

TAKE THE CHILDREN TO CHURCH

Considerable discussion has been aroused at different times as to the propriety of forcing children to attend divine service on the Sabbath. In this connection it has been frequently urged that to oblige a child to go to church against its will might result unfavorably as to its church-going habits in maturer years. Instances are repeatedly cited where men have declared that they used to promise themselves, when thus obliged to go up to the house of God, that should they ever live to be their own masters they would avenge themselves of the distasteful obligation by remaining away for ever after. And undoubtedly in some cases the unfilial promise has been fulfilled.

But in an excellent sermon to which it was recently our privilege to listen, the pastor argued with convincing plainness that just the same view should be taken in this case as would be if a child rebelled against attending school during the week. What parent sufficiently cognizant of the importance of education would allow a child to remain away from school day after day simply because it did not want to go? And then, what mere child is capable of judging of its present or future needs in any respect? It is nothing short of injustice, not to say cruelty, to allow a little untaught child to decide for itself what course it shall pursue in any matter of vital importance. But the trouble is, far too many parents fail to recognize the habit of church-going as being one of vital importance. As regards the school on week days, a child begins its attendance at a certain age, then continues to go as a matter of course. Except for good and sufficient reason, it is expected and required that the pupil be in his place each day.

We remember vividly the response which a sudden declaration met when one day, away back in youthful years, we announced our decision not to attend church that morning. The kindly but shrewd father looked up in quick surprise and asked: "What! are you feeling sick to-day?" "No, sir." "Hain't God spared your life through the week just passed?" "Yes, sir." "You've been fed and cared for through the week, haven't you?" "Yes, sir." "Then, my child, what good reason have you for staying away from the house of God to-day?"

The question was unanswerable. We went to the house of God that day, and ever since the years ago when those wise, judicious queries were set against a foolish determination to act falsely to the most faithful training and example, there has never been a willingness on our part to remain away from the service of God's house on the Sabbath except for what seemed good and sufficient reason. Treat it as a matter of course that children will regard the Sabbath; and how else can they regard it properly except by engaging for at least a little while in the worship of the sanctuary? Parents can do no more than to insist upon respect to their wishes while children are still under their control, and then leave results to God. But the force of early habits is something remarkable. Suppose with growing manhood there comes a restless desire to break away from the restraint and requirement of earlier years! Leave the children to God; if you have been faithful, he will surely be, and in "showing mercy unto thousands of them who love him and keep his commandments," he will not forget to guard the children of his children who have remembered the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Ten to one those who have asserted their independence for a while by neglecting the duties of the Sabbath will drift back into the safe old habits of childhood again.—*Free Church Monthly.*

KIND WORDS.

What silence we keep, year after year,
With those who are most near to us and dear!
We live beside each other day by day,
And speak of myriad things, but seldom say
The full, sweet word that lies just in our
reach

Beneath the commonplace of common speech.

Then out of sight and out of reach they go—
These close, familiar friends who loved us so;
And sitting in the shadow they have left,
Alone with loneliness, and sore bereft,
We think with vain regret of some kind word
That once we might have said, and they
have heard.

—*Sel.*

The Common Council of the city of Hamburg has declined to present to the Roman Catholic order of "Gray Nuns" the gift of a plot of land for an hospital. The refusal is grounded upon the charge that the hospital would become the centre of proselyting influence.