REINFORCING A DEMOCRACY: HOW I THINK IT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE CHILDREN: BY KITTY CHEATHAM

THE preparation of our children—future makers of America—is the great work that confronts us today. At this vital moment in the world's history—a moment of far greater import than many perhaps realize—we cannot shut our eyes to much of the imperfect training that passes as education. We are beginning a new era, and in the dawn of it we need enlightenment at every point of contact with our children. Before they can be helped they must be understood, and before they can be understood they must be loved. We must first of all appreciate that they are intelligent individuals. Even the tiniest babe receives this full recognition of his complete spiritual individuality from me.

Gilbert Chesterton has said, recently, that "every great artist in his heart scorns art as compared with the greatness of God and man." Let us, then, think of children, deal with them, not as unthinking babes, but as having an intelligent understanding of their own relationship to that profound utterance of the Great Teacher: "I thank Thee, Father, these things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes." The purity, innocence, sincerity and receptivity of the childlike thought, inspired that immortal utterance and it should be emblazoned in the consciousness of every instructor of the young.

The demands of the twentieth century children are imperative. The mothers and teachers of our future citizens must awaken to their responsibilities; must make themselves fit to judge what is proper to be taught children. Much that is valueless is given under the guise of learning. Last year I sat in the midst of several hundred little ones who were being "instructed" in one of our great institutions of art. The subject in hand was mythological, "Heroes and Monsters." We heard the experiences of Hercules strangling the serpent, of Perseus and the dripping head of Medusa, and I mentally protested, though I never heard of any of the accompanying parents doing so. A child's consciousness blossoms forth under the light of beauty and
DESIGN BY GRAHAIME ROBERTSON for the cover of Miss Cheatham's book, called "Kitty Cheatham, Her Book," in which this lover of children is represented as the Pied Piper in modern education.
"PETITE JEANNETON," from a drawing by Grahame Robertson in "French Songs of Old Canada."
"CECILIA," from a drawing by Grahame Robertson appearing in "French Songs of Old Canada."
Miss Kitty Cheatham, Musician and Educator.
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love just as the little budding things come up at the friendly touch of the sun. Why should the seeds of pagan myths be planted in this beautiful, fresh, virgin soil? What do these two particular ones illustrate and accentuate but the very qualities that are manifesting themselves in the universal chaos of today? When, instead of a world-wide obedience to that divine command, "Little children love one another," we find Cain again destroying his brother. These noxious weeds of malice, hatred, greed, jealousy, tyranny, despotism, etc., are trying to spread and choke out the immortal blossoms of love, tenderness, loyalty, unselfishness, humility and the desire to do unto others as you would have them do unto you—a mental attitude which is a firm foundation upon which to build the characters of our future citizens.

THERE are many progressive thinkers among mothers and teachers who are awakening to the great responsibility that art owes the child, and the many letters of inquiry that come to me are inspiring me with an earnest, unceasing desire to make my own offerings of increasing value and beauty. Artists should coöperate with all who touch child education in this great work of establishing a true democracy. We have limitless opportunities. The familiar musical composition, picture or story are the popular ones. Let us then ask ourselves, individually, with what we are making our children familiar!

We have it in our power to lift up the masses in this country by our own refusal to lower our artistic standards, and especially by giving to our young people only the best in all the arts. I have found that children will listen, breathlessly, to the little classics of Brahms, Mozart, and other of the great masters, and they love the inspirational folk tales. (This does not mean that they should ever be excluded from legitimate amusement and entertainment, and there is a wealth of rich material to draw from along these lines.)

They are starving for the "bread" of beauty, joy and inspiration, and are fed so often by the "stones" of sensationalism. What are the ideas back of each number on the programs we offer them today? (Cause and effect—the idea and its expression—cannot be separated.) I do not need to go into the ideas in the librettos of many of the well known grand operas that are given at our large opera houses, not only here but in other important American cities. Many—too many—children hear these operas which almost without exception express infidelity, viciousness, cruelty, sensuousness. The only antidote is to perpetuate through artistic effort "whatsoever
things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, . . . whatsoever things are of good report,” all of which will find response in the child’s consciousness, and express itself in new and undreamed of forms of beauty and purity.

Let us keep daily in mind that we are building for a better democracy. And we need constantly to rid ourselves of the idea that nothing has value unless it has the stamp of a century or so. We are a childlike nation whose constitutional greatness is founded upon its directness of purpose and utterance. We have the childish faults as well as the childlike virtues. We need to guard against imitation, while revering all that is good in the older nations—for any expression of truth is a universal truth—we must keep ever before us the great principles upon which this nation was founded, and also the fact that the makers of America were childlike men, who, in moments of great national stress, turned like humble little children to a Higher Power for guidance.

A friend of mine, aged five, asked her mother recently: “Are you sure God made everything and finished all He made?” Upon receiving an affirmative reply, she added, “Then what business is He in today?” It seems to me that we, who have the blessed privilege of guiding children cannot delay making ourselves fit to reveal the “business He is in today.” The counterfeit expressions of art—the wrong methods of educational processes—will never unfold, the immortal “conceptions unconfined.” There are many practical means of illustrating this, one of which is the feeding of our children’s minds on the comic supplements of many of our Sunday papers, which are often badly written, badly colored, badly printed and express, certainly, not wholesome ideas.

We cannot begin too early to encourage expression in a child. I have many grateful opportunities for speaking directly on these lines to children in my own recitals, and when I have been privileged to cooperate with our distinguished conductors, Josef Stransky, Leopold Stokowski, Dr. Horatio Parker, David Mannes—and others—in their symphony concerts for young people, (these concerts having been given by the New York Philharmonic and Symphony Society orchestras, also the New Haven Symphony,) I have always endeavored to bring to the attention of young auditors the fact that many of the compositions of our great masters, whose works have been heard on these programs, have been inspired by the simplest little tunes, and also that they themselves have risen, generally, above insurmountable difficulties, in their own childhood to give
"A LA CLAIRE FONTAINE."
From a drawing by Grahame Robertson, illustrating "French Songs of Old Canada."

THE OLD FAIRY STORY QUALITY is shown vividly in all of Mr. Robertson's drawings, possessing the power to stimulate the imagination as well as to satisfy the love of beauty so essential to the illustrations for children's books.
"OVER THE HOUSE-TOP, the mountain and stream, higher and higher, Love soon you will fly into the Dreamland on Love's Lullaby";
From a drawing by Grahame Robertson to illustrate "Love's Lullaby."
forth later their immortal creations. These facts I like to emphasize with our American children, who, unfortunately, often have too much luxury surrounding them and are not taught self discipline and gratitude. There is a tendency among them to take things too much as a matter of course, and they are not taught often to appreciate so much that is being done for them. These orchestral programs also enable me to show what the great masters have written when they were children; Mozart, for example, who composed little classics at four; Mendelssohn, who not only composed at the same early age, but who at seventeen finished his great work, the Overture “To a Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

In addition to these two musicians, Bach, Brahms, Haydn, Beethoven, Moussorgsky, Tschaikowsky, Grieg, Dr. Arne, Sibelius—many others might be mentioned who have contributed to the musical literature for children, Stevenson, Kipling, Kenneth Grahame, William Blake, Graham Robertson, Louis Carroll, Christine Rossetti, Hans Christian Andersen, Selma Lägerlof, George MacDonald, Bjornson, Tolstoi, Fiona Macleod, William Allingham, etc., as well as our own Longfellow, Whittier, Field—have been represented on these programs for young people. I always endeavor to impress young people with their individual responsibilities, and after each concert I receive numerous letters, drawings, little bits of manuscript music, little poems and bits of prose. These are my priceless possessions and have proven to me that it does not detract from a child’s love for music, as music, to help them along with any illumination that has come to me.

I am aware that I am touching upon one of the most vital questions of the day. There is only opportunity to speak on a few of its aspects, but I do want to say that in my large experience I have found that children love the best in all the arts. They have an intuitive sense of beauty. When one finds an abnormal desire for sensationalism, one must search for the cause in their environment and in the mentality of those who instruct them. It is not always possible to meet the needs of the individual child in large educational institutions, but it is possible—and imperative—that each individual instructor rise to meet the splendid opportunity that is being given him today.

MUCH is being said today about the necessity of teaching folk songs to children as a necessary adjunct to their education. I have looked through perhaps a thousand folk songs lately of Great Britain, Russia, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Finland, Hol-
land, Greece, Japan, China, etc., and have heard many of them sung by the people in these different countries. There are, however, comparatively few of these that I would teach to children. The folk song is, as a rule, the expression of a maturer consciousness and tells of national or domestic happening, and has little in connection with the child or the childlike attitude. Their value lies in the fact that they express the spontaneous utterance of elementary folk. I feel it is legitimate to correlate some of the lovely folk tunes with appropriate words for children, and this I have done in certain collections of my own. For inspira-
tional value no folk songs exceed our own old negro ones and these should be heard and preserved in their original simplicity. One day I hope to speak at length upon the many interesting artistic compositions, both musical and literary, that are being written today. I hope to give a program this winter entirely of manuscript com-
positions by Americans, no longer a difficult task.

Solomon said, “When there is no vision the people perish.” The childlike sense of wonder, of “seeing things,” is sometimes obscured by the mists of materiality which surround them. The future of our country—of the world—lies in our children. Many who are in the thick of the mental battle which is being waged today—a battle greater than Waterloo or Gettysburg are too close to the old structure to wish to help tear it down; but every structure which is not founded upon truth and love must go and the revelation of those immortal ones “not built with hands” must come forth.

It is through our children that we must make our advance toward higher ideals, and it sweeps over me, as a great wave, how we cannot commence too early to inculcate in them all that is beautiful and en-
nobling so that they may bring a clear, pure vision toward those whom they may be called upon to instruct or to govern.

I am grateful to be the means of introducing our American chil-
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dren to the distinguished English illustrator, Graham Robertson, who will be much known in this country in the future, as his work—in its imaginative and inspirational beauty—places him in the rank of the truly great. He has chosen as one of his illustrations a little lullaby which I should like to have taught to our very young children and the words of which, as they become a part of their growing consciousness, will make them true partakers of the new declaration of independence—the independence which will, to them and to all, mean the “glorious liberty of the children of God.”

AMERICA—Love’s Lullaby

“Lullaby, baby dear, cradled in blue,
Angels and mother-love watch over you,
Under your slumber robe, precious one rest,
Lullaby, sleep-a-bye in your soft nest.

“Lullaby, little one, soar in your dream
Over the house top, the mountain, and stream,
Higher and higher, love, soon you will fly
Into the dreamland on Love’s Lullaby.

“Lullaby, baby-bye, cradled in blue,
Sleep on and dream on your nap-a-bye through,
In your sweet slumber love’s lullaby hear
‘God and His angels and mother are near.’

“Lullaby, lullaby, mother-love sings
Over the cradle of peasant and kings,
‘God is the Father and Mother of all,’
This is Christ’s message to great and to small.

“Love clothes the lily in radiant white,
Love feeds the lambkins, and guards through the night,
Love broodeth over each hamlet and hall,
Love never faileth, but careth for all.”

AUGUSTA E. STETSON.

Editor’s Note.—Miss Kitty Cheatham, who so loves children that she gives her life to their instruction and entertainment, believing that the educational number of The Craftsman will reach a great many parents and children, has expressed in this article her views on the need of a newer ideal of edu-

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