

'EGROTS'

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I had considered discussing "The Use of Women in the Education of Children." But since this subject has had much attention by others, I have changed my plan. Instead, I would like to consider "The Use of Children in the Education of Women."

Women have much responsibility in leading children to help them get to Heaven, but we shouldn't overlook the big work that baby does to make sure mama gets there! From the beginning, a baby is filled with "egrots," and through it mama will get a lot she has to learn. The work of parenthood and the effect of egrots (that's "storge" spelled backwards) make a whole new life for mama.

A home blessed with children is a home enriched with delights and experiences to be found nowhere else. It is the source of one of the greatest phases in the education of women. Among the things gained from this education is a new sense of values from a new sense of responsibility. But this new sense of values is a more subtle and potent influence than we can imagine. Perspective is something children lack, and it is through teaching a true sense of values that a woman can have her eyes opened in a way that will have a real effect on her life.

To children almost every incident is either the greatest thing in the world or the most dire of tragedies. It is the present which is all-important. How many times will a mother take her child on her knee to explain that there are things far more important than the current crisis. When she tells this to her child, she is developing a philosophy for herself. An unsuccessful party, a burned meal, or even a temporarily unemployed husband, are only as a child's incident when viewed in the long range.

We find other cases where parents' observations of their offspring help them to detect imperfections in themselves. Children's human faults are plain, but those same human faults—impulsiveness, jealousy, selfishness—though perhaps more cleverly concealed, are within us all. Parents with problem children might, with study, find that the child is following a pattern set by the parents themselves. A dawdling child might be the result of the parent's habit of putting off the child's requests with "just a minute" and "not now"; a saucy child is perhaps the result of a sarcastic or nagging parent. Children are quick to imitate their elders, whether for good or bad, for the child doesn't know the difference. Parents who realize this make an effort to protect the sphere surrounding their children. They search for things which may be helpful to the child's progress, both physically and spiritually, and they develop aversion to things which may hinder this progress. Conversations which are uncharitable are checked, coarse language and unpleasant habits are more apt to be avoided in the presence of little ones. Here is the shunning of evils for a good cause which may lead to shunning them for an even better one.

Perhaps even more important than this avoidance of a disorderly sphere is the effort to create a good one. Children present new incentives for adults; on the natural plane this involves health, comfort, and development. But religious parents are even more concerned with spiritual matters.

In cooperating with the Lord's implantation of remains, mothers and fathers are exposed to new spiritual contacts which can aid in regeneration.

Children may bring a realization of the need to create reverence in a home where the need was not felt before—thus family worship may be started for the children's sake, while the benefits to a large extent are to the parents. We have heard of the powerful effect on a child when seeing his parents kneel in prayer. In this they are introduced into the truth that all life is from the Lord alone. And is there not a powerful effect on parents as they demonstrate to children that they themselves are only children of the Father in Heaven? Because parents lead worship it may seem that it is because of them that there is worship in the home. But in many cases there would be no worship were it not for the children.

Wise parents realize that to give children an idea of God and of things holy, they must first acknowledge these things themselves. This is really brought to mind long before the child is old enough for worship—namely, at the time of baptism. The service is almost as important to the parents as it is to the baby. It gives them a re-vision—a new covenant with the Lord.

Every parent makes sacrifices in order to give the children more important things. A good illustration of this is the couple who considers their children's education one of the more important points in deciding where to make their home. One of the thrills in growing up is gaining independence. There is a stage when we feel that life's greatest delight is to be young and have no cares or burdens. Many do not realize the far greater thrill in the next step of growing up, until they have come into it. For there is a thrill in having cares to fill and enrich your life, and in being tied down to one place called home. Restless youth does not recognize at once that what people really need is to be needed. What will bring true happiness is service to someone who is dependent on us.

As a mother, a woman becomes the most indispensable being in the world. For her children she must be there, and no one can take her place. Thus a woman gains a position in the human structure of uses and finds happiness in a use which no one but she can fill. It can lead to a greater happiness, intended by the Lord for everyone in creation: a place in the angelic heaven.