

A WORD FOR THE YOUNG.

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COULD the young but fully discern, or could they be brought fully to believe, the general, the almost necessary effects of cherishing impure thoughts and feelings, one would hope that many a thoughtless wretch would be saved the pangs of remorse, — many a life be prolonged for usefulness, — many a soul be preserved from perdition. But they hear of the power of habit, and the connexion between desire and action, and the enslaving nature of vicious feelings; — and they speak of these things, and perhaps reason about them; but they feel not their full force: they cannot conceive, from their versatile thoughts and feelings, how any can gain such an ascendancy as to lead imperiously to destruction; and, though they may yield a speculative assent to the representations of those who have their own sad experience to guide them, or speak from the sad experience of others, yet a full practical belief is wanting, and they go on with thoughtless security, even when walking among the thickest snares of the enemy.

In a thousand, in ten thousand instances, *the first step to ruin has been the indulging in impure conversation.* “What harm can it do so long as we do not act wrong?” has been the reply to the suggestions of the religious friend, or to the suggestions of conscience. What harm? — why the worst, that of strengthening propensities which wisdom loudly commands to curb. — Words, with an unperceived, sometimes scarcely preceptible, connexion, introduce and invigorate trains of thought and af-