

that is to live! how terrible is the death that such an one has to die! and what an eternity lies before so wretched an ending in this world! Blow after blow, constantly repeated, breaks the hardest stone at last. You do not see the effect of each blow, yet each blow added something to the breaking.

I remember having seen, long ago, a frightful accident. There was a railway train filled with goods, sheep, cattle, and market produce, standing at the top of a long-inclined plane.—The trains, at that place were lowered down by a rope. There were a great many other trains and carriages, both full and empty, standing at the top of the incline. The men were busily engaged, each with his own work. Some were adding a few empty carriages to the ends of the goods train, before it was let down the inclined plane. As each carriage was pushed slowly up, and joined to the others, it gave the train a blow. Each of these blows produced some effect. At last, as carriage after carriage was added behind, those in front began to move slowly, very slowly at first, down the incline. At each turn of the wheels they went faster and faster, and soon the motion became visible to every one. An outcry arose. Some ran to the brakes; others ran to try and fasten the long rope to the hindermost carriage,—but all in vain; the boldest were terrified; the speed increased; and soon, with a rumble like thunder and a speed like lightning, the whole train darted down the hill, and was smashed, with all its living freight, into splinters and atoms at the bottom.

This is too frequently the progress of little sins in the child's heart. If you do not take good heed, you may get fairly started, without brake or guard, down the inclined plane of sin; and the end of it is destruction and death, sure and certain. Nothing short of a miracle could have stopped that train when it was once fairly in motion; and nothing short of a miracle of grace can stop you when once you are fairly advanced in the full career of little sins. You are on the way to that end now, my dear young friend. The wheels are moving, more and yet more rapidly. Stop; stop now, while yet there is time. Trust to no miracle, but seek the Lord while he is near. Go no further from him than you are. Answer when he calls. To-day, while yet it is called to-day, hear his voice, and harden not your heart,—*Plain Paths for Youthful Runners*, by Rev. J. Alexander.

A PARABLE.

A certain tyrant sent for one of his subjects and said to him, 'What is your employment?' He said, 'I am a blacksmith.' 'Go home,' said he 'and make me a chain of such a length.' He went home; it occupied him several months, and he had no wages all the time he was making the chain, only the trouble and pain of making it.

Then he brought it to the monarch, and he said, 'Go and make it twice as long.' He gave him nothing to do it with, but sent him away. Again he worked on, and made it twice as long. He brought it up again, and the monarch said 'Go and make it longer still.'

Each time he brought it, there was nothing but the command to make it longer still.—And when he brought it up at last, the monarch said, 'Take it, bind him hand and foot with it, and cast him into a furnace of fire.'—These were his wages for making the chain.

Here is a meditation for you to-night, ye servant of the devil! Your master the devil is telling you to make a chain. Some of you have been fifty years welding the links of the chain; and he says, 'Go and make it longer still.' Next Sunday morning you will open that shop of yours, and put another link on; next Sunday you will be drunk, and put another link on; next Monday you will do a dishonest action; and so you will keep on making fresh links to this chain; and when you have lived twenty more years, the devil will say, 'More links on still!' And then, at last it will be, 'Take him and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into a furnace of fire.'—'For the wages of sin is death.'

There is a subject for your meditation. I do not think it will be sweet; but if God makes it profitable, it will do you good. You must have strong medicines sometimes, when the disease is bad, God apply it to your hearts!—*Spurgeon*.

Skating on Weak Ice.

A STORY FOR BOYS.

'Mother,' exclaimed Willy Temple, as he ran into her room one morning, where she was quietly engaged in sewing, rattling in his hand a pair of bright, new skates—'Mother, can't I go skating on the pond to-day? Tom, and Dick, and the other boys are waiting for me, and we are going to have a splendid time.'

'I'm afraid, Willy, that the ice isn't strong enough yet,' answered Mrs. Temple, looking up.