

7. Woman's Sphere.

By One of the Sex.

The Lives We Live.

THE PURITY OF OUR BOYS.

I want to gather the mothers together today, and have a quiet confidential talk. It won't hurt the father a bit to listen to us, and indeed I am not sure that they are not as much interested in this matter as we are, but for the present, we will address ourselves to our duty as mothers, and leave the duties of fathers for the Elders themselves to give counsel upon. There is a subject which is rarely spoken of, except in whispers, between a few anxious and intelligent mothers. But I think you and I can speak of it in a sufficiently guarded way to be of use to each other without being in the least imprudent or indelicate. This is my subject: The guarding of the innocence and purity of our boys. Now, singular to state, there is a sort of unwritten social law which permits a boy to find out everything about nature and its workings that is possible for him to discover in farmyards and from the talk of unwise men, while the girl is supposed to and often does remain in utter ignorance of the first principles of nature's wonderful processes until after marriage. Is not this on its face a false and pernicious tradition? A boy rarely has occasion to know any of these laws, unless he is going to take up medicine, while a girl lives her life under the workings of the laws of which she only learns the penalties by the most agonizing experiences. And there is another thing; the plastic mind of a boy can be kept as pure and as free from taint of vulgarity as that of a girl, if the parents so desire, although it must be admitted that the law of inheritance or heredity has great force in this matter. But just now, we are speaking only of those fathers and mothers who are equally modest and pure but whose boys show when grown up a singular difference to their parents in disposition and actions. I wonder if the fathers of our boys sufficiently think how wrong it is to allow their half-grown sons to listen to vulgar talk, and if they realize the depth of responsibility involved in allowing such boys to hear of and see what should never be seen by their eyes, except such things are quietly and intelligently explained as an education to them? Oh, mothers, guard your boys with all the strength of your souls! Ask them from the time you allow them to run out and play with other boys, no matter if they are still in baby dresses, how older boys act and what they say to them! Watch them if they get off in barns with other boys; or if they are long out of your sight, follow them and always with loving stratagem draw from them what is said and done when they are not with you. Never make the mistake of supposing that your boys are better than your neighbors' boys or that your boys cannot do wrong. No matter if they tell you they are innocent, it will do no harm to prove it. Of course it is not wise to doubt the word of a child, but refrain from asking direct questions while skillfully drawing out the record of actions and words from your trusting child: Never ruin your child's confidence in you by threatening to whip him when he ever does "so and so." These acts will be hid from you in the future and

you have only made your child deceitful.

Dress.

WHAT SHALL IT BE?

This department aims and has aimed not to tickle the ears of women with descriptions of lovely and impossible toilettes, nor of expensive and unattainable luxuries of any sort; but to give a helping word in the matter of food, dress and in fact in all of the more important fields of women's work. Now, the crying need of the hour is economy—economy spelled with a big E. If I could go into every Relief society and every Young Ladies' meeting in Zion today, I would try to preach a sermon on economy; not stinginess, not oppression of those around us; but I would say: Sisters, let us join in a society of relief and comfort to our distressed husbands. Let us joyfully wear our last summer's bonnet, let us gladly trip to meeting with our last summer's or last winter's dress on, and put on our countenances such a cheerful, happy expression that our nearest and dearest will declare we have never looked so beautiful in all our lives. And if I could touch the heart of the wealthiest sister in every town; I would especially urge her by precept and example to economy. Even if she did not need it so much as some others, her example would be a moral support to weak ones who always need some such support. And another thing, let our economizing be done with the utmost cheerfulness. Let no unkind look or reproachful word be given to the bread-winner of the family. His trials are all he can bear, be sure of that. And if ever there was a time when you can be a help meet for your husband, it is just now. See to it, that you do not fail in his hour of need. Again, you can teach some exceedingly valuable lessons to your children at this time. With the kindest and tenderest words show the older ones how necessary every little economy is, and get their earnest and loving cooperation in helping father to tide over this stringency. I can see even in this trial that is upon us a chance for us all to learn the most valuable lessons. Shall the mother not make use of these valuable opportunities then?

The Food We Eat.

COOKING VEGETABLES.

Can you cook a good, plain dinner? I hear a chorus of yesses in answer to that simple and plain question. Just so. How do you cook potatoes? "Oh, put them on in water, and boil them until they are done." We have once before spoken of this important matter, but let us speak again. Are you cooking new potatoes? Then, pour boiling water over them, or better still, put your pot on, have the water in it boiling hard, and then drop your potatoes in. Don't throw about a pint of cold water off your hands in with the potatoes and thus stop the water from boiling. Don't fill your pot full of water, but have just enough to cover the potatoes. Boil until done, keeping them merrily dancing all the time with the glow of the fire, and the moment they are done, not five nor ten nor fifteen minutes after, turn every drop of water off and cover them with a clean cloth, set on the top of the stove, and you will have some mealy,

white, well flavored potatoes, fit for any American sovereign to eat. How many people consider boiling potatoes of no importance? Yet the consequence is always potatoes of no importance or flavor. Can you cook peas, beans or cauliflower? Oh yes. Same way, I suppose, that you cook potatoes? Just the same. Now peas, delicious peas, the sweetest vegetable ever grown, need great care. They must be put on in boiling, mark, I say, boiling water, well covered, in fact you must be more generous with the water supply than you were with the potatoes; then they should not be salted until nearly done. Some rash cooks put soda in peas and thus kill a great deal of their natural flavor, but I would advise you not to do so. The soda makes peas or asparagus a beautiful green color, but the natural flavor is destroyed. If your peas are young and tender, nothing but a small pinch of salt and a good lump of butter is needed to make them ready to serve. When peas and potatoes first come, economical housewives cook the two together, and then make a cream gravy for the whole. If you wish to do this, or if you want your peas made with a thickening, take a generous cup of cream, or milk if you have not cream, leaving the water in which they were boiled still in the pot, and mix up two spoonfuls of flour with two spoonfuls of butter, beat this to a cream, and add to the gravy just as it reaches the boiling point. There is no need to stir this thickening, for the lumps will all boil out. Any kind of vegetables can be thickened in the same way, and it is far better than putting the butter into the gravy, and adding thickening made of flour and water. The gravy always tastes richer and smoother if made in this way. Vegetables need the least possible amount of salt, and no pepper. If folks will persist in ruining their stomachs with pepper added to meat, for pity's sake let the delicate flavors of green vegetables assert themselves without the pernicious addition of pepper. Cauliflower should have the water in which it was boiled turned off, and then either dressed with drawn butter, or a cup of cream thickened with flour or butter, a spoonful each, beaten to a cream before added.

The Clothes We Wear.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE HOOP.

You and I, sensible readers of the DESERET NEWS—for all readers of the DESERET NEWS are sensible people if all sensible people are not readers of the NEWS, which I am not at all sure of—I say you and I, dear reader, can look back with a smile of amusement to the frantic efforts of would-be-fashion-leaders to project upon us a reign of crinoline. We said so all the time, didn't we, dear readers? For are we not sensible readers of an eminently sensible paper? Well, as I say, we said so all the time. We are approaching too near the reign of sense and peace on this earth for such a monstrosity as the hoop to become engrafted upon our lives and bodies. There were a few, but how few, who wore circular wires under their dresses. But now, the only effect of all the talk last winter is that our skirts are spread out like an umbrella top, and scant ruffles here and there break the monotony of the expanse. By-the-way, have you got one of the new