

conscience, wantonly alarming religious convictions, and substituting for a clear, a frank, and manly issue a disastrous, a blind, and timid policy, wriggling along like a serpent instead of walking with self-dependent erectness. This manly erectness would be the rule were the formula of the great preacher accepted who has said: "Secular education by the State and Christian education by the Christian Church is my motto."* Uniformity of truth is desirable, and it will come, not by contrivance, but by conviction.

Someone quoted lately in the *Daily News* (September 19, 1895) the following sentence I wrote in 1870:—

"With secular instruction only in the day school, religion will acquire freshness and new force. The clergyman and the minister will exercise a new influence, because their ministrations will have dignity and definiteness. They will no longer delegate things declared by them to be sacred to be taught secondhand by the harassed, overworked, and oft-reluctant schoolmaster and schoolmistress, who must contradict the gentleness of religion by the peremptoriness of the pedagogue, and efface the precept that 'God is love' by an incontinent application of the birch.....It is not secular instruction which breeds irreverence, but this ill-timed familiarity with the reputed things of God which robs divinity of its divineness."

The Bible in the schoolroom will not always be to the advantage of clericalism, as it is thought to be now.

Mr. Forster's Education Act created what Mr. Disraeli contemptuously described as a new "sacerdotal caste"—a body of secondhand preachers, who are to be paid by the money of the State to do the work which the minister and the clergyman avow they are called by heaven to perform—namely, to save the souls of the people. According to this Act, the clergy are really no longer necessary; their work can be done by a commoner and cheaper order of artificer. Mr. Forster insisted that the Bible be introduced into the school-room, which gives great advantage to the Freethinker, as it makes a critical agitation against its character and pretensions a matter of self-defence for every family. Another eminent preacher, Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, wrote, not openly in the *Times* as Dr. Parker did, but in *The Sword and Trowel* thus: "We should like to see established a system of universal application, which would give a sound secular education to children, and leave the religious training to the home and the agencies of the Church of Christ." It is worthy of the radiant common sense of the famous orator of the Tabernacle that he should have said this anywhere.

Open Court.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

(To be continued.)

A Conservative opponent of John Morley in a House campaign was once addressing a Scotch audience in behalf of a larger military policy, when, according to a writer in *Short Stories*, he was nonplussed by this question by one in the crowd. "Is Maister Wilson in favor of spending thirty-six millions a year on the army and navy, and only twelve millions a year on education,—that is to say, twelve millions for pitting' brains in, and thirty-six millions for blawin' 'em oot?"

Amid the orchard grass she stood and watched with childish glee
The big bright burning apples showered like star-falls from the tree;
So when the autumn meteors fell she cried, with outspread gown,
"Oh, my, papa, look! Isn't God just shaking apples down!"

Willie was very much interested while the choir sang the anthem in church last Sunday. At its conclusion he turned to his mother, and in a stage whisper asked: "Say, mamma, which beat?"

* The Rev. Joseph Parker, D.D.

• THE MORAL SENSE IN CHILDREN.

CHILDREN in their earlier years are of course ignorant of the distinctions between right and wrong. But the mind at birth is no *tabula rasa*. The child inherits, in the form of aptitudes and predispositions, the results of ancestral experience running back through centuries. There are inborn tendencies to evil as well as to good. As a child has intellectual aptitudes for music or mechanics or art, so it has a hereditary tendency to habits and practices that are moral or immoral, which may be brought into activity or be restrained by education, example and surroundings.

Observers have particularly noticed that in children the moral sense is usually undeveloped, and for some years, in cases, is very weak and even apparently absent. From this fact some philosophers have rashly inferred that conscience is wholly a "creature of education."

The writer knows men of the highest character, tender-hearted, with intense aversion to cruelty, who, when they were boys, took delight in stoning cats, sticking pins through flies, injuring property in order to punish its owners for some fancied wrong, etc.; their own explanation now is that they had not sufficient imagination to enable them to realize the extent of the suffering which they inflicted and not sufficient amount of sympathy to make the infliction of such suffering revolting to them. Their moral sense was not wounded by an act of petty theft, and they sought only to escape detection, which experience had taught them would be followed by punishment.

Evidently the moral sense in those persons was latent and they were guided only by pleasure and impulse. In future years the moral nature grew as the intellect grew, until the conscience became regnant, when acts which had been committed without the slightest compunction were looked back upon with sorrowful regret. Many children are not lacking in tenderness of heart, and very early have the moral nature far more active than it was in the individuals referred to above, in whom it was developed slowly and late in childhood; but careful observation will show that in most children the moral sense, like some of the instincts, is latent and requires time to bring it into active exercise and to make it an important factor in practical life.

In childhood, when many of the lower characteristics are prominent and before the higher traits have appeared, arrested growth is extremely unfortunate for the individual. Only as the child grows does the intellectual and moral nature become ascendant. This truth has a very important bearing on the education of youth. It suggests the importance of restraining the lower impulses, and waiting until a later age for that positive, stimulating, educative work which has for its object expansion of the mind and the cultivation of the heart. These facts must sooner or later be given consideration in all educational work.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

Chas. Watts and G. W. Foote, Toronto Auditorium, Nov. 1.