

twenty years while he was building the ark, and we all know the result," said Mary. "No, girls—

"Right is right, since God is God,  
And right the day must win,  
To doubt would be disloyalty,  
To falter would be sin."

"What do you think about it, Elizabeth?"

"I think you are right, Mary; my conscience has been pricking me for some time about card-playing, but I am sorry to say I had not the courage to stop, for I know what everybody will say, but 'trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength' I will, from this time on, 'try to do what He would have me do. I am afraid I have many times broken that part of my Christian Endeavor pledge."

"Does that mean that you will stay away from Helen's party?" asked Madge.

"What would be the use in going when I say I have played my last game."

"What do you think about it, Lil and Nan?" asked Mary.

"O, don't you know, we have always been considered peculiar, because we have never learned to play. We are glad we are not alone in our views."

"I seem to be the one stray sheep in this crowd," said Madge. "I respect you all for doing what you think is right, but I must say I am not convinced yet that there is any harm in playing cards at home, and I think you are foolish, Elizabeth, for giving up playing now, for you know you are the best player in town."

One bright, sunshiny morning, just thirty years after the above conversation had taken place, a lady in deep mourning called to see Mary Champion. It was Madge Dill, grown old before her time.

"I was looking through an old diary yesterday, Mary, and this is what I read:

"Stopped at Mary Champion's on my way down town this morning, and heard her reasons for not playing cards. She might as well have cast her 'reasons' on the waters as far as I am concerned, for she did not, and cannot, convince me that there is any harm in it."

Here she burst into a flood of tears.

"You did, indeed, 'cast your bread upon the waters, and it has returned after years when it is too late. O! Mary, if I had only listened and heeded, I might not have been the broken-hearted woman that I am now."

Then she told May how she had taught her brother to play cards, and how in a fit of anger at cards, while under the influence of strong drink, he had stabbed his brother-in-law—her own husband—who had died from the effects of the wound, and her brother was in the penitentiary for life.

"Do you wonder at the change that has come over me, and that I do not care for the things that I used to care for?"

"Wherefore, come out from among them, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—*ScL.*

#### A FATAL DISEASE.

A merchant learned that a favorite clerk had won a prize in a lottery. He called him up to the desk and discharged him, with the following remarks: "I have been in business forty-three years, and have yet to see the first man who gambled and remained absolutely honest. Twenty years ago I would have tried to cure you. I am too old now to take on new worries. Remember that I told you that the gambling habit was a *disease fatal to honesty* and almost incurable." The young man secured another position, from which he was discharged inside of two years for stealing.

It is well to try to reform men, but it is not safe to give them too many opportunities to add to their sins. When a man is proved to be a thief, the man who trusts his own or others property in his hands may lead him into temptation, and help him on to ruin. If a man is converted, and confesses and forsakes his sins, then he may be helped; but there is little use in trying to cover up the designs of an impenitent thief or rogue, and thus giving him a chance to wrong us and others on a still larger scale.

Boys, remember that all lotteries and games of chance are but gambling. Beware of the beginnings.