

merry and sweet faced girl to the choicest delicacy that the ample provision for the affords. Or it may be that some kind friend opens her rooms for an evening to a crowd of young folks, and indulges them in games, and pleasant chat or more pleasant stories, or even it may be, with the song, dance, the sweet toned piano, instead of the fiddle and the pipe,—and winds all up with a feast of good things, and parts from them with pleasant smiles, and gentle leave-takings.

In these things, young people are apt to consider the very greatest happiness—and it may be the only happy portions of their lives. They talk of them and think of them, often with an exclusion of every thing else; what a poor comparison is the drudgery of daily life, with what torments are books or tasks, or any kind of work; what a poor insipid, tiresome thing is industry! Now, I am not one of those morose moralists who deem a laugh or a smile, or shut the heart against the innocent natural gaiety of the young. Not at all; I have given us faculties for enjoyment and have a perfect right to use them within the bounds of propriety and moderation. Reason and duty tell us, however, that these faculties must be trained and taught to obey the laws of a happier order, which the beneficent Creator has given us. Do you see that young steed, with arched neck, wide nostrils, and impatient foot. He is full of generous ardor and eager to be away; he frets against the bit, and paws the ground with restless hoof, and while he does you cannot help admiring the strength and beauty of the noble creature. He too is full of pleasure, and if you give him the rein, he is off like the wind,—snorting with pleasure and rejoicing in his liberty. See him career along, but there are crooks and gullies on the road though he minds them not. His strength and spirit are great, but his experience little. You soon find him stumbling and struggling—it may be at the foot of an embankment, his master lying senseless far distant, and the fragments of a carriage still attached, against which, wild with grief and yet weak from wounds he struggles with impotent fury. You stop to find only a wreck, and the noble creature so admired, with broken limb, will lie bound along the road again.

Such is too often the end of pleasure—when the rein is given to it too soon, ere the mind has been disciplined to self-denial, and trained to habits of honest industry, strengthened by religious principle, that invulnerable armor, against which the shafts of evil cannot reach and never will prevail.

Do you see that young man walking before you dressed in the extreme of fashion? observe the swaggering step, and the little cane in his hand striking at nothing. Look at the really handsome face, how the cheek is flushed and the eyes are red with late hours

and indulgence in riotous living. To that youth the rein was given far too soon; he was practically taught that pleasure in the sense we have just been considering it, was all in all. Work was considered drudgery—industry vulgar—indulgence every thing. Allow me to introduce you to him that you may hear him talk. The poor man knows nothing beyond an affected drawl and the polite conventionalisms of what he calls good society. He can speak of the last party, and criticise the ladies, or their faces; he can talk of the coming boat race, or it may be of the merits of a popular actress at a popular theatre. He is learned in the qualities of the different kinds of wine, and has their names at his finger-ends. He will descant largely on the qualities of dogs and horses—and he considers himself a fine gentleman, looking down on it may be on his father and his father's friends—as rather low—but at least, as altogether too slow for his taste. What is the end—the almost invariable end of this? Is it true happiness? No, the very reverse. It is like the young horse while he kept the middle of the road, and before he floundered into the terrible pit-fall. A too indulgent parent laid down the reins out of a foolish affection, or a more foolish vanity, and when he would resume them they are beyond his control. The old man now mourns vainly after his lost son; he sees those means for which he toiled, night and day, during long years, squandered in spite of him, in crime and folly. His dreams of ambition are at an end; he descends into the grave with a broken heart, and the votary of pleasure follows him in a few years—a spendthrift and a pauper. This is too frequently the round of a life of pleasure. Let us, my young friends, guard ourselves against it, as our most dangerous enemy. Are you a school boy or a student, or an apprentice, in the heyday of youth? Think of pleasure not as the great object of life, but as the very occasional relaxation from appointed duty. Recollect that its steps are dangerously downwards—that its folds, like the touch of affection, are at first soft and downy, but at last the chains are adamant, cold, hard, and relentless. Indeed, it is generally far more dangerous to have too many friends than too few. Look to that hall of learning. Who is it that often carries away the highest honors for scholarship? Open your eyes and look well around you at the young aspirants after future fame. The professor rises and taking up the coveted honor in his hand, calls out a name. You watch to see who will obey the summons. Is it that well combed youth, with faultless necktie and fashionable air; the mother's darling and the delight of evening parties? No, it cannot be, though while he twitches his little riding switch nervously in his hand, it is evident he would like to be the fortunate one. But here as almost every where else, fortune favors