whole air is that of a woman worked to death."

"James, what nonsense!"

"It is not nonsense. I wish it was. Five years ago you had the complexion of a child, as clear and rosy as Susan's. Your eyes then were bright, full of animation. You had young children, a house to keep in order, and just half our present income. Yet you could find leisure then for a daily walk, could read in the evening, or sing for me, could enjoy an occasional evening of social pleasure, or some entertainment. I had a wife then."

"James! what do you mean?"

"I mean that, in the place of my happy, healthy wife, I have now a sickly, overworked seamstress. Those dolls that have just gone out have none of the grace of childhood. They are fast becoming little pieces of vanity, all absorbed in their finery. Their under clothing would do for signs in an emporium of linen, with the embroidery, ruffles, and tucks."

"But I do it all myself, James."

"Exactly. You are stitching your life into the garments of your children, who would be far happier, healthier, and better in the simple clothing suited to their years."

"Oh, I am well enough. I am pale to-day because I sat up late last night. But I must dress for church, or we shall be late."

The service passed over Mrs. Henley with but little impression. To her chagrin, the little Goodwins, who had all their dresses direct from London, had an entirely new style of overskirt, that made Jennie, Susan, and Lottie look quite old-fashioned in the eyes of their mother.

Summer came, and the long spring days were spent in preparing a seaside wardrobe for the children, for Mr. Henley, by the advice of his physician, was going to take his wife to the seaside.

The pain in her side had become very troublesome, and there was a little hacking cough that meant wakeful nights. The pale cheeks were seldom tinged with a healthy color, and the eyes were languid and heavy. People spoke pityingly of Mrs. Henley as "quite an invalid," and her husband mourned over the alteration in his wife.

He insisted upon having a physician, who advised fresh air, and exercise, and a tonic. And Annie obediently swallowed the tonic, took a daily walk, and then made up for "lost time" by stitching at night. For were not the Goodwins, the Wilcoxes, and all the leading fashionables of Langton going to the same place where Mr. Henley had taken rooms, and could Jennie, Susan, and Lottie have one inch less ruffling and tucking than they possessed?

He only shrugged his shoulders when his little girls minced along with dainty fine-lady airs, instead of bounding with the freedom of childhood. He bore the steady whirr of the sewing-machine in the evening, instead of the voice or music of his wife.

But when Annie's health began to give way he exercised his authority, and found he had been silent too long.

But, the summer wardrobes completed, the dainty dresses trimmed, the trunks packed, Annie faithfully promised James to rest during the summer sojourn at the seaside. With a sudden consciousness of growing weakness there came to her an appreciation of her husband's love and patience that had been numbed. She began to realize that she had let her ambition for dress overshadow her love for her husband, and that she had wronged him in depriving him of the companionship he had prized so highly.

"I will rest while I am gone, and when I come back, James, I will give my evenings to you as I did when we were first married."

That was her parting promise, never to be exacted. Only a few days of rest were allowed her before an acute attack of lung fever prostrated her. James left his business to hurry to the seaside, a nurse was engaged, and medical skill did its utmost. But the constitution, weakened by confinement and overwork, could not resist the disease, and while the summer days were still in their full beauty Mrs. Henley knew she was dying.

It was a bitter thought. Life held so much that was precious; her kind, loving husband, her beautiful children, her happy home, all these must be left.

"A mysterious dispensation of Providence," said Mrs. Goodwin; "such a good mother. And those children are just the age when they most need a mother's care."

Annie Henley, in the dread hour when she bade farewell to hope, wound her arms around her husband's neck, and sobbed—

"If I had only listened to you, James, I might have been a guide to our children, a companion to you for many years, and when I died have left loving memories instead of a trunk of fine clothing. I have wasted my life."

And James Henley, in his widower's weeds, with his three little girls in sombre black beside him, wonders mournfully how many mothers of the land are wasting their lives in the same struggle for appearance.—*O. J., in Episcopalian.*

WORKING CHILDREN.

"I don't think I ought to work, mother when I go to school;" said a bright-eyed little girl of thirteen, as she stood on the brick floor of the dairy, tingeing the shining milk pans with the rose tints of her fresh calico dress.

"I only ask an hour a day, Mary. I get very tired with both house and farm work, and I cannot get help, you knew," said the weary mother in a sad tone.

"But children never work, mother," said Mary, pettishly.

Mary's mother said no more, but went on scalding milk-pails and pans and turning them up in the sunshine. The little girl took her crocheting and sat down on the cool porch.

If Mary's mother had no word for her, we have; and for every other girl, or boy, who "rests" while a weary mother toils.

"Children never work." Alas, little Mary, you, and all little folks, whose pink dresses and polished skirts come shining from the hand of a mother, little know what some children do in the world.

If such heartless young folks could go to the coal mines and cotton factories of England, they would see children not up to their waists, harnessed into little carts drawing loads like cattle, or standing from day-break till night-fall at looms, till their backs are bowed, and their limbs bent like old men and women, and all this for the privilege of starving in work, rather than out of it.

How we wish the little grumblers had to go over the sea to learn that some children have to work hard, and under stern masters. But alas, they need not go out of our own State to see factory children fainting at their toil and oppressed by task masters, till the Legislature comes to the rescue, and limits the hours of work and demands for them a certain amount of schooling.

This hard working of children is not always the fault of the mill manager. Parents, pressed by poverty, or laziness, which is too often the parent of poverty, sue for work for their children, and sacrifice their health for their own present gain or ease. What, compared to this, is a little help given a smiling mother in a cheerful home?

It is a rare thing to see a child overworked at home, the danger lies in the other direction; the over-indulgent mother in moderate circumstances, too often wears her own life out that her children may enjoy the ease they do not need.

We have heard of boys, and to their shame be it said, who allow their mother to draw water, split wood, make fires, and to do many other things which are really boys' work, while they play croquet, go fishing, ride horseback, or blow their breath through fifes and flutes.

We have heard of girls who let their mother do all the washing, ironing, and other housework, while they embroider sofa pillows, or drum on the piano.

Have such children any hearts?

Remember and pity the children who do "work," and relieve these loving mothers before they are worn out serving you.—*The Watchman.*

WEED EARLY.

Constant repetition of children's pert sayings, notice of their beauty, the placing them in everlasting positions to show off, spoils them as irremediably as thunder spoils milk. As much as we may deplore the sight of a tame child, disciplined out of all sparkle, is the forward little chit who attends late parties, talks wisely of fashions, and is rude to her elders, a pleasanter sight? The ways of half the children we meet are more irritant to good feeling than mustard to raw flesh.

I visited lately a young mother of four bouncing boys. The endless roaring, the constant contention, the frightful confusion in that home would have tortured a Bedlamite. Meal-time was passed in a rain of bread-balls and the interchange of howls. Bed-time was an era of thunder. Early morning was a cannonade of scufflings. At last I ventured to mildly insinuate reform.

"Not for the world," said the parents. "Our children are impulsive and healthy. They shall never be governed. We take them regularly to church, and see that they say their prayers; they will turn out all right."

Perhaps they will, but should not the love we bear our children teach us the folly of allowing them to be nuisances and roysterers, because God in his love may bring them with maturer years to see the folly of their ways? I own a garden, so does my neighbor. In the spring we go forth to weed our beds. He stands with biting shears and watchful eyes, and whenever a dainty green peeps sunward he snips it off. "I will run no danger of weeds," says he; "better no roses than one nettle." In my turn I allow all to come up together, weeds and blossoms, fearful I may destroy a precious flower if I attempt to rid the ground of choking tares. In blossoming time he stands disconsolate before his barren earth heaps, while I mourn knee-deep in tangled disorder. Ah, we have both erred; the result is but the fault of wisdom gone astray.

It takes a Heaven-taught eye to discern the lily from the nettle when both are nascent in the kindly soil. Plant well, weed lovingly and with yearning prayer, and be not discouraged if your grounds seem prolific of bramble. There is more hope of land o'errun with tropical vegetation than that which lies on stony hillsides; and the child, faulty, troublesome, full of madcap ways, will make a nobler man, perhaps, if you weed early, than your quiet humdrum little chap that gives no trouble.—*M. E. Holden, in Christian Union.*

TO-DAY! TO-DAY!

"Well, you speak the truth; and, at a future time, I do intend to be religious; but I must have some more *spree* yet. I must enjoy life a while longer still." So said the youthful, gay, and healthy R——, in reply to serious expostulations which I had been addressing to him. I had spoken to him of the claims of the Creator upon the creatures of His hand—of violations of the law met by the shedding of the Redeemer's blood—of peace with God which faith in Christ secures—of freedom from uneasy, anxious cares, and tormenting, terrifying fears—and of the genuine pleasantness of wisdom's ways. He owned that what had been urged was true: yet still he smiled, and joked, and bid the peaceful message go its way. One concluding word of his, however, fell solemnly on my ear, and deeply affected my spirit. He exclaimed, whilst turning on his heels to leave me—"*But I shall perhaps rue of this.*" My hurried answer, so far as I remember, was, "*Perhaps you will!*" That day was Friday.

I saw him again the next morning. We paced together one of the public walks outside the city. I dealt pwith him earnestly. My sympathies were awakened for him; and I used every argument, and put before him every moving consideration that was within my power at the time. Yet once more he answered me, that at a later period of his life he would attend to these concerns; but that he still meant to have.

"SOME MORE SPREE YET."

That day passed over—a second day followed—a third succeeded—and then, suddenly, the startling question was asked me, "Have you heard how poor R——is to-day?" All that had recently passed between us now rushed upon my mind; and I said with much emotion, "No indeed, what is the matter with him? I have not heard that anything has befallen him." "Have you not?" replied the inquirer; "he is dead, or all but dead of small-pox." On the previous Friday, he joked, and put off serious thought, and purposed future years of jollity and gaiety. On the following morning, during the conversation already mentioned, he had informed me of his having experienced, during the previous night, some symptoms of indisposition. He had even told me that he had had passing suspicions of being threatened with an attack of the small-pox. He was better, however, he said, having used some active remedy; so that not the slightest apprehension had passed through my mind, at the time, of his being in any real danger from that most dangerons disease. I treated him as one in undoubted and vigorous health; and I pressed upon him rather the importance of a well-spent life, than that of being prepared for death. But four or five more setting suns had sunk in the west, ere the small-pox had accomplished its fatal work; and, ere yet another week had fled, the disfigured, lifeless corpse of poor R——had been committed "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

The funeral knell that pealed forth over the remains of poor R——still speaks. It cries to all such as have ears to hear, To-day! To-day! To-morrow is not yours! "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth!" To-day! To-day! "To-day, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."—*Word and Work.*

PATIENT WORK.

Slow and patient work in writing is the kind that tells. Rapid writers are soon forgotten, but those who spend years in careful thought are immortal:

Tennyson was ten years in writing "In Memoriam," Thomas Gray was, in his day, one of the finest scholars in Great Britain, and perhaps unsurpassed in Europe. Very brief is the poem to which he mainly owes his celebrity, and which will keep his memory green and fragrant as long as the English language lasts. It may be read through in five minutes, but Gray was seven years in elaborating it.

But Gray's is no solitary case of scrupulousness in literary work. At the town of Ferrara is still treasured the ancient scraps of paper upon which Ariosto wrote one of his stanzas—the description of a tempest—in sixteen different ways before becoming satisfied with it. The stanza is one of the most celebrated among Ariosto's remains.

Petrarch surpasses this. One of his stanzas he rewrote six-and-forty times, and Tasso's manuscripts so abound in alterations that they are illegible to other people's eyes. Montesquieu once remarked to a friend concerning a particular part of his writings, "You will read it in a few hours, but I asure you that it has cost me so much labor that it has whitened my hair."

Newton, despite his great intellect and huge stores of learning, found within himself patience to write his "Chronology" sixteen times over. Gibbon wrote out his "Autobiography" nine times, and gave twenty years' toil to his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

HOME INFLUENCE.

"Overcome evil with good" is a wiser maxim on which to combat intemperance, than is, "Fight the devil with fire." And it is only necessary to suggest how much better it is to keep men right than to have to reform them, to bring out the importance of home influence in training the young. The subject is a trite one, to be sure. It has been harped on ever since the time of Solomon. And yet there is no short cut to virtuous living. Sumptuary statutes can not supersede the fundamental law that a child "trained up in the way he should go" is a thousandfold more likely to make a temperate citizen than one who has been neglected at home, and entrusted to the artificial restraints of society. The mistake of many earnest reformers has been in attempting to put the State in the place of the parents—society in the province of home. It has been thought more rational to punish liquor-selling than to so train boys that they would not want liquor—a better philosophy to prohibit the supply than to destroy the demand.

For example, farm life has been, in general, left so rude and barren that the young have sought their vocations elsewhere, in the midst of temptations. Home life in towns has been too often conducted without reference to the innate and innocent desire of young folks for recreation; and the boys have drifted out upon the streets, and into saloons and bad companionship, when they might and should have been finding their enjoyment at home. Too-busy fathers and too-weary mothers and too-careless sisters are the ruin of many a promising lad. "You must not!" from the father and "You ought not," from the mother, have been relied on to keep him from evil ways, while he was left to himself for entertainment. And so, instead of playing dominoes with his sister, or cards with his father at home, the boy has learned on a hay-mow, or played over a mug of beer with some mates after "the store" was shut up.

Most lads would prefer a cosy sitting-room at home, where they were at liberty to bring their mates for innocent games, or a social dance, or cheerful music, to a rendezvous in a saloon. But with a home that is all command and no concession, all preaching and no pleasure, all duty and no fun—a dull, tread-mill, old-folks sort of a place—it is a matter for deep regret, but not of wonderment, that the boys drift away from it. Keep hold of your children, if you would save them, parents. And remember that the real forces are those of love, expressed not in care merely, but in sympathy, co-operation, participation, and real companionship.—*Golden Rule.*

CONSISTENCY.

BY MARY B. DODGE.

"'Tis strange how superstitions yet enchain
A priest-bewildered people, heart and brain,"
Said Harry to his chum, a trifle older;
"'Tis strange, 'tis passing strange!"
Just then the moon
Threw softest radiance over Harry's shoulder
Chink went his pocket-change—
"How opportune
This lucky chance," cried he, "to see the light
Of yon fair orb while glancing to the right!"

O, fear the Lord ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him.

PSA. 34: 9.