

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Bringing Up Father

Drawn for The Bee by George McManus



Ella Wheeler Wilcox on Advice to School Girl About Her Studies and Her Attitude to Her Teacher

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.
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To a School Girl: You tell me you hate Latin, and ask me if I think you should spend so much time on a dead language when there is not time enough for all the things you long to study.

My ideas of education for girls do not coincide with that of many people. Had I a daughter, I should begin to make her a linguist as soon as she could talk; and her schools would be selected for that purpose in the main.

It is all very well to say you can travel the world over with only the English language in your brain and on your tongue's end, but I assure you, my dear girl, I intensified in pleasure and profit 10 per cent by every language we know.

Besides this, familiarity with other languages gives a woman numberless opportunities for enjoyment, for usefulness and for shining as a planet among stars.

If you are looking forward to a social career, nothing can be more valuable to you than acquaintance with languages; and if you are expecting to be self-supporting you will find a linguist who reads and writes two languages besides English has many more desirable chances for gaining a good salary than one who knows only English.

Therefore, I would advise you to apply yourself to your Latin earnestly; and then it will be less of a labor to acquire the French, Spanish, Italian and German—one or all of them. But unless you mean to study some language see no benefit in your giving time to Latin.

Be thorough in English, and study its niceties. Do not be stilted or pedantic; but no matter what sort of slang and coarseness your associates may indulge in and think it "smart," in the American way of applying that word, avoid all loose and sloppy language as you would avoid soiled clothing.

The rarity of good English (or good American), among our high school and college graduates is shocking and humiliating to one who takes pride in being an American.

The rarity of well placed voices is equally shocking and ear-bruising. An important part of your education should be in learning how to use your vocal organs in speaking.

It is being taught by specialists today, and you should consider it an imperative duty to begin now in this course. Find time Saturday, each week, if you have no other free hour, and get the rudiments of voice placing, before you form bad habits of speaking with a nasal, or a throaty, or a heady voice.

An agreeable speaking voice is one of the greatest charms you can cultivate. In your association with other girls you would feel deeply hurt if any one accused you of being common in your looks or actions. Then avoid the commonest qualities possible in a human being—jealousies and gossip.

Teach yourself to praise freely and criticize rarely; and when you have a criticism to make, make it only to one whom you feel can be helped by your words to overcome a fault—never behind the back of the offender.

Learn to sympathize with your schoolmates in their trials, but also learn what is harder still—to rejoice with them when they surpass you in any achievement, or win any prizes for which you may be seeking.

Root out envy and jealousy from your nature, and know in so doing you have made yourself more lovable and more admired than by attaining the highest school honors.

Precaution Against Lightning

Indoors is the Safest Place—Shun All Trees, Wire Fences and Umbrellas

By GARRETT P. SERVISS.

A lady writes me that she narrowly escaped being struck by lightning some years ago, and now she is in mortal terror every time the season for thunderstorms approaches, and she wishes to know what precautions one ought to take in order to avoid danger from this source.

At the same time a man writes that he and his family like to spend the hot months in the country near a small body of water, but, having heard that water attracts lightning, they are nervous about it, and much of their summer pleasure is destroyed by fear of thunderstorms.

Everybody knows people who are almost paralyzed whenever a thunderstorm is raging about them, and since the season of such storms is not far off, and there is no way known to science of preventing their occurrence, it is worth while to recall some of the facts that have been learned about them.

A flash, a bolt of lightning is simply a discharge of electricity, resembling that which may be produced, on a small scale, by accumulating a charge on the conductor of an electric machine, and then bringing some object near, to which the electricity will leap like a crackling thread of flame.

In the case of lightning the place of the charged conductor is taken by an electrified cloud, and the earth beneath serves as the object which "draws its fire."

But the strength of the discharge depends upon the density of the charge on the conductor. The charge resides upon the surface, and if more and more electrification is given to the same conductor the density increases until the strain upon the surrounding air becomes so great that it can no longer be borne, and then a discharge takes place through the air, which instantly relieves the strain by lowering the pressure.

Now, on a thunder cloud, which is composed of billions upon billions of minute particles of vapor, each of which has contributed its electrical charge to the common stock, the density, or potential, becomes enormous, and when the discharge takes place, the flash may extend several miles through the air.

The small discharge from an electrical machine will burn particles of dust, or demolish minute objects. It will also produce a severe shock in the human body. But the gigantic discharge from a thunder cloud will instantly kill men and larger animals, tear off the branches or rend the trunks of great trees, hurl down chimneys and towers, destroy roofs, melt iron rods and chains, and set fire to buildings and haystacks.

It was not until Franklin invented the lightning rod that men knew any way to ward off the strokes of lightning. The lightning rod does its work by providing an easy road for the electric discharge. When properly constructed it may even prevent too great an accumulation of potential in the clouds above by gradually drawing off their electric charge.

According to Prof. G. F. Barker, an effective way to protect an ordinary house from lightning is to run galvanized iron telegraph wire "up all the corners, along all the ridges and eaves, and over all the chimneys, taking these wires down to earth in several places, and at each place burying a load of coke around the wire in order to establish an efficient connection with the ground."

These wires should terminate above in sharp points, elevated several feet. The object of all this is to furnish ready ways for the electricity to travel between the clouds and the earth. Travel it will, somehow, if it takes a fancy to go in that direction, and if the way is not open it will open it by force. But it will usually follow an iron wire, if it has no sharp turns, as obediently as a led child.

There is danger, however, in being near a lightning rod when a discharge takes place through it, because the human body is a fairly good conductor, and an overflow current from the wire would be apt to leap to it.

As to personal protection, without regard to lightning rods, the safest place in a thunderstorm is in a house. Keep the doors and windows closed. Avoid the neighborhood of stoves, chimneys and fireplaces, especially if a fire is burning in them. Remain in the center of the room. Do not carry large metallic objects in the hands, and keep away from such objects in a room.

Franklin, who knew as much about lightning as any man that ever lived, advised sitting in a chair, in the middle of the room, and putting the feet up in another chair. But the best protection of all, according to him, is to have "a hammock, or awning bed, suspended by silk cords, equally distant from the walls on every side, from the ceiling and floor."

If you are caught in a thunderstorm in the open, do not carry an umbrella, and do not take shelter under a lonely tree, or a small grove of trees. Keep away from wire fences. Many cattle have been killed by lightning striking, or following, such fences.

There is more danger near a body of water than in the midst of dry land, but by keeping indoors one may feel secure even on the shore of a lake or river.

Statistics in all countries show that the number of men killed by lightning is far greater than the number of women, and the reason undoubtedly is that the latter are less apt to be caught out of doors by a storm.

Does Marriage Bore You?

By DOROTHY DIX.

Why is it that men find matrimony more of a bore than women do? They do, you know.

The woods, to say nothing of the city streets, are full of wife deserters, while you hardly ever hear of a woman who deserts her husband and children.

It is the men who find domesticity so dull that they forsake their fire-side for the pleasures of an evening at the club or corner saloon.

It is the woman who reads up on politics and base ball so that they may be able to talk intelligently and interestingly to their husbands. No man ever posts himself up on the fashions so that he can hold a heart to heart conversation on draped skirts and wired collars and interrogation point feathers with his wife.

It is women who live in deadly fear that their husbands will get tired of them and go off after some straitlaced young girl when they get fat and forty. You never observe any man worrying over the danger of his wife getting weary of him because he's gotten middle aged and bald-headed and bay-winded.

It's men that yawn their heads off after dinner if they stay at home, and who either lie down and go to sleep on the couch or doze over their newspapers.

Why is this? Are women more stupid than men? Are they less entertaining conversationalists? Are they personally less attractive than men?

Perish the thought. Still, the truth remains that the feminine constitution appears to stand the wear and tear of matrimony better than the masculine one than brain building.

Be ready to share your best friends with others, and do not be one of those exacting and unreasonable girls who wants no one to love or be loved by her friends but herself.

In every community and school such types are common, and it always savors of prettiness and lack of broad, and noble qualities. Just as each flower in the garden has its place, so each friend and acquaintance has a place; and no one should crowd another.

Be helpful wherever you can, and be appreciative of the hard work your teachers have done and are doing to fill their positions. Teaching is one of the most trying and nerve-taxing of occupations; and if you show consideration, affection and courtesy to your teachers it helps to lessen their troubles and gives zest to their labors.

Even as a pupil, remember, you have something to give as well as something to receive.

Yet matrimony is harder upon the women than it is upon men, and the wife is called upon to make a thousand sacrifices where the husband has to make but one.

No other work on earth is so monotonous as housework, the constant doing over of small tasks that have to be done again the next minute, and that show no tangible result. The housewife cannot point to the dinners she has cooked and her family have eaten; the clothes she has washed and mended, and they have soiled and torn again; the floors she has swept, and that have been littered the next hour, as the result of her labor.

Women, too, are more grateful for kindness from their husbands than husbands are for attentions from their wives. A woman with a really appreciative husband goes about beaming upon cymbals and calling on her friends to observe how blessed she is, whereas a man takes everything that a good wife does for him as no more than his due.

The average wife has the longest hours of any worker in the world, the smallest amount of outside diversion and the least pay, and yet she finds matrimony not only endurable, but a blessed estate, while the one best bet is that the average man spends his time wondering what made him fool enough to saddle himself with a wife.

In the discussion of this subject that has been going on, hundreds of letters have been received from both men and women. Almost every letter written by a man says emphatically that matrimony is a bore, and that a man is a fool to get married, while the women's letters are a mass of praise of the happiness of wedlock.

Here are samples of the opinions of men on the question.

"A man who signs himself A. W. writes: 'Is matrimony a bore? It certainly is, if after a hard day's work the husband comes home to a complaining wife instead of to a home where he can rest. A woman knows (or if she doesn't she ought to) that after she is married she is bound to have trouble. Now, then, she ought to marry with the resolve that she will bear her matrimonial worries the best she can without adding them to her husband's. If a man is in business for himself he has business troubles; if he is a laborer he has a hard time keeping his job from a younger man. All men have enough troubles without having their wives' worries. In short, it is enough for a man to support his family without his wife making life a bore to him by ceaseless complaining. It's the wife's fault that matrimony is dull.'

Another man writes: 'Of course, matrimony is dull. It's worse than dull. It's purgatory. I am a hard-working man, and after trouble after trouble during the course of the day I come home to a dissatisfied wife, only to be badgered by her fault-finding and nagging. I stand by my marriage vows for better or worse, and were it not for the fact that I have two children I believe her tongue would drive me insane. What is life with a woman of this sort, who nags all the time, no matter how hard I try to please her? When I

Concentrated Wealth

By DR. C. H. PANKHURST.

Shortly after the celebration of the late Cyrus Field's sudden wedding I happened to meet him somewhere downtown and our conversation naturally turned to the public event which had just transpired, and which had meant so much to him, especially because of the large number of cablegrams which he received from notable people in England congratulating him on his success in laying the first oceanic cable.

He went on to speak of the obstacles which he had encountered in the course of that achievement, the large amount of money which had been required in order to carry it through, and wound up with the emphatic declaration that it takes a great deal of money to accomplish large results and that even then the undertaking will be a failure unless the large mind is at the disposal of a single man and is principally the contents of one man's purse, and not an accumulation of pennies collected by passing around the hat among a crowd of the impetuous.

There is among us a rather widely prevailing feeling of antagonism toward those who are immensely rich, and that feeling is very often thoroughly justified. It is justified when their wealth has been accumulated by dishonorable means and is the sum total of what has been overbearingly extracted from the pockets of those having small holdings.

It is justified also when the money which has been accumulated—whatever the process of accumulation, honest or dishonest—is employed and expended in accordance with the unchristian principle that a man may do what he will with his own.

But the feeling of antagonism is not justified on any such ground as that a man has wealth and a vast amount of it, for we never should have reached our present stage of civilization if we had not had such men and a great many of them.

Cyrus Field was right.

His doctrine is guaranteed by his own achievement.

He made it possible for people to talk to each other across the sea without their communication being subject to the delay of going by sailing vessel or steamer. He was able to do it by means of the concentration of capital, subject to his own disposal and mode of expenditure.

If a man wants to go west he is no longer obliged to go on foot or to be transported in an emigrant caravan. The reason why such tedious method of travel has ceased to be necessary is that certain aggressive pioneers have had the control of enough money to track the continent with iron roadways and equip them with steam carriages.

We are all of us every day enjoying advantages that have been put within our reach by men that were immensely wealthy. If we are of a jealous disposition it may make us uncomfortable to realize how dependent we are upon what has been done for us by those who are infinitely more favorably circumstanced than we. If so, the best thing we can do is to get over our jealousy and not convert our blessings into curses by being sored by the way in which our blessings, many of them, have come to us.

We ought rather to be grateful that there are so many in the world who have honestly acquired large money and who are making so considerable a part of it accrue to public advantage.

Were we all of us to throw out entire property into one huge melting pot and then divide up per capita, everything in the shape of progress would be instantly suspended and the suspension would be continued till some progressive spirits were able to rise above the dead level of financial equality and set the wheels of progress to rolling again.

There is nothing in the foregoing that contradicts the fact that concentration of capital may work to public disadvantage; but that is just whatever is good in the life may become bad in the abuse.

The Fuel of Love

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

Love's a fire that needs renewal Of fresh fuel for its furnace. Love's wine mingles when caged and captured, Only free he soars enraptured.—Thomas Campbell.

The question is asked many times, "if a long engagement fair to the girl?" It certainly is not. An engagement of more than a year's duration is as trying on love as six months of married life, and more fatal.

A man and his wife in such a short time as six months accumulate a community of interests. They have a home, and the home instinct is the greatest anchor love knows. There is the hope of a family, the tie of their early wedded happiness; every self-denial the girl-wife makes has its reward in something tangible.

If she is disappointed she conceals it in her pride. She was wooed and won, and is married to the man she loved. These facts stand out as if written in a splash of gold with which she would cover every disappointment.

The engaged girl has nothing to sustain her in the waiting period of a long engagement but love and hope, sturdy offerings of her romance at the beginning, but they soon begin to weaken.

The days of their courtship were as ideal neither the man nor the woman seen a reason why they should not continue, and they become engaged with no immediate prospect of marrying.

At first the sense of proprietorship, which an engagement gives the man, the joy of knowing that she is his, without the tormenting thought of paying for her material wants, makes his happiness complete. He spends his evenings with her, and his little bank account grows. On her part, with that longing for a home which dominates every good girl, she works feverishly on dainty little household accessories, putting in tiny little stitches with a prayer of thanksgiving that she has the privilege.

These she puts in what girls call a "hope box," and she begins to take more pride in her "hope box" than in her personal appearance.

She loves him all the more when he does without a new suit that he may add to his fund for their home; womanlike, she takes it for granted that he loves her just as much in last year's hat, knowing that the price of a new hat has increased her store of household linen.

The economy never grows irksome to her, for the reason that woman's love grows on its opportunities for sacrifice and service, but it palls him. He is neither married and enjoying a home, nor is he a free young man, at liberty to come and go and spend a dollar as he chooses.

It is easy for a man to make of himself a martyr. He begins to regard himself as eligible to the rewards of the early Christians because he gives up a ball game or a theater that his cooking stove fund may grow.

He feels sorry for himself, and the first twinge of self-pity a lover feels is the first of many stabs at the heart of the girl he loves.

He occasionally strays. The evenings when he is not with her are no longer his most weary hours; they have become his evenings off. He flirts here and there and the engagement of which he was at first so proud becomes something to conceal because of the hampering influence it would have on his relations with other girls.

The girl, with her head bent a little lower over her embroidering and hem-stitching, continues to take such joy in anticipation of their future she doesn't see that the face of the future has changed. She has grown older and is losing the freshness of youth. When he takes her out he is conscious that she isn't as smartly attired as other girls. Man-like, he doesn't see the sacrifice; he sees only the effect.

"Love's a fire that needs renewal of fresh beauty for its fuel." She has neglected the renewing of fuel in her certainty that his love was lasting, and realizes her folly only when the ashes are dead and cold.

The tie that binds a man to an engagement of marriage is as fragile as gossamer, and when it is broken it leaves him with no scars.

A girl is bound by a tie which her love makes a cable. To the end of her days she will bear on her heart marks of this painful lesson in man's fallibility when that engagement is broken.

On Bad Habit of Apologizing Too Much

By VIRGINIA TERHUNE VAN DEWATER.

The apology has become a nuisance. This may sound brutal, but it is true. Not the humble apology which the wrongdoer makes to the person he has wronged. That is dignified and to be respected. But the needless apology with which we are all familiar has become a nuisance.

"I don't like to take a meal in Mrs. Blank's house," said a woman the other day, "for she apologizes for everything she sets before me. It is 'I am afraid there is too much salt in this soup' or 'Oh, dear, this meat is tough' or 'I am so sorry' or 'My dear, this is a very plain dinner. I hope you will pardon me for having such a simple meal tonight.' And all the time everything is as nice as it can be, and the only things I cannot excuse are her excuses."

A woman who does not apologize except when courtesy and common sense demand it gave a dinner on the evening of the day that a new cook had been installed in her kitchen. To her secret dismay the strawberries—the first of the season—were brought to the table heaped in the center of a platter plentifully garnished with parsley.

"What did you say?" asked the friend to whom the hostess mentioned the incident the following day.

"Say? Nothing! I had a right to garnish my strawberries with anything I chose. I let my guests suppose it was an innovation—a new thing in decorations—if they thought anything at all about it. I certainly did not call attention to my cook's mistake."

She was a wise woman. The habit of apology, if persisted in, affects one's self-confidence, for one at last assumes a deprecatory attitude about herself and her possessions. She fears that she "doesn't look just right" when she goes abroad; she feels that her own home is not as handsome as her neighbor's house, and intimates as much; she at last gets to the point where she is content with nothing that belongs to her. And all the while her long-suffering friends pat her—figuratively speaking—on the back and try to reassure her.

"Do not apologize," advised a wise man, "unless you have been guilty of actual wrongdoing. It lowers your self-respect."

Not long ago I heard a woman say of a piece of work into which she had put her best efforts:

"There! That is done as well as I can do it. It may not be as excellent as somebody else could have made it, but I know it is as good a thing as I am capable of at present. So I offer no apologies for it."

Was that not the sane and honest stand to take, and was it not more pleasant to her hearers than to have her deprecate that she had done "so poorly"? When one has performed any task to the best of one's ability there is no reason why one should not acknowledge the truth. If one is at heart and in effort sincere, he need not be ashamed. After all, nothing is really contemptible except affectation and sham.

An attitude of self-appreciation is entirely compatible with true modesty. A man need not be conceited to be aware that he has done well.

A great artist was exhibiting a painting he had just completed.

"That is a beautiful picture!" exclaimed a friend to him.

"I know it, and I love it," was the painter's naive rejoinder.

"What a pretty dress that is you have on!" said one woman to another,

Bits of Wisdom

Instinct is not always infallible. The early robin sometimes wishes it had waited awhile.

It is natural for the physician who treats the rich to mix fees and symptoms in his speculation.

Castles built in the air are much more accessible now that the aeroplane road has been successfully opened up.—Judge.