

A boy once shot an arrow into the air. So lofty was its flight, he lost sight of it in the clouds, and failed to detect the place of its descent. Long time he searched in vain around the meadow, and at last went home mourning the loss of his arrow.— Years passed away. The boy became a man. After many wanderings, he revisited the haunts of his boyhood. Walking around the meadow, he gazed upon a venerable oak, whose wide spreading branches had frequently sheltered him, in his boyhood, from the rays of the sultry sun.— Full of old memories, he stood until his eye rested upon a feather which protruded from a hollow in the tree. He drew it forth, and with it the identical arrow which years before he mourned as lost.

And is it not thus with the efforts of God's children? They speak in the ears of sinners, they bestow a tract, they utter an exhortation, or, if in the ministry, preach a sermon. They strive to watch the flight of their shaft. Vain endeavour! They cannot track it as it enters the mysterious regions of the mind; and they too often foolishly deem it lost. But it is not so.— It has done its work; and either in the future years of time, or in eternity, that effort, like the long lost arrow, shall come back to the bosom of its owner, bringing with it a blessing, even the reward of a duty faithfully performed.

It is said of the Methodist, Dr Coke, that while journeying in America, he once attempted to ford a river. But his horse lost his foothold and was carried down the stream. The Doctor narrowly escaped drowning by clinging to a bough which overhung the river-side. A lady in the vicinity gave him entertainment in his distress; sent messengers after his horse; and did him much kindness. When he left her roof, he gave her a tract!

For five years the good Doctor toiled on in the cause of God in England and America. Whether his tract had been destroyed, or had pierced a human heart, he knew not—nay, he had forgotten his gift. But one day, on his way to a conference, a young man approached him and requested the favour of a brief conversation. "Do you remember, sir, being nearly drowned in——river some five years ago?"

"I remember it quite well!" replied the Doctor.

"Do you recollect the widow lady, at whose house you were entertained, after escaping from the river?"

"I do, and never shall I forget the kindness she showed me."

"And do you also remember giving her a tract, when you bade her farewell?"

"I do not; but it is very possible I did so."

"Yes, sir, you did leave a tract. That lady read it, and was converted. She loaned it to her neighbours, and many of them were converted too. Several of her children were also saved. A society was formed, which flourished to this day."

This statement moved the Doctor to tears. But the young man, after a brief pause, resumed saying:

"I have not quite told you all; I am her son. That tract led me to Christ. And now, sir, I am on my way to conference to seek admission as a travelling preacher."

Thus did the good Dr Coke find his arrow in an unexpected hour! And thus will our shafts come back to us all in due season. Courage, therefore, drooping friend! Weep not over any apparent want of success! But as you have learned to labour, so also must you learn to wait.— Only see to it that you toil on in faith, and wait in hope!

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

My son, about eighteen, had left the family-circle one evening to attend a meeting in the public hall. When he reached there he found a man standing at the door, with a table before him, selling tickets. A ball is to be held here-to-night, said he, and here are tickets, so much for a gentleman and lady. Come young man are you going in?

'Yes, sir,' said he, 'I am going in, but not to attend a ball. I never go to balls. I am going to the third story to attend a prayer-meeting.'

In an instant the tickets were dropped; and the vendor, looking into the young man's face, said with tears in his eyes, 'A prayer-meeting! Yes that is where I ought to go.— Young man, come out on the sidewalk; I must say a few things to you.'

He seemed to be in agony while he told the young man that he once went to prayer-meetings; that he thought at one time his heart was changed; that his mother was left a widow when he was a child, and though she was poor, she sent him to school, praying that he