

## SOME THOUGHTS ON CHARACTER BUILDING.

Every one who takes a half mile walk with us, or talks with us ten minutes, lays something on the wall of our life. The books we read do their part in our character building. Our thoughts also have their important place among the builders. As we think, so we grow, Trifling thoughts—a flippant, shallow life. Sad thoughts—a sombre character. Reverent thoughts—a life on which rests the hallowed marks of divinity. Not only do they go into the walls of our life, but when they are uttered they go out into the world and build themselves into the world and build themselves into the character of others, becoming impulses—inspirations—in people's hearts.

Very grave is the responsibility of the man or woman who writes a book—a novel, for example, which catches the fancy of people and is read by thousands. "It is a great success," men say. Yes; but what does it put into the lives of those who read it? What impulses does it start? What impressions does it leave? Does it kindle holy or unholy fires in the hearts of its readers? Is it gold, silver, costly stones, or is it wood, hay and stubble, that it builds into life-walls? It is a high privilege to be permitted to write words that carry in them the seeds of good, that become strength, encouragement, cheer, hope, and comfort, in other lives. But suppose that one's writings carry in them the poison of moral death—what serious accounting must the writer have when the harvest is gathered up!

It is bad enough to be a useless Christian, doing no good, building nothing that will last; but it is sadder far to live to tear down, with unhallowed hand, what others, with love, prayer, and toil, have built up; or, by unloving and censorious words, to discourage those that are sincerely trying to do God's work and to bless other lives. We should all pray to be saved from the doom of those who destroy the temple of God.

No doubt many of us build much rubbish into our character. We read books that do us no good, even if they leave in us no virus of evil. We indulge in thoughts, feelings, imaginings, longings, which build up in us nothing that we can carry into eternity. We spend

hours in conversations, at best of only idle words, imparting no inspiration toward better things. Whether in our own life or in the lives of those about us, only that which is white and will last forever is fit building material.—J. R. MILLER.

## ILLUSTRATING THE BIBLE.

"The Bible picture roll, with its true and tastefully colored pictures, one for each lesson in the year, deserves a more general use than it already has. A noted kindergartner had said to me: 'Children think in images, and they should have pictures with their Sunday-school lessons—good pictures, that will not give them distorted ideas.' She was delighted when shown the Bible picture-roll.

"The Sunday-school Bible should be illustrated with objects as well as pictures. But here is a great danger. 'Pegs of various colors, slightly larger than matches,' representing Christ and his apostles, and other persons mentioned in a lesson, make one shudder because they so belittle the truth. On one occasion a teacher, giving a lesson on the fall of Adam and Eve, used a green worsted snake to represent Satan! Such illustrations give children misconceptions of truth rather than conceptions. People represented by pegs, even the Christ, cannot have an uplifting, broadening influence upon the minds of children. Sunday-school teachers do not need urging in the line of object illustration, but rather do they need restraining. Kindergartners tell us that there is danger of too much stimulation the imagination in the use of symbols; that they blunt perception, and sentimentalism is fostered by the too free use of them. Let us ask ourselves, you and I, if we have not committed offense in this direction.

"Let us help the children themselves to illustrate the Bible. This we can do by giving them something to do in connection with the lessons—guiding them in appropriate motions in the recitation of Scripture texts, particularly selections from the Psalms, by giving them blocks or other materials to reproduce the story of the lesson; by giving them sewing cards to stitch at home during the week, cards which contain a picture symbolizing the lesson, and, underneath, the golden text to be