

But there are other charges: poor Effie is neither steady in play nor steadfast in love! Don't you think the *habit* of attending to her lessons may help her to stick to her play? Then encourage her. "What! The doll's tea-party over! That's not the way grown-up ladies have tea; they sit and talk for a long time! See if you can make your tea-party last twenty minutes by my watch!" Now, this failing of Effie's is just a case where a little gentle ridicule might do a great deal of good. It is a weapon to be handled warily, for one child may resent, and another take pleasure in being laughed at; but, managed with tact, I do believe it's good for children and grown-ups to see the comic side of their doings.

But I do think we err in not enough holding up certain virtues for our children's admiration; put a premium of praise on every finished thing—if 'tis only a house of cards. Steadiness in work is a step on the way towards steadfastness in love. Here, too, the praise of constancy might very well go with good-humoured family "chaff," not about the new loves which are lawful, whether of kitten or playmate, but about the discarded old loves. Let Effie and all of them grow up to glory in their constancy to every friend.

There, I'm sending you a notable preachment instead of the few delicate hints I meant to offer; but never mount a woman on her hobby—who knows when she will get off again?

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

