

"My mother, being feeble in health, sat down, and beckoned me to sit down beside her. Her look, so full of tender sorrow, is present to me now. I would not sit but still continued standing beside her. 'Alfred, my dear son,' said she, 'have you lost all the love for your mother? I fear you have,' she continued, 'and may God help you to see your own heart, and me to do my duty.' She then talked to me of my misdeeds, of the dreadful consequences of the course I was pursuing. By tears and entreaties, and prayer, she tried to make an impression on me. She placed before me the lives and examples of great and good men; she sought to stimulate my ambition. I was moved, but too proud to show it, and remained standing in dogged silence beside her.

"I thought, what will my companions say, if, after all my boasting, I yield at last, and submit to be led by a woman?

"What agony was visible on my mother's face, when she saw that all she said and suffered failed to move me! She rose to go home, and I followed at a distance.

"She spoke no more to me until we reached our own door.

"It is school-time, now," said she. "Go my son, and once more let me beseech you to think upon what I have said."

"I shan't go to school," said I.

She looked astonished at my boldness, but replied firmly, "Certainly you will go,—Alfred, I command you."

"I will not," said I, with a tone of defiance.

"One of two things you must do, Alfred, either go to school this moment, or I will lock you in your room, and keep you there till you are ready to promise implicit obedience to my wishes in future."

"I dare you to do it," said I, 'you can't get me up stairs.'

"Alfred, choose now," said my mother, who laid her hand upon my arm. She trembled violently, and was deadly pale.

"If you touch me I will kick you," said I, in a terrible rage.

"Will you go, Alfred?"

"No," replied I, but quailed beneath her eye.

"Then follow me," said she, as she grasped my arm firmly. I raised my foot,—oh, my son, hear me! I raised my foot and kicked her,—my sainted mother! Oh, my head reels as a torrent of memory rushes over me! I kicked my mother,—a feeble woman,—my mother! She staggered back a few steps, and leaned against the wall. She did not look at me, I saw her heart beat against her breast. 'Oh heavenly Father,' she cried, 'forgive him; he knows not what he does!' The gardener just then passed the door, and seeing my mother pale, and almost unable to support herself, he stopped; she beckoned him in. 'Take this boy up stairs, and lock him in his own room,' said she, and turned from me. Looking back as she was entering her own room, she gave me such a look,—it will for ever follow me. It was a look of agony, mingled with the intensest love,—it was the last unutterable pang from a heart that was broken.

"In a moment I found myself a prisoner in my own room. I thought for a moment I would fling myself from the window, and dash my brains out; but I felt afraid to die; I was not penitent. At times my heart was subdued, but my stubborn pride rose in an instant, and bade me not to yield. The pale face of my mother haunted me. I flung myself on the bed, and fell asleep. I awoke at midnight, stiffened with the damp night air, and terrified with frightful dreams. I would have sought my mother at that moment, for I trembled with fear, but my door was fast. With the daylight my terrors were dissipated and I became bold in resisting all good impulses. The servant brought my meals, but I did not taste them. Just at twilight I heard a light footstep approach the door. It was my sister, who called me by name.

"What may I tell mother for you?" she asked.

"Nothing," I replied.

"Oh, Alfred! for my sake, for all our sakes, say that you are sorry. She longs to forgive you."

"I won't be driven to school against my will," I replied.

"But you will go if she wishes it, dear Alfred," my sister said, pleadingly.

"No, I won't," said I, 'and you needn't say another word about it.'

"Oh, brother, you will kill her, you will kill her! and then you can never have a happy moment."

"I made no reply to this. My feelings were touched, but I still resisted their influence. My sister called me, but I would not answer. I heard her footsteps slowly retreating, and I again flung myself on the bed, to pass another wretched and fearful night. Oh, God! how wretched, how fearful I did not know.

"Another footstep, slower and feebler than my sister's, disturbed me. A voice called my name; it was my mother's."

"Alfred, my son, shall I come in? Are you sorry for what you have done?" she asked.

"I cannot tell what influence operating at that time made me speak adverse to my feelings. The gentle voice of my mother that thrilled through me melted the ice from my obdurate heart, and I longed to throw myself on her neck, but I did not. No, my boy, I did not. But my words gave the lie to my heart, when I said I was not sorry. I

heard her withdraw. I heard her groan. I longed to call her back, but I did not.

"I was awakened from an uneasy slumber by hearing my name called loudly, and my sister stood by my bedside.

"Get up Alfred! Oh, don't wait a moment! Get up, and come with me. Mother is dying!"

"I thought I was dreaming, but I got up mechanically, and followed my sister. On the bed, pale and cold as marble, lay my mother. She had not undressed. She had thrown herself on the bed to rest; arising to go again to me she was seized with a palpitation of the heart, and borne senseless to her room.

"I cannot tell you my agony as I looked upon her; my remorse was tenfold more bitter from the thought that she would never know it. I believed myself to be a murderer. I fell on the bed beside her. I could not weep. My heart burned in my bosom, my brain was all on fire. My sister threw her arms around me and wept in silence. Suddenly we saw a light motion of mother's hand,—her eyes unclosed. She had recovered consciousness, but not speech. She looked at me and moved her lips. I could not understand her words. 'Mother! mother!' I shrieked, 'say only that you forgive me.' She could not say it with her lips, but her hands pressed mine. She smiled upon me, and lifted her thin white hands, clasped my own within them, and cast her eyes upward. She moved her lips in prayer, and thus she died. I remained still kneeling beside that dear form, till my gentle sister removed me. She comforted me, for she knew the heavy load of sorrow at my heart,—heavier than grief at the loss of a mother, for it was a load of anguish for sin. The joy of youth had left me for ever.

"My son, the sufferings such memories wake must continue as long as life. God is merciful; but remorse for past misdeeds is a canker-worm in the heart that preys upon it for ever."

My father ceased speaking, and buried his face in his hands. He saw and felt the bearing his narrative had upon my character and conduct. I have never forgotten it. Boys who spurn a mother's control, who are ashamed to own that they are wrong, who think it manly to resist their authority, to yield to her influence, beware! Lay not up for yourselves bitter memories for your future years.—*British Mothers' Journal*.

5. FILIAL OBEDIENCE AND LONG LIFE.

"Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Here is, no doubt, a promise of temporal good to all such as respect and honour, love and obey their parents. Their days shall be prolonged—they shall live longer—shall live in the enjoyment of more earthly blessings—shall bask in the sunshine of God's countenance. They shall live longer. There is a general promise to this effect—the days of the righteous shall be prolonged—the fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. This is, no doubt, true as a general maxim; for, aside from the divine promise, there are natural principles at work to bring about such a result. Sin contains the elements of death. It is the seed of destruction. When it has conceived it bringeth forth death. Sin works death. It is not simply true that death or final dissolution is the consequence of sin; but disease and all the preliminary steps of death are to be traced back to sin, their rightful progenitor. The laws of nature (of which are the laws of our bodily structures) run parallel with, or rather, are the laws of God. Sin as inevitably does violence to the one as to the other. Sin is the great shortener of life. Other things equal, the greater the sinner, the less his chances for long life. Every sin does a greater or less violence to his nature. He is, too, more exposed to the casualties of life—more in the way of violence and danger—more liable to disease and premature death, than the man who is pursuing the even tenor of a pious life.

These are the general principles, which, when applied to children and youth, afford a most pleasing confirmation of our sentiment.

Childhood and youth—better to say infancy—childhood and youth are the season for laying the foundation of a healthful constitution, a good conscience, and a wholesome character; which, in their turn, are the best security for a long life. But how shall they gain this security? I hesitate not to say that neglect of parental instruction and reproof is productive of more evil in these respects than any other, or all other together. Parents are the natural guardians of their children, and though often the authors of many foolish things in respect to their offspring, they are really the authors of nearly all the good their children experience. Perhaps, nine-tenths of the bad constitutions with which some are afflicted through life—nine-tenths of the bankrupt characters which work death in the physical as well as in the moral man, may be traced back to some early neglect of parental precept and precaution. It is not too much to say that the child who does not respect the opinion, and improve by the reproof, and obey the precepts of his parents, will, in general,