

# PARENT AND CHILD

## WHY PARENT EDUCATION TODAY:

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THERE is every justification for Catholics to show the deepest interest in the so-called Parent Education Movement of our day. In his Encyclical on Christian Education the Holy Father refers to this modern development in particularly emphatic terms.

“We wish,” he says, “to call your attention in a special manner to the present-day lamentable decline in family education. The offices and professions of a transitory and earthly life, which are certainly of far less importance, are prepared for by long and careful study: whereas for the fundamental duty and obligation of educating their children, many parents have little or no preparation, immersed as they are in temporal cares.”

Then follow words of condemnation of the practice of sending children away from home even in their tenderest years “for economic reasons, or for reasons of industry, trade or politics,” and also a strong appeal to pastors of souls to interest themselves in parent education.

A recent writer in a noted magazine for ecclesiastics shows strikingly why there is an imperative need for parent education, particularly in our present changing world.

“We are living,” he says, “in a new age called by some the Age of Speed. Times have changed, and time-honoured customs and institutions have gone by the board. The old-fashioned home is fast passing away. The family bond has been burst asunder by the personal and independent self-seeking of the individual. Life is more complex. Children assert their so-called personal rights at a very early age. In this respect the modern child is precocious for the exaggerated notion of independence has had its effect upon the young, impressionable mind. With the breaking-up of the home, both parents and children seek their recreation outside the family circle. The streets and the theatres exert a greater influence than the common sleeping place called home. The task of rearing children has become more complicated, and in a way burdensome. Parents have not responded to this new task. Many of them would like to but they do not know how.”

These words are followed, like those of the Holy Father, by an earnest plea for better guidance with regard to child training, for a suitable literature on the subject, and for a renewed realisation on the part of parents generally of the tremendous importance of the early impressionable years of the child—the years ordinarily spent almost exclusively within the home circle. In a word, they are followed by a plea for Catholic parent education.

One can readily agree with the writer quoted above that training of parents has become a necessity, certainly much more of a need, at least, than it was in times past. When parenthood was less difficult than it is today, formal education or specific instruction and guidance from extra-domestic sources as a preparation for family life was far less essential. Domestic life was reasonably successful without it. Parental love, native intelligence, and Christian understanding, coupled with favourable environmental circumstances, enabled many parents quite satisfactorily to fulfil their obligations towards their children. Through normal contacts within the confines of the little home world the children gradually learned the lessons of life that prepared them for the tasks of founding their own homes and rearing their own families. Step by step children became equipped with the knowledge and practice of home-making, their training usually ranging all the way from the mere physical side of housekeeping to the religious and moral training of children.

But social conditions have changed during the past few decades. and one of the unfortunate results is found in the fact that the more informal education in the homes of the past has largely broken down. The shared activities of work and play within the domestic realm have more and more gone by the way. The whole question of child training has become more difficult. Family life in general has become more involved and complex. We now have an enormously complex individual coming into contact with an equally involved and constantly changing environment.

No sincere parent, I am sure, would question the statement that the responsibility for the training of their children and for providing them with the suitable environment in which to grow up belongs to the parents, and should be assumed by

them, nor is there any problem more worthy of the parents' time and effort than precisely that of caring for the physical life of their children—a matter so essential for their general well-being — as well as for their mental, moral and social development, in order that they may grow up efficient and happy adults.

It goes without saying, however, that if parents are to meet this obligation adequately and successfully, it is necessary they take the task seriously, and that they give the subject of child training the thought and attention that it deserves. Particularly today does the role of parent educator in its fulfilment involve much more than merely loving a child and being interested in his welfare, Born with a certain inherited equipment, what a child becomes, within the limits imposed by inheritance, is dependent not only upon love and affection, but also upon the intelligence and understanding of those adults who come in contact with him.

However, understanding children and their behaviour problems is not only a matter of intuitive or inborn knowledge on the part of parents. Nor is it merely a matter of eager desire to meet their full responsibilities towards their children. Rather is it, in great part at least, the result of acquired knowledge; in other words, of hard study, of much hard study of the physical, mental and social needs of many children as well as the determination of the particular needs of each individual child. Acquired knowledge is necessary for this, just as it is for any other important task.

Fortunately, there is at hand today an ever-increasing fund of scientific facts regarding the development of children. During recent decades a whole host of scientists have been centring their attention upon the study of the pre-school child, and after the wheat has been sifted from the chaff not a few sound kernels remain. Still a mere accumulation of such scientific facts does not necessarily make for progress with regard to the problems of child care and guidance. These findings of science must be popularised; they must be disseminated, or, in other words, brought within reach of the average people. It is, in fact, a conscious attempt on the part of organisations and agencies that deal with child life to interest parents in the newer knowledge of children as well as a conscious effort on the part of parents to avail themselves of this knowledge and thereby gain an understanding attitude towards their children as developing personalities.

The truth is, however, that to date Catholics have given comparatively little attention to this movement. Only a few of their number are found engaged in this particular field of activity. Catholic schools have given the matter scant attention. Our literature on the subject is very limited. Yet, as the words of the Holy Father imply, there is every reason for the keenest interest in this work on the part of Catholics. In fact, there is an imperative need for such interest. After all, it is in the home that we must look for the ounce of prevention of our social problems, rather than for the pound of cure after the damage is done. Moreover, parent education should go a long way in creating a much-needed renewed interest in home life today. It should also go far in reinstating the home again as the primary educational agency.

In the following few pages the writer hopes to open up this field, at least to some small extent, to Catholic parents, by setting forth a few specific principles and practical rules for guidance in their tasks of child training.

## II

### GUIDES FOR THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

It is quite likely that if parents would approach the field of parent education by first of all turning the searchlight of inquiry upon themselves, investigating their own attitude towards child training, and studying their own methods of fulfilling their obligations in this vital field of activity, not a few of them would find themselves fitting into one of the three following groups: First, parents who are too strict; second, those who are too lenient; third, those who are inconsistent or alternating in disciplining their children. Careful observation shows that many parents do, as a matter of fact, fall into one of these three categories. Wholesome discipline, however, lies in a consistent, middle-of-the-way course between the extremes of strictness and laxity.

There are not a few parents who rule their homes like autocrats. They are over-strict and severe. Excessive punishment, ceaseless bickering, and endless restriction make the home anything but inviting to the children. The result is only too frequently the cultivation of a disputatious or rebellious character, or of a silent and sullen antagonism, instead of the development of a spirit of loyalty to parent and home. Deceit and double-dealing may even be resorted to by children in such homes in their efforts to escape punishment.

No doubt autocratic parents get a certain thrill out of the realisation that their children obey them with unquestioned obedience. But the proper training of children is of far greater importance than a little selfish bit of pride or pleasure on the part of parents. The important question is whether, under such rigid rule, children will develop a wholesome degree of moral independence and self-control. In other words, will they, on leaving the parental nest, be able to stand on their own two feet in the world?

More common today than a discipline that is too rigid is undoubtedly one that is too weak and easy-going. As there are parents who are autocrats, so also there are parents who are little less than servants to their children. Such parents may be simply of an easy-going temperament, or certain environmental circumstances may account for their leniency and failure. The spirit of "do as you please," for example, is very much in the air these days and is extremely contagious. Some parents, too, may actually persuade themselves that they can train their children by yielding to them. They give in to all their childish whims and tantrums as the easiest, if not the only, way of maintaining peace and quiet.

Yet these parents must certainly realise that by countenancing such a philosophy of the easiest way they are simply leaving their children unprepared for life. The world into which these youngsters must eventually be turned is emphatically a world of hard knocks. Young people whose rule of life is to avoid what is difficult and to go through with those projects only which appeal to their sense of ease and comfort are the raw material from which the failures of life are formed.

This may sound like old-fashioned doctrine, but it is doctrine that is decidedly in need of greater emphasis today.

Most frequent of all and most disastrous is the union of license and severity in the home. In this instance the parents are inconsistent, spasmodic in their dealings with their children. First they pet, and then they punish: one minute they coax into good behaviour, and the next they scold abusively; today they condemn a certain act, and tomorrow they pass it by unnoticed.

It is not to be wondered at that, under the circumstances, children scarcely know what is expected of them. Nor will they ordinarily fail to take a chance because of their parents' changing humour, so that they can extort bribery and affection when they want it. Thinking their parents guide more by whim than by principle, the children may even lose all respect for them and all confidence in them.

In this connection it is also well to observe that differences in judgment on the part of parents should always be settled in private, and not be paraded in the presence of the children. If the parents make use of two opposite codes or standards—that is, if one constantly shields and spoils, while the other remains ever stern and unyielding—then the methods of each stultify those of the other. The fact is that the union of license and severity in the home, whether in the person of one and the same capricious parent or in two parents with opposite standards, is both very common in practice and decidedly harmful in effect.

The type of discipline required of parents will, of course, have to depend to some extent upon the disposition of the particular child that is being dealt with, but it must always be a consistent discipline, and in general must lie between the two extremes of severity and laxity.

Obedience in the home is quite compatible with wholesome and wholehearted democracy therein. In fact, a proper degree of independence, initiative, and freedom must be recognised and encouraged. Without these there can be no developments, no virtue or self-control. A policy of repression stunts and kills, or it incites to rebellion with the subsequent necessity of a host of laws and regulations, all unwelcome because imposed from without.

On the other hand, to permit a child to range entirely at its own will is to prepare it not only for failure in every worthy conflict of life, but in all likelihood for shame and disgrace as well. A controlled freedom should be aimed at.

There are certain general rules that may well be brought to the attention of parents if their training of children is to be effective under modern conditions of living.

1) First of all, parents do well to realise that there can be no training at a distance; hence they must go out of their way, if necessary, to keep close to their children and to enter, so far as possible, into their work and play. Under the older economic order of more rural times, parent and child were brought together and largely shared work and play and all this

automatically and without special effort on their part. Under the newer and present order which prevails, particularly in cities, this has been radically changed. Economic and social conditions tend to build an ever-widening chasm between parent and child. The companionship that formerly came about automatically must today be carefully planned and even sacrificed for. It must be brought about by more artificial effort.

(2) Again, parents should realise that the training of the child is not only the mother's, but also the father's task. It is particularly difficult for many fathers today to spend much time with their children; hence they must learn to make the most of their time with them. In other words, they must learn to take an active interest in the hobbies and sports of their children. The child, whether boy or girl, who comes under the guidance of only one parent is in much the same position as a half-orphan and will be very liable to suffer a one-sided development.

(3) Another point that parents do well to bear in mind, particularly in this day of a rapidly-disappearing, patriarchal family system, is the importance of their winning the loyalty of their children and of playing the role of sympathetic confidants to them. If a father and mother are trusted friends and confidential advisers to their children in the frank and open years of early teens, it is reasonable to hope that they will continue to serve in this highly important capacity during the more secretive years of adolescence and afterwards.

Certainly it is worthy of the highest commendation that children bring all their problems, troubles, and doubts to father and mother for solution, but such will be the case only when the parents are truly companions, friends, and confidants to their little ones. The significance of this vital matter cannot easily be exaggerated.

Child guidance cannot, of course, be reduced entirely to rule-of-thumb methods. Yet it is equally true that, over and above the general guides laid down in the preceding pages for parents, some more specific rules can be suggested that should prove beneficial to them in their tasks of rearing their children.

Many parents, in fact, eagerly welcome such proffered helps. Matters of child discipline frequently perplex them. They are often at a loss as to the best course of action to follow, perhaps well aware, too, that the decision that must be given will have its bearing on the future life of the child. Shall they punish, or shall they praise? Shall they allow, or shall they refuse? The decision is often not an easy one to make, nor does the matter depend merely upon the convenience of the parent or upon the order of the household.

While hard and fast formulas that will offer unfailing solutions for all such possible cases are out of the question, it is equally certain that some helpful guiding principles can be offered the parent. Several are suggested in the following that are apparently among the more practical and far-reaching.

(1) As few commands as possible should be given to children. Over-correction and domination are naturally resented by the child as they are by the adult.

(2) A child's attention should be secured before a command is given him. An order shouted haphazardly at a little one who is all preoccupied with some playful activity, that is almost as serious as a matter of life and death to him, will likely be but dimly recognised and but little heeded. For real co-operation attention is altogether necessary.

(3) Commands given a child should be followed up—that is, parents should let it be known firmly and pleasantly that they unfailingly expect obedience. Otherwise all discipline will be speedily undermined.

(4) It is poor policy to bribe a child. He will likely capitalise his disobedience by holding out for a greater bribe the next time. If given a penny to behave today, he will likely expect another, or two of them, to heed your orders tomorrow.

(5) Parents should not expect the impossible of a child. If their commands are reasonable, obedience will be fairly easy on the part of the little one.

(6) Not a few parents incessantly make use of threats in order to gain obedience. Such a habit ordinarily results either in a hampering fear and timidity on the part of the child, or in a realisation that the commands of the parent are futile and their observance or non-observance a matter of trivial importance.

(7) It is particularly worthy of note that once a child has lost confidence in his parents because of deception or other cause, it will be restored only with the greatest difficulty. Hence the unreasonableness of deceiving children in order to gain obedience.

(8) One should be just in dealing with children. In adults the imposition of an unjust command leaves an ugly scar if not even a festering wound; in children it at least lessens their respect for and their confidence in their parents.

A general rule that may well be emphasised is to give a positive rather than a negative turn to efforts in child training. In other words, one should be ready to approve the good acts of a child as one is to condemn the bad ones. Thus, if a child is reprov'd for eating too many sweets, why not commend him when he faithfully eats his vegetables and fruits?

At times punishment may become necessary in training children within the home. Its aim should always be to bring about regret in the child's mind. He will not readily repeat that for which he has felt sorrow. Many suggest also that wherever possible punishment should follow naturally from the offence committed. Such a practice, at any rate, would tend to focus the attention of the child on the consequence of his own act, rather than the possible anger or resentment of the parent. An extensive use of corporal punishment in the case of the average child is hardly commendable since it is hard to administer it unemotionally, and harder still to receive it in that manner. Corporal punishment is perhaps more liable to result in defiance or secretiveness than in penitence.

Again, parents should always bear in mind that the proper aim in a child's upbringing should be to develop self-control and self-training. Hence, at least from his earliest school years, a child should be gradually trained to moral independence. During the pre-school years, of course, his mental capacity is not sufficiently developed for reason to play any considerable part in the training process. The principal method of training during this period, therefore, must almost exclusively depend upon the simple fact that the child will naturally tend to repeat acts which have pleasant consequences, and to avoid those which have unpleasant ones. The unpleasant consequences may result from the undesirable action itself, or they may be artificially attached to the action by the parent, for example, in the form of a scolding or other act of disapproval.

However, while blind obedience is excellent for the young child, it is a mistake to carry it over into later years. Children of school age are old enough to appreciate the reason of things and should be taught them. Ideals and principles should play an ever-increasing part in their training. Thus, the child should be taught to obey not to avoid punishment, but because the law of God expects it of him. Or, again, he should be taught to be truthful, because lying is essentially wrong, and so on with other acts and omissions. If children have learned no reason for being good other than blind obedience to their parents, their good habits will have no permanent force. They will only be make-believe.

### III.

#### RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN THE HOME

The sincere Catholic parent realises, of course, that the element of religion should permeate the entire training process of the child. There is no question that the latter's spiritual realisation is a constructive and preventive power in forming his character.

Particularly are there some very real advantages connected with the early religious training of the child within the home circle. The individual in whose mind the truths of religion are intermingled with his earliest recollections has been especially favoured indeed. The fact that instructions within the family circle is associated with the child's sentiments of love for his parents lends an appeal in the case of training within the home that is lacking in the more formal training coming from the school or from some other source. On the part of the child himself such qualities as simplicity, faith, curiosity and activity which characterise him in his pre-school years make his religious development a relatively simple matter if only he is brought into contact with the knowledge of God and His truths.

This contact, however, is not brought about automatically. It must be planned for. Special effort on the part of parents is necessary, but it is effort very much worth while.

Children are capable of learning much about their religion during the pre-school years. Studies have shown, for instance, that the average child can have some realisation of God as Creator by the age of three. Again, some children of three years of age will mention heaven as a place where good children go after death. But while the studies show children are capable of such knowledge at the age of three, they show also that many, as a matter of fact, do not come into possession of it until some years later.

So, too, has it been shown that, at the age of three, children can express a number of moral ideas. Yet among many children under six there is lacking practically all religious motivation. Their obedience, for instance, is merely a natural act, quite unrelated to any truths of religion. They obey because their parents demand obedience of them. School children of six years of age, however, are usually found to be quite sensitive to the ideas of religious duty and are readily influenced by religious motives.

Apparently there is but one conclusion to be drawn from the noteworthy difference between the moral ideas of the child just before and immediately after entering school—namely, Catholic parents are not making the best use of their golden opportunities for the religious training of their children during pre-school years. As soon as the child enters the Catholic school he is taught to act from religious motives. Many parents apparently fail to train their children to do this.

#### IV.

#### MORAL AND SOCIAL TRAINING IN THE HOME

The social training of the child, in other words the development of his character or the shaping of his personality, is first and foremost a task of parents. Whether or not the child will fit into the normal social life of his time will depend in very great measure on the parents' intelligent efforts in his behalf. From time immemorial has this shaping process been looked upon as fundamentally a parental obligation. It is, of course, still considered so today. In fact, the home seems even more necessary for this function in our present complex civilisation than it was in the simpler environment of the past. In their task of training, the parents should look both to the happiness of the individual and to the common good of society. The training process itself should reach into the innermost recesses of the mind and the heart. It should permeate the very depths of character.

Furthermore, it can hardly be over-emphasised that here, as in the case of religious education, there is need for early training. Infancy is the golden period for setting up proper habits of conduct. The happiness and efficiency of the adult man and women depend in a very large measure upon the type of habits acquired in the training process and in the experiences of early life. Some of the child's instincts show themselves even in the earliest days of infancy, and their proper development is a matter of utmost importance. In fact it is generally recognised that the individual's personality is largely formed during the first five years of life—in fact, to no small extent even during the first two or three years. In general outline, at least, the results of these first years will remain through life. All students of human nature recognise that this is the period in which deepest impressions are made. These impressions, consequently, exert an influence upon the whole future of the child.

The impulses towards conduct which last longest and are rooted deepest always have their origin near birth. Early childhood is the age when primitive instincts can be re-directed and modified, when their evil effects can be forestalled or turned into good. It is the age when the foundations of all later developments are laid. Hence, there is a very general recognition of the importance of an intelligent use of this formative period during which personality is so readily influenced.

Nor can it be questioned that the possibilities of the early plastic years are equally great for evil and for good. Thus there are some social qualities which, if not acquired in early childhood are rarely acquired in after life, and then only with great effort and difficulty. So, too, are there certain unsocial tendencies that put in their appearance, which, if left unchecked and unheeded, will speedily grow into rank weeds of vice. It is, therefore, of prime importance to the individual and to society that these vicious tendencies be checked, and that social qualities be diligently cultivated in the earliest years in order that a luxuriant growth of virtue may result. Thus, habits of ill-temper, for example, may develop in a child several years before the use of reason. Left unchecked, they will grow and continue through life, begetting a very unsocial individual.

It is very poor policy, indeed, to permit a small child to do as he pleases, on the theory that "he will grow out of it later." Such an attitude on the part of the elders can only lead to the growth of incorrigible children and to unsocial and even anti-social adults. On the other hand, early lessons in forbearance and self-denial gently and patiently inculcated can go far towards preserving the child from the development of an evil and unsocial growth.

And so on with other virtuous habits.. With the advance of years the character becomes more pronounced and matured. Yet it ever clings to its first outline and remains true to its earliest impressions. Once strengthened by age, it bends with difficulty. Hence, social economy and progress alike demand that much intelligent effort be centred on the training of the pre-school child. That, of course, is the period in which the family influence is paramount. Normally the home forms the first environment in which the character of the child is to be shaped.

Both congenital, or inborn, as well as non-congenital factors influence the development of personality. In other words the instinctive nature of the child exerts some influence over his development, while his surroundings also play a part in the shaping of his conduct. It is in the former, however, that is, in the individual's inherited instincts and emotions, that the foundations of character essentially consist. These are the mainsprings of human activity for good or for evil, for social or unsocial conduct. Nor can these hereditary factors be rooted out. They can be trained, however, and as stated, with sufficient care and effort their operations can be modified and their evil effects forestalled. By intelligent coaching their evil possibilities can even be converted into good, yet the tendency itself towards evil will ever remain. In the case of the environmental factors, however, we have a different situation. A person's surroundings may quite readily be modified, and in not a few cases may also be radically changed.

A realisation of what the fundamental instinctive drives in human nature are and what the parent educator's attitude towards them should be as they manifest themselves in the growing child is, of course, of prime importance in the delicate task of shaping a child's personality. The average Catholic child would be able to name the chief among man's inborn impulses provided at least that he is questioned in the language of the catechism. This familiar little book lists them under the title of "Capital Sins," as follows: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth.

The instincts indicated by these terms are, of course, in no sense sinful in themselves. They are neutral, their goodness or badness depending on their proper use or their sinful abuse. If permitted to run riot, they become the chief foundations of unsocial characters, the well-springs of moral delinquency. If duly shaped or modified, that is, if properly trained and kept under due control of man's higher faculties of mind, will, and conscience, they lead to the growth of personal virtues and socialised individuals.

We find also that the term "passion" is at times applied to these impulses. This latter term simply means something that affects us; hence, it may mean either a help to virtue or an inducement to vice, and indeed, any of the passions may lead us either towards virtue or towards vice. The briefest analysis would show that each has a beneficent purpose, that when any one of them is permitted to hold ungoverned sway, or its satisfaction is allowed outside of legitimate channels, it is certain to prove harmful to either individual or society, or even to both.

Thus pride, rightly understood, may be a spur to uprightness and goodness; it may prompt us to acquire virtue, to cultivate wholesome learning, to strive after agreeable habits and that propriety of conduct that becomes our station of life. Ungoverned pride, however, or a vaunted self-assertion, will only lead to the birth and growth of such an unsocial brood as foolish vanity, boorish arrogance, and overbearing haughtiness, qualities not only essentially un-Christian, but also anything but ornamental to character.

Again, covetousness, or acquisitiveness, regulated by prudence and common sense, in reality means the same as thrift or economy. It prompts the individual properly to provide for himself and for his own, both for the present and for the possible "rainy day." But when left uncontrolled, this passion develops into the vice of avarice; it becomes an in-grown obsession manifesting itself in hoarding or miserliness, or in an inordinate craving for and an all-absorbing love of mammon. It may even show itself in a desire for cruel and relentless domination of others.

So, too, must one distinguish between gluttony and the moderate partaking of food and drink. The latter is necessary for the maintenance of life and health. But if not held in leash, our instinctive appetite may develop into an inordinate craving that will end in injury to both soul and body. It is in this sense—that is, in the satisfaction of an inordinate craving for food and drink—that the term "gluttony" is properly used.

Or, again, there is the capital sin, so-called, of sloth. Sloth and idleness go hand in hand. It has rightly become proverbial that an idle person is an easy prey for the powers of evil. The laws of nature prompt us to conserve our energy

and to restore it by due rest and relaxation. They do not demand, however, that this conserving process be overdone. To conserve our energy at the expense of duty and our best interests is simply to be slothful or lazy.

And so on with the other passions of capital sins—envy, anger, and the sex instinct. Then, too, there are other emotional well-springs in human nature besides the seven capital ones. There are, for instance, the milder influences of fear, self-submission, play, and love or affection.

Several guiding principles regarding the training of the instincts suggest themselves. Thus one important principle that should be followed is to foster the milder instincts. Arousing and encouraging the development of the individual's more amiable and humane emotions and desires will go a considerable distance in counteracting any hidden tendency, for instance, to cruelty or harshness, to spiteful, hateful, or other unsocial emotional reactions. With the gentle and milder instincts of tenderness and sympathy well established, the more vehement influences of anger, acquisitiveness, and self-assertion or pride, and such like will naturally be neutralised and restrained. It is highly essential that the good impulses be aroused and that evil ones be offset, and this should begin in the earliest years.

Among the first emotions to show themselves in the child are fear, anger, and pleasure, or the rudiments of love and affection. These may show themselves during the first months of infancy; others follow later. At about the third year, for instance, jealousy, cruelty, self-assertion may be found to some extent in the average child. Practically all inherent personality weaknesses will manifest themselves during the pre-school years—that is, during the first five or six years of the child's life. By way of example, attention in some detail may well be given to the three so-called primary emotions—fear, anger, affection.

With regard to fear, the parent already sees indications of this emotion during the first months of the new-born babe's life. The sudden removal of support, for instance, will produce a fear response consisting in a sudden catching of breath, in a closing of the eyelids, or even in crying. The child can be taught to manifest fear in many different ways.

It is not good policy, however, to make a child fearful. Rather should the simple rule be observed that little ones should never unnecessarily be frightened. Although many careless adults take it as a joke, frightening children may readily be a serious matter. The fearful child has a serious handicap. Only too frequently does he develop a permanent sense of discouragement and failure, resulting in hesitation and unwillingness to tackle anything worthwhile or difficult. It is very questionable whether a child who has been made timid and shrinking in his early years can ever again regain his natural open manner and successfully assert himself.

Most fears are caused by some experience through which the individual has had to pass in early life. Thus this instinct may be aroused by threats of bogeymen or policemen, by threats of leaving the child alone, or by terrifying punishments. Or, again, the child may be made fearful by telling him tragic stories or by forcing him into new and strange situations in the hope of accustoming him to them. Moreover, parents, and especially mothers, seem not to realise to what great extent their own acquired fears are passed on unconsciously to their children.

Anger is also one of the so-called primary instincts, one that shows itself in the earliest days of the child's life. In the infant, this emotion is commonly caused by holding the child tightly or in any way restraining his movements. Later on any blocking, thwarting or hampering of the individual's free actions may give rise to anger.

Founded in human nature itself, every individual will experience this emotion from time to time. Unless properly controlled, it readily leads to very undesirable conduct. If the individual does not learn to control it through education and experience, it will eventually control him.

But the control of this passion, so-called, if it is to be of real value, must come from within the child, and should not be something super-imposed from without. Anger, for instance, that is merely pent up because of fear of punishment, is only too likely to explode violently at an altogether inopportune time. Particularly is it essential that self-control in regard to this instinct be established very early in life.

One of the most common manifestations of anger in children is the so-called temper tantrum. Any normal child, of course, will show an occasional bit of temper, but the little one who meets every difficult situation in life with chronic irritability, or even with dramatic and uncontrolled outburst, is in grave danger of developing many personality defects

which will make him an unhappy and inadequate individual for life.

When one searches into the causes of tantrums, it becomes apparent that in not a few cases the attitude of parents is responsible for the outbursts of temper on the part of children. Again, it may merely be due to imitation. Thus, if the parents are peevish, irritable, and given to outbursts of anger in the presence of children, the chances are that they in turn will be forced to witness similar exhibitions on the part of their little ones.

Then, too, children often must suffer because of irritability on the part of their parents, an irritability for which they may in no way be responsible. Some trivial annoyance vexes the parent, and the child must bear the brunt of the resultant peevishness or manifestation of temper. Under the circumstances, conduct on the part of the child that would ordinarily be passed unnoticed now calls forth severe reprimands. The child, of course, feels the injustice of such treatment and may even rebel against it. This but leads to further trouble.

Moreover, children are often thoughtlessly subjected to much unnecessary humiliation, teasing, and ridicule by parents or by other grown-ups. In many instances such conduct on the part of adults is not due to any spirit of unkindness, but is simply prompted by the enjoyment which they derive from observing the child's reactions. They are quite unaware, perhaps, of the harmful social effects that may ultimately flow from their actions. Finally, there is no doubt that a cold, forbidding indifference towards the child by the busy and often irritated parent is frequently the cause of unhappy moods in children.

The pleasurable emotion that is later to develop into love or affection shows itself already in simple responses in the early days of infancy. The wise parent will endeavour to develop this emotion along salutary lines, causing it to blossom forth into the full bloom of normal affection. It will then bring to the individual himself much contentment, and will also make him a source of happiness to others.

The importance of this emotion can hardly be exaggerated. We know that love, the love, namely, of God and fellow-man, is the very heart and soul of Christianity. It should, then, be cultivated with most painstaking care.

Sheer love of self, or rank selfishness, on the other hand, is essentially pagan and should consequently be diligently guarded against. The earliest life of the child tends to be dominated by his selfish strivings. He endeavours to gather unto himself everything within his reach and to make it his own. He constantly demands the attention of those about him. In his struggles for attainment, however, he is often thwarted and repulsed, ignored and neglected. Failing in his own efforts on the one hand, and seeing others succeed while he loses on the other, causes him not a few difficulties. And many of these trying experiences of his daily life, instead of developing in him a spirit of love and affection, tend to arouse in him that perversion of the love instinct that is called jealousy.

By jealousy we mean that unpleasant feeling induced by any interference or attempt to thwart us in our efforts to gain a loved object, whether a person, power, possession, or position.

By the very nature of the emotion it carries with it a lowering of self-valuation followed by humiliation, concealment and shame. The jealous child encounters many difficulties in dealing with his playmates. He becomes self-centred and readily develops a sense of failure and of lowered self-esteem. He feels wronged and neglected. Later in life this emotion brings about an inability to share in the joys of others and make it impossible to see others succeed without feeling resentment. At times it eventuates in anger towards the object of jealousy or produces a desire for revenge and retaliation. Not infrequently, even, does it cause the individual to withdraw himself and to hide his feelings under the cloak of indifference. Such a person is always more or less unhappy. He feels diffident, depressed, and strained. His conduct is naturally affected.

There are many things in the normal life of the average child that may give rise to feelings of jealousy. For instance, there is the arrival of a new baby in the home. It is altogether commendable that, in case of such an event in a family, care be taken to let the other children know that they are just as much loved as before, and that they are still important members of the household.

The display of affection by parents towards other members of the family or towards outsiders is also a frequent source of jealousy. Moreover, the unwise attitude of visitors or relatives, who constantly praise or hold up one brother or sister as

a model or persistently point out shortcoming or defects in another, may cause feelings of bitterness, resentment, inferiority, or inadequacy in the child who is inclined towards jealousy.

Nor must one overlook downright favouritism. This is a weakness that is perhaps far more common among parents and among those who wield authority than is commonly suspected. A careful observer notes it at times in most unexpected places. While the balanced adult is inclined to look with disdain or contempt upon one who plays favourites, the little child is usually hurt by the latter's tactics.

In order to prevent the development of jealousy in the child, every effort should be made to keep down the growth of selfishness, a trait more or less common to all children. The above-mentioned causes of jealousy should be carefully eliminated. The child should be taught early to share his toys, his sweets, and the like, with other children. He should be taught habits of unselfishness and the joy of making others happy. If he learns to be unselfish within the family circle, he will find little difficulty in being so when he comes into contact with the great outside world.

The seeds of jealousy sown in early childhood days will persist. It is the jealous child who becomes the jealous man or woman, as it is the testy child who becomes the testy adult. As a child, the jealous individual encounters many difficulties in getting on with his playmates. He feels wronged and neglected. Gradually he develops a sense of failure that handicaps him constantly; he either withdraws from his play-mates and the activities of life, or becomes domineering and pugnacious in order to gain attention for himself. Eventually this emotion leaves him incapable of sharing wholeheartedly the joys and successes of others. In fact, his jealousy may even end in uncontrolled resentment, and that with disastrous results.

It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that this morbid manifestation of the love instinct be guarded against in childhood, lest it produce an unsocial adult utterly out of harmony with his environment and lacking in all adjustment to his fellow-beings.

A well-regulated natural love on the part of parents for their child is of no less importance than the proper development of the emotion of love in the young child himself. It is, in fact, the first essential in rearing children, and is as helpful as an ill-regulated affection is harmful.

The home is the natural abode of love. Without affection home is an empty word; with affection it becomes the most advantageous place for the proper development of the child's personality. Beyond any question it is the role of the affections that gives the home and family life its influence. Only love can furnish the motive for the constant, untiring and unwavering care which parents must show their children, and only love can bring into play the spiritual forces so essential for the shaping of the child's character.

In the case of a very young child it is undoubtedly the mother's rather than the father's affection that plays the most important part. Because of the close contact between mother and child, mother love has constant opportunity for full play and development. Thus there develops a union that binds them together and fills the child's mind with trust, confidence and respect. This enables the mother to cultivate the feelings and emotions, the chief forces in the determination of character.

Yet the affection of the father also has its place. Neither father nor mother, however, who have the best interests of the children at heart will spoil them with over-solicitous care. They will give them reasonable care and attention, but will not allow them to impose on their sympathy. Unless due care is exercised, a child becomes a slave to sympathy, and never learns to face the realities of life. Note the following cases:

Victor's mother was unhappily married. For companionship she turned to her boy and made him the centre of her affection. She liked to keep him constantly around her and would retail his good qualities to visitors in his presence. Victor became shy and repressed. He was looked upon as a bit queer by his classmates. He seldom participated in active sport with boys of his own age. He spent most of his time at home or in the immediate neighbourhood, and he preferred reading and other activities which kept him near his mother.

Rose's mother became a widow at the age of thirty. Her husband had been very intelligent, and their married life was of the happiest, so that the woman felt the blow keenly. She was lonesome and discontented, and lavished all her love on

her only daughter, Rose. When the girl got older the mother always opposed any social contact with boys. The result was that the girl became shy, never went to parties, and remained very much to herself. Unless the mother dies or suddenly changes her attitude, it appears that Rose will grow up a repressed and dissatisfied spinster.

The two above examples, cited by the Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey, show how parents may, to the detriment of their children, seek in their offspring an emotional satisfaction that is lacking in their own lives. Parental love may be the most precious single natural blessing a child can enjoy, but it must be a love that seeks the child's good, not the parents'. It must be an affection that is willing to sacrifice itself for the sake of the child. Otherwise, it will become a damaging force to the latter. Parents, therefore, who draw a morbid emotional satisfaction from their children's sympathy are not loving wisely. A child's personality may become so welded into the life of the mother through the exercise of its natural affection that he finds it difficult to develop his own individual characteristics. Such faulty affection on the part of some parents may become as harmful to children as is the utter lack of affection on the part of others. Sooner or later they will have to strike out for themselves, and if they have not as children learned the habit of self-dependence they will show themselves discontented and but poorly-balanced individuals.

Another real hazard in this connection is the danger of spoiling the child by "babying" him too much, by giving in to his whims, for instance, in order to win and hold his affection or to keep him quiet. Fortitude is an element of the greatest importance in the child's training. Particularly in this day of an easy life and soft creed is coddling unfortunate. The child must be taught the habit of facing the difficulties and realities of life unflinchingly. As soon as the individual begins to deceive himself and to refuse to face unpleasant truths, he is laying the foundation for many unhealthy traits of character—for oddities, peculiarities, and such like, and, in some cases, even for serious mental disorders. Parents should realise that children who grow up without facing the facts of life will be improperly prepared for life's inevitable tasks and hardships. Such children will grow up so lacking in ability to face life that they will suffer much more than the average child. The youngster, therefore, who is waited upon indulgently at every real or imaginary ache, or is lavished with emotional sympathy, whenever a trifling difficulty arises, is not being prepared to face life's realities. Nor is it the individual who is immune from all perplexing problems who is well adjusted to life, but the one who has developed habits and character traits that will enable him to face the difficulties of life openly, frankly, and courageously, without compromise or self-deception. Even in the early days of childhood may the individual well be taught the value of the cardinal virtue of Christian fortitude. It will do him far more good than will spoiling or "babying" him.

Herein particularly lies a real danger in the case of sick children. Note the case of Irene. The later was living up to her name. Her face was flushed with anger. She scrambled, scratched and screamed, by turn or in unison. Eventually her mother gave her what she was clamouring for, and Irene was again serene. Such "scenes" have become quite frequent. They date back to Irene's serious sickness of a year and a half ago.

Illness and injury play strange tricks with one's personality. A long-continued sickness at times makes a grown-up person bitter and resentful, a disagreeable and fault-finding individual. It is true, too, that illness often brings out good traits, such as patience, sympathy and kind consideration of others. In the child there is even greater danger that undesirable traits show themselves during illness and fix themselves into firm and unbending habits. A sick child must be handled with care by the parent. Such a child, it is true, is entitled to special consideration, but afterwards he must learn to give up his privileges and once more take his former place in the household. He must learn again to shoulder his former responsibilities and to give and take and battle in everyday life with the other members of the family.

There is no need to give a sick child the privilege of dominating the rest of the household, and it is safe to say there is invariably more danger of spoiling a good disposition through letting the child go undisciplined than of aggravating his illness by making him live up to the rules and regulations of the home.. Even though greater leniency was shown him during sickness, after convalescence he must again accustom himself to playing his normal role in the family and in other groups.

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