

Out of the books mentioned above, the following may be selected as providing a fair working library for the ordinary teacher during the current six months: (1) Commentaries on the Acts, Lindsay and the Century Bible; (2) Commentaries on the Epistles, The Cambridge Bible or the Century Bible; (3) Books on the Life of Paul, Stalker and Meyer; (4) On New Testament Geography, MacCoun, or the Oxford Helps. It should be borne in mind that no one of the books named is a necessity. No teacher should think that, because such books as these are out of his reach, he ought not to be a teacher. The one needful book is the Bible. Other books are useful, but may be dispensed with.

TEACHER TRAINING

By Professor Walter C. Murray

XIII. YOUTH AND DOUBT

The change from Boyhood to Manhood is the greatest in the life of man. At that time the beliefs which the boy has received from parents and society are thrown into the crucible of doubt. Then are tested the habits that have been formed by copying the examples of others or by obediently following their precepts. When the white heat of passion has cooled, beliefs and character are found to have been changed—perhaps to a bit of ash, mayhap to pure gold. These fires may flare up suddenly and sink down as quickly; or they may begin slowly, and gradually increase in intensity, but remain at a white heat for years. So it was with Descartes, who for fully a third of his lifetime was consumed with doubt. Intellectual doubt, however, is the less of the two great perils of the time. Moral scepticism, accompanied by rebellion and pride, may shatter the very foundations of morality and turn the youth into an agent of destruction.

THE STORM AND STRESS

of this period seems to be inevitable for the great majority. From it the youth will emerge a strong sane man, or an anarchist, moral and political.

Many well-disposed, but not well-advised persons, attempt to suppress the doubts and independence of the youth by force. The

slightest expression of doubt in word or in deed is repressed. Such methods remind one of the venturesome engineer of the Mississippi steamboat, who ordered the stoker, at the critical point of the race, to sit on the safety valve. We can neither successfully suppress doubt nor can we guard against it forever. It is possible to delay the assault, but the causes are too deep-seated in human nature to be denied expression for all time. These intellectual and moral diseases are, like the epidemics of childhood, difficult to escape, but, when once successfully passed, are harmless in the future. Nor need they be so deadly if the boy is in a good state of moral and intellectual health. If his early training has been based upon truth and right and has been thorough, he will come through as successfully as a well-built and well-manned ship rides through the storm.

"WELL-BUILT AND WELL-MANNED!"

To be well-built, to have a good character wisely formed in the past is important, but to be well-manned is equally important. Sympathy and a wise forbearance keep the youth heading in the right direction. Severity, uncompromising and unyielding severity, will drive him from his bearings; and then, when he is caught in the trough of the sea, rudderless and compassless, he is almost beyond the reach of hope. I have known not a few who have been driven to active hostility against all forms of religious belief by the severe rebukes of well-meaning but unwise persons. The doubts of the young men had startled, shocked, these elderly guardians of the faith, who had taken the doubts, not as doubts, but as disbeliefs.

Young men throw off their doubts, as a child throws a stone at a window, to see what will happen. Should their doubts meet resistance and call forth a discussion, they join in the fray with joy. The greater the ability and native strength of the character of the youth, the greater will be the opposition. It is useless to attempt to beat it down. The stronger and the better the stuff of the young man, the more vigorously he will fight; and, if the struggle be prolonged, what was begun half in jest, half in earnest, will become the settled conviction of a lifetime.