

THE BOY AND THE GIRL

PEOPLE who know of the Indian only from books think of him solely as a warrior. As they have heard of him chiefly when he is at war, they do not realize that this phase of his life occupies but a small part of his existence, or that aside from this he has a communal and family life on which his well-being depends. He has a wife and little ones whom he loves as we do ours; parents and grandparents whom he respects for their experience and the wisdom derived from it; chiefs and rulers to whose words he listens and whose advice he follows, and spiritual directors, who tell him about the powers which rule the earth, the air, and the waters, and advise him in his relation to the forces of the unseen world. In other words, his is a complex life, not devoted solely to one pursuit, but full of varied and diverse interests. He must provide food for his family, must maintain his position in the camp, and must uphold the standing of the tribe in its relations to other peoples. All these duties call for the exercise of a discretion and self-restraint in his living which can be acquired only as a result of some system of education.

Even those who have had much to do with Indians hardly realize that their children are taught. They see the little boys constantly playing about the camp, engaged in sham battles, or swimming in the stream, or, in winter, sliding down hill on sleds made of buffalo-ribs, or throwing their javelin-like darts, or practicing with the bow and arrow, or stealthily hunting small birds or rabbits; and, contrasting this life of freedom with that of the white child, who spends much of his time in the schoolhouse, they assume that the Indian child grows up without instruction and without guidance. Yet no group of people could possibly live together in peace and harmony if each member of it followed his own inclinations without regard to the wishes and rights of his fellows. Like other people, the Indians have sufficient care for their own comfort to see to it that no member of the tribe shall unduly interfere with this, or infringe on the rights of others.

Among the Cheyennes the men were energetic, brave, and hardy; the women virtuous, devoted, and masterful. Their code of sexual morality was that held by the most civilized peoples. Such fathers and such mothers were likely to produce and rear children like themselves: impatient of control or restraint, perhaps,



Child on a dog travois, unknown Sioux

and fierce and cruel in taking revenge for injuries, yet after all possessing many of the qualities which we wish to see in our children: courage, independence, perseverance—manliness. These qualities they inherited, but how were they brought out?

The Indian child was carefully trained, and from early childhood. Its training began before it walked, and continued through its child life. The training consisted almost wholly of advice and counsel, and the child was told to do, or warned to refrain from doing, certain things, not because they were right or wrong, but because the act or failure to act was for his advantage or disadvantage in after life. He was told that to pursue a certain course would benefit him, and for that reason was advised to follow it. His pride and ambition were appealed to, and worthy examples among living men in the tribe were pointed out for emulation. Of abstract principles of right and wrong, as we understand them, the Indian knew nothing. The instructor of the Indian child did not attempt to entice him to do right by presenting the hope of heaven, nor to frighten him from evil by the fear of hell; instead, he pointed out that the respect and approbation of one's fellow men were to be desired, while their condemnation and contempt were to be dreaded. The Indian lived in public. He was constantly under the

eyes of the members of his tribe, and most of his doings were known to them. As he was eager for the approval of his fellows, and greedy of their praise, so public opinion promised the reward he hoped for and threatened the punishment he feared.

When a Cheyenne baby was born it was warmly wrapped up, and for a time carefully protected from the weather. During the first two or three months of its existence, if the weather was cold or stormy, the child was carried about in its mother's arms, and was not laced on a baby-board or cradle until it had become so hardy as to be able to endure some degree of exposure.

As soon as the child had become strong and hardy enough, and the weather had grown milder, it was lashed on the cradle or baby-board. During a good part of the time it was carried about on its board, which, when the mother put it down, was sometimes hung up to a lodge-pole, or leaned against the side of the lodge in the camp. When the child was not on the board, and was not scrambling about on the ground, it was carried on its mother's back, her blanket or robe holding the little body close to hers, passing around her shoulders, and being held by her in front. The child's head was a little higher than the mother's; its hips lay between her shoulders, its heels showing



Wife of Strong Left Hand (on horseback), with mother and children