

out of his slender means to her comfort; and one of his last acts of filial duty was to write "Rasselas" for the purpose of paying her little debts and defraying her funeral charges.

George Washington was only eleven years of age—the eldest of five children—when his father died, leaving his mother a widow. She was a woman of rare excellence—full of resources, a good woman of business, an excellent manager, and possessed of much strength of character. She had her children to educate and bring up, a large household to govern, and extensive estates to manage, all of which she accomplished with complete success. Her good sense, assiduity, tenderness, industry, and vigilance, enabled her to overcome every obstacle; and, as the richest reward of her solicitude and toil, she had the happiness to see all her children come forward with a fair promise into life, filling the spheres allotted to them in a manner equally honorable to themselves, and to the parent who had been the only guide of their principles, conduct, and habits.*

The biographer of Cromwell says little about the Protector's father, but dwells upon the character of his mother, whom he describes as a woman of rare vigor and decision of purpose: "A woman," he says, "possessed of the glorious faculty of self help when other assistance failed her; ready for the demands of fortune in its extremest adverse turn; of spirit and energy equal to her mildness and patience; who, with the labor of her own hands, gave dowries to five daughters sufficient to marry them into families as honorable but more wealthy than their own; whose single pride was honesty, and whose passion was love; who preserved in the gorgeous palace at Whitehall the simple tastes that dis-

* Jared Sparks's "Life of Washington."

tinguished her in the old brewery at Huntingdon; and whose only care, amidst all her splendor, was for the safety of her son in his dangerous eminence."*

We have spoken of the mother of Napoleon Bonaparte as a woman of great force of character. Not less so was the mother of the Duke of Wellington, whom her son strikingly resembled in features, person, and character; while his father was principally distinguished as a musical composer and performer.† But, strange to say, Wellington's mother mistook him for a dunce; and, for some reason or other, he was not such a favorite as her other children, until his great deeds in after-life constrained her to be proud of him.

The Napiers were blessed in both parents, but especially in their mother, Lady Sarah Lennox, who early sought to inspire her sons' minds with elevating thoughts, admiration of noble deeds, and a chivalrous spirit, which became embodied in their lives, and continued to sustain them, until death, in the path of duty and of honor.

Among statesmen, lawyers, and divines, we find marked mention made of the mothers of Lord Chancellors Bacon, Erskine, and Brougham—all women of great ability, and, in the case of the first, of great learning; as well as of the mothers of Canning, Curran, and President Adams—of Herbert, Paley, and Wesley. Lord Brougham speaks in terms almost approaching reverence of his grandmother, the sister of Professor Robertson, as having been mainly instrumental in instilling into his mind a strong desire for information, and the first principles of that persevering energy in the pursuit of every kind of knowledge which formed his prominent characteristic throughout life.

* Forster's "Eminent British Statesmen" (Cabinet Cyclopædia) vi., 8.

† The Earl of Mornington, composer of "Here in coo! grət" etc.

Canning's mother was an Irishwoman of great natural ability, for whom her gifted son entertained the greatest love and respect to the close of his career. She was a woman of no ordinary intellectual power. "Indeed," says Canning's biographer, "were we not otherwise assured of the fact from direct sources, it would be impossible to contemplate his profound and touching devotion to her without being led to conclude that the object of such unchanging attachment must have been possessed of rare and commanding qualities. She was esteemed by the circle in which she lived as a woman of great mental energy. Her conversation was animated and vigorous, and marked by a distinct originality of manner and a choice of topics fresh and striking, and out of the commonplace routine. To persons who were but slightly acquainted with her, the energy of her manner had even something of the air of eccentricity.*

Curran speaks with great affection of his mother, as a woman of strong original understanding, to whose wise counsel, consistent piety, and lessons of honorable ambition, which she diligently enforced on the minds of her children, he himself principally attributed his success in life. "The only inheritance," he used to say, "that I could boast of from my poor father was the very scanty one of an unattractive face and person, like his own; and if the world has ever attributed to me something more valuable than face or person, or than earthly wealth, it was that another and a dearer parent gave her child a portion from the treasure of her mind."†

When ex-President Adams was present at the examination of a girls' school at Boston, he was presented by the

* Robert Bell's "Life of Canning," p. 37.

† "Life of Curran," by his son, p. 4.

pupils with an address which deeply affected him; and in acknowledging it, he took the opportunity of referring to the lasting influence which womanly training and association had exercised upon his own life and character. "As a child," he said, "I enjoyed perhaps the greatest of blessings that can be bestowed on man—that of a mother who was anxious and capable to form the characters of her children rightly. From her I derived whatever instruction (religious especially, and moral) has pervaded a long life—I will not say perfectly, or as it ought to be; but I will say, because it is only justice to the memory of her I revere, that in the course of that life, whatever imperfection there has been, or deviation from what she taught me, the fault is mine, and not hers."

The Wesleys were peculiarly linked to their parents by natural piety, though the mother, rather than the father influenced their minds and developed their characters. The father was a man of strong will, but occasionally harsh and tyrannical in his dealings with his family;* while the mother with much strength of understanding and ardent love of truth, was gentle, persuasive, affectionate, and simple. She was the teacher and cheerful companion of her children, who gradually became moulded by her example. It was through the bias given by her to her sons' minds in religious

*The father of the Wesleys had even determined at one time to abandon his wife because her conscience forbade her to assent to his prayers for the then reigning monarch, and he was only saved from the consequences of his rash resolve by the accidental death of William III. He displayed the same overbearing disposition in dealing with his children; forcing his daughter Mehetabel to marry, against her will, a man whom she did not love, and who proved entirely unworthy of her.

matters that they acquired the tendency which, even in early years, drew to them the name of Methodists. In a letter to her son, Samuel Wesley, when a scholar at Westminster in 1709, she said: "I would advise you as much as possible to throw your business into a certain *method*, by which means you will learn to improve every precious moment, and find an unspeakable facility in the performance of your respective duties." This "method" she went on to describe, exhorting her son "in all things to act upon principle;" and the society which the brothers John and Charles afterwards founded at Oxford is supposed to have been in a great measure the result of her exhortations.

In the case of poets, literary men, and artists, the influence of the mother's feeling and taste has doubtless had great effect in directing the genius of their sons; and we find this especially illustrated in the lives of Gray, Thomson, Scott, Southey, Bulwer, Schiller, and Goethe. Gray inherited, almost complete, his kind and loving nature from his mother, while his father was harsh and unamiable. Gray was, in fact, a feminine man—shy, reserved, and wanting in energy—but thoroughly irreproachable in life and character. The poet's mother maintained the family after her unworthy husband had deserted her; and, at her death, Gray placed on her grave, in Stoke Pogis, an epitaph describing her as "the careful, tender mother of many children, one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her." The poet himself was, at his own desire, interred beside her worshipped grave.

Goethe, like Schiller, owed the bias of his mind and character to his mother, who was a woman of extraordinary gifts. She was full of joyous, flowing mother-wit, and possessed in a high degree the art of stimulating young and

active minds, instructing them in the science of life out of the treasures of her abundant experience.* After a lengthened interview with her, an enthusiastic traveller said, "Now do I understand how Goethe has become the man he is." Goethe himself affectionately cherished her memory. "She was worthy of life!" he once said of her; and when he visited Frankfort, he sought out every individual who had been kind to his mother, and thanked them all.

It was Ary Scheffer's mother—whose beautiful features the painter so loved to reproduce in his pictures of Beatrice, St. Monica, and others of his works—that encouraged his study of art, and by great self-denial provided him with the means of pursuing it. While living at Dordrecht, in Holland, she first sent him to Lille to study, and afterwards to Paris; and her letters to him, while absent, were always full of sound motherly advice, and affectionate womanly sympathy. "If you could but see me," she wrote on one occasion, "kissing your picture, then, after a while, taking it up again, and, with a tear in my eye, calling you 'my beloved son,' you would comprehend what it costs me to use sometimes the stern language of authority, and to occasion to you moments of pain. . . . Work diligently—be, above all, modest and humble; and when you find yourself excelling others, then compare what you have done with Nature itself, or with the 'ideal' of your own mind, and you will be secured, by the contrast which will be apparent, against the effects of pride and presumption."

* Goethe himself says:

"Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur,
Des Lebens ernstes Führen;
Von Mutterchen die Frohnatur
Und Lust zu fabuliren."

Long years after, when Ary Scheffer was himself a grandfather, he remembered with affection the advice of his mother, and repeated it to his children. And thus the vital power of good example lives on from generation to generation, keeping the world ever fresh and young. Writing to his daughter, Madame Marjolin, in 1846, his departed mother's advice recurred to him, and he said: "The word *must*—fix it well in your memory, dear child; your grandmother seldom had it out of hers. The truth is, that through our lives nothing brings any good fruit except what is earned by either the work of the hands or by the exertion of one's self-denial. Sacrifices must, in short, be ever going on if we would obtain any comfort or happiness. Now that I am no longer young, I declare that few passages in my life afford me so much satisfaction as those in which I made sacrifices or denied myself enjoyments. 'Das Ent-sagen' (the forbidden) is the motto of the wise man. Self-denial is the quality of which Jesus Christ set us the example."*

The French historian Michelet makes the following touching reference to his mother in the Preface to one of his most popular books, the subject of much embittered controversy at the time at which it appeared:

"While writing all this, I have had in my mind a woman whose strong and serious mind would not have failed to support me in these contentions. I lost her thirty years ago (I was a child then)—nevertheless, ever living in my memory, she follows me from age to age.

"She suffered with me in my poverty, and was not allowed to share my better fortune. When young, I made her sad,

* Mrs. Grote's "Life of Ary Scheffer," p. 154.

and now I can not console her. I know not even where her bones are: I was too poor then to buy earth to bury her!

"And yet I owe her much. I feel deeply that I am the son of woman. Every instant, in my ideas and words (not to mention my features and gestures), I find again my mother in myself. It is my mother's blood which gives me the sympathy I feel for by-gone ages, and the tender remembrance of all those who are now no more.

"What return, then, could I, who am myself advancing towards old age, make her for the many things I owe her? One, for which she would have thanked me—this protest in favor of women and mothers."*

But while a mother may greatly influence the poetic or artistic mind of her son for good, she may also influence it for evil. Thus the characteristics of Lord Byron—the waywardness of his impulses, his defiance of restraint, the bitterness of his hate, and the precipitancy of his resentments—were traceable in no small degree to the adverse influences exercised upon his mind from his birth by his capricious, violent, and headstrong mother. She even taunted her son with his personal deformity; and it was no unfrequent occurrence in the violent quarrels which occurred between them, for her to take up the poker or tongs and hurl them after him as he fled from her presence.† It was this unnatural treatment that gave a morbid turn to Byron's after-life; and, care-worn, unhappy, great, and yet weak, as he was, he carried about with him the mother's poison which he had sucked in his infancy. Hence he exclaims, in his "Childe Harold":

* Michelet, "On Priests, Women, and Families."

† Mrs. Byron is said to have died in a fit of passion, brought on by reading her upholsterer's bill.

"Yet must I think less wildly: I have thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame;
And thus, *untaught in youth my heart to tame,*
My springs of life were poisoned."

In like manner, though in a different way, the character of Mrs. Foote, the actor's mother, was curiously repeated in the life of her joyous, jovial-hearted son. Though she had been heiress to a large fortune, she soon spent it all, and was at length imprisoned for debt. In this condition she wrote to Sam, who had been allowing her a hundred a year out of the proceeds of his acting: "Dear Sam, I am in prison for debt; come and assist your loving mother, E. Foote." To which her son characteristically replied—"Dear mother, so am I; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother by her affectionate son, Sam Foote."

A foolish mother may also spoil a gifted son by imbuing his mind with unsound sentiments. Thus Lamartine's mother is said to have trained him in altogether erroneous ideas of life, in the school of Rousseau and Bernardin de St.-Pierre, by which his sentimentalism, sufficiently strong by nature, was exaggerated instead of repressed;* and he became the victim of tears, affection, and improvidence all his life long. It almost savors of the ridiculous to find Lamartine, in his "Confidences," representing himself as a "statue of Adolescence raised as a model for young men."† As he was his mother's spoilt child, so he was the spoilt child of his country to the end, which was bitter and sad. Sainte-Beuve says of him: "He was the continual object of

* Sainte-Beuve, "Causeries du Lundi," i., 23.

† Ibid, i., 22.

the richest gifts, which he had not the power of managing, scattering and wasting them—all excepting the gift of words, which seemed inexhaustible, and on which he continued to play to the end as on an enchanted flute."*

We have spoken of the mother of Washington as an excellent woman of business; and to possess such a quality as capacity for business is not only compatible with true womanliness, but is in a measure essential to the comfort and well-being of every properly-governed family. Habits of business do not relate to trade merely, but apply to all the practical affairs of life—to every thing that has to be arranged, to be organized, to be provided for, to be done. And in all those respects the management of a family and of a household is as much a matter of business as the management of a shop or of a counting-house. It requires method, accuracy, organization, industry, economy, discipline, tact, knowledge, and capacity for adapting means to ends. All this is of the essence of business; and hence business habits are as necessary to be cultivated by women who would succeed in the affairs of home—in other words, who would make home happy—as by men in the affairs of trade, of commerce, of manufacture.

The idea has, however, heretofore prevailed that women have no concern with such matters, and that business habits and qualifications relate to men only. Take, for instance, the knowledge of figures. Mr. Bright has said of boys, "Teach a boy arithmetic thoroughly, and he is a made man." And why?—Because it teaches him method, accuracy, value, proportions, relations. But how many girls are taught arithmetic well?—Very few indeed. And what is

* Ibid, i., 23.

the consequence? When the girl becomes a wife, if she knows nothing of figures, and is innocent of addition and multiplication, she can keep no record of income and expenditures, and there will probably be a succession of mistakes committed which may be prolific in domestic contention. The woman, not being up to her business—that is, the management of her domestic affairs in conformity with the simple principles of arithmetic—will, through sheer ignorance, be apt to commit extravagances, though unintentional, which may be most injurious to her family peace and comfort.

Method, which is the soul of business, is also of essential importance in the home. Work can only be got through by method. Muddle flies before it, and higger-mugger becomes a thing unknown. Method demands punctuality, another eminently business quality. The unpunctual woman, like the unpunctual man, occasions dislike, because she consumes and wastes time, and provokes the reflection that we are not of sufficient importance to make her more prompt. To the business man, time is money; but to the business woman, method is more—it is peace, comfort, and domestic prosperity.

Prudence is another important business quality in women, as in men. Prudence is practical wisdom, and comes of the cultivated judgment. It has reference in all things to fitness, to propriety; judging wisely of the right thing to be done, and the right way of doing it. It calculates the means, order, time, and method of doing. Prudence learns from experience, quickened by knowledge.

For these, among other reasons, habits of business are necessary to be cultivated by all women, in order to their being efficient helpers in the world's daily life and work.

Furthermore, to direct the power of the home aright, women, as the nurses, trainers, and educators of children, need all the help and strength that mental culture can give them.

Mere instinctive love is not sufficient. Instinct, which preserves the lower creatures, needs no training; but human intelligence, which is in constant request in a family, needs to be educated. The physical health of the rising generation is intrusted to woman by Providence; and it is in the physical nature that the moral and mental nature lies enshrined. It is only by acting in accordance with the natural laws, which, before she can follow, woman must needs understand, that the blessings of health of body, and health of mind and morals, can be secured at home. Without a knowledge of such laws, the mother's love too often finds its recompense only in a child's coffin.*

It is a mere truism to say that the intellect with which woman as well as man is endowed has been given for use and exercise, and not "to rust in her unused." Such endowments are never conferred without a purpose. The Creator may be lavish in his gifts, but he is never wasteful.

Woman was not meant to be either an unthinking drudge, or the merely pretty ornament of man's leisure. She exists for herself as well as for others; and the serious and responsible duties she is called upon to perform in life require the cultivated head as well as the sympathizing heart. Her

* That about one-third of all the children born in this country die under five years of age, can only be attributable to ignorance of the natural laws, ignorance of the human constitution, and ignorance of the uses of pure air, pure water, and of the art of preparing and administering wholesome food. There is no such mortality among the lower animals.

highest mission is not to be fulfilled by the mastery of fleeting accomplishments, on which so much useful time is now wasted; for, though accomplishments may enhance the charms of youth and beauty, of themselves sufficiently charming, they will be found of very little use in the affairs of real life.

The highest praise which the ancient Romans could express of a noble matron was that she sat at home and span—" *Domum mansit, lanam fecit.*" In our own time it has been said that chemistry enough to keep the pot boiling, and geography enough to know the different rooms in her house, was science enough for any woman; while Byron, whose sympathies for woman were of a very imperfect kind, professed that he would limit her library to a Bible and a cookery-book. But this view of woman's character and culture is as absurdly narrow and unintelligent, on the one hand, as the opposite view, now so much in vogue, is extravagant and unnatural on the other—that woman ought to be educated so as to be as much as possible the equal of man; undistinguishable from him except in sex; equal to him in rights and votes; and his competitor in all that makes life a fierce and selfish struggle for place and power and money.

Speaking generally the training and discipline that are most suitable for the one sex in early life are also the most suitable for the other; and the education and culture that fill the mind of the man will prove equally wholesome for the woman. Indeed, all the arguments which have yet been advanced in favor of the higher education of men plead equally strongly in favor of the higher education of women. In all the departments of home, intelligence will add to woman's usefulness and efficiency. It will give her thought and forethought, enable her to anticipate and provide for the

contingencies of life, suggest improved methods of management, and give her strength in every way. In disciplined mental power she will find a stronger and safer protection against deception and imposture than in mere innocent and unsuspecting ignorance; in moral and religious culture she will secure sources of influence more powerful and enduring than in physical attractions; and in due self-reliance and self-dependence she will discover the truest sources of domestic comfort and happiness.

But while the mind and character of women ought to be cultivated with a view to their own well-being they ought not the less to be educated liberally with a view to the happiness of others. Men themselves can not be sound in mind or morals if women be the reverse; and if, as we hold to be the case, the moral condition of a people mainly depends upon the education of the home, then the education of women is to be regarded as a matter of national importance. Not only does the moral character but the mental strength of man find its best safeguard and support in the moral purity and mental cultivation of woman; but the more completely the powers of both are developed the more harmonious and well-ordered will society be—the more safe and certain its elevation and advancement.

When, about fifty years since, the first Napoleon said that the great want of France was mothers, he meant, in other words, that the French people needed the education of homes, presided over by good, virtuous, intelligent women. Indeed, the first French Revolution presented one of the most striking illustrations of the social mischiefs resulting from a neglect of the purifying influence of women. When that great national outbreak occurred, society was impregnated with vice and profligacy. Morals, religion, virtue,