EARLY EDUCATION
THE BASIS OF CHARACTER.

A Sermon Preached by Rev. Alexander Alison, Pastor of the Alexander Presbyterian Church, Nineteenth and Green Sts., Philadelphia.

TEXT.—"Train up a Child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.—Proverbs xxii. 6.

If any one should ask the question, "Why do I lay so much emphasis upon the training of the young?" as I shall hope to develop in the course of this address, I would be constrained to reply, because I believe that such teaching lies at the very foundation of all spiritual character; and because I feel in my own heart the benefit of such instruction.

There is, perhaps, no text of scripture of more vital importance to parents, guardians, and those who are in any way connected with the training of the young, than this one. It not only establishes a fact, but also conveys a promise. I am aware that there are those who have taken exception to this passage of the inspired Canon. There are those who say that in some cases the text is untrue.

How can any one, who believes the Bible to be the inspired Word of the living God do this? It may be that we imagine a possible exception, because we have not examined the subject in its every aspect.

This fact will probably discover itself as we proceed. People may argue, if they will, that in some cases children are so naturally prone to evil that all efforts to train them in the paths of rectitude and virtue will be futile; but I feel quite sure they cannot prove their point; they cannot establish their premise.

No deviation ever took place from the declaration of the text. No one can prove that a child trained up in the way he should go ever departed from it in after life.

But, methinks, I hear the remark: "Have not the children of pious parents, ministers of the gospel, for instance, departed in manhood and womanhood from the way of truth, religion and virtue?" Admitted.

Sometimes they have; but they have not departed from the way in which they were trained. Ministers, like other people, are human, and, therefore, liable to err in the training of their little ones.

They are apt to be *inconsiderate* in their affection; and by excessive indulgence, perhaps, and kindness unnecessary, unconsciously train their children in the way of wrong. It is possible to hurt, yea, even as the old aphorism says, "to kill with kindness."

I have heard a minister of my acquaintance say, "I believe it is our true wisdom to always exercise the spirit of forgiveness and forbearance when they err, rather than to punish."

This may be true, and doubtless is so in a certain sense, but not so altogether. What says the sacred writer? "He that spareth the rod hateth his child," *i. e.*, his child will grow up to draw out his hatred and dislike; and "sparing the rod" is not an evidence of love, but the converse. At a certain age legal suasion is far more forcible than moral. Let us learn a lesson from our Heavenly Father's dealings with those who are His believing children. God, who is ever considerate in His love and affection for the heirs of glory "*chastens* those whom He loves," and yet, on the other hand, we are also informed, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

If the rod is spared, the child soon comes to know how easy and lenient is the parent or guardian, and fear (*i. e.*, respect for his laws) being absent, he indulges in various kinds of disobedience, mischief and pranks. It is one of the attributes of the Christian nature to "fear God" as well as "keep His commandments." Not with a *timid* fear, but with a becoming reverence and godly fear and awe—a fear that is deeply mixed with deference and respect. The same principle should be implanted in the mind of the child towards its earthly parent.

A parent who is strict in his discipline is always most respected. The same is true of the teacher, whether in the secular or Sabbath-school, although the kinds of discipline are, of course, very much different.

Where proper discipline is enforced the child will respect authority without being afraid, except there has been a violation of the law; and if the little boy or girl knows assuredly that penalty will certainly be enforced when laws are broken, or commands set at variance, he or she will soon come to avoid the repetition of those little offences which are displeasing to the parent, and if allowed to go unpunished, are "the little foxes that spoil the vines."

Children often know more, and are sharper and shrewder than we give them credit for. They soon discover whether we are inclined to indulge them in their faults and little follies, or to pay out the full penalty of their childish indiscretions; and as surely as they do so in infancy, so surely shall they carry these tendencies into manhood and womanhood. There is no doubt at all of the truth of our text. It is just as great a truism as Solomon or any one ever uttered. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." But some one may remark: "What are you going to make of *disposition*?" "Well, I believe there is much, very much, in the influence of disposition. I believe there is more truth than poetry in the well-known adage, "Blood will tell." I believe, also, that the same theories that prevail among men in regard to the humbler members of the animal kingdom, will not be found absurd when applied to God's highest creation—man. If a gentleman desires a valuable horse, he is anxious—earnestly so, to know its antecedents, its pedigree. Nor does this prevent his exercising great diligence in the training of the colt. He does not allow the animal to grow up merely trusting to its record for admirable results. No! he uses, if anything, more care in such a case, believing that his attention to the laws of equestrian culture and development will be more richly rewarded than in ordinary cases. But with an animal of good disposition inherited from a noble sire, or dam, he knows how comparatively easy is the work of producing a pleasing effect. So it is with the *genus homo*. Where deep-seated, genuine morality and stable character is the fortune bequeathed by one's parents and grand-parents, the work of fulfilling the text is comparatively easy. Where, however, no such thing exists the faithful training of the godly parent or guardian will undoubtedly produce marvelous results in proof of the statement found in the text, "Train up a child, etc."

But I cannot dwell. Time will not permit me to consider as fully as might be desired the subject of natural disposition—that is, the disposition inherited—as a factor in the education of the child.

It is proper, however, to say in leaving this part of our subject, that the man or woman who fully understands the idea involved in the simple word "train," will make the first part of the study of the child, his disposition. Everything depends on the discovery of this. Such knowledge is to the work of education, or "leading out" what the foundation is to a house. No two children are alike, and here is the point where they mainly differ, especially in the moral aspect of the question.

But a word ere I pass to the more particular elucidation of the text on what we sometimes hear said about the children of ministers and other prominent Christian workers.

Some one says, "Minister's sons are the hardest cases." Is this true? Statistics have shown that *ninety-six* per cent. of the sons of the Manse turn out fine Christian men, a large number of them, like their fathers, ministers. Of the four per cent. who do not, it is said that three-fourths of that four per cent. go down by reason of strong drink *i. e.*, outside influence which cannot be entirely guarded against. The same high rates hold good conversely in the ranks of those who are from parents of vicious habits and blunted moral sensibilities. Why then do people talk so about the children of ministers? Because they hear more about them and their households, doubtless. In leaving this, let me ask you individually to think of the number of minister's children you have ever known to go to the bad. You will find the number limited, I believe. People frequently talk without deep pre-meditation, and repeat what they hear without giving it digestion. And now let us examine the injunction of the text after which we may note its promise.

We notice (1st) we are called upon to "Train." It is to be observed that we are not told to "*Teach* a child in the way, etc." No, it is "Train." Now, what is the difference? It is very striking! I will use a homely, yet, I think, appropriate illustration. Walter, we shall suppose comes dashing into the parlor, throws down his coat on the floor of the hall and off again with a rush to play. His mother shouts after him: "Walter, Walter, come here." The obedient boy at once returns to his mother's presence. She says: "Walter, my boy, you ought not to have thrown your coat on the floor; please do not do it again." In the meantime, however, she has picked it up herself. She has made a mistake; she has not gone quite far enough. She has simply *taught*, not "trained" Walter. If she had said "Walter, you will be good enough to hang that coat in its proper place." She has shown him how to carry out her wishes. She had trained her boy into the act of *doing* properly his duty.

And we thus see a profound difference between merely telling a child what to do, and having him do it on the spot. It is the difference between *teaching* and *training*. The text does not say "Teach," but "Train." The latter method, therefore, is the method of the text, and doubtless were this more literally carried out we would find very few persons who would take exception to this portion of Holy Writ.

But (2d) children *can* be trained. Is this a fact? Yes. We have just been noticing this very point. Children *can* be trained. When children are born into the world they are born with all the latent powers of manhood within them. Time and nature are required to develop those powers and bring them into play. All the physical, mental and moral properties are there. Objectively they require cultivation; subjectively they can not help developing; they will do so in one of two directions, either towards the goal of excellence, which alone is found in the path of duty, or towards the highway of worthlessness and vagabondism, which ends in nothing good. There are in every child great possibilities. Let us never forget this fact. The college president raised his hat to the student because he saw in him the possibilities of a future President of the Republic, recognized this idea. The brain with all its fire is caged in a little spark that time alone and culture may fan into a flame that will illumine the world by its brightness. History abundantly proves the truth of this position.

What is true of the physical and mental, is equally true of the moral. Certain causes produce certain effects. Just so; if invigorating influences are brought to bear upon the physical development of the child, so shall the body be properly matured, and healthy in its manhood, making due allowance, of course, as already indicated, for hereditary taint or premonitory disposition. It is training, however, oftentimes the training of nature alone, that makes, in a large sense, the healthy body. It is simply surprising how much can be done for the body diseased by inheritance. The science of gymnastics, the laws of hygiene, etc., are now so well understood that even an unhealthy body can be much longer kept in connection with the soul than people generally imagine.

It is wonderful how by attention to the simple laws of healthy living in the training of a child with a tendency, for instance, to consumption, the evil day—the day of death—can be warded off to an indefinite period. Nor is all this a whit less true, as we have seen, in relation to the mind, nor less worthy our belief when argued in reference to the soul. It is natural for the youth to learn; he must either grow up in solid knowledge or stolid ignorance.

If good, true knowledge is laid before his mental vision he will become a scholar; if only rubbish is presented to his mind, such as dime novels and other trashy literature, then secular ignorance, but devilish knowledge will be the result. He must either grow upward or downward: naturally, the downcourse is his choice. He requires no aid in that direction: upward, however, he requires guidance, *i. e.*, *training*.

It is a remarkable fact that no race or sect of people has ever been found where development upward was achieved without external assistance; in other words, without communication with an outside nation or nations higher up in the scale of civilization.

I am aware that Sir John Lubbock has endeavored to prove the contrary in his book on "The races," but Professor Flint, of Edinburgh, in his new book on "Theism," has completely demolished his premises, as i shown that he entirely begged the question. What is true of the races is true of the individual, for individuals, compose the races. *Training*, then, is necessary. External effort must be brought to bear upon the child physically, mentally, morally, if you would secure a rounded culture in these various channels of education or development, for the true derivation of education is—*E-duco*, *i. e.*, "I lead out." A child may be trained either way, up or down. Our text very strongly implies the fact. God would not have placed on record the language before us, "Train up a child, etc.," if it were not so. It is "train up." Your child then being susceptible of training, let him be early set in the proper path and he will continue to walk therein.

If he is taught early to desire God he will always be an admirer and a doer of it. Habit will become second nature. Good habits can be learned as well as bad ones, *but not so easily*. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

But, again, the text suggests also that youth is the time to train, and strongly implies that no other time will do.

It says, "Train up a child," not a full-grown person; such would be absurd. It would be in conflict not only with the conclusions of experience, but with the actual laws of nature. "As the bough is bent, the tree is inclined." is a well-known saying. If you bend the twig when it is green it will grow as bent; you cannot possibly bend a full-grown tree. If you wish to train a horse it is necessary that you begin with the colt. Begin then the work of culture—mental and spiritual—or as some people call it, moral—in youth. This is most emphatically the period of life referred to in the text. It is clearly shown, not only by these words, but by actual experience, that youth is the best, in fact, the only time to train in "wisdom's ways, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, etc." A child can be taught almost anything in infancy. He can be taught also to avoid and overcome as well as by neglect of teaching, to cherish that which is evil and degrading.

If the child has the tendencies in him after that which is vicious, you may root them out in youth, or at least so effectually subdue them that the better principles inculcated will prevail. You cannot do so, however, in after life, When the tares and the wheat have become so thoroughly incorporated that the tares have the upperhand, there is much danger of destroying the valuable cereal in the effort to uproot the useless wild growth. Discover, then, in time the evil, and commence the weeding process in childhood. The boy who is selfish with his brother or sister will likely be so as a man. Root it out! Teach him generosity and magnanimity early. Again, the boy who steals his mother's apples and pears, or even his mother's sugar, in childhood, is in danger of becoming largely dishonest in after life. Again, I say. Root it out! Train the children to shun the very appearance of evil. Show them what is right and wrong *now*, else you may depend upon it, you can not do it when they are old. Youth is the only time to bend the boy's will or the girl's nature. Train the children to tell the truth. Train them to *love* it. If this is done they will be truthful in manhood and womanhood. If this is neglected they will, perhaps, be liars, and universally mistrusted. Disregard for truth, for one's word is a terrible failing. Some one has said: "A liar is worse than a thief; you can hold the hands of the latter, but you cannot control the tongue of him whose falsehood is matter of common report." The law reaches the one, and scarcely touches the other.

But, this is not all. Our text leads us to consider another point of great importance.

"It says: "Train up a child in the way he *should* go," *i. e.*, not in the way he *would* go. It requires no labor to train in the way he *would* go; it is most emphatically nothing but labor if we would train them as says our text, *i. e.*, "up" as they "should go."

Children require no attention at all to grow as they *would*; but that is down. Let them alone and they will go in that direction naturally.

But someone argues thus: "I have seen children grow up neglected by their parents, and turn out well." Frankly admitted. They sometimes do, *but no thanks to the parents for it*.

The circumstances around them have been favorable fortunately, and therefor, they have imbibed those principles, not because they were taught them by preceptors, but because they received them from surroundings, and in some measure, perhaps, by inheritance. We have more reason to thank God frequently for our circumstances than many of us generally imagine. While circumstances do not form, they in a very emphatic sense confirm character. But to illustrate the point more fully and show the absurdity of such reasoning, let me remark that I have heard people say: "I believe those children who are allowed to grow up, regardless of the laws of healthful attention; those children who seem to roll mostly in the mud: who are continually exposed to the elements etc.; who are not kept covered with warm clothing and supplied with the other essentials to a healthy existence, turn out the hardiest and the strongest." Fallacious reasoning. I have not the slightest doubt that children who survive such unnatural treatment are really healthy, robust and strong. Otherwise they must have died.

In making such declarations as we have referred to, *i. e.*, that roughest treatment makes the strongest children, we are too often guided by particular, not general observation. We do not allow our vision to include sufficient territory. Our promises are wrong to begin with, therefore our conclusions cannot possibly be correct. We forgot the hundreds and thousands—aye! tens of thousands of children who have died from such neglect and exposure. It really requires strong, healthy children physically, to withstand such treatment, and I am very much impressed with the thought that the children who survive such monstrous dealing are about one in every hundred of those so exposed, while the ninety and nine succumb to the neglect of nature's laws and lie concealed within the tomb, and far enough away from human observation.

There is a very large portion of our race—about one-half—which does not survive the age of *five*, and if the cause of death were really ascertained (as it cannot be by man), it would, doubtless, be found that neglect on the part of parents and nurses to pay proper attention to the demands of physical law in the care of the infants, had much to do with the fatal results. I venture to affirm that the exercise of a little study of the science of hygiene and the uses and effects of oxygen and carbon, together with a very large allowance of common sense on the part of those entrusted with the care of children of a tender growth, would lead to a large decrease in the ratio of infantile mortality.

What I have been saying in regard to the body, I also plead in reference to the higher, the intellectual and spiritual parts of the child. Parents, guardians, teachers, *all* connected with the education of the young, see to it that you are using every means to "train them up" not in the way they *would*, but "in the way they *should* go. The text is addressed to *you*: Who else can it mean?

Those who have been instructed with the intellectual and moral training of immortal—think of it—never-dying souls should realize, without delay, their great responsibility. The text is for *you*! Listen to its voice! Use every effort to obey its teaching.

And now that we have considered the injunction of the text, let us proceed to examine the important—yea, the practical query: What are a few of the ways in which we may be able to "train up a child in the way he should go?" that is, as I understand it, in the narrow way that leadeth unto everlasting life, for that is ever the idea of the Word of God.

Let us apply our minds to this one thought, for it is really the *sine qua non*—the *summum bonum* of all our effort in the cultivation of the child—*i. e.*, the whole child, intellect, affections, will.

It is of the highest importance before commencing to work on anything, that we should discover, if possible, its value, *e. g.*, a worker in gold or precious stones of any kind is more careful of the materials than an artificer in brass or iron would be. Jewelers require to be skilled workmen. Every particle of refuse made is precious: therefore, they must be careful in handling, or in the effort to improve, not to lose any of the value of the material; they must be careful in the selection and use of their tools; they must understand the intrinsic worth of that on which they are at work. Just so spiritually. Before applying the spiritual tools, *i. e.*, the Divinely ordained means (and God works by means—human instrumentalities) it is well that we should understand the value of the soul. And what is that? It is simply incalculable. No human arithmetic may discover the answer to our question; the science of mathematics is speechless in the presence of our problem. We must alone seek the answer in the Book of Holy Light. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" or "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

These children of yours and mine, as we remarked a moment ago, have immortal, never-dying souls. Do you realize it? Whether you do so or not, such is the fact. These precious, invaluable souls are destined to live forever, either in peace or misery, in happiness or woe, in Heaven or Hell.

If you are satisfied, then, concerning the importance of your charge, kindly do not allow the following hints to fall unheeded on your ears.

First. Have your own soul safe, my brother or sister! Be sure your own salvation is secure! Without this you will have no knowledge of how to conduct the higher spiritual education of your offspring. If you cannot speak French, or do not know the language yourself, you cannot teach it to your children. If you have never studied the art of chirography yourself, it is not within the range of possibility that you will be able to lead your offspring to distinction in the science of caligraphy, or even to master the common rules of writing. The same, spiritually.

If you do not possess an experimental acquaintance with Christ as a personal Saviour as he is revealed in the Gospel, you do not know *how* to serve Him, and cannot tell to others the wondrous story of redeeming grace. You cannot "*train*" your child to love Him. Secure, then, your own salvation. "Make your (own) calling and election sure," and then begin with family worship. This will have a wonderful effect. Never miss a day. If you cannot pray at the family altar, learn to. Never say can't; Christ can make you able. "I can do all things, through Christ, who strengtheneth me," says the apostle of the Gentiles. So may every believer also say. Hear again the promise, "My grace is sufficient."

If it is a very heavy burden for you to pray alone and extempore, get a good edition of family prayers, and read one every morning and evening.

If read in the proper spirit, why should not this be an excellent plea? Have singing also in your worship. Your child will be greatly impressed by this. Do not forget to train the young heart to love the praises of the Lord, and of Zion's Courts. The power of song is being felt in our religious work, but not sufficiently so. I notice that in a great many homes singing in family worship is neglected. Without this such worship may be very dry, tedious and uninteresting to the young.

I most emphatically urge this part of the service. Sometimes we hear complaints that congregational singing is being neglected in our churches, and blame is laid upon the well-trained choir. Is it not possible—yea, probable, that we are putting the blame on the wrong shoulders?

May it not be that the passing away in a large measure of the habit of the fathers to give praise its proper place in family worship is the most largely responsible for the lack of interest taken in the public singing of the sanctuary?

Is not this a reasonable suggestion? But again, train your child to pray; teach him a prayer of some kind; the Lord's Prayer, for example, or any other prayer; but *train him to pray*. Have him commit to memory little hymns, religious poems, verses of scripture, the shorter Catechism, etc. Tell him as early as possible of Jesus and His love. Tell him often "The old, old story," not only often, but continually.

Do not *bore* him; but, do it in a pleasant, child-like way. Every parent and person accustomed with children, knows what is meant by that. Children have the utmost confidence in their parents; take advantage of this, and they will grow up *not infidels*, but firm believers.

But again. Take them to the church as soon as possible. Never mind if they require to be taken out a few times. If you take them early, they will probably grow up, and on looking back be unable to remember a period when they did not go to the House of the Lord, I am afraid that many of our churches are behind on this point: very largely behind. How many of our Sabbath-school children attend the services of the sanctuary?

Occasionally we may observe the little ones coming to the Sabbath-school, and not to the services of public worship. I am glad, however, to be able to express the opinion that there is an improvement taking place in this respect.

What kind of lessons are parents who act in this way teaching their children? How much interest will such children ever take in attending church when grown? Do you wish to know why so many of our boys in all our villages, towns, and cities are found hanging around the corners of the streets on Sabbath? Because they were not "trained" to go to church by their parents. Most of these boys you will thus meet on the Sabbath were in the habit of going to a Sabbath-school when they were children. Ask them and they will tell you so. I have asked many of them, and have found it so. They went to a Sabbath-school of some church when they were children: but now they are no longer children; they have lost the idea of going to Sabbath-school altogether, because, you know, it has become fashionable to consider the Sabbath-school only for children; (I wish instead of calling it "Sabbath-school" the name would be changed to "The Church Studying the Bible," *i. e.*, the *whole* church, young and old in common) and that as pupils leave the public school when they have reached a certain age, so may all those who attend the school in connection with the church. This idea is not only held in theory, but actually carried out in practice. Parents are largely to blame in too many instances; they allow the children to feel that the Sabbath-school is the children's church (*it is not*); therefore, they allow them to do all their worshipping there, and when they grow old enough to feel no longer called upon to be scholars, they go outside; and, never having been trained to go to church they remain *outside*.

I have said it frequently, and I love to say it again and again, for the sake of emphasis, if it is impossible for the child to go both to church service and Sabbath-school, then let the child miss the Sabbath-school rather than the church. Nothing on earth will compensate for the loss of regular attendance on the House of God; nor for your negligence as parents and guardians in allowing it.

Oh, that my words might reach the heart of every father and mother in this great city of Philadelphia, and that the result thereof might be an attendance, even at the exercise of great self-denial on the part of all concerned of your offspring on the worship of God in His Holy Temple.

As I have said before, bring them just as early as possible to the church. Never mind even if they do make an occasional sound God bless the children; their sweet, treble tones can never be aught but musical to all who love the Lord in sincerity and in truth. Surely, He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," never meant us to go to the Holy place without them.

But now that I have spoken thus fully of church attendance, let me further say, do not neglect to send them *also* to Sabbath-school. Never mind if they are not as well dressed as other people's children; this cannot always be. It is absolute folly for people to vie with each other in this way.

Many people are so much exercised how they are to cater most to the tastes and etiquette of society that they have very little time left to look after the moral, not to speak of the higher spiritual welfare of their children. Avoid this! You will be none the less thought of by those whose friendship is worth having, that your child has worn the same suit for a couple of seasons, if you can purchase clothing that will endure so long. I cannot. However, in these days of such cheap, ready-made wearing apparel, such an excuse requires no more than a passing notice.

But I have said, send your child to Sabbath-school; now, I add, send him to the Sabbath-school of *your*, not his choice. You are the best judge, not the child.

I have heard children say: "I am going to so and so Sabbath-school; there they give the best library books—that is, those containing the silliest stories, for these, by such children are of course considered the best. In so and so Sabbath-school, they always have the nicest Christmas tree, and the teachers give the handsomest presents at Christmas, and there the pic-nic in summer is just splendid."

Such a commentary on the Christian training of the professedly Christian home! such a reflection on the boasted Christian education of the day! The very idea of a child going where he or she likes; why the thing seems, in the highest sense, absurd.

It is not, after all, so very important which of the evangelical Sabbath-schools a child goes to, but the parent should choose. If a child is allowed to go to one school to-day, and another to-morrow, or two in one day, he will not be likely to remain by one church when he reaches the age of maturity.

If you desire to have your children Presbyterians send them to a Presbyterian Sabbath-school: if you wish to make them Methodists send them to the Methodist Sabbath-school, and so on. Remember the Sabbath-school is in quite an important sense, the nursery of the church. The Roman Catholic Church has taught us a grand lesson in looking after the children. It would be well for our children as well as the Church, if we would follow their example here. It was Bishop Bellarmin, I believe, who said, "give me the first eight years of a child and you may have the rest." But, once more, insist upon your child going *regularly* to the Sabbath-school which you select, as well as to church. Depend upon it the habit of going to church one day and staying at home another, will grow up with the child, and it will, in all probability, be found that in after years, irregularity in church attendance will be the result.

Be also enjoined to discourage your child in finding fault with the teacher. Do not grumble because the teacher does not say all that could be said about the lesson; no one can. Rather tell your child what you discover has been omitted. Rejoice that the teacher does your child some good. Remember that the teacher's work is a labor of love, prompted, probably by the highest desire for the saving of your child from eternal death.

But, finally, we notice in the third and last place, the promise of the text: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and *when he is old he will not depart from it*,

How cheerful, how encouraging! Work that the promise may be realized in your experience, my Christian father and mother.

Pray for your children. "Thus did Job continually," are the words of the inspired writer. Let us follow his example. The language of the word is "pray without ceasing," etc., and while you pray *work* and use the means—for God surely helps those, and only those who help themselves. The Lord will guide you—only trust Him. Now, oh, now give yourselves to the task! Nay, not the task, the pleasure.

There can be no doubt that on the great day of final account all who have had aught to do with the education of the young will be held heavily accountable, for great had been the privilege laid upon them of training the young in the knowledge of holy things while their minds were pliable, and "to whom much is given, of him shall much be required."

Oh, that we all might be more concerned about the young. They are the lambs of the fold. We must not allow them to wander off like some of the older sheep who ought to know better and do not. As it is with the confirmed inebriate—the habitual drunkard—so it is with sinners who are Gospel hardened—and there are such in every place—there is no use in hoping to do much with them. We must, however, do what we can, even with them. We must never falter or waver in our faith in the promise of the Lord. Even in working with those most hardened or depraved, for,

> "As long as life its terms extends,
> Hope's blest dominion never ends,
> For while the lamp holds on to burn,
> The greatest sinner may return."

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

But we must in the future turn our attention very largely and mainly to the safety of the lambs. They have not yet become polluted, they have not yet become devoted to the enemy, and they are not yet entirely the servants of sin. Listen to the inspired appeal: "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." And furthermore, the grand promise: "Those who seek me early *shall* find me." Oh, friends, let us labor for the saving of children. Let us warn them before the false steps are made. Let us by earnest, conscientious and loving teaching throw around them a fence, a mighty wall of conscience which will stand them effectual stead in the evil day, and which, when they go out into the giddy whirl of the mighty city, in the midst of the wicked world, all the battering-rams of evil will be unable to penetrate or break down. To this end, see to it, that the blessed Word of God—the Bible—is thoroughly taught them in childhood. Any boy or girl who goes out into society and life well founded upon the solid rock of Divine truth, will, like the magnificent lighthouse in the midst of the dashing breakers, stand grandly, unmoved when the waves of sin and the storms of temptation threaten to carry everything before them. Let parents, guardians, teachers and others be only faithful in presenting before the young the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, even Jesus, blessed Jesus; and withal endorsing their teaching with a "holy walk and conversation that becometh the Gospel of Christ," I am willing to leave the next generation and the glory of the Church of Christ for the future to unfold. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY MARCH 17, 1889.

Christ's Love to the Young.

LESSON TEXT.

(Mark 10: 13-22. Memory verses, 21-22.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: *Jesus the Mighty Worker.*

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*—John 14 : 11.

LESSON TOPIC: *How to Serve.*

Lesson Outline:
1. Child-likeness Commanded, vs. 13-16.
2. Self-Confidence Discouraged, vs. 17-21 *l. c.*
3. Self-Surrender Demanded, vs. 21, 22.

GOLDEN TEXT: *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.*—Mark 10 : 14.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—Mark 10 : 13-22. How to serve.
T.—Matt. 19 : 13 : 30. Matthew's parallel narrative.
W.—Luke 18 : 15-30. Luke's parallel narrative.
T.—Matt. 18 : 1-14. The model child.
F.—1 Cor. 1 : 18-31. Lowly serving.
S.—Phil. 2 : 1-8. Model service.
S.—Dan. 1 : 3-21. Serving nobly.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. CHILD-LIKENESS COMMENDED.

I. Children Welcomed:

Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not (14).
He called to him a little child (Matt. 18 : 2).
Forbid them not, to come unto me (Matt. 19 : 14).
Let the children first be fil'ed (Mark 7 : 27).
To you is the promise, and to your children (Acts 2 : 39).

II. Children Commended:

Of such is the kingdom of God (14).
Except ye turn, and become as little children (Matt. 18 : 3).
Of such is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19 : 14).
Of such is the kingdom of God (Luke 18 : 16).
As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk (1 Pet, 2 : 2).

III. Children Blessed:

He took them in his arms and blessed them (16).
Whoso shall receive one such little child....receiveth me (Matt. 18 : 5).
He laid his hands on them (Matt. 19 : 15).
Straightway the damsel rose up, and walked (Mark 5 : 42).
Be ye....imitators of God, as beloved children (Eph. 5 : 1).

1. "The disciples rebuked them." (1) The source of rebuke; (2) The objects of rebuke; (3) The ground of rebuke.
2. "He was moved with indignation." (1) The objects of the Lord's indignation; (3) The grounds of the Lord's indignation.
2. "He took them in his arms, and blessed them." (1) The Lord and the little ones; (2) His arms and his blessing.

II. SELF-CONFIDENCE DISCOURAGED.

I. Eager Seeking:

There ran one to him, and kneeled to him (17).
Master, what good thing shall I do? (Matt. 19 : 16).
What shall I do to inherit eternal life? (Luke 18 : 18).
Brethren, what shall we do? (Acts 2 : 37).
Sirs, what must I do to be saved? (Acts 16 : 30).

II. Confident Boasting:

All these things have I observed from my youth (20).
What lack I yet? (Matt. 19 : 20).
Thou who gloriest in the law (Rom. 2 : 23).
No flesh should glory before God (1 Cor. 1 : 29).
Not of works, that no man should glory (Eph. 2 : 9).

III. Still Lacking:

One thing thou lackest (21).
A man which had not no a wedding-garment (Matt. 22 : 11).
One thing thou lackest yet (Luke 18 : 22).
All....fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3 : 23).
They did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God (Rom. 10 : 3)

1. "Good Master, what shall I do?" (1) The courteous address; (2) The momentous inquiry; (3) The infallible instructor.
2. "All these things have I observed from my youth." (1) A broad sweep; (2) A steady continuance; (3) A bold assertion.
3. "One thing thou lackest." (1) A single lack; (2) A serious lack; (3) A fatal lack.

III. SELF SURRENDER DEMANDED.

I. Surrender Directed:

Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor (21).
Go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor (Matt. 19 : 21).
Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee (Mark 10 : 28).
Sell all that thou hast, and distribute (Luke 18 : 22).
From whom I suffered the loss of all things (Phil. 3 : 8).

II. Follow Christ:

Come, follow me (21).
Let him deny himself, and take up his cross (Matt. 16 : 24).
Let him....take up his cross daily, and follow me (Luke 9 : 23).
He said unto another, Follow me (Luke 9 : 59).
If any man serve me, let him follow me (John 12: 26).

III. Surrender Refused:

He went away sorrowful (22).
Let us:....cast away their cords from us (Psa. 2 : 3).
Suffer me first to go and bury my father (Luke 9 : 59).
First suffer me to bid farewell (Luke 9 : 61).
We will not that this man reign over us (Luke 19 : 14).

1. "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor." (1) The universal sale; (2) The universal distribution. —(1) None for self; (2) All for others.
2. "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Heavenly treasures: (1) Their nature; (2) Their source; (3) Their superiority.
3. "He went away sorrowful." (1) Away from Christ; (2) Away with sorrow; (3) Away to doom.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

CHRIST AND THE YOUNG.

The young who served him (Matt. 21 : 15, 16; Mark 14 : 50, 51; 16 : 5; John 6 : 9-13).
The young whom he honored (Matt. 18: 2; 19 : 13-15).
The young whom he healed (Mark 7 : 25-30; Luke 9 : 38-42; John 4 : 47-53).
The young whom he restored to life (Luke 7 : 11-15; Luke 8 : 41, 42, 49-56).
The young whom he used as an example (Matt. 19 : 16-26; Luke 15:11-24).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS.

The discourse from which the last lesson was taken is given more fully in Matthew (chap. 18). But both Matthew and Mark pass over in silence a period of about six months, only noticing a journey from Galilee through Perea (Matt. 19 : 1; Mark 10 : 1). But Luke and John give more space to the history of this interval (Luke 9 : 51 to 18 : 14; John 7 : 1 to 11 : 57) than to any other period of our Lord's ministry save the closing week. Yet the arrangement of the events in chronological order is one of the most perplexing problems in the gospel narrative. John, however, makes some definite statements as to time, and an outline of the story can be constructed.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurred shortly after the last lesson, our Lord visited Jerusalem (John 7). His ministry in Galilee ended with this visit, or shortly after. There was increasing hostility at Jerusalem, which led to attempts at violence during the Feast of Dedication (John 10). At one or the other of these festivals a blind man was healed (John 9), but is uncertain at which. After the Feast of Dedication our Lord withdrew beyond Jordan; returned to Bethany, where Lazarus was raised; then he withdrew to Ephraim, apparently a small city a few miles east of Bethel, until near the last Passover (John 11).

Luke narrates some details connected with the close of the Galilean ministry; but most of his narrative must be placed in Perea,—how much is open to discussion. Other points are doubtful, but the three (Synoptic) accounts come together again with the blessing of the little children. Mark and Matthew place a discussion on divorce immediately before (Mark 10 : 2-12); but all three accounts connect together the incidents in this lesson.

The place was somewhere in the valley of the Jordan, not far from Jericho, probably on the east side of the river.

The time was not long before the last Passover, probably during the latter part of March, year of Rome 783 (A. D. 30), six months after the last lesson.

Parallel passages: Matt. 19 : 13-22; Luke 18 : 15-23.

The Love of Beauty.

The love of beauty and refinement belongs to every true woman. She ought to desire in moderation, pretty dresses, and delight in beautiful colors and graceful fabrics; she ought to take a certain, not too excessive, pride in herself, and to be solicitous to have all belonging to her well-chosen and in good taste; to care for the perfect ordering of her house, and harmony and fitness of her furniture, the cleanliness of her surroundings, and good style of her arrangements; she ought not to like singularity, either of habit or appearance, or be able to stand out against a fashion when fashion has become custom; she ought to make herself conspicuous only by the perfection of her taste, by the grace and harmony of her dress, and unobtrusive good breeding of her manners; she ought to set the seal of a gentle woman on every square inch of her life, and shed the radiance of her own beauty and refinement on every material object about her.

The Way the Money Goes.

"This is the way the money goes," says the Rural New Yorker. Towels are used for holders, napkins are used as dishwipers, soap is left to soak in water; clothes are whipped to pieces in the wind; hams and cheese are let to mould and get full of "skippers;" tea, coffee and spices are let to stand open and lose their strength; coal is wasted, vegetables are thrown away that would warm over nicely; scrubbing brushes are left to warp in water; bits of meat are thrown away that would make a good soup or hash; a pint more or less, of dough is left sticking to the bread-pan; the cork is left out of the molasses jug and flies take possession; the extravagant use of butter, sugar and eggs and cooking is notorious, pails are allowed to dry in the sun and fall apart; bread is wasted, tea and coffee are made too strong; and there is careless breakage in dishes, glasses and other articles in every direction.

Women teach us repose, civility and dignity.

A great nature is calm and quiet and retiring.