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SYMPATHY AND SENTIMENTS
AND
THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERIOD OF
CHILDHOOD

It is true that during the suckling period and at the start of life, a child neither completely hears nor he can properly talk but the very natural, warm and affectionate glances of mother firmly lays the foundations of the edifice of love and sympathy in the soil of his body and mind.

In the world of today, especially in the West, as also among the Westernized people of the East, young mothers deprive their children of this sympathy and human feelings because they have to take up employment in order to help move the economic wheel of life, or for some other reasons-possibly, for instance, under the influence of the fashions of the day. And this they do unconsciously, unaware of the fact that in so doing they deprive their children of this human gift of priceless value. And no different is the case of mothers who, immersed deep in affluence and wealth and steeped in a life of merriment and pleasure, consider this kind of work as a sign of backwardness and conservatism, and out of mode.

Not only has Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, and research statistics of the World Health Organization proved and established the importance of motherly love,

sympathy and affection during the suckling period as well as in infancy, but also that great portrayer of human sentiments, William Shakespeare, in his play entitled the "MERCHANT OF VENICE" considers a noble human being as one who is mature in sympathy and benevolence. The wordless lessons of sympathy and affection are imparted to a child only through the warm, penetrating and meaningful glances of mothers and fathers during the suckling period.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?

Reply, reply,

It is engendered in the eyes,
with gazing fed, and fancy dies,
In the cradle where it lies.

Gabriela Mistral, Nobel Prize – winning Poet from Chile says :

His Name Is Today

‘We are guilty of many errors and many faults but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer, ‘TOMORROW.’ His name is ‘TODAY.’ **

It has been said that children can never select their parents. On the other hand, it is the parents who are responsible for the future of their children.

Abraham Lincoln has said that ‘those who are devoid of sympathy and human sentiments, and those who are cold, indifferent, callous and are of evil nature and they are not sinful. On the other hand they are nothing

but the produce of their environment and upbringing. If we had also been brought up under similar circumstances we would have become just like them. We should have sympathy for them and pray for them.'

The American medical researchers have come to the conclusion that 'a successful physician is one who, apart from having a minute knowledge of medicine, must also be mature in human sympathy and feelings or else he would never be able to understand his patient and achieve success in his treatment.'

A noble Iranian mother has always lived in her natural environments. She has always considered the time spent in rearing up her children as the best part of her life.

Those who, as a result of poverty or ignorance, are unacquainted with this aspect of child-mother relationship or those who, under the influence of a ceremonious life, or a life of luxury and splendor, or out of sheer rivalry and envy, entrust their children into the hands of governesses, nurses, or gardeners, or to the care of their drivers, instead of themselves imparting this superb lesson of humanity which is the pillar of love and sympathy, they little know what enormous and unforgivable sin they commit.

It is not enough to be a nominal father; it is not enough to provide the wherewithals of education in the best and the most expensive schools. It is imperative that in the very first years of childhood, pure and noble nature should be inculcated in the child through the warm and sympathetic lap of mother or else, as very aptly said by Mowlana Jalaleddin Rumi:

To teach art and science to the evil-natured
Is to girdle a sword to the stirrup of a highwayman:
Knowledge, affluence, splendor, station and rank
Bring forth mischief in the hands of the evil.



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* The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Compr -
ising His Plays and Poems, Spring Books, London, P 197.

** Time, December 27, 1976, P 54 .