

THE HOME CIRCLE.

BY M.

No. 9.—PUNCTUALITY IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

Punctuality is a virtue which should be cultivated in youth by those who hope to succeed in any calling. Nothing inspires confidence in a man sooner than punctuality in word and action. Blessed is he among men of whom it can be justly be said, "His word is as good as his bond." The Psalmist had evidently such a character in view when he said, "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." He, and he alone is immovable. On the other hand there is no habit which sooner saps the reputation of a man than want of punctuality. Thousands have utterly failed in life from this cause alone. Want of punctuality is not only a serious vice in itself, but it is the parent of a large progeny of other vices, so that he who becomes its victim becomes involved in toils from which it is almost impossible to escape. He who needlessly breaks his appointments shows that he is as reckless of the waste of others' time as of his own. His acquaintances readily conclude that the man who is not conscientious about his appointments will be equally careless about his other engagements, and they will refuse to trust him with matters of importance. No matter how many virtues a man may apparently possess, if he has no regard to his word or promise, he is adjudged as counterfeit all through; "Tekel" being evidently his true character—"Weighed in the balance and found wanting." Hence, being left to his own resources, forsaken by friends, spurned by foes, and regarded by no man, he soon becomes of all men the most miserable, and eventually sinks into the grave "unhonoured and unsung."

Not only this, but often the failure of one man to meet his engagements promptly causes the ruin of many others. Many an honest merchant has been driven to bankruptcy by the delay of his customers to settle their accounts. Punctuality should therefore be made a point of conscience. It is a duty incumbent upon all men. The young man going out into the world should make it his chief study. If he has not been taught to form the principle of punctuality in word and action in infancy, let him not delude himself with the idea that it is easily attained or that he can practice it at pleasure when necessity demands. It is no easy matter to be punctual even in youth, under the training of faithful parents; but when the mental and moral faculties have become seared, and the character fixed in after life, it is almost impossible to unlearn the habit of tardiness and unpunctuality. Though reason be fully convinced of its inconvenience and criminality, it sticks to the man as an innate principle of our depraved nature, and can only be overcome by the most strenuous persevering efforts and continuous watchfulness.

In view of all this, it is astonishing how many parents there are who neglect to teach their children the duty of punctuality. Such neglect is criminal in the extreme, having a tendency to ruin the child's prospects