

This being the case, the wholesale pouring in of the most useful knowledge in a class is of little service, unless wise and loving care, following personal study of idiosyncracies, be given to each.

This training, the work of years, must begin early, and probably in its first stages will take such form as the following:—Instead of saying continually, "Don't do that," or "You will be punished if you do that," the parent or teacher will say, "Ought you to do that?" "Is it right to say or do this?" Punishments will of course always be a part of education. But our views is that if punishments or rewards are held out as sanctions of conduct, they will produce a very spurious morality, and the moral sense will never strengthen. Hard as it may be, and baffled as we shall be by some peculiar children, the training from the first of the young heart to look at actions in the light of right and wrong before doing them, and indignantly to reject those condemned by conscience, must have most beneficial results in the majority of cases. [See Note at end.]

Educated parents who reflect, will more or less act on this principle; but impulsive, and impatient, and unconscientious ones, will take the old-fashioned and less troublesome plan of simply pouring in orders into the almost unconscious ears of children, and freely administering punishments, if they are broken; or perhaps which is almost worse, taking no notice, and thus actually training the young in ways of lawless disobedience.

The hard-worked poor, with their overwhelming domestic and family burdens, can scarcely be expected to adopt or act on the principles advocated, and it will then devolve on teachers in day and Sunday-schools, and on the clergy to take up the work of discipline. That it is harder to do this in schools than in the house, is clear, for the teacher has but a limited portion of the child's time at his disposal, and has generally to contend moreover with an exactly opposite system of home influence. But it must be attempted, and by God's blessing can be hopefully undertaken, we believe.

II. We have space only to give slight hints on the way in which it seems to us, an improvement in this direction might be introduced in parochial teaching. First, unity of aim will be attained if the clergyman gathers round him often, as so many do, all his teachers, both of daily and Sunday-schools, and impresses on them the vital importance of developing the slumbering conscience, and drawing out and strengthening the will towards the law of duty. He may possibly be moved to say—"To succeed in making a boy or girl, under the blessing of God, set up duty on the throne of his heart, will be of more use to him than to enable him to pass a hundred examinations." To show him Jesus Christ as our example in doing the will of God, and to teach him every day to say, "would He do this? If not I shan't do it?" This again, the parish clergyman will perhaps put before his assembled teachers as the first law of practical Christian education.

And then as the principle here advocated will have to be worked out in a systematic and patient way—what system or plan, it may be asked, will best enable pastor and teachers to carry out this work? We answer fearlessly—the Church Catechism, loyally and sensibly used. How nobly does it lend itself to such a purpose. First, the great assurance that the young soldier is, indeed, one of God's family, with all the Father's love and grace secured to him, and the Father's eye upon him in loving watchfulness always. Secondly, the child's pledge or promise of a life of holy choice, rejecting all evil things, choosing to do all that is directed by his Father. Then—delighted combination of grace and free resolution—"By God's help to I will." A motto by the way, worthy of being printed on the page of every child's Prayer-book in letters of gold.

And after this introduction, how well the whole system of this brief formulary lends itself to our course of will-training? *The Faith*, historical and doctrinal, gathered from the Bible and so plainly worded, so easy to grasp, so free from technicalities and controversies, all and no more than is necessary for the youthful soldier, to live and fight by, and at last to die by. The law of *Duty*, first to God, and then to self, and to others, worked out so admirably in detail, and lending itself to application to every action of life. *The Helps*, prayer and Sacraments, on the meaning and necessity of each of which so much can be said year after year as the young mind opens, and the conflict develops between the higher and the lower will. The hearty use of the Church Catechism as the Church's manual for training the free and intelligent will of her children, cannot, we believe, be too strongly urged. The teaching of its words and of its simple and obvious literal meaning, will be the office of Sunday-school teachers, and those who take classes in the day school. The New Testament history will crystallise about the nucleus of its creed. Then the deeper meaning, the daily application, the working out of motive, vow, faith, duty, helps, in a hundred ways, will be the happy office of the clergyman in his school classes and his Church catechising, year after year.

Such teaching will never grow stale, and instead of burdening the memory with hundreds of dates and minute facts to be reproduced at an examination, the tendency of such teaching will be to fix attention on great principles, and to draw out fervent wishes, and to develop humility for many faults. The close contact with daily life of the laws of duty when worked out in detail, will make the teaching always fresh. And the little ones will not be half so likely to fall asleep when their clergyman walks up and down showing them how they can do their duty to God in the nursery, and their duty to their neighbour at their games and lessons, as if the subject was the falling of the walls of Jericho, or the sun standing still on Gibeon, thousands of years before they were born.

Nothing is intended in the text to be said against old-fashioned doctrine of teaching children to obey. Obedience and truth are the prime moral duties of the young. But in the discipline of obedience two things should be borne in mind:—

(1.) Every child should be taught as soon as possible to distinguish between moral great duties and those small minor matters such as habits of order, neatness, punctuality, cleanliness, refinement of speech, and so forth: attention to which must be developed by the giving of rules, and obedience to orders.

To put moral duties, such as those given in "My Duty to God" and "My Duty to My Neighbour," on the same level with the former, by making all alike simple matters of command, is a grave error.

(2.) Obedience to the higher moral law should be developed through obedience to the earthly parent or teacher; but every effort should, from the beginning, be made to shift as soon as possible the authority from the external to the internal rule. Moreover, we would go farther and add that where a child is gentle, and loving, and devoted to a parent, the obedience to his will, which naturally flows from such a loving disposition, should be carefully used as a means of introducing the idea of relation to a yet more tender Parent, the Lord Himself; and as John the Baptist gladly transferred the allegiance of his disciples to one greater than he, so the wise parent will aim at guiding the filial spirit towards that greater Parent who will be by His children's side when the earthly father is no longer near to exercise the constraining influence of his presence.

### LENT IS AT HAND; HOW SHALL WE USE IT?

Lent offers a mode of complying with the precept "Grow in grace." The object of Lent, therefore, is discipline, the acquiring and strengthening of Christian graces.

This, however, can be only through more frequent and more earnest use of all "the means of grace," worship, sacrament, meditation, confession, intercession, alms, and works of charity.

But for such increased use of means, more time is, of course, required; and, more time for religious uses involves taking time from worldly uses.

The first essential condition of using Lent aright is to have redeemed an amount of time in some quarter. And there is not the least question as to where we should begin this work of "redeeming the time." The time usually given to amusements and entertainments is naturally the first to be redeemed from the lower use to the higher. We may also with obvious fitness take for this higher use the time usually given to such businesses and affairs as are not limited to any particular time, but which may be done at convenience; and, in short, we should redeem all time but that which is necessary to the due performance of the duties of our vocations. The ordinary domestic cares and the occupations which are the mode of livelihood, are not expected to be set aside or neglected; nevertheless, these may often be made less exacting.

But, when in such ways time has been redeemed, special care is to be taken to appropriate such a time wholly to religious uses. It were idle, if not mischievous, to take time from our vocations and use it in our avocations. No one is justified in making Lent a secular convenience, a time for beginning or finishing the various articles of fancy work long had in contemplation. Let the sole object of such "redeeming the time" be in order to begin or carry on some definite religious work, and make some personal advance in religious culture by reading and study or by the establishment of more effective habits of piety. Especially should Lent be used to complete those plans of moral improvement undertaken in the past, but left unfinished; as well as to renew old social ties that have nearly perished by neglect. And this latter, not for the sake of pleasure, but "to do good unto all," thus letting our "light shine."

The second essential of using Lent aright is to have "redeemed" an amount of money, so that the increase of subjective piety may have the means of outward expression. More prayers involve more alms, if we would have our religion symmetrical. Prayers and alms should be inseparable and always in direct proportion, not reciprocal. Neither of these may be substituted for the other. We must not try to make "the calves of our lips" do duty in the way of sacrifice for the calves of the flock. But to use Lent for the purpose of earning money would be to sacrifice its first essential, the redeeming of time. The only alternative is that the redeeming of money in Lent is to be by saving money. And the obvious way that this may be done is by the foregoing of expensive entertainments and indulgences of appetite and fancy. But the money thus redeemed must be conscientiously devoted to religious uses. Obviously there can be no religious benefit derived by any self-denial which redeems money from one sensuous indulgence, only to spend it on another.

The great sin of the age, the sin of which we are all guilty in one way or another, and for which we all suffer in greater or less degree, is the sin of excess, intemperance. Over-work and over-indulgence are the complementary forms of this universal sin of excess. Lent is our opportunity to combat successfully with "the sin which does so easily beset us." Lent comes to those of us wholly immersed in "the cares of this life," as well as to those wholly absorbed in the pleasures of sense and taste, repeating afresh the warning and the precept: "The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness."—*The Church Helper, Mich.*

How ludicrous are some of our monumental epitaphs. As if the story of a life could be chiselled by the stone-cutter on the side of a marble slab!