

A Psychologist's Case Records

By DR. GEORGE W. CRANE

It is a wholesome sign when little boys begin to send valentines or greeting cards to their youthful sweethearts. It shows they are developing normally.

CASE G-109

George is my oldest, and not quite 8.

"I think I'll write a letter to Marilyn," he announced at the table one day. Marilyn is his favorite girl friend in school.

"I wonder if her mother would let her go to a movie with me on Saturday?"

My wife answered that he could ask her and find out.

"But I don't know where she lives since she's moved," George replied. "But I guess if I wrote her a letter, she could take it to her mother. I'll give it to her teacher and let the teacher give it to Marilyn," he finally decided.

"She's in a different room from me at school, and I don't see her very often."

DIAGNOSIS

He wrote the letter, and then as a mark of his admiration for Marilyn he decided to enclose a penny along with his message. Instantly Philip, who is a little over a year younger, decided he ought to write to his girl friend.

But as Philip had no penny, he decided maybe his girl would just as soon receive a stick of chewing gum, so he enclosed that delicacy in his envelope.

I cite these happenings to show that long before the average youngster has reached adolescence, he has begun to look upon love as pertaining to the opposite sex.

In the ordinary home where both parents are living together, the son automatically absorbs the fact that he will select a woman when he later marries. The daughter, conversely, expects to imitate her mother and marry a male in later adulthood.

If, however, a little girl is brought up by a doting mother, the father being dead or divorced, the daughter may subconsciously develop an abnormal fondness for mama. This child may then be much more receptive to love stimulation from her own sex. It isn't a wise policy, therefore, to segregate such a youngster in a girl's boarding school during her adolescence, for in so doing the mother only favors the development of homosexuality.

A normal home involves two parents living together in love and mutual devotion, plus children of both sexes. If death or divorce, or unwise birth control, causes any abnormality in such a normal home unit, then the parent must be careful lest the child get a warped outlook on life.

Youthful love affairs may begin even in kindergarten. They are usually of an idealistic sort, devoid of most sexual action. The children



may not even kiss, but they feel devoted to one another.

Parents can favorably condition their children's attitudes toward love and marriage, toward heterosexual relationships, so that the little ones are already well fortified for happy marriage before they are sexually matured.

On the contrary, a warped parent can make a cynic out of her youngster, and poison the child's mind regarding men, or women, so that marriage is lightly regarded, or avoided altogether.

In fact, most divorces do not start with the wedding ceremony. They can be traced clear back to kindergarten or even babyhood.



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