

to every day life, is the vital necessity. It is at this point we hesitate and seek for light; it is here we stumble, and here that we fall. Life presents few problems on other lines. If our conduct is correct in this connection we need have no further concern.

These are the lessons we must teach, and to present them in the most effectual light is the sole duty of the First-day School. To do this, we must sometimes venture outside the strict lines of religious teaching, in its generally accepted sense. How did Jesus teach? Apply the principles of religion to the conditions and lessons desired to be taught to-day as He applied them in His day. An all-wise Creator has placed us in this world, endowed with gifts and faculties, with knowledge and reason, all of which He intended us to use to the fullest extent. He has placed knowledge and the means of still further cultivating it within our reach, not in order that we may waste it, but rather that we may use it all for a good purpose. We are in duty bound to use every right means to the best of our ability. We are not restricted to things spiritual in the limited sense, but it extends to things secular as well. We dwell in the secular world, and deal with secular things; but if we would associate them more closely with the spiritual, the result might be to our advantage.

While it is essential that we teach religion, it is by no manner of means necessary that we teach theology. The connection between the two is too remote, and the value of the latter is by far too problematical for us to venture upon that subject. Theology may have its place in this practical world, but it is a very small place, and its value is confined to very few people. We are certainly safe in assuming that it has no place in the First-day School. It gives little assistance to one, either in his public or private relations, while the First-day School is designed to aid in both.

Again, we have heard much about

teaching "Friends' Principles," and to a certain degree this is necessary and right; but a mistake may easily be made here. Friends' principles, that are necessary to be taught, are very few in number, and are held in common with nearly all other religious bodies. Those peculiar to this Society, are preferable rather than essential; are a matter of inference rather than a fixed law; may be applied in one way to-day, or by one individual, and in another way to-morrow, or by another individual. Be self-reliant. Do not be bound by that much hallowed term, "consistency," unless you can in very truth be consistent; unless these are your real views, and moreover, are most needed now, and are best suited to the subject in hand and the trials before you. What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think.

Says Emerson: "This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty, better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after your own; but the great man is he, who in the midst of the crowd, keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."

We should teach self-reliance rather than conformity. Teach a principle because it is right rather than because it may or may not be a tenet of a certain Society. Teach the duties of life, and their relations to the principles of eternal goodness. I would stimulate a thought, a living inquiry, a continual aspiration after higher and nobler ends.

Teach how to live, for when we begin to live we shall cease to exist in our present manner. Earnestness and sincerity will find the way in every case, and if we but do our duty fully, as it appears to us, we will have little need to ask questions as at present.

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