

frankly open the heart of his inspection, and sincerely pray "search me O Lord, and try me . . . create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me," he will adjust this inner regulator whereby all our outward conduct will be adjusted to the commandments of our God and the soul enabled to say, I delight to do thy will, O my God.—Christian Intelligencer.

God's Love to Men.

The ruler who came to Jesus by night to ask concerning things of the kingdom had no doubt a number of questions ready, most of them in regard to matters of purely intellectual curiosity. Yet behind this curiosity lay at least a possibility of deep spiritual earnestness. It is for this that our Lord looks in the heart of a man and it is to this which he appeals. Brushing aside all legal and philosophical subtleties over which Nicodemus may have been meditating he brought him face to face with the great gift and the great reality of the divine life.

The wisest Pharisee, like Nicodemus, the most hopeful pupil of the greatest teacher of the law, like Saul who sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the most learned theologian, the greatest sinner, the man whose thoughts are concerned with philosophy or money-getting or pleasure—all alike must be born anew. The new life is the essential thing and Christ alone brings it to meet the needs of men. By the side of this essential, deep reaching and all prevailing question of the spiritual birth mere intellectual wisdom and purely earthly aims sink into complete insignificance. We may be sure that the first and really significant question of Jesus will not be of our details of knowledge but rather of that personal relation to the Heavenly Father in which eternal life becomes the portion of our souls.

This was the first and the important lesson for a man like Nicodemus; as it is the real and inevitable question for each one of us. Are we alive with God? But Christ is not satisfied with affirmation—he must define the life, showing his affinity with the deep things of human experience, and so bring the seeker into personal relation with the Holy Father, the giver of all life. Men have preached the gospel as if it were a threat to sinners. Christ preached it to Nicodemus as a revelation of the love of God. The new life does not begin in the dawning of our love to God through faith; it began long ago in the divine affection. It is summed up in the words Christ spoke to Nicodemus, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life."

We must remember always that God's love anticipates and underlies our faith and our experience. Our life is kindled at that fire, it must gain depth and breadth and passion in communion with the life of Christ and in fellowship with the cross by which he showed the limitless self-giving of the Heavenly Father for his children. Our love takes color from life fellowship with that divine and suffering love of God in Christ.

No thought of judgment, therefore, can be true which leaves out of account the fact that Christ's life is redemptive, that God's first purpose was not to judge the world but to save. Judgment is inevitable because the light condemns the darkness; love, hate; devotion, pride; and self-denial, selfishness. For every deed and word and thought in which we are unloving we shall be self-judged in the day when all things are declared. The opportunity must always judge him who neglects it. The light must always show the quality of the darkness. And God who loves us is behind all these great judgments which already cast their shadow over every life. Happy is every one who has learned of Christ, first, that the heavenly life is God's gift, and then that life is love. God is the center of that life, Christ is its example and the Holy Spirit is the companion of its daily service amid the trials and perplexities of our earthly experience.—The Congregationalist.

Manners and Morals of Children.

The American child is the terror of society wherever it goes. An eminent German on his first visit to the United States was much pleased with many things, but disapproved of the children. His remark on leaving our shores was: "There is plenty of family government in America, but it is all in the hands of the children." It is certain that there is no other civilized or semi-civilized country in the world where such rudeness and impertinence in children would be tolerated as may be seen in this land almost anywhere and on any day.

The causes of this distinctly unpleasant characteristic of American children have been sought after. It is common to say that it is due to a lack of parental training and control. Probably this is largely the case. But this only raises another and more difficult question: Why should American parents be so conspicuously lacking in authority over their children beyond parents in other lands? It is not to be presumed that American children are naturally more depraved than others, nor that American parents are specially deficient in power of control. Observation in other matters shows that quite the opposite is the case. In this country it is frequently seen that a man eminent for tact and ability and success in directing large bodies of men is hardly more than a cipher in his own home, and

one whose word is law to thousands lets his own family run all over him, and is flouted and disobeyed by his children with impunity. Why is it?

Doubtless some part of the explanation may be found in the spirit of extreme democracy which prevades our land. Personal independence is the chief fetish which our people adore. All our political and social ideas are framed to suit the supremacy of the rights of the individual. No matter whether it is best for him or best for the community or best for the world, the sacred rights for personal freedom must not be encroached upon. This ideal of supreme importance of personal independence shapes all our ideas of social and political life. It lies at the foundation of the doctrine of state rights and of local self-government.

We are not stopping now to inquire whether things are right or wrong; we are seeking only to find their influence on the children. They hear their elders talking as if the privilege of having their own way was their dearest and most sacred possession, and they naturally fall into the same habit of thinking.

There is a fallacy somewhere between the personal freedom of a man and a child, but the child does not see it very clearly. When Thackeray was in America he said to a boy on the street in New York: "My boy, I want to go to the City Hall." "Well, run right along, sonny," replied the street arab. It was funny, but it could not have occurred in any other country but this. And we pay too high a price for the sharpness of the wit of our children when we buy it at the cost of a suitable reverence for old age and rightful authority.

Another potent factor in the demoralization of children is the cheap theatres and cheap novels. As the writer was crossing Boston Common a few days ago he saw a boy with perfect mimicry imitate the manners of a stage drunkard. The other boys thought it was smart and wished they could do as well. The papers every day are telling of crimes committed by mere children which were evidently suggested by the low theatre or cheap novel. Children who never go to the one or read the other, copy from those who do. The manners and morals of children are shaped by these, as the dress of our women by the demi-monde of Paris; and there is no remedy for these things except in an aroused public sentiment that shall control these deadly foes to the children and rouse parents to their duties in the training of their own families.—Watchman.

Worry is Waste.

By REV. C. A. S. DWIGHT.

In a well ordered life there is no room for worry. Worry palsies the powers of the soul and scatters its energies in ways worse than useless. Worry is a kind of miasma, which many in this age breathe in almost without knowing it, thus weakening their mental tissues and enervating their wills. The worst thing about worry is that the more it is cultivated the more it clings. The worry-habit is one of the most mischievous of the pet practices, in which modern Americans are indulging.

The Lord Jesus Christ gave a most excellent remedy against the weakness and waste of worry when He said, "Let not your heart be troubled!" There might, in the view of the case, seem to be every reason why men's hearts should be troubled. We live in a world full of sin, sorrow, disappointment, care and bickering. Nevertheless the programme of the Christian life, as Jesus Christ announced it, contains no clause permissive of worry on the part of a believer. The word is, "Believe also on me," and ye shall not worry! The soul that is intimately joined by faith, love and obedience to the Lord Christ becomes lifted at once high above the lower levels of life, where the miasmas of worry prevail, into the serene, clearer atmospheres of a blessed, divine communion. It is easy to talk against worry, and very easy to worry about our worries, but only the grace of the Christ who said "Believe on Me" can save the soul from feeding on its own morbid states of mind, or wasting its substance in the riotous living of a rampant pessimism.

If worry is waste, work is wealth. One of the best preventatives of worry, next to the grace of God, is downright hard work. If we may paraphrase an old rhyme we may say that

Satan finds some worries still
The idle mind to fill.

The man who is busily employed all the time, save for necessary resting spaces, and especially the individual who is constantly occupied in doing good to his fellow-men, has small time or liking for fretting and brooding. The best preventative of infection, the doctors say, is a healthy condition of the physical frame. Just so there is in hard, helpful work a kind of an antiseptic antagonism to worry and to the malarial influences of melancholy.

Love God, and live for men. Then will your life be full of meaning, dignity, force and result, and exempt from wasteful worry. Remember Carlyle's "gospel of work"—"If you have anything in the world to do, do it!" The first means of developing man, as we learn from Genesis, was to give him work in the garden of Eden. The world today would be more like an Eden if people would worry less and work more.—New York Observer.

The Spirit of the Age.

So far as its aptitude toward the great doctrines of the Gospel is concerned there is nothing in the spirit of this age peculiarly different from that of any age that has preceded it. The delineations of human nature, as found in the Word of God, are equally as true, in every line and shadow, for today as for two thousand years ago. The same passions surge in human breasts today as when the old prophets wrote, and the same disinclination to holiness and faith frames itself in unregenerate hearts to-day as when Christ wept over the Jerusalem that rejected him.

It is very pleasing and flattering fancy to many people that there is something quite peculiar in their constitutions, so much so that there needs to be a certain modification of the Gospel in order to adapt it to their peculiar case. They would like to have some high sounding name given to their unbeliefs, such as their intellectual or temporal attitude. They do not like to be classed as unbelievers and rejecters of Christ. They do not like the old classification where God "concluded them all in belief," or said, "there is none that doeth good; no, not one." They would rather be flattered and told that theirs is a remarkable, an exceptional case, presenting special difficulties and perplexities and lying outside the old rule laid down by Christ, that "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." But, it may be, the conceit is gotten out of them, at some time, and they learn that they are just common sinners, after all, for whom Jesus came to die, and who may be saved if they will come to God in repentance and faith.

Many a minister has made a mistake in attempting what he vainly imagined was a adapting of the Gospel, to the age or the community in which he lived. Having in mind certain worldly or unbelieving elements he came to preach what he thought would be effective in reaching them and insensibly came to take their attitude in reference to the Gospel, and, finally to present what he thought would be acceptable or pleasing to them. And then, the heart of the Gospel being eliminated, it ceased to be the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation, and came to be the wisdom of man to the confirming of the unregenerate in their unsaved life.

This age has some very pronounced and distinctive features. It is an area of great material progress, of invention and skill. But spiritually it cannot be said to have taken ground higher than those that have preceded it. The carnal heart is still enmity to God. The wages of sin is still death. Eternal life is still the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The blood of Christ still cleanses from sin. Faith is still the condition of justification. The Holy Spirit still pleads with men to live a life hid with Christ in God.

We greatly err if we think to modify or change the Gospel. It is the message of God to all lands and to all ages. It is for man and woman, for youth and for old age. The spirit of the age is to be commended in so far as it yields itself to God, and where it does not so yield it must humble itself in repentance and faith or remain under God's condemnation.—Herald and Presbyter.

The Cruelty of Carelessness.

A vast amount of unhappiness is caused by simple thoughtlessness. There are people who never stop to consider what the consequences of any action may be. An idea occurs to them, and straightway they act on it without thinking if it may cause inconvenience or distress to others. If they use an article which is common household property they do not return it to its proper place, and others must spend much time and patience in looking it up. They are often late at meals and irregular in keeping appointments, and generally not to be depended on. They are full of apologies and seem contritely sorry, but it never occurs to them to think carefully, so as to be on time for engagements, or to avoid doing that which will cause trouble to others. They mean well, but seldom do well; and their carelessness is more trying to the patience than positively evil intentions. Pure malevolence can be guarded against, but from good-natured heedlessness there is no escape. One or two persons of that character will keep a whole household in hot water a large part of the time, and wear out the energy and vitality of those responsible for the smooth running of the household affairs more than all the burden of their necessary duties. It is difficult to resent the conduct of these irresponsible persons, but their treatment of those with whom they come in contact has the same effect as intentional cruelty. Their excuses do not remedy the wrong, but more consideration for the comfort and convenience of others would make them more agreeable members of society and add greatly to the health and happiness of their friends.—The Watchman.

Imagine Jesus examining your work, as he will at the last day; and strive that there may be no flaw in it, that it may be thoroughly well executed, both in its outer man and inner spirit.—Dean Goulburn.