

is decidedly deteriorating. It is painful to see that men of character are becoming even more rare."

The question, whatever may be its correct answer, is one of intense interest. It is a sorry outcome of all our scientific, inventive, and industrial progress, if indeed the character of men and women is deteriorating. While we are slow to accept so gloomy a view and prefer to believe that on the whole the tendency of character, as well as of science and culture, is upward, it may be worth while to inquire more closely and persistently into the fitness and efficacy of the means we are employing to insure that the average of character in each succeeding generation shall be higher than that of its predecessor. It will be readily admitted that this result depends upon the kind of character-training the boys and girls are receiving in the homes and in the schools, more than upon any other influence, or all others combined. With respect to the former, it is to be feared that, while there are many notable exceptions, as a rule the home-training in these days of intense devotion to business on the one hand, and to pleasure-seeking on the other, is but a broken reed upon which to rest our hopes for any great upward tendency in the moral character of the coming generations. But of that we do not now propose to speak.

What of the schools? The chief reliance, so far as the masses are concerned, is undeniably on these. What are nine-tenths of the public schools of the day doing for the development of a high type of character? What provision is made in the crowded programmes for direct ethical, as distinct from intellectual culture and development? No one will, we presume, doubt for a moment that the moral nature is quite as susceptible of cultivation as the intellectual. No one will doubt that it is quite as well worth cultivation, in view of every higher and really worthy end for which the schools exist? And yet is it not the fact that while provision is made in the school programmes for the study of almost every subject which is supposed to bear more or less directly upon the cultivation of the intellectual powers, no such provision is made for the cultivation of the moral faculties? The time-tables may be searched in vain for a half-hour which is to be devoted to the discussion of questions of motive and conduct. No text-book is prescribed, dealing with ethical questions. No exercise is specially adapted to develop the sensitiveness or confirm the supremacy of conscience, or to leave the impression upon the youthful mind that the question of the right and wrong of things is the first and greatest of all questions, and should have precedence over every other.

An instructive article bearing upon this general subject appeared in the August number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, from the pen of John Dewey, professor of Philosophy in Michigan University. Feel-

ing the importance in ethical discussions of finding out as nearly as possible what is going on in the minds of the students themselves, Professor Dewey, among other devices, hit upon the following method: He asked each student to state some early typical moral experience to his own, relating, say, to obedience, honesty, and truthfulness, and the impression left by the outcome upon his own mind, especially the reason for the virtue in question. Some specimens given from the mass of material gathered by this process are curiously suggestive of the looseness which prevails in the minds of very many parents in regard to the bases and sanctions of morality. Professor Dewey sums up the results of his analysis as follows:

"Nine-tenths of the answers may be classified under one of the following heads: The impression left by the mode of treatment was that the motive for right doing is (1) found in the consequences of the act; (2) fear of being punished; (3) simply because it is right; (4) because right-doing pleases the parent, while wrong-doing displeases; (5) the religious motive. In number the religious motive predominates; next to that comes fear of punishment. In many cases, of course, several of these reasons were inculcated.

In concluding his article, Professor Dewey says: "Everyone will admit without dispute that the question of the moral attitude and tendencies induced in youth by the motives for conduct habitually brought to bear, is the ultimate question in all education whatever." This is, of course, true. But it would, to our thinking, be a fatal mistake to infer that it is essential to the efficiency of moral training, in home or school, that a clearly outlined theory of ethics be reached and formulated before such instruction is attempted. If it were so; if, for instance, the battle between the empiricists and the intuitionists had to be brought to a finish before anything could be done in the way of direct and positive moral training in the schools, the outlook for the improvement of character in the twentieth century would be dark indeed. We do not know that Professor Dewey holds this view, or that he fails to perceive that each one of the five classes of motives above tabulated may be in itself good and effective, so far as it goes.

The practical conviction which it seems to us essential to have embedded in the mind of every parent and teacher is that the normal child has an innate sense of *right* and *wrong* in actions, or to speak more accurately, in motives; that he either instinctively feels, or is so constituted that he may most easily be made to feel, that he is under supreme obligation to do what he believes to be right and to refuse to do that which he believes to be wrong. With profound questions as to the nature of right and wrong he need have little to do until he reaches maturity. The first and great thing in all moral training is to deepen the sense of obligation to do the right and shun the wrong, and to establish the habit of re-

garding this obligation as above all other objects and incitements, no matter what the origin of the notions of right and wrong, or the ground of the distinctions between them. The second step is to put the child in the way of finding the best means of distinguishing what is right from what is wrong in the thousand and one cases which are of constant occurrence in daily life. In doing this, different criteria, such as those derived from the probable consequences or tendencies of the action, may be applied. But why should it be difficult to apply in every case in which the action in question is related to others than the doer, the one crucial test which has been given by many philosophers, but which found its most concise and forcible expression in the Golden Rule, as laid down by Christ, "Whatsoever ye would," etc. Taken, not as an authoritative religious dogma, but as a test of motive, it is difficult to conceive that any parent could or would, object to such a rule being inculcated as a law of life, for every individual, young or old. It is easy to see that such a rule, while immediately applicable as a test of motive, could be made the basis of a course of most interesting and profitable ethical study, for youth and adult, seeing that it involves in its sweep, not only the individual immediately affected, but all to whom those effects may be in any way related, and so covers the whole science of sociology. But the great and obvious benefit of such a study, with a suitable textbook, or under a competent teacher, in the improvement of character, would be in the habit thus formed of making the moral the first consideration. In other words, it would tend to develop that "moral thoughtfulness," which Arnold of Rugby rightly deemed of so much importance in the training of youth.

CHRISTIANITY AND GERMAN CRITICISM.

Professor Ramsay's "The Church in the Roman Empire" (Hodder & Stoughton), of which the eagerly expected new edition has appeared, is perhaps the most important contribution in our language towards the solution of those critical problems originally raised by the Tübingen School in Germany regarding the origin of Christianity. It is now fashionable to speak of the Tübingen School as dead. But while it must be acknowledged that the extreme positions once taken up by the leaders of this school are no longer tenable, it is not the part of wisdom to ignore the fact that many of the main presuppositions—dangerous, and as we believe false presuppositions—of this school still survive and vitiate the critical conclusions of many German scholars, who, while they disclaim the name are still enslaved by the spirit of Tübingen. If any one questions these statements, let him compare "The Apostolic Age," by Professor Weizsäcker, an acknowledged leader of the