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Moral Training of the Young—Pedagogical Principles and Methods

MARTIN G. BRUMBAUGH

What an Ethical Culture Society is For

LESLIE WILLIS SPRAGUE

The Moral Instruction Movement Abroad

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MORAL TRAINING OF THE YOUNG— PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODS.*

BY MARTIN G. BRUMBAUGH.

At the opening of this course of lectures, it was my privilege to deliver an address on the scope of the problem of moral training; to point out the breadth of the problem, and the factors in the problem. That has been followed by the series of lectures that you have heard on the several Saturday afternoons, all of which were the unfolding of phases of that problem from the historical side.

If we have established the scope of our problem, it seems to me only right that, as a concluding thought, we should raise the question—What is the process of realization in the moral training of the individual? How do we bring the boy and the girl through the various steps that lead at last to the realization within himself of the things that we think of as belonging to the moral life?

In answering this question, I hope to point out what seems to me to be, not only the steps in the process of moral training, but those steps in the order in which they should be followed in the training of a child to moral conduct. The problem then is to follow the following principles in order:

First, the prerequisite for the moral training of a

*Closing lecture in a Saturday afternoon course on "The Moral Training of the Young in Ancient and Modern Times," given by different lecturers under the auspices of the Society for Ethical Culture of Philadelphia. At the time this lecture was given, March 26, 1904, Dr. Brumbaugh was professor of pedagogy in the University of Pennsylvania. He now holds the position of Superintendent of Public Schools of Philadelphia.

child. Before formal moral training is begun with a child, he should be trained to the formation of right judgments. Before we can ask him to determine what is the right or the wrong in a specific thing, he ought to have his instrument of judgment trained, so that when he comes to apply it to the solution of moral problems it will be an effective agency in disposing of his difficulties. That means that the whole intellectual discipline of the mind, when rightly carried out, is the best basis for the moral training of the child. "When rightly carried out" means when the whole discipline of his intellect centers in the purpose of training him to the formation of right judgments; to be able to take facts from any field of thought, and, holding them in mind, establish their relations, and announce these relations as they really are.

In order to accomplish that, one must give the child multiplied interests upon which to exercise judgment; for he reaches the power of forming right judgments only by forming judgments, by having definite things laid before him, and reasoning with these things, until he knows how to use the materials of thought, and draw from them their legitimate conclusions. Our whole public educational system is weak or strong in proportion to its efficiency in establishing this power in the mind of a child. It stands opposed, therefore, to some of the things all too common in our educational policy; and to the extent that these things prevail, they weaken the possibility of the ultimate moral training of the child by impairing immediately his ability to form right judgments.

The first of these things in our educational practice to which this law stands opposed is the prolonged presentation of concrete materials to the child. There is such a thing as overdoing the shoe-peg, the tooth-pick and the green-pea experiment in education; and there comes a

time in the life of the child when it should be taken away—utterly away—from all finger contact with things, and be compelled to think in symbols; and he will never arrive at the point in his culture where he can establish right judgments until he has lifted himself above the plane of thinking in things.

I do not mean that all concrete teaching is bad; indeed, I think teaching that is not concrete in the elementary grades is not good; but the attempt to carry the concrete materials of the elementary school and the kindergarten high into the grades of our public schools keeps the child always below his better power, and, in the end, interferes very materially with his ability to establish right judgments. For his judgments, at the last, are the relations of ideas expressed in symbols, and not the relations of things expressed in extension or space.

The late Dr. Higbee, who was, for many years, the distinguished Superintendent of Education in this Commonwealth, was wont to express this phase of our problem in these words: "There speedily comes a time, in the life of a child, when we should un-sense him, bring him away from immediate contact with things, and throw him back upon himself, to find truth in the symbols of his own soul."

It stands opposed, in the second place, to excessive memory efforts, to that long series of efforts in home and school that think they accomplish much when the child, by reason of them, is able, in his memory, to carry large orders of facts about which he knows absolutely nothing, beyond the fact that he knows how to repeat them in the order in which they were taught to him. The memorizing of long and senseless categories of raw materials—it may be—but which never get beyond the mere memory stage of the child's mind, stands sadly in the way

of the serious cultivation of the power of correct judgment in his mind. The function of the memory is not to carry these things, it is to carry the products of the judgment when once they have been analyzed and expressed; and the vitality of the individual's memory is to be measured by its ability to put back into judgment that which, before it reached the memory, was refined in the judgment. Things understood are the legitimate products to be placed in the memory.

In the third place, it stands opposed to the hasty generalization which leads the mind of the child, and of the childish adult, to infer a law upon too meagre premises, to think that a great truth has been discovered when only a few facts have been apprehended.

This reminds me of the story of the French doctor who had a patient sick with typhoid fever, and after all the remedies that he knew had been tried without avail, he finally, in distress, gave the patient chicken broth, and the man got well. Then the French doctor was delighted, and he announced through the medical journals that chicken broth would cure typhoid fever. The next patient that he had was an Englishman, and he applied the remedy, but the Englishman died. Then he revised his generalization, and said that whereas chicken broth would cure a Frenchman who was ill with typhoid fever, it was fatal to an Englishman!

Children are making that sort of generalizations all the while, and they lead to conclusions that are not warranted by the facts at hand, and that impair the power of forming correct judgments, which are only the legitimate expression of exactly what the facts that are in the mind convey.

It stands opposed, in the fourth place, to reasoning by analogy, or inference, that most subtle and pernicious field

of thought which, basing itself upon some figure of speech, places over into one order of truth what it sees in another, on the basis of remote or fanciful resemblance. To be sure, before we have philosophy, we have mythology; before we have science, we have the myth—and all through the history of the race reasoning by analogy has set the standard for primitive minds, and not at all the standard for mature minds and civilized experiences. Now, the child, as he comes to the school, is very prone to make inferences that are not warranted by the facts; and, if he is to be trained ultimately into right judgments, he must be cautioned against forming any such analogous relations as these. Here, then, is the general process of intellectual culture, which results in establishing in the mind of the pupil the power to judge facts correctly.

The second thing to which I wish to invite your attention, in the preparation of a child for specific moral guidance, is this law, that his conduct is to be regulated in accordance with moral ideas and the sentiment of duty. The child, at the beginning of his life, is not moral, nor yet immoral—he is unmoral; he has not yet established a will that determines conduct, and therefore he has not yet taken upon himself the taint of the immoral nor the virtue of the moral quality. He stands before all activity without the power to enter upon it; and, in that early stage of his life, by the presence of the teacher and the parent, there must be formally set in the life of the child conduct in harmony with right ideals, and with the sentiment of duty. Long before the child knows why, he must do things. The child must do things long before he can give a reason for the thing that he does. He must do the things because somebody else knows that is wise; and so the child acquires the habit of moral action, and es-

establishes a formal code of moral deeds before his own mind has reached the point of growth whereby he can either approve or deny the validity of these things.

The child comes to school every morning at nine o'clock, not because he has reasoned out within himself the virtue of being there at nine o'clock, but because the moral order in the school and in the home has established conduct in conformity therewith. The child must sit in school quiet and erect and respectful and obedient long before he knows the value of these things. He does it in obedience to a law imposed upon him by the school and home for his good; so that his conduct establishes through habit a conformity to a code of moral deeds before he has reasoned out for himself what moral deeds are. And there are some people much older than children who still act under the guidance of a formal morality imposed upon them from without, and who have not yet reached the stage in their development in which a real moral soul from within guides their conduct.

I think most of us are just a little different from what we would be because of the formal quality of the life about us, and our desire to conform to it; and yet, if we were to vote in our souls we would vote against conformation to those principles. One of the reasons why we like to go off during the summer season into the woods, is, as we say, to be natural once again; that is, to throw off these formal restraints, and be our own guide—yacht, fish, if we want to; take the collar from our necks and throw it to the winds, if we want to; and do other things which in the social order are not considered good form, the individual who practices them being ostracized by society. So much for the formal and intellectual prerequisites of this process.

Let us now take up the constructive side of the prob-

lem. Under that, first of all, it seems to me, we should instruct the mind of the child in moral ideas and their spiritual significance; that is to say, we should tell what these ideas are, and what they stand for on the spiritual side. I prefer to put the interpretation of the idea on the spiritual side, rather than upon any other side, because I want the child that acquires a moral idea to see the value of that on its best side, in its relation to religious truth, and the higher development of his soul, rather than to see these relations to his services to mankind in the market and in the counting-house.

So the first thing here is to teach the child clearly what a moral idea is—what we mean by truthfulness; what we mean by kindness; what we mean by honor; what we mean by trustworthiness; what we mean by conscientiousness, or by any other of the dozen or more things which enter into the complex thing that we call the moral self.

After we have taught what that thing is, the next step is to show to the child its value, that is to say, its significance, so that there comes to him, in the appreciation of the idea itself, the reinforcement of its great value to him in his life. When we teach a boy mathematics, and come to some such problem as percentage in the study of arithmetic, we always first define the term, and then tell him how important it is that he should understand percentage because of the great value of its applications to him in his subsequent business career. We tell him how he will be able to compute the interest on money; how he will be able to compute discount; how he will be able to form a compound or complex partnership, and, putting in various sums from different sources, at the end make an equitable and just distribution of the profits or right adjustment of the losses, and so we point out the specific value of that study to him; and he takes all the more in-

terest in the study of percentage now that he knows that it has a large value to him in life.

I think we have not always, with the same degree of skill and patience, told our pupils in the schools and our children in the home the real significance of these moral ideas in their lives.

Then, in the third place, when we have once established the idea, and impressed its value upon the mind of the child, the problem is to secure from the child the application of these principles to specific acts—a creed-conduct—and this is the most difficult thing in the whole process. Most of our children know, in general, what are the right and what are the wrong things; but when we ask them to put the test of these laws to the interpretation of a specific act, at once there is the greatest diversity of opinion, and the greatest failure. Let me illustrate that very briefly to you.

A boy one morning was called by his mother. He got up promptly, dressed himself, and came down to the breakfast table on time. (How do you score that for the boy? For him, or against him, so far?) At the breakfast table this boy refused to eat the food that was prepared for the other members of the family, and, instead of that, he ate five shredded-wheat biscuits. (How do you put that down for your boy—for him or against him? Now you are not all unanimous on that problem; you cannot apply your moral code to a question of five shredded-wheat biscuits.) And while the boy is at the breakfast table, maybe while the boy is eating his meal, his mother says to him, "When you are through with the breakfast, I want you to go on an errand before you go to school." He understands her all right, and, when the meal is over, puts on his cap, and goes out and plays until nine o'clock. At exactly nine o'clock he is at school, lined up with the

other saints ready to go into the school and take up its duties. During all the morning session, until noon, he behaves in school as a boy should behave, and performs every task required of him by the teacher. When school is over he goes home for his luncheon. His mother says to him, "Why did you not go on that errand for me this morning?" and the boy says, "I forgot;" and after luncheon he returns to school. That afternoon, as a group of children were passing the seat upon which he sat, in some manner his foot slipped out and tripped another boy, and the boy fell in the aisle. The teacher saw it, and said, "Come here!" and he came. She said, "Why did you do that?" and he said, "It was an accident." She said, "Sit over there, and I will see you after school." When the other scholars had gone home, the teacher and this boy had an interview, which lasted fifteen minutes. It does not matter what was said or done—it is over, and the boy goes straight home. His mother says, "You are late this evening." "Yes," he says, "I was talking with a friend," What is your opinion of that boy?

Take each act which has happened that day, and set your moral law upon it, and tell me whether I do not speak the truth when I say that one of the very hardest problems with which we have to deal, in the process of the moral training of a child, is to teach him rightly to apply the law that he knows to the specific acts that come under his daily observation.

We have not nearly enough training in our schools just on that point; we seem to be content when we have taught the law, and received the answer back, when we ought not at all to be content until the child can interpret the law adequately in terms of conduct. And if there be any part of the whole moral process in the school that has great significance, it is that part of it which gives the

child, through exercise upon specific cases like that, the power at the last to weigh the complex acts of a day's life or an hour's career, and form a proper judgment upon them.

The discipline of the home and the school is a discipline of caprice, and the child is punished to-day for that which is let go by unnoticed the day before, and much of the severity or the leniency of the punishment at any given time is determined by the condition of the stomach and the liver of the teacher or the parent at a given moment. It is the law dishonored, and caprice exalted into a code.

Had I time, I should like to give you further stories, that I think might possibly puzzle you, large as you are, and experienced as you are, in applying your moral law to concrete problems properly.

Now that we have once accomplished this quality in the moral process, the next thing is the directing of the personal experience of the individual in acting out his moral ideas, in doing them, for it is only when he does them that he learns the virtue there is in them.

There was once a selfish boy in a group of thirteen, who, when fruit was served to the group, always reached out, and took the largest apple or the largest banana,—and selfishness is always immoral. And a wise teacher said to herself, I must break that habit, and establish unselfishness in the heart of that child. So she said to the child, "When you pass the fruit around to the other children, help yourself last." And he said he would. And, behold, when he had passed around the dish to the twelve children, the last of the twelve took the last of the pieces of fruit, and the selfish child had an empty dish from which to help himself. He cried the first time, but the second time he saw the force of the teacher's wisdom, and

the actual truth is that there came a time speedily when that boy delighted in passing the fruit, and seeing others happy, even when he himself did not receive fruit—and that is a high moral state for a man or a boy to achieve in this world.

In some way we must give the child the opportunity to do the things that bring to him the sense in his conscience of approval for the act that is right, and when we have done that, we can reinforce the value of this personal experience by presenting to him concrete cases of worthy action performed by others—preferably by others of his own age—so that he knows that this thing is within the range of his own attainment, and is the actual achievement of one no better able to achieve than himself.

In Holland, in the public schools, the history books for the children are all so written that a child of the grade in which the book is used tells to the children in the public schools the story of Holland's glory. There is no mature mind interpreting great civic processes, but a little child in the book stands out and tells the children, in the language of the book, the story of Holland's glory. And because it is the language of a child to the hearts of children, it stimulates them as perhaps a more mature experience could not stimulate them.

In other words, next to the actual doing of the moral thing is the story in which moral deeds are described. The value of the story is next in value to the personal experience. For that reason biography is of tremendous value in the training of the moral self. If I wish to teach a child that has no opportunity to understand in his own experience a certain moral quality, let me select for him, not a law relating to that moral quality, but a very real, full story, in which that quality is acted out by another person of his own age and maturity. A story that will illustrate this may lead you to see my point, and believe it.

Some years ago, in the city of Edinburgh in Scotland, there was a Christmas present given out to the poor children of the city by the Christian charity of the city; and on Christmas Eve the little children lined up in a row to receive their presents. Many of them were poor, and half-clothed, some bare-footed and bare-legged. They stood in a line in the twilight on the icy pavements of the city. In the line was a little bare-footed girl, whose feet, as they pressed the icy pavement, were almost frozen. She would raise one foot under her meagre skirts and warm it a bit, standing on the other foot meanwhile. Then she would change positions, and in that way she tried to protect herself from the freezing cold. Next to her in the line was a boy, bare-footed like herself, but wearing on his head a woolen cap. When he saw the suffering of the little girl, he took his cap from his head, laid it down on the city street, and said to her, "You may stand on that."

Next to taking one's cap, and putting it under the foot of a suffering child, it seems to me that the story would teach the moral and enforce the quality for those that hear it.

When a story is presented, its value is to be measured by its concrete quality, which is the quality in the story that appeals to the emotional life, that nourishes the feelings of the child. And so, after the story, the next step is to reinforce the feeling quality of the story by the poem, which is itself full of concrete materials, but which strengthens the quality of the story because of its rhythm—the rhythm adding to the emotional phase of the story—and then, as a last expression of that, to put the rhythmic emotional material into a song, and sing it. The order is—tell it, read it, sing it. When you have done that with it, you have pretty well defined it in the moral atmosphere of the child's mind.

When all of this has been done, beginning with the purely intellectual training that leads to correct judgments, and the establishment of formal morality by the exercise of force and guidance from without; when we have informed the mind of the child as to what moral truth is, and have taught him how to interpret that—in a law first of all, and in the concrete cases in the second place—when we have put the premium of emotional appeal upon the child to do that thing, there remains one additional thing, the summing up of all this round of disciplines into the law, or the maxim or the proverb, which stands in the mind of the child as a sign of all that through which the mind has passed, and which is adequately and fairly represented by the maxim or the law.

You see, therefore, that in this process, that with which we usually begin, the moral training of the child, is that which comes the last. Here again is the law, "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first." What has been perhaps, more than any other thing, the cause of so imperfect results in the moral training of our children, is that we have laid the law before them at the outset, and put no premium or inducement into the life of the child to realize the law. So he committed it to memory, and repeated it when he was asked to do so, and violated it all the time, because he never learned what it meant in terms of conduct or in terms of feeling.

If we want to do the right thing with all the material that we have gathered here from week to week in this course of lectures, it seems to me that we can reduce it to the order I have indicated this afternoon, and at the very last, as the crown of the whole moral activity, set the law, and not at the beginning.

Just one thing more, which I think should be said at this stage of the matter. All moral training, just as all

intellectual training, has its right to be, not because of any results that are achieved in the mind of the individual that pursues intellectual studies or moral studies, but because of the service which that knowledge compels the individual to render to his fellowmen.

To know one's duty, and not to do it, is not only immoral within itself, but it is a radical hindrance to the working out of the well-being of our fellow-men. I have no business to know moral law unless I honor my knowledge of that law by service to those about me; and the very virtue of a moral soul is to be measured in terms of his service to those about him, and the depth of that service, and the breadth of that service, and the quality of that service. All is to be interpreted by the character of the service that we render, not by the quality of the theory that we hold.

There are some people who think they do many good things. They do them because they wish better things to come back to themselves. Their service is not unselfish, and it is not moral. It is when we do a thing because we dare not, from our own self, refuse to do it, and do it without a thought of the morrow and the moral, that our service begins to take on the high quality of moral heroism.

WHAT AN ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY IS FOR.*

BY LESLIE WILLIS SPRAGUE.

IN trying to answer the question, what an Ethical Society is for, you will perhaps pardon me a personal word by way of preface, since this is my first address upon an Ethical Culture platform, after formally associating myself with the movement. Since I have been old enough to look seriously upon the problems of personal and social life, I have been greatly impressed with the Ethical Culture Movement; and as my contact and experience have broadened, I have come more and more to feel the imperative need in modern civilization of such a movement. And this, first of all, because of the platform which is secured by an Ethical Society, a platform upon which all classes of people, whatever their affiliations may have been or are, may meet—that broad platform of human brotherhood, where people of diverse thoughts, ideas and impulses, may meet to help each other in the endeavor to understand the meaning of life, and to discover the right attitude towards their fellows, and towards the problems of modern civilization. I have all along been specially impressed by the fact that Ethical Culture brings ethics to the forefront, putting the necessities of the ethical life as the pre-eminent necessities and placing ethics before and above all other considerations. Not simply morality, but ethics. Morality be-

*An address delivered before the Philadelphia Ethical Society, Sunday, October 23, 1904.

longs to the outward conventional relationships of men and women. Morals means an outward conformity to the ways of good living that have been developed in the past; whereas ethics, as the derivation of the word implies, connotes rather the inner attitude of man towards the problem of his being, the right adjustment in the inner life as well as in the outer conduct of life, the discovery of principles upon which the moral life itself is to be constructed. I take it to be important that ethics should be brought increasingly to the forefront, in the midst of a world-change that is going on in the thinking of man. Sweeping changes are taking place in the religious and philosophical thought of the world, and it is imperative that ethical interests should be separated from either theological or philosophical theorizing, in order that the ethical life may not go down, as is all too common in the modern world, with the disintegration of the philosophical or theological bases upon which the good life has heretofore rested. This I think to be one of the most important interests of the Ethical Society and of the modern world; the more so considering the fact that the tendency towards material science, economic and social emphasis, and the larger and larger human contact are all tending increasingly to break up the old sanctions, the older philosophical and theological bases upon which ethics has heretofore rested, and to leave the conscience of men unanchored. Evidence we find on all hands of the breaking up of the sanctions of the moral life, not only in the individual but in the community, and of the rapid spread, through the last half century, of thought that expresses itself in free love, frequent divorces, the breaking up of the older constraints, the lessening bonds of duty between employer and employe, the piling up of fortunes by political manipulation, and the cynical smile

which political corruption brings to the faces of those who hear it mentioned,—the indifference of modern society towards those fundamental ethical impulses which the past recognized, but which to-day seem to be further and further from having their due command over our life.

I have been interested in the Ethical Society, not only on account of the basis it offers, but the common meeting ground which it gives to those of different beliefs, not only because it brings ethics thus to the front, but because the Ethical Society as an association represents the earnest endeavor on the part of individuals to combine on behalf of the interests that are most precious and imperative. And I take it that these interests which have been at work in the organization and that have drawn me personally to a closer association with the Ethical movement, are those which have animated the efforts of your leaders, here and elsewhere. An Ethical Society is not primarily a protest against other religious organizations. It is not born of any failure to appreciate the enormous service rendered to the world by every institution that in any way seeks to conserve the ethical interests of humanity. There are few associated with the Ethical movement, I take it, who do not realize the debt of the world to every phase of organized religion, every great system which has given its great ethical enunciations and exercised an influence towards a larger and nobler relationship of men and men. The Ethical Culture movement represents an endeavor to gather together the best influences and teachings, the highest reaches of thought and imagination which the world has anywhere and everywhere expressed, in order that they may be brought to a focus upon the conditions of our own time and the problems of our personal lives. And it is significant that there

should at last be in the world one platform upon which the various ethical interests of all religious teachings may be represented and all placed together in that larger synthesis for which the world is waiting.

But the Ethical Society is something more than a mere platform for the free expression of opinion concerning life, ethics and religion. Because it is an ethical society it is necessarily an association of people—an organization—in behalf of high and world-wide ends. You may think that all these various interests might be realized in the individual life, separate and alone; that ethics is the supreme effort of every individual when he comes to his right awakening, however separate and aloof he may be from his fellows. But ethics is not merely a question of individual life. It requires an association of people who are united for this great common aim. And this thought of organization brings us to one of the most imposing characteristics of the modern world. We see about us everywhere a tendency towards closer, vaster organization; a tendency which in the inner life is met by a resistance of organized endeavor. There is a tendency towards larger and larger combination of peoples. We have evidence in this country of the passing away of State rights and the larger emphasis upon the rights of the Federal Government. Federal interests are more and more absorbed in the larger interests of international relationship, so that the political issues of the day are not the issues of internal administration but of foreign affairs. We have seen the tendency of our time towards extending the international ideals. Such meetings as those of the Peace Conference are indicative of a growing disposition to combine, on the important questions of international ethics, into one great world organization; and the power of the international arbitration bureaus

and international treaties, increasingly inclusive of even minor affairs, is a further indication of this tendency towards world organization. We see the same tendency towards organization in business life: the combinations of capital in trusts, of manufacturers, of labor unions and the federation of labor interests. The same tendency is going on even in the educational life of the country, and the larger institutions are taking the smaller ones under their control. Our city schools are dominated by the policy of the universities. The secondary schools are made to be preparatory for the higher educational institutions. All through the external world this tendency towards organization and closer association is robbing man of much of his independence, so that he cannot work alone, can scarcely think alone, and cannot fully live except in harmonious relation with society.

With this surrender in the external affairs of life, men have been driven to assert the claims of individual life in matters of ethical experience. We have heard a good deal lately concerning why men do not go to church. This discussion has filled the pulpit and press and magazine. One reason, and perhaps the pre-eminent reason, why men do not go to church, is that men wish to reserve one little province of life in which they shall be free and independent. Many of the people who do go to church and attend faithfully upon the ministrations of religion will not associate themselves with the organizations of religion, because they cannot surrender this last province of individual liberty, the liberty of the individual life in matters of faith and ideals. And yet, if you will look closely at the matter, you will discover that there is no province in which association is so imperative as in the innermost experience of the individual. We can much more readily work alone, even amidst combinations of

capital and labor, than we can carry on the principal work of our personal lives without the influence and suggestion of others. Without association for moral and religious end, the highest ideal which is developed out of race experience, which belongs not only to the present but to the past, which gathers into itself all the finest and the best of all that man has ever loved and thought and been—must perish.

But the great end of the ethical life is not simply the emphasis of the ethical interests, but an associated endeavor in behalf of those interests, in order that we may come to a higher appreciation than we can reach separately and alone. The Ethical Society therefore stands for association, and if we do not realize this necessity, it is because we are still under the influence of the old monastic, or of the philosophical individualistic interpretation of human existence which through long centuries has been emphasized. These have been the dominating influences on the attitude of mind towards the meaning of life in the past. If you would know the truth, go alone and think; go into the closet or into the desert, if you wish to reach the ultimate, go apart, as the philosophers did, and dwell alone in the contemplation of your own inspirations. And yet, if we stop a moment to think upon the weakness of this individualistic ideal we shall see how it has been corrected by all the higher influences of our own time. Carlyle's thought of the hero as one who stood alone, who had no contact with his fellows except to open his ideal to them. We are coming to realize that there is no hero who does not gather into himself the spirit of his time, and become the expression of the highest and best forces of society. No thinker can, out of the intimacy of his own study, bring forth some new philosophy of life. The great thinker is the man who gathers

into himself the utmost of human intelligence, and who therefore becomes the interpreter of the silent endeavor, the expression of the intellectual activity of the great majority of men. The higher life is always the life of close and intimate human association. The artist is no artist who does not gather into himself the ideals and aspirations of the age, and then give voice to that which otherwise were silent. And so the moral life is conditioned upon association in behalf of moral ends.

The Ethical Society then stands for association, and for association in the spirit of an ethical challenge. We have our ideals which we do not live up to. If any one of us could live up to the best impulses, thoughts and purposes which he has gained from the nurture of his childhood, even for one day, the world would be a very different place in which to live. But we do not live up to these ideals. These ideals with which we began our early manhood are dissipated in the midst of a world of conflict. The higher ethical impulses of our spirits are destroyed or made ineffective by the angry jar and friction of the world about us. The noblest aspirations fail, and every man who goes out to meet the problem of life is met with the question whether it is worth while to seek to live up to his aspirations, or whether to conform to the standards of the world in which he is placed. And so we come to the Ethical Society meeting, as people go to their places of worship, to renew our allegiance to these ideals which have commended themselves to us in the past, to measure our life by the standard which we seriously hold, and to give ourselves anew to the ethical interpretation and fulfillment in practice of the higher inspirations which each and every individual life must at some time feel. The association therefore is for ethical challenge, but not for this alone.

The Ethical Society is an association for ethical illumination, for moral guidance. We know not what to do in the midst of the perplexing problems of modern life. The conscience of the race is to-day perplexed in the midst of conditions which are largely new. Each human life is to-day more difficult than in the ages past. We come together in the Ethical Society for the study of the questions of the ethical life, as well as for self-devotion to ideals. You come here, where, according to your plan, speaker follows speaker, each with some special study and experience, for guidance, and to gain for yourselves that interpretation or vision which the speaker has of the meaning of human association. We unite in the Ethical Society in the interest of a deeper apprehension of the spiritual imperative, and of the way in which ethical commandments should carry us in our business, in our homes, and in our relation to the civic life. The Ethical Society is not only a meeting place for challenge, not only a place to which we shall come for illumination and instruction, but it is an organization of people in behalf of ethical work. And one of the things which our day ought to realize is that association is imperative, that expression is imperative, if any effectual work is to be done in the world that is so complex, so vast that every individual effort is lost in the great organized social life. If you would do anything effective in business, you usually ally yourself with other interests along your line of activity. If you would be effective in the educational world, you must associate yourself with the greatest movement in which you can find a place, with the greatest co-ordinated activity. And so, in the ethical interests of the community we must realize the limitation of our own individual capacity, and the necessity for close co-operation in order to secure the best effect.

And that for which an Ethical Culture Society must exist—for which all of the churches really exist—is to be found in the inspiration given to the individual life. The way in which you and I live in the community, the way in which we fulfil our duties as parents, husbands and wives, neighbors, citizens and workers in the world, the way in which we fulfil our responsibilities will determine the world's interpretation of the meaning and importance of the ethical life and of the Society for Ethical Culture.

But over and beyond the influence of the Ethical Society upon the individual life, there are great undertakings which cannot be served by individualism, however high its expression, things which we must do together. If you would realize the importance of such co-operation, you only need to look at your own Society, or that of New York, to see how one and another thing is accomplished through association, which could not be wisely undertaken alone. Any such work as that undertaken by your Society last winter, in providing a course of Saturday afternoon lectures on the Moral Education of the Young, in which you gave the community the best utterances that could be gathered concerning moral education in our public institutions—such an effort could not be fruitful if attempted by an individual alone, nor could it be so well and effectively performed by any other organization in this city. Look at the splendid Ethical Culture School at New York, which Professor Adler and his associates have developed, which is an object lesson, not only to the city of New York, but to the best educational interests of all the world. People come from over the seas to study its workings, to see the results in the awakening of the ethical life, and the attainment of an all round culture on the part of those who are fortunately privileged to pass the years of their life-preparation there.

Then there are the philanthropic interests of the many different divisions of the New York Society, bringing life and healing to people of every class and of every race. This, then, is the object of an Ethical Society—to gather the people whose little means and whose inadequate time could not personally effect any great object, any important leadership towards ethical ends, but who by combining the little means and time of many people in a neighborhood, attempt great undertakings, and attain a vast accomplishment.

The Ethical Society is, therefore, an association on behalf of ethical work, not merely for bringing out ideals of life by personal inspiration and contact, but on behalf of ethical service to the community. For the ends of ethical culture such a Society must necessarily be a close human association, and one of the points I wish this morning to emphasize more than any other is the imperative necessity for a closely combined association among the people who constitute an Ethical Society. The Ethical Society is for this very human relationship of men and women in the interests of the ethical life. In one or another way through a number of years past, it has been my constant feeling that there has been too little contact of this sort. Our great universities, increasing in their activity and in their numbers, are gradually limiting the contact between professor and pupil, and decreasing that between pupil and pupil. In the great cities we live lonely and isolated lives. In the midst of the city we can be more lonely than out upon the dreary desert plains. There are thousands of people about us in whom we have no interest, with whom we have no association for moral help. The individual is lost in the great aggregations of modern cities and of industrial activities. An Ethical Society ought to form one place in the great desert of lone-

liness in which we can come into vital and human relation with mankind, in which we shall come into such contact as shall be helpful to each and all. This is the whole secret of the Ethical movement, the right relation of life with life, the interest of mutual helpfulness.

We need a new interpretation of marriage relationships and of domestic life. The older significance of marriage—the old formula—was to cleave to each other for better or worse as chance might be. The ethical idea is not for better or worse, but that husband and wife take each other to make the worse good, to make the good better, and to make the better best. The true marriage is an ethical co-operation, each seeking to bring out the highest and best in the life of the one he or she most loves. This is the true meaning of marital responsibility, which modern conditions are causing to be interpreted in terms of material economy. The responsibility of the parent as to the child, as commonly viewed, is that it shall be well taught, clothed, fed and started in life. But the ethical responsibility is not only to clothe, feed, educate, but to bring out the latent possibility not only of intellectual and physical well being, but of moral and spiritual life, to develop in the child all that is latent in its spirit. So in friendship: true friends are not those who merely enjoy each other's society from year to year, who come into relationship with each other in pleasant social intercourse, but is realized where each strives to bring out the best that is in the other's spirit, so far as one life may influence and affect the other. And this is the true meaning of an Ethical Society,—an association of people banded together for mutual moral help in character-building—in which the members come into personal human relationship. If we could only devise methods by which, instead of constant instruction, which often falls

upon dull and deaf ears, we might incite and stimulate each other to bring out, each for the other's good, the best and highest! But this whole thought rests back upon a new apprehension of the meaning of human life.

The American impulse, so strong all over our great land, is to get out of the class in which we have been placed by the fortune of birth, and to get into some higher class, that of those better favored than we are. This eager desire to get on in life, which is so characteristic and so fatal in our civilization, rests upon a false perspective, upon an unethical interpretation of human relationships; for every human life, because it is a human life, whatever its degree of education and its position in the world, whatever its capacity and power, has its contribution to make to every other human life. The one thing which the social settlement work has most clearly revealed is the fact that those who go to work among the unfavored classes get far more than they give. Men in the midst of suffering and distress, surrounded by unfavorable conditions, who have learned what it is to endure hardness, to resist temptation, to stand upright with the dreadful fact of to-morrow's needs pressing heavily upon them in to-day's activity, because they have come thus into contact with an essential experience of human life, are able to speak words which the most favored needs to hear. So the Ethical Society, if true to its foundation principle of gathering together people, regardless of education and station, into one fraternity, is in a position to help on the enrichment and enlargement of human character through moral fraternity, as no other organization can possibly do.

The ethical association, then, is in behalf of co-operative character-building, close human personal relationship between member and member, not simply for the pleasant

enjoyment of a social hour, but for ethical ends, that each may seek to bring out in the other the best that is latent there. An ethical association, however, is not true to its name or purpose when it does not provide inspiration and opportunity for those who would do personal work and render help to the lives of those with whom they come in contact. I am depressed by the enormous spectacle of wasted human lives. No one can study the social conditions of our time without being depressed with the spectacle. There are thousands of our young men, and men who are no longer young, going down in ethical and spiritual decay. We are depressed when we read of 80,000 men falling on the battlefields of Manchuria, and we ought to be depressed; the heart of humanity ought to break beneath the strain of sympathy for our brothers who are going down to death. But we overlook the fact that in every one of our great cities an equal number of men are going down to death without the shedding of blood upon a battlefield. Professor Jordan, some years ago, told in the *Forum* his experiences while coming across the continent on a slow train which stopped at nearly every station. There were groups of young men all along the road, idling and loitering, drifting into ways of vice and sin, with no thought of life's duties, going down into intellectual and spiritual decay. Walk out upon the streets of Philadelphia any evening, and you will see throngs of young people going to the devil, as they say in New York, because they have nowhere else to go to. Look into every section of the community and you will find uninspired, unillumined lives of men and women.

I cannot see how an Ethical Society with its aims can fail to become an animating power in the regenerating work of humanity. And if it is true to its ideals, the

Ethical Society must mean inspiration to every one of its members to go out into the highways and byways, to take by the hand the wayward and erring, to help those who are falling by the wayside because of the lack of a haven, and bring them to a place where a helpful human interest may illuminate them and awaken them to a sense of their uselessness both to themselves and to the community. The Ethical Society ought to be an important regenerative force in every community, seeking to bring in the erring; not a fellowship for the mere sake of fellowship, not seeking to build up its organization if you please, merely by bringing people into membership, but to bring them under influences which will illuminate them and make them better men and women. If true to its mission, then, the Ethical Society is for the work of social redemption, for the inspiration of every member to loyal human service, not simply in giving of alms, but in bestowing that higher alms which consists in being a true friend.

We come to the morning lectures not merely to hear what the lecturer may say, not to meet our friends and those with a kindred interest, not this alone—but we come upon the day of rest and thought that in one place we may meet face to face the ideal, the ideal which has been born out of the ages of human life, nurtured by the noble example of all the saints and saviors, prophets and martyrs who have gone before, nurtured by every current of religious life since the world began—each nation with “its message from on high, each the Messiah of some central thought for the fulfilment and delight of man.” We come here that we may meet that ideal which has been enriched by the sacrifice and earnest toil of all peoples in all time. The ideal we hold may perhaps have a different interpretation for every one of us. In its

formless glow we shall each see the face which is to us most dear, which through education, association and love has been impressed upon our consciousness. One will see there the face of the man of Galilee, another the face of Moses or Isaiah, another Buddha or Mohammed, another Knox or Calvin or Emerson. Most of us will probably see the face of a sainted mother, or some dear friend who has been closer to us than a mother; but the lineaments which we shall each discover for ourselves will be dependent upon our point of view, and the medium through which we look is secondary to the fact that we shall look upon the ideal—the highest aspiration, the deepest conception of human life which the ages have developed—its meaning and its mission. The Ethical Society is an association for the preservation of the ideal, to gather it from all the factors of human richness, and to illuminate that ideal with a new reality and allegiance, and to bring it to bear upon the question of individual activity and the right attitude of men and women in all the relations of life. It is the home of the ideal.

That which is significant in every religion is not its dogma, but its vision; not its principles, but its inspirations; not its beliefs, but its undertakings. In the presence of the ideal, inspirations, which surpass the power of utterance in words but which lead us ever onward to growth and fulfilment, shall more and more be infused into the practical deeds of every day, to transform them into the image of the ideal, and to fulfil them in terms of vital human experience. It is for such things as these that the Ethical Society exists. It is these things that we individually need, that the world needs, and such things as these can be supplied by the Ethical Society as by no other human association.

THE MORAL INSTRUCTION MOVEMENT ABROAD

[SOME information regarding the moral instruction movement abroad, compiled from printed documents by a member of the Philadelphia Ethical Society and read at its recent (twenty-second) annual meeting.]

The Moral Instruction League in *England* was founded in 1897. Its object is to introduce systematic non-theological moral instruction into all schools, and to make the formation of character the chief aim of school life. It has issued many leaflets and pamphlets. It has published a Graduated Syllabus of Moral Instruction for Elementary Schools. It has presented a petition to the Board of Education signed by members of the Lords and Commons, university professors and other representative men, asking the Board to make provision for lessons in personal and civic duties. It gives twice a month, in the League's Rooms, specimen lessons of Moral Instruction by capable teachers, before audiences of educational experts and the general public. It is collecting material as illustrative information under the several headings of its Graduated Syllabus. It publishes and recommends, several moral text-books. It is influencing Educational Authorities all over the country—moral instruction being given in more than 3,000 public schools to about 1,000,000 children. It is communicating with all the head teachers and all the Training Colleges in the land. It intends to, or has already, approached the new Government to press on it the need of introducing Moral Instruction as a regular subject into all public schools—the religious instruction given having proved morally ineffective—twenty-seven educational authorities, in spite of an overcrowded curriculum, having recently found it necessary to make additional provision for moral instruction of a systematic kind.

In several of the *British Colonies*—in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Jamaica, Queensland and South Australia, definite instruction is given in morals and good manners.

In *India* an official Education Circular has been issued (in Bengal) which states that teachers must aim at developing moral character by stories and examples of famous men, in their text-books, and by the example of the teacher; that character is shaped by discipline, habits of punctuality, obedience, regularity, method, and truthfulness, and the virtues of generosity, self-control, self-sacrifice, respect to superiors, tenderness to animals, and compassion for the poor and aged.

In *Germany* the League for secular education and moral instruction, possessing a membership of over 400 persons, is setting up a publishing house at considerable cost, for the purpose of encouraging and facilitating the production of books on moral instruction.

In *Austria* a Moral Instruction League is in contemplation. The Austrian Board of Education has just issued new regulations for schools which are conceived in an ethical spirit, and show in detail the supreme importance of teaching to the children the leading virtues.

In *Holland*, steps have also been taken toward the formation of a Moral Instruction League, and to this end several meetings have taken place at The Hague.

In *Hungary*, it is reported there is the possibility of forming a Moral Instruction League. Moral instruction in Hungary is supposed to be given in all schools, but it forms only a part, and a very small part, of the denominational instruction given by priests and rabbis.

In the schools of *Italy*, Moral Instruction has been for some time a separate regular subject.

In *France*, the impulse given in recent years to instruction in morals or practical ethics is most significant. The subject there is not new; moral instruction is found in school programs antedating the Republic but always in relation to religion. In 1882 the State schools were made strictly secular, morals and civics being placed at the head of the prescribed studies. For a while the scientific spirit dominated. But within the past few years the primary

school of France has undergone a subtle transformation. The scientific spirit has given way to the ethical spirit. The teaching of practical morals has become live and effective; and is intended to complete and ennoble all the other instruction of the school. While each of the other branches tends to develop a special order of aptitudes or some kind useful knowledge—this study aims to develop the man himself.

In *Japan*, for nearly forty years past, they have been excluding from the schools all priestly influence. The government has introduced moral instruction into all the schools since 1868, and attaches especial importance to such instruction being carried out. The greatest value is placed on ethical influence permeating all classes of the people, as the surest guarantee for a sound further development. An eight-volume work dealing with moral instruction has been since 1903 in use in all the schools of Japan—of elementary schools alone there are over 27,000. In the lowest grades, text-books in moral instruction are not used. The children are interested in moral conduct by means of object-lessons. Even in the higher classes, object lessons in morals are used. The examples of famous men, and the occurrences of daily life. The duties succeed one another proceeding from the family to the school, and from the school to the duties of the citizen. In the higher classes, the various ethical systems are set forth. Moral instruction in Japan is not anti-religious, but has for its sole object the strengthening of the ethical consciousness. The policy pursued by the Japanese authorities is almost identical with the aim of the Moral Instruction League of England.

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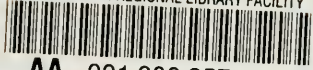
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