

matters in the books and newspapers he may read, or the conversation he may hear about them.

A man of what is called liberal education must be acquainted with at least the outlines of ancient history, art, and modern science, besides divers other matters too numerous to mention, or he will be shut out from very much of the current interest of his age, and be excluded from the advantages of literary culture and information. A very large number of books, the proceedings of many societies and institutions, literary, scientific, political, social, technical, addressed to those of liberal education, will be hopelessly closed to him unless as a child and young man he has been taught the rudiments and outlines, the knowledge of which is taken for granted by all who speak of, or comment on, the events and progress of the world.

Just so in religious education. A certain amount of rudimentary instruction is necessary—in respect to the statements and doctrines of Christianity—in order that lessons of Christianity may be eventually conveyed; in order, *i.e.*, that any religious education may be given.

The child afterwards may make a wrong use, or no use, of the main religious and historical statements contained in that book, but he is unfitted to take his place intelligently in much conversation, or even to read with sufficient perception many allusions of current journalism, if he has never been taught anything about those religious and historical statements. Afterwards when he grows up, he may, wisely or unwisely, form his own conclusions. He will have his own opinion about the lessons and deductions drawn from these statements. But at any rate he should be in early life supplied with some information upon which his views, right or wrong, can be based. For this reason most people insist on some

primary religious instruction. But we must not confound this with religious education. This is another matter. It concerns those moral precepts, those spiritual motives which are intended to influence the conduct of life, which are to create a sense of consciousness, a love of truth, a devotion to the high principles of righteousness.

Religious education concerns itself with the knowledge of God as our Father which is in heaven, and a perception of Divine love and the spirit of self-sacrifice revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ. This can never be conveyed in mere dry lessons. It can come only from the loving heart, and appeals to the conscience. It passes from soul to soul. And it is this which makes the duty of any one who professes to impart religious education of such grave importance.

When, therefore, we talk of religious education as distinct from, as an advance upon, religious instruction, though this may be honestly given in school, it must chiefly be given at home, if the child's character is to be formed on Christian lines. Without righteous home example and influence, woful is the prospect that the child will grow up into a genuine Christian man or woman. It is likely, in time, to take its tone from its surroundings. If they are good—though some children disappoint the best parents—there is obvious hope that the child will turn out well. How many a man and woman, honestly trying to lead a Christian life, traces his or her better mind to the influence and example of a righteous parent! How many parents, humanly speaking, have only themselves to thank when their children turn out ill! Perhaps they have cuffed and scolded them when they have been troublesome; but that is not religious education. Perhaps they have even sent them to Sunday-School and Church; but very possibly that was to get them out o