

A very great question rises up here ; and that is, *What is it to repent ?*

You all know there are two kinds of money—the good, and the counterfeit. And a man might have a house full of the counterfeit, and yet he could not be said to have any money. It would do him no good. So there are two kinds of repentance. One is good, and the other good for nothing. They may not seem very different, just as two pieces of money may look alike, while one is good, and will buy things; and the other is good for nothing; just as two trees may stand together, and look alike, while one produces good fruit, and the other nothing but leaves. But you want to know what it is to repent. Let me try to tell you.

A man, who is now a minister of the gospel, gave me the following account. I tell it to you in order to show you what repentance is. “I had one of the kindest and best of fathers; and when I was a little white headed boy, about six years old, he used to carry me to school before him on his horse, to help me in my little plans, and always tried to make me happy; and he never seemed so happy himself as when making me happy. When I was six years old, he came home, one day, very sick. My mother too, was sick; and thus nobody but my two sisters could take care of my father. In a few days he was worse, very sick, and all the physicians in the region were called in to see him. The next Sabbath morning, early, he was evidently much worse. As I went into the room, he stretched out his hand to me and said, ‘My little boy, I am very sick. I wish you to take that paper on the stand, and run down to Mr. C’s. and get me the medicine written on that paper.’ I took the paper, and went to the apothecary’s shop, as I had often done before. It was about half a mile off; but when I got there, I found it shut; and as Mr. C. lived a quarter of a mile farther off, I concluded not to go to find him. I then set out for home. On my way back I contrived what to say. I knew how wicked it was to tell a lie, but one sin always leads to another. On going in to my father, I saw that he was in great pain; and though pale and weak, I could see great drops of sweat standing on his forehead forced out by the pain. Oh, then I was sorry I had not gone and found the apothecary. At length he said to me, ‘My son has got the medicine, I hope, for I am in great pain. I hung my head, and muttered, for my conscience smote me. ‘No, sir, Mr. Carter says he has got none?’ ‘Has got none! Is this possible?’ He then cast a keen eye upon me, and seeing my head hang, and probably suspecting my falsehood, said, in the mildest, kindest tone, ‘*My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for the want of that medicine!*’ I went out of the room, and alone, and cried. I was soon called back. My brothers had come, and were standing,—all the children were standing round his bed, and he was committing my poor mother to their care, and giving them his last advice. I was the youngest; and when he laid his hand on my head, and told me ‘that in a few hours I should have no father; that he would in a day or two be buried up; that I must now make God my father, love him, obey him, and always do right, and *speaking the truth*, because the eye of God is always upon me’—it seemed as if I should sink; and when he laid his hand on my head again, and prayed for the blessing of God the Redeemer to rest upon me, ‘soon to be a fatherless orphan,’ I