



## Loving, Right, and Noble Ideas

In a recent Ambleside monthly group call, we were discussing Parents and Children, chapter 21. After reading about the importance of nourishing our children daily with “loving, right, and noble ideas” and the spiritual potency of ideas, a classroom story came to mind:

I was a new Ambleside teacher, and my class was having little or no discussion compared to the other classes I had observed. Then we read and narrated about the struggles of Jamestown Colony in This Country of Ours. The text told how many of the colonists were simply “idle loiterers,” while a few of the men did all the work.

Captain John Smith noticed this, called the colony together and said he would no longer have this type of behavior. “Everyone must do his share,” he said, “and he who will not work shall not eat.”

When asked, “What struck you about the passage,” it was as if the Holy Spirit had opened the flood gate of discussion in the children. Our discussion of ideas continued to grow throughout the year. I am convinced that the nourishment of rich text, and the spiritual potency of loving, right and noble ideas, breathe life into meaningful discussions.

~ Ambleside Homeschooling Mentor, Sherrill Durham

And we considered this idea as well—that we are like those first colonists and in the same way must work at our lessons, or we shall miss the feast!

*“We endeavor that all our teaching and treatment of children shall be on the lines of nature, their nature and ours, for we do not recognize what is called ‘Child-nature.’ We believe that children are human beings at their best and sweetest, but also at their weakest and least wise. We are careful not to dilute life for them, but to present such portions to them in such quantities as they can readily receive.*

*We are Tenacious of Individuality: we consider Proportion—In a word, we are very tenacious of the dignity and individuality of our children. We recognize steady, regular growth with no transition stage. This teaching is up to date, but it is as old as common sense. Our claim is that our commonsense rests on a basis of Physiology, that we show a reason for all that we do, and that we recognize ‘the science of the proportion of things,’ put the first thing foremost, do not take too much upon ourselves, but leave time and scope for the workings of Nature and of a higher Power than Nature herself.”*

— Parents and Children —