

soul to become imbued with its influences. This can only be done in youth, when there are no loathsome diseases at work upon it. And what now. The home the moral nursery. Is it worthy the name? We can answer only by ascertaining the character of its nurselings.

The boy in town, in the large majority of cases, as soon as he leaves his cradle, learns to be a practiser of deception. He stays upon the street full one half his time. Learns street and saloon talk. Makes a man of himself by lisping, as soon as he can, the fellest oaths. Chews tobacco. Learns to lie; and a thousand other things, including those baser and darker crimes that cling like scales to the human race from head to foot.

Take him to the country. It changes his nature somewhat. About as much as it does the English boy to take him to the pampas or Andes. He becomes rather shy. An exceedingly modest ens; rather ragged and brown. Learns to grind his teeth upon men, when he is by himself, but shuns their presence. He is, most cases, is very ignorant, because all around him are ignorant. Trained, in a degree, in right and wrong, as far as lying and stealing are concerned, but without reason. Has thus a few principles of morality; but upon them, learns to found a creed, which, when he becomes a man, makes him a bigot, a prejudiced fool. It is a kind of blind morality, since it leaves him entirely without the pale of honor. These are somewhat extremes, but as they take their stand at each end of a long list of conditions, and as all others gradually grade into them from each direction, they must represent the influences that move the masses. Then, we affirm that the home, on the whole, is not a moral school. Thus we find the result, as we might reasonably expect, that there is very little real honor, very little real justice, very little real purity, and that conscience is strangely thin. We attribute the cause of all this to the too little amount of real persistent effort to lead out the moral na-

ture at the time and place where effort can be most advantageously employed.

Turn now, for a moment, to another part of the curriculum. While the home may be, and in some instances is, the moral garden, the school should be, but scarcely ever is, a field for both the moral and intellectual. We can judge only by results. As a result of the workings of our public schools, we must take the development of that class that is leaving them every day, and either going out upon the world, or taking steps toward college. Who are these youths? Are they thorough, as a class? I know you smile at the thought. Are they moral, as a class? This question is still stranger. But why not? Plainly, because they have been under improper influences. They have been cast in unfit moulds. Saying nothing of our sectarian schools, and more especially our Roman Catholic schools, where the pupil is, for a great part, brought down to Creeds, Confessions and Articles of Faith, until he is so trimmed and straightened that he ever after runs in a single groove, believing nothing except his creed, or judging against the world, and forever a dupé to snufflers and prayer-books, we will examine for a moment the work of our common public schools. In the first place, we are well warranted in asserting that there is, especially in the west, very little real system. We mean system that does really reach and effect the pupils. And why? We know we have a system of State and county superintendents. We know, too, that generally they do their work well. But here system ends. It does not properly extend to the individual. He is influenced only so far as the money is concerned. That is, he is generally sent to school for several months during the year. His teacher is also required to pass an examination, which, in most cases, is unsatisfactory. According to our American principles of freedom, each district usually elects its own teacher. So the matter is ever left open to objections. District