

and for tea, &c. fine wholesome water is plentifully furnished from several springs, which break out on the north of the city, both within and without the walls. There are several bridges, some built of stone, thrown over the canals.—*Chinese Repository.*

#### FIVE MINUTES TOO LATE.

O it is a wretched habit to be behind the proper time in anything which we have to perform, yet this has been the case with me all my days: take warning by the trouble it has brought upon me.

So many unlooked-for events take place in the world, that the most punctual are sometimes thrown out of their accustomed plans, but there is no excuse for the wretched practice of habitual irregularity.

When a child, I was scolded for being too late at school; when a boy, I was cuffed and kicked for being too late at my work; and when a man, I was turned away for being behind my time on a particular occasion when my services were wanted.

My uncle Jonathan was well to do in the world, and as his nephews were his nearest relations, we had reason to expect that his property would come among us. He had, however, one peculiarity, which effectually shut his door against me. He never was five minutes too late in an appointment in his life, and thought most contemptuously of those who were. I really believe that I was a bit of a favourite with him until my unfortunate failing justly offended him.

He had occasion to go a journey, and I was directed to be with him at seven in the morning, to carry his portmanteau to the coach. Alas! I was "Five minutes too late," and he had left the house.

Knowing his particularity, I hurried after him, and running till I could scarcely stand, arrived at one end of the street just in time to see the coach go off with my uncle at the other. Dearly did I pay for being "Five minutes too late."

My uncle did not return for a month, and certainly showed more forbearance toward me than he was ever known to do on a similar occasion; for in a letter he stated, that if I could be punctual, he should wish me to meet him on his return, to take charge of his portmanteau, and thereby make some amends for my misconduct. Off I set, but knowing that coaches frequently arrive a quarter of an hour after their set time, I thought a minute or two could be of no consequence. The coach, unfortunately, was "horridly exact," and once more I was after my time, just "Five minutes too late."

My uncle Jonathan never forgave me, fully believing that I had done it on purpose to get rid of the trouble of carrying his portmanteau. Years rolled away and I was not so much as permitted to enter the door of my uncle Jonathan.

Time, however, heals many a sore, and while it ruffles many a smooth brow, smooths many a ruffled temper. My uncle Jonathan so far relented, that when about to make his will, he sent to me to call upon him exactly at ten o'clock. Determined to be in time, I set off, allowing myself some minutes to spare, and pulling out my watch at the door, found that for once in my life I had kept my appointment to the second. The servant, to my surprise, told me, that my uncle Jonathan had ordered the door to be shut in my face for being behind my time. It was then I found out that my watch was too slow, and that I was exactly "Five minutes too late."

Had I been earlier on that occasion I might have been provided for, but now I am a poor man, and a poor man I am likely to remain. However, good may arise from my giving this short account of my foolish habit, as it may possibly convince some of the value of punctuality, and dispose them to avoid the manifold evils of being *five minutes too late.*

#### THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE.

One of the small islands in Boston Bay was inhabited by a single poor family. The father was taken suddenly ill. There was no physician. The wife, on whom every labour for the household devolved, was sleepless in care and tenderness by the bedside of her suffering husband. Every remedy in her power to procure, was administered, but the disease was acute, and he died. Seven young children mourned around the lifeless corpse. They were the sole beings upon that desolate spot. Did the mother indulge the grief of her spirit, and sit down in despair? No. She entered upon the arduous and sacred duties of her station. She felt that there was no hand to assist her in burying her dead. Providing as far as possible for the comfort of her little ones, she put her babe into the arms of the oldest, and charged the two next in age to watch the corpse of their father. She unmoored her husband's fishing boat, which but two days before she had guided over the seas, to obtain food for his family. She dared not yield to those tender recollections, which might have unnerved her arm. The nearest island was at the distance of three miles. Strong winds lashed the waters to foam. Over the loud billows, that wearied and sorrowful woman rowed, and was preserved. She reached the next island, and obtained necessary aid. With such energy did her duty to her desolate babes inspire her, that the voyage, which depended on her individual effort, was performed in a shorter time than the returning one, when the oars were managed by two men who went to assist in the last offices to the dead.

Virtue offers the only path, which in this life leads to tranquility.—Cicero.

#### DECISION OF CHARACTER.

There is no trait of character which will prove through life, more really important and useful than this. An individual may be possessed of a kind heart, and of principles which should deter him from error; and yet, without firmness of mind, he is constantly liable to be led astray by the persuasion of others, or still more by their ridicule. This last, although an efficient and useful weapon when wielded, as it ought to be, against the prevalence of vice and folly alone, is a dangerous one in the hands of many. How often will the ingenious heart, which has resisted every inducement of pleasure, yield its opinion to the dread of ridicule, and join the pursuits with which its feelings have nothing in common. We would then warn and advise the young to acquire decision of character which is the guardian of all the other virtues. As a beautiful piece of mechanism, perfect in all its parts, may lose its regularity of movement, when subjected to the influence of a magnet—so the mind is liable to have its perception of right affected and its powers rendered useless, useless by decision of character it can resist the attractions of pleasure. In young persons this character is particularly desirable—often thrown into new and trying situations, and fearful of being considered by their companions prudent and economical, they are induced to take the first step—and then how easy is the transition from rectitude of conduct to the beaten path of dissipation. Every one cannot be sufficiently acquainted with character, to judge how far it may be safe and how far dangerous to initiate one into the amusements of the world. The object may be a kind one the intention good; yet, unless the youthful mind have firmness and decision, it will meet many temptations in the world, when it will be difficult to resist.

The brief history of two young men, may serve to illustrate our remarks and may be interesting to our youthful readers, who should observe the contrast.

L—was very young when he first felt the want of a father's advice and the protection of a parent's home. He possessed kind feelings and a heart as yet uninfluenced by a love for the pleasures of the world. He had many fine qualities, but was deficient in decision of character. From the nature of the occupation in which he was engaged, he was thrown into society very different from that to which he had been accustomed. He had a lively disposition and a good deal of imagination; and, conscious that if he once tasted the pleasures of excitement, his mind might become so fond of it, he, for a while, carefully avoided the persuasion of his thoughtless friends. There was a struggle—but he said to himself, "I will yield but once." Alas! he was again and again persuaded, and every time his objections were less strong and he less able