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UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

In malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.—*St. Paul.*

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THOSE TEARS!

They were a mother's. A wicked son's perversity caused them. They were many. They were bitter. Bereavement causes tears. Loss of property makes them fall. Anguish of the body will wet the cheek. Oppression causes weeping. But more bitter than all these are the tears of that heart-broken mother. Sweetest, fondest anticipations were dashed. Expectations, that had shot their cheering radiance through the dark clouds of long years of adversity, were at an end. She wept, for it was the funeral day of her hopes.

Those tears—how eloquent! Every drop uttered a volume of terrible truth. What language they uttered!

1. Concerning the *depth of that son's guilt*. That *he* should cause them for whom had been endured all the pangs of maternal solicitude since the hour of his birth—that *he* should cause them, whose most tender care it should have been to shield the parental bosom from every sorrow—this was most unnatural. What obligation could have been in force upon him, that was not to make the author of his being happy, and prevent, by all the forms of tenderest kindness, that any tears should ever fall on his account. But he trod down and trampled on all these obligations. And those tears, started by his guilt—what a tale they told of its amount!

2. Spake they not too of his *danger*? It was not simple maternal love that made that being a mourner. She was allied to the Saviour and Judge of the world by a living faith. Those tears were shed over God's broken law, and redeeming love lightly esteemed, and the Spirit of grace grieved. Those tears were the more bitter, because she that wept, wept

over God's dishonor as well as her own withered hopes. God saw those tears! Was there not an alliance of his holy mind with the mourner, and deep displeasure in that mind at the guilty cause of her tears?

That wicked son saw them. Fast and free they fell. But he steeled his heart against them. There was thrilling eloquence in them, but they pleaded in vain for his repentance and return. He rushed into the arms of temptation. He linked his soul with the vicious and vile. It is long since he has trodden the threshold of his home. For her he wandered. Parental love and tenderness asks—"Where?" but hears only the lonely echo of its own voice.

Those tears! Perhaps that son will yet remember them. The stern mood of a guilty mind is sometimes strangely relaxed. He who had braced his nerves against every tender and solemn appeal, finds stealing over him thoughts and reflections that make the giant frame of his depravity shake like an aspen leaf. Those tears—the terrific hand-writing on the wall—may yet startle him as memory retraces the picture before him. He saw them once. Again he may see them. They may have redeeming power. They may prove the last, yet the successful appeal of eternal mercy. The remembrance of them may touch the only remaining chord whose vibration could arrest steps that were taking hold on hell!

Those tears! If they reclaimed not, what will they say to that son in eternity? Holy parental love shed them in vain. What a spectre to enter the world of despair, and thrust itself on the vision of guilt! Who shall fathom the ocean of his woe that shall meet it then.—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

PASCAL.