

Only Once.

'Come let us go and get some violets,' said John to Henry, who had come to spend the afternoon of a fine day in spring with him. 'There are oceans of them over there in the green meadow.'

'Oceans of them!' said Henry, with a look surprised. 'The ocean is a great way off.'

'I know it is,' said John, 'but the violets are not: come on.'

Henry stood still, as if filled with thought.

'What are you thinking about,' said John, noticing his looks.

'No matter,' said Henry. His countenance cleared as he said this, and he began to follow his young friend.

The truth was, it took Henry a little time to find out what John meant when he said there were oceans of violets. He had been away from home but very little, and there he only heard his parents say just what they meant, and he was taught to speak in the same manner; and he did not know but that other boys were taught to do so too. He thought everybody meant what they said, and hence he was puzzled to make out John's strange way of speaking.

A fine meadow lay between the house before which the boys were standing, and the green lane where the violets grew. The grass had grown very high, and would therefore be injured by any person's passing through it. John's father had told him that he must not go through it any more, but must go around it when he wanted for violets. It was a little further round.

When John had said to Henry, 'Come on,' he began to climb the fence to get over in the meadow. Henry was a thoughtful boy, and asked him if his father would like to have him go through the grass?

'He told me not to, but I will go through this once only.'

'I would not if my father had told me not to.'

'Why it won't do any hurt to go through once—only once.'

'It will be disobeying your parent, and that is enough. If the good Lord makes violets grow for us, I think we ought not to disobey him while we are getting them. Come, it is but a little way round.'

Thus urged, John got down from the fence, and went round with Henry.

This only once is the cause of a great deal of mischief in this world. When a person resolves to do what he knows to be wrong only once, he cannot tell how many times he will do it. The way that Satan gets men quite in his power is by tempting them to do some sinful act, only once. He knows it will be easier to get them to do it a second time, and so on till they are led captive by him at his will. If Henry had followed John when he said, 'Come on,' or had urged him to go through the meadow, John would have disobeyed his father, would have sinned before God, and perhaps have laid the foundation for his ruin.

The boys entered a shady corner of the land, which they would not have thought of visiting if they had gone through the meadow. In this corner they found the ground richly spread with violets.

'O, I'm glad you wished me to come round; I should not have thought of coming to this thick spot,' said John.

'Father says we always fare the best when we do right,' said Henry. 'We are never to do wrong it only for once. Only once is a great mischief-maker.'



I WILL PRAY.

I will pray, I will pray,
Night and morning, every day;
Fold my hands, and lift my eyes
To my Jesus in the skies.

I will pray, I will pray,
'Jesus wash my guilt away;
Make my spirit pure within,
Keep my soul from every sin.'

I will pray, I will pray,
'Jesus help me to obey
All thy wise and holy will;
All thy wishes to fulfil.'

I will pray, I will pray,
At my work and and at my play,
All to help, and all to love,
As the angels do above.

I will pray, I will pray,
When I'm sorry, when I'm gay;
If my precious Saviour smile,
I am happy all the while.

I will pray, I will pray
Even in my dying day:
"O'er the stream so dark and wild,
Jesus, take thy little child."

Good looks.

Most young men care for their personal appearance. They like to make themselves agreeable to their companions, and one way of doing this, they very well know, is to dress in a neat and becoming manner, and to make the face and the manners as pleasant as possible.

But when a young man gives himself up to drink, he very soon loses his good looks. He loses, too, his self-respect, so that he no longer cares to appear well to others. He goes with his person filthy, his hair unbrushed, and his clothes soiled and carelessly put on. More than that, the strong drink disfigures his face, blotches his skin, and inflames his eyes.

Is it right for a young man whom God has made comely in person thus to destroy himself? No, indeed. The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," means as much that we must not murder others.

God holds us to account for the care we take of our bodies. He expects us to serve him with these as well as with our souls, and while we live here in this world, it is only through those that our souls can act and show our love and obedience to God. The Bible says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

We are therefore bound to take care of our bodies, these temples of God. But this no drunkard does. He defiles, injures, destroys it. What will he answer in the day of judgment?

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