

when the young have before them for their imitation a life of self-forgetful benevolence, one may have as fair a certainty as human nature admits that his property will, after his death, be wisely and benevolently used.

But this plan of a man's hoarding his wealth all through his life, bringing up his children in the same line, setting them an example of selfishness, and then at last making a benevolent will, and giving away what he cannot keep any longer, is about played out. If you want to do a thing, why do it, and enjoy the doing of it, and enjoy it after it is done.—*Not. Baptist.*

TAKING THE CHILD'S MEASURE.

It is recorded that once upon a time a father and mother, with their only son, visited the establishment of a Chatham street dealer in "ready-made" with a view to the equipment of the son with an overcoat. The son was a spare little fellow, considerably under the average size of boys of his age. The dealer, having learned of the parents that their boy was about twelve years old, went to the pile of overcoats from which he usually supplied twelve-year old boys, and brought from it a coat which he proceeded to put on the juvenile customer. It hung on the youngster in awkward and ample folds. The parents objected, and insisted that the coat was too large. The dealer insisted that it was right. His reply has become historic. "Dere ish no trouble. De coat ish all right. De coat ish de proper size; but de poy, ah! de poy is too small."

The parents are said to have turned away in honest indignation in quest of some dealer who could fit coats to boys, rather than insist on boys fitting a certain grade of coat.

That which seems absurd on the part of the Chatham street dealer is enacted continually in the religious culture of our children. There is a great deal of teaching done which is good enough of its kind, and which, if rightly dealt out to the minds for whom it is appropriate, would result in fine success; but the educational garment for an advanced growth of mind is often wrapped round the shrinking little fellow who knows very little, and has but a partial knowledge of what he does know at all. It fits him entirely too much. It envelops and smother him. He is lost in it, and it acts as an extinguisher to his limited ideas.

On the other hand we sometimes make the "misfit" of teaching the more advanced child that which should be the portion of the primary learner. We give him, as it were, a garment of learning which is so much too scant that it will not meet around him. There is neither comfort nor fitness in wearing it. If he succeeds in crowding himself into it, it is only to split its seams and to burst it at the elbows. It is of no credit to anybody concerned with it.—*S. S. Times.*

THE CHILDREN AT CHURCH.

A great many of them never go to church at all; as many more seldom go; and very few comparatively are regular attendants. This would probably be the testimony of most of the pastors of our Churches, if they spoke from their own observation and experience. And this, let it be observed, is the case in regard to the children of our Protestant population, and is also true to a very great degree of our Sabbath-school children. Such a condition of affairs is worthy of the deepest regret, and demands the attention of all who are interested in the prosperity of the Church and the conversion of souls.

The shallowest of all reasons given for this non-attendance of the children upon the public worship of the sanctuary is, that the preaching does not interest the children—that it is designed for the older people. But the sermon is not the whole of the service. There is the prayer, in which every wise minister ought to specially remember the children; there is the reading of God's Word, which is so well calculated to instruct and bless both the old and the young; there is the singing, which ought to be of interest to all; so that, with the most ordinary preaching, the house of divine worship would seem to present attractions for all. Nevertheless, whether the minister preaches special sermons to the children, or not, it is clear that he ought often to notice them in his discourse, and by anecdote or illustration call their attention to some point that may come within the range of their understandings. The driest sermon will in this way present something to the minds of the young which may be of lasting profit to them.

Another vain delusion, which some people fall into, is, that children get about all they need of religious instruction in the Sabbath-school. If all the teachers were what they ought to be, if the lessons had point and pith and vitality, and if there were more of sound, fundamental Gospel truth, as well as Bible geography and moral illustrations, there would be more force to the suggestion. But the sad fact is apparent, that a child can go to some Sabbath-schools for a good while and then not seem to know much about the Gospel or the doctrines of the Word of God.

Admitting the existence of the difficulty to which attention is called, the methods of removing it may well be considered. And, first of all, the preacher should show that he has an interest in the children; and this he can do in many ways besides remembering them in his public prayers and in his sermons. He can notice them on the street, and at their homes, and wherever he may meet them.

Beyond all that the pastor can do there will still be needed the influence of parents and those who have the care of children. If the adult members of our families reverence as they should the place of prayer, speak kindly of the minister, and strive to profit by what is preached; if they are as regular and self-denying in their attendance upon divine worship as they are in their attention to business; if the children were given to understand that the Sabbath preaching service is to be participated in with the same regularity and promptness as the Sabbath dinners; if these things were observed, conscientiously and perseveringly, a change for the better would be speedily realized.

Again, if the superintendent and teachers will do what they easily may a very large proportion of the children of any Sabbath-school may be induced to attend at least one preaching service, each Sabbath. Some of the children's parents never go to church, but they would have no objection to the children going, provided they could be well cared for; and some arrangements ought to be made by every Church by which such children can have seats and watch-care in the house of God. There are many good ministers who are preaching to thin houses, whose hearts might be made glad by a rapid increase in their congregations if they would only use these simple means. Try them, brethren; and when the lambs of the flock gather about the undershepherd let him be sure that some portions of the choicest food be placed within reach of the little ones.—*Congregationalist*

SAGACITY OF A HORSE.

The following extraordinary story of equine intelligence and fidelity is taken from Thompson's "History of Montpelier."

"Not far from the year 1806, Mr. Charles Stevens, who lived on East Hill, made a horse-back journey to Massachusetts, passing down on his way from home, over the high bridge, across the Winooski, about three-fourths of a mile below Daggett's Mills Village. During his absence the bridge had been stripped of all the plank, preparatory to replanking, or putting in some new string-pieces. While the bridge was in this dismantled condition (which condition was wholly unknown and unsuspected by Mr. Stevens), he reached home, on his return from his journey, at a late hour on an unusually dark night, totally unconscious that he had passed through any peril in passing over the river, which was only a mile or two from his house.

"Which way did you come?" asked his family.

"The way I went, of course."

"No, you couldn't; for the river is roaring high, and there is not a single plank on the bridge."

"Yes, I did come the same way, and over the same bridge; and you can't beat me out of it."

"Here was a complete issue; and neither party being in the least disposed to yield, they the next morning, in company with a neighbor—a Mr. Parker—repaired to the bridge, and, to their amazement, discovered by the tracks on the ground, and the calk-marks of the animal's shoes on the timber, that the horse, after selecting the broadest-hewn string-piece, had mounted it, and passed so quietly and safely over it to the other side, that the rider was not made aware, in the great darkness of the night, that he was undergoing the dangerous transit."

SPELLING.

The recent revival of spelling matches naturally leads to enquiries concerning the best methods of conducting the exercise of spelling in schools, and the relative amount of time that should be devoted to it, in the different grades.

We shall first speak of methods of study. Much time is lost, we believe, in the preparation of the spelling lessons. The study for a given lesson should be, mostly, upon the words which the pupil cannot spell correctly, when he begins the lesson. Some test to determine the unknown words should evidently be given. When the pupil takes his book in hand and scans the columns one after the other, in a mechanical way, he silently, or otherwise, spells all the words, those which he can already correctly spell as well as those which he cannot. Now he should concentrate his study upon the words upon which he is at fault. How is the pupil to know which these words are? With his eye upon the printed page, he cannot positively tell. If he tries to test himself by catching the word, then "looking off," it by no means assures him. The test should be given by the teacher, or under the direction

of the teacher, before the lesson is studied at all by the pupil. The "missed" words determined, the pupil may then devote his time for the lesson upon those alone. There are several ways of testing the pupil's knowledge of the lesson before he studies it, which may be adopted according to circumstances. The teacher has not time, ordinarily, to test the pupil upon the words of the lesson, in advance of study upon the same. But they may be tried upon oral spelling by "pairing off," the pupils pronouncing and spelling to each other all the words of the lesson, marking those that are missed. The pupils thus ascertain what words they need to study. Unless a pupil is beyond where he ought to be in his spelling book, there will ordinarily be less than a quarter of the words which he cannot spell to begin with. If his list for study is reduced to these, he will be much more ready to master the smaller list, than as though the whole lesson was before him for study. Sometimes a word may be correctly spelled by guessing; to avoid this, the lesson should be spelled twice over, by which means the pupil's knowledge will be pretty thoroughly sifted.

The test by writing the words is better than the oral one, if time will permit its practice. The teacher cannot be expected to look over all the lists to mark misspelled words; but the pupils can look over each other's work, referring to the spelling book for correction. This, too, is a valuable exercise for them, being, in fact, an effective mode of study.

If there is any one at home to assist the learner by pronouncing the words either for oral or written spelling, it will be a great help to both pupil and teacher. There is no lesson more easily managed at home than the spelling. It requires no explanation, and is not a severe mental tax upon the pupil. Where the practice of home study is required, by all means let the spelling lesson receive attention.

In respect to the methods of studying the words, we may say, that what is the best for one class of minds may not be so for another. Some learn anything quickly and permanently by repetition, without much assistance from the eye. Others look upon words, and even sentences, as pictures; and if one of the details is wrong, they instantly see it, without any conscious spelling of the words. We believe the training of the eye to be an important adjunct in learning to spell. Those whose eye is quick and accurate will unconsciously learn spelling in ordinary reading. We believe that most commentators look at words as pictures, intently detecting a misspelling. We frequently hear the best spellers say that they know just how the word looks on the page of the spelling-book where it occurs. While some, then, will learn the words more readily by repeating the letters which compose them, others will do much better for themselves by looking at the word, the repetition of the letters being a minor part. Those who learn spelling in this way learn it for writing, the only way in which it is of practical value. It is the opinion of the writer that the word printed or written, as it addresses the eye, should be before the pupil as much as possible. Words often missed should be written again and again. They should be upon the black-board, not the incorrect spelling which we sometimes see, but correctly spelled, till the form of the word is indelibly impressed upon the pupil's mind.—*N. E. Educational Journal.*

SELECTIONS.

—If our merchants and bankers and legislators had all been taught by parents and Sabbath-school teachers in their boyhood to avoid the sin of lying under all circumstances, and to be as afraid to steal a penny as they would to put their hand in a lion's mouth, we would not hear of so many widows and orphans being defrauded, and witness so many terrible downfalls.

—He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping. Therefore, be sure you look at that. And in the next place look at your health; and if you have it praise God, and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of, a blessing that money cannot buy, therefore value it, and be thankful for it.—*Izaak Walton.*

—A Bible collector, in giving his view upon this subject, sent to the Bible secretaries the following illustration: "When I was in Caledonia, Racine County, this summer, I called upon a man for his contribution to the Bible cause. He is not a wealthy man. He does his own work on the farm. He looked over his books, and said his contribution would be seventy dollars. I asked him 'Why this remarkable benevolence?' He said, 'Six years ago I felt I was not giving enough to the Lord, so I resolved to give in proportion to His blessings, and I hit upon this plan: I will give five cents for every bushel of wheat I raise, three for every bushel of oats, barley, etc., that I sell. The first year I gave twenty dollars, the second thirty-five, the third forty-seven, the fourth forty-nine, the fifth fifty-

nine, and this year my Bible contribution is seventy dollars. For twenty years previous, my doctor's bills had not been less than twenty dollars a year, but for the last six years they have not exceeded two dollars a year. I tell you 'There is that scattereth and yet increaseth,' and 'The liberal soul shall be made fat.' How many will follow this man's example?"

EARLY POVERTY A BLESSING.—An English judge being asked what contributed most to success at the bar, replied: "Some succeed by great talent, some by the influence of friends, some by a miracle, but the majority by commencing without a shilling."

HOW TO BECOME HAPPY.—Many young persons are ever thinking over new ways of adding to their pleasures. They always look for chances for more "fun," more joy. Once there was a wealthy and powerful king, full of care, and very unhappy. He heard of a man famed for his wisdom and piety, and found him in a cave on the borders of the wilderness. "Holy man," said the king, "I come to learn how I may be happy." Without making a reply, the wise man led the king over a rough path, till he brought him in front of a high rock, on the top of which an eagle had built her nest. "Why has the eagle built her nest yonder?" "Doubtless," answered the king, "that it may be out of danger." "Then imitate the bird," said the wise man "build thy home in heaven, and thou shalt then have peace and happiness."

DEBT.—The *Christian at Work* closes a whole some homily as follows:—Debt: there is no worse demoralizer of character. The sad records of defaulting, embezzling and dishonest failures which we met with so constantly in the daily press, are often, indeed most frequently, the result of the demoralization of debt, and consequent desperate efforts at extrication. The financial props have given away. The little debt, which at first was small as a grain of mustard seed, like the rolling snow-ball, has gathered weight and multiplied itself a thousandfold. And still it grows, and like the fabulous hydra which Hercules was sent to kill, you no sooner strike off one head than two shoot up in its place. The struggle is severe, but in the end decisive; either confession is made of a hopeless bankruptcy which might and should have been avoided, or integrity is sacrificed to the temptation of the moment. Debt ruins as many households, and destroys as many fine characters as rum; it is the devil's mortgage on the soul, and he is always ready to foreclose.

A GOOD SUGGESTION.—The *Congregationalist* says: Very many members of churches are kept from attendance upon prayer-meetings by age or sickness, or by the care of the sick, or by inability to go abroad in severe weather, or in the evening, or by distance from the place of meeting. Some of these causes operate most powerfully at this season of the year. Might it not be well if the appointment for the prayer-meeting were an appointment also for a concert of prayer on the part of those who cannot attend the meeting? Let them be invited to observe the time, or some part of it, at their homes. This would be a coming as agreeing together within the bounds of the Master's promise. It would be a benefit to those that are kept at their homes, by causing them to feel that the appointment makes some call upon them; and by the interruption which the return of the hour would bring to the course of other thoughts. And what would not be least, it might give to many warm-hearted Christians the pleasure of having this further share in what is done for the advancement of the cause they love.

BLANK CHECKS.—Suppose some friend of ours, whose wealth is known to be practically unlimited, should declare his readiness and willingness to supply all our wants. Suppose he should put into our hand a book of "checks," all signed by his own hand, and the amounts left blank, for us to fill up in any need, with such sums as will meet every possible exigency. Suppose we tell our kindred and acquaintances what a friend we have, and how richly provided we are for every strait. And then, suppose we go about half-starved, groaning with leanness and faintness, or only half-dressed, in thin rags, and the shame of our nakedness bowing us down to the ground. Would not those who knew us be moved with wonder and doubt? Would not one of them say to us: "I thought the great banker had undertaken to feed and clothe you; is this the best he does for you? His offer could not have been very sincere. His words were large, but they do not seem to have meant much." How such a demonstration on our part would shame the truth and generosity of our friend. Or, if we acknowledge that we did not use the "checks," and did not more than half believe they would be honored, how the confession would shame our own littleness and meanness of confidence in our benefactor! "Lord, increase our faith!" A large expectation will prepare us to receive a large blessing. It will affect our desires. It will control our working. It will shape our plans. It will stimulate our importunity, and especially will it honor God.—*Rev. A. L. Stone, D. D.*