

faculty has come into operation, and this happens certainly in the third year, and often earlier. Or, if we go on to the time when the notion of property has first got a lodgment in the mind, we may meet with a pertinent instance of the vivacity of the conceptive power, when the little stickler for its rights finds its own horse or doll in its brother's or sister's hand, and then running to find brother's or sister's horse or doll, eagerly discusses the question of *meum* and *tuum*, and notwithstanding the close resemblance of the two subjects of debate, fixes its grasp upon the genuine and real *meum*. That is to say, this same lisping assertor of its rights, has retained in its brain a picture of its plaything so exact and particular that it serves it at any time as a *tally* by which it may recover the archetypic. Again, take the instance of a child of three years old, and let it be one of only ordinary intelligence. Accustomed only to the objects of an inland and rural home, he accompanied his mamma, let us suppose, a year ago, to a watering place. Then at different times, during the intervening months, the striking objects of that now world have been recalled to his recollection in vivid language; and now, if he be questioned concerning those objects, and many others therewith associated, although the questions are varied as much as we please in phraseology, and although now points of view are taken, he will convince his catechist that there is present to his mind's eye a not indistinct set of pictures of the sea in its changing aspects—of the baths—of the buildings—of the equipages—of the downs. Or, let him be shown unexpectedly, a view of the pavilion, or of the chain pier, and his instantaneous recognition of them will make it unquestionable that the things seen so long ago exist still by their images in his mind.

But we need not hold on in this strain. This *conceptive* is the first purely mental power of which we are conscious, and it is evidently fed and sustained by the *perceptive*. And how can the instrumentality of parents and teachers be brought to bear with the greatest effect on the expansion and development of this power of the mind, how but by presenting to the various senses their appropriate food, and thus strengthening them by exercise. The cultivation of the various senses we shall take up in our next.

MORAL EDUCATION—WHAT IS IT? HOW GREAT ITS IMPORTANCE!

It is much to be feared that many use these words, and write and speak on the subject of Moral Education, who neither understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm. The term moral, like a great many others in the English language, is susceptible of no small diversity of meaning, and in this have not a few sheltered themselves, contending most earnestly for moral education, whilst they are all the while attaching their own acceptance to the words. We all know what is generally understood by a man of good moral character,—that it just means a person of sobriety, of justice, of correct and honourable dealing with his fellow-creatures, without the least allusion to the motives by which he is animated, or to the end he has in view in the conduct he is pursuing; or, if these are referred to, it is but too manifest that they are purely of a selfish, or secular, or worldly character. In the same sense is the term moral employed by not a few in connection with education. They are vehement in their support of moral education, but it is plain that all they mean by it is that the children be encouraged to speak the truth, or be punished for telling lies, because, in the

one case, it is manly and creditable, and, in the other, cowardly and discreditable. Others, again, go a step farther on the matter of moral education. They insist upon the daily reading of the Sacred Scriptures in school, but not a word of comment by way of explanation or enforcement is to be offered, though in every other department or branch of study, not a sentence is passed over without every effort being made to bring it down to the level of the meanest intellect. Not an attempt is to be made in the daily intercourse between teacher and taught, or between the scholars themselves, to reduce the precepts of the Bible to practice, either in the stimulating to duty or in the deterring from crime. Should any child be detected in telling a glaring falsehood, not an allusion can be made to the awful judgment inflicted on Ananias and Sapphira, even though that thrilling narrative formed part of the chapter read in the morning. Such a course we regard as little else than a mockery of the Sacred Scriptures. It is like the soldier who equips himself with his furnished arms for the battle, and, after he has faced the enemy, refuses to use them. At all events, if it can be said that such children receive moral instruction in school, it surely never can be said that they receive moral education.

We take the word moral in its highest and most important sense, as referring to all those duties which spring from our relationship to God and to one another, and as discharging these duties out of love to our Creator and Saviour-God. When applied to education it just means the drawing out, the developing and strengthening by exercise of our moral sense, and this is done by bowing to its authority and complying with its requirements. That all have a conscience possessed of certain characteristics or properties, just as all have an intellect possessed of certain powers or faculties, and that this conscience is susceptible of immense improvement, of an ever increasing sensibility, are truths questioned by none. But this vicegerent of Divinity, as the Moral Governor of the Universe, this umpire of right and wrong in every one's breast, does not constitute an infallible directory to our moral nature. Like every other part of our being, it has shared in that dread and desolating catastrophe which has befallen the species, and neither its own efforts nor the auxiliaries of nature or Providence can restore it to its pristine authority and dignity. It needs illumination, it needs unerring direction, and none but the Lord of the conscience is capable of imparting either the one or the other; and this he has actually done in his own oracles; hence designated the only infallible standard of faith and morals. That these sacred oracles may serve the end intended they must be used in school—not read merely—but used by reducing their precepts to practice in the intercourse maintained between teacher and taught, and between the taught themselves, by constituting them the first and the last standard of appeal in all matters appertaining to the organization and government of the whole school establishment, as well as by plying the scholars with their motives to diligence and good conduct. By such appliances, continuously and perseveringly employed, the conscience of the young will be drawn out, enlarged and rendered increasingly sensitive. And this is what we consider moral education. We have no sympathy with those who seem to imagine that all that is necessary is the mere reading of the Sacred Scriptures in school without note or comment, or the slightest allusion to its truths or precepts. Better, infinitely better, that there be even this recognition of the Divine Word than none at all:—it is but a rightful act of homage to Him who is the supreme Lord of the conscience, and to whom both