

half an hour every evening before retiring.

"Oh pshaw!" you say; "let nature take her course. She will set matters right in her own time."

My dear madam or sir, you should pause and analyze the meaning of your words. Your developing child is a growing animal, but to let nature take her course would be inconsistent with the social and moral obligations resting upon her. Nature's impulses are the same from insects up to man; but man must govern impulse by reason and judgment unless he wishes to be only an animal, instead of the highest expression of divinity yet evolved from animal life.

Therefore, instead of "letting nature take its course," you must direct nature's impulses by wisdom and care into healthful channels.

Avert overwrought imaginations and excited nerves by a systematic course of exercise which produces thorough circulation of the blood.

Give her pleasures suited to her age, and divert her mind from dwelling too much upon herself.

Let her be fatigued enough to sleep when she retires, and see to it that she gets up as soon as she awakens.

"Nothing gives my daughter such pleasure as to lie and dream," said a blind mother to me once. She is no hand for outdoor romps, like other girls; just give her a book and a lounge and she will be happy all day long."

"It would be better for her health to romp outdoors and read less," I suggested.

"Oh, she is in excellent health; she never has an ache or pain; that languid way is natural to such dreamy temperaments, if fancy."

If I had told that mother what was the nature of the dreams I read in her young daughter's eyes she would have shown me the door.

But let me beg of you to be alert and avoid allowing your daughter to form this habit of languorous day-dreams. It is more fascinating than any outdoor sport, once formed, and more enervating than the hardest labor. Many a weakly woman might trace her ailments back to this period of luxurious imagination in her youth's dawn.

"But I never recollect any such dangerous period in my life, or any such diseased imagination," you tell me. Quite likely. Girls of the olden time were not brought up in such ease and luxury as are the girls of today. Household duties and the care of younger children devolved upon the daughters of the household instead of upon servants and nursemaids, as in the present time. Then, too, you may have been one of the exceptions to the rule; but remember that it is unsafe to expect your daughter to be exactly like you. She has a paternal inheritance. Many a calm, practical mother forgets that the father's fiery or poetic nature may of right descend to her daughter, and that it needs a more careful guarding than did her own. And the strangest fact of all is that the father forgets or ignores this also. It is well to keep the fact before his eyes.

It is well to make him realize that a certain amount of social amusement, where games and dancing predominate, among carefully selected companions, is a necessity to the physical and moral well-being of his daughter. Call his attention to the fact that a tightly closed

vessel of boiling steam explodes and causes devastation and destruction if it has no outlet. A human being developing into vigorous maturity is like this vessel, and the outlet for a portion of the surging vital forces should be made in healthful pleasures and amusements.

When your daughter reaches the age of twelve years at latest you should instruct her that it is not modest to allow gentlemen guests and friends to take her upon their knees and caress her. Let no false idea of keeping her "a child as long as possible" render you careless in this matter. And do not make the foolish blunder of thinking that all your men friends are "perfect gentlemen," who could not entertain an unworthy thought toward your daughter.

In your quiet domestic *role* you know very little of what is going on in the minds of men. You think of your twelve-year-old daughter as a child—they think of the woman she is soon to be. Their thoughts and feelings are contagious. One of the most carefully reared and severely chaperoned girls I ever knew told me that her first knowledge of evil came to her at the age of thirteen through a lifelong friend of her family—a man old enough to be her grandfather, and a man occupying a high social position. While she was not allowed to associate with boys of her own age, she was permitted to receive the caresses of this "fine old family friend" until her own modesty gave the alarm. You can instil an idea of dignity and womanly reserve into your little daughter's mind about these matters without destroying her innocence; but even if you must startle her somewhat out of her childlike ignorance and freedom of conduct, it is better that the experience should come through you than through the men who frequent your house.

Make yourself her confidant, that she may avoid revealing herself in ignorance to dangerous companions of either sex. You tell me with great dignity and some severity that "your daughter is not allowed to associate with dangerous companions of either sex; that you know her mates thoroughly, and they are exceptional young people." My dear madam, your words are empty air. You know no more of the secret thoughts and feelings of your daughter's mates than you know of the man in Mars.

You might be startled and shocked should you think aloud in your presence once. They are not vicious, but they are in the unformed chaotic state of which I am trying to warn you in regard to your own daughter, and their mingled curiosity, ignorance, and dawning knowledge render them unsafe confidants for one another unless there is a sympathetic, wise counsellor back of them.

Again your dignity asserts itself, and you tell me your daughter has no curiosity on forbidden subjects and no dawning knowledge and no dangerous impulses. Then, dear madam, your daughter is not a normal being. She is not in good health; she is an anæmic. To build her into a woman fitted for domestic duties she needs iron tonics and blood foods.

The world will be much better off when we get over the romantic idea that a young girl is an angelic creature who communes with seraphs in the privacy of her room, and who is to be guarded to the very altar steps from any knowledge of evil. Such girls sometimes exist, but

they are not normal beings, and they do not make good wives and mothers.

And, again, girls who have shown what you would term a precocious tendency to vicious thought have, when properly guarded and guided over the dangerous chasm, made ideal wives and the most perfect mothers later in life.

The wise mother, when discovering this tendency in a young girl, does not strive to scold, punish, and shame her into reform; she does not say to her: "This is a poison weed; root it out of your mind at once; pray to God to aid you in casting out this noxious weed." Instead she says: "This is the root of a beautiful vine, God-implanted, which by and by will make your life sweet and fair; but if you misuse it now it will be dwarfed or hideous; think of it with reverence, and pray God to guide it wisely in its growth." Then she gives her plenty of healthful books to read and enough study, and occupies all her leisure time with physical exercise mingled with agreeable companionship, until nature has accomplished its revolutionary work and the chaotic period has passed and the girl is a woman.

But alas! and alas! for the scarcity of such mothers.

The average American girl dwells alone with her imagination and the confidences of equally unwise companions through these years, exposed to all the dangerous freedom of association with the flapping wings of our American eagle, proclaim to all the world to be her right.

If she goes wrong in ever so slight a measure her parents are crushed to the earth by surprise and sorrow; but that she ever goes right is an increasing wonder to me the more I see of the world and the deeper I study human nature. Indeed, it speaks well for the level head and the good heart of the American girl that so few, comparatively speaking, make serious mistakes; but this is due to her own innate worth and not to the wisdom of her parents.

ELLA WHEELER-WILCOX.

WAKEMAN'S WANDERINGS.

LONDON, April 17, 1893.—After all, though the antiquarian, historic and picturesque features of English villages provide endless fascination and charm, their human interest has the strongest hold upon the observant mind and sympathetic nature.

They are by no means alike though universally possessing similar characteristics, and very many are strikingly typical of them all. Those most like the English villages of literature will be found in the eastern, midland and southern shires, from Lincoln around to Devon, and these comprise the far greater number. Those differing most from each other, and occasionally separately as well as a whole from all others, are those of the northwestern shires; the northwestern midland shires where industrial development has created a host of comparatively modern hamlets; the western central shires among the Malvern and Cotswold hills, where the antiquity of all villages is very great; and those of Cornwall where race distinction has left strongly marked peculiarities in language, customs, and home and village life among the lowly.

The peasants of Cumberland and Westmoreland who are nearly all villagers, most of the former being "states-