

LET THEM ALONE.—If there is any class of persons who can pray mightily and reasonably pray to be let alone, it is the boys who are flying kites in the city during the breezy hours of "soft serene September." Let them alone, careful mothers and care-worn fathers! Don't let big brothers bother them, nor big sisters scold them! No matter if they do steal the curtain-cords for string, the morning paper for sail, and your best neck-tie for the narrative of the favorite kite! Don't ride the little fellows down ye, John's of the pave! Don't swear at them ye throngers of the walk! Remember the days of your own boyhood before the bristles came out and the smiles "struck in," upon your lips. Remember the joys of incomparable "diamonds," "eight squares," and "round-heads," and sundry other bouyant shapes, whose upward tendency raised your young heart higher than one of Lee's victories raised gold. Let your lips close shut by the cares of money-getting and the vexations of money-spending, relax into a grin, and your tongue utter words of encouragement. If the youngster rifles the paternal pocket of the favorite pen-knife, and the maternal cupboard of the prepared batter, in order to build the aerial craft—never mind.

Isn't it better that the boy should be making kites and flying them, in the clear blue ether, than sailing chip schooners in the muddy canal, playing in the dirt of the back-alley, with oyster-shells, old boots and dead kittens, by way of toys, or fitting himself for the State prison by a lesson in profanity on the street corners? Of course it is; and exercise is cheaper than medicine, too. The Romans were wiser than we, nineteenth-century reformers are, in some things. Among them, the school master had to direct and encourage the sports of his pupils. He taught them to recreate, as well as to study. He refined and superintended their games; repressed strife and ill-humor, and was, in short, umpire and master of ceremonies on the play-ground. We think the sports of children not worth minding. If they will only play and be out of sight and hearing, they are sure to be out of mind. We don't care where the boy is if he is only out of the way; and when childhood passes into youth, and the neighbors hint that our son and heir is rather fast—perhaps call him a rowdy, and we are shown indubitable evidence of the truth of this, we open our eyes in astonishment, and wonder where he has learned such things.

This is wrong. The sports of a child need to be classified, arranged and varied, as much as his studies. They should be suited to his age and strength. But see Dio Lewis for the true theory on this point. We are just saying a word for kites and kite-flyers. The boy who is fond of this sport, has one strong safeguard against the little vices common among those of his own age. He has got a thought above the earth, as high as his kite flies at least,—and many a thundering editorial never gets higher than the tatter of the kite-string will permit. He that flies a kite must look up. He must grow familiar with cloud-land and learn to love the blue empyrean. His impulses will not be earthy. He will love the sunshine and court the pure fresh breeze. He will grow to be a man in heart as well as in nature. His dreams will be full of beauty.

And gay castles in the clouds that pass,  
Forever flushing round a summer's sky

It is a harmless, ennobling, exciting sport. Let the youngster follow it then, and if you can't bring your dignity down, so as to show him how to make the little air-ship firm, though frail; if you cannot teach him to send it straight up into the blue ether, till every inch of twine is paid out, and the little fellow jumps about in delight, wishing he had a string a thousand miles long, you can, at least, let him alone. Let him enjoy the sport and do not damp his spirit with making remarks.