

"Education in the Home."

by

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Man is influenced by his environments. He lives for himself in no respect. Material and social surroundings affect his well being, developing the gifts bestowed upon him by nature either for good or for evil. He cannot acquire a fortune in a desert land or even in a fruitful land, if he lives alone; nor can he as an isolated human being ever attain any heights of moral excellence. Having no temptations he requires no will power to resist them, need make no effort for that purity of life which seems so difficult to maintain in some districts. But throw temptation in his way, surround him with the natural influences that require resistance, and then he who overcomes all obstacles and rises above that will show his strength of character and will earn the respect of his fellow man.

It is the same with the young and inexperienced child, and even some adults, as it is with undeveloped Indian. Take the Red man from his home, place him school. He will soon take up the habits of the people with whom he associates. He is taught the ways of the white man. Let him return to his people after finishing his education, and more than fifty percent of them go back to the

blanket and the habits of their race. The remainder by their efforts to apply their nature to the development of their, rise above the common level and pursue some useful occupation in life.

But from where, you will ask does this natural tendency come? Where have we developed it? From the place we learn our first and most lasting impressions. From the place we first begin to distinguish between right and wrong - the home. What then is there in the home to influence us? What is a home? Is it a dwelling owned or rented by a man in which his wife keeps house? Is it a place to cook wash mend sew or converse? Ask the wanderer in foreign lands or the hard working man; ask the learned professor or ignorant child, and the first thought that comes to them is of a place ruled by love. A place where the wife or mother is the central and most feature.

The word "home" has in it the elements of love rest, permanency, and liberty, and besides these the idea of an education by which all that best and purest within us is developed into nobler forms fit for a higher life.

In the beginning of education we find that the homes were scarcely more than a dwelling, or we might say a small kingdom where the husband

and was the chief ruler, and all others were to serve him, even at great sacrifice and pain to themselves. The Chinese race being one of the earliest that we have any record of, the education was of the most rudimentary form, no attention being to the home education except the teaching of obedience and politeness; This the mother taught them and as a reward often had to sacrifice her girls to please her husband. Almost the same conditions existed in India and Persia. The mother being loved and respected by the children, yet the father being the ruler.

In the time of the Jews we find the home relations much elevated. Great progress was made, and the husband and wife being equal were companions and co-workers and helpers in the education of their children. Equal education was not permitted, yet these homes were far in advance of any other at that time or even after that time, for no other race of people has given such careful home training to its children, from the earliest times to the present. There being no Jewish schools until after the destruction of the nation and the loss of their civil liberty, this home training was absolutely necessary if they had any education.

Following the education through the Egyptians the Greeks, and the Romans we find them in advance of China and India. There is a gradual realization of the importance of home education though at no time is it very marked. In none was the complete individual educated, but special was laid on some one phase, thus giving them an abnormal education along some lines and leaving them ignorant along others.

It has been less than a century since woman has been admitted to the professions, or any occupation except teaching, needle work, keeping boarders, working in cotton mills, in book-binders type setting and house hold service. But since the professional work has gradually been opened to woman, more educational advantages have been furnished them to prepare for their duties, and later in life they have made use of this knowledge when they have had homes of their own, and have been better able to impart knowledge and training to the children given in their keeping.

Home conditions have gradually improved as it became necessary for new occupations to open and a broader education was required. Today only a very few professions are closed to woman

and her ability to compete and co-operate with man, increases her power and influence and proportionally increases her fitness to care for a home.

It can safely be said that very few homes furnish the educational advantages and encouragements that they should in order to obtain the best results. Many parents are ignorant as regards books, many are mere book-worms and have had no experience, yet they make home and attempt to train their children up to be well rounded men and women. Many have both the book learning and experience and then make a failure.

Judging the future from the past and present, it seems only just to say that the future generations will advance the home education as it has advanced in the past. The different experiments will serve only as a starting point for the future generations to begin its work.

In all societies, professions, or occupations there is a standard or requirement whereby men must acquire a certain amount of knowledge and pass an examination or have some financial acquirement. But in the fundamental

though the highest occupation, that of home-building and home education, there has never been any acquirements. The most ignorant and poor are just as eligible as the rich and educated. It seems almost cruelty to deprive them of this privilege, but not until the men and women have been taught the rudiments of home building, and can pass an examination showing their ability or knowledge to care for and train children, and have enough property to ensure their education and other advantages, then and only then will the general standard of our homes be raised far above the present, and the number of ignorant waifs and beggars will be decreased.

All teachers are required to reach a certain standard and show by their examinations, that they have the ability to teach our children. Then why should it not be more important that we, who have much more influence over them than another person possibly can, to reach a certain standard before we are permitted to have a home.

We see the horse studied, sheltered fed with certain amounts and varieties, given physical exercise, well groomed, and given every

possible attention that will make the horse more comfortable. Then we contrast these conditions with the conditions existing in many houses, for we cannot call them homes, and long for a higher enlightenment of the people, so they will realize that the human being needs more careful training than the dumb beasts. If the young parents only knew how much the little things affect the child's after life, more pains would be taken that the child would see these little things the first time, in the light that would be most impressive to them.

'Tis while the child is young that the mind is most receptive and most easily moulded, and the early influences and surroundings lay the foundations for the future minds and habits.

It is an acknowledged fact that musicians are the most sensitive people and readily respond to their inner feelings and emotions. Many times a violent passion may be quieted by a soft piece of music, or the softer passions may be aroused and a more sympathetic nature will result. The power of music is at no time so effective on the individual

as during the early life. Then the child's mind is plastic and impressions are easily made. Usually the first impressions a child receives he will carry thru life and if more pains would be taken in the to arouse the feelings the world would be filled with a more sympathetic set of people and a wider interest in the success and happiness of our fellow beings. Yet comparatively few people in the world enjoy the privilege of a musical training and surroundings, simply because they cannot afford it or because the parents not having been ^{thus} educated deem it unnecessary and foolish.

The father or mother who laughs or sneers at an unsuccessful attempt of the child, is likely to discourage that child so he will never try the act again. Rather let the parent sympathize with the child and encourage him to try again and again until he is successful. The child who receives encouragement will persevere until he succeeds and always remember the person who gave him the encouragement with the kindest of feeling thus we have two objects gained - the end in view and feeling for others.

Many professional and society men leave the case of their children entirely to the mother thus over-burdening her with the many cares and she becomes cross and peevish and not a fit teacher for the child. Many society parents leave the entire care of their children to some disinterested person, while they enjoy themselves, knowing their children are being properly clothed and fed. No matter how faithful a nurse may be she cannot have the same interest in the child that the faithful parents do, and in very few cases are the ideal results

The parents who co-operate in the education of their children intellectually, morally and physically, aiding them to form good habits and ideals while young, will be more satisfied with the result. Then the home will serve as an example for the ideals of the child. Children are naturally imitative and think that the parents are perfect so pattern after them. Thus the child is a living commentary upon its parents, and a moral production of the parents. The child readily discerns any discrepancy between the parents teaching and example, between their profession and actions. To give the

children good advice and a bad example is but beckoning them one way while you deliberately take them by the hand and lead them the opposite direction.

Love is the basis of all homes and through it much may be accomplished. Without love there is no home - a mere dwelling place. And as the mother studied each individual nature and characteristic of the little life entering that home, more pains will be taken to refrain from the unkind and sharp reproving words which checks and withers the tenderest blossoms of the dearest love as the delicate leaves of the vine are troubled by the faintest breeze. The caress and sympathy which every child, no matter in what station of life craves for from the cradle to manhood and womanhood will be more freely bestowed and the child early form the habit of confiding in its parents, and will so continue just as long as the parents are free and sympathetic in return. Destroy this fellowship and the child will go to a friend for counsel, instead of the natural advisor the father or the mother.

Some parents complain because their children donot confide in them. But do the parents first confide in the child? Do they place

their trust in the child and teach him to be true to that trust? The natural tendency of human beings is to give what they receive, and unless the child first receives how then will he know what to give?

Love is as necessary to the majority of children as the air they breathe and if the parents' caress is denied them they will seek it elsewhere, and perhaps in private. Many of the youthful marriages are contracted for this reason and a home is begun with love and ignorance as the foundation. How can we expect the results of this home to compare with the one in which the parents have been liberal in their affections and by advice and counsel have prolonged the time before marriage, thus giving greater opportunity to broaden the field of knowledge.

The child likes amusement and enjoyment and if slight suggestions are made, or the objects for amusement thrown in his way he will draw upon his own resources for the combinations of these objects in different forms, thus aiding in the development of his self activities.

Pictures or picture-books is one of the best methods for developing a love of literature, and aiding the imagination.

Many parents think that as soon as the child is old enough to start to the public schools that their work is at an end. Perhaps it is, but those same parents will see the time when they will know of their mistake and realize that that a parent can do much to aid the teacher in the education of the child, as well as controlling the morals of that child. If the parents fail to educate the children to grapple with the problems of life, assuming all responsibility and shielding them from every care, they know not how to do for themselves, but are a life long dependence upon another.

But if the sons and daughters are taught the beauty of domestic happiness, in connection with the moral, intellectual and physical as exemplified in our own home life, we almost invariably send out good husbands and wives to bless and light other homes, and they in turn send the sunlight on its way to bless those that come after them.

In all probability the ideal standard will never be reached but the general tendency is to create better homes; and when woman realizes that she must lead in that work of home building and home education and

strives harder for the ideal home, which is the noblest work of art possible to human creatures, in as much as it is the earthly representative of our best and highest rest. The girls and boys will be educated to know and understand the cares and responsibilities connected with such homes, the harmony and affection will be increased in the home, thus decreasing the number of divorce cases; and a nation of men will be sent out who will trample and crowd out the evil in their efforts to maintain and promote the good.