

EFFECT OF ONE WRONG ACT.

Have you ever considered the effect of one wrong act? The thing may not seem wrong in itself: soon done; and viewed alone may appear of no importance. But you must trace its ramifications, and follow up, link by link, its results. That single insignificant act, done thoughtlessly, in an unguarded moment, must send forward an influence through your whole subsequent life.

The historian of British India, speaking of the voyage of Warren Hastings to that country, says, concerning a circumstance which occurred on that voyage: "It is doubtful whether this act did not exercise an unfavourable influence over his whole moral nature, and over his career." Of how many persons might the same remark be made! One wrong act brings the murderer to his ignominious end. One wrong act stamps, with indellible stains of dishonor, a character hitherto above reproach. One wrong act in youth has thrown many a young person from under the controlling love of a kind Providence, and launched him on a sea of trouble and sorrow to a late old age.

Of how much peace, of how much spiritual prosperity and holy joy, has a single sin at the outset robbed a true child of God? Of how much deep, unavailing sorrow and mortification has it been the inlet! It was an act, perhaps, as soon done as the turning of a key by the angel that opened the bottomless pit; but with a more distressing power for evil it has caused a darkness, as the smoke of a great furnace, to overcloud your prospects, and has led forth amid the wide-spread scenes of all your following years, memories and regrets with a keener power than scorpions, and leaving hardly a green thing in the waste of a life that opened with so much to animate and to cheer. It has drawn down upon you the displeasure of God. It has arrayed his providence against you, and shut you off from the fullness of his love.

An unadvised expression from the lips of Moses shut him out from the green pastures and still waters beyond Jordan. Never till we reach heaven, and there have all our secret history unrolled to our view, shall we know from how many scenes of earthly and of spiritual happiness a single wrong act has excluded us; how many sore afflictions it has drawn around our weary pilgrimage; and from what degree of advancement it has shut us off even amid the glories and blessedness of heaven.

OUR THOUGHTS.

We are ever thinking. Swift as the fleeting sounds, come and go from the mind the light winged thoughts. We call them little things, are scarce conscious of their presence, and yet our characters are according to the nature of our thoughts. We indulge ourselves in a multitude of thoughts, frivolous and unworthy. If we desire to honor our Savior, let us remember that not words and deeds alone, but the offering up of thoughts, may also be acceptable service. As our minds dwell upon the ineffable beauty and sweetness of Jesus, let our thoughts, burdened with grateful love, rise as sweet increase to heaven. The love of Jesus, let it be the dear theme on which our thoughts linger long, and to which they return with new delight.

We express our love for a friend by saying, I think a great deal of you. Let us thus express our affection for Jesus. We shall know that Christ is enthroned in our hearts, when we find him enthroned in our thoughts. We need not doubt our love to Jesus, if through the busy day and in the still night, we are ever keeping in mind the memory of his goodness.

If, then, we have nothing else to bring to the Savior, for mercies countless as the sands, let us bring our thoughts filled with a vision of the Redeemer's beauty and glory, until lost in wonder, love and praise, and offer these as our sacrifice.

We want to be like Jesus. The more we think of him, the more shall we increase in love and kindness to him. It is thus, that beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—The following every day rules, from the papers of Dr. West, are thrown together as general way-marks in the journey of life:—Never ridicule sacred things, or what others esteem as such, however absurd they may seem to you. Never recant a supposed injury till you know the views or motives of the author of it. On no occasion retaliate. Always take the part of an absent person who is censured in company, so far as truth and propriety will allow. Never think worse of another on account of his differing in political or religious subjects. Never dispute with a man who is more than seventy years of age, or with an enthusiast. Do not jest so as to wound the feelings of another. Say as little as possible of yourself and of those who are near to you. Never court the favor of the rich by flattering either their vanities or their vices. Speak with calmness and deliberation, especially in circumstances which irritate.