

restraint. Cruelty ! O may our children be preserved from the tender mercies of those who so regard such real and self-denying kindness.

It is always best, if possible, to avoid such collisions. Many children are taught implicit obedience, without ever entering into such a contest with their parents. And it is certainly preferable to govern a child by the mild procedure of ordinary discipline, than to enter into such a formidable conflict, where great severity is often required. Wisdom therefore teaches us to guard against giving a child an opportunity of summoning all its energies to disobedey. Those are peculiar occasions, and peculiar moods of mind, which generally elicit this strength of rebellious feeling. A little foresight will often enable us, without any surrender of authority, to calm the rising feeling, instead of exciting it to its utmost strength. We may sometimes by judicious management check the rebellion in its first appearance, before it has gained sufficient strength to call all our power into exercise to put it down.

As an illustration, let us suppose that James and Mary are playing together in the evening, and James gets vexed and strikes his sister. He has done this without any provocation, and ought to be punished, and ask his sister's forgiveness. But the mother has perceived that during the whole day James has manifested a very unpleasant disposition. He has been irritable and unyielding. She sees that he is now excited and angry. Every parent knows that such variations of feeling are not uncommon. One day a child is pleasant and affectionate ; the next, every thing seems to go wrong ; little things vex, and the whole disposition seems to be soured. The mother perceives that her son is in this frame of mind ; he has done wrong, and ought to ask his sister's forgiveness ; but she knows that in this excited and unamiable frame of mind he will be strongly tempted to resist her authority. Unreasonably vexed as he is, it would be one of the hardest acts of submission for him to ask the forgiveness of his sister. If the mother tell him to do so, the temptation to refuse is so strong, that in all probability he will decline obeying. She must then punish him. And here comes the contest, which must be continued, if it is commenced, till the child submits. Now, how is this contest to be avoided ? By overlooking the fault ? Most certainly not. She rises, takes James by the hand, and says, " My son, you have been doing very wrong ; you are ill-humoured, and must not stay with us any longer, I will carry you to bed." She accordingly leads him to his chamber.

Just before leaving him for the night, she tells him in a kind but sorrowful tone, how much she is displeased, and how much God must be displeased with his conduct. As usual, she hears him say his prayers, or kneels by the bed side, and prays that God will forgive him. She then leaves him to his own reflections and to sleep.

He is thus punished for his fault : and as he lies in his bed, and hears his brothers and sisters happy below stairs, he feels how much better and wiser it is to be a good boy. In the morning he awakes. Night has given repose to his excited feelings. He thinks how unhappy his yesterday's misconduct made him, and resolves to be more upon his guard for the future. All his rebellious feelings are quelled by the soothing influence of sleep ; his passions are not aroused ; the mother can now operate upon