

The Child

Thoughts
on
Child Culture,

by DAVIS H. FORSYTHE.



PAPER READ BEFORE THE
MOTHERS-IN-COUNCIL,
of GERMANTOWN, PHILA.
Twelfth Month, 10th, 1902.

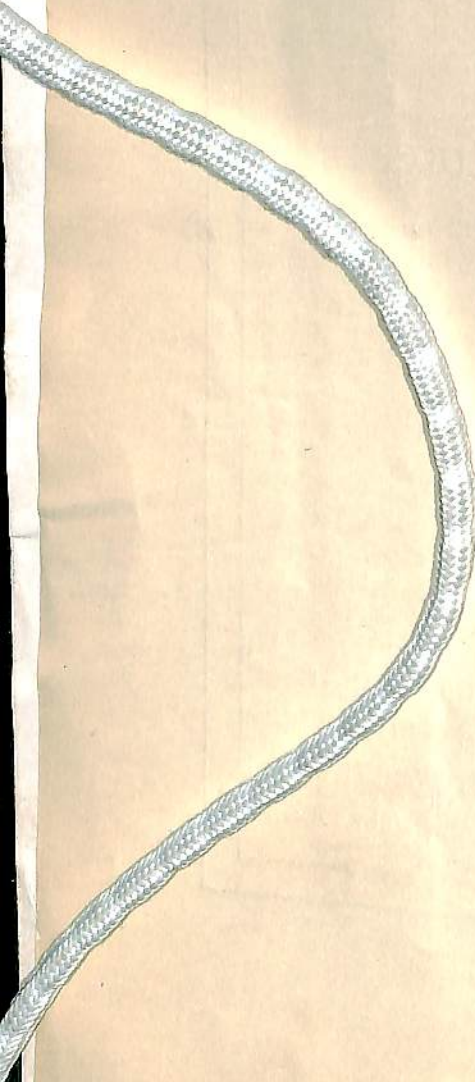
*James & Siggie Smith
with the love of their cousin
Elij S. Forsythe.*

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IN COMING before a company of ladies such as this, I realize that I am speaking to those who have made the study of the individual child a closer object of observation than anyone, except a devoted Christian mother can make it, and I appreciate, too, that to dream of speaking in any new field would be as futile as the old story of the Newcastle coals; but since you have been so generous as to ask me to use a few minutes of your time, I have gained my own consent to do a very foolish thing, to talk of something about which you already know more than I do. If at times I fall into any of the school-master's pitfalls of expression, you will kindly attribute it to my long apprenticeship and not for an instant to my lack of apprehension that any one of you is better qualified than myself to handle the topic.



THOUGHTS ON CHILD CULTURE.



LONG ago it was said by one whose wisdom dwarfs the combined wisdom of us all—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." We have had friends and school-mates whom we have loved, whose career through childhood has promised well, whose school record has been spotless and his college life clean, but as we know them now that we have become men and women, we find almost no vestige of those marks of promise that a few years ago were so bright. The boy whom we knew as the brilliant debater, always on the side of some moral reform, has become dishonest in the handling of another's money, and his name is a reproach. The boy who was admitted with the warmest welcome into our homes, who helped to make many a pleasant evening at hearthstones, where it was supposed nothing but purity ever entered, meets you today on the streets of some distant city, and you read the story of his fall in the face that he fails to lift to greet you.

The boy, who but recently led his class in their hardest school tasks, and who gained his teacher's approval, and his classmates' envy, today has brought such shame upon his family that they want never to hear his name pass your lips.

The boy, who but a few years since, led a Christian Association in a large Boarding School, and was in-

deed and in fact a worthy example to others of what he professed, today is a total wreck, a wreck not only himself, but such a burden to a devoted mother, that nothing but that Divine Grace, which he has denied and done violence to, can sustain her.

Why, you ask, have I dragged these pictures before you? The unregenerate world is full of them, and you reasonably ask how can they especially interest us. I have purposely chosen these four cases, so that no one here can even guess the objects of them, but they are actual and real, and can be duplicated and more than duplicated from my own experience, and with a little review I have no doubt you can add to them also; but it is no attractive task and that is not my purpose in bringing them to view.

We all know of boys and girls who have been apparently well trained, who have had the advantages of birth, home and school, who have had God-fearing parents and who have run well for a season; but who, when they should have taken on fresh armor have laid aside what they had already assumed and have said, in act, if not in words, that it did not fit them. They have henceforth gone a different course, and you and I know, in too many cases, that the end of the way has been sorrow and anguish. What did the Wise Man mean when he said, "Train up the child in the way that he should go"? Was he speaking in general terms, and are my instances and yours merely the few exceptions that prove the rule?

Or was he enunciating some great law, true for all time, for all conditions, and for all surroundings, which has not as yet been solved?

The Mothers' Congress, or the Teachers' Convention that can throw a ray of light on the solution of this,

has placed the race under a heavy obligation of gratitude; but I fancy such bodies give their strength to more practical matters, they discuss questions of health, school problems and questions of ethics, and do not train their guns on the old proposition of King Solomon, which reads like a syllogism from Aristotle.

The statement stands so simple, that he who runs may read. What more does a mother ask for her boy, than that he may grow up in the way he should go, for when he is old he will not depart from it. It will be a joy to her in the training, and a joy that will abide beyond the grave, to know that he will not depart from it.

Now I presume were we to settle down for the next sixty minutes, and each write out, under headings, the essentials needed in training a child and collate our papers, we would find very great variety, and were this company made up of ladies whose surroundings were different from yours, and from each other's, the counsel collected would be still more various; and were we to suppose our company made up of delegates from various nations, how divergent would be the advice they would give! Yet I want to believe that the Wise Man spoke not for favored children alone, but for you and for me, and for all people everywhere. I fancy there would be detected much of theory in the paper that came from the aunt, who had never known the real problem of meeting the child's needs, and that in each mother's paper would be discernible, strong traces of a personal equation. Her judgment would be tinged with a strong bias, unconsciously created there by the problems her own life forced upon her.

There would be no wisdom in collecting a digest of such conclusions, and reducing it to a formula, for any

formula that excludes any essential would not satisfy us, and nothing that you can name is not essential to at least one child.

There have, as you know, been great educational schemes created. Some have stood the test of experiment and have passed beyond the empirical stage. They are instinct with vitality; they appeal to a certain age of the world's history more than to another; but they have the stamp upon them that shows that they are fitted for a more universal adoption. It is essential that every teacher be acquainted with these, and it is desirable that every mother, so far as she is fitted for it by her own past training, should know something of them also. But these historic characters, men like Socrates, Plato, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, Herbert Spencer, may be the stumbling block cast in the way of a well-intentioned mother, for these men wrote not for your boy or my boy, or for the child of any race. They wrote, as it seems to me, to enunciate principles that are fundamental; they are the trunk of any system of training. The portion that will help you and me is the ripened fruit, growing far from the trunk; the fruit owes its very existence, and all that is good in it, to the fact that it is associated with the trunk, but you and I appropriate it and are in blissful ignorance of this vitalizing trunk, but are helped and stimulated, none the less, by the fruit which it has helped to nourish.

I hope I have not wandered from my text. A mother, fortified with all the special knowledge these many masters have written for her, and anxious to appropriate all of it that she can for her child's good, may be more of a hindrance than a help in the period of that child's life when character is most plastic.

You will believe this at once, if you will look among your friends, and note how a child has been benefited by the arrival in the family of a younger brother or sister who claims all the mother's strength, and leaves him to the care of someone else. It is not, I fancy by much reading or much study that a mother learns how to train her child. No two of us are alike. We differ so widely that the points of diversity far outnumber those of resemblance; so it seems to me, that what we want to lay stress upon in the proverb which heads our talk this morning is, not the training or the route of march, but on the contrary it is the child himself. I fancy King Solomon's dictum has borne the test of trial every time where the child has been made the subject of study, and where the trainer has been masterful and tactful. "Train up a child in the way he should go." Who, you may well ask, can be equal to this? There has never been a child born into the world whom you can take for a model, even the older brother or sister of the little problem before you is unlike him in almost every way, and with each child brought into the world comes an utterly new task, for he is to be trained in the way *he* should go.

But we are fortunate in this:—Mother nature is often kinder to our children than we are ourselves, and it would not have been permitted that a promise being left us through the Sacred Writings, would fail of its realization except through our inability to comprehend its significance or our unwillingness to lay hold of all that it implies.

I fancy, somewhere not far out of sight, will be found the cause for the sad failure of those four boys I mentioned a few minutes ago, all of whom, now grown to manhood, are on the high road to ruin. I

think I know the cause in each case, but as the chances are strongly against their fitting any cases you will ever know, it would be no help to mention them. I believe each was not trained in the way *he* should go. Something that would have suited your boy and would not have harmed mine was the beginning of the down hill track with these.

Doctors, long ages ago, agreed that certain kinds of physic met certain ills. They enunciated this fact or these facts, and they have stood the test of experiment a countless number of times. There has grown up their pharmacopoeia which, while it is always being enriched by new discoveries, is essentially, in parts at least, as old as the language which has made it possible for mankind to retain it. Do we have any counterpart to this in child training? Is there any digest of professional knowledge on child training and development, that a mother can turn to, or a teacher can consult to meet the case that may for the time be under inspection? The Doctor can prescribe his tonic, because he knows the nature of the patient's disorder. He has gained skill in diagnosis, and he knows his pharmacopoeia. The mother has nothing of this kind, not because nothing has been written, for the library shelves groan with books on Child Study and the like, and not because it is impossible for someone to prepare a digest of all of these, and the host more on the same topic that are, I am sure, sooner or later to appear. Suppose such a compendium were at hand, duly tabulated and indexed, as complete in its way as the storehouse of knowledge open to the Doctor, would it avail the mothers and educators of the race? We all agree, I fancy without a reservation, that it would be folly of follies to entertain such a thought.

The question comes to this:—Are we then, as parents and teachers, as the trainers of youth, face to face with a fact that we have no body of collected knowledge to guide us, is our work to be as experimental as that of our forefathers many generations removed? Are we, in large measure, to grope in the dark, as each new problem comes before us, trusting that the moment that calls us to some new service, will in some way furnish the needed solution? I do not want to think this. I want to believe that there are chances open to the mothers of today, to do more and better for their children, than were their grandparents able to do for theirs. I don't mean to say or hint that I think they do, or even that, under existing circumstances, they can do better but I do not want that any one shall turn from the vexed questions of child development with the thought, that all that is said and much that is written is vanity of vanities.

We can carry our parallel with the physician a little farther with some profit, I think. The great surgeon from Vienna traveled thousands of miles a few months ago, to perform a delicate operation that baffled the combined skill of many of Chicago's doctors. If this treatment proves what it at first promised, it will justify many times all that has been done. I suppose this man knew better than anyone else, the nature of the little girl's particular disorder, and as he did, if available he was the best man to try to relieve her.

And so in every child problem worthy of serious thought, I believe in the Providence of God, it was intended that there should be two who should be able to diagnose the disorder, and by mutual and concerted effort go very far each time in setting it straight. You

know who these two are. You know, too, better than I do, the sad picture all about us, not many squares away in all directions of the compass of how this is done violence to, and you know the results. We need not go to the poverty-stricken quarters of the town. We will find it everywhere, moral disease, mental weakness, bodily disorders, all following just as directly, and just as surely the neglect of unworthy parents, as any effect in the physical world follows its natural cause. Why is it so? With the natural instinct to preserve and protect the child, with the inborn desire on the part of the parent to have the child grow to a better state than the parent has enjoyed, with an honest effort to advance it in things that are really good; and with the mother and father-love which out-reach, and over-top all other considerations combined, with all of these and sometimes others working for each child, is it not a fair question of wonderment that the results are as disappointing as they are? Yet we face about, having confronted so many failures, and we read the words that were written of old, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he WILL not depart from it." We think we see so many failures, that we are ready to question the truth of it all, or to try to explain our difficulty by enveloping the whole in some question of mystical psychology.

We not infrequently hear the remark, what a fine fellow is so and so, and then the other, but how could he be otherwise with such a father and mother, but upon reflection we are baffled, for just across the street lives another lad with an environment just as choice, and with parents equally gifted, and this second

lad is a terror to the neighborhood, and an enigma to all who try to study the problems of child growth.

Why, you ask me, have we gotten into such a tangle in this presentation of a subject that usually is made to proceed in the orderly manner of a matter-of-fact science. Am I trying to persuade you of a thing, of which you will not be persuaded, that it is little less than vain to discuss, and argue and plan schemes for child training. I do not want to do so, but I do want to impress the truth of what I deeply feel, that the sad failures, allowing for the exceptions that fit every rule, are due to a neglect of those simplest of all laws which we call instinct, but which, in our highly civilized stage, we have relegated to our reason instead of instinct, and have oftentimes made sad havoc.

There are, we know, laws which govern growth, beginning back prior to the time of the birth of the infant, and extending on into the period which marks the passing of youth into manhood and womanhood. The great principle of mother love and father love, which is so difficult to define, but which we all recognize as an essential and ever present part of every normal man and woman, prompts instinctively to acts, which if we were to wait for wisdom or the learning of books to solve for us, would forever go unsolved. This brings us, as it seems to me, to the threshold of the basic principle in the education of the child.

Ernest-Seton-Thompson, in his beautiful stories, has interested the young people in the wonderful way nature has provided them with what their needs demand. The lesson we should gain from these same stories in connection with our work for the children, is to notice what an important part each animal has to play in his own education, or we had better say, not to

confuse terms, in his own training. Raggybug did not learn all his wonderful tricks at once, he had many a drill before they became second nature even to him. The pack that followed Lobo did not in one lesson learn to move in a body, as though they were but one. The mother teal made a marvelous passage by the overland route with her little ones, but none of them could lead a flock as she did until they had fortified instinct with much training; and so on, if we had time we might add illustration upon illustration to show how these wild animals, though gifted with native instinct above anything the human race possesses, yet notwithstanding this special endowment of instinct, they repeat and repeat their little performances until a perfection is attained, which is so clever, that we speak of it, if seen anywhere else than in its native place, as perfectly natural.

You see then where I have brought you. I hope my logic has been fairly sound, and we face, as it seems to me, the most fundamental principle in child training, the question of habit. It is no new topic, but it is rather modern in this respect, that the search lights of modern experimental psychology are demonstrating, that some of the good, old maxims of our grandparents are, though they never dreamed it, in perfect accord with the most advanced statements of the philosopher who sees in every thought of the intellect, a corresponding material phenomena in the gray matter of the brain cells.

I do not have to think that it was apparent to King Solomon, that there was any connection between his saying, which I have already emphasized by quoting, and the thought-tracks in the matter of the brain, but I am authorized in believing that these great truths

of which this is only one, and which are universal both in time and place, will harmonize most beautifully with all the true findings of modern thought.

If you are to train up a boy in the way he should go, you need to know how to train, the one you are to train, and the route of advance.

Each of these implies a host of side tracks, which have to be followed out for the sake of the help they can give us, but the three I have named, how to train, the one you train, and the road you go, as they bear on the question of habit, are more than enough for us. To attain to anything like a comprehensive acquaintance with the first, implies a general knowledge of the findings of modern psychology. To know the individual child brings us into touch, and into harmony with those modern writers who are laying great stress upon individuality in education, and of whom Preston W. Search, in his little book "An Ideal School," in Appleton's International Educational Series, is representative; and to have a just appreciation of the third of these three considerations, namely, the road to go, it seems to me necessitates a logical mind able to apply to the individual child, who at the time is the subject of consideration, whatever science and experience have taught.

I find the older some of us grow, the more fixed and settled we become in our conviction that the doctrine of education along the lines of least resistance, is very apt to fail in the results we want to reach. It is not the boy and girl of fifteen we must keep in view, the stress and strain of temptation to the boy at least I think you will find, will come to him later, and unless you have trained him in such a way, that you

are morally sure he can stand alone when the temptations press heavily upon him at college, or his first dip into the business world, when, perhaps for the first time in his life he has to come so close to vice as almost to touch it, I repeat, unless he has been trained with this in view, though right up to this time his parents may have felt that all was well with him, they have sadly miscalculated.

Dean Briggs of Harvard, who, as you all know, is thoroughly acquainted with the American youth from the core out, and whose knowledge of young men dates back into the period of school life and forward into college life and beyond, has said in substance, and I think there is little doubt but that he will keep on saying:—Is it illogical to infer that children taught at school along the so-called lines of least resistance, are intellectually spoiled children, flabby of mind and will? For any responsible work we want men of character, not men who, from childhood up, have been personally conducted and have had their education warped to the indolence of their minds.

Every intellectual effort has its moral aspect as well. A girl of twelve, in our school within the past five years, during her first week in school said to her teacher when one of the recess periods came round, "Teacher, please fix up my desk while I go to play." This little girl was fortunate in the possession of parents, who were capable of appreciating the trend of her previous training, and wisely took measures to counteract the growth of a habit, which, if trained, would have stood a fair chance of making her alike a burden to others as well as to herself. Dr. Martineau says "Virtually the student comes to his teacher with a bill of rights in his hands, and says "Mind,

you must not be dull, or I will go to sleep; you must attract me, or I shall not get on an inch; you must rivet my attention or my thoughts will wander." "Very well then," says the Doctor, "if such be your mood, go to sleep, do not get on an inch and let your attention wander." "I warn you," says he, "That this enervated mood is the canker of manly thought and action."

There is something tonic and bracing in this attitude of rebuff to the half-weakly, half insolent tone of so many of the young people of today. If you want us to be virtuous, heroic, learned and accomplished, they practically say to the church, the school, the college, to their parents, you will have to exert yourselves. We want to gratify you but will tolerate nothing dry, nothing hard, nothing ascetic. The duty of the preacher or of the professor, is to waft us to Heaven or Parnassus on gentle zephyrs; otherwise each must endure the pain of seeing us conclude to go somewhere else.

This is putting the matter rather strongly, I fancy you think, and so perhaps it is, but I could multiply to the limit of my allotted time, cases in my own experience that are not far enough removed from this. I recently came upon this sentence in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's excellent book concerning children, and this is her sentence:—"It is necessary in this world to like what you do, if you are to do anything worth while. One of the biggest of all our troubles is, that so many of us are patiently, and wearily doing what we do not like." At first sight this does not seem to harmonize with a terse sentence from Dean Briggs, given in the same lecture, from which I have already quoted:—"In practical life the job has to be done, and

the man must adapt himself to it or lose it," but I believe they harmonize in thought and intention when we read them in the context in which they occur.

There has been so much said and argued from the standard of the interest of the pupil, that the educational thought in some quarters has been greatly in danger of losing its poise, and of apparently undervaluing that sturdier discipline of work for work's sake, which has been the ground work that the best educational systems rest upon. Both in the home and the school it is possible to so sugar-coat all the tasks that are assigned to a child, that this element of work for work's sake is lost sight of, and as a result, the training we are pleading for amounts to little.

Power to drudge at distasteful tasks someone has said, he considers the test of faculty, the price of knowledge, and the matter of duty, and that without this, the stuff is in no man that will make him either the true scholar, or the true Christian. This to be sure does not sound much like the remark I read you from Charlotte Perkins Gilman; she argues that the child must like what he does. The other that the child must drudge at distasteful tasks, and certainly between these two stretches a field full of educational difficulties. I don't know that I want to harmonize them, but I think we shall find at least a partial adjustment when we read her next sentence:—"One of the biggest of all our troubles is, that so many of us are patiently and wearily doing what we do not like."

There is such a thing, and I want to plead most earnestly for it, as training a child to do what is assigned, on the high ground of duty, the responsibility rests with the trainer. Make-shifts, and clap-trap

have to be set aside, and he must have a perspective of sufficient range to enable him to judge of the end from the beginning. If the end does not justify it, let it be given up and not entered upon; if it does, let it be pursued with all resoluteness, and in time the elements of patience and weariness from doing what we do not like, will have gone, and in their place there will be substituted the sense of duty.

When we reflect that interest cannot always be the ruling motive of our work, that as men and women we have to face sterner stuff in the realities than we can guess at as children, let us lay as secure foundations as we can against the time to come. The foundation must be stronger than the building that is to rest upon it. You and I have only to do with the first, the other will go up, story by story, it may be with us as onlookers, or we may have passed off the scene, certain it is, that all the effective work we do in the rearing of the building we call character, must be done with the foundation stones. And this is training, the first of the three elements that enter into the Wise Man's counsel.

And in leaving it I want to quote again from Dean Brigg's inspiring words, "Training is the discipline that teaches a man to set labor above whim; to develop the less promising parts of his mind, as well as the more promising; to make five talents ten, and two five; to see that, in his specialty, he shall work better and enjoy more for knowing something outside of his specialty; to recognize the connection between present toil and future attainment, so that the hope of future attainment creates pleasure in present toil; to understand that nothing can be mastered without drudgery, and that drudgery in preparation for service

is not only respectable, but beautiful; to be interested in every study, no matter how forbidding; to work steadily and resolutely until, through long practice, and it may be after many failures, he is trusted to do the right thing, or something near it, mechanically, just as the trained pianist instinctively touches the right note."

I believe, my friends, it is training much like this that we must seek for, and persevere in if we wish to realize for our boys and girls, the end the sage had in view. It is strenuous, but it can be kindly. It is constant but it need not be exhausting. It has the end in view, and no intermediate place, and it will prove, I believe, far more comprehensive and satisfying than any of the modern make-shifts, because it has for its ultimate object on the part of parent and teacher alike, "To engrain into the pupil that assortment of habits that shall be most useful to him throughout life." As Prof. James says in his *Talks to Teachers*, "Education is for behavior, and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists."

Were we to take up the three elements in King Solomon's dictum, in order of their importance, I think we should certainly discuss the child first, but I have chosen the different order because I wanted to dwell at greatest length on the training, and pass the other two in briefer review.

The individual child! What a host of questions for discussion the very title prompts! As each child has a character of his own, differing at so many points from the standard which our previous training and prejudice have given us, we recognize that common justice demands a fair acquaintance on our part, as parent and teacher, with the natural peculiarities of the

child. The question of inherited traits, of environment, of temperament, moral characteristics, intellectual and physical, embracing, as they do, so much in detail, all ask for a close study, but so compensating in their returns, that it constitutes the chief claim of a teacher's calling, and more than anything else, I think, exalts it to the position of a profession, because it represents a specialized field of work, demanding special knowledge of a high order, and great experience. How often have I said to a father, "Does perfect openness exist between thee and thy son, on all matters concerning his interests?" and often, too often, I find that on one vitally important matter, he has been too long silent, so long indeed that the practice of keeping information from the parent has become confirmed into a habit.

The best human safeguard, and I feel that I speak advisedly when I say it, the best human safeguard a young man can have is a perfectly open relation with his parents, and this is a relationship which a teacher as such cannot of right claim. Nature has done her part in giving to the child that open and honest confidence in a parent's love, that prompts him to tell the parent all that concerns him, and that parent, I fancy, does violence to his child's best interest, who grows restive under the trial of listening to much that is very trivial. If he is not watchful, the day will come, and often years before he expects it, when from some filthy source will be poured into his little child's mind, pictures which forever destroy the perfection of that mirror, which up to now reflected a perfect image. The sad picture is made doubly sad, you have lost your child's complete confidence.

There is something he hides from you, and he has engrafted upon himself a habit which may grow stronger with time, and your child has been introduced to questions, about which it is of prime importance that he should have knowledge, but it has come through a channel, the very last that you would have chosen.

By fostering the closest friendship between father and son, by interesting himself in every detail of a son's daily life, in short, by knowing in the spirit of love, and never in the spirit of censure all that the son knows, a father can do much; a mother may often do more, for nothing ever exalts itself in a boy's mind above the friendship of a good woman, and chiefest of these to all of us is the love of a saintly or sainted mother.

I cannot leave this topic without being more specific, for I believe where perfect openness exists between parent and child, you really know the child in the spirit King Solomon intended when he said, "Train him up in the way he should go;" and I believe we owe it to our children to be most open with them on those very subjects where the hazards are greatest. There is, I know, from my own personal experience with boys whom I have been thrown with the past score of years, a want of filial courage at critical moments, which can only be accounted for by a false reticence in early years when an affectionate freedom should exist between father and son. I want to read you what some one says who has had great experience in the training of youth, and whose outlook on the whole question stretches to a far horizon. My own experience is very limited beside his, but his statements only confirm me in my previously formed conclusions and strengthen me in my feeling, that a

school that can have the home atmosphere pervade it, and where brothers and sisters, boys and girls, mingle together under proper supervision and restraint just as they would in the family life, after all, goes farthest toward meeting the difficulties that inevitably exist.

The extract I purpose reading is this:—"The earliest important cause of reticence between parent and child, the longest continued, the fiercest, and the most morbidly silent temptation, the temptation most likely to scorch and blight a whole life and the lives of those who come after, the temptation most likely to lead through passion to reckless selfishness, and through shame to reckless lying, is the manifold temptation in the mysterious relation of sex to sex.

No subject needs, for the health of our sons, and for the protection of our daughters, to be brought earlier out of the region of alluring and forbidden exploration, into the light of wholesome truth. Out of the category of the unspeakable into the category of things, which, though talked of seldom, may be talked of freely between father or mother and son. Temptation, passion, will exist always; but temptation and passion, which must be nursed or suppressed in secret, are far more insidious, far less conquerable. Moreover, temptation and passion, when confided to a father or a mother by a child who is struggling to do right, lose half their danger. The strength of those nearest and dearest buoys up our own; and the fear of confessing a sin, a false fear when once the sin is committed, may be wholesome as a safeguard. No parent can begin to be in a frank relation to his son, if he has left the son to pick up in the street, and in the newspaper, all his knowledge of the laws to which

he owes his life; yet, as things stand, this most vital of all subjects, is often the one subject about which a young man shrinks from talking with any but contemporaries as ignorant as himself."

I need say little more. My plea is for a fuller confidence between parent and child. Believe me as true as is the axiom that the greater always includes the less, so true is it that if the parent neglects to cultivate a son's confidence in the important interests I have just alluded to, he has failed to know his child. His other training in the abstract may be almost faultless, and the plans which he has made for his son may be the best; but I am sure he is losing an opportunity to live up to the full measure of the advice, which is the text of our discourse this morning.

We have dwelt on two phases of our topic, the training and the child, and there remains the third consideration, the *way* he should go. It is so intimately associated with the other two, that much that has been said applies to it as well as to them; but there are a few thoughts which especially pertain to it, and I want to emphasize them. I have heard people of some experience say, that the honor system never works with children or people of immature minds. It may seem to work in so many cases for so long a time that one's faith in its efficiency is almost established, but after all only to receive a shock made the severer by its suddenness.

To my mind there is no more beautiful parallel in the New Testament, than the little child as the emblem of purity and innocence. "Except ye be converted and become as little children." We accept it, and then go forth and speak of the innate sinfulness of our boys, and the naughty ways of our girls, and

say they come by them naturally. I think we all have implicit faith in the little ones up to a certain point, but we do violence to, and discourage the best that is in them by allowing a spirit of distrust to enter in, and that which *we* work for logically and arrive at by degrees, the child grasps by instinct, so that this spirit of distrust on their part has hardly gained any foothold with us before it has become a real part of the child's possessions, and we are responsible. Truth, simple, unadulterated and very plain, no subterfuges, is the only antidote for this, and is, I am sure, one of the most important sign-boards to the way the child should go.

If the so-called honor system cannot prevail in a school, and I believe it is very rarely feasible and wise, it is not, I think, the fault of the thing itself, but is due rather to the imperfection of our living below the privileges of the ideals which we would like to follow. Another important sign-board is—honesty. This implies more than the nonappropriation to ourselves of what is another's. It stands for honesty of intention and endeavor, and if these be real and genuine, what the world calls honesty will take care of itself.

Another pointer-board is that of fidelity to made or implied promises. I believe we will agree that the little child has a marvelous apprehension of the sacredness of a trust, but so early is this blighted by what he sees in the world of his elders about him, that the first lesson in dishonoring engagements is given before the parent is aware.

There are many other sign-boards that the young need in conspicuous places, to point out to them the way they should go, and in addition to these, they need kindly and patient guides. How very often we,

who have accepted the responsibility of a life calling to this very end, fail—fail so signally of the high aim we have placed before us! None here appreciate it more painfully than I do myself; but there is never a time for faltering. The problems today are as important as those of yesterday, and with all the helps at the door of the parent and teacher of the present, we have even a better right than our grandparents had, of accepting the saying of King Solomon as our fundamental belief, and endeavoring with a renewed aspiration each morning, under God's guidance, and by His grace, to bring it to pass in all these young lives that under Providence are influenced by us.

