

Choice Selections.

[FROM OUR Exchanges.]

Education—Should It Be Christian?

If you want your nation religious, then make your education religious. It requires no argument to show that the nation of the future will have no existence aside from the children of today. Mothers are now singing their lullaby to the statesmen of tomorrow. They are to day holding in their arms those who shall print our pictures, sing our songs, manage our enterprises, preach our sermons, write our epitaphs and build our monuments. We are making our own hereafter by the way we train our boys and girls. These facts do not lie within the domain of controversy. They are self-evident.

Another fact should be placed alongside of this, namely, that no nation can long survive, if resting on a purely intellectual basis. The finest intellects, when not safe-guarded by religion, are liable to wreck. Having no moral ballast they are subject to a hundred winds and cross currents. They may sail well but they are never sure of the haven. There must be some ultimate appeal of conscience. There must be some standard of right and wrong by which all equities are to be defined. If an educated intellect is to be that standard, then you will have as many standards as you have intellects and their conceptions will be warped by individual inclination, by preference, prejudice or even by intellectual training. Every man thus becomes his own standard and there is no appeal to a higher law.

There must, therefore, of necessity, be a recognized, ultimate standard, a higher authority to which all alike can appeal. That higher law is the will of God, and this will is found only in his word. So that, aside from any moral or spiritual benefit which might accrue to the individual, the very perpetuity of the nation itself demands religious instruction on the part of the children. The duty of the nation, therefore, is, not only to educate, but to educate religiously, to give proper conceptions of right and wrong, and to place before the mind of the child the true standard of appeal in all such cases.

But there is a duty that arises from another source—the parental. Parents are instructed to bring their children up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." One of the highest tributes ever paid to mortal man was God's estimate to Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." When God gave his commandments to Israel he said to all parents: "Thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." There is no authority for confining this religious instruction to the home. The child's education is not ended there, and this instruction is to be carried wherever the child's education is carried, whether it be to the public school, the academy, the college or the university. The command is: "Thou shall teach them," whether by self or by proxy. Parental responsibility does not cease when the child comes under the tutelage of another.

There is, however, another reason why education should be Christian, which if not greater, is certainly not less than either of the two just mentioned, and that is the child himself. By all the laws of God and by all the higher and nobler instincts of man the child should be instructed in the truths of the religion, otherwise it

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is doomed through life to lose the great end of life, the higher pleasure and the glory of living, and is condemned through the lamentable folly of its guardians—the parents and the state—to a dark and hopeless eternity. Every instinct of that child's present and future demands that it be started right in the great work and mission of this world.

People nowadays are too much afraid of being too strict with their children. But it is this very strictness—not harshness, not cruelty—that has made the world's best men and women. It is related of Dr. W. L. Breckenridge

that he once said to his mother: "Mother, I think you ruled us with too rigid a rod in our boyhood. It would have been better had you used gentler methods." The good old mother straightened herself up and said: "Well William, when you have raised up three as good preachers as I have then you can talk."—United Presbyterian.

A man's charity to those who differ from him upon great and difficult questions will be in the ratio of his own knowledge of them, the more knowledge the more charily.—Norman MacLeod.