

Santa Claus, but, on being laughed at in school, asked her mother for the truth, and had to learn that there was no Santa Claus, though it was her mother who had taught her all about him. But really this anecdote and all that it teaches must not be taken seriously. Children are not grown men and women, and their reasoning faculties and moral sense, wonderful as they seem at times, are in a more or less incipient and chaotic state. Whatever their upbringing, they hardly live in our region of sober fact. They are dominated by strong imagination, and of themselves so color objects and incidents that they cease to be for them what they are for us. A little boy who can construct a railroad train out of four chairs, and put all his vim and the greatest sobriety into its operation for hours together, is not at all likely to lose faith in his parents later on when he learns there is no Santa Claus. He laughs at his own credulity, and realizes almost by instinct that it was his parents' love that tried to keep him absorbed in a world that he made for of his own accord. Is that not the experience of us all? When the bubble of Santa Claus burst, did we lose faith in any one on that account, and was not our only regret that the sweet mystery of Christmas had vanished? There are many acts of deception that love and careful parents to practise on children, but not one need ever disturb their faith in parental goodness. As their minds develop and detect the little frauds, they discover of themselves the wisdom and the kindness at the bottom of them all. And what would child life be without the fairies? Under any circumstances, it soon, too soon, comes down to hard fact and human life. Why not let it soar at will in the realms it takes to by instinct? What a poor thing mature life would be but for a little imagination to lift us up out of our ruts and grooves! And to neglect and starve the imagination in early childhood! is to attempt to kill it in the man. Surely there will always be a place in childhood for the old fairy tale book. It would be a great pity, after the happy days we've known with them, to see them delivered over to the hangman to be burnt.

THE BIBLE FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.—But fairy tales are not everything. As the only food for early childhood they would be very unsubstantial, and the writer of the paper above alluded to takes up a very noble cause when she pleads for the use of the Bible in the training of little children.

The hard, unpalatable fact that confronts us to-day is that the generations are growing up ignorant of God's Word. Everything reveals it—Sunday school, examination papers, current literature, and everyday conversation. The Old Testament, in particular, suffers neglect. And yet, as Christians, we believe it to be the Word of God. It is the one indispensable book. Protestantism means the unimpeded systematic reading of the Bible, or it is an unsubstantial dream. The condition of religious education among Protestants to-day is a bitter disgrace. What would the Reformers have thought of an education that leaves little or no place for the Word of God? And what a glorious time early childhood is for instruction in Scripture, when there is a continual clamor for stories! Nursery rhymes and fairy tales have been specially devised to meet this need, but what can meet it half so well as the Bible story? What can surpass in interest for the child the simple narrative of the creation, the deluge; the life of Abraham and Jacob and Joseph; the career of Moses, and the journey of the Israelites to Canaan; and the achievements of judges like Gideon and Samson; the child Samuel; the call and failure of Saul; the whole life of David; the doings of kings like Solomon and Jehoshaphat and Ahab and Josiah; the captivity and return; and then, from the New Testament, the simple story of Christ's life, His birth, baptism, and early years, His miracles and His kind words, His suffering and crucifixion and resurrection; the early experiences of the twelve, and the life of St. Paul? Is there any material like it and so near at hand for the entertainment and delight of little children? What can the parent be thinking of who lets the precious years of child life go by without an earnest attempt to familiarize the young with the Word of God? There is the double inducement of its paramount importance and its wonderful interest. It costs but little labor, and may yield such splendid results. If thousands of young men and women at this hour take no interest in church or the reading of the Bible, are there not as many parents who, in large measure, are to blame for it? Moreover, the educational value of the Bible cannot be overrated. It is a whole national literature in itself, and these are days when men are never weary of advocating the power of good literature. Whatever the best literature can do for mankind the Bible can do. Even Professor Huxley, with all his hostility to Christianity, admitted his inability

to name a book which could take the place of the Bible in the education of little children.

THE SECRET OF POWER.

The Bishop of Ripon, in a pastoral to "The Clergy and all Fellow-Workers," writes:

"Is it too much to say that the temptation of our own day is to those mistaken confidences which the prophets of old denounced? We rely on our organization as Israel relied on its horses and on its chariots, and its allies. We rely on our carefully-made plans, our privileged position, our noble lineage; and we forget that these are merely external advantages—valueless unless filled with the loving power of God. We need to remember the apostle's words—'The second Adam was made with a quickening spirit.' The realization of this saves us alike from false confidence and false diffidence—on the one hand from the danger of imagining that we can do everything without Him, and on the other from that of thinking that even with Him we can do nothing. To realize that our means are inadequate is to learn humility. To realize that we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth is to learn faith. Our store, like that of the disciples, is ever unequal to the demands made upon it. In His hands the scanty supply becomes enough—we may, in His might, grow equal to the burden which is put upon us—when we are weak we are strong—joy and courage enter with us into our work, the tasks become easier, for He is at hand; the difficulties disappear, for He makes a way for us. As saintly Henry Vaughan sang:

"Lord! with what courage and delight
I do each thing
When Thy least breath sustains my wing!
I shine and move
Like those above,
And with much gladness
Quitting sadness,
Make me faire dayes of every night!"

—*Church Guardian.*

THE ESSENTIAL TEACHING.

MAN must not be taught to enjoy, but rather to suffer for others; to combat for the salvation of the world. It must not be said to him Enjoy: life is the right to happiness; but rather, Work: life is a duty, do good without thinking of the consequences to yourself. He must not be taught "to each according to his wants," or "to each according to his passions"; but, rather, "to each according to his love."—*Mazzini.*