

bringing disgrace upon himself, I think. "That youth was as much sinned against as sinning. He is walking in the path in which his parents put him. Thorn-bushes never yield grapes, and figs do not grow from thistles." The very word "iniquity" means something twisted. It is something bent or wrung out of a straight line; hence the word "wrong." Now this ugly twist is too often given by a father's or a mother's hand. The wrong which the child does proceeds from the wrong done to them by an evil example. Then comes the swift and inevitable reaction, when the reckless and disgraced son becomes the punisher of the parents' sin and wrings their heart with agony. "Be sure that your sin will find you out," is not more true in regard to any class of wrong-doings than those which parents commit against their own offspring.

3. It does not require that we be cruel in disposition in order to sin against our children. The foolish fondness which pets them and gratifies every selfish whim and pampers their pride is even worse in its influence than harsh brutality. No more fatal sin can be committed against your son than to let him have his own way. Pride will grow fast enough in your daughter's heart without your adding fuel to the flame with extravagant flatteries and fulsome adulation. It is a curious fact that praise when bestowed on noble conduct humbles and sweetens a child; but praise lavished on mere externals—like beauty or dress—only puffs up and inflames selfishness.

Parents, do you always make an especial study of the peculiarities of each child? Joseph was a very peculiar lad from his very excellences, and when his partial father rigged him out in his "coat of many colours," and he began to have dreams of his brothers "bowing down to him," it is not strange that their coarse natures grew jealous and revengeful. Father Jacob sinned against that pure, sensitive boy before the churlish brethren began their villainous outrages. Some children are picked at and scolded, until they become sullen. Others are ridiculed for their deficiencies or deformities, till they grow desperate. Harshness always hardens, and then parental phariseism prays that God would soften the boy's hard heart! To train up a family wisely and for the Lord requires more sagacity than to write a book and more grace than to preach a sermon. It is the highest trusteeship in the world. The family underlies both church and commonwealth. Wherefore, O father and mother, for thy own sake, for God's sake, for the sake of the immortal soul committed to thee, do not sin against the child.—*Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.*

CHARACTER THE ONLY FOUNDATION FOR REAL SUCCESS.

There may be a show of prosperity when principle is wanting, but if it cheat others it never cheats one's self. The player himself, behind the scenes, thinks very differently of the stage effects from the spectators; he knows the other side of the painted shams, and that what is gold to the audience is tinsel at hand. Our happiness must be within us or nothing can give it. What the world calls good fortune is often the worst for peace and enjoyment. It is not possession, but desire of it that gives pleasure; without the spur of hope or ambition the mind loses its energy, and falls back on itself in listless satiety. It is the chase that delights, not the capture; and what looks bright in the air is often poor enough when we get it. Byron's figure of our enjoyments being like plucked flowers, which we must destroy to possess, is as true as it is striking. They are the painted butterflies which a touch defaces. A clear conscience sings in the breast, like a bird in a cage, and makes a heaven wherever it be; but honour, or money, or place, without it, are children's toys. Mere getting is not success; there are many poor rich men, and many rich poor ones. To have a soul, like a sun, gilding everything round it, is the true prosperity—to have our wealth in the bosom as well as the bank.

Still, while it is thus true that character is success it is more; it gives an open door to whatever advancement or qualifications make possible. To be merely upright and trustworthy is, of course, insufficient; for the porter may be as good a man as his master, and yet could not take his place. But, with due qualifications, a good name is the best means of either attaining or keeping any promotion. Honest worth goes far of itself, with very humble abilities; for mere common sense and good principle count far more in the market than we suppose. A young man may

have any capacity, it will weigh nothing if confidence cannot be put in him. Interest has keen eyes, and soon appraises its servants at their true value. Appearances may deceive for a time, but, once detected, the game is over. It is nothing that there be many good points; character alone gives them value. A slip may be condoned, but even the suspicion of anything serious is fatal. The finest fleece goes for nothing if we see the wolf's muzzle, and we settle the wind by a very small feather. Want of confidence, like a rotten foundation, rocks and brings down whatever may rest on it, be it ever so good in itself. A look, or a word, may let out a long masked hypocrisy, and no one can act and forecast so perfectly as to be never at fault. Many things, of course, may hinder advancement—slowness, idleness, want of judgment, incurable trifling, want of interest in a calling—but many of these will be borne for long, and patiently striven with. A flaw in the man, however, is deadly, one whiff of a moral taint is enough. To be unsteady, dishonest, untruthful, or in any way unreliable, is hopelessly capital. An unfaithful servant is worthless to God or man. Character is the young man's "Open Sesame!" before which the treasure-houses of life stand wide for his entrance.

THE CHILDREN.

POEM FOUND IN THE DESK OF CHARLES DICKENS AFTER HIS DEATH.

When lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
And the little ones gather around me
To bid me "good-night," and be kissed.
O the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace!
O the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine and love on my face!

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood, too lovely to last;
Of love that my heart will remember
When it wakes to the pulse of the past.
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin—
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

O my heart grows weak as a woman's,
And the fountain of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go:
Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempests of fate blowing wild—
O there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.

They are idols of hearts and of household,
They are angels of God in disguise—
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still beams from their eyes—
O those turrets from earth and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild,
And I know now how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child.

Seek not a life for the dear ones
All radiant as others have done,
But that life may have just as much shadow
To temper the glare of the sun.
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself,
Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
I have banished the rule and the rod:
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the goodness of God.
My hearth is a dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them for breaking a rule;
My frown is sufficient correction,
My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more;
Ah! how I shall sigh for the dear ones
That meet me each morn at the door.
I shall miss the "good-nights" and the kisses,
And the gush of their innocent glee
The group on the green, and the flowers
That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and at eve,
Their song in the school and the street;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And Death says the school is dismissed,
May the little ones gather around me,
And bid "me good-night" and be kissed.

A MATTER FOR THOUGHT.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian churches of the Republic has had under consideration one matter which it would not harm many Canadian churches to ponder well. It found that very many

churches were pastorless, and it bravely set itself to discover the secret of these vacant pulpits. The conclusion to which it came was that the calamity might very largely be traced to the popular idea so prevalent that the minister is responsible for the prosperity of the church. The position of the present average church is that it is to succeed or fail according to the ability of the minister alone. On the man of the pulpit the burden of success is placed, while the men of the pews refuse to share that burden with him, no matter how heavily he may be weighted.

The inevitable outcome of such a condition of affairs is something like the following. The candidate for the pulpit is confronted with such questions as these, "How smart are you?" "Can you make the rental of these pews pay the salary and all current expenses?" "Can you steer successfully between the Scylla of orthodoxy and the Charybdis of liberalism?" It is not godliness but smartness that is sought in the minister. Not the salvation of men, but big pew rents, that becomes the highest consideration. Not the truth as Christ taught it, but the truckling to all opinions, it is that must characterize the sermon. And if the minister cannot meet these inordinate demands, he is starved out. Or if the church cannot find a pastor who would fulfil its foolish conditions, it is content to let its pulpit remain vacant until its smart man shall turn up.

There is a terrible force in these statements. There has been introduced into churches of late a great deal of vulgar ambition for success as a church in a purely material way, and to imagine a congregation in any growing town which would be content to worship in a little rude stone church, would be to imagine and not to realize. Brick, mortar, dressed stone, black walnut and upholstery, a high steeple with bells, and a big debt are preferred. And then we must have a preacher who can preach

"To please graceless sinners,
And fill empty pews."

This is the *modus operandi* in too many cases, and it is a crying shame that such a state of things should appertain to any circle of men calling themselves by the name of the lowly Christ.

The Assembly has done good by calling attention to this matter. It needed a bold stroke of the sword, and it got it by the finding of the Assembly. It is degrading to the ministers of the Gospel to make them responsible for "drawing" crowds as if they were theatre actors. And yet this is altogether too common. And it often happens that preachers who are necessitated to do some work or suffer starvation are forced to become sensational or half-sceptical in their pulpit methods and efforts in order to draw. The piety of the pulpit cannot be sustained where there is the opinion prevalent in the pews that he must by his smartness make the church a financial and social success. In apostolic days the matter stood thus, "You (the people) must serve tables, that is, you must attend to the secular in the assembly, while we will give ourselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayer." And that should be the arrangement yet. For a minister has his hands full, who studies and preaches the Word. And the least any church can do is to relieve him from any financial consideration.

The curse of this day is its worship of smartness. Before that idol thousands bow the supple knee. It is more taking than goodness with many. But smartness lives very near to trickiness and shame. And in the same neighbourhood live worldliness and pride. What wonder when such a premium is placed on smart men just because they are smart, that many of them get intoxicated by the fulsome worship accorded them, and go down to ruin and drag their train of admirers with them into the slough. What the age wants is a downright respect for goodness and Christ-likeness and simplicity. These alone are the Church's ornament and strength.—*Canadian Independent.*

THE "Opinione," of Rome, which frequently applauds Mr. Gladstone, is highly delighted with his supplementary Budget. Referring to the British Premier's statement regarding the Treaty of Commerce with France, the "Opinione" remarks, "Mr. Gladstone always rises to the inspiration of a high moral purpose. His words are a defiance to the economic methods of the middle ages, rehabilitated and glorified by the self-willed German Chancellor. In Mr. Gladstone the spirit of international equity surmounts every other consideration, and he keeps true to the time-honoured and glorious maxim of his party, 'Probity is the best sagacity.'"