

eyes at once, and sometimes it just pours down. The boy with the least grit has usually the loudest yell. Most boys must cry a little, but the less the better. Grit and groans don't agree.

When a boy has a hard task he should not begin to pity himself, nor waste his time inventing excuses to escape his work. The boy with grit has often hard things to do; but he does not drop his jaw and droop his eyes, and whine; but sets his teeth and braces his muscles and stiffens his back, and gets to work. The boy with grit does hard things: the other fellow sits still and grans.

Then, boys should play fair. Some boys will cheat and lie just to win; but such boys make poor playmates. Better lose a game fairly than win it by cheating. You can steal games as thieves steal money, but it does not pay. Lying and cheating will spoil the best sport. Fair play is the only good

play, and there should be no other. Winning or losing, boys should play fair. We like boys to "play the game" with all their might, and "play to win," too; but a boy loses more than he gains who is bound to win anyway—fairly if he can, falsely if he must. A game is never worth what it costs if it is dishonestly won.

But more than all else, boys should be Christian boys. This is the sure secret of both sweetness and strength, and will make a boy "the soul of honor" in either work or play. It isn't hard for a boy to get on the right track, and the Lord will help him stay there. Christ himself was once a boy, and He knows all about boys now. He is the boy's best Friend and Helper in all that enters the boy's heart and life. Every boy should get to know Jesus and try to please Him always. It is that which makes right doing easy.

## "The Child Problem"

By MRS. S. J. HUGHES, ATHENS, ONT.

**I**F "in true education the first thing necessary for us, is to see aright the subject on which to act," it is imperative that we view the child before we try to solve the "problem." We must understand something of his individuality, his relation to the world around him and to God. Christ's attitude towards children and his teachings concerning them clearly define their relation to God and their place in His kingdom.

"Blessed be Childhood," wrote Amiel, "which brings down something of heaven into our rough earthliness." "As is the dawn to the day, so is childhood to humanity." In the individuality of the child lies the difficult part of our "problem." Of one thing we are assured. He is not like a sheet of pure, white paper upon which we can write what we will, neither is he like a bit of wax, which we can mould and shape to our liking. Impressionable in his early years he certainly is and easily influenced for good or evil, yet every child born into the world comes bearing the imprint of the generations preceding him. With his senses all undeveloped, he is yet a creature of instinct, and dowered with faculties which differentiate him not only from the brute, but to a degree from his kind, for as surely as no two children agree exactly in face and figure, so do no two possess the same mental and moral characteristics. We must, therefore, study individually the faculties of the child and superintend lovingly and judiciously their proper development. The chief agencies by which this is to be accomplished are the home, the school and the church. The home is first in importance. There the mother is the strongest factor in the early development of the child. It is hers to see that he is warmed, clothed and nourished, to train him in those habits which tend to the formation of character, and to imbue him with reverence and love for goodness.

Training means culture, and culture is development along natural lines, though not necessarily along the line of least resistance. First in importance of the things which every child should learn is obedience to properly constituted authority, one of the basic principles which underlie every condition in life. Whether in the physical, social, moral or spiritual, he must learn conformity to the laws which govern in those realms, or suffer loss and pain. While the will is plastic teach him to be obedient.

Teach self-reliance.—Even the child requires the stimulus which is only obtained by overcoming difficulties. Life will call for the full use of his faculties, and he needs them developed.

Teach him self control.—It is as true to-day as of old that "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he which taketh a city."

Teach him to be thorough and dependable.—It was a fixed rule with one of the most successful teachers never to allow a child to do a thing badly who had once done it well. Slovenliness where excellence is possible, is a blemish in the character of child or man. The child in your home, or the friend by your side upon whom you can depend is a joy in your life.

Teach him self reverence, and from that, reverence for all

that is sacred in earth and heaven.—It may be that these habits cannot be perfectly acquired in childhood, but unless there is the beginning of culture in this direction there can never be the attainment of the ideal in the man. To do this it is necessary that we ourselves shall be living exemplars of our teaching, and then that we enlist the co-operation of the child's own will, for that is the key to the "Problem." "That the important thing is in directing the germinating will of the young child is easy to say but hard to carry out." The young tree must be bent—not broken. Make the child sure that justice and love are back of the command and usually he will readily and naturally yield to guidance and authority. But do not weary and disgust him by too close scrutiny or too many commands. Allow the active boy and girl considerable room for the free development of their activities.

Experience is a very faithful teacher.—A child sees things through a child's eyes, and if he has not the same conception of the meaning of words which we have, let us not blame, but patiently and lovingly seek to instruct. Never give a child to feel that the loving watchful care of his Heavenly Father, is as the merciless eye of an inquisitor. The thought of being always in God's sight ought to give the greatest assurance to the child. Let us be fair and not expect in a child an excellence of character which all the years of discipline have failed to develop in us. We can find no better methods than those used by the great modern educational reformers, Pestalozzi and Froebel. They held that the faculties or powers of the child could only be developed by exercise, and increased with use. When Pestalozzi was in charge of about forty destitute children, he learned that a neighboring town was burned and many children made homeless. He gathered his children around him, told them the sad circumstances, and suggested that they ask the Government to let twenty of the destitute children come and live with them. He warned them at the same time to consider well before they decided. "I still see," he writes, "the emotion with which they answered 'Yes, yes, we are quite ready to work harder, eat less, and to share our clothes, for we want them to come.'" Surely this was a lesson in benevolence and Christian charity better than a year of talk about them. "It was in this way," he says, "I strove to awaken the feeling of each virtue before talking about it."

In the development of the spiritual nature of the child the very first principle of Christianity is obedience. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." The child who has been taught self-reliance makes an alert, resourceful Christian, and he who has learned self-mastery, best understands the Master's words: "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me."

Hearten.

Don't scold.

Cheerfulness is catching.

Smile and someone will smile back.

Frown and all the world will look black.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Be Cheerful!