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SINCERITY.

Sincerity is in words what honesty is in deeds—the best policy. The want of it—insincerity—arises from many sources in the human character. In some it springs from a love of concealment and intrigue. In others it is caused by a dread of consequences which they suppose would result from a disclosure of the truth. In others it arises from a false love of approbation—the flattering of others seeming to them a sure way of gaining their object.

To the first of these classes all that can be said is, that they possess a feature of character which they ought to keep in check; as if indulged, it cannot fail to procure them contempt, and frustrate the views which they hope to realize.

To the second class we would say, that, like all cowards, they are apt to miscalculate the supposed danger. They will allow that to incur a considerable danger to escape a small one, can only be the mark of an imbecile mind. In most circumstances the danger of telling the truth can be calculated with success; but no one can tell what mishaps are to ensue from either saying what is false or suppressing what is true. In general, the straight-forward course only threatens us with a slight loss of the respect of others, which the majesty of sincerity is almost sure immediately to restore; but what an awful responsibility we incur by undertaking to endure the miseries by which we are to be overpowered at the moment when it is discovered that we are not only guilty of the fault, but have destroyed our honour in a vain endeavour to conceal it. Timid persons of this kind often imagine there is danger where there is none, and act the hypocrite for nothing, humbling themselves by a violating sense of doing what is mean and

wrong, when a candid and conscientious course would give them that approbation which sincerity never fails to command.

Insincere discourse towards others, for the sake of gaining approbation, is so contemptibly foolish, that they must be weak indeed who are guilty of it. All false acts for obtaining the respect and admiration of others, are labour in vain, and create contempt in the discerning. Insincerity is much more liable to be detected than may be imagined, if not by the immediate object, at least by some other person.

There is a kind of insincerity which must not be overlooked. It is the abuse of innocent jesting. Some give themselves up so entirely to an ironical and bantering kind of discourse, full of whimsical slang, that their real sentiments are at length buried beneath a mass of rubbish. Persons of this kind live in a perpetual masquerade, and grow old with the rattle in their hands; aiming at no higher gratification than that of being laughed at.

In the indulgence of every kind of dissimulation, in whatever circumstances, there is much danger, and cannot be carried into effect without injury to virtue. To all who may be disposed by nature or "evil communications" to the vice of insincerity, we would not only represent the obvious disadvantages which follow the practices of vice, but also the great advantages which accrue from the opposite virtue. No one can estimate the vast number of evils which afflict society on account of the necessity of being guarded against possible insincerity, or the happiness which would attend the world if truth prevailed more generally; without feeling that he cannot practise a virtue more useful to his kind, or accord to any fellow creature greater praise than to say that he is sincere. But besides the lustre with which we are invested by the practice of sincerity, there is the comfort of the still brighter and more blessed light which it kindles in our own bosoms. He who is conscious of sincerity can scarcely know fear.

OLD TREES.

A chestnut tree is now growing on the side of Mount Etna, in Sicily, the trunk of which is hollow, and is 180 feet in circumference; one hundred horses can be sheltered at once within its interior. There is a walnut tree near Balaklava, in the Crimea, that is at least a thousand years old. The cedars of Lebanon are the remnants of the forest from which Solomon built the Temple more than 3,000 years ago. There are oaks now growing in England which were planted before the Norman conquest. The yew trees are still older. One in the churchyard of Braburn, in Kent, is now more than 3,000 years old. The same cypress which sheltered the troops of Fernando Cortez, in Mexico, is standing now, and others are there like it, which are 4,000 years of age. The mammoth pines of California are the most wonderful trees in the world, growing 400 feet high, and attaining a circumference in proportion. These trees are two or three thousand years old. One of them required five men twenty days to bore it full of pump auger holes, the only way to fell it, and then it was so nicely poised that it stood till the same men spent two days more in driving wedges with a battering ram into one side of the cut to topple it over. The expense of cutting it down was \$550. It is by no means improbable that some of the olive trees near Jerusalem are the same that stood there when the Saviour was on the mount and in the garden.

Family Department.

We had better study how to bear actual misfortune, than perplex ourselves about that which may possibly befall us.

A farmer returning home in his wagon, after delivering a load of corn, is a more certain sign of national prosperity than a nobleman riding in his carriage to the opera.

To be angry about trifles is mean and childish, to rage and be furious is brutish, and to maintain perpetual wrath is akin to the practice and temper of devils; but to prevent or repress rising resentment is wise and glorious, manly and divine. — WATTS.