

there as I have bid you, or"—but before the alternative was enunciated, the refractory Sandy had made a movement, and we could hear teacher and pupil pass to the front amid the continued silence of the school.

"He'll manage," I then overheard my mother say, as seemingly recollecting herself, she rapped at the door for the second time.

The introduction which followed was a very short one, as far as I was concerned. Would that all such introductions were as short; for of all agonies the teacher has to undergo at the hands of the parent, perhaps none is more acute than the process of having the virtues of the pupil catalogued in the presence of the parent, pupil and teacher within the precincts of the school building, before the pupil has had any opportunity of showing how far he or she deserves or does not deserve the praise. How easy it is for a vice to be venerated as a virtue, no one knows so well as the teacher who has to listen to the rigmarole of the indulgent parent. Even the politician is unable to make the worse appear the better reason with such a show of candour to his constituents, as the mother does when she presents any of her brood to the teacher, or defends them from his disciplinary verdicts.

"My boy can do no harm, unless in a kind of a thoughtless way, and you really must excuse him this time," is the verdict of nearly every parent in the land, male or female.

"My daughter may be heedless at times, but she is apt to learn and is of a kind heart," is the theory that is ever greeting the ear of the teacher.

Of course there are sensible parents who do discern the moral idiosyncracies of their offspring readily enough, but how many of them are willing to confess to others the existence of such. To do so seems to be a kind of "want of confidence motion" in themselves. It is not necessary to speak the truth at all times, especially about one's own. There may be something in the law of hereditary after all; and if there be, it would be simply suicidal for one to condemn one's own.

Nor is it different with the parent's judgment about the intellectual capacities of their children. If no parent has ever confessed to a teacher that his or her child is deficient morally, very few have been brought to declare that intellectual inferiority has ever been the fruit of their loins. In my long experience as a teacher, only one gentleman ever confessed to such intellectual inferiority in those of his own household, and it was wrung from him after years of deferred expectation that his son would come to something in my hands.