

About the House

Virtue May Become a Vice.

Virtues can be carried to such an extreme that they degenerate into vices is an axiom. Perhaps the one which most easily and quickly slips over the border is the virtue of criticism.

A little kindly, well meant criticism is one of the best stimulants to growth. But it is seldom a critic can remain just a kindly critic. It is so easy to slip over the line and become a chronic fault finder, from whom Heaven preserve us.

One such pest has almost broken up a community organization in a prosperous farming section. Her first suggestions were constructive, but whether her success in getting the organization to change some of its plans gave her an enlarged sense of her own importance, or whether she was at heart a born fault finder, who can say? At any rate she continued to pick flaws in the methods of work until the discouraged promoters of neighborhood enterprises are all ready to give up.

Probably this woman has done no more harm, though, than her neighbor who finds fault with her family. Every woman knows that no husband is perfect, no children faultless. But why be forever telling them about it? Psychologists tell us that the best way to build up is by praising virtues rather than by stressing faults. Yet this woman—and she has many copies—almost never mentions a good thing about any of her family, but continually harps on their shortcomings.

That woman is giving her children a reputation they will have hard work living down. They are already looked upon in the community as future bad citizens, when as a matter of fact they are only normal, average children. No child ever overwhelms its parents with gratitude for its daily care. Yet because these children are not constantly thanking their mother for their bread and butter, she refers to them as monsters of ingratitude. And where is the child who hops out of bed in the morning and rushes to mother, clamoring to be given work to do? I've yet to see a healthy boy or girl who voluntarily offered to do chores or wash dishes, until months of habit had made the job seem natural. The propensity of children is to dash out to play, and if they don't whine and protest when you dragged them in to work, you'd think there was something the matter with them. Now, wouldn't you?

Yet, because this woman's children are healthy young animals and object to being broken to harness she bewails the fact that her children are lazy and idle. Bewailing at home would be bad enough, it would go far towards making the children lazy, but to tell their faults to the world is little short of criminal.

A "Never Fail" Pie Crust.

A pastry made with hot water! We ask you—the experienced cooks—can you think of anything more iconoclastic? Here it is:

½ cupful shortening (¼ cupful butter, ¼ cupful lard), ½ cupful hot (boiling water), 2½ cupfuls flour, ¼ teaspoonful baking powder, ½ teaspoonful salt.

Cream the shortening with the water by adding the latter only a bit at a time. Mix the salt and baking powder with the sifted flour, and stir this into the butter and water. Turn out upon a floured board and roll thin before lining the tins. And do not forget when lining the plate to carefully press out all air so that none is left to force up the pastry in large bubbles and push the filling out of the pie into the oven. This amount will

make upper and lower crusts for one large pie. If filling is uncooked bake forty minutes in 450-degree oven, reducing the temperature to 400 degrees for last ten minutes.

It is claimed that this recipe will never fail. It is more easily and quickly made than by the old method of rubbing the fat into the flour and keeping everything ice cold.

More power to every discovery that saves time and labor but sacrifices no quality!

A Novel Bazaar.

Ladies' Aid: Can you suggest some new way of holding a small sale or bazaar?

A Pedler's Parade is novel and does not require booths. Those who take part dress up to represent peddlers (both men and women), and place their wares in baskets, packs and push-carts. The sale opens with a parade of these "merchants" headed by an organ-grinder carrying a hand-organ, if it is possible to hire one. An agile boy might be persuaded to dress as a monkey and accompany the organ-grinder throughout the evening, holding up his cap for stray pennies. If this can not be arranged, a group of musicians might serve as a street band, producing music on real or fake instruments, but remembering to "pass the hat" between numbers.

After the "parade" the peddlers endeavor to sell their wares, imitating the methods of real peddlers in order to create merriment. Sandwiches can be sold from a basket carried by a man dressed to represent a "train-boy." Another "train-boy" could sell peanut bars, marshmallows, other package candy and sweet chocolate. Ice cream could be sold from a push-cart and should be served on paper plates and eaten with tin spoons. A woman carrying a basket containing cakes should be near at hand. Other baskets should be filled with aprons, iron-holders, tea-towels, fancy-work, notions and flowers if they are available.

Planning Embroidery.

Plan your needlework for the season. Think of something you have always wished for and resolved to get when you could "afford it," or to do when you "had time."

For instance, if you have been longing for a really handsome embroidered linen luncheon set, but never started one because you felt you would never finish it, make that your season's work. When every odd hour is spent on making a piece of work grow, it is surprising to see how the thing gathers speed after it once has a start.

Such beautiful stamped linens are being shown this season that even the busiest woman, who have not given any time to embroidering for years, are trying to spare a few hours to do it. The most important point about these new stamped pieces is that they are of genuine Irish linen, of the full, round thread Derryvale weave. This will wear for years and years, so the worker has the satisfaction of knowing that her labor will last, not for a season, but for a generation. Indeed, if she be of sentimental nature, she will take joy in laying up treasure for her daughter and her daughter's daughter, just as good mothers of half a century ago used to do.

Those women were wise in their work, for material that was to be graced by the art of their hands was always of the finest quality genuine Irish linen. That is why some fortunate daughters—and even granddaughters—have remnants of bridal sets to-day as keepsakes. And how those lovely old silvering pieces are

cherished! If anything grows old gracefully, surely it is linen. Its sheen and silky smoothness seem to become more ingratiating with time.

So whether the present-day woman wants merely to satisfy her own longing for beautiful embroidered linen or whether she is sowing that others may reap, there is an abundance of worthy material at hand. The designers have given their best in the patterns, and the manner in which motifs have been carried through sets is admirable.

A centrepiece, accompanied by twelve doilies in two sizes, strikes one as a big piece of work—one that the faint-hearted is likely to postpone until she has "more time." The "more time" stage is a sort of twin sister to to-morrow. It has a way of never arriving. And so a woman goes on longing for the thing right within her reach, if she will only stretch her arm, just a little bit, for it.

Hand embroidery moves faster as the work progresses and faltering fingers grow swift and skillful. A piece that frightens one by its enormity when blank loses all the terror it held for the worker within a week's time. And it is a work that rests the mind while the hands fashion a beautiful thing.

Embroidery may be done at any time, in any place, in any company. The conversation can go along freely, for there are no stitches to count, no clicking needles to interrupt. It has always been a pastime occupation of gentlewomen.

Women's time is too precious to-day to waste it, even in her leisure moments, on unworthy work.

A North Pole Deception.

It may surprise many people to know that even when an Arctic explorer had the Pole Star exactly overhead he would still be about eighty miles from the North Pole.

Why? Because the Pole Star—or Polaris, as it is known to astronomers—is not at the North Celestial Pole, to which the geographical North Pole corresponds, but nearly three times the apparent breadth of the full moon from it.

The fact is that the Pole Star merely happens to be the nearest bright star to the North Celestial Pole. This latter point is an imaginary one in the heavens, marking the spot towards which the earth's axis is directed. Owing to causes which need not be entered into here, this imaginary point is moving in a great circle in the sky, a circle so vast that about 26,000 years is taken to complete it.

A few thousand years ago it was a long way from the present Pole Star, and in those days the star was quite an ordinary one, differing in no way from hosts of others we see around us on any fine night.

In another few thousand years to come our present highly-important Pole Star will have again sunk into obscurity through having been left in the lurch by the steadily-moving North Celestial Pole. The brilliant blue-and-white Vega will be the most magnificent Pole Star of the future. It will be about 12,000 years, however, before its turn comes.

September Days.

September days—September days—
An' autumn fields are callin'.
O'er woods there hangs a purple haze
An' acorns are a-fallin'.
Where squirrels in the trees so high,
In their wee paws are holdin'
The nut to eat—oh, such a treat—
A sight for your beholdin'.

Across the fields the Bob White yields
His mating call so cheery,
Which plainly says his wife he shields
By that call clear an' merry,
Ere long the punkin's golden glow
Will brighten up the stubble,
An' pies that mother makes you know
Will banish care an' trouble.

September days, September days,
An' school bells gladly ringin',
An' boys and girls with happy ways,
Their cares to winds are flingin',
Again the huntsman's horn so clear
Will on the air be fallin',
"The autumn's here, the autumn's here."
The painted woods are callin'.

Why the Teeth Chatter.

The little muscles which close the jaw are acted upon by the cold in such a way that they pull the jaw up and let it fall by its own weight. This, repeated many times, causes the teeth to click together, and produces what is called "chattering."

"You think of it in connection with your teeth because it is the teeth which makes the sound, but the cause lies in the muscles used in chewing or in opening your mouth when you speak. The chattering occurs in spite of the will or brain. You have little control over it, and can stop it only by clenching the teeth."

It is really a mild variety of spasm caused by the cold, which acts on the jaw muscles in much the same way that some poisons produce muscular spasms which cannot be controlled.

It is more profitable to emulate than to envy.

and the worst is yet to come



HEALTH EDUCATION

BY DR. J. J. MIDDLETON

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Dr. Middleton will be glad to answer questions on Public Health matters through this column. Address him at the Parliament Bldgs. Toronto.

A few days ago a letter reached me from a mother in the country, reading as follows: "Our baby, seven weeks old, had a rash from the heat. Would you kindly tell me what is best to do for it." This is a difficult question to answer by letter, and shows what Public Health officials have to deal with. In the first place the question should be answered by the family physician. He is the one to visit the child and determine what the cause of the rash may be. The mother may think it is caused by heat and she may be right, but it is better to have expert advice on the matter. There are rashes due to scarlet fever, incipient measles and various other ailments that have to be taken into account.

It is for reasons such as this that Public Health Education as far as Child Welfare is concerned, aims to impress on mothers the necessity of a thorough medical examination of their children regularly. Parents are too prone to diagnose complaints of children and label them this or that without any scientific investigation whatsoever. For instance, it is appalling to think of the number of deaths of infants and young children from diphtheria whose mothers were firmly convinced that the sick children had merely a "sore throat" or tonsillitis. Over 63 per cent. of the deaths from diphtheria in Ontario last year were among children under five years of age—that is, children of pre-school age who had not yet come under the supervision of school medical inspection. Minor defects of all kinds, moreover, go unattended to, and become chronic because either the parent did not notice the defect in the child or else did not regard it as anything serious. The idea of calling in a doctor is only as a last resort with some people, in fact, you will sometimes hear the expression "I don't think he is sick enough to send for a doctor."

The baby is not a toy or a plaything, but a great responsibility. Its health, growth and happiness depend largely upon you—the parent. Therefore you must avoid infection by keeping the baby away from anyone who is not perfectly well. What seems like a cold in the head may turn out to be measles or some other disease. Remember that measles and whooping-cough are serious diseases for young children. The older a child is when he comes down with them, the less is the danger of fatal results. The germs of disease enter by way of the mouth. Keep playthings and comforters, and everything that has not been thoroughly cleaned out of the baby's mouth. Do not let the baby crawl around on a dirty floor or dusty carpet. Place him on a clean sheet or blanket. Flies carry disease to babies. Screen the baby's room.

Keep flies away from the baby and his food at all times. Cover the crib or carriage with netting to keep out the flies and mosquitoes.

A healthy, good-tempered baby is one of the greatest joys of life. Wherever it goes, sunshine radiates from its presence and fills the most

drab and uninteresting situations with smiles and good-fellowship. A few evenings ago I was in a train coming to Toronto from Blackwater Junction and the compartment was filled with the ordinary crowd of tired, sleepy individuals one sees travelling at night after a long journey. Yawning, yawning listlessly at the notice prohibiting spitting in the train, or looking out into the dark of evening, everybody seemed to be looking on life as a commonplace, without a thrill. But into the train came a young man wearing the returned button, and with him were his wife and baby. That charming little mortal about fifteen months old was soon the centre of interest. Hardly had its mother got seated when it wheeled round in her arms and grabbed a newspaper which a man was listlessly reading in the seat behind. Instantly the man was alert with kindly interest. Not wanting to have the reader disturbed, the mother moved over to the seat facing, but a ruddy-complexioned old fellow was the next victim. The little tot promptly took hold of his ear and the weather-beaten stranger turned round startled. But when he saw that laughing little countenance he instantly reached over his horny hand and shook baby's outstretched palm. The child then noticed a lady across the aisle eating an orange and glued its eyes on the attractive fruit. With the mother's permission the lady gave a section of the orange to the child, and to show its appreciation, the little one allowed itself to be lifted on to the lady's knee.

All the time the baby was smiling and waving its hands at nearby people in the compartment, with the result that everybody was wreathed in smiles. That baby was a tonic—a genial travelling companion not only to its parents, but to every stranger it met along the way. Its father remarked to me that the baby was breast-fed from birth till it was over nine months old, which was very obvious.

To me, interested in the Welfare of Children, my admiration of this youngster was associated with a feeling of regret—regret that there should not be more of these healthy, happy babies in this Province of Ontario. They are optimists from birth and will grow to healthy men and women. How often we see the other extreme, the ill-nourished, pale and crying baby, handicapped in health from the moment it begins its earthly existence. It is a sorry spectacle and there is no need for many of these weaklings, if the mothers only knew and practiced mothercraft, particularly the great essential—breast feeding, coupled with proper care of the child during the early months and years of life. In the whole field of Child Welfare there is no more important first principle than this—having the child fed at the mother's breast. It is a slogan that should be preached from the housetops, from the pulpit and from every newspaper and avenue of publicity in this country.

Germany's Latest Offer to France

The delivery to France by the German Government of 7,000,000,000 gold marks worth of building materials within three years is provided for by the recent agreement between Louis Loucheur, French Minister of the Liberated Regions, and Walter Rathenau, German Minister of Reconstruction, the details of which are now made public, says a Paris despatch.

This immense transaction will be handled by two companies, one to be organized by Germany and the other by France, each to allow participation by some private capital. The German company is to look after the assembling of material ordered by the French company at the shipping points.

Transportation and delivery by the German company at suitable terminals and on suitable dates also are provided for, the payment to be made to the manufacturers out of German Government bonds issued specially for

this purpose. The French company will take the material thus delivered and sell it in the open market exclusively for rebuilding northern France. The French Government, according to the terms of the agreement, will take care not to cut prices below a reasonable competition with private interests which hitherto have been strongly opposed to Germany's supplying material to the detriment of French manufacturing firms.

Herr Rathenau's main argument was that if Germany were compelled to continue cash payments under the same international exchange conditions as those she encountered while paying the first billion marks she would be forced inevitably to default, probably not later than next July. The mark, which has already decreased in value since the recent London agreement, is likely to fall to a point where it will have no more exchange value abroad, it was argued by Herr Rathenau.