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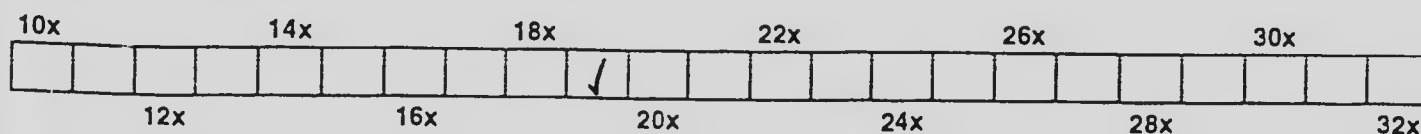
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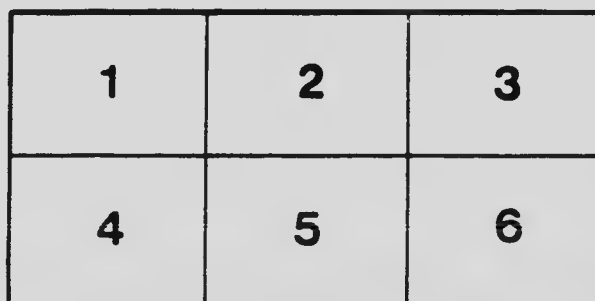
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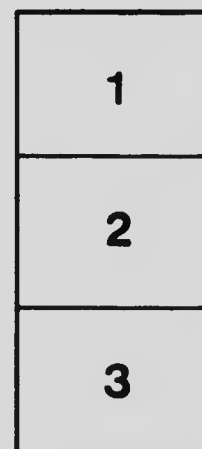
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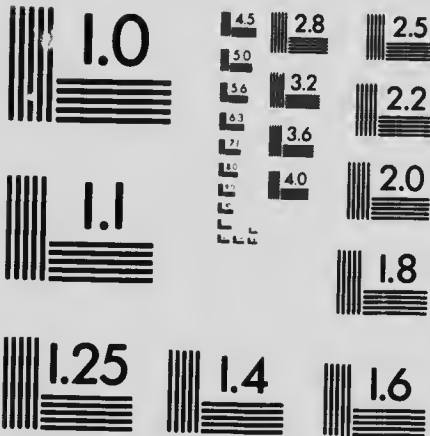
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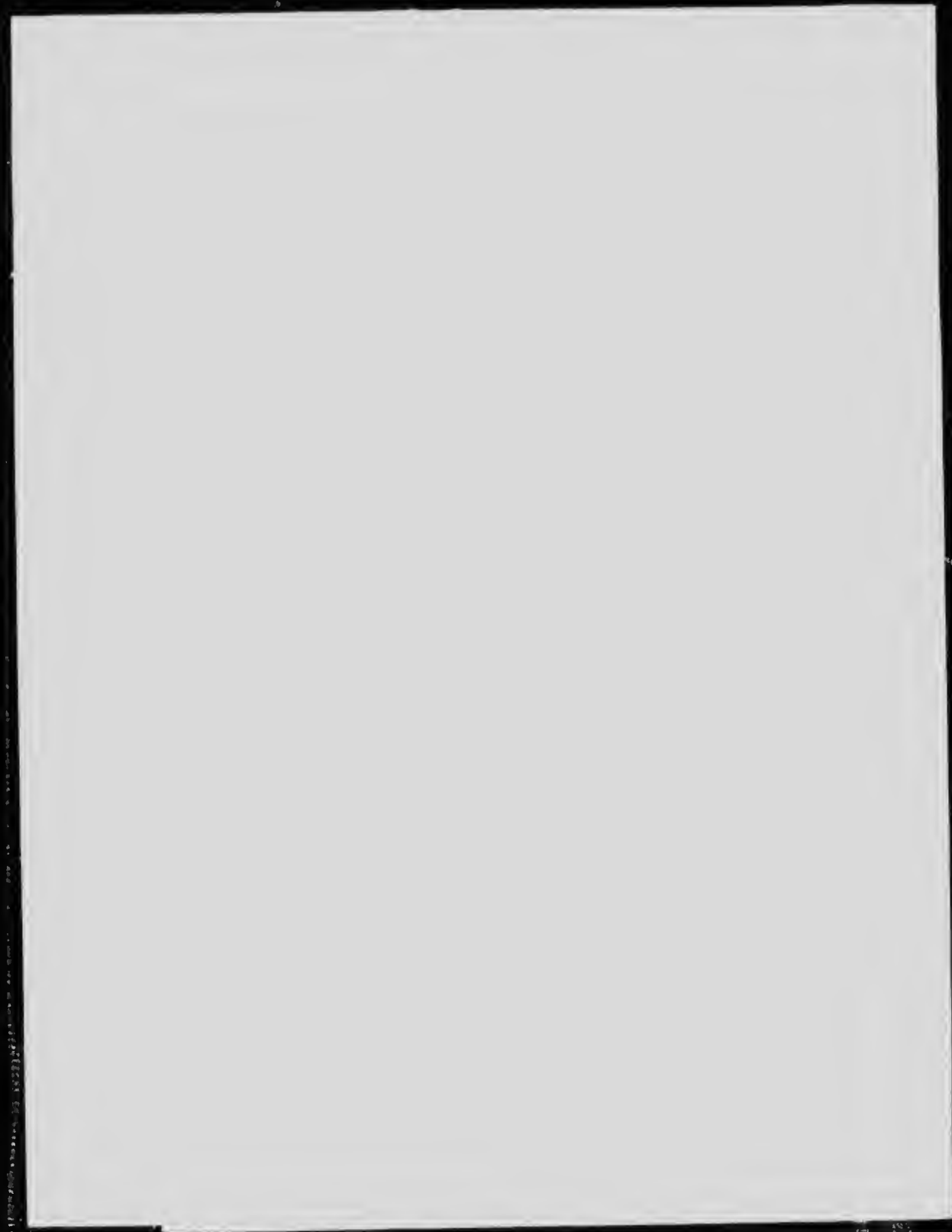
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*Author of "The Children"*

# **The Children**

**Christ and The Children,**

AND

**The Church and the Children**

BY

**REV. W. H. PORTER, M.A.**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL  
EVANGELIST**

**AUTHOR OF "CONVERSE WITH THE KING,"  
ETC.**

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Jesus said, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven"—Matt 19: 14. "And he took them up in his arms put his hands upon them, and blessed them."—Mark 10: 16.

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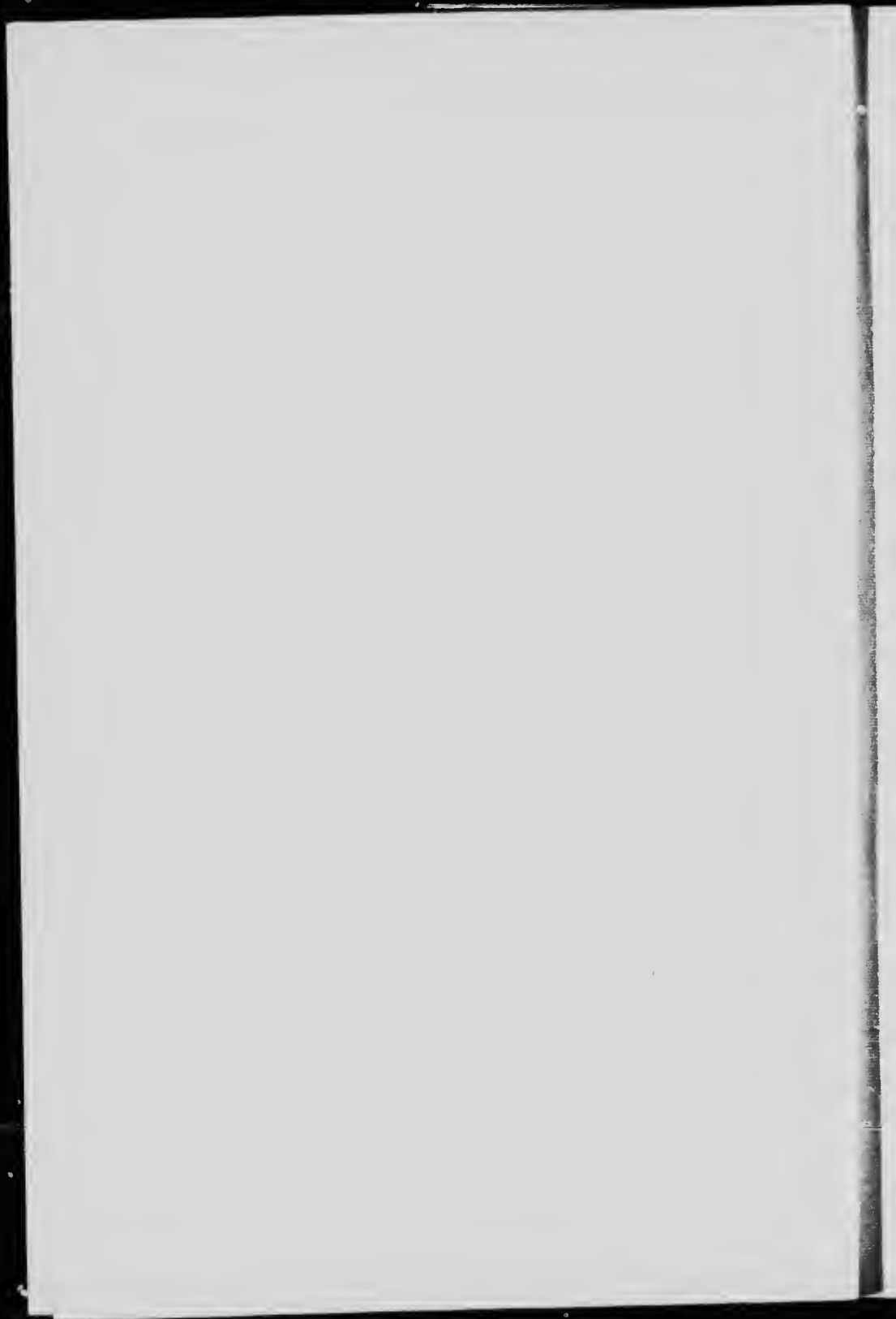
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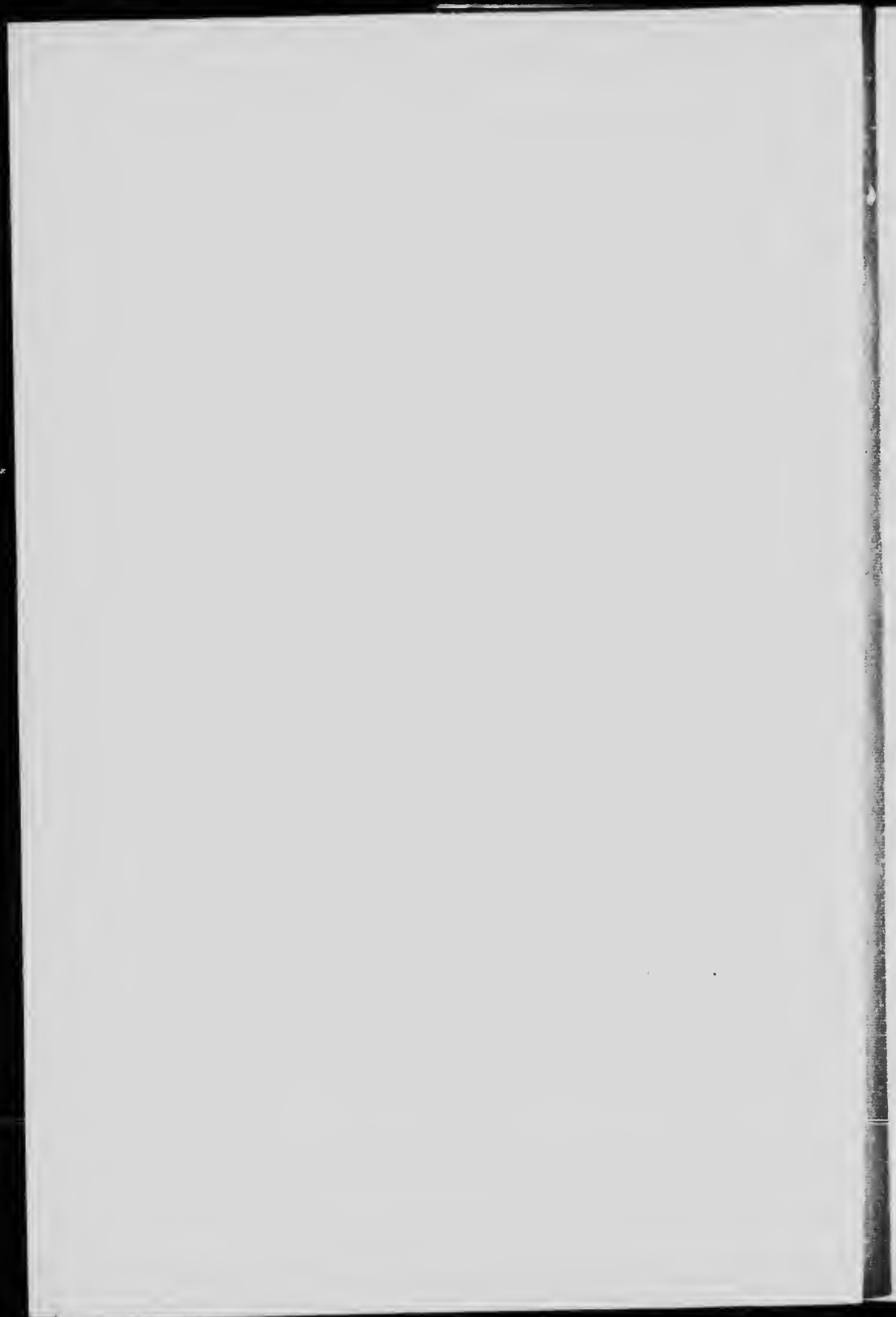
## PREFACE.

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It has been suggested to me, as Sunday School Evangelist, that the circulation of printed matter relative to the work might render it more effective.

Hence this little booklet, which is affectionately commended to any who desire the joy of Jesus in the salvation and Christian development and usefulness of the children, and thus in the best interests of the Christian Church.

Nothing is said in these pages of children incapable of knowing their sinfulness and of repenting, or, of learning of Jesus and of loving and trusting Him. Where Scripture is silent, or nearly so, we may be ; however, we may hope and believe that through the redemption of Christ, heaven is made sweeter by the unconscious departed babes. But, as soon, at least, as the children's responsibility begins, ours does, and our object is to show that it begins earlier and is more pressing than many suppose.



PART I.

**Christ and the Children.**

*Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,  
Ere the sorrow comes with years?  
They are leaning their young heads against their  
mothers,  
And that cannot stop their tears.*

E. B. BROWNING.



## Christ and the Children.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### LITTLE CHILDREN NEED TO COME TO JESUS AND BE SAVED.

Jesus said : "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost." "For, it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."—Matt. xviii. 11, 14.

That children are lost and need to be saved, Scripture and reason affirm.

"All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way."—Isa. liii. 6.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh : and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 6, 7.



"They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 5-8.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind ; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."—Eph. ii. 3.

"For . . . by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all sinned."—Rom. v. 12.

From the above passages it appears that children as sinners need to come to Jesus and be saved.

Observation also confirms this.

Those who have most attentively observed child life have noticed how early and naturally it "goes astray."

Rev. D. Hutchinson says: From what I

know of children, it is not difficult for me to believe in the doctrine of human depravity. How very early does the evil tendency begin to reveal itself. Temper, self-will, obstinacy, disobedience, insincerity and deception, etc., like germs in the soil waiting for air and sun and shower to germinate, so these evil propensities in childhood seem only to need the proper conditions to develop.

Thus Elizabeth Browning describes Isobel as saying to her child,—

“ A solemn thing it is to me  
To look upon a babe that sleeps—  
Wearing in its face the deeps,  
The undeveloped mystery  
Of its Adam's taint and woe,  
Which when they developed be,  
Will not let it slumber so.”

The Psalmist seemed to recognize this inherited depravity and pray for its only real remedy when he said : “ Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”—Ps. li. 5, 10.

Indeed, if children were without sin they would

not need Jesus as a Saviour, nor could they claim Him ; for, " His name was called Jesus because He was to save His people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21.

" Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. i. 15.

" Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. v. 6.

In his admirable topic for these times, "The Old Evangel and The New Evangelism," Dr. C. A. Eaton says : " If in Adam all do not die because of sin, then in Christ all cannot and need not be made alive."

In fact it is only as saved sinners that any can ever sing with the redeemed : " Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."—Rev. i. 5, 6.

#### CONVICTION OF SIN.

If children are not sinful, how can we account for their conviction of sin, which is often deep and strong, even at a very early age.

How strikingly Mrs. Hemans describes early conviction, in her lines entitled,—

THE CHILD READING THE BIBLE.

"The soul, the awakening soul I saw ;—  
My watching eye could trace  
The shadows of its new-born awe  
Sweeping o'er that fair face :  
As o'er a flower might pass the shade  
By some dread angel's pinion made."

When holding children's meetings in London, Ontario, a very excellent Christian, in speaking of early religious impressions, said, that when she was only five years old she was very deeply convicted of sin and often used to weep in penitence and long for pardon. She believes that a little gospel teaching then, with the Spirit's influence, would have readily led her to Christ.

I have heard another woman, who is nearer to me than any other, say, that when she was about *four* years old she would often go away and weep alone, and being found by her mother and asked the cause of her tears, she would say, like Luther, "My sins, my sins."

Surely such sense of sin and longing for salvation as many very young children experience, prove their need of a saving interest in Christ.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake."—1 John ii. 12.

#### HINDERING CHILDREN FROM COMING TO JESUS.

"Then were brought unto Him young children that He should touch them; and the disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid (hinder) them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."—Mark x. 13, 14.

The late Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said :

"It must be a very great sin indeed to hinder anybody from coming to Christ, the only way of salvation.

"Who would dare to keep a perishing soul from Jesus? To obstruct a person fleeing to the city of refuge, would have been an inhuman act deserving the severest punishment. But he who holds back a soul from coming to Jesus, is Satan's servant and doing his worst work."

Yet, alas ! how many, if not by force, or ridicule,

or disuasion, by unbelieving apathy and indifference, hinder the little ones from coming to Jesus.

Let the children come to Jesus,  
Whose kind touch such blessing gave ;  
For they need Him now as ever,  
In His wondrous power to save.

Let the children come to Jesus,  
In their simple, child-like way ;  
For the heart that was so tender,  
Is the same toward them to-day.

Dr. J. V. Smith, whose success with boys adds weight to his words, says : " It is to be feared that there is in the Christian church to-day a great deal of latent scepticism concerning the conversion of children.

" How few really try to bring the children to Christ at once. They imagine that at some future time they may make more intelligently the better choice. And so the children instinctively discover that they are not expected, or perhaps desired, to become Christians at once, and thus they begin their first lessons at procrastination, which, alas ! they only learn too early and well. They begin

resisting the gracious influences of the Spirit. They become familiar with saving truth, but not experiencing it in heart or life, it becomes the savor of death unto death, and not of life unto life."

Rev. W. W. Weeks says, on "Do not sin against the child."—Gen. xlii. 22 :

"Many sin against the child, by thinking it is so innocent and pure that it does not need a Saviour.

"But it is worthy of note that our Lord's most explicit declaration concerning the doctrine of depravity, viz.: 'The Son of Man is come to save that which was *lost*,' was in connection with His teaching concerning the salvation of children.

"Doubtless many a child would come to Jesus and be saved, but for the attitude of older Christians towards them, whose spirit of unbelief, even if unspoken, utterly discourages and hinders them.

"There is a wonderful correspondence and sympathy between the heart of Jesus and that of a little child, and we sin against them both when we keep them apart."



## CHAPTER. II.

### LITTLE CHILDREN MAY COME TO JESUS AND BE SAVED.

"I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me."—Prov. viii. 17.

Jesus said : "Suffer the little children to come unto me."—Mark x. 14.

From the above passages it is evident that little children can come to Jesus and be saved. And this has been experienced by very many children. Indeed it is wonderful how many Christians date their earliest and some of their deepest religious experiences to very early childhood.

The famous children's evangelist, Rev. E. P. Hammond, in his beautiful little book, entitled, "Early Conversion," mentions several instances of children, from three to five years old, coming to Jesus as conscious sinners, accepting Him by



faith as their Saviour, and giving evidence in after life of genuine conversion.

Indeed, such instances of children from five to ten years of age are quite common.

And why not ?

Is there anything in the way of salvation, or in the gospel message, or in the Spirit's work, unadapted to childhood ?

Or is there anything in childhood unadapted to the salvation of Christ ?

#### KNOWLEDGE.

Many seem to think that children, say, from five to ten years old, are incapable of understanding the way of salvation and becoming Christians.

Dr. Andrew Bonar says : "There is a practical error very common among God's people. All of them profess to believe that the Holy Spirit may convert souls at any age, and that conversion cannot be too soon, while yet they do not look for the conversion of children with the same lively faith that they do for those of riper years. The same warm-hearted believers who labor for older

people, and are satisfied with nothing but their immediate conversion, do not practically so feel and act in reference to children. They do not press home on them, as on older persons, their present acceptance of Christ." Evidently they forget that salvation consists in realizing one's sinfulness, and in trusting Christ; and that infinite wisdom and love never were more displayed than in making the way of salvation so simple as to be easily apprehended by the most feeble mind. Indeed it is so simple that, instead of being too difficult for the child, the chief difficulty with older people is in coming down to its simplicity. Thus, instead of children having to grow up before they can come to Jesus and be saved, as so many seem to think, Jesus asserts the very opposite: "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xviii. 3.

Again, He says: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26.

But those who question the ability of children to apprehend the way of salvation, seem to forget how intelligent they are. In secular things, they "wonder how such little heads can carry all they know," and yet forget that in religious things they are equally intelligent.

If Elijah and Elisha *stretched* themselves each upon a child to bring life into it, so some of the noblest men of the church to-day are devoting their best powers to simplify the Word of Life for the children.

Rev. R. E. Knowles says: "Children are not on the verge of intelligence—they are intelligent."

To show how clearly many of them can apprehend the simple gospel and the way of salvation, one or two extracts from children's letters may be given:

"Dear Mr. Porter:—Your meetings have not only led me to Jesus, but have shown me how to live a Christian life. I always thought, before Sunday night, that we had to be very good before we could become Christians. But now I know that we must just come to Jesus as we are, and

give Him our hearts, and believe that He receives us as He says He will."

Another writes:—"I have been trying to get two little girls to become Christians. One has become a Christian already, but the other said that she was trying to become a Christian.

"I told her that there was no trying about it, but it was simply believing and trusting in Jesus. I am enjoying the meetings v·y much. I am trying to help mother and God, too."

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says:—"I have usually found a clearer knowledge of the Gospel in the child convert than in the man convert." John says:—"I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father."—1 John ii. 13.

#### REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

"Repent ye and believe the Gospel."—Mark i. 15.

"When He is come He will reprove the world of . . . sin, because they believe not on me."—John xvi. 8, 9.

I think I never shall forget a ruddy, bright-faced

little girl of six or seven years, with whom I conversed in Montreal during our children's meetings.

On asking her if she had put her trust in Jesus, with the usual childlike frankness, she replied, "No." On asking her if she ought not to, with equal seriousness and frankness she said, "Yes." On speaking to her, further, of the love and longing of Jesus for her, and how He came from heaven and died upon the cross to save her, and now invites and waits to receive her, the feelings that had evidently been suppressed, and that evidenced the Spirit's work, seemed to melt and overpower her, and sobbing as if her little heart would break, she hastened away, like Mary, to weep alone in another part of the church, where I heard her sobs for some time, and where Jesus, I doubt not, met her, and folded her in His arms and blessed her.

Next day she came to meeting with a calm, sweet, happy face, and, on asking her if she had put her trust in Jesus, with the same childlike frankness, but with the evidence of a blessed change, she answered, "Yes."

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says again : "O, dear friends, talk not of a child's incapacity for repentance. I have known a child weep herself to sleep for the month together under a crushing sense of sin. If you would know a deep and bitter and awful fear of God's wrath, let me tell you what I felt as a boy.

"If you want to know what faith in Jesus is, you must look to the dear children who have taken Jesus at His word and believed in Him, and therefore know that they are saved. Capacity for believing lies more in the child than in the man. We grow less, rather than more capable of faith in Jesus."

Whether we regard salvation as believing Christ's word, trusting His person, or receiving His gift, reason and experience agree with Christ's own word, that instead of children having to grow up to become Christians, adults have to become as little children.

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto

Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xviii. 1-3.

Of course, at any age, the work of regeneration is only effected by the Holy Spirit. But to some we are encouraged to proclaim the Gospel, with special assurance that the Holy Spirit will accompany the word with saving power: as the Lord said to Paul at Corinth: "Be not afraid, but speak, . . . for I have much people in this city."—Acts xviii. 9, 10.

And so Christ's word, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," seems to carry with it the divine promise of the Spirit's power in proclaiming to them the Gospel message.



### CHAPTER III.

IT IS DESIRABLE THAT LITTLE CHILDREN SHOULD  
COME TO JESUS AND BE SAVED.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time  
to every purpose under the heaven."

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy  
youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years  
draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure  
in them."—Ecc. iii. 1 ; xii. 1.

Those who have not labored much with children  
have an idea that they are all pretty much alike in  
their susceptibilities to the Gospel, and especially  
to any direct efforts for their salvation. But they  
differ as much in this respect as older people do.

In London, Ontario, at Adelaide Street church,  
where we had a very gracious work among the  
children, a little boy ten years old wrote me : "I  
asked some of the boys at school to come to the



meetings, but they made all kinds of excuses. I got one of them to come, but I couldn't get him to come again."

One of the sad things with children, as with older people, is the utter indifference, if not opposition, of many of them to things spiritual; also the hardening effect of the Gospel upon them. To some it is "the savor of life unto life," but to others, "of death unto death."

I asked a blacksmith one day how he hardened iron. "Heat it and hammer it," he said. And I thought, O that parents, Sabbath school teachers, and ministers might realize more that God's word is as a fire and a hammer, to break and subdue, or to harden. Perhaps they would more earnestly, as a lady at Owen Sound expressed it, "try to bring the children to Jesus and then teach them."

In speaking to Dr. Thomas of the hardening effect on the children of teaching them the Gospel, and not expecting them to receive it, he said: "Yes, and it hardens the teachers too."

#### TURNING A STREAM.

"A pebble on the streamlet set it,  
Has turned the course of many a river."

The conversion of a soul from sin to God is like turning the course of a river.

Crossing the Rocky Mountains, on reaching the summit, one may notice by the railway a spring, which a child's hand could turn there toward the Atlantic or the Pacific. But coming down the mountains, gathering speed and volume in its course, what power could turn it?

#### CROSSING A RIVER.

Dr. Edward Judson compares conversion to crossing a river. The person converted in childhood crosses near its source, where it is easy to do so. But the person converted later in life crosses where the current has become deep and wide and strong, and it is very difficult to get over.

And so the cares of the world and the temptations of life, with ever increasing unbelief, deepen and widen as years advance, till they become as it were impassable.

#### BENDING A TREE.

The conversion of a soul may be compared to bending a tree to the desired shape. But how

much easier to bend the sapling, than the grown tree.

"To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts. . . . Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."—Heb. iii. 7, 8, 13.

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots ? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."—Jer. xiii. 23.

Dr. Behrends says : "The probabilities of moral reformation diminish as men grow older. Character seems to tend to permanence at a very early period. Do not wait till you are older. Come to Jesus while you are boys and girls. The way back to God is harder and rougher the longer you wait. The best and wisest thing that anyone can do is, with the very first knowledge of sin, to come to a pardoning God and get forgiveness and a new heart."

Dr. J. V. Smith says again :

"If our boys are not converted and cared for in the days of their youth, what then ?

"Anyone who has given the subject any prac-

tical attention, knows that it is much easier to lead a boy ten years of age to Christ than it is to lead a young man of twenty. If our youth are not saved before they leave their teens—aye, before they are far advanced in their teens—the probability of their conversion becomes exceedingly doubtful. There never was a period in the history of the world when it was more important for a boy to start out with fixed religious principles, and stick to them at all hazards, than the present. The temptations to wrong-doing are so numerous, so subtle, and so strong, that nothing but the grace of God can save them from making a total wreck of life.

“Lord Shaftesbury stated in a public meeting in London that, from personal observation, he had ascertained that of the adult male criminals of that city, nearly all had fallen into a course of crime between the ages of eight and sixteen years, and that if a young man lived an honest life up to the time he was twenty years of age, there were forty-nine chances in his favor, and only one against him, of living an honorable life thereafter.”

## GRAFTING.

"Make the tree good and his fruit good."

Human nature is like a corrupt tree. Nothing can change the real nature of its fruit except grafting it.

But how much easier and better to graft the tree when it is young. It becomes more homogenous. The old tree after being grafted has to be continually watched and carefully pruned to keep the natural shoots from outgrowing the grafts and sapping their vitality. But how different when the tree is grafted when young. Its growth is all graft; and so with the Christian. How greatly have the tendencies and habits of earlier life marred and hindered Christian character and usefulness. An aged Christian once said to me: "I wish you would persuade my son to give up swearing. Although I have been a Christian thirty years, when I am suddenly vexed I am tempted to swear."

Probably it was so with Peter.—Matt. xxvi. 74.

"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways."—Prov. xiv. 14.

With Thomas the sceptical habit beset him.—  
John xx. 25. Happy for those who become  
Christians before evil habits have become fixed  
and strengthened, requiring much of the energy of  
after years to grapple with them. Even after  
becoming Christians,—

“ ’Twill save us from a thousand snares  
To mind religion young.”

#### HAPPINESS.

“ God made all men to be happy.”—Epictetus ;  
and it might be added, All men wish to be happy,  
but, through sin, have lost the clue, and only God  
can give it to them.

“ Blessed are the people that know the joyful  
sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy  
countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all  
the day.”—Ps. lxxxix. 15, 16.

“ Wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and  
all her paths are peace.”—Prov. iii. 17.

“ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria,  
and preached Christ unto them. And the people  
with one accord gave heed unto those things

which Philip spake . . . And there was great joy in that city."—Acts viii. 5, 6, 8.

"Christ desired for His followers "that their joy might be full."—John xv. 11. Surely it is not unreasonable to desire the highest happiness of those we are interested in. But as Mr. Spurgeon says again : "If you would know joy in the Lord you should look for it in the experience of childhood. Many a child has been as full of it as his little heart could hold."

If one thing more than another, in letters received from children converted in our meetings, has impressed me, it has been the note of joy that has pervaded them. And this seems the more surprising, because I had spoken so little about joy in addressing them.

The following extracts from letters written by children from eight to twelve years old, speak for themselves :

"I have given my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He has received my heart ; for I can feel it in my heart I am so glad that I gave my heart to Jesus, for He has made me so happy ;

and I hope that He will keep it." Eight years old.

"I am so happy since these meetings began ; for I know Jesus better now than I did before." Nine years old.

"When I gave my heart to Jesus I thought morning would never come, I was so happy." Nine years old.

"I gave my heart to Jesus two weeks ago, and have been happier ever since. I am sure every one who loves Jesus feels happier than before." Ten years old.

"I found Jesus on Sunday, Feb. 24th. I play around and enjoy everything far better, and am better satisfied now than when I was without Him." Ten years old.

And still another writes :

"I have been a Christian nearly two years I do not see how any one can live without Jesus ; the Christian's is so easy and happy a life to live." Twelve years old.

And why should not the dear children be happy, with such conceptions and experiences of



the privileges and blessings of those who believe ? As a child thirteen years old, writing to me, said : " I have been a Christian for some time, but your meetings have drawn me nearer to Him. I realize more that I have Jesus and all that is connected with Him now. Pray that I may love and follow Him more and more."

Such expressions as the above show the readiness of the child-mind to seize and appropriate some of the grandest truths of the Gospel, emphasizing still further the importance of getting people as far as possible to attend to religion young.

It is said that in foreign countries our children outstrip the older people in acquiring the language wonderfully.

And so, in acquiring some of the more difficult arts and sciences, it is necessary to begin young.

But what acquirement so difficult as the conception and outworking of that life, concerning which its most ardent and successful apostle, after long and strenuous effort, said : " I have not yet attained."

Truly has Froeble said : " It is of the utmost

importance to bring the young into an early conscious relation with God."

"O, satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."—Ps. xc. 14.

LOVE.

"Everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7.

"Whom having not seen ye love."—1 Pet. i. 8.

Sometimes a little child who has never seen its father has been taught by its mother so to know and love him, as eagerly to look for and joyfully to hail his home-coming.

Mr. Spurgeon says again: "I have usually found a warmer love to Christ in the child convert than in the man convert. From personal knowledge of young children, some of them very young indeed, I have more confidence in their spiritual condition than in that of older people. I have even met with a deeper spiritual experience in children ten and twelve years old than in persons of fifty and sixty."

Notice what some of the little children say:—  
"I just love the name of Jesus." Ten years old.

"I found Jesus on Monday evening at my bedside. I love Jesus." Eight years old.

"I love Jesus. I've loved him since Sunday. I love you for helping me to love Jesus. I am your little friend." Eight years old.

"I do love Jesus Jesus bids us shine, and I want to shine for Him every day." Eight years old.

"I love Jesus because He first loved me. I do love Jesus. He is my shepherd." Nearly seven years old.

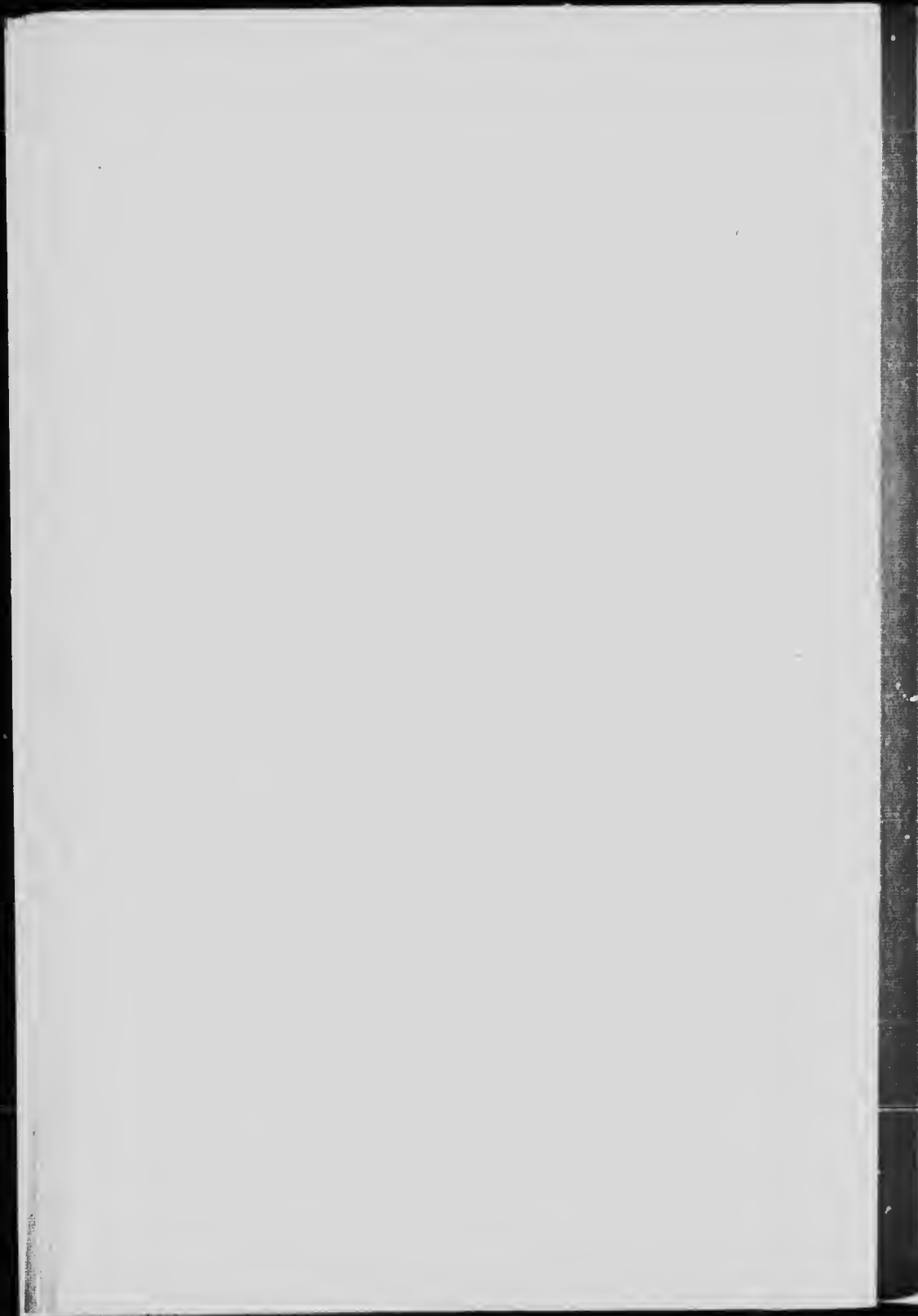
### CHILDREN WELL MAY SING.

Children well may sing the story  
How the Saviour came from glory,  
And in Bethlehem's lowly manger cradle lay :  
For they sing that wondrous story  
In the realms of endless glory,  
With angelic hosts adoring Him to-day.

CHO.—Oh, they'll sing that wondrous story  
When they reach the land of glory,  
And with saints and angels praise Him evermore.  
Yes, they'll sing that sweet, glad story  
In the home of light and glory,  
With the Saviour dwelling on that blissful shore.

Children well may sing the story  
How the Saviour left His glory,  
And for them on Calv'ry's cross did bleed and die ;  
For they sing that joyful story  
In the land of love and glory,  
With the ransomed ever praising Him on high.

Children well may sing the story  
How the Saviour now in glory  
Gathers still the children fondly in His arms,  
For they sing that blissful story  
To their golden harps in glory,  
Ever safe from sin and sorrow and alarms.



PART II.

**The Church and the Children.**

*Better trust all and be deceived,  
And weep that trust and that deceiving,  
Than doubt one heart that, if believed,  
Had blessed the life with true believing.*

FRANCES ANNIE KEMBLE.



## The Church and the Children.

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### CHAPTER. I.

#### RECEIVING THE CHILDREN.

“Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe on me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”—Matt. xviii. 5, 6.

It is said that a little boy in New Brunswick, many years ago, was converted and wanted to join a church. But not being able to answer fully the questions put to him (some of which might perhaps have puzzled the questioners), he was refused



admission until he should become older. Shortly after he was welcomed into another church and became one of its most earnest workers and staunch supporters. In fact, he became one of the most prominent men, socially and politically, as well as religiously, of his native province. Who can tell how much of strength and influence and blessing the one church lost and the other gained by their different spirit and action.

#### GROWTH.

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. iii. 18.

Till maturity is reached life is expected to develop, and the more important and precious the life, the more anxious we are for it to attain to maturity.

It is said of the infant princess of Italy, that so anxious are her parents to have her properly develop, that her nurse, besides receiving liberal pay and a pension, with the coming of the baby's first tooth, is to have \$2000, and when the child can speak, \$2000 more, and again a similar sum when she can walk unsupported.

Such is the interest these parents feel in the growth and development of their little offspring.

Indeed, I knew of a mother who scarcely ever mentioned or showed one of her children as she did the others, for the little one scarcely grew from its birth.

With what different feelings Paul must have written, Heb. v. 12: "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the very first rudiments of the oracles of God"; and 2 Thess. i. 3: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, for that your faith groweth exceedingly"

But proper development requires suitable conditions.

"Can the rush grow up without mire?"—Job viii. 11.

#### TREES.

"That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."—Isa. lxi. 3.

#### TIME TO GROW.

Trees of the firmest grain and finest fibre,

whose wood can bear the greatest strain, or receive the smoothest polish, require time to develop.

And so with Christians. How true this is of the most stalwart saints of Scripture.

Thus, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Daniel and Jeremiah, like Obadiah, could all say: "I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth."—1 Kings xviii. 12.

They were like Josiah, who, "while he was young began to seek after the God of his father."—2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.

Like David they could exclaim: "Thou art my hope, O Lord God. Thou art my trust from my youth. Thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."—Ps. lxxi. 5, 17, 18.

#### SOIL AND CLIMATE.

"I am like a green olive tree in the house of God."—Ps. lii. 8.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree ; he shall grow like a cedar of Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age ; they shall be fat and flourishing."—Ps. xcii. 12-14.

Everything prospers best in its own place and element.

" The world is not a friend to grace  
To help us on to God,"

any more than northern frosts to develop tropic vegetation.

When persons, young or old, are truly converted, they incline as naturally to Christ's church and people as the converts did on the day of Pentecost.

" Then they that gladly received His word were baptized ; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 41, 42.

If we accept, as the apostles did, the Saviour's commission, " Go ye and disciple all nations, bap-

tizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," by what authority can we refuse His ordinances and the fellowship of His church to those who humbly and sincerely trust and love Him ?

Dr. B. L. Whitman says : "I can remember when little children were very scantily welcomed into the membership of our churches. To-day the pastor whose heart is aflame counts it double joy, not only seeing a soul saved, but a life and a lifetime, when the little ones come into the kingdom."

But it makes a wonderful difference what condition a church is in when she receives into her membership young converts. I have known persons try to raise fruit trees, by setting them in holes a few feet round, leaving the earth all hard around them. Thus when the rootlets got through the softened soil and reached their hard environment, they ceased growing. By-and-bye it was found that, to grow fruit trees the soil must be mellowed and enriched all around them as far as the roots could extend.

And so it is in receiving young converts into the church. We are taught this in the parable of the vineyard : " My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he gathered out the stones thereof and planted it."—Isa. v. 1, 2. "Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root and it filled the land."—Ps. lxxx. 9. And so to-day, if the tender plants are to thrive they must have rich, mellow soil to grow in.

And besides this, how much easier and surer to have the trees grow if planted young.

"The Westminster" says : "The strength and activity of the church of to-morrow, its very life, depends, under God, on the young people and children of to-day, and their attitude to religion, and their equipment for service."

LAMBS.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd ; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom."—Isa. xl. 11.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?.... Feed my lambs."—John xxi. 15.

A shepherd being asked how he had such fine sheep, answered : " By taking care of the lambs."

A story is told of a good old Scotch elder who was greatly grieved at his pastor's constant refusal to admit children into church fellowship. Inviting him to his house one day, after tea the elder took his pastor out to see him put his large flock of sheep into the fold. Taking his stand at the entrance, the elder allowed all the sheep to enter, but with his heavy stick he roughly kept the lambs from going in. The pastor became quite indignant, and exclaimed : " What are you doing ? The lambs need the shelter of the fold far more than the sheep."

" Just what you are doing to the children of the church," was the elder's prompt reply. The object lesson was effective, and never again did the pastor attempt to shut out Christ's little ones from His fold.

#### CHILDREN.

" Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."—Ex. ii. 9.

" And Hannah said, For this child I prayed ;

and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him ; therefore also I have lent him to the Lord ; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

"But Hannah went not up (to the yearly sacrifice) ; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever."

"But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord."

"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men."

"And the Lord called Samuel again the third time And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child."

"And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and did let none of his words fall to the ground."—  
1 Samuel i. 27, 28, 22 ; ii. 18, 26 ; iii. 8, 19.

How different Hannah's conduct from that of many : and how different the results. She prayed for her child, and when the Lord answered her,



she believed and acted accordingly, and her child grew up to be an honor and a blessing.

Many pray for the children and teach them the way of salvation, and when the Lord hears their prayers and blesses their efforts, they don't credit it; and when these children come and tell them that they have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and put their trust in Him, and now in their joy and love want to confess and follow Him, instead of gratefully and gladly sympathizing with and encouraging them, they too often help the enemy to fill those little hearts with doubts and unbelief by their incredulousness.

How well did Jesus couple "unbelief and hardness of heart" (Mark xvi. 14), and never is their union sadder than when it begets in the hearts of Christ's disciples opposition or indifference to the salvation and religious training of the children.

As Rev. Mr. Weeks says again: "We sin against the children by opposing an open confession after they have received the Saviour. Not that we should urge children to join the church, or fail to use proper care and discrimination in receiving

them, but when from love to Christ they come asking the privilege of obeying Him in His ordinances, and of communing with His people, we should be sure that we have good reasons for refusing them.

“Nor should we demand of them a higher standard of piety, or a stronger evidence of conversion than we do of older people. They have the same spiritual needs, weaknesses, and difficulties as older people, and equally need the strength and comfort that come from openly confessing Christ and serving Him.”

I heard a farmer once say that he did not want his orchard hedged in so that the wind could not blow through it. The wind made the trees strike deeper and grow sturdier, while it made the fruit larger and more valuable, by blowing off the worm-eaten and worthless.

A little girl in Kingston wrote: “I got saved Tuesday night at home after meeting, and I was so glad that I wanted to tell everybody. When I went to school the next day the girls made fun of me; but I told them that I was not afraid to own

Jesus as my Saviour, and now I am so happy in Him."

Thus, the way of obedience is the way of blessing just the same to children as to older people.

In keeping the commandments there is great reward.—Ps. xix. 11.

"No man when he hath lighted a candle putteth it . . . under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they that enter in may see the light."—Luke xi. 33.

"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. x. 10.

Dr. J. V. Smith, on "The Church and the Boys," says: "Many good people tell us not to be in too great a hurry in receiving the children; they say, 'Wait awhile, till they understand better, and can act intelligently.'

"But, it has been well said that 'there are very few children in the primary departments of our Sabbath schools that do not know more about Christ than the two families first gathered into the Christian Church in Europe, namely, the family of

Lydia, and the family of the Philippian jailor, all of whom were baptized after hearing their first gospel sermon.'

"The jailor was a hardened heathen at sunset, and a baptized Christian at dawn." So few and elementary were the essentials Paul and Silas deemed necessary to enter the school of Christ.

I asked our Foreign Mission Secretary, Rev. J. G. Brown, one day, how the religious intelligence of the Telugu converts compared with that of our younger Sunday school scholars. His answer was: "It doesn't compare at all."

In "A Plea for the Children," Mrs. H. M. N. Armstrong, missionary, says:

"I sympathize with little children because I remember my own struggles towards the light when I was a very little child.

"My mother used to pray for our conversion daily, but, like many, looked for the answer to her prayers in the future, rather than now.

"The greatest struggle of all my childish life was to acknowledge my love to Christ. My conscience whispered that if I truly belonged to Him I ought to confess His name, and yet I could not

bring myself to do this to those who did not expect me to acknowledge Christ yet, and might be very hard to convince that I knew what I was talking about. I have followed my mother round the house longing to tell her that I had given myself to Christ, and did love Him with all my heart, and then when she asked what I wanted, my heart failed me, and I ran away to weep over another defeat.

"From a very little child till I was thirteen years old I fought the battle with myself, and then God gave me grace to confess His name publicly. A little help many years before would have greatly lightened my burden and made me a happier and brighter Christian.

"I am firmly convinced that if parents looked for the conversion of their children and expected it, and would not be content without it, a multitude of children would never pass through that dark, barren waste of years that so often intervenes between their first understanding of the way of life, and their final acceptance of Christ. They would accept the Saviour's invitation as soon as they received it, and would grow up in the Saviour's fold, trained to His service from their childhood."



## CHAPTER II.

### CARING FOR THE CHILDREN.

“What shall be the manner of the child, and what shall he do?”—Judges xiii. 12.

Possibly one of the most hopeful signs of the present, and prophecies of the future, physically, mentally and morally, is, that, wearied and baffled with the unsolved problem of the man, the world's greatest scientists, and governments even are devoting themselves seriously to the study and development of “the father of the man,” the child; and not without already some measure of success. “The Metropolitan Magazine,” Aug., 1901.

On “Do not sin against the child,” Rev. Mr. Weeks says again :—

“There is also another way in which the church may sin against the children, by not properly caring for them after they have been received.

"Too generally the preaching and services are adapted to older people, and not to the young. Certainly the older members in a family should not be neglected, but special provision should be made for the babes."

In doing this I am sure that the church will not only be fulfilling her motherly mission, and the desire of her Lord, but she will secure in the doing of it His richest blessing.

In speaking of

"THE CHILDREN'S PORTION,"

Rev. R. E. Knowles says in effect :

"In a sense, the whole service should be for the children. We have all they need : and they need all we have. Their early religious and intellectual impressions should be of the highest order, and in quality, mature.

"The preacher who can best arrest the attention and enchain the mind of the little ones with religious truth, will at the same time do so with the older ones. Indeed, if we were but more alive to the presence of children in our congregations, our

preaching would be more exalted and enhanced in power, being more permeated with the Personal of the children's Christ . . . .

" 'Tell me more about Jesus,' is the pleading of many a little life, as it is the unspoken cry of many maturer lives under the burdens of sorrow, sins, and care."

As Dr. J. V. Smith says again :

"If as Protestants we were as wise in our generation as the Church of Rome, in looking after the children ; if we sought to mould their plastic minds to the Divine pattern, what an era of prosperity we would enter upon. Cardinal Wiseman showed his sagacity when he said : 'Give us the children, and you (Protestants) can take the adults.'"

"It does not need a prophet to affirm that the church which is the most successful in laying hold of the children and training them for the Lord, will be the most powerful church in the next generation. It matters little who may be foremost in this divine work, so long as it is rightly done."



## SERVICE.

Children are God's apostles, day by day  
Sent forth to preach of love and hope and peace.

J. L. LOWELL.

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast  
Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies,  
that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

--Ps. viii. 2.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the  
calf and the young lion and the fatling together;  
and a little child shall lead them."—Isa. xi 6.

Dr. R. L. Whitman says:

"In receiving child converts into the church a  
new recruiting ground for Christian service has  
been opened. Nor has it been wanting in  
results"

As with the little captive maid in the cure of  
Naaman's leprosy, or with the little lad and his  
small barley loaves and fishes in supplying the  
hungry multitudes, so little children have often  
been God's most used and honored instruments  
of blessing.

Many of the children's letters written to me show how soon and easily they learn what many older people seem so slow in learning, that we are "saved to serve." "That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life."—Luke i. 74, 75.

One little child writes :

"Dear Mr. Porter :—I am so glad that you have taught me about Jesus. I am going to try to teach other little children about Jesus, and I hope that I will grow to love Him more."

Another writes :—"My sister, or friend and I are going to try to get up little meetings, to see if we can bring others to Jesus."

And still another :—"I have got two boys to give their hearts to Jesus, and I am trying to get a lot of boys to come to your meetings, so that they will give their hearts to Jesus."

Such interested efforts for the salvation of others impress us favorably when put forth by the early disciples, or by converts in India or China.

Shall we discredit the working of the same Spirit in the same manner in our children ?

O Father, mould my heart once more  
By thy prevailing breath  
Teach me, O teach me to adore,  
E'en with that pure one's faith ;  
A faith all made of love and light,  
Child-like, and therefore full of might.

MRS. HEMANS.

PRAYER.

"God heard the voice of the lad."—Gen. xxi. 17.

How often, as with Ishmael, the Lord hears the child's cry, even before the mother's.

In the hearts of children are open sincerity and simple trust, essentials to acceptable prayer, more than in the hearts of older people. Indeed, in this, as in everything else, "he that will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven must become as a little child."—Matt. xviii. 4.

In Mr. Hammond's books on children are many wonderful instances of the power of children's prayers.

If a complete history could be written of such prayers and answers, I doubt not it would be astonishing.

Mr. Spurgeon had a great confidence in children's prayers. He says : " It is a sacred joy to me to know that certain boys and girls make it a habit of praying for me. I cannot tell how highly I value such prayers."

Eternity alone will reveal what blessings may have attended his ministry in answer to them.

In my work as Sabbath School Evangelist, nothing has given me greater encouragement and comfort, saving the Master's words, " Lo, I am with you alway," than the knowledge of being remembered in the children's prayers.

PRAISE.

" Children, let them praise the name of the Lord."—Ps. cxlviii. 12. 13.

" When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that [Jesus] did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David, they were sore displeased, and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say ? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea ; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise."—Matt. xxi. 15, 16.

It is said that an artist labored to paint a picture of Jesus that would lead men to worship and love Him. Having finished the picture, he asked his little daughter who it was. She answered, "Some great king." Again he labored to bring out his ideal. Calling his child again, he asked her who it was. Claspng her little hands, she said, "My Saviour!" and the artist rested satisfied.

The unsophisticated child is a truer judge, and more candid, than the connoisseur.

The Gospel, clearly and simply preached, is the unveiling, or portraying of Jesus, as Eliezer portrayed to Rebecca Isaac, till she, "having not seen, loved," and was willing to leave all and to be his.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,  
I'll follow where He goes,"

sings many a child heart with a devotion as genuine and heroic as that of missionary martyr.

Yea, doubtless when the day dawns, it will be a surprise how many young heads wear martyr's crowns, swelling their hosannas.

LET THE CHILDREN PRAISE THE SAVIOUR.

Let the children praise the Saviour,  
And their grateful love outpour  
To that Friend, who with fond pity,  
All their sins and sorrows bore.

Let the children praise the Saviour,  
And their sweet hosannas sing ;  
For no praise that men can offer  
Is more precious than they bring.

Let the children praise the Saviour  
With glad anthems loud and long ;  
For to Him their praise is sweeter  
Than the best angelic song.

WILL THOSE CONVERTED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD  
CONTINUE STEADFAST ?

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”—Prov. xxxii. 6.

Some people seem to read this verse, “Train up a child *toward* the way he should go, and when he is *older* he will *get into* it.”

But, as Dr. Bonar has well said : "The sense of the text is this : Be sure that you get (initiate) a child in the way while he is still a child, and you need not fear in regard to his continuing in it. Get the truth into his soul while he is a child, and rest assured that he will go on as he has begun. It is a blessed text to encourage us to seek the present and immediate conversion of children." And with this some of the most recent psychological discoveries of the child nature agree.

As the great Edmund Burke says : "While the child mind is as plastic as wax to receive impressions, it is like iron in retaining them."

How often one may notice in a museum, or on beds of rocks, impressions of foot-prints, rain-drops, and ripple-marks, etc., and wonder how they came there, so indelible and distinct. But geologists tell us that they were imprinted there when the rock was clay or sand. And so on our concrete sidewalks, one may notice the clear-cut imprint of a horse-shoe, or even of a leaf or flower ; and pause to think, how important it is to get the Divine truth and image fixed in the young heart while it is tender and plastic.

Indeed, many who have had large experience in Christian work, do not hesitate to affirm that, with proper environments, at least, child converts are more steadfast than any others.

The Saviour, who knew the heart and condition of each, said: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10.

I have before me now the collected testimony of over fifty leading ministers in England, Canada and the United States, to the superior character and steadfastness of those converted and received into the church in childhood, over those converted and uniting with the church later in life.

Dr. D. D. McLaurin says: "My experience is, that those who are converted and baptized before they reach their teens, make the truest and best Christians."

Chancellor O. C. S. Wallace, D.D., says, he can recall no case of discipline during his pastoral experience of those joining the church under thirteen years of age.



The late Mr. Spurgeon, who received hundreds of converted young children into the church, and exercised stricter church discipline than most ministers, said, that he never had to discipline any received in childhood.

I have often wondered how or why Christians could be indifferent or sceptical as to child conversion. But, considering what early conversion means to the convert, and to the cause of Satan and of Christ, the wonder vanishes, leaving only a deeper sense of the subtlety and sagacity of our enemy and of Christ's. Surely there is no possible way that he could more effectively secure and strengthen his kingdom, and hinder Christ's, than to delude Christians into believing, (1) that little children do not need to be converted ; or (2) that they are too young to be converted ; or (3) that, unlike older people, their profession of conversion should not be accepted until it had been tested and that, perhaps, not so much under trusting and encouraging watchcare, as under distrusting and dispiriting scrutiny.



### CHAPTER III.

#### A WORD TO PARENTS.

"By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw that he was a beautiful child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict."—Heb. xi. 23.

"The parents should lay up for the children."—2 Cor. xii. 14.

It is said of John Vine Hall's son that he couldn't be an infidel, for the genuineness of his parents' Christian character and influence prevented it. How sadly suggestive, on the other hand the brief record of Ahaziah king of Israel, "who did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother."—1 Kings xxii. 52.

One parent may, perhaps, draw the child downward, but it requires both, "as workers together with God," to draw him up.

Happy the child who in after life can say,—

My boast is not that I deduce my birth  
From loins enthroned, or monarch's of the earth ;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,  
I boast of parents passed into the skies.

WM. COWPER.

#### FATHERS.

"The glory of children are their fathers."—  
Prov. xvii. 6.

What a place of influence and power the father is designed to occupy and wield in the home.

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children."—Prov. xiii. 22.

Fathers, what inheritance will you bequeath to your children? Will it be of moral worth, or of worldliness and ambition?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:" and, "by humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life."

A little boy was following his father across the room one day, taking long strides, and being asked what he was doing, he said that he was trying to walk in his father's steps.

How often in the "Book of the Kings," or of "The Chronicles" one finds this suggestive sentence, "He walked in the way of his father," or, "did according to all that his father had done."

"Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Eph. vi. 4.

Say with David,—

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord."—Ps. xxxiv.

11. But not by precept only, but by precept and example.

This high and sacred responsibility and privilege are yours. Do not think to clear yourself by delegating it to another—minister, S. S. teacher, or even to the mother. She has her part, but not yours.

Think of those wonderful words with which God closes the Old Testament: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite them with a curse."—Mal. iv. 5, 6.

Fathers, to you a trust is given,  
More blest than angels claim in heaven ;  
To train the offspring of your love  
For life that leads to life above.

#### MOTHERS.

MOTHER ! What a world of opportunity, privilege and responsibility is in that word !

To you a greater than Pharaoh's daughter has said : " Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."—Ex. ii. 9

Mother, " Is it well with thee ? Is it well with thy husband ? Is it well with the child ?"—2 Kings iv. 26.

Happy, thrice happy if thou canst say truly,  
" It is well."

A mother's hands ! what treasures rare they hold,  
More precious far than richest gems and gold !  
Through pious influence and teachings wise,  
To train for earth, and fashion for the skies !

From " CONVERSE WITH THE KING."

The following letter from the mother of a little boy, eleven years old, who died from a cold taken

in rescuing two other boys from drowning, only a short time after his conversion and baptism, may serve to impress others with the importance of not hindering, but encouraging and helping the little children both to trust and to follow Jesus.

“ Paisley, Feb. 15, 1901.

“ Dear Mr. Porter :—I cannot thank you enough for coming to Paisley, and for your meetings here, if only for my boy Jimmie.

“ What hope and faith he had, and what a comfort I have that he put his trust in Jesus as his Saviour.

“ I think I see him the night he came home from meeting and wanted to be baptized. I talked with him for a while and told him he had better go and see the pastor. He went to see him, and then went to the church to see if they would receive him. He often told me what you said to him.

“ I got your book, ‘ Converse with The King,’ for him on Christmas, and he was so pleased with it. How often he looked at your photo in it. He intended to write to you. I asked him the day

before he died if he would like to see you, and he nodded his head, for he could not speak.

"That night his hand was pointing upward. He died as easily as if he were going to sleep.

"My little girl has been baptized since. How Jimmie wanted her to come to Jesus.

"He said he was praying for two boys, that they might put their trust in Jesus as their Saviour. He wanted to give something to missions, if he could only give his Bible. He had put the only dollar he had in the church treasury.

"Poor child, how hard it is to realize that he is gone.

"But I feel my faith grow stronger as I see that white hand pointing heavenward.

"I would be so glad to have you write a few verses in memory of Jimmie. They might do others good. Yours, etc."

The last I saw of my little friend was at the railway station, Paisley, the morning I left. It was early, and cold, and snowy, but he had come with a little paper bag of oranges for me, and to bid me good-bye. Dear boy, I often seem to see him yet.

## IN MEMORY OF JIMMIE WILLITS.

How oft in looking o'er the year  
Of labor with the children dear,  
Sweet memories my spirits cheer,  
Of many whom we sought to win  
To Him who suffered for their sin,  
Opening our hearts to let Him in.

Among them all one bright boy's face  
Will ever hold a sacred place,  
Whose taught me memory can efface.  
I often take a picture from my shelf,  
As with the boy I see his place he took,  
To list the teachings of The Book.

How often memory's dreamy grave  
The favor of that watery grave  
Where Jesus, who died to save,  
And then arising from the tomb,  
He did not seem of earth and gloom,  
But heir of light and endless bloom.

How often does his Christian love  
My human selfishness reprove,  
And help to lift my heart above.  
How oft, too, does his dying hour  
Come to me like a heavenly dower,  
Reviving in me faltering power.

How often to my wistful eye,  
That white hand pointing to the sky,  
Says :—"Do not for me grieve or cry ;  
I soon shall be on His dear breast,  
Whereon my soul found sweetest rest,  
To be with Him forever blest."



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