

**Youth's Corner.**

**BENGALEE PROVERB.**

*He takes the weaver's beam to kill a fly with.*

This proverb is used to describe the folly of seeking an object by means so far beyond the necessity of the case, that they will rather defeat it than assist its attainment. The fly might be killed by one's stealing near, and giving a slap with something that was not perceived before; but the weaver's beam is so great and stiff that the fly will get warning by the shadow of it, and will save itself by timely flight.

I once knew a man who set up as a coach-maker in a small town. He was fond of making a great show in every thing he did. So he began with providing a steam-engine which was to save his workmen a great deal of labour. He had all the wheels and machinery for cutting, sawing, turning, and planing by steam; but he had so little of that kind to do, that the engine might have stood still sometimes all day except an hour or so; yet the fire had to be lighted, and the money with which he might have bought materials was sunk in purchasing the engine, and a man had to be kept at high wages who knew the working of it; the expense of all this was made up by no advantage from saving of labour. At the end of a few years, he had run into debts which he could not pay: the whole of his great concern had to be sold, and he was obliged to work as a journeyman again for wages.

Two boys agreed that they would write a letter each to a school-fellow at a distance. The one of them commenced by getting a quire of letter-paper, a bundle of quills, a new blotter, a box of wafers, a penknife, Johnson's Dictionary, and Elements of Composition. He then sat down with great satisfaction, and began to think what he was to write about. There he sat and sat, and not one thought arose in his mind that he could have set down on paper. The weaver's beam was in his hand, but the fly to be killed had escaped.

The other boy just took up a letter-cover which happened to lie by his side, and began to set down quickly the thoughts which came uppermost in his mind; in half an hour there was so much on his paper that when he got a letter-sheet, and a good pen to write with, he filled two pages quite easily; and new thoughts came up in his mind, with which he filled up his third page and as much of the back as he could spare, leaving only room for the direction. The fly was killed, but not with the weaver's beam.

Two young men became awakened to a sense of their state as sinners. They both of them went to their pastor, told him their feelings, and received his advice. The one of the two went to another minister and talked with him too, and to a third in the same way, and from each of them he asked advice about books to read and opportunities to seek for improvement. He then procured all the books, read a chapter or two in one, then laid that down and took up another—and so on without reading one of them through. He went from one place of worship to another, in order to make out whose ministry was most improving; he sought for people who were not yet awakened, in order to tell them how deeply engaged he was about religion, and what he was doing for his improvement. They remonstrated with him, and he talked with great severity to them; then an infidel who had more knowledge of the Bible in his head than he, began to argue with him, and soon the young man found that he was puzzled with the objections which were raised: presently they set upon him with light conversation, and treated religion as a thing for weak minds only to heed; he was drawn into parties of pleasure, and it turned out that all the serious thoughts about his soul went off like the morning cloud, and he became a reckless liver and a despiser of religion altogether.

In the mean time, his friend had gone from the conversation with his pastor to his secret chamber. There he knelt in prayer with his Bible before him; he asked for light, that this one book might be opened for him to apply its sacred words to his heart and conscience. The Bible and his own heart furnished him with matter for thought enough. Yet he had always some one book besides for reading; but only as a help for the better understanding of God's own holy Book. In prayer he was engaged more than in reading and talking. He was not always upon his knees; but often, with a book before him, or with the pen in his hand he stopped reading or writing, and prayed that God would impress upon his heart the wholesome truths which he was discovering. By and by the seriousness of his mind and the steadiness of his walk were noticed; he was asked to help in teaching at the Sunday School, and to meet with the other teachers for the study of Scripture-lessons. Soon he had quite a new circle of acquaintance. Their questions led him to tell of what God was doing for his soul; and their communications again enlightened him upon the ways in which God deals with souls, dividing to every man severally as he will. In course of time, his pastor encouraged him to become a minister. He had a desire for it, but had kept silence about it until

the question was put to him, would he be willing to give up his worldly business, in which he was getting on well, and be poor, that he might make many rich? Then it sounded to him as if the Lord was asking, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And he answered, "Here am I; send me!" He became a very devoted and successful minister.

**WORSE THAN THE SAILORS.**

"Captain?" bellowed a man, while hold of a rope, as the schooner was towed through the Welland Canal, "what will you carry me to Cleveland for, and find me?"  
C. Three dollars.  
P. And find me all I want?  
C. I will give you a berth, and what you want to eat and drink.  
P. Will you, what I want to drink?  
C. I will furnish you with what tea and coffee you want, and with good cold water.  
P. No spirit of any kind?  
C. No, none of the men drink any—we have none on board. I never furnish it to any body.

P. Well, then I will not go with you.  
C. I do not wish you to go—I will not have you on board, if you drink ardent spirits.  
P. I will not help you with your vessel another moment (letting go the rope.)

C. Very well—don't want your help—would not have even the rope of my vessel soiled with the hands of a drinking man.

They parted. The captain made a second trip to Cleveland, some time after; and, while there, a man came on board his vessel, and seizing him by the hand, very cordially said, "Well, how do you do, Sir?" "Why, quite well, thank you, Sir; but, as it happens, I do not know you," replied the captain.

"I am the man you refused to take on board for Cleveland, at the Welland canal, because he required spirits to be furnished him. It was a great disappointment to me not to go.—I was detained a great while—but it did me good. I thought to myself—well, if I have got to be worse than the sailors, it is time to look about me—and I tell you what, captain, I have not drunk a drop since, nor do I ever intend to do."—*Bethel Magazine.*

**A DAY RIVER.**

It is said that in Peru there is a river called the Diurnal, or day river; because it runs with a great current by day, but is wholly dry at night; which change is thought to be owing to the heat of the sun melting the snow that lies on the mountains, but when the sun goes down and the cold night approaches, the snow hardens, by which alone the river is fed, and the channel is quite dried up.

Not much unlike this river, are all worldly contentments: which are only day comforts, but not night comforts. In the sunshine of peace and prosperity, they flow with some pleasing streams; but in the night season of affliction, they vanish and come to nothing.

It is far otherwise with the promises of the gospel, whose streams of comfort, in the time of trouble, do usually run most plentifully, and refresh most powerfully the weary and afflicted soul; so as to preserve it from fainting under the pressure of any evil.—*Ep. Recorder.*

**WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?**

A striking anecdote was related at one of the May meetings, by a clergyman from the South of Ireland, in proof of the real profit derived by some of the poorest classes from a free perusal of the word of God. At the periodical assemblage of men, generally of a very humble rank, who are employed to read the Scriptures in Irish, to their poor ignorant countrymen, a series of questions are propounded by the clergymen who attend as examiners, in order to ascertain how far the minds of these teachers are imbued with the truths that they communicate to others. One query, addressed to a very simple unlearned man, who manifested great love for the sacred book, was to this effect: "If you were threatened with persecution and suffering for retaining your Bible, would you give it up?" A pause ensued, and the question was repeated, with a demand for some reply. "Please your reverence," said the poor fellow, "and with submission, I think that question is not rightly put." "How so?" "In what way would you have it expressed?" "Why, then, sir, and begging your reverence's pardon, I think you should ask me, if I was threatened with such things for keeping my Bible, would I give it up? For, sir, how do I know what I would do if I was tempted?"

Such an instance of self-knowledge, and consequently of self-distrust in one who had received no teaching but what the Holy Spirit had communicated to his soul, conveys an impressive lesson to many who have lived in the constant enjoyment of every help to divine study. From whence arise the frequent and harsh judgments that Christians are heard to pass upon their fellows, if not from a confident conceit on the part of the individual, that he, in similar circumstances, would have acted more consistently, more prudently, more decisively or in some way more suitably, than his neighbour had done! The poor Irish peasant had evidently read his Bible with more profit to himself than such persons seem to do; and a little of his experimental knowledge of the traitor within, would often appear an acquisition worth bartering many of our higher attainments to acquire. What would I do in such or such a case? is, in fact, a question beyond the power of any man to solve; and by flattering himself that he can solve it, he does but nourish the self-confidence of a deceived heart.

What ought I to do? is a safe and profitable inquiry. It sends the man to his Bible and to his God. The former teaches him both his duty, and the moral incapacity under which he lies of fulfilling it, or any duty whatever, in his own strength; at the same time it refers him to a power always to be acquired by believing prayer; it shows him his poverty, and opens at his feet a mine of wealth; it displays the feebleness of his naked hands, and gives him armour of proof; weapons where-with he may pull down the strongholds of his enemy. I desire—because I greatly need it—to have the poor peasant's distinction ever before me, with David's prayer, "Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins;" and in reference to those around me, "who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" The habit of censuring others goes hand in hand with that of applauding self; and it is no unprofitable exercise to watch the risings of the former inclination in our hearts, that by its guidance we may detect the latter.

O, the preciousness of that Book which is able to make the basest and most despised of our ignorant fellow-creatures wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus! This poor man had been brought up in strict and bigotted adherence to a system which throws the sinner altogether upon his own will-worship and meritorious works, for acceptance before God. Yet the entrance of that word, in its single majesty and simple truth, gave him such light as dispersed every shadow from his darkened understanding, and taking him off from all vain dependences, threw him entirely upon the guidance of Him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—*Ep. Recorder.*

**THE POOR MAN'S FRIEND.**

The slothful man is a disgrace to his species. The powers of mind and body, which might be used to the glory of God and the good of our fellow-creatures, are frittered away, morning after morning, upon a prolonged toilet, which, when made, only makes the wearer of it ridiculous; and evening after evening, upon eating and drinking and pleasuring, which serve but to rivet on their voracious chains of selfishness and vanity. The man of toil is the man of the highest respectability—the man of daily, diligent, industrious toil for his family, who, by the sweat of his brow, under the solemn curse of our first parents, continues to produce materials for the support of himself and his family. Compare that man, returning with his stained person and his weary sinews from his toil to his home in the evening; compare him with the youth of fashion, returning from his idle, lounging ride or walk: which is more respectable? which is more an object of affection? on which would you lavish your attention? which have you more respect for? I claim respect for my poor friend's character. I ask the affection of your hearts for them; and then you will set about improving their dwellings and their condition, not with a cold donation, but with a warm heart. It is in this way our object is to be gained, and in this way alone. The poor must be visited, not with the ostentation of condescension, which barely waits for a reply to questions put with scarcely civility, and which, instead of good, inflicts a double evil—evil to the rich who indulges in such conduct, because it ministers to their own vanity and self-importance, and evil to the poor who meet with it, because it provokes a recoil of repugnance and reserve. They must be visited leisurely and kindly. The stories of their domestic troubles, their contentions and quarrellings with their neighbours, must be listened to—their vulgarities must excite neither sneer nor smile—their wants and troubles must not be derided as insignificant—their failings must not be rudely assailed. Nothing can justify rudeness to any man, however poor. \* \* \* May I add one word of inducement for you to undertake and persevere in this good work? It shall be taken from the highest source—the word of Him from whom all blessings flow. It is our Christian calling to consider, not every man his own things only, but every man also the things of others. The aim of the gospel is to deliver us from the weakness of nature, which is selfishness, and elevate us into the strength of Christianity, which is sympathy, practical sympathy, active love. The last and greatest achievement of the gospel is to bring us to the first and greatest commandment of the law—that is, love. True religion is grateful love on earth produced by pardoning love from heaven. It is not in conditions demanded, but in pardon bestowed, that the real cure of man's heart commences. His disease is sin, not only in its exposure under the divine law, but also in its effects upon the human conscience. It produces alienation from God, and consequent selfishness among men. The stream of love to our fellow-creatures flows from the fountain of love to God, and that love is opened in the pardoning gift of his dear Son. In this is manifested the love of God; and we love him because he first loved us. Love believed leads to communion, and as, on the one side, evil communications corrupt good manners, so, on the other, good communications subdue evil manners; and in communion with God sustained, Christian

character in all its holy fruits is formed.—*The Rev. Hugh McNeile of Liverpool.*

I have lived as a clergyman for full twenty years among the poorest of the poor in Yorkshire, and lately, in Birmingham; and I know the heart of the poor; I know their faults, and I know their virtues, and have wept with those that wept; and this I would impress upon the meeting, that no pecuniary commutation of personal service for Christ to his poor can be allowed, without endangering the very existence of society. The rich and the poor must be better acquainted. The employer must put off the master, and put on the man and the Christian; and he will find that sympathy is power to the affections, as knowledge is to the mind. I visited a very worthy, but poor family lately, who seeming to be unusually cheerful, I inquired the cause, and the good mother having wiped a chair for me with her apron, and desired me to be seated, said, the cause of their joy was, that the master had been to see them, had noticed the children, inquired as to their conduct separately, and given blame or praise as deserved; and she added, "He was so kind to my children, I never was so pleased since my marriage." This is the way to amend the condition of the poor, and I have no hesitation, as a practical man, in saying, that if the better-conditioned connected with these districts would set apart one evening weekly, and spend two or three hours among the poor, in a spirit of Christian sympathy and wisdom—reading to them the Word of God, commending to them the formularies of the church, and affording them a little aid in their necessities, they would effect more good to society than has ever been done by all our police, and all our coercion of the vicious—more too, I believe, than without it could be done by all our sermons, from January to December. I would not, however, have it supposed that the distress of the poor is confined to such vast places as Birmingham. I have just passed, in travelling, through the agricultural district around Haverhill, in Suffolk, where some of those fearful acts of incendiarism, arising from the "desperation" noticed in the circular, have within a few days occurred. The fires in those parts were the engrossing subject, and I went into a tradesman's shop to make a small purchase, when I inquired as to the cause of these acts of madness: the answer was, "I do not wonder at fires, where the people, many of them, are living upon pig-meat"—that is, "sharps," or bran, with the coarsest taken out, given usually to pigs, and which was, in this case, made into a sort of bread. I asked for some of this bread, and was supplied with the slice I now exhibit from a cottage in the neighbourhood, the mother of the family saying she would be too thankful to have enough even of that, but eleven had subsisted chiefly upon one bushel of that bran bread, worth less than 2s. weekly, for the last thirteen weeks. My informant was no sympathizer with the burners, having in the family sustained a severe loss by a recent fire in the Isle of Ely hard by, where half a village had been burnt, and twenty-five families had no refuge but the church at Strettham. There might be many remedies for such a state of things as this within the province of the legislature, but I am anxious to impress upon you, if Londoners can bear plain truth from a plain countryman, that you must be on the alert, or our doom as a nation is sealed. I would have you to know, that in the vicinity of Grosvenor-square there have lately been found 1465 families, 925 of which have but one room to each family, and 623 of the whole but one bed to each family. Let each discharge his own duty; let all demand the time to be secured to the labouring people which is so essential to pastoral and personal visitation. What can the shepherd do in his district who can not see his flock, the adults, or children, till after eight o'clock at night? I have often been out on this errand till eleven o'clock at night, when I ought properly to have been at my home. I hope this Society will bring into practice the precepts taught by St. Paul and St. James, that the wealthy may no longer say to the poor, "Be ye warned and filled," but may bear in mind St. Paul's great principle, "that the husbandman that laboreth shall be the first partaker of the fruits."—*The Rev. George Bull, Incumbent of St. Matthew's, Birmingham. At the formation of THE LABOURER'S FRIEND SOCIETY, May 1844.*

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