

perience the children are made accustomed to law, to order, and are taught what are called the virtues of punctuality, and silence, and obedience. This may be readily admitted; but punctuality, silence, and obedience are not, necessarily, virtues at all. At best they are expedients whose use may spring from evil motives, as well as from good. They do not indicate character, nor does their possession assure good conduct in other directions. I do not think it can be denied that the ordinary school discipline, even if it is of a poor sort, is of great value; but, nevertheless, it is inadequate for the cultivation of character.

Another class go to the other extreme, and claim that definite moral instruction should constitute part of the daily school curriculum, that children should be given regular lessons in morals, as in geography and arithmetic, in order that they may be made intelligent upon ethical questions as they are upon other questions. This, undoubtedly, has value. Intelligence upon moral questions is an excellent thing, but it does not make character. We have been accustomed to rely too much upon definite technical instruction in morals. Preachment is not nearly so instrumental in training character as many think; indeed, I believe that the ordinary school discipline and curriculum are worth more in training character than specific moral instruction.

While such instruction, wisely given, has great value, it is hazardous to require the average teacher to give frequent lessons of an ethical sort, and at any rate, such instruction is only of partial value. At its best, it can only affect the externals of conduct—what people call morals.

A very wide distinction should be made between morals and character. Morals are superficial; character is

fundamental. Many bad people have excellent morals. The genesis and evolution of morals are interesting. As everybody knows, morals—mores—are simply manners, conduct—are necessarily superficial, and change from time to time, and from place to place.

Good people in different ages and in different localities have had totally different standards of morals. The excellence of morals, as commonly viewed, depends upon their conformity to accepted standards. These standards are, in part, the product of the experience of the ages by which men have learned what course of conduct most tends to peace and general comfort. But, in part, morals depend upon existing conventionalities, ephemeral, often absurd. Our fathers did many things which we should regard as immoral. We do many things which they would have regarded as immoral, without in either case violating the prevailing standard. We never regard the standard of morals as fixed, if we are thoughtful, and the good are quite as apt to be violators of old standards and introducers of new, as the bad.

It is, doubtless, well that people conform to prevailing moral standards if they have no better ones, but it is not enough; character is needed. Character is fundamental, self-directing, self-acting, controlled from within. Morals are external, obeying extraneous laws, changeable, expedient, conventional. Morals include but a part of life; character, the whole. It is all inclusive, all extensive. The perfection of morals is complete conformity to external standards, avoidance of criticism and friction. The perfection of character is inability to do what is wrong, which in God or man is not a limitation, but an evidence of power. Wrong is a weakening and disintegrating force, like disease. The strong character moves.