Our Contributors.

SINNING AGAINST CHILDREN.

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One of the most needed, and one of the most useful of modern benevolent organizations, is the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Its object is to protect the victims of parental brutalities, or of cruel neglect. Its sphere of action is chiefly among the degraded classes; but there is many a well-fed child in a well-furnished home that is suffering badly from bad management or parental ignorance or false views of parental duty. An immense number of fathers and mothers need to have the solemn caution which Reuben gave to his churlish brother, "Do not sin against the child."

There is no trust in this world more tremendous than the trust of parentage; and none which many persons seem to treat more lightly. Food, clothing, shelter, and schooling they provide, but they utterly ignore the fact that the Creator has intrusted to them the most susceptible and receptive creature on earth when he commits to their charge a young immortal. A parent stamps character and shapes destiny for this world—often for the next. In geological museums you may see some slabs which show the prints of birds' feet, or of leaves, which were made in the stone when it was once only a liquid pumice. In like manner we can detect the fingermarks and footprints of parental influence upon the character of children when grown to manhood and womanhood; and they are not very ornamental, either.

Children are imitative creatures; and we all know how tendencies to good or evil character spring from parental influence, and the chief element in moral heredity is the force of example. There is a monotonous uniformity in the history of certain Jewish kings. Each one of them "walked in the ways of his father who caused Israel to sin." That word "ways" is very significant. The father made the path and the son walked in it. Just as true is this now as in those olden times. The most difficult cases to reform in inebriate asylums are the victims of hereditary drunkenness. Often when I see a young man bringing disgrace on himself, I think, "That youth was as much sinned against as sinning." He is walking in the path in which his parents placed him. Thorn bushes never yield grapes, and figs do not grow from thistles. The word "iniquity" signifies something twisted; and the ugly twist is too often given by a father's or a mother's hand. The wrong which the child does is the natural sequence of the wrong done to him by an evil example. By and by comes the retribution, when the child once sinned against wrings the parental heart with agony. When you sin against your child you may be pretty sure "that your sin will find you out."

What a piece of open soil to sow teachings in is a young mind! Words uttered by parents sprout. A sneer against the Bible spoken at the table or by the fireside lodges in a boy's memory and helps to make him skeptic. A great deal of foolish and caviling criticism of sermons, in which parents willfully or carelessly indulge when they come home from church, kills the influence of God's message. This may amount to a sin against the Holy Spirit who inspired the message, and who may be silently working on the mind of some child in that family. The question of how much actual good the best sermon may do is commonly settled on the day of its delivery. Parents often help to settle it. In most cases religious errors are hereditary. Dishonest practices also descend from father to son. Bad books in a parent's hand are very apt to be read by the younger members of the family; and, when a father takes his son and daughter to the average theatre, the lad is in danger of having passion inflamed by the indecencies of the stage, and the daughter's purity is soiled by the lewd displays or the immoral innuendoes. It is bad enough to smutch your own soul. I entreat you, don't sin against your child!

It does not require that we be willfully cruel in order to sin against our children. The foolish petting and pampering of pride, and gratifying of every selfish whim may be as mischievous as harsh brutality. No worse sin can be committed against that son than to let him always have his own way. Pride will grow fast enough in that daughter's heart without your adding fuel to the flame with extravagant fineries and silly adulation. It is a curious fact that praise bestowed on noble conduct has a sweetening and strengthening influence. but praise lavished on mere externals—like physical beauty or fine dress—is only apt to inflame selfishness.

Many a father studies his account books, and many a mother studies her magazines or her receipt books or her visiting lists more than they study the peculiarities of their own children. That boy is scolded into sullenness; that other one is ridiculed until he gets desperate; harsh treatment often hardens the heart, and then Pharisaism prays that God will soften it! There is a steady decline in the percentage of conversions reported in the annual statistics of several denominations. How much of this is to be attributed to a decline in home religion, God only knoweth. The family underlies both commonwealth and church. All the preaching power of the pulpit will avail but little as long as parents are sinning against their own children.

New York, N. Y.

RUM TRAFFIC NOTES.

DOFF THEIR HATS.

In Russia the Minister of Finance has issued an order that hats must be doffed to bartenders in whiskey shops, as they are government officials.

It may come to this in Canada if government control of the liquor traffic should be adopted, as is anticipated by some people.

A KING'S POSITION.

An evidence of the growth of temperance sentiment in Scandinavia is found in a news item which says that Oscar II., King of Sweden and Norway, has acceded to a petition from his temperance subjects and decided that hereafter battleships are to be christened with water, not wine.

TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL.

The *Medical Record* makes the announcement that a hospital to cost $75,000, is to be erected in Chicago, the physicians of which must use no alcohol in their prescriptions. The hospital will be called the Frances E. Willard National Temperance Hospital. The three schools of practice—regular, homoeopathic, and eclectic—will be represented on the medical staff.

SCOUNDRELS.

American whalers are accused of selling liquor to the Indians in the far north, near the mouth of the Mackenzie River. Indians are madly eager for liquor. The Canadian authorities and the Hudson Bay Company do all they can to keep liquor from the Indians and the Indians from liquor. Irresponsible adventurers from the United States have no scruples in giving the Indian all he can take so long as he has furs or anything of value to part with. All rumsellers are the same kind.

A PROHIBITION STATE.

Five great Indian tribes have been for many years located in Indian Territory. They are in the main civilized and Christianized. They are ready for statehood, and are preparing to organize a new state to be named "Jefferson." One of the fundamental principles of the new state will be the *Prohibition* of the liquor traffic and the tavern. This is a rebuke to white men who have not the courage, the self-denial and the Christian principle required for such a step. It is expected that the new state will be set up in 1906.

A JUST JUDGE.

We need more such judges as the one who presides over a Pittsburg, Pa., court. When the officers made their report to the court the judge said:

"Gentlemen, it is very strange that the daily newspapers contain accounts of continuous violations of the liquor laws, and everybody seems to know it except you gentlemen, whose sworn duty it is to return such cases. You may take the returns you have handed in and the court will give you until two o'clock to make truthful returns or you will get yourselves into trouble." They did not get themselves into trouble because they returned several saloonkeepers for violation of the law.

DISTILLERY CAST OUT.

There is hope for France. As a feature in its suppressing disloyal Roman Catholic "orders," it has compelled the removal of a great distillery conducted by the monks.

It is said that the government received in excise taxes three million dollars a year from the liquor establishment conducted by the monks of "La Grande Chartreuse," while the "religious" whiskey compounders made nearly twice that sum. The whole establishment was transported to Spanish soil, the "father superior" being conveyed across the border in an automobile.

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