

Education as a Moral Discipline.

BY REV. W. C. WILKINSON, D.D.

It is a mooted question how early it is best to begin the education of a child. I mean, of course, his education with books. His education, in one sense, begins the moment he utters his first faint cry of self-announcement, proclaiming that a man is born into the world. From that time forward the process of education for the child goes on without ceasing. We cannot help ourselves about this. But it is a matter upon which we as parents may exercise our discretion—at how tender an age we will begin the work of formal education.

There are two heresies of extreme doctrine on this subject, which are about equally pernicious. We shall be safest in the middle. Neither too early, (it endangers the child's bodily health,) nor too late, (it endangers his health of mind and soul.) On the whole the heresy of too late is just now the stronger. Children run too long like colts. If they could be kept running thus with no effect but upon their physical natures, there might be some gain, and there would be little loss. No loss, perhaps, except loss of time. The difficulty is that boys sometimes become not only physical but moral colts. Moral colthood is very apt to keep full step with physical. How to tame the moral colthood of children—or, better, how to keep it from needing taming, that is, how to keep it down altogether—is a great problem. I propose education as one fruitful expedient.

I believe it is very frequently the case that the difference between a fast young man, or—what one hates even to write, the idea is so disgusting—a fast boy, and a good, pure, dutiful youth, the rarest and loveliest product of society: the difference between these intense contrasts in life is made by the simple fact of wrong mental training, or total want of all mental training for the one, and right mental training for the other.

The lusty strength of young life must be put to some use. There it is, dancing and leaping along the veins. It will be used. If you do not set it to work it will set itself to work. And always to some

questionable work. Harness it and drive it; gently, but drive it. Now the brain will take the overplus of vitality in youth that cries out for some employment, the brain will take this and use it. The brain will use it to some advantage, but the greatest advantage will be that it is *used*, that is, disposed of. The chief problem is to get it safely disposed of.

If your boy has his wanton force of lusty blood all at his own disposal, it would be contrary to nature but he should put some of it to the ill-use of various pranks, vexatious to you as well as injurious to him and to others. Take your son before this habit in him gets head. Send him to school, or in some other way set his *brain* to the task of drawing out his too much animalism. That excess of animal life is food and fatness for the brain. What he needs is *toning down*. Ten to one his brain is his best disciplinarian. *Task* him a little. You will see the civilizing, the humanizing effect of education upon him almost immediately. But don't put it off too long.

Morbid Religious Phrases.

JOHN FOSTER wrote a famous essay on the "Aversion of Men of taste to Evangelical Religion." We wish modern Christians would read it through, and purify their daily conversation from vulgar commonplaces. There are phrases and modes of speech which ought not to be tolerated any longer. If, for example, we ask Mr. Brown which chapel he attends, he replies that he "sits under the Rev. Jonah Nervous." As Mr. Nervous is a restless, fidgety person, Mr. Brown's position "under" him must sometimes be very uneasy. We are also surprised that Mr. Brown should be willing to be "sat upon." When Mrs. Flighty wishes to inform us of her reason for leaving Adullum Chapel for Zora Tabernacle, she explains that she could not get any "food" at Adullum, whereas at Zora she banquets on "fat things," which probably explains her physical magnitude and wellknown sleepiness. On some placards we read, "Come and hear the simple Gospel preached." What is this simple Gospel? Is