

ings they betray petty ambitions, groundless pretensions to rank or refinement, a fondness for small lies, more respect for the smiles of the world than for the precepts or injunctions of the Church and a proneness to contemptible bickerings and enduring spite. Better things are expected of them because they flaunt, as it were, in the breeze of public opinion, their claim to superior virtue. Seeing their best actions marred by manifold meanness, the world will say : Deliver us from pious people ; better is the frankness of the shameless sinner than the duplicity of the devout.

Secondly, they must not talk scandal. One of the infallible marks of a truly converted soul is a deep ever-present tenderness for the reputation of others. The sham Christian or the surface Christian often betrays his pretence or his shallowness by severe criticism of his neighbours. The heathen had no conception of Christian charity ; to him any hidden crime, however secret, was legitimate quarry for the shafts of his sarcasm. To put himself in the hunted victim's place was a thought that never entered his mind. Heathenism, especially that of Greece and Rome, was selfish and cruel almost beyond the belief of those who have never studied its classics. The violence of personal abuse in those days seems to us, whom nineteen centuries of Christian benignity have chastened, shockingly barbarous. Nowadays it survives amongst drunken men and women, abandoned miscreants, proverbially wicked persons and all the riffraff of humanity. It still seethes amid the baser passions of mankind like the menacing fires of a temporarily quiet volcano, breaking forth occasionally among tolerably good people when anger has upset their mental and volitional equilibrium and broken through the crust of their habitual self control. However, thank God, even merely nominal Christians detest the man or woman that is known as having "a bad tongue," and the first indication that a man's profession of practical Christianity cannot be trusted is often to be found in his fondness for