

IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER.

There is a difference between character and reputation. Character is what we really are. Reputation is what others suppose we are. A man may have a good character and a bad reputation, or he may have a good reputation and a bad character. The reason of this is, that we form our opinions of men from what they appear to be, and not from what they really are. Some men appear to be much better than they really are, while others are better than they appear to be. Most men are more anxious about their reputation than they are about their character. This is improper. While every man should endeavor to maintain a good reputation, he should especially labor to possess a good character. Our true happiness depends not so much on what is thought of us by others, as on what we really are in ourselves. Men of good character are generally men of good reputation; but this is not always the case, as the motives and actions of the best of men are sometimes misunderstood and misrepresented. But it is important, above everything else, that we be right, and do right, whether our motives and actions are properly understood and appreciated or not. Nothing can be so important to any man as the formation and possession of a good character.

The influences which operate in the formation of character are numerous, and, however trivial some of them may appear, they are not to be despised. The most powerful forces in nature are those which operate silently and imperceptibly. This is equally true of those moral forces which exert the greatest influence on our minds, and give complexion to our characters. Among these, early impressions, example, and habits, are, perhaps, the most powerful.

Early impressions, although they may appear to be but slight, are the most enduring, and exert the greatest influence on the life. By repetition they acquire strength, become deeply rooted in the mind, and give bent and inclination to its powers. "The tiniest bits of opinion sown in the minds of children in private life, afterwards issue forth to the world, and become its public opinion: for nations are gathered out of nurseries." Examples, it is said, preach to eyes; and there are but few persons, especially among the young, who can avoid imitating those with whom they associate. For the most part, this is so unconscious that its effects are almost unheeded, but its influence is not on that account the less permanent. The models which are daily placed before us tend to mould our character and shape our course in life. Habit results from the repetition of the same act, until we become so accustomed to it, that its performance requires no mental effort, and scarcely attracts our attention.

By the influence of early impressions, the force of example, and the power of habit, the character becomes slowly and imperceptibly, but at length decidedly formed; the individual acquires those traits and qualities by which he is distinguished, and which bear directly upon his happiness and welfare. It is very important, then, for every one, and especially for the young, to be very careful as to the impressions he cherishes, the example he imitates, and the habits he forms. These are important elements which go to constitute character, and if they are of an improper nature, the result will be ruinous. Character is everything. It matters not what a man's reputation may be, without a good character he cannot be really happy.—*Methodist Recorder*.

PARAGRAPHS FOR PREACHERS.

PREACHING OVER PEOPLE'S HEADS.—We hear a good deal about preaching over people's heads. There is such a thing. But generally it is not the character of the ammunition, but the fault of aim, that makes the missing shot. There is nothing worse for a preacher than to come to think that he must preach down to people; that they cannot take the very best he has to give. He grows to despise his own sermons, and the people quickly learn to sympathize with their minister. The people will get the heart out of the most thorough and thoughtful sermon, if only it really is a sermon.—*Phillips Brooks*.

PREACHING DOCTRINES.—It is the merest mockery to constantly iterate the invitation, "Come to Christ," or to repeat perpetually, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," without at the same time telling who Jesus is, and explaining what is meant by believing on Him or having faith in Him. But to do this involves doctrine, and at this point we are met with a popular outcry

against doctrinal preaching. "Preach Christ," they say, "and leave the doctrines alone!" This is impossible, and the demand is absurd. Any explanation about Christ is based on some doctrine as to His person. If we attempt to explain His crucifixion and death, we also involve doctrine. Even beneath the clamor itself there is the doctrine that it is no matter what a man believes, so long as he is resting in Christ. But doctrinal preaching is not confined to the evangelical ministry alone. They who teach that Christ is but a man, or that His death is but the death of a martyr, are equally teaching or preaching doctrine. The truth is, that if men would preach that there is any significance whatever in the Gospel, it is impossible to escape the use of doctrines.—*Wm. M. Taylor, D.D.*

Prune thou thy words, the thoughts control
That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul
And change to purpose strong.

But he who lets his feelings run
In soft, luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done
And faints at every woe.

Faith's meanest deed more favor bears,
Where hearts and wills are weighed,
Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade.

—*John Henry Newman*.

EXTEMPORANEOUS STYLE.—If you determine—as I trust you will not to read, you will do well to master the materials you have prepared for a sermon in the same way in which men master the materials they have prepared for a speech. On a few sheets of note-paper if you cannot trust your memory—you may indicate your leading lines of thought, and the illustrations which you are most anxious not to forget. You will find it expedient to prepare two or three opening sentences; it is still more expedient to make sure of an effective close. One of the best speakers I have ever heard was often in the greatest difficulty through his inability to hit upon a perfectly satisfactory sentence to finish with. Those of us who knew him used to watch him with the greatest amusement while he was hunting to the right and to the left for what he wanted. We used to say that he was "running after his tail." If you have an illustration which requires perfection of form, you may write it out carefully and commit it to memory. You may also prepare a few keen, epigrammatic, or passionate sentences, in which to concentrate the effect of extemporaneous passages which lead up to them. I believe that Plunket, one of the greatest of our orators, was accustomed to prepare his speeches in this way. It is generally understood that on great occasions Mr. Bright follows the same method. As for the extemporaneous passages, let them be perfectly extemporaneous. Make no attempt to recall the words in which your thoughts occurred to you in your study. Never permit yourself to criticise the form of your sentences. Grasp your thoughts firmly and let the sentences take their chance. The advice of Mr. Pitt to Lord Mornington was admirable: "My Lord," he said, "you are not so successful as you ought to be in the House of Commons; and the reason, as I conceive, is this: You are more anxious about words than about ideas. You do not consider that if you are thinking of words you will have no ideas; but if you have ideas, words will come of themselves." Lord Mornington—who is better known as the Marquis of Wellesley—took Pitt's advice, and he became one of the most eloquent of English orators. But, though you ought not to think of your style while you are preaching, you must think of it at other times. Whether you read your sermons or preach extemporaneously, it is equally necessary that you should take a great deal of trouble to acquire a mastery of the English language. Do not imagine that a knowledge of your own tongue will come to you by instinct or inspiration. The power of writing and speaking in clear, strong, racy, picturesque, and musical English is as truly the result of culture and hard work as the power of reading a play of *Æschylus* or a difficult speech in *Thucydides*.—*R. W. Dale, D.D.*

If we are children of God we ought to use the children's privileges, and, enjoying the blessings, seek the rewards that are furnished in the Father's house. It is very common to tell of our duty of service, and of the blessings that are in store for us in a better world, but we are all too apt to forget the grace that, while we are here, will fill us with the rest of believing.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

THE voluntary contributions to Church of England schools during the last year amounted to £620,034.

AROUSSED by the progress of Christian missions, the Buddhist and Shinto priests of Japan are collecting money to send missionaries of their respective beliefs to other lands.

JOHN JACOB ASTOR, of New York, is erecting a Shelter for Destitute Women and Children, in connection with St. Barnabas House, Mulberry street. The corner-stone was laid by Bishop Potter last week.

THE English Church Missionary Society being compelled to contract its operations, very properly abandons its work in Constantinople and in Smyrna where the American missionaries are laboring so efficiently.

THE income of the Established Church of Scotland last year was about £370,000, and of the Free Church £570,000. Nearly three-fourths of the 1,000 ministers of the Free Church have a stipend of not less than £200 (\$1,000).

THE Church of St. Raphael's, Bristol, which has been closed since Christmas, when Mr. Ward was inhibited, was re-opened on Sunday, but only members of St. Raphael's League were admitted. The whole service was conducted by laymen.

AN interesting feature of the anniversary of the Dauphin Co. Bible Society, held in the First Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pa., June 4, was the fact that three of the Judges of the Supreme Court addressed the meeting in earnest commendation of the work of the Society.

REV. DR. NATHANIEL BOUTON, an eminent divine and citizen of New Hampshire, who died June 6th at Concord, where he was a settled pastor forty-two years, attributed the origin of the American Home Missionary Society to a remark made by him in a stage-coach, January 27, 1825.

THE Moravian Church mourns the death in Germany of Bishop Levin T. Reichel, an able and faithful minister, and one of the most active members of their Mission Department. Mr. Reichel was the first editor of the "Amerikanischer Botschafter," the German monthly paper of the American Tract Society.

ON Monday afternoon Cardinal Manning laid the foundation-stone of a new Roman Catholic Church about to be built in Quex Road, Kilburn, by the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate. The ground on which the edifice will be built formerly belonged to a Priory, dating as far back as the reign of Henry I.

EARL RUSSELL was buried on Tuesday in the family vault at Chelms. Early in the morning his remains were removed from Pembroke Lodge in a hearse. The mourners and the invited guests joined the procession at Rickmansworth. Owing to the expressed wish for privacy there were comparatively few spectators.

STEPS have been taken, under the Public Worship Act, in the form of a complaint to the Bishop of the diocese, by aggrieved parishioners, against the alleged illegalities practised by the Rev. Mr. Enraght, vicar of Holy Trinity, Bordesley, in conducting the services of the church. Fifteen distinct charges are brought against him of excesses in ritual, and so on.

REV. ALFRED SAKER, missionary at the Cameroons on the West Coast of Africa, at the May anniversary in London, told of his labors in civilizing and training the natives, for whom he had translated the Bible, and among whom he numbered over 2,000 converts. By means of the Dualla language he was enabled to speak with Africans from all parts of the continent.

THE New Testament Company of Revisers assembled on Tuesday in the Jerusalem Chamber for their eighty-first session. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol presided. The other members present were the Dean of Lincoln, the Dean of Rochester, the Master of the Temple, Archdeacon Palmer, Canon Kennedy, Professor Brown, Professor Newth, Dr. Angus, Dr. Scrivener, and Mr. Hurnphry. The Company proceeded with the second revision of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

THE Rev. Crauford Tait, the only son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, has just died at Stonehouse, St. Peter's, Isle of Thanet. He was twenty-nine years of age, and had been unwell for some time.—The death is also announced of the Rev. J. W. Carter, of Christ Church, Stratford, after a lingering illness. For many years Mr. Carter had sought to influence for good the reading public, by inserting paragraphs of religious matter as advertisements in the ordinary columns of weekly newspapers.

AN application was on Saturday made to Lord Penzance, on the part of the Rev. Joseph Charles Edwards, rector of Ingomells, in the diocese of Lincoln, that he might be restored to his living. The defendant was suspended by Sir R. Phillimore for five years for immorality, and he was not to be restored unless he filed in the registry of the court certificates of three beneficed clergymen of his good conduct during the last three years of his suspension. Certain certificates had been lodged, and Lord Penzance made an order that he be admitted to his living.

ACCORDING to a return lately presented to the House of Lords, on the motion of the Earl of Powis, no less than 2581 "separate incumbencies or districts" have been created in the Church of England since 1842, or within the last thirty-five years. In other words, seventy-four new parishes have, on an average, been constituted in England every year during that period. Of course the increase has been largest where the presence of the population is greatest. In the diocese of London 286 new parishes have been formed; in Ripon, 234; in Lichfield, 216; and in Manchester, no less than 296. Even in the diocese of St. Albans, only constituted last year, an increase of two new parishes is already recorded. When we remember that, in addition to a permanent pastor and a new church, schools and parsonage-houses have generally been provided, we see how actively church extension is going on in the Episcopal Church.