

3. THE POLICY OF HONESTY.

When an expression let fall by some writer in a moment of happy inspiration so accords with the convictions of men that its sentiment receives unanimous assent, it is called a proverb, and its very repetition henceforward has the force of unanswerable argument. Judged by the frequency of its repetition what proverb contains a truth more generally accepted than "Honesty is the best policy?" While we all must agree that it is not the highest motive to present to the mind of a youth, to show him not that dishonesty is wicked, a *heinous sin*, for which the sinner will be held strictly accountable, but that it is simply inexpedient and foolish still in seeking for means by which the feet of childhood and youth may be placed in the right path, the motive of expediency is by no means to be disregarded.

In a worldly and selfish sense it is politic, it is wise and more than this, it is the most politic and the wisest thing in the world for one to be strictly and unswervingly honest.

In society the forger, the counterfeiter, the clerk who robs his master's till, is a *fool* not less than a criminal, and it is the dictate of the plainest common sense as certainly as it is the injunction of the moral law to be honest, watched or unwatched, in public or in secret. We propose in a few simple and direct words to apply what has thus far been said to the case of pupils in school. There are among students, as everybody knows, manifold opportunities and frequent and strong temptations to dishonesty. No teacher with any skill in reading human nature can meet his class in the recitation room for a month or even a shorter period, without mentally dividing them into three classes.

1. Those who are everywhere and always honest.
2. Those who will cheat if the temptation is strong and the opportunity favours.
3. Those who will cheat *whenever they get a chance*.

Happy the Instructor who finds among his pupils so many of the first class, those who disdain to accept assistance by a school mate's whispered word, who scorn to sneak into a rank upon the teacher's record which they do not deserve, that the low deceiver who takes advantage of a back seat to recite slyly from the book, who smuggles a note book into the examination and shines by virtue of plumes which are not borrowed, but stolen, shall find the moral atmosphere *too hot for him*, and be compelled per force to be as honest as his neighbours. Unhappy he who makes the sad discovery that every recitation furnishes a new scene for the exhibition of juvenile depravity: that the honesty of his scholars is no higher than the desk, no broader than the backs of the pupils who sit in front, and no longer than the teacher's short eyesight.

Much of the prevalent dishonesty in school is hereditary, traditional, an evil bequest from former and less enlightened generations. In olden times, when the so called teacher was often an ignorant and brutal tyrant, it is easy to see how the relation between the pedagogue and his pupils was naturally that of antagonism. As stratagem was (as it is still) considered justifiable in war, pupils soon come to think that any act however dishonest it was, without just cause, to be resorted to, if it would only serve to avert the cruel blow of the passionate master. But when the teacher is the pupil's friend, working with him for his improvement and highest welfare, how despicable is that spirit on the pupil's part which leads him to make trickery and deception the substitute for downright honest work! And it is as foolish and as impolitic, as it is despicable. Was there ever a scholar habitually dishonest, even if (as is very unlikely to be the case), he should always succeed in baffling the teacher's vigilance, whose character was not well known to his classmates and fellow-pupils? Is there any one to whom good reputation among his daily companions is a matter of no moment?

A teacher has done much towards establishing the proper relation between himself and his pupils when he is able to drop the office of policeman, and devote himself, mind and soul, to his own proper work—the development of intellect and heart. To a refined and sensitive nature, nothing can be more distasteful, than the constant exercise of suspicion and distrust.

Detectives and informers doubtless have their place, and are useful therein, but it does not demand the highest and noblest attributes of character to be successful in such duties. While the good teacher will exercise a reasonable degree of vigilance, and punish promptly such derelictions of duty as he discovers, he will not make it his chief occupation to play the part of watch-dog. He has other and better business.

Pupils may be made to understand that the student who cheats, injures no one seriously but himself, and that this injury is great and irreparable. No logic so subtle, no intellect so acute, as to be able to prove, either in school life or the broader life of the world, that there is any permanent good to be gained by deception and fraud.

Always and everywhere, "*Honesty is the best Policy.*"—*Illinois Schoolmaster.*

4. THE BIBLE AS AN EDUCATOR.

While the question of "the Bible in the schools" is being agitated, let us glance at some of the main features of the book, and we shall be better prepared to judge the rank it should occupy as an educational text-book.

But previous to its examination, let us inquire, first, what is the aim of all true education? We answer in general terms: The symmetrical development of the triune nature of man. Second, is our present educational system accomplishing this end; if so, to what degree. As to what progress we are making with regard to man's physical education, for answer look at the large heads and small chests of most of our children; poor, hungry little creatures, begotten and bred in defiance of physiological laws, the only light that beams on their dark pathway, is at the end of the passage. The ignorance of hygienic conditions that prevails among all classes of society, and the more especially marked among the so called "liberally educated" is amazing. The majority are suffering from ailments, the origin of which may be traced to improper dress and diet. Can we then call our system of physical education a success?

Let us examine, next, some of the results of our moral culture. We pride ourselves that we are a Christian nation—though it is to be feared that Christ himself does not suspect it. We talk largely of the spirit of our institutions, boast of our civilization, our high culture, our benevolent organizations, but forget to mention our prisons that contain our lesser rascals, while we fete the successful villains on the fat of the land, and doff our caps as tribute to their smartness. We pity the "poor heathen," and send him instructors in morality and religion, while we make fashionable in our "best society," those crimes that would blanch the cheek of the pagan, then look up and "thank God," that we are not as other men, that we had our birth and education in a Christian land. If by their fruits ye shall know them, we would inquire wherein the moral status of the United States exceeds that of China, India, or Africa. Can we pronounce our system of moral education a success?

Our course of intellectual training has succeeded better, though it is far from being what it should be. The age is precocious—we have any amount of wonderful babies, smart children, and sharp men, great scholars (on the surface), yet intellectual culture lacks the strength, breadth, and depth it would possess, were not heart and health culture so ignored.

We put individuals into the hopper of our great educational mills, turn the crank, and they come through like so many pressed brick, only their use to society is of less practical value. Well may this peculiar process be termed education, which means to *draw out*, in the West we call it "*scoop out*," and he who is unfortunate enough not to have sufficient vital energy to withstand the withering, deadening, crushing pressure of the "regular course," gets "*scooped out*" of his manhood—eviscerated of the attributes of true nobility, becoming a social automaton, to whose theories science must accommodate herself. A rational training would have developed the man, would have made him a living, moving, formative power in society.

Now we come to consider the main proposition, viz: The rank the Bible should occupy as an educator of mankind. Although we are not quite prepared to advocate its adoption as an entire curriculum, yet would we draw upon it so largely that the "powers that be," would consign us forever to the rank of old fogies, and the enemies of progress. The Bible strikes at once at the root of the matter, instructs the heart, makes pure the fount whence proceed the "issues of life." What other text-book of morals will accomplish as much?

Having then implanted holy desires and obedience, next "the instruction of wisdom" is imparted "to give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." Then the result is "health, length of days and peace." Do we need a better hygienic formula? But will the prescription perform all it claims? Well, one tried it more than 1,800 years ago, and we have no account that he ever was sick or the twelve who sojourned with him; but one of them, the ablest logician of his age, informed a certain people that one reason why so many of them were sick, was because of their lack of faith in the teaching of the great instructor.

With a sound body, and therefore a sound mind, and a soul in communion with the Father of Spirits it is not easy to see that such an one has a mighty vantage-ground? Would he not be a giant among the pigmies of to-day? As he scans the pages of the Book of books, he is called upon to grapple with the most gigantic problems of time—not abstract dogmas merely, but vital questions of the hour, that concern all mankind, that the angel intellects of Gabriel and Michael "have desired to look into." Could the Bible