

breakfast that papa left untasted that morning, of the ceaseless chatter of the children, the soiled tablecloth, half washed dishes, and muddy coffee; all excused on the plea that Bridget had more than she could do.

"Then why not do it yourself?" said Conscience; and I had no answer to make.

Then I saw again papa's indignant face and heard his tired voice: "Christie, are you never going to learn how to take your mother's place, or am I always to find my home uncomfortable and the children uncared for?"

And what was my reply? "Am I always to be a slave, papa, and waste my youth washing dishes and minding children? Pray what is to become of my singing and Italian?" He said nothing and left the room; and I with a guilty feeling tugging at my heart, tried to make myself believe I had only spoken the truth and was entitled to do so. But my undutiful, sinful speech rang in my ears, and my better nature rose up against it.

"Poor papa!" I thought. "How hard he works and how little comfort he has! How grey and careworn he has become since mother died, and though he gave me money for a new quarter of singing and Italian he says the household expenses must still be reduced." For an hour I fought with myself, and at last my eyes seemed opened and I longed to begin upon the new line of conduct I sketched out for myself. My first act of self-denial was to start immediately for town, and, putting the money for the new quarters that papa had given me that morning in my purse, I called upon my teachers and informed them I must discontinue my lessons. Then feeling as though my last pleasure in life had gone, I stopped and purchased a hat for Teddy, books for Robbie, dish towels for Bridget, and many other useful articles which I knew we had been in need of for a long time, but had no means of procuring.

How I worked the rest of the day! And how wonderfully the old house brightened up under a little judicious care and management! Bridget and I washed the curtains in the sitting-room which had hung soiled and yellow so long that poor papa had asked if they were intended to be ornamental or strictly useful. I brought down the plants and bird-cage which had decorated my own room, and made many other changes, which, though slight in themselves, made a wonderful difference in the looks of what had always been so forlorn a room for a family to congregate in on a winter's night.

When all was done, I stood amazed, and contemplated the change a few hours' work and a little ingenuity had accomplished in the looks and comfort of the old house.

But there was a slight drawback to my pleasure, for Conscience kept whispering in my ear, "Why didn't this occur to you before? Instead of being wrapped up in your own affairs, why haven't you tried to make the house cheerful and your father comfortable?"

Neither did my efforts in this new line of conduct stop here, but, having prepared for the comfort of the outer, I took into consideration the inner man. After making a nice pudding, I set the table neatly and prettily, and told the astonished Bridget that it would be my duty hereafter to attend to it while she might devote the whole of her time and talent to the cooking.

When the children came home from school I combed and scrubbed them to such an extent that they asked if the minister or Walter Kingsley was coming to tea. I laughed and sighed in the same breath, for the innocent enquiry stung me more than any reproach.

"No, Janie," I said, "but sister is going to be good now and keep you always neat little girls. Papa don't like to see such untidy-looking children around him, and you must all help me and be good, too, and keep yourselves clean, and not all talk at once when papa comes home tired."

The promise was readily given, for children see as clearly as older people where there is trouble, and can be easily reasoned with. Finally, with bright faces, smooth hair and clean aprons, we descended to the transformed sitting-room, and I found, to my intense delight, their manner had improved to meet the occasion.

Never shall I forget the surprised look upon papa's face when he entered the cheerful, home-like room. The fire burned brightly, the snowy curtains were drawn close, and the birds and plants added such a pretty freshness to the scene. The evening paper, his slippers and dressing-gown took away from any "company look" it might have to his eyes, and when he found himself surrounded with his children looking happy and cared for, I saw his eyes fill with tears and his lips tremble.

Need I say I felt fully repaid for the sacrifices I had made? My trial proved such a success that I was never willing to go back to the old shiftless way of living. Still I fought many a fierce battle with myself before I could give up entirely old habits, and the burden at first was a heavy one to carry.

Far from thinking myself a household

drudge now, I look upon the duties I perform for my loved ones from day to day as among my greatest privileges. And when papa puts his arm around me and calls me "Little Mother," I look back upon that dreary time and thank God for opening my eyes and giving me strength to bear the burden until it became light.—*Christian Union.*

#### BURNT FINGERS.

BY MRS. AMELIA E. BARR.

There is an old proverb which says that "Burnt children dread the fire." The maker of the proverb wisely limited it to children, for it is certainly not applicable to adults. Everybody knows men and women who have burnt their fingers to the bone, and yet who will at the very first opportunity burn them again. There for instance is an impulsive, generous man, whose fingers have been burnt by false friends using them over and over again to pull their own roasted chestnuts out of the fire. He has bought worthless scrip of one, loaned money to another, become security for a third; he has been burnt each time, and yet he is just as ready as ever to become the prey of the cunning and the unprincipled.

Is the speculator ever warned by his losses? As one project fails, another, with "millions in it," takes the place. Is the gambler warned though the cards and the dice-box burn into his very heart? To the last stake he is quite sure that by some kind of legerdemain he is to be delivered from the consequence of his crime, and two and two made to count five in his behalf. Does not the drunkard fly to the wine cup though one bitter lesson after another has taught him that death is in it. The busy-body is forever putting his hands into fires that do not concern him, and which by no possible effort he can control. Every one of us must indeed plead "guilty" in a greater or less degree to not sufficiently dreading the fire at which we have once been burnt.

If the cause of this persistence in evil was ignorance we might expect that experience would correct it; as it undoubtedly does errors in mental and mechanical labor. But the fault lies deeper, it is not ignorance as much as temperament. We are all apt to think that if we could only live our lives over again we should avoid the sins and mistakes into which we have fallen. But unless our organization was changed, this is very doubtful, for the gravitation of character is always naturally to its weakest points. There is certainly no doubt, but that, under favorable circumstances, experience teaches men, but the conditions of these lessons have no fixed rules, and the study of character never can be a written and positive science. To think that others will profit by our experience is almost as hopeless as to expect them to be nourished by what we have eaten.—*S. S. Times.*

#### FRED. DOUGLASS' ESCAPE.

In his lecture on "Reminiscences of Slavery and Anti-slavery," Mr. Douglass gives the following rehearsal of his own escape: "While slavery existed, I had good reasons for not telling the story of my escape from bondage, and now that the great trial is over, I do not know any good reason why I should not tell it. People generally imagined that it was a marvellous recital, but it is one of the most simple and common-place stories that could be given. I was owned in Talbot county, on the eastern shore of Maryland, in 1835, and a few years after that time made my escape. I had been sent up to Baltimore by my master to a brother of his for safe-keeping, but it was a strange movement to send me sixty miles nearer my liberty. When I determined on escaping, I looked about for a proper means to accomplish my purpose. At that time great vigilance was exercised by the authorities. Everybody was strictly watched, and if a slave were found outside the limits of his master's plantation, he would be liable to show by what right he was out of place. I was put to work in a shipyard, and commenced to learn the business of ship-carpentering and caulking. Here I had frequent intercourse with sailors, and in them I thought I discovered a feeling of sympathy and kindness. Although the difficulties and obstacles against escape were apparently insurmountable, I conceived an idea that I could secure my release by dressing in sailor's clothing and making a surreptitious retreat. But I had no papers by which I could pass from place to place. Fortunately, I met with a man named Stanley, who lived in Baltimore, and who was free. He resembled me in stature, and from him I obtained a suit of sailor's clothes, and his protection papers, and in this apparel, provided with the necessary articles, I, in September, 1838, secured my liberty. I got Isaac Rhodes to take my bundle, and, by arrangement, after the train started he threw it in, and I ran after and jumped on the car. If compelled to buy a ticket, it would have been necessary to undergo the most rigid examination, and all description in the papers must correspond exactly with the marks on my person. Accordingly, the scheme was carried on, and I soon arrived at Wilmington.

"Here I met Frederick Skein, for whom I had worked, but I was perfectly disguised that he did not know me. In a few moments the train from Philadelphia, bound south, arrived, and on this was Capt. McGowan, of the Revenue Cutter, of Baltimore, whom I had known intimately, and who had also been acquainted with me, but he, too, had failed to recognize me. When the conductor came through the train he rudely called on all the passengers for tickets, but when he came to me, instead of speaking in an arrogant manner, told me kindly that he supposed I had my free papers. I responded in the negative, but his surprise was great, and his indignation not apparent, when I told him that my only pass was an American Eagle. Looking upon it, he stated that I was all right, and with this assurance I came through to Philadelphia, and proceeded to New York. I got there at two o'clock, and strayed about and slept in the streets until morning. I did not know that I had a friend there, but on the next morning I met Isaac Dixon, at whose house I had lived in Baltimore, and he referred me to David Ruggles, a philanthropist and generous-minded citizen. While in the city, where I remained several days, I visited the Tombs, and there I saw Isaac Hopper, who, for the great offence of assisting 'Tom,' a well known character, in making his escape, was undergoing trial."

Mr. Douglass kept this story secret a long time, because the conductor who allowed him to pass from Baltimore to Philadelphia would have been responsible to his master for the pecuniary extent of the loss sustained, and because he did not want to expose his friend Stanley, and because he did not want slaveholders to know that slaves had any methods of escape. His freedom, he said, was honorably purchased by British gold, \$750 having been paid for him by a friend of his in England, and the negotiations having been conducted by the Hon. Wm. Meredith, of Philadelphia.—*Christian Patriot.*

#### DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS.

One teacher rules by a law as inflexible as those of the Medes and Persians. He makes no allowance for difference of age or sex or temperament or home training. The single article of his creed is that discipline must be maintained. He has no smiles, no relaxation, no cordial greetings for his pupils, lest his authority may suffer. In his eyes a mistake is criminal, a laugh is flat treason. No sound disturbs the solemnity of that awful place. His school is orderly; but so is the penitentiary. Everything is silent, but it is the silence of the grave. It is all, as Mr. Mantalini would say, "one demd horrid grind." His pupils may fear him, but they hate him. He has no art or device by which to catch their sympathy, arouse their enthusiasm, inspire them with grand and noble purposes. He fails entirely of the highest prerogative of the true teacher—that of stamping his own impress and seal upon his pupils for all time. He sends them forth at last abject, spiritless creatures, or, if they have any rebound, disposed to transgress and defy any law, human or divine, except when restrained by fear.

This kind of school discipline, too, like the rigid method of teaching, is passing away. With the more modern teacher all is love. He loves all his pupils, from the frowzy six-year-old boy to the big girls on the back seats. He gushes, he runs over with love. He sets up no standard of right, in any case, to which the ill-disposed or unruly must come. He coaxes and flatters his pupils, and is inclined to toady parents and the school board. He desires to succeed, and his effort is to govern, provided he can do it by love; if he cannot, he lovingly submits to have the school govern him. Out upon such sickly, wisy-washy, sentimental nonsense. That teacher is weak who desires any love from pupils not founded upon sincere respect for him as a man and a scholar, and a fearless executive of just and needful regulations. No true boy of spirit will feel anything but pity and contempt for such an invertebrate teacher as I have described.

There is no need of either of these extremes in government. The teacher can be just, without being morose; fearless in doing his duty, and yet kind and genial; strict in requiring obedience, and yet swift to do pleasant things for those under his charge.—*Michigan Teacher.*

#### THE EXASPERATING SCHOLAR.

There are very few teachers who have not had their patience tried by what may be denominated "the exasperating scholar." The exasperating scholar is certainly very trying, and the worst of it is, that the methods of no two of them are alike. Some of them exasperate by their restlessness or their stolidity, or their inattention, or their predilection for tricks, malicious or otherwise, or by their insensibility to all appeals to their feelings or principles—in fine, in a multitude of ways. Now it is a great mistake to get out of patience with the exasperating scholar, at least to let him see that such is the case. As the

boys would say, "That would be nuts to him." It is a still greater mistake to give him up as incorrigible. No teacher has a right to do this. He has a special duty to perform to the scholar—namely, to strive to make him better. If all children were cherubs there would be no need of Sunday-schools, and the teachers would have no occupation. It is just because children are the reverse of cherubs that we have Sunday-schools and need teachers. So there must be no such thing as giving up a scholar because he is bad, or intractable, or exasperating—for that is the very sort we most need to reach. The true way is to find out the tender spot in the child's disposition, and by wisely touching it to reach his better feelings. This may require much time and close observation and discreet manipulation, but it will pay for the trouble. It may be set down as a universal truth, that everybody has a soft or tender spot somewhere. Now the duty of the physician—for the teacher is a physician in a sense—is to find this tender spot. This found, the victory is half won already.

Once, when talking of "exasperating scholars" to an experienced teacher, he said: I have been much tried with such in the course of my life. Sometimes the exasperating qualities of a lad are exhibited in one way and sometimes in another. Indeed, I never knew them to be twice alike. But one thing—or perhaps I should say two things—I have found to be invariably true, namely, that nothing could be accomplished by complaining, or scolding, or trying to drive the offender; and that there was always some way to reach him and effect a cure, if it only be found out. My plan has ever been to find out this way as soon as possible, and thus save both time and worry.—*From the Christian Intelligencer.*

#### SELECTIONS.

—The following is a true copy of a letter received by a village schoolmaster: "Sur, as you are a man of noledge, I intend to inter my son in your skull."

—A little fellow who was at a neighbor's house about noon the other day watched the preparation for dinner with a great deal of interest, but when asked to stay and eat something he promptly refused. "Why, yes, Johnny, you'd better stay," said the lady; "why can't you?" "Well, o'course," said the little fellow, "ma said I musn't unless you ask me three times." They invited him twice more right off.

—A French money-lender, complaining to the late Baron Rothschild that he had lent a nobleman ten thousand francs who had gone off to Constantinople without leaving any acknowledgment of the debt, the Baron said, "Well, write to him and ask him to send you the seventy thousand francs he owes you." "But he only owes me ten," said the money-lender. "Precisely," rejoined the Baron; "and he will write and tell you so, and you will thus get his acknowledgment."

—A gentleman who was seated in a crowded horse car on the Sixth avenue resigned his place in favor of a pale, slender woman who carried a large child in her arms, and was being jostled this way and that with the motion of the car. To the gentleman's surprise, a burly individual took the seat before the lady could reach it. "I meant this lady to have my seat," said the gentleman, angrily. "Well," replied the other, settling comfortably back in his seat, "dat lady ish my wife!"

—A novel clock has recently been placed in the tower of the Albany (N. Y.) Savings Bank. By an ingenious arrangement the dial is illuminated by a gas burner, lighted automatically at early evening twilight, and extinguished at daylight. This is accomplished by means of the mechanism itself without the attention of any person; and what is still more wonderful, although the time of daylight varies very greatly from month to month, the clock lights the gas at precisely the proper time from day to day.

—Formerly, in Sweden, the penalty for various degrees of murder was death, and the law was rigorously enforced. Of late the king has been accustomed to commute death sentence to imprisonment for life, but homicides have increased so alarmingly, that he has recently refused to exercise this clemency and is allowing the murderers to meet their doom. To all pleas for the abolition of capital punishment we may continue to give the old response: "Yes, but let the murderers begin."

A PERILOUS FEAT.—"Atlas," in his note in the *London World*, says: "A friend who was on board the 'Poonah' on her last outward voyage informs me that Blondin, who was among the passengers on his way to Melbourne, created immense excitement by performing a feat hitherto unattempted even by him. The 'Hero of Niagara' walked along a rope stretched from the main to the mizzen mast 120 feet long, at a height of sixty feet. The motion of the engine and the swaying of the vessel made this a difficult operation, especially as the rolling at the great height was much more perceptible than on deck. When Blondin descended to receive the congratulations of those who saw him perform this unique feat he was quivering and perspiring from sheer excitement, and his face was deadly pale. He exclaimed, 'Well, I've done it—I knew it was to be done, but I have never attempted anything like it before!'"