

with the determination of this character than the school. The school did not receive the young person till it was five years of age. The school, moreover, took charge of the pupil only for so many hours a day for five days in the week, and for forty weeks in the year. It was obvious that the school did not play the first part in the moral education of the young. He appealed to the teachers here to say whether the bad boys of a school were not bad when they came to it. Having thus cleared up what the teacher could not do, they would next consider what the teacher could do. He must say, first of all, that the teacher's work in this respect depended more upon the silent influence of his actions than on anything which he could mention. He would mention certain points in which the schools were really moral teachers, and in which they could be made better moral teachers. In the first place, the discipline of school was of itself a valuable moral agent. The habits of obedience formed or strengthened there, were an incalculable benefit to persons who were to live in a civilized state. Again the habit of punctuality was inculcated and this was of great importance in all business operations. Then self-control in many of its various aspects was forced upon the pupils by the nature and discipline of the school. Again, the special acts of discipline in the school could be made to have very great moral use. Everything depended upon the method that was adopted in performing acts of discipline. If this method was one that commended itself to the growing moral nature of young persons it would have a good moral effect. It would be absurd, however, to appeal to a moral nature which did not as yet exist in the child. The work performed in the school was of immense moral value. Dr. Watts had expressed that in the words "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." If work accomplished nothing else it prevented the formation of evil habits. But it also led to the formation of good habits, industry, diligence and others. Not least among the good habits encouraged by the school was that of accuracy, a quality which was of great importance in the education of a child, on account of its bearing on truthfulness. Again, the going to school and mingling with a number of children had of itself a great number of moral advantages. The pupil became a member of a moral society, and had to conform to the rules of that society. A word or two might be said about the influence teachers might exert by attending to the manners of their pupils. The essence of good manners required that we should seem to be everything that was good, and the very effort of seeming to be good had a tendency to make us good. What, then, was the conclusion of the whole matter? First, with regard to the charge that was often made, that in consequence of the want of the formal teaching of religion in our schools, the moral tone of the community was declining—to that charge he must utter an indignant "nay." It was impossible to find any evidence of it. If you appealed to the evidence of facts and figures you would find no confirmation for any such charge. Compare the statistics of the past twenty-five years with those of the preceding quarter of a century and you would find that there had been no increase in the number of crimes or in the moral degradation of the people. It could not be maintained that Germany, France and Scotland, where religious instruction had been given in the schools were morally in advance of the communities on this side of the Atlantic, in which a different system had prevailed. He believed that in a