

Our Women and Children

Conducted by
Lucille Skaggs Edwards

II. Loved As They Ask To Be.

DOUBTLESS every mother thinks, "Here am I, able to give full measure to my child, for my love is perfect, complete." How full of fault we often find mother-love! Does it not often lack understanding? Do we not find it sometimes selfish? Does it not often lack sympathy, and firmness?

"Loved as they ask to be" requires special thought, effort, prayer and preparation on the part of the mother, to distinguish her love from that of the animals who will give their lives in defense of their young.

No mother, who loves her child as it asks to be, will neglect its health before or after its birth; ignorance is no excuse, it is criminal. Literature, teaching the care of the baby and touching every phase of the child's physical development, is issued free by our government. The Better Babies week, observed in all cities, affords a great opportunity for obtaining information along this line to mothers who find little time for study. Thousands of babies' lives are sacrificed annually on the altar of maternal ignorance—ignorance of the laws of health and the food and care required by babies. The future men and women of our race must possess, along with trained brains, hands and hearts, strong, healthful bodies.

Some mothers' love might be summed up in the words, fondness and indulgence. Mothers must deal gently yet justly and firmly. The mother should not love (?) her child so much that she cannot see its faults, nor must she be too weak to help the child overcome these faults.

It is no mark of great love to lavish foolish finery on our children or make spendthrifts of them by allowing a waste of hard-earned money. Such fondness of our children instills vanity, pride and discontent. Many girls are leading lives of shame because their mothers taught them a love of fine clothes. What you put on your children's bodies is of infinitely less importance than what you give their souls.

"Between the dark and the daylight
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupation
That is known as the children's hour."

Does not "loved as they ask to be" demand a children's hour? Doubtless my readers will find me expressing this thought in each of these themes. I confess that it is a sort of a hobby of mine, for as a mother of some experience I count among the happiest moments of my life the hours given to my children for their exclusive entertainment—the hours I have spent in playing with them. Some part of the day spent with the children in games, story-telling, cutting paper dolls, folding newspapers into soldier hats and battleships, nature talks and songs affords a wonderful opportunity to make home attractive, to better understand each other and to create stronger bonds of love and sympathy between the mother and the child. Don't neglect the children's hour; it will keep your heart young; they grow up all too soon and then the chance is gone forever.

Mother-love must not be selfish. We cannot fence in a little corner of this big world and keep it clean and pure just for our own children. "Loved as they ask to be" will make us reach out for the little hearts that are hungry for love, give a little attention to those left neglected and have a kind word and an understanding sympathy for the wayward ones, for our child may have been just such a one had it been deprived of love and care. Every good mother wants to make the world a better world for her child to live in, and this can be done only by helping every child in every way she can to come into its right to be understood as it should be, loved as asks to be and developed as it might be.

The child's character will reflect the measure of love that is given it. The whining child lives with irritable people; the rude child is not treated courteously, and we recognize the beloved child at once—it has poise, it is frank, it is sympathetic, it shows plainly that it has had the great fortune—greater than riches—of being loved as it has mutely asked to be. L. S. E.

(Next week: III. Developed As They Should Be.)

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SPRING

With the Teacher

'Tis now the time of silver moon,
Of swelling bud and fancies free
As Western wind—but then, Ah me!
May cannot come too soon!
The Rover calls in every child,
And sets his pulses running wild.

Do stop that noise and take your seat!
Joe, learn to study quietly;
Why girl, it surely has me beat
How you forget Geography!
Brazil's in Spain? Here, close that book!

What caused the Civil war you say?
Susanna claims somebody took
Her beads, return them right away!

Now boy, I've told you once before
To put that story book away;
I'll call the roll: Beatrice Moore,
Why were you absent yesterday?
O, yes, I heard that mocking-bird;
Lee Arthur, straighten up your face!
Why class, I'm sure you never heard
Of adverbs having tense and case!

Well, James, explain the term per cent.

My, my, 'tis surely not forgot!
If it was fun or devilment
You'd know it all, sir, like as not.
Who put that bent pin in my chair?
No, no, of course; bent pins can walk.
I'll tell you though, had I sat there
I'd make these straps and switches talk!

A picnic on for Saturday?
(I wish that I were going too)
Oh, no, I couldn't spare a day,
I have too many things to do.
Well, there's the bell, good-by, good-by.

And be good children, don't forget!
Well, thank the Lord, they're gone,
but I
Can hear their joyous laughter yet.

'Tis now the time of silver moon,
Of swelling bud and fancies free
As Western wind—but then, Ah me!
May cannot come too soon!
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A LESSON IN FRENCH

By Sergeant Major Denver D. Ferguson,
Headquarters 317th Labor
Battalion, A. P. O. 712, A. E. F.

WE learn over here that the boys and girls at home are learning or trying to learn to speak the French language in order to be able to say a few things to their brothers, husbands and sweethearts when they come back. I am thinking that if such is the case, many will be disappointed, for the lesson that we have generally learned, has not been at all the French language. I am sure it will require a much more able man than myself to picture the general lesson which we have learned, which is not exactly a lesson in French, but a lesson of France. I read every day of the riots in Berlin, the bread riots in Madrid, disturbances in England and at home, strikes and lawlessness almost everywhere, but here in France; she who has suffered from the war and during the war, I never hear of any disorder. No strikes, no riots, no disorders, no disputes, no misunderstandings! What! Have you noticed what you read? When bread is scarce, when fuel is low and dear, its France who accepts the situation without a growl. She is the most marvelous piece of civilization I have ever conceived. We boys have not all learned to speak French, but we have all learned a lesson of peace and contentedness from the French. They accept conditions as they are and hold malice toward none. That's the general lesson we have all learned in France and I do not think the folks back home have kept pace trying to learn French. It is not a question of knowing their language at all—it does not matter whether you can speak a word, you feel the same force and affection everywhere among the French.

We meet a friend (Frenchman) in the morning, he says, "bon jour;" (for which we say "good morning.") Then he says, "Comment Allez-vous?" or "Comment ca va?" or "Comment

Portez-vous?" These three expressions are familiar here and they are used exactly on the same occasion and for the same feeling for which we say, "How are you?" We reply, "Tres bien" or "Assez-bien," or "Je me porte bien," which is used as we use, "I'm very well," or "Pretty good," or "I'm all right." Then we add, "Et vous?" meaning, "And you?" or "And how are you?" The Frenchman responds, "Tres bien, aussi," or "Le meme," meaning, "Very well, too," or "Very well, also," or "The same." Then he probably says something about the weather, something like this: "Il fait beau temps," meaning, "It makes fine weather," or "It is a fine day." We speak back, "c'est certainment, monsieur," meaning, "It certainly is, sir." Then perhaps he says, "Voulez-vous diner avec nous, aujourd'hui?" Meaning, "Will you (or wish you) dinner (or have dinner) with us today?"

Sometimes we reply in the affirmative, "Oui, monsieur, je serai tres heureuse d'avoir le chance," meaning, "Yes sir, I shall be very glad to have the opportunity." Then, he no doubt will say, "Bon, allons tout droit," meaning, "Fine, let's go straight ahead."

As a rule the streets (les rues) are narrow, so we soon see an automobile coming towards us. He cries out, "Attention!" (pronounced ah-tan-see-on) meaning, "Look-out!" or "Watch-out!" so we step aside the "rue" and let the auto pass, then we go on. Directly we come to an old and moulded house of stone, such as the poets used to sing of in their poems of old. It is not tall but it stands like the Pyramids of Egypt. The roof is red, made of tile, and the windows sunk in thick and substantial walls of stone. We enter, as we hear a voice ring out "Entrez!" (meaning enter or come in.) Inside is a contented family of four, for the average French family is not large. There's a "Femme," a demoiselle of about eighteen years named Carmen and two "petit" boys named Charles and Louie, aged about 10 and 12 years, and all say on sight, "Un bon soldat," meaning "A good soldier," for they call us all good soldiers. Then my friend will present me to his wife and tell her things I do not understand except by their pleasant actions and smiles. He says, "Permettez-moi vous presentez ma femme, Madame Ofray," or "Faites connaissance avec ma femme, madame Ofray," meaning "Allow me to present to you my wife, Mrs. Ofray," or "Make acquaintance with my wife, Mrs. Ofray." Then we say, "Je suis charme de faire votre connaissance." (I am very glad to make your acquaintance.) "Portez-vous bien?" (Are you well?) "Oui, monsieur, et vous?" (Yes, sir, and you?) We say, "Tres bien, merci." (Very well, thanks.) Then she speaks to Carmen, who immediately brings in an extra easy resting chair; places it near her own and bids me, "Assoyez-vous," or "Mettez-vous la," meaning "Sit down," or "Put yourself there." Then a range of queries from everyone. Charles has quit his play. Papa has gone somewhere. Mamma has quit her sewing and all eyes are on us. "Vous causez la francais bien." (You speak French well.) "Non, mademoiselle, je ne pons pas." (No, miss, I do not think so.) "Combien de temps avez-vous ete en France?" (How long have you been in France?) "Pour huit mois." (For eight months.) "Il faut etre tres intelligent d'apprendre si vite." (You must be very intelligent to learn so fast.) "Merci, m'amie." (Thanks, my friend.) Then we talk about lots of things in simple language for very few of us can speak French "Assez bien" (Well enough) to talk about things we so intimately speak and talk about in English. Presently Monsieur Ofray may return with a bottle of best red wine (vin rouge.) Madame Ofray soon may have dinner ready and we soon are seated around a table in a room such as we have at home. All is gay. We have bread, soup, cheese and beef. "Tres bien." (Very well), "un bon diner." (A good dinner.) Our passes in the towns are not always of long duration, so we may soon find it necessary to leave. After it is all explained by signs and actions and in the best manner we know how in

French, we soon leave a happy and pleased little family of five with invitations to come back tomorrow. So we say "Merci vien, monsieur, quand j'ai plus de temps, je reveindrai." (Many thanks, sir, when I have more time I shall come back. "Alors" (then) "Au revoir, monsieur, au revoir madame, au revoir, mademoiselle, au revoir, mes petits." It is the custom to tell each and every one "Au revoir" (until we meet again) and shake each by the hand, always upon leaving.

What we have learned from the French would fill pages—yes volumes and the story never will be told. I am afraid that after the peace and all is well, France will find her population in Americans increased many times of that before the war. We want to come home and we are coming home, but we won't forget France.

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