

wise than that evil training shall bear evil fruit?

Consider the case of a child born of drunken and degraded parents, growing up in a hot-bed of vice; hearing nothing but profanity and obscenity; learning nothing of the difference between right and wrong; no prayer whispered over its cradle; no pure thoughts of a better life instilled into its budding mind; its playground the street; its companions equally benighted with itself. It cannot attend school; it has no clothes; it is not kept clean; the mother would not take the trouble to send it, and school boards are not always sufficiently interested to provide accommodation and enforce attendance. Growing up untrained, except in evil and sharp cunning ways, the child at seven or eight years of age is sent out to sell papers or to beg, sometimes to steal, on the streets constantly, and with companions older in vice than himself. The boy learns rapidly, until at fifteen or sixteen he becomes a thief when opportunity offers, and trusts to luck to escape detection and retain freedom.

With the girl the downward course is somewhat different, though the result is essentially the same. Escape from the family quarrels and squalor is sought on the streets, where vice is easily learned, and the road to comfort and luxury made to appear comparatively easy, until by stages she sinks into a common outcast, unpitied and unloved.

Thus are the ranks of the criminal classes supplemented, and thus is perpetuated the curse of evil that stands as a constant menace to life and property, and continues to hold over every community a sense of insecurity. And where, we may well ask, lies the blame for this state of things? Not with the helpless victim of untoward circumstances, but with the parents, and with the community which failed to step in when the parents proved false to their duty.

In proposing a remedy, the first es-

sential is education. Not education in the narrow sense of mere intellectual instruction; but education which cultivates the heart and the moral nature, which inculcates truthfulness and gentleness and modesty and calls out the purest and noblest instincts of humanity. In providing such an education it may, and often will, be necessary to remove the child from its natural parents. In this enlightened age, it is a recognized principle that no man or woman has a right to train a child in vice, or debar it from opportunities for acquiring pure and honest habits; and if parents are not doing justly by their children, they forfeit their right to continued guardianship. This principle is now a legal enactment in almost every Christian land, and it is only in the careful yet unfaltering use of this power, that we can hope for a noticeable reduction in our prison population. It is a duty we owe to ourselves; it is far more a duty we owe to the children who are thus unfortunately placed. Every resource of the law should be exercised to compel such parents to pay for the education of the children removed from their control.

For the protection of the child the removal is made; for the protection of the community, the unworthy parent should be compelled to pay to the last farthing. For all such children real homes should be sought, where they may develop naturally, and grow up in common with all other children. An institution is not a home, and never can be made such, though it may be useful as a temporary abode in which to prepare the little one for the family circle. No child should be kept permanently in an institution, however good, and this is something that cannot be too frequently pointed out, since there are orphanages that retain children for periods of from five to ten years.

While there are these cases in which the only hope for the child lies in its complete removal from improper