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Have used Ayer's Hair Vigor three years, and it has restored my hair, which was fast becoming gray, to its natural color."—H. W. Gifford, Paterson, N. J.

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It is not, then, a difficult thing to avoid both extremes, to be neither too lenient nor too severe? Does it not show us how high a place in Paradise a faithful parent shall enjoy? Does it not—this matter of parental correction alone—show us why our Blessed Lord raised the parental office to a sacramental state?

St. Paul in the text—although speaking of correction in general—lays down two rules which good parents know by experience to be the two wings of their flight to heaven: first, parents should be spiritual, and second they should be meek. Spiritual, because to be a good parent "is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy." Brethren, lay this to heart: the married state is indeed happy, but only by the grace of God. Natural dispositions go before all supernatural life. But the natural man is clay which the potter moulds into a vessel of election. And how often do we see easy-going, kindly natured young people become crabbed enough after marriage. They lack the grace of God; that is the reason of their difficulties in governing their children. They do not pray enough. They do not come often enough to the sacraments. They are unwilling to inconvenience themselves by joining the rosary society or the temperance society. The necessary spirit of sacrifice is absent from the family; and that spirit is born of the practices of religion.

Furthermore, the spirit of meekness is necessary. The true spirit of correction is not the spirit of authority, but the spirit of meekness. If one's mind is all puffed up with the importance of one's dignity and the greatness of one's merit; if one is always itching to have his authority respected by his children, instead of seeking to be loved by them on account of his devoted affection; if by his harsh voice, his exacting spirit, his cold and distant manner, his stinginess—if by such means he undertakes to keep "his children in their place," they will be neither virtuous nor happy. And least of all will he be happy himself.

After all, dear brethren, there is but one object in bringing up a family: to train souls how to be good children of God. Now, if human beings can be kept out of sin in any other way but by much loving kindness, then the Christian religion is a mistake. Once St. Philip Neri was surrounded by a troop of noisy boys. Some of his friends, who were annoyed by their shouts and laughter and boyish clatter, complained of them to him. "Why, Father Philip," they said, "how can you stand such a noise about you?" The saint smiled and answered, "They might chop wood on my back if it would only keep them out of sin." Let it therefore be the one object of parents to so correct their children as to gradually remove the defects of character and nature which may cause them to sin. It may sometimes be good to punish with a certain severity, but always without passion; after a little time, at least, of deliberation, and especially in such a way that the child may know that the chastisement is inflicted by one who loves God and his child's soul too much to neglect proper correction.

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FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

SEPTEMBER 14, 1895.

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

CORRECTION FOR FAULTS.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. vi. 1.)

Perhaps there is no duty so hard to perform well as that of correction; and of course I refer chiefly to parental correction. Some parents are too lenient. They sin by petting their children. They over praise them to their faces. They give them to understand that they are not loved, but worshipped. They believe them against school teacher, neighbor, or relative. They are the slaves of the child's slightest whim. And long before old age comes such parents are apt to suffer from that very miserable affliction, a spoiled child. Children are said to be the crown of their parents: the spoiled child is a crown of thorns.

Others, on the contrary, are too severe. If they really love their little ones they have discovered how to disguise it. They are too exacting. They scold, and they scold often, and long and loud. They bring up past offences, long since atoned for. They dwell much on their own merits as good parents. They correct in anger. Impulses guide them, or rather drives them, in place of affection and a spirit of justice. The sudden slap and the rude shove for the smaller ones; the blow of the fist, the kick for the larger ones. And oh! the deadly curse, the evil wish connected with Satan's name, the wish for eternal loss for one's own child, the harsh name, the face flaming with rage, the shouting voice—brethren, all this drives the boys to the saloon, and the girls to the dangerous companionship.

It is not, then, a difficult thing to avoid both extremes, to be neither too lenient nor too severe? Does it not show us how high a place in Paradise a faithful parent shall enjoy? Does it not—this matter of parental correction alone—show us why our Blessed Lord raised the parental office to a sacramental state?

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

SEPTEMBER 14, 1895.

The Baby's Beauty.

Before our Lady's shrine she knelt,
Our little blue-eyed girl;
Enwreath'd about her roselike face
Was many a golden curl;
And in her dimpled hand she held
A rosary of pearl.

A baby quite—of summers three—
She loved her shining head;
And, as she told the beads, she lisped,
With lips of cherry-red,
Her only prayer—(two words!) she smiled,
And "Hail Mary!" said.

Again, again, and yet again
The baby treasured her prayer;
Her face out shining, like a star,
From clouds of golden hair;
The while she press'd the polish'd beads
With meek and reverent air.

Her azure eyes on Mary's face,
A look of rapture wore,
Such as the eyes of Gabriel
The great Archangel bore,
When first he hailed the Virgin Queen
In Nazareth of yore!

'Twas "Hail Mary!" on the cross,
(God bless the little fairy!)
And on the Pater Noster strains
A chant that could not vary:
On *Ave* and on *Gloria*,
'Twas always: "Hail Mary!"

"Come hither, May!" her mamma cried,
"And learn to say it rightly—
No one could understand such prayers!
You blunder, darling slightly,
"Ah! Blessed Mary, and all!"
The baby answered brightly:
—Eleanor C. Donnelly in *The Rosary*.

Always be Civil.

We little appreciate the effect of a kind word upon those who are more used to blows. It seems that one evening a young lady abruptly turned a street-corner and ran against a boy, who was small and ragged and freckled. Stopping as soon as she could, she turned to him and said, "I beg your pardon. Indeed, I am very sorry."

The small, ragged and freckled boy looked up in blank amazement for an instant. Then taking off about three-fourths of a cap—all he had—bowed very low, smiled until his face became lost in the smile, he answered:

"You can hev my parding and welcome, miss, and yer may run ag'in me and knock me clean down, an' I won't say a word."

After the young lady passed on he turned to a comrade and said, "I never had any one ask my parding before, and it kind o' took me off my feet."—Sel.

The First False Step.

It is the first false step that tells. You know that when you fall down stairs. Oh! if you only had looked where you set your foot, you never would have had all those blue and yellow bruises! So it was with everything else in this world—with the man who falls into dissipated habits; with the woman who loses her self-respect and that of others; with the man who ends a respectful life by some deed that is dishonorable; with all who follow any courses that bring their penalty of shame and suffering and death. It is the first little step that does all, and it may not be so very bad a step in itself—only a little wrong. It may be only a mistake, indeed, but the end comes all the same. Let every boy and girl remember this. Just as it does not do to make a mistake at the head of the stairs, so it will not do to make even a mistake in the beginning of life—especially a mistake of the sort that leads to evil, for it often brings one to the bottom at last.

The Boy Musician.

Youth's Companion.

The biographies of Mozart read like romances, so full are they of anecdotes of his marvellous precocity. His father was court musician with the Prince-Bishop of Salzburg. The boy, therefore, breathed a musical atmosphere. The pianos of that day were small, the touch light, and the musical compositions were not difficult. But these facts do not explain the early and amazing manifestation of Mozart's musical capacity. When four years old he played minuets, and learned music with facility. One day his father discovered him composing something which he called a "concerto for the harpsichord," and laughed at the work of a six-year-old child.

As the little fellow insisted that it was really a concerto, the father examined it. The piece proved to have been written strictly by rule, although so overloaded with difficulties that it could not be played.

The boy learned the violin, and surprised his father by playing correctly in a quartet. The little fellow continued to surprise not only his father but musical princes and learned musicians. In his thirteenth year he gained a triumph so significant that the highest musical authority in the world, the Philharmonic Academy of Bologna, recognized him as a "Knight of Music." Mr. W. S. B. Matthews, in his book, "How to Understand Music," tells the story of this triumph.

Young Mozart applied for admission as a member of the academy, whose president was Father Martini, the learned contrapuntist, and whose vice-president was Farnelli, a great singer and an accomplished musician. They and the other members of the academy recognized Mozart's genius as a performer, but did not believe that a boy of thirteen could pass the severe examination in composing music required of candidates for admission to membership.

Father Martini regarded the boy with favor, but he was determined that the academy should not be suspected of admitting a boy because he was an "infant prodigy." He therefore assigned to Mozart the hardest task ever given—the composition for four voices of one of the canticles of the Roman *Antiphonarium*. Three

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hours, alone in a locked room, with no helps but pen, ink and paper, were allowed for the performance of the task.

It was with severe misgivings, for he thought highly of the boy, that Father Martini delivered to the youngster the theme. In less than an hour the beadle announced that Mozart was ready to be let out, as he had completed the work assigned him. "Impossible!" exclaimed Father Martini.

"In the hundred years the academy has been established, such a case has never occurred!" said the members.

The examiners went to the locked room, and received from Mozart the manuscript score, written in a neat and delicate hand. They spent an hour in going through the work, and then pronounced their verdict—"It is perfect! Absolutely faultless!" Mozart was led into the presence of the waiting academy, to be greeted with hearty applause and recognized as a composer so skillful as to be worthy of membership.

Yet this "musical prodigy" never became a spoiled child. His success did not puff him up. He was fond of play and adhered to childish habits. Doubtless his gentle disposition and even temper helped him to remain a modest, confiding boy. But what mainly kept him from becoming a conceited, bumptious child was the fact that his public life as a performer was supplemented by regular studies in musical theory, in French, Italian, Latin, and in other branches of education. These studies made him modest, because they caused him to see that, though a "prodigy," he had much to learn before he could become an educated musician and gentleman.

A boy may be bright and self-reliant, but he will remain modest and childlike if he has learned that though his reach is high there is much beyond his grasp. Even when he has grown to manhood and is laurel crowned, he will confess with Newton,

"I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

IN AFFLICTION.

Excessive grief for the dead, without hope, or without yielding to the consolations of religion, is unreasonable, and opposed to the teachings of Catholic doctrine. It is true, not to sorrow at all would be unnatural. We have an intellectual as well as a corporal being: one is as positive, if not as tangible, as the other; and when these ties of our intellectual being, which bind our hearts to those we love, are severed by death, they bleed as do the veins and blood vessels of our physical systems when a limb is cut or mangled.

On the death of friends nature contends with reason and religion. These unite in instructing us to dry our tears. Reason urges as an argument, that whatever happens by Divine permission, is irreversible; and that whatever may be the condition of the departed, it is unalterable. To mourn must be wholly unavailing.

The remembrance of religion is more consolatory, and equally rational and true. It urges that whatever transpires by the will of God, must be for the best; that the separation of our friends from us is not eternal; that there is a higher and a better life, where a union with our dead will be forever.

Notwithstanding these arguments of reason and religion, nature is slow to acquiesce, and urges in her turn that when those bands by which divine Providence has connected heart to heart are severed, they must bleed. But when the wound has healed a holy and tranquilizing calm succeeds, which assures us that reason and religion have gained the victory.

It is rare in the moral and in the natural world that tempest is not succeeded by calm and blue sky. That adversity has its uses there is not a doubt. It teaches us the feebleness of the tenure by which our hold is sustained upon perishable things; that true and enduring possessions and pleasures are stored in "that building not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Our trials draw us nearer to God, writes Henry Cole in the *Poor Soul's Advocate*. Adversity, too, draws us nearer to each other and makes us less selfish. It is true the lessons of sorrow are hard to learn. To school the heart to endure all things meekly and patiently is no easy task. When those we love are taken from us the struggle is sometimes long and painful before we can look up and say, "Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done!"

Why should we sorrow for the dead? Their sorrows are past, their toils are over, their struggles are ended and their tears are wiped away. They have trod the dark valley: they have paid the debt of nature, and death and mortality have no longer any dominion over them.

The death of friends is instructing and inconsistent as the expression may seem—consoling. The occasion is instructive, because it teaches us the importance of improving the time left to us that we should be ready for death at any hour. The occasion is consoling because, with every loved one that death removes from us, we feel that a tie is broken that bound us to earth, and another formed which is drawing us upward to heaven.

When the brightness of the sun is eclipsed by dark clouds, and the storm beats around us, our spirits are cast down; not because the sun does not shine, for we know that it shines above

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