

was wanting regular and faithful instruction in the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion, in their own homes, at their mothers' knees. I know that many parents think that if they send their children to Sunday-school, it is a good and sufficient substitute for home instruction. But, oh! what a sad mistake!—as if anything could take the place of that training which belongs to the parent, or supply the place of those endearing and tender associations which are imparted by the parents' own teaching, and the lasting impressions which they leave. But not this alone; we should probably find that there had been an absence of proper discipline. They were, perhaps, indulged in things to their hurt. Restraint was withheld just where it was most needed. While yet in his earliest boyhood, the child was allowed to come in contact with all sorts of evil. He roamed about at will, amid debasing influences and associations, choosing for his companions the vulgar and profane, and long ere he reached man's estate he became addicted to the vilest practices. It was natural that the youth should seek for freedom—natural that he should adopt the tastes and habits of his associates, wicked and vile though they might be, and fall into the same snares and temptations by which they had been taken captive. And being thus allured into the paths of vice, it was to be expected that home would be abandoned for the street, and that the innocent amusements of the home circle would be eagerly exchanged for the corrupting pleasures found in the abode of the evil and profligate. It was a consequence inevitable, that youth with this unbridled license should grow up without any governing, virtuous principle, and be found in the ranks of the dissolute and the godless.

As well might we look for a fruitful yield from a garden that was left without culture and suffered to be overgrown with weeds, as to expect any other results. Our children, we must remember, will be in character and habits just what we make them. It is, then, for us parents to determine what they shall be. Ours is the responsibility. It lies nowhere else. The child is committed to our trust. We are its appointed guardians and instructors. To us belongs the duty of its proper training. We may make that life what it ought to be. We may frame the life of the child on principles of religion and virtue, and thus make it an ornament to society, an honor to God, and a blessing to ourselves; or, by careless neglect, we may make that life an open shame, a very scorn and derision to those about us, and to ourselves a lasting reproach. God requires it of us that we shall bring up our children in His fear and love. It is an apostolic precept, "Parents bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The means to do this are mercifully placed in our hands. If faithfully used, the end will surely be attained. Such labor is not, cannot be put forth in vain. The "training up a child in the way he should go" is no mere venture, but has the assured prospect of reward. "When he is old," says the inspired writer, "he will not depart from it." Not so certain is the increase the husbandman looks for, when he casts his seed into the ground, than are the blessed fruits of faith which follow the careful planting of Divine seed in the heart of the child.

If our sons and daughters are not what they ought to be; if they have grown up immoral and bad, having no fear of God before their eyes, and are simply the votaries of the world, given to the pursuit of vanity and folly, be sure that we ourselves are chiefly to blame. The fault is our own. We have been faithless to our trust. We proved ourselves unworthy our stewardship. We are reaping the fruits of our own disobedience and neglect. We may look elsewhere for causes, and think to find them in sources foreign to ourselves, but in vain. The woman whose daughter is vain and frivolous, and altogether absorbed in the pomps and vanities of the world, totally

unfitted for the serious duties of life, need not look abroad for the influences or the causes that have made her child the trifling and foolish thing she is. The fault is hers, and hers alone. It devolved upon her to mould the character and to choose the principles which should rule the life; but she faithlessly neglected the duty. The man whose son is a drunkard or a libertine need not think to exonerate himself from the responsibility of that son's evil course, because of outward circumstances. He is deceiving himself most grossly if he imagines that temptations from without are the chief or only cause of his child's vicious habits. He forgets that that son inherited from him, in common with the race, a weak and sinful nature, prone to sin and evil, and, if left to itself, there was nothing to keep it from falling. Perchance, he himself had not learned that there was needed something from above and outside of himself—the aid of Divine Grace, the co-operation of God's assistance, the constant exercise of a Divine principle, by which alone the passions would be held in subordination, and the churchman kept from sinking down to ruin. He, perhaps, had not been taught the necessity of this superhuman aid to give security to the soul. In training his child, all that he did, probably, was to impart a little intellectual instruction, giving no attention whatever to moral or religious culture.

That which was of the greatest, of unspeakable, importance was neglected. Instead of arming the lad with those weapons of Divine Grace which would enable him to resist the temptation of the world, the flesh and the devil, he allowed him to go abroad with no safeguard over the passions, no guide to the feet to keep them from stumbling.

It is no wonder that such exposures should be followed with a downfall. It was a thing not to be astonished at that children suffered to grow up thus should turn out badly. It was even to be looked for, that a young man growing up without sound moral teaching, and never taught the necessity of self-restraint, the duty of going to God for the aid of His grace to overcome the unruly propensities of an evil nature, will be found among the profane and profligate. He will appear in society with just that character which he grew up with, shaped and moulded by his parents' hands. Where this is not the case, it is only the exception, not the rule.

Much is said, and justly, too, of the great and crying evil, intemperance. Everyone, especially every well-wisher of good order in society, must deprecate the growing evil, and desire that it may be stayed. We ought, indeed, to be willing to make any sacrifices to save from ruin those who are being drawn into the fearful vortex.

But when we are dealing with this vice, and are considering how it may be best put down, are we endeavoring to strike at the root of the evil? or are we thinking to eradicate it by a few superficial efforts? A great deal of what has been said and done, thus far, in reference to this important question, has not, we know, produced permanent and lasting effects, nor has it brought about the reform intended. Now, we fear it was not gone about in the fear of God, and an entire dependence on His grace, and yet, as said so well in one of our collects, "without Him nothing is strong, nothing is holy. Any work, to stand, must be begun, continued and ended in Him."

It is well, as it is important, we know, to remove temptation out of the way, to close up the avenues by which the young are drawn away into vice and crime. But this is scarcely half the battle. To effect the cure desired, we must go down deeper into this question. It would seem that no conquest can be expected unless we begin at the very point whence the mischief springs. We must deal with the tempted, as well as the temptation. The habits and propensities of the youth must be considered and dealt with, as well as the place where he indulges their gratification.

Unquestionably, had the training of the boy been what it ought, the young man of to-day would have shunned these haunts of vice. Those tempting libations which ever and anon entice him might have been spread before him in vain. Acquaintances might have invited or jeered, coaxed or taunted, without avail. The armor of God is proof against all the wiles of the devil and the lusts of the flesh. If faithfully adjusted by the parent, we believe that he need not fear to send forth his son, even into a wicked and dangerous world.

The grace of God, obtained by earnest prayer, working through His appointed means, will be effectual to check every passion and restrain every inordinate desire. Let every parent in this community, then, begin as he ought, and as the Bible directs, to train up his child with holy training, implanting pure and sound principles with which to govern the life, and there shall not be the complaint of such general demoralization as now is heard, and which has brought so much misery to our otherwise pleasant homes. And let those whose sins, through neglect of early training, are pursuing the downward path, labor for their reform as they labor for nothing else. Let them plead with them as for life, to leave off the intoxicating cup, and be seen no more in the abodes of vice. Let them go to God for aid to enable them to bring into the path of virtue those whom they neglected to bring there in tender age. In order to reclaim our youth, they must be induced to abandon the pernicious practices and habits which now lead them to squander their earnings and wreck their lives. Then would the whole tone of society be changed. Instead of spending hours of leisure in riot and debauchery, or at least in pleasures that are immoral and debasing, they would be found in virtuous society, ready to adopt every habit and join in every enterprise which is designed to elevate and improve the life.

#### CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

We commend the following extract from *Church and Home, Florida*, to the attention of our brethren of the clergy and laity in Canada, as expressing our position and hopes. Our purpose is to reach with hopeful influence all the people of the Diocese. To this end the work upon the paper is a labor of love. But we are anxious to do more of the work of the Church than we are doing. We want to grow and to increase in usefulness and influence for the good cause. The suggestion below will show the brethren the ways and means by which they can make *THE CHURCH GUARDIAN* a stronger and better messenger to all households.

The same cry comes from different quarters, of the inability of the local Church paper to reach extensively and effectually the families of the Diocese, and the cause stated is the lack of practical interest of the clergy in its circulation. The Florida paper says: "As a means of intercourse between the distant parts, we are comparatively a failure, simply because the clergy have failed to second our efforts. The Iowa paper has sent out for a year large numbers gratuitously, with the hope thereby that persons would subscribe. The proportion was lamentably small who did pay for what they received; in several instances not one in fifty paid."

So says the *St. Louis Church News*, and we endorse the statement. If our clergy would only take hold of the matter as the Methodist preachers do for their "Guardians" and "Advocates," our Church papers, too, would be taken and read generally by our people, increasing their intelligence and zeal in religious matters fifty per cent. No doubt about it. Try it in any given congregation. Secure the reading of some good Church paper in every family, and watch the result.