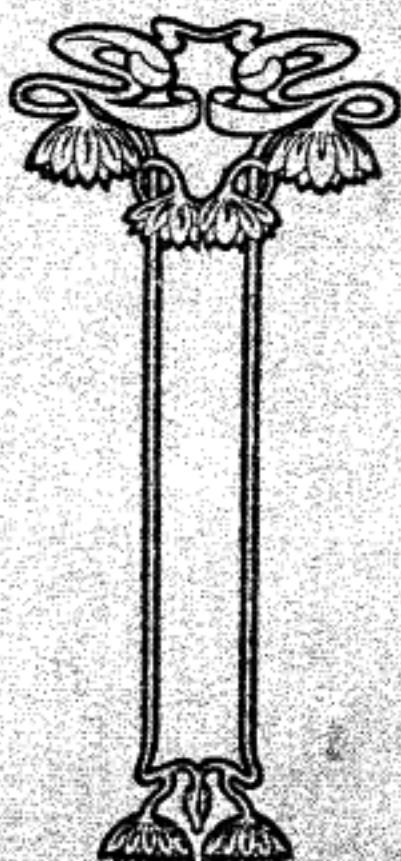


What Every Mother
Should Know



BY

Margaret H. Sanger

31—32nd THOUSAND

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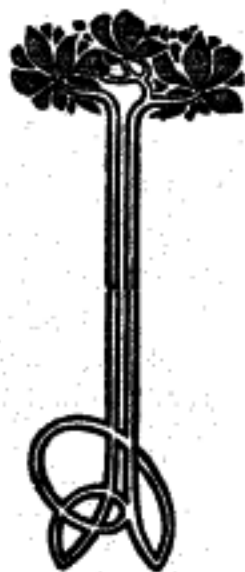
1921

What Every Mother Should Know

OR

How Six Little Children Were
Taught the Truth

By MARGARET H. SANGER



ANTHONY RINKERS

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*To Stuart, my first born, whose first heart
throb led me into the joyous complexities of
motherhood.*

Dedicated January, 1911.

PREFACE.

The following articles were put into story form for the mother so as to enable her to make the truth and facts just as interesting to a child's imagination as possible.

The idea is that the child be taught the process of reproduction and absorb such knowledge without realizing he has received any "sex" instruction.

M. H. S.

INTRODUCTION



HERE is scarcely any subject which is of greater importance or of greater interest to parents than this subject of teaching children the truth about life and birth.

Every mother knows that some day her little boy or girl will have matured into the possessor of the powers of procreation, yet she fails to teach the child how to care for, or how to regard these powers it possesses.

Biologically speaking, these creative powers are the most important functions of the body, but they are the only functions of the human body which are utterly ignored by both parents and teachers.

In order to perpetuate the species, nature has endowed all animals with sexual instinct, and man is the only animal who is ashamed of this instinct. Man is the only animal with the intelligence to exercise the privilege of limiting his offspring, though he continues in his sexual relation.

Man, and man alone, is the only animal who is subject to disease directly inimical to the integrity of the organs of reproduction. Ignorance of this has led to a serious increase of gonorrhoea and syphilis and threatens disaster to the race.

So, with this last assertion before our eyes, we parents cannot help but see that we have a danger to combat. It is there and shows itself in the death list, in statistics, in the hospitals, where thousands of innocent girls and women are being operated upon. In fact, the danger signal is everywhere about us, if we could but understand what it really is.

In the public schools all over this country there is a general cry for help. Teachers are calling out for assistance to help them check the degrading and immoral atmosphere which is pervading the school rooms today. The words and language of the children (of all ages) found whispering together, the writings in the notes and on the walls of the buildings, all tend to show children's thoughts. And in these actions the teacher sees the danger signal. She realizes this is the first step, and not knowing how to cope with these conditions, she calls for help.

The time comes to every mother when she first hears her child say: "When I get big and have a little girl I'll, etc."—showing that the natural average child takes it as a matter of course that at some future time he or she will have children, too. Shortly after this, questions are likely to begin, as when the parents speak of things they did, or places they went to either before marriage or early after, and the child asks:

“What did I do, father?” “Was I there, too, mother?”

Then begins the mystery. And the lies told by the parents in answer to these simple questions are shameful to hear. Father and mother smile slyly at each other and reply:

“Oh, no, dearie, you were not there.”

“Where was I, then?” the child insists.

Another sly look passes between the parents and the lies begin.

“You were in heaven,” or “among the flowers, etc.”

“How did I get *here*, then?” continues the small questioner, who is in quest of information concerning the most important subject in the child world, the “I.”

Then of course, the reply comes that the stork or the angels, or oftentimes the doctor brought him. However, any answer will do which will delude the child’s mind and keep him, as the parents say, “innocent.”

Now let us see what happens. This little child is beginning to think. He has received brand new information, something fully as wonderful and mysterious as Santa Claus, and he loves to think about it and talk about it, too.

He goes again to mother (father is not always around) and besieges her with questions, and she all in ignorance of the harm she is doing him, becomes so entangled in this mesh of

lies that she grows cross, or impatient, and stops his eager questions by sending him out to play to divert his attention to some other subject. But his attention is not long diverted before he returns to this subject, and if his walk is taken with an aunt or nurse he continues to ask questions, and to his even greater surprise, the aunt or nurse, not knowing what the parent has told him, tells him what she thinks. This will very likely be an entirely different story from what his parents told him, and so he begins to realize that there is some secrecy, which no one will explain, and he becomes determined to find out the meaning of it all.

By the time this little fellow is one year in school he knows all about who brought him from "heaven" and how the stork came, etc. He may have been most carefully reared in the little things which help to make him thoughtful and considerate of others; he may have been trained in every way to make him upright, honest and truthful, but the vile words with which this information thus received by him is clothed, the base and foul idea of love and marriage, the distorted view of the creative power which he receives, cannot help but stunt and deform his mind and leave his conception of the beauty of birth and love forever scarred.

If, on the other hand, the child had been

told the truth by his parents and had the reasons explained to him for not talking to other children on this subject; if he had had impressed on him what a trust was his and how beautiful a gift to take care of, he would have been satisfied and his curiosity would have ceased.

There are excellent parents who pride themselves and boast of never promising their child anything from a toy to a spanking without keeping the promise, but who find themselves most embarrassed and confused when it comes to speaking about the facts of birth.

This attitude of mind comes from several reasons. One is that there are parents, good, faithful and loving, who do not know the dangers and results of street instruction, who think they are keeping the child "pure and innocent" and prefer to give the child the impression of "spiritual" birth, as implied in the answer "The angels brought you from heaven."

Again, there are parents who know the value of home instruction, but know not how to tell them, and it is for these mothers that the following chapters are written.

The best method is to begin to teach the little child when it is very young. At 4 years of age the first lessons of the flowers could be begun. Keep it up. Then a little later, say six months, teach about the fish or frogs. Then the next year the life of the birds should be taught,

and by the sixth year the child will be ready for the mammals and humans. In case he asks questions before he has learned of the mammals, refer him back to the flowers and you will find an answer.

Most children are safe from being polluted in thought after the study of the flowers, but as the child's mind keeps growing and developing, his questions in order to be answered truthfully demand that he be taught the higher stages of development.

Mothers, keep in mind, the beauty and wonder of it all, and as you proceed in the study of the mechanism of the reproductive organs of human beings you cannot but impress upon the child the beauty and wonder of love. Help the child to realize the sacred trust of his organs, the danger in misusing them. Help him to realize the physical and moral development which awaits him in parenthood, but above all keep him close to you in confidence *through the truth.*

My object is to help all mothers who wish to give their children the right conception of the beautiful truths of reproduction, and I shall begin the first lesson "The Flowers—Mr. and Mrs. Buttercup, their home and their family."

CHAPTER I.

Mr. and Mrs. Buttercup, Their Home and Families.



LITTLE 5-year-old Bobby sat playing in the sand pile one lovely afternoon in May, and, judging by the glimpses his mother had of him through the open door of their cottage, his mind was to all appearances intent on making a sand fish perfect. For in and out the damp sand was thrown from the pile to the fish mold many times, until at last being perfect, at least to his satisfaction, he got up and ran to find his mother, who was busy within the small two-room shack where they were living for the summer.

He caught hold of her apron to attract her attention, and said: "Mother, where did I come from?"

Needless to say, his mother was greatly surprised at this question, just at that time, for she had not the faintest idea that his thoughts were on anything but the perfection of that sand fish. However, she quickly recovered from her surprise and taking his little face between her hands, said:

"Bobby, dear, that is the most wonderful story in all the world, and if you are quite sure you can keep a secret and only talk about it to father and mother, I'll tell you all about it."

The curly head bobbed up and down in answer to this and as his eyes grew big and bright, he answered:

"Do tell me the story mother, I'll not tell."

Then she said: "Let me ask you a question, dear. Do you know where the baby flowers come from? Or the baby birds or chickens or all the baby creatures in the world?"

"No, no," he answered simply, but excitedly.

Then she told him that as soon as the dishes were put away, she would take him for a walk in the woods and show him where the baby flowers come from, where the mother kept them when they were baby seeds and also tell him how the father and mother flower gave life to the little baby seeds, which afterward grew into the lovely flowers we see all about us. She would show him that he was once a little seed like the flower seed and kept in a soft little nest in the same way.

Bobby's mother now regretted that she had not begun earlier to tell this story of the flowers to him. For she realized that had she done this then, now when he had reached the stage of

development where he was curious about his own being, she could at once have taken up the story of his own creation, and, of course, referred back to the story of the creation of the lower species. This would have simplified matters greatly. However, she decided it could never be too late and the easiest and quickest way even now, was to begin with the flowers.

It now occurred to Bobby's mother that to teach only her child the truths of Nature would be a most fruitless task; for in playing with his companions, they would undo all her work unless they, too, were taught the truths, and in the same way.

She consequently set about gathering in the children of the neighborhood with whom Bobby played. She explained to the mothers what she was about to do. Most of them strongly objected to their boys learning these things which they considered of interest only to grown-ups. But five of the mothers consented, and seemed delighted to have their children taught the truths in this most beautiful and interesting manner.

Accordingly, she took five little children, together with her own, ranging in ages from five to six and one-half years, and started in the woods to hunt for the common wild flowers. Soon they were scrambling over boulders and

fallen trees in search of mountain pinks, violets, buttercups, anemones, etc., calling and shouting to each other at each new find, their faces bright and happy with the glow of health. It was a picture never to be forgotten; and as they gathered around Bobby's mother, who was seated on a moss covered, fallen tree, they received their first lesson.

As the buttercup was a little early—those on this particular outing being the first ones found of the season—they naturally made it the most popular flower; and so it became logically the first family to be studied.

They were told that the whole buttercup, as they held it, was the Buttercup House, whose color was yellow, and that inside the house, within the petals, was the Buttercup Family.

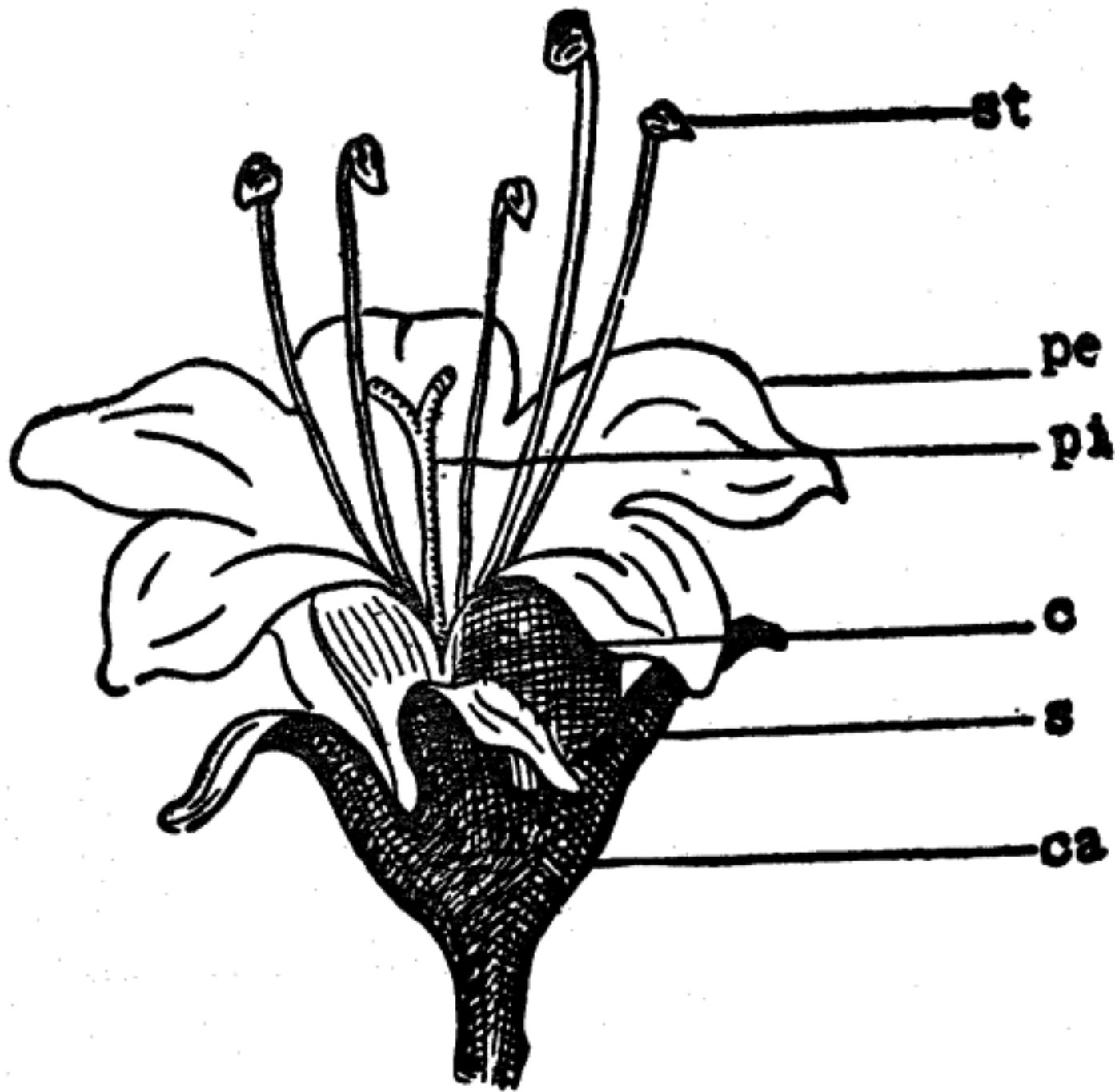
"Is there a father?" asked one; "and a mother?" asked another.

"Yes, indeed; there must be a father and mother if there are to be any seeds," was the reply.

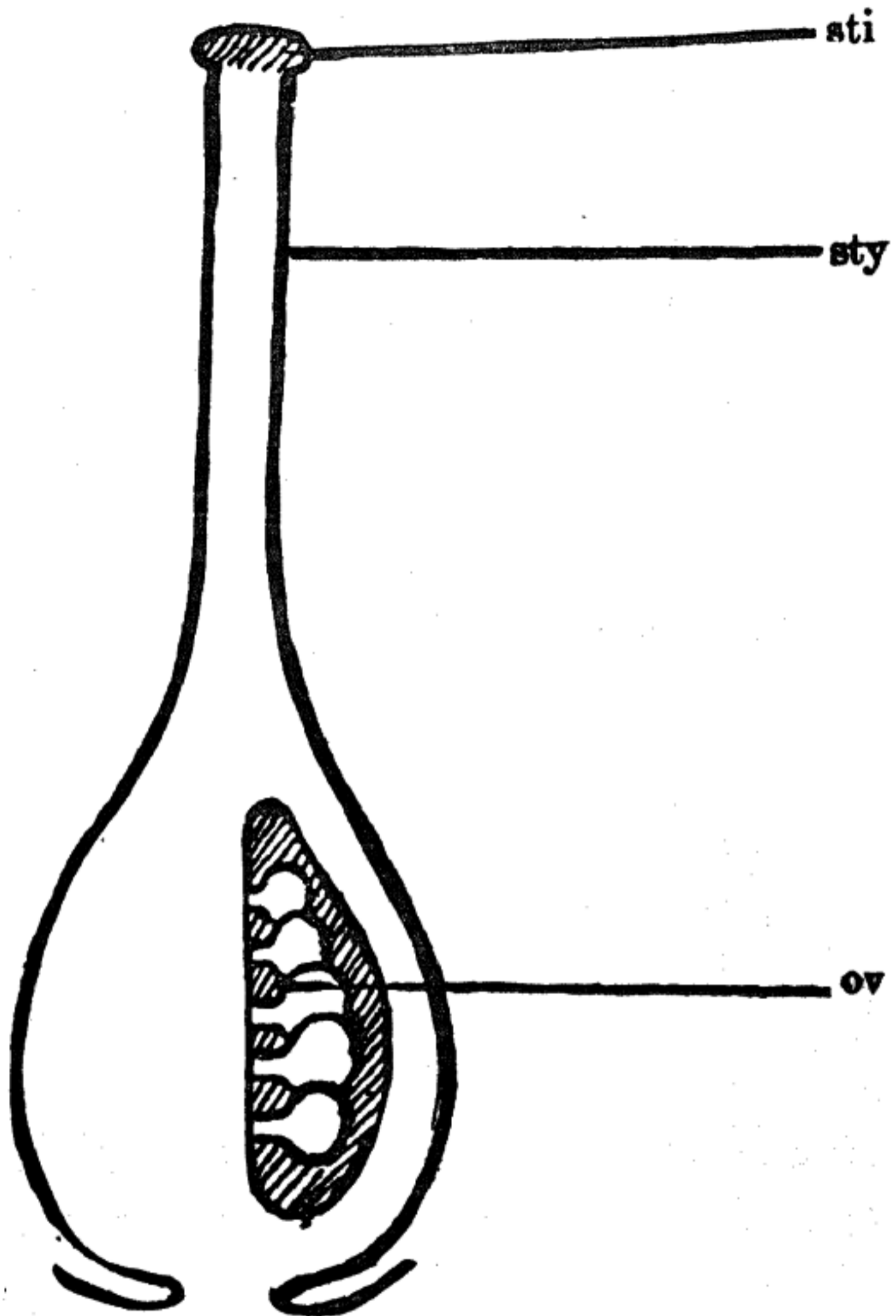
Then they were told that all forms of plant life have but one object and that object is to reproduce their kind—"to make more flowers."

They were told that the flowers have reproductive organs—"parts that make more flowers"—called pistils and stamens.

The pistils were called the "mothers" because at the bottom of the thin tube are the



A complete flower: st, stamen; pi, pistil; pe, petal; s, sepal; ca, calyx; c, sorolia.
After Bergen.



Pistil. sti, stigma; sty, style; ov. ovule. After Bergen.

ovules or seeds. The pistils were examined carefully and the very top or stigma was found to be very sticky. "Why?" asked the children. But they were told they must wait and find out about the father before they found out why this part of the pistil was sticky.

Now attention was again called to the seeds lying within the pistil or mother, and the fact that they were not developed yet. "Why?" Again we must wait to learn something about the father.

Now we come to the stamen, or "father." This is a slender thread-like fibre which has at its ends a little case or sac which contains a very fine powder-like substance, called the pollen.

In most of the flowers there are several stamens and one pistil; but in the buttercup there were several of each—so that the Buttercup House contained several families, the children were told.

Now to come back to the fathers, or stamens, and the tiny sacs containing the pollen. This pollen is a very important part of the growing of all flowers. The children were asked to name some of the flowers which they knew that had this powder on them. Answers came in the names of golden rod, wild rose, cherry blossom and many others.

Now it was explained that this pollen from the stamen, or father, must get into the pistil

or mother, and reach the ovules or seeds, or the seeds cannot grow and develop into new plants. This union of the pollen with the ovules we called "mating" or "to mate." And as this process of developing the seeds is the one object of plant life, we shall see how they go about accomplishing this object.

CHAPTER II.

The Flowers.



WE learned that the Buttercup family lived within the petals of the Buttercup House. And we learned that the pollen from the stamen, or father, must reach the pistil, or mother, before the little eggs or seeds contained in the mother can begin to grow and develop into new plants. But the flowers cannot move about as can animals, so they must depend on insects and outsiders to bring the pollen into the little nest where the eggs are. But unless there is some object attracting insects, bees, moths and butterflies, etc., to visit the flowers, they would not come to them, so the flowers have many attractions, such as their color and their odor. But the most important, and one which is sweet is the little bag of nectar or honey contained in many flowers which all insects love and will go far to get. When the insect visits the father, it rubs against his pollen, the pollen sticks to his head or legs. Then as he visits the mother, if the stigma (which is the top of the pistil, or mother) is ready for the pollen, it shows this by becoming moist, and sometimes sticky. Then the

pollen clings to the stigma, and down it goes through its tiny tube, to the little nest of ovules, or seeds, where it mates and at once causes the seeds to become alive. Then they grow and grow until their time comes to burst forth and develop new plants themselves.

Now, it is also important that the little visitors who come for the nectar, or honey, should fly from flower to flower and not crawl, because in doing so the pollen would drop off and never reach the mother flower, who is anxiously awaiting this important substance, so that the little seeds, or babies, may begin to grow. Consequently they have many ways of keeping out the crawling insects. Mrs. Buttercup has a very hairy stem, which makes a very hard journey for Mrs. Ant and others to come into the Buttercup house for a little sip of honey. She often starts there, but gets so tired out that she gives up the trip and returns to her family without any honey for them. This plan of growing a hairy stem is only one of the interesting ways the flowers have of keeping out the insects who cannot help them carry out the one object for which they exist—to make more flowers.

Some of the flowers have a little trap door to their sac of honey, which only the weight of the bee can open. Others keep their nectar in long tubes, so that only bees with long tongues

can reach it. An example of this is in the Orchid of Madagascar, which has a nectar tube eleven inches long, and depends upon one certain kind of moth for its existence.

It is related that when Darwin was confronted with the evidence of this flower as against one of his theories he insisted that such an insect must live—even before it had been discovered! Again, other flowers keep their petals closed, and the petals must be forced apart in order to get the honey by a strong bumblebee. The flowers that are fertilized by the insects are called “insect loving.” Those that are fertilized by the wind are called “wind loving,” etc.

The buttercup was thought not to need the insects to carry its pollen to the stigma—it was for some time thought to be what is called self-fertilizing. But the discovery of the small sac of nectar shows that it must have a purpose, and that purpose to attract insects to bring pollen from other father flowers to fertilize the tiny seeds.

The stigma is not always ready to accept the pollen, but when it is ready it becomes moist, and in some flowers sticky, which shows it is in condition to accept the pollen or is ready to mate and that the seeds are ready for their development. This condition often lasts only a few hours, but sometimes a few days.

The boys had now been taught and had seen how the pollen reaches the baby seeds. They had been taught the importance of the pollen for the growth of the seeds. They had seen that after the pollen reaches the seeds, that they are given new life, that they remain right in their little nest and are nourished by the pistil or mother flower, until they are full grown or matured. Now as this process is the whole object of the individual plant, what happens then?

The boys were shown that as soon as the seeds begin to grow, the petals, on the mother flower, begin to wither, and it seemed as if the flower gave of its beauty, form and youth in order that the baby seeds should grow and mature.

The boys were then taught that the plant depends on the earth and air for its nourishment, and as the various flowers have various ways of keeping the crawling insects out of their honey sac, so have they different ways of spreading or scattering their seeds after they have matured. If all the seeds of all plants fell right down near the parent plant there might not be nourishment enough to provide all the seeds with food.

So again the outsiders assist them as they did in carrying the pollen. This time it is the wind which does much to assist them in this

work. The birds, too, eat of the seeds and drop some of them on other ground. The wind serves the milkweed and dandelion; the birds help the fruits, and berries, and the "burrs" help themselves by catching on the clothing of passersby, or the fur and hair of animals.

Then there are those seeds which are in pods—sweetpeas, beans, peas, etc. Some of these dry and curl up, and as this is done, it throws the seeds in various places. Then there are those seeds which are in burrs, nuts, chestnuts, etc., which also burst open at a certain time, some of them explode, and this process scatters the seed over an area of several yards. But the wind seems to be the most important messenger in helping the flowers scatter their seeds.

The boys were also taught that the plants breathe and need care; that their struggle for existence is intense. They are also taught of the beautiful development of the flower under cultivation, and Mrs. Buttercup and Mrs. Daisy were both taken from the field and cultivated, given plenty of light, water and the proper soil, best suited to the needs of each, and the results were wonderful.

The boys each were given small gardens of wild flowers, which they cared for themselves, and the following year they each had small vegetable gardens.

Every flower had a life story, they were told, and each a different story—interesting, intense and true.

Bobby's mother found that the boys absorbed this information readily and very quickly. Although they studied the flowers for an entire year, they also studied the frogs and birds, together with the flowers. The mammals and humans were taken up during the winter.

They were also told that every baby seed continued this life of producing more flowers, that every girl is like the mother flower who has the little seeds hidden within her ever since she was born, while every boy is like the father flower and has the sac of pollen like him.

That the seeds are hidden way back in the abdomen and when she grows big enough the seeds will grow also and she too may be a mother of little boys and girls.

That the pollen in the boy is kept in the scrotum until he grows up big and strong, when it too will be ready to add life to little seeds and then become the father of strong boys and girls.

On a later occasion when Bobby was taking his bath, he felt greater freedom now to ask all kinds of questions. He pointed to the umbilicus and asked his mother what that was for. He was told that that was the naval, so called, and it was where the cord had been which had tied him to mother when he was a little seed, and

through which he had received all his air, food and drink. This caused great surprise, so much so that upon the first occasion in talking with the boys he gave this information in his own way, which led one to understand all boys were interested and curious about this depression in the abdomen.

This information had a most marvelous effect in establishing the truth in their minds; it seemed as if they needed proof and here, indeed, it was.

Much more time could have been spent on the flowers, but once the idea is given that each child is like the flowers, and that the flowers are like people, the rest is simple.

The frogs then took their attention, but never wholly, for on every occasion when a new flower appeared, it was examined as to its color and possibilities of family rearing.

CHAPTER III.

The Toads and Frogs.



HE next order of life to study should have been the fishes, but as Bobby's mother upon investigation found that the nearest stream, which contained fishes was five miles away, she decided to go on to the next highest order, the frogs, and point out, as she went, the difference in the two.

Of course, there was no difficulty in getting toads, but just where to obtain and how to keep frogs puzzled the community for a few days, until at last it was decided first to make a pond for the frogs to live in, and then go to the nearby ponds and capture some.

They were especially fortunate in finding in their locality what at one time had been a reservoir, which had a pipe leading into it from a nearby spring, and another pipe leading out of it into a nearby stream. The pipe connecting the reservoir with the stream, it was found, could be corked, and in a few days there appeared a delightful pond of clear, clean and fresh water.

Their delight knew no restraint when the afternoon came for them to go in search of some occupants for this nice new home. Accordingly, they started out a little late in the afternoon, with pails in their hands, and eager, expectant and happy faces.

As they came within sight of the pond, they need search no further for frogs, for the air was filled with sounds—queer, croaking, unmusical sounds, but unmistakable sounds of the joy of the existence of frogs.

As they came nearer, there was one gulp—"Chu-u-ug"—after another, one splash after another. Then silence reigned supreme and not a sound could be heard.

The youngsters entered into the spirit of the hunt and scattered about the place. Some sat silently on logs or stones waiting patiently for a frog to appear on the edge of the pond; others crouched near the water waiting, with pails in hands, ready to catch a frog the moment he should appear.

It was great fun catching them, for no sooner was the word passed that a frog had been captured, when, lo! he was gone.

It was not long, however, before the little procession was marching homeward with frogs a-plenty.

Their new pond made a fine place for them to live in, and they throve and grew.

For a few days the children made a daily excursion to the pond upon the hill, and brought more frogs to the new home; they brought frogs' eggs, too, which they carried carefully in their pails.

The eggs were watched, and each day saw a change, so that within a week the pond was swarming with tiny tadpoles or "polly-wogs," as the children called them. These, too, they carefully observed while they fed them, and as the tiny legs and feet developed, while the tail became absorbed and disappeared—they were told that now the tadpole had changed into a frog and needed air. Then stones were placed into the pond, so large that their surfaces protruded from the water, and upon these the baby frogs hopped and croaked their thanks. The tadpole can be kept in a tadpole state a long time if he is not properly nourished. Also, if his tail is bitten off by an enemy it will grow again.

The toads were found to be more interesting, because they did more actual service to mankind. The children were told that toads live on land almost all of the time, only going to the water to lay their eggs; that they feed on insects from the garden, such as the grub, cut worm, slug, caterpillar, worms, etc. Anything alive he will eat. The toad is, therefore, a great help to the farmer, and no little boy would

ever harm a toad if he but understood what a helpful creature he is in the garden.

The toad labors under many disadvantages, as well as having many enemies. The first great disadvantage is that he is neither a water creature, like the fish, nor a land creature like the reptile; so that his struggle for existence is very hard. Should he decide to leave one pond, where the enemy is overwhelming, his only chance is to start on a rainy day to discover a new home for himself, and if he has the good fortune to find one before the sun comes out and dries things up, he is safe.

At first the children showed a dislike to touch the toad on account of getting warts, but they soon learned that the fluid which the toad expels when he is picked up suddenly is harmless—and produced no warts—but there is a liquid which exudes from the toad when he is in severe pain (his means of self-defense) that burns the mucous membrane and causes stinging pain.

Animals, generally speaking, are aware of this fact, and if you watch a dog play with or tease a toad, you will see that he does not bite him, but simply puts his paw on him. The skunk, too, is most careful, and rolls the toad on the grass to wipe off this caustic fluid.

Toads during the process of development shed their outer skins every four or five weeks.

Adult toads shed theirs about four times a year. This skin is shed in one piece, much as a man removes his shirt, and is then swallowed.

The tongue of a toad is fastened in front of his mouth, which helps greatly to catch his food, as he shoots his tongue out and seizes it. He does not drink like other creatures, but absorbs water through the pores of his skin. If kept in a dry place for even a few days, he will grow thin and die; but if a toad has proper environment he will live to be very old.

Toads do not breed, or produce their kind, until they are 3 or 4 years old. When at this age Miss Toad, or Frog, awakens from her long winter's sleep, she feels hungry, and glad, perhaps, that she has lived through the winter, for she feels life within her. Undoubtedly she is glad and happy to be awake, and off she goes to search for food and friends.

Perhaps she finds Mr. Toad, who, too, feels life stirring within him; he also feels the joy of spring, so together they go to the breeding pond.

Like Mrs. Buttercup, Mrs. Toad has within her body a little nest where little seeds or eggs have been kept and have been growing, and now that the time has come for them to awaken to a new life, they need life from the Father Frog just as the buttercup needed pollen from the stamen.

Mr. Toad (or Frog), too, is stirred by this

new and wonderful life giving desire within him—this desire to mate—and when Mrs. Toad (or Frog) feels the eggs are to be expelled, he comes very close to her, and in order to fertilize every egg before it goes into the water, he holds her fast behind the arm, and as they are expelled he pours over them his life giving fluid, which enters every tiny egg and gives it life—a new life.

In a few days the eggs begin to grow; they are all incased in a colorless, transparent jelly-like substance, which serves as food for the tadpole while forming, and also for protection. They are spherical in shape, and in ten days the pond will swarm with tiny tadpoles.

Mrs. Frog lays between 500 and 1,000 eggs at one time; Mrs. Fish, however, is still more prolific, for she lays 1,000,000 eggs. Mrs. Fish lays her eggs in the water. She claims a place by blowing all rubbish away with her fins, and there she deposits her eggs. Many of these float away before they can be fertilized by Mr. Fish.

Impress the child with the knowledge that here is one of nature's earliest signs of motion.

That the flowers could not move about to seek their mates, but the fishes, frogs and all higher forms of life do this, and are more particular as they ascend the scale of life.

Thus, the children were taught that the higher in the scale of development living crea-

tures go, the greater care must be given them. Not only to the undeveloped seed within the mother's body, but also to the egg after it has passed from her to the nest, for as creatures develop and ascend the scale, their eggs and offspring become fewer. And emphasis was laid on the care Mr. Frog took to fertilize the egg BEFORE it went into the water—one step higher than Mr. Fish.

There is no doubt that the words "cold-blooded," as applied to frogs and toads, hit the mark, for there is not the slightest affection or sympathy shown or felt for their own kind. They give no care or concern to the eggs after they are deposited, and the "polly-wog" has to depend on himself.

Nature seems to have given them but one instinct relative to their kind, and that is the one blind impulse or instinct of reproduction.

Early in the summer months, the frog orchestra seems well tuned, but as the cold days come on the toads crawl into a hole, burrowing it as they go, while the frogs go into the mud to sleep through the winter, out of reach of frost and snow, where they lie dormant until the spring air shall again inspire them with the joy of living,

CHAPTER IV.

PART I.

The Birds and Their Families.



THE next step to be taken was the study of the birds. Everywhere could be seen father and mother birds busy making their house for the babes, which were soon to come to live with them.

Great fun it was to hunt for nests and count the number each one discovered. First, right in Bobby's yard was a young horse chestnut tree, and here in this tree Mr. and Mrs. Thrush had already built their nest, or house, and were even now waiting for the first egg to come.

Again the children were told that Mrs. Bird was more active and more intelligent than Mrs. Frog or Toad; that altogether she was a *higher* creature than either the flower, the fish or the frog; that all father birds and all father creatures on up the scale of development use greater care to fertilize the egg than either Mr. Buttercup, Mr. Fish, Mr. Toad or Mr. Frog. For, instead of fertilizing it in the water, or with the help of the insects or wind, the egg of the higher

creatures is fertilized while still in the mother's body.

Just like the flowers, Mrs. Bird has an ovary, where the little seeds or eggs are kept. This ovary is attached to a tiny tube, and this tube has no separate opening directly out of the body, but runs into the intestine very close to the outer opening of the body, where the intestines throw off the waste food.

Now, these little eggs have been within the Mother Bird's body *always*, ever since she herself came out of the egg, and they have been growing slowly all the time until a time comes when, like the stigma of the pistil (which at a certain time is ripe for fertilization and becomes moist and sticky), they, too, are ripe for fertilization.

That this time has arrived is shown by many outward signs—such as beautiful plumage and charming songs. Especially in the male bird does this show itself. His whole nature seems bubbling over with the desire to mate and the knowledge that at last he, too, has developed. For though there are no eggs within his body, there is something else there just as important to the creating of new little birds, and he feels the time has come when this fertilizing substance is ready to do its work. His color becomes bright, even brilliant, and his voice becomes

enchanting. Thus he tells the world of this glorious happiness.

This period is called the mating season—the time when both father and mother birds awaken to the desire of building their nest and creating offspring.

The egg has become as developed as Mrs. Bird alone can make it. For, like the flower seed, the fish and frog egg, it needs the fertilizing substance from the father bird to complete its development.

As has been said before, the father bird knows that there are so few eggs that he and Mrs. Bird cannot afford to lose even one, so *great, very great* care must be taken to fertilize every egg.

There is an instinct in all creatures implanted there for millions of years to preserve or perpetuate their species, and this instinct shows itself when the father creature, like the father bird, places himself in such a position that the fertilizing fluid can get into the mother's body as near as possible to the undeveloped eggs. And as every atom of this substance is alive, it moves on, and on, until it reaches the egg, where it mingles with it and the two different substances have become one. Now after the two substances have mingled, the egg passes down the little tube on through the opening out of the body into the nest. While it is passing

through the tube, however, it accumulates a food substance called the "white" of the egg. This is not the *living* part of the egg, but simply food just as the frog eggs were incased in a soft substance, which served as food for the tadpole—so in the yolk, is the new baby bird, incased within the "white" of the egg.

At the bottom of the tube, through which the egg passes to its opening, is a fluid which also incases the whole egg and hardens into a shell, and it is then ready to go into the little nest.

After the fertilization takes place the egg is soon ready to be laid, and so the nest must be ready, soft and cozy. And this is what Mrs. Thrush was now waiting for in the nest she and Mr. Thrush had built in the horse chestnut tree.

But even this was not all. For, though the eggs were here, the new little birds were not yet here. And again it was shown that while the frogs and toads left the eggs in the water to care for themselves, Mr. and Mrs. Bird do not and can not do this. The eggs must be kept warm almost constantly, and so Mrs. Bird gathers them close to her warm body and sits on them day after day, until they are ready to burst the shell open, and come out—the real new birds.

CHAPTER V.

The Birds and Their Families.



NOW that the nest in the horse chestnut tree was completed, Mr. Thrush sat near by waiting to hear the glad news that one egg had come. So the next time Mrs. Thrush went away from the nest for her bath the children peeped into the nest and there saw one speckled egg! The next day another was there, and the next day still another.

Mr. Thrush was a most interesting father for the children to observe, for he fought off any bird who ventured too near Mrs. Thrush's nest. For birds there are who are too lazy to build their own nests, and boldly take possession of any nest they can. Father Thrush knowing this, was ever on the defensive and ready to fight to protect his "wife" and little ones. He watched when she went for food—and when at sundown she went to the stream to bathe, he also watched.

The Thrushes seemed to do most of their love-making at sundown in song. The song consists of four notes, which the children interpreted as saying, "Do you love me?" And the answer came in three notes, "I love you."

If singing meant happiness, Father Thrush was certainly very happy these days. For he seemed to sing more than any of the other birds, except, perhaps, Father Song-Sparrow, who, too, was overjoyed at the arrival of four youngsters.

Mother Thrush never answered Father Thrush's musical song while she was waiting for the eggs to hatch—she was very still then always—but he must have taken her love for granted, for he sang on just the same.

One day some time later when the children took their usual place under the tree, the air was rent with shrieks and cries from both birds, who flew at them and scolded so shrilly that the children decided it was best to go away, but on watching from a distance they saw Mrs. Thrush bring food in her mouth, and three tiny heads, with open bills, stretch themselves above the nest. They knew now why Mr. and Mrs. Thrush objected to their going so near the nest that day. The children were so excited that it was difficult to keep them from going to the nest to see. But when they were reminded of the great care Mr. and Mrs. Thrush had given the eggs, so that they might hatch into little birds, and were told that it would trouble them greatly and excite them to have any one touch the nest, they decided to wait for a better opportunity.

It did not come for several days, for Mr.

Thrush was a most watchful father. But these Thrush youngsters were developing so fast and had such husky appetites it took both Mr. and Mrs. Thrush busy to keep them fed. So when the parents were off on their hunt for food the children carefully looked into the nest. There they were, three featherless, fearless, funny things, with only knowledge enough to stretch their necks for food.

The day that Mrs. Thrush first hurriedly told Mr. Thrush that one scrawny "imp" had come out of its shell, he seemed overjoyed, for he sang all day long—even into the night. This was, perhaps, the most vivid example of a father's joy the children saw. But another case came to their notice of a father bird's devotion—and that was when Mrs. Sparrow deserted her little ones.

There was an old apple tree at the back of the house, and in the trunk of this tree Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow had made a home for their children.

One morning there was a call of distress from Mr. Sparrow. The children watched him as he flew from tree to tree, and limb to limb, calling—calling in the most plaintive tones. All day he called until the sun went down behind the Palisades, but no mother returned to her children. It was quite decided that Mrs. Sparrow was hurt, or even killed, and great was

the excitement over this terrible possibility. After two days of calling and calling Mrs. Sparrow returned—but not alone. The guilty partner of her flight came along, too, and Father Sparrow promptly chased him away, but every time Father Sparrow flew at him and chased him off, Mrs. Sparrow would fly away with him. Then poor Father Sparrow would call and coax and tease and plead with her to return, and she would return just long enough to see the little fledglings, and off she would go with the other sparrow. Each day she returned to see the little ones and trouble the poor father, who was trying so hard to provide for the motherless family.

The other birds seemed most sympathetic, and on one occasion Mr. Robin watched the sparrow house while Mr. Sparrow chased the wooer of his wife. This was the last time, for Mrs. Sparrow never again returned to her family.

No other birds ever went near that tree wherein the lone "widower" dwelled. He seemed greatly respected by the other birds. He taught his little ones to fly and where to find the choicest food in Bobby's garden. The children insisted on caging the cats for a few weeks so that Father Sparrow would not have this extra burden on him. They were of one decided opinion that father love and devotion saved that

family, and all agreed that it was a most important factor in bringing up a family.

This was a most unusual case, and the boys were made to realize its unusualness, for it is *very seldom* that a mother ever deserts her young.

It was funny to watch the sentiments of these small tots. As soon as Mrs. Sparrow returned for her short intervals the children got bread and worms and all kinds of tempting food in hopes that she would remain with her family. They were willing like Father Sparrow to forgive her, but as soon as she made her preparations to go away, instinctively they picked up stones to throw at her, so intense was their interest, and it is feared that had not a grown-up been with them something would have happened, for the air was full of whispers, and words like bean shooters, air rifles, etc., were heard occasionally.

However, their attention was diverted to Miss Oriole, who had two young Oriole attendants. Each asked for her love—and she would not decide. How she teased them both, and how desperately she flirted. Of course, the lovers despised each other, but how wonderfully they told her in song of their great love for her, each trying to outdo the other.

When no one was about she must have made up her mind to accept one, and it was

noticed it was he with the sweetest voice rather than the one with beautiful plumage who won her. He was a most daring and fearless lover and took beautiful care of her while they were waiting for the eggs to hatch.

The summer was one lovely long day watching the birds. As the cold weather came on, the birds became fewer—new and strange birds on their way to the South came for food and flew away again.

There was no more interesting and charming lesson of paternal love to be learned than among the birds, and it was noticed that no longer was the mother of sole interest, but the father's habits and life became of interest. The children received their lesson of father love, through the birds.

Where the father flowers, fish and frogs gave themselves no concern over the young, here was a higher creature, whose love of offspring was not purely physical, but represented something higher in his makeup. This was not only the desire to procreate, but to protect and care for his offspring after their creation.

This is perhaps one of the best times to begin to talk to the child of its own body, if one has not done so before.

The study of the birds gives the boy particularly a beautiful impression of the father's

part in life, so that it is quite natural for him to think of himself in this relation too.

Teach the child that there is no shame in nature. Mothers should never say "shame on you" when a child exposes any part of its body.

Always allow perfect freedom in his acts and affections. Teach him that love and affection are beautiful, and let him follow his impulses in these. Never make children kiss people for "form's" sake, either aunts or uncles or any others; let them alone in this for their instincts are keener, often, than ours.

It was not until all the familiar birds had gone that their thoughts turned to the higher stage, the mammals,

CHAPTER VI.

The Mammals and Their Children.



THE first question one of the boys asked was, "What is a mammal?" It was explained to the children that a mammal is an animal with a hairy covering, who breathes with lungs, and has warm or quick circulating blood. They have little ones, which when born are not in the form of eggs, like the frogs or birds, but have the same shape as their parents, though smaller and weaker. The mother mammal nurses these little ones with milk secreted from glands, called mammary glands. And that is why they are called "mammals."

Their instincts are highly developed, and they are considered the highest animals.

Many instances were shown them of the meaning of instinct, as that of the mother bird turning over her eggs every day. In fact, from the first the word was explained in every stage to enable them to know the difference between *instinct* and *reason* later on.

There was no one creature taken up this time, but all together, and some pictures were shown them of lower tribes of man, and it was

decided that man must be classed with the mammals, for he is partly covered with hair, gives birth to young in his own shape, and feeds the young from mammary glands. They were told that there is a mammal, the spiny ant eater, covered with hair, which, however, lays eggs like the birds in nests. They were told about the kangaroo and opossum, who give birth to their little ones very early, and carry them in a pouch until they are able to help themselves. As soon as the little opossum is born, Mother Opossum picks him up in her mouth and places him in her pouch, where he sucks away at the milk which is secreted there, until he is strong and able to get food for himself—which is about the same length of time that other mammals carry their young before giving birth to them.

They were told of the bats and the flying squirrels. They were told that Bobby's cat must be given a new clean box, or bed; that she must not be handled roughly or chased, because she was going to have little kittens. To the utter astonishment of Bobby's mother there was a chorus of, "How do you know?" and she realized that she might have omitted a most important piece of information.

They were again reminded of the birds and the undeveloped eggs coming from the ovary of mother bird, which at a certain time become

ripe for fertilization; of how the father bird at a certain time feels he has developed (since the fertilizing principle within him has developed) so that in coming in contact with the undeveloped egg within the mother's body, these are quickened into life. The same process goes on with the mammals, but as the instinct becomes more developed as they go higher in the scale of life breeding becomes more complex.

They were told that where in birds the whole egg, shell and all passes out of the mother's body into the nest, with the mammal the shell becomes a thin skin, which envelops the little one, but remains within the mother's body until it is grown enough and strong enough to live on the milk from the mother. While it is within the mother's body it is fed from the blood of the mother, and all the food she eats helps to make the little ones within her strong.

It is of great assistance for a mother to have some knowledge of the processes of assimilation so that the children will learn how the food products in the blood, instead of supplying the mother, go to the child to build up bone, muscle, nerves and tissues.

They were told that as the mammal grows and develops within the body of the mother her shape becomes changed—becomes larger in the region where the new life lies, and that is how

one could tell that Mrs. Pussy Cat was going to have a family.

It was dwelt upon at great length that it was necessary to know this, because every mother needs protection from worry, excitement, cruelty, overwork, starvation at such a period; that she needs kindness, rest, good food, sunshine, in order that she give the little one strength and health.

They were told that in smaller animals many more eggs develop at a time and are fertilized but in the larger animals such as cows, horses, elephants, etc., only one egg develops and one animal is born. In man, too, this is true. One egg develops at a time, and if it is fertilized it remains in its little nest (or uterus), and grows until it is ready to stand the changed conditions into which it must come after it is born. If it is not fertilized it passes on out of the body and is lost, but when it is fertilized by the father, it remains in the uterus and grows until it is grown enough to withstand a different life and different surroundings.

At first the new being is only the size of a pea (that is, in a week after it is fertilized). In a few weeks (eight) it is the size of a lemon, and its shape is complete. In four months it begins to move about, to kick, to move its little hands, and in nine months Mother Nature can develop it no more. It is time to change, if it

is to live, so she sends it along the passage, enlarging the passage and stretching it as it goes—which causes much pain and suffering to the mother, until it reaches the outside world, where it is taken and cared for and loved, and all the mother's pain is forgotten in the joy of having her little one alive and strong and well.

One of the mothers was expecting the arrival of a little one, and great care and tenderness was shown her after the children knew of this event. She was assisted up the hills, brought flowers and all the tenderness of which children are capable was bestowed upon her.

They anxiously watched and waited for its arrival, looked over the small clothing which was being prepared for it, and seemed as interested as any grown-up could ever be.

The most interesting questions were asked her each day. At first the young mother was rather embarrassed, but they were asked with such simplicity and frankness that she realized the prudery was in herself alone, and she soon entered the talks and answered their questions. These were mainly of the little one's movements, etc. Can it see? said one. Does it kick? said another. Does it like ice cream? etc., etc., all perfectly innocent questions which can be answered, and makes the reproductive act the natural and beautiful part of life that it really is. Soon the young mother and the children

were on the most friendly terms. They would come to her and confide their secrets to her, tell her words other boys had used and ask her about these words. They came to her in preference to telling their parents, which shows again the necessity of every mother being the first one to tell the child this sex knowledge, for the one who does tell it usually holds a strong influence over the child for some years to come.

They were taken to a farm some miles away to see a calf a few days old. Stories were read to them at this time about the habits of these animals and the care of their young. They were taken to the Museum of Natural History in New York and to Bronx Park, and such excursions were red letter days in their book of childhood.

They were told of the freedom of the animals in choosing their mates—that beauty and strength seemed the greatest qualifications. The story of the bees was briefly told. How the queen bee leaves her home amidst the hundreds of male bees who are all anxious to be the father of the future hive. How she rambles about for a little while, then up she flies—up, up, straight into the clouds with hundreds of male bees following. Gradually the weakest bees drop off and return, but the stronger ones still follow until there are often only two male bees left in the race. The weaker of the two

returns and the strongest bee of the whole hive wins the queen bee, and fertilizes the eggs within her body. After this act of reproduction he dies, and Mrs. Bee returns to her hive and lays thousands of bee eggs. The strongest gave his life that the future bees should be given his great strength.

The children were sad about this. They wanted the strongest to live, and it was now the place to teach them of their own bodies, what cleanliness and strength means to the future race of man.

To give the children an idea of the shape of the uterus, Bobby's mother took a pear, turned the large side up, letting the stem part hang down, it was then cut open lengthwise, the seeds, core and stem removed. Both halves were fastened together again with thin sticks just to get an idea of the shape of the baby's nest.

The part where the stem was is like the passage where the little one comes out into the world after the seeds have grown.

CHAPTER VII.

Man's Development.



THE great object which Bobby's mother had in mind was to make these teachings of such a nature that the children would be impressed with the truth that they are only *part* of nature's great and wonderful plan.

They were reminded again and again of the stages of life—plants, frogs, birds and mammals; of the millions of years it took to bring about these wonderful creatures and that at the top of the list, perfect, intelligent and supreme, stands man. Man, the most complex of all and the most perfect.

It was most natural for the children to consider nutrition and reproduction as the two most important essentials of any form of life.

Up to this point this was quite sufficient. The animals had instincts to nourish their bodies and also to procreate their offspring. This seemed their life object, but since man was the more intelligent, there must, of course, be other and broader outlets for this great intelligence.

Their own bodies was a subject which took months to cover in study. They were shown charts of the human figure (both sexes) and all parts of the body were named in the same way as parts of the flower were named. Parts of the organs of reproduction were called by their names in telling of the works each part performed. No special stress was laid on the naming of these parts, but simply, casually, as one would speak of the various parts of the eye, or any other organ. In the same manner they were told of the harm done to their bodies in handling or touching any one part unnecessarily. If the eye, ear or nose was dug into, we would surely greatly injure ourselves, perhaps losing the use of that organ for the rest of our lives. The generative organs are no exception in this. To tamper with this most wonderful part of nature's machinery, means not only sickness, dullness of intellect, stupidity, physical and mental weakness, but oftentimes disables a little child for life.

In order to grow into perfect manhood or womanhood, all parts of the body must be developed naturally. If a little bud of a flower were to be roughly opened, it fades and dies long before it can carry out the great object of its life, namely, to develop the baby seeds within it.

So with boys or girls who carry within their

bodies the making of a human life. How terrible to cause that little life to be shattered, just through ignorance and neglect.

The children were taught that there was one beautiful time to come to them—to look forward to and to hope for that time when they can look into a tiny baby face, clasp two tiny baby hands, and feel this wonderful and beautiful creation a part of their being—the expression of their souls.

They were told to keep in mind this time which should come, and to keep their minds and bodies clean for this wonderful gift.

As all the children were still too young to go into the details of either menstruation or venereal diseases, it was considered best to dwell on the early tribes of man on up to marriage, and wait for future developments before going further. The tree dwellers and cave dwellers were already familiar stories to them. The fact that people lived together very closely; that the woman had great freedom in choosing the man whom she wished to be the father of her child, even as freely as the animals chose their mates; that in this freedom great mistakes were often made, such as that for a period some mothers chose their sons or brothers, or fathers to be the father of the new little one; that after a time it was found that this was very injurious to this new little child, for he

often could not walk, or talk, and was weak, and sometimes a cripple—and more often died very young.

So the chiefs of these tribes got together and said this must not be, for if this continued there would be no strong young men or women to till the soil or fight off the animals, wild beasts or the enemy. Then a law was made that only those of the different tribes or families should choose each other for the parents of the future children, and here the lesson of the Buttercups came in—that often Mrs. Buttercup would reject the pollen from the stamen in her own house, but would accept the pollen from another buttercup house and become fertilized with that.

The part the two sexes took in different ways to strengthen and develop the race seemed of great interest to the children.

The work of hunting and fishing was left to the men of the family, while equally important work, that of cleaning and cooking the food, was for the women. Men spent much time in making tools and weapons. They were able to save much time and energy when the bow and arrow was invented, for, instead of taking all the time to creep upon a beast or enemy with a knife or sharp stone, he could remain at a distance and do the same work. Thus, men got

a little more leisure time. With every new invention their labor and energy was saved, but it took much longer for labor-saving inventions for the women to come into use.

Gradually the marriage form came into existence, as these new tools and weapons became more valuable. Men wanted these to go to their own children, so it came to pass that the man could choose any woman he wanted to have for the mother of his children by getting consent from the captain or chief of the tribe. If he received this consent then she, the woman, must live with him, love him, honor him (no matter what he did), and obey him in everything. Absolute submission was the law for the wife. If she objected to this and ran away she was cast out and was beaten. Other tribes had the same laws and dared not take her in, so she was left to die. If she did not like her husband and took another for the father of her child she was often not only cast into prison, but either stoned to death or burned at the stake.

Naturally, after centuries of this treatment, she became submissive and so dependent on man for her living that she dared not express herself aloud, but merely as her husband allowed her to do. If she was very beautiful she was not made to work, but the prisoners of other tribes who had been captured, were made to work for her. Often the captain or chief had several

wives, but the wife was allowed only one husband.

As the children had been taught the lives of the mother flowers, frogs, birds, bees and mammals, there was no reason why the history of woman should not be taken up until they were ready for older work.

They loved to hear about this, and it seemed just as interesting to them as the other stories.

It is important that mothers teach children the true history of the race, and get the seed of truth planted for future cultivation.

The marriage laws have had many changes for the man, they were told, but few as far as the woman is concerned. The different customs of women in different countries can be told them, and the general development of both men and women can occupy a great deal of time until the children are more ready to understand the true or real significance of the studies to be later dwelt on.

The children were never talked *at*, but always *with*. They were allowed to talk freely. Once or twice the older children seemed a little conscious on taking up the matter of their own bodies, yet after a few minutes as the other children joined in the conversation, they, too, forgot and overcame the embarrassment, and all went well.

The children were told frankly that some

mothers did not like their children to know these things; that like the fairy tales and the story of Santa Claus, the mothers liked their children to believe that the stork brought them, or some other fairy tale. They were told that these things are *not to be talked about with other children*, and any time any child wished to know anything about himself or any question whatever, to come to the mother or father, but *never* to other boys or girls. These children were taught the necessities for the excretions of the body—that in order to have good health this used up waste food must pass out of the body or it would become poison and the boy or girl become sick and die. There was no hurry in telling anything to the children. Most of this information was told on walks in the woods, or at times when they seemed to want to know. One story leads to another, and before long the children's questions will bring everything from you which you wish to tell.

The result of these teachings has been commented on by the school teachers of these children, who say they are so truthful, clean-minded, frank and open about all things that it is a pleasure to know them.

Every mother can teach her children the truth if she only knows it herself, and has the right attitude toward it. She can elaborate on this plan or outline as much as she wishes, but

she must get down to the child's world in order to make her teachings impressive and successful. The one unpardonable sin on the part of a mother is to let her children learn the truth elsewhere than from her own lips.

CHAPTER VIII.

Conclusion.



ONE of the most important things which a mother must keep in mind is to give only such information, and in the manner suitable to the child's age. Children differ so greatly, that it is impossible to lay down any rules as to what and how much should be told at any age.

Some children are very curious, and very receptive always, while others have little curiosity and even when told sex truths, pay little attention to the telling, or seem little impressed by it.

It is for each mother to do as she finds advisable. Children will often ask a question very seriously and before one can formulate an answer, another question has been asked on an entirely different subject. But the fact that he has asked the question shows that the mind has awakened to this curiosity, and he will no doubt ask it again.

Mothers, be prepared! Do not force any thing; it will all come in time if you keep close to the child in confidence. Just be prepared. When children are very young get them accus-

tomed to the naked body. Let them run about naked at night, perhaps while undressing for bed. Let them bathe together or with you. If this is done very early at any early age you will soon find that a boy's thoughts are clean regarding the naked body. You can then tell him the names of the different parts, for he will most likely ask, and his curiosity will often entirely cease. This is the type of boy who looks back upon life and feels he has "always known" the clean and beautiful of life.

This is the opportunity to tell how to care for the body. The teeth and nose should be cleansed morning and night. When there is any itching of the rectum or sexual organs this is often caused by uncleanness and washing of these parts at once will often relieve the irritation.

Teach that no part of the body should be touched unnecessarily by any one, and when there is any discomfort of any kind to come to the mother, who will attend to it. See that no clothing on the child is tight or causes irritation, for this often leads a child to touch and handle himself and forms the habit of masturbation.

This is often acquired innocently, even at the creeping age, and the child becomes a victim and slave to the habit.

Keep a close watch over children for this

habit, without making them conscious of it, especially if the child prefers to be alone or remains long in bed in the morning. These are by no means positive symptoms of the habit, only when these signs are present keep your eyes open.

If you do find this habit is formed, keep him up at night until he is sleepy, or at least do not send him off to bed alone when he is not sleepy, to lie and toss about with this temptation. Let someone read to him or tell him interesting stories which will divert his mind so he can fall asleep.

The same in the morning; do not allow children to remain in bed after they have awakened; do not have the bed too soft or the coverings too heavy; the room should be cool and he should lie on his side rather than on the back. Keep his mind busy with interest. Get him to call you whenever he feels the temptation, or to come where others are. If he will trust the mother and together fight this habit, he will soon be the victor. Always it is the same—confidence, confidence, is such a necessary part of the child's life.

When a child is under four years of age is the ideal time to gain this confidence, for then there is nothing personal in anything you say; all interests are general. There is no shyness or consciousness of sex. If this has been done,

when he takes up the study of the birds more could be told him of the sexual parts; that as some day he was to be a father he was made differently than mother or sister because he had a different part to do in life's work. That he must keep well and grow strong in order to do this work. There need be no mystery about the sexual truths; impress upon it the sacredness of the process. There is no greater crime against a child than for a parent to allow a child to flounder about with half truths, gathered from polluted and corrupt associates.

Be deliberate in giving the child the truth, as much of it as he can take at a time, or as little, *but have it the truth.*

Mothers will be confronted with questions concerning the vilest words of the street. Tell him frankly their meaning in your own clean way, and the correct word to use in its place. You will find when his curiosity has been satisfied he will no longer be curious or have any special desire to use these words.

Every child first turns to his mother in confidence for all these questions. Never turn him off with a slight or embarrassed answer; just rely upon your knowledge, your natural knowledge, and answer him. Every mother can do it. Do not make a Sunday School lesson of these teachings, only to be taught once a week on very solemn occasions. Children hate being

talked at; just be natural, simple, interesting, informal, and as often as the opportunity arrives.

This confidence and early understanding will bind you together far beyond that most difficult period, puberty, and enable you to strengthen the child's ideals of manhood and womanhood.

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