

## Our Women and Children

Conducted by Lucille Skaggs Edwards.

### THE YOUTH-KEEPING WOMAN

Not so many years ago, a woman at the age of fifty renounced all general activities, donned her cap, adjusted her spectacles, and set herself down in a cushioned chair beside the chimney, there to knit out her remaining days. She thought she was old. She thought her work was done. In the chimney corner she was out of the way.

Fifty—old! This generation smiles at such a thought. The American woman of today is younger at seventy than her grandmother was at fifty. She has lengthened out her youth—at fifty she has not thought of old age at all. The spirit of youth has stayed with her. She knows that her hair, brown or gray, is more becoming than a lace cap. She finds that in holding to the uses and interests of life she is in possession of something more magnetizing than the knitting needle. She has no thought of being pushed into the background. Indeed, through lack of use, the chimney corner is disappearing.

"Those are my next-door neighbors—Mrs. Blank and her daughter," said a woman to her friend.

"Which is the mother?" asked her friend. "They look more like sisters."

It was true. The mother appeared almost as youthful as her daughter.

Could the elderly woman of a half century ago catch a glimpse of the youthful, sprightly, interesting grandmother of today, she would rub her eyes and perhaps shake her head.

The white-capped old lady in the chimney corner was sweet, and dear, and beautifully helpless. We love her! All honor to her memory! She filled her place, and it was no small place. We are not disposed to be critical of her.

But the woman of today, strong, educated, enthusiastic, self-reliant, ah, we take off our hats to her!

When did woman lay aside the cap and leave her warm corner? No one knows. We awoke one morning—she was gone from the easy chair! We found her at work everywhere. From all branches of industry she beamed at us. We discovered her out in the world fighting the battles of the weak. With hand and heart and brain she was helping to solve some of the world's great questions.

Today when she speaks—the world listens. Her pen glides over the page—before the ink dries, the world has read and gives its endorsement. Her opinions are asked upon public questions. She can do with the world almost as she wills.

The modern improvements in the home have much to do with the widened sphere of women. Today there is no drudgery in housework. There is more time for reading and study, for travel and recreation, for social service and civic problems.

A variety of interests conserves youth. Bright eyes, flushed cheeks, leaping pulses, springing feet, depend much upon the amount of enthusiasm we bestow upon our tasks. As a rule, it is not the wide-awake, broad-minded, public-spirited woman who breaks down early. It is the woman who has no social life, no diversion, no interesting work, no wholesome outside interests who grows old at fifty.

The cap and the chimney corner linger as a beautiful, lavender-scented memory; always in our thoughts a

soft, hazy halo encircles them. But we hail the youth-keeping woman of today, with her strength, ambition, enthusiasm and culture. In the larger, better life, and in the uplift and progress of this wonderful age, she has her opportunity. In the buoyancy and optimism which she brings to her work, she renews the glad days of her girlhood, she "keeps her youth."—People's Home Journal.

### WHOEVER LOVES IS NEVER OLD.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

When life has been well spent, age is a loss of what it can well spare—muscular strength, organic instincts, gross bulk, and works that belong to these. But the central wisdom, which was old in infancy, was young in four-score years, and dropping off obstructions, leaves in happy subjects the mind purified and wise. I have heard that whoever loves is in no condition old. I have heard that, whenever the name of man is spoken, the doctrine of immortality is announced; it cleaves to his constitution. The mode of it baffles our wit, and no whisper comes to us from the other side. But the inference from the working of intellect, having knowledge having skill—at the end of life just ready to be born—affirms the inspiration of affection and of the moral sentiment.

### THE WAY OF LIFE.

Written for The Monitor.

One early morn I walked with you  
Down by the river side;  
The grass was wet with sparkling dew—

The meadows far and wide  
Were thickly starred with flowers that blow,

To greet the glad spring weather.  
You took my hand and whispered low  
"We'll walk life's path together."

I walked with you one noonday bright,  
Through fields of waving grain,  
Still full of hope—with hearts still light,

We walked our ways again.  
With steady aim you calmly traced,  
Our trail of joy and sorrow—  
And hand in hand we bravely faced  
The coming of the morrow.

I walked with you one twilight dim—  
We paused—our steps were slow—  
(You hummed a dear, familiar hymn)  
Our locks were white as snow.  
You whispered in my ear again—  
"Dear heart, we've walked together,  
Through lanes of sorrow, joy and pain  
Through fair and cloudy weather."

One starless night I walked with you  
Down to the river's brink;  
I held your hand and whispered low—  
"Your craft will never sink."  
You closed your eyes, and lo! your bark

Slipped gently with the tide—  
And I was left there—in the dark—  
Down by the river's side.

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