



The Home Department

Conducted by Helen Watts McKee

No Place for Boys

What can a boy do, and where can a boy stay,
If he is always told to get out of the way?
He can not sit here and he must not stand there.

The cushions that cover that fine rocking chair

Were put there, of course, to be seen and admired;

A boy has no business to ever be tired.

The beautiful roses and flowers that bloom

On the floor of the darkened and delicate room

Are not made to walk on—at least, not by boys;

The house is no place, anyway, for their noise.

Yet boys must walk somewhere; and what if their feet,

Sent out of our houses, sent into the street,

Should step around the corner and pause at the door,

Where other boys' feet have paused often before;

Should pass through the gateway of glittering light,

Where jokes that are merry and songs that are bright

Ring out a warm welcome with flattering voice,

And temptingly say, "Here's a place for the boys."

Ah, what if they should? What if your boy or mine

Should cross o'er the threshold which marks out the line

'Twixt virtue and vice, 'twixt pureness and sin,

And leave all his innocent boyhood within?

Oh, what if they should, because you and I,

While the days and the months and the years hurry by,

Are too busy with cares and with life's fleeting joys

To make round our hearthstone a place for the boys?

There's a place for the boys. They will find it somewhere;

And if our own homes are too daintily fair

For the touch of their fingers, the tread of their feet,

They'll find it, and find it, alas, in the street,

'Mid the gildings of sin and the glitter of vice;

And with heartaches and longings we pay a dear price

For the getting of gain that our life-time employs,

If we fail to provide a place for the boys.

A place for the boys, dear mother, I pray;

As cares settle down round our short earthly way,

Don't let us forget by our kind, loving deeds

To show we remember their pleasures and needs;

Though our souls may be vexed with the problems of life,

And worn with besetments and toiling and strife,

Our hearts will keep younger—your tired heart and mine—

If we give them a place in their innermost shrine;
And to our life's latest hour 'twill be one of our joys
That we kept a small corner—a place for the boys.

—Boston Transcript.

"What Are You Reading?"

It is to be hoped that every one is reading something, and it is well if that something were of the best, whatever its class. Fortunately, in these days, there is no dearth of literature suited to every taste and need, and the principal thing is to get something that will leave us better because of having read it. Every family should have its political paper, and it would be well to read "both sides of the story;" a clean, wholesome newspaper should be read, in order to keep touch with the questions and happenings of the day. The local, county paper should find a place on the table, and among them should always be found the papers that mother likes. A good church paper should not be forgotten. Papers or magazines devoted to household economy and "ways of doing things" should not be overlooked, and in addition to these, there should be such as are suitable and interesting for the young people. There is so much clean reading at reasonable prices, that it is a pity not to have it. In many homes, however, there are several "story" magazines, containing only sensational, and often harmful, fiction, the reading of which is responsible for much of the unrest and discontent of our boys and girls. Then the newspapers which come to us are full of details of all manner of crimes, scandals and outrages against the decencies of life, emphasized by illustrations which teach the lessons much more thoroughly than any words can do. With the Sunday papers come the "colored supplements" and "funny pages" which are anything but funny to one who realizes how their teachings may impress the tender mind of the child who usually falls heir to them. Pictures are the alphabet of the child, through which he spells out the lessons of life. The lessons should be of a higher order.

If the minds of the young people are of healthy growth, they should like the best of reading, and should be given books, papers and magazines that will help to give them high ideals, and train them for the work awaiting them in life. The best is none too good, and if bad at all, it is too utterly bad for the boy or girl. Books of information are well, but books of inflammation should be rejected.

"Going Back to the Simple Life"

We hear so much of it—read so much of it; but we know it can never be done. Everything points to the fact that there is no going back. We must push forward, to the better conditions, the broader possibilities the future promises us. It has taken centuries to place us where we are today; it would require a long time to set us back to the frame of mind that will allow us to be content with the bare existence which the many were forced to eke out in the old, old days. Time was when the originals of the race were content with a cave for a dwelling and a pile of leaves for a bed. Even in those days, it was a case of the survival of the fittest, and the fittest did not always mean

the best; the battle then, even as now, was usually to the strong. We are not certain that they were any more content, or that they were any more happy than we of today. The watchword seems always to have been to push forward.

We, of today, in the new conditions, are as little children; dazed with the mental and physical abundance that has come to us, we hardly know how to use our wonderful good fortune; we, in our ignorance and inexperience, are wasteful, extravagant, reckless. Men and women alike are bewildered. We make many mistakes. We mistake the "fairy lights" on the marsh-lands for the glow of the stars, and often-times with the best of intentions, we fall into error. Though we should retrace our steps, we might not get back to the solid ground, for even the old paths are obliterated. We can not go back. Try as we might, we could never find the way.

But we can, and must, press forward. Some of us will fail. Many of us must prove only stepping stones by which the few may get safely through the bogs. Through abuses of our great privileges, we must learn their uses. The old garments do not fit us—we have out-grown them. And the new ones are too often but misfits. Slowly, but surely, things will become adjusted; we shall see the follies, and learn to avoid them. We shall find the solid ground, and learn to avoid the ditches of error, and in time, get safely on our feet. But we must all recognize the fact that there is no going back. We must set our ideals high, and push forward.

Disagreeable Duties

"The one thing which reconciles me to the three-times-a-day dishwashing," said my young friend, "is that my dishes are so pretty. It is a pleasure to handle them." And watching her shapely hands as she piled them into the draining pan, I thought, "What a text for a sermon on house-keeping!" "But your pots and pans?" I inquired. "Oh, I always wash them the minute I empty them. I always have a pan of hot water setting handy, and everything, as fast as it is emptied, is washed and hung away or set where it will dry out that it may not rust. It takes so little time when they are freshly emptied, and they are out of the way while I have other things to think of. When the meal is over, there is left me only the china and glassware, and I like to handle them."

I think this will apply to more than dish washing. There are few women that do not take pride in "pretty things," no matter of what kind. They may even be coarse, or common, so they satisfy the demands of the beauty-loving nature, and this satisfaction must be met for even the coarsest nature, for each and every one has some standard of beauty to which they cling. If we can not have fine things, in abundance, we can have enough pretty things to redeem the positive ugliness of the majority. Many of the semi-porcelain, or even the common delf dishes, have pretty designs, or delicate tracery which renders them pleasing to the eye. But nothing will make amends for the nicks, cracks, breaks, and scorches which afflict many dishes through the careless handling of some housewives. It is best to get as good an article as one can afford, and then take care of it. We can never have

"something for nothing." No matter what the quality of our belongings, they will require careful handling in order to retain their prettiness. Dishes that are thrown together in the pan, with boiling water poured over them, no matter how fine or coarse they are, will soon lose their attractiveness, while rough handling will leave them notched, nicked, cracked and broken until one does not care, and then dish washing is always a burden. Setting dishes in the oven, or on the stove to "warm things," or to keep them warm, is another source of ugliness. Do keep your dishes pretty and whole. If you can not, use tin or agate ware.

"For Love of It"

"Duty is for man an enemy and an intruder, so long as it appears as an appeal from without. When it comes in through the door, he leaves by the window; when it blocks up the window, he escapes by the roof. The more plainly we see it coming, the more surely we flee. It is like those police, representative of public order and official justice, whom an adroit thief succeeds in evading. The officer, though he finally collar the thief, can only conduct him to the station, not along the right road. Before man is able to accomplish his duty, he must fall into the hands of another power than that which says, "Do this; do that; shun that, or else, beware." This is an interior power—it is love. When a man hates his work, or goes about it with indifference, all the forces of earth can not make him follow it with enthusiasm. But he who loves his office moves of himself; not only is it needless to compel him, but it would be impossible to turn him aside. * * * This central force manifests itself under a thousand forms. * * * All that it touches bears its seal, and the men it inspires know that through it we live and have our being. To serve it is their pleasure and reward. They are satisfied to be its instruments, and they no longer look at the outward glory of their office, well knowing that nothing is great, nothing small, but that our life and our deeds are only of worth because of the spirit which breathes through them."—The Simple Life.

"They say there are no such things as fairies, or that they are fairies no longer; but they know not what they say. The original of the fairies sung by poets was found, and is still, among those amiable mortals who knead bread with energy, mend rents with cheerfulness, nurse the sick with smiles, put witchery into a ribbon and genius into a stew."—Charles Wagner.

For the Home-Keeper

To keep the table cloth fresh looking for some time, when not in use it should be kept in folded creases, and when brought out should be laid on the table and unfolded its entire length, the width being doubled, with the crease along the center of the table. Then the half-breadth that is folded should be turned back, and the cloth will hang even. A cloth that is gathered up "anyhow," without taking the trouble to fold it in its own creases, will always look mussy, and a mussy-looking tablecloth will not keep clean nearly as long as a smoothly-folded one.

Faded chenille draperies may be freshened and made to serve another season by shaking out the dust, then boiling in strong soapy water for fifteen minutes to remove the old color, rinsing in clear water and dyeing a

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