

rule for the subject, but merely to encourage discussion. Following the old proverb that two heads are better than

one, surely the ideas of a number will be given to aid the teachers gathered here.

## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MORALS

By W. A. McIntyre.

The responsibility of the school in this matter is very great. It must give instruction, and very careful instruction, because ideals of conduct are so varied; it must supply motive, because knowledge alone does not always ensure right performance; and it must provide opportunity for right action, because impression is perfected only in expression, and because the thing done rather than the thing talked about is what becomes part of the life.

The instruction will cover the whole field of duty. It will be suited to age and conditions. It will be given in a language and according to a method that appeals to the pupils of the various grades. It will be incidental always, and direct and systematic on occasions; that is, the experiences of each day will furnish an opportunity for the presentation of some moral truth, and in addition to this there will be formal lessons according to a prearranged and carefully planned system. In other words, the teacher will follow the same plan of procedure in discussing moral health as she does in discussing physical health or hygiene. But ideals of behavior are established in the minds of children not through instruction alone. The teacher's example, her attitude in dealing with offences, or in referring to people and their actions, their choice of memory gems, her teaching of maxims of behavior, her choice of music, art and literature, her care of the grounds and building, her manner of conducting lessons, her earnestness, fidelity and thoroughness—all these and a thousand other things set up ideals of action, so that the teaching of morals is not the simple little trick it is sometimes thought to be. It is the life of the school, as illustrated in its spirit, its

methods and its personalities that is important.

This fact explains why the word "motive" was used. It is necessary that feeling accompany instruction. When a teacher in her life illustrates the truth she is endeavoring to impress, it is not surprising if pupils imitate her actions, but if precept and life are not in accord, the precept is forgotten. In a secondary sense biography, history, literature all have a living power. Formal instruction, didactic talks and even reading of sacred Scripture may often have little power to modify conduct. It depends so much upon the teacher, her earnestness, enthusiasm and sympathy. To put it in a word, instruction to be of value must be living. Dogma may produce formal mechanical obedience of a kind, but it will not develop that glad, free and willing action which is the essence of good conduct.

But instruction, even if given in the right spirit, must be accompanied and followed by right action. Impression is perfected in expression. Even Squeers understood the first principle of teaching when he said, "First boy, spell botany." Then after the spelling "b-o-t, bot; t-i-n, tin; n-e-y, ney," he said, "Now, go weed the garden." It is the honesty in the daily lessons that counts; it is the courtesy in the ordinary tasks that is remembered; it is the cleanliness of the floor and desks that is significant. It is not the teaching of the school, but the actual living that tells. Even where there is little instruction, the practice may be excellent. It is the practice which is essential.

And so it comes to this, that a little school may be a small heaven on earth if teacher and pupils live in sweet harmony, following the Golden Rule.