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bad habits. for



The first point of importance to notice with regard to moral instruction is that, in the words of the proverb, example is better than precept. This is too often forgotten by parents, especially in the case of young children. Many parents are emphatic in inculcating truthfulness, but, on very slight occasion think it advisable to escape the importunity or curiosity of children by deception, if not by actual falsehood. They fondly hope that the deceit will pass unnoticed; but children are keener observers than they are generally supposed to be, and very quick to detect any discrepancy between preaching and practice on the part of their elders. It is therefore imperative that parents in all cases should themselves act up to the moral precepts that they inculcate upon their children. Another important point in the home training of children is careful selection of associates of their own age who will not teach them bad habits. For the same reason, especially in rich houses, great care must be taken that the servants do not exert an evil influence on their moral character.

Bad servants teach a child to be deceitful and disobedient by secretly helping him to enjoy forbidden pleasures, which of course they warn him he must on no account mention to his parents. They may also render a child rude and overbearing by servile submission to his caprices and bad temper. If we now pass from home to school life, we see that the first great disadvantage that the school-master labours under is that it is very difficult for him to gain the affections of his pupils. A father can generally appeal to filial love as an inducement towards obeying the moral rules he prescribes. But a school-master appears to boys in the position of a task-master, and is too often without reason regarded by them as their natural enemy, particu-

larly by those whom he has to punish for idleness or other faults, that is, by the very boys who stand most in need of moral instruction. Even when a school-master has got over this hostile feeling, he finds that the large amount of daily teaching expected from him leaves him little leisure to give his pupils friendly advice in the intervals between lessons. It has been proposed in India that formal lessons in morality should be given in schools and colleges. But it is to be feared that lessons so delivered from the school-master's desk or the professor's chair would produce little more effect than is obtained by the writing of moral sentences in copy-books.

In the great public schools of England the masters have opportunities of delivering moral lessons under more favourable conditions, when they preach the weekly sermon on Sunday in the sacred precincts of the school chapel. The Indian teacher has no such opportunity of using his eloquence in guiding the members of his school towards moral enthusiasm. Yet he can do much by the power of personal example, and by creating in the minds of his pupils admiration for the great English writers, who in prose or verse give expression to the highest moral thoughts.

In addition to this, all intellectual education is in proportion to its success a powerful deterrent from vice, as it enables us to see more clearly the evil effects that follow from disobedience to moral rules.