

bosom? Have you not noticed it in the house and by the way—at the fireside and in the place of business? And have you not felt that pleasant words are among the “charities that sweeten life?” Ah! yes, and their influence has come over your own soul. Not long since, when you went bending to the earth, oppressed, and weary with life’s manifold sorrows—when dark clouds hovered over you, and blackness of darkness covered you—when you are ready to yield in despondency the pursuit of happiness, and give yourself up to unmitigated gloom—when no object of life seems desirable, and even the friendships of earth were worthless in your eyes—when you would fain have passed the companion of your childhood unnoticed, as you met him in the way—oh! you can tell how, in such an hour, the sound of a cheerful voice, one pleasant word, has dispelled the gloom, and given you to the world again—a man—a hopeful, trusting man. You can tell us how like an angel-whisper was the kind inquiry of that companion, and how the tone of cheerful sympathy sent the dark clouds rolling from our sky, and, revealing the bright light of day, showed you that earth is not all a wilderness, nor man a being utterly deserted to wretchedness.

Or, when you have come from the counting-room or the office, careworn and weary—when your brow has been furrowed and your thoughts perplexed—when troubles of the present and anxieties for the future have crowded every peaceful feeling from your heart, and when you almost dreaded to return to your own fireside, lest the sight of dear ones there should increase your distress—tell us what has been the influence of pleasant words at such time? Tell us how that, ere you open your door, the sound of glad voices reached your ear, and as you entered, how the troubles of your soul were laid to rest, and cares for the present and for the future fled before the pleasant words of your smiling children and the gentle greeting of your wife.

Or, when the ire of your spirit has been roused, and indignant feelings have reigned supreme in your breast—when the angry threat was just rising to your lips, or the malignant wish about to burst from your heart—what mighty spell caused the storm so suddenly to subside, and spoke the turbulent waves so quietly to rest? Was it the whisper of a pleasant word that restored calmness to your tempest-tossed soul? Did the soft answer turn away your wrath?

Reader, we might write a volume on this delightful influence. Go where we will, abide where we may, we feel its power. In every place we find some, who have but to speak, and gloom, unbidden, unwelcome guest, departs in haste, and the raging waves of passion are hushed, as by His voice, who once said, “Peace, be still.”

But they are few. Among the multitudes of earth how small the number who habitually, and from principle, speak pleasantly. You have met them. Now and then they have crossed your path, and I doubt not your whole soul has blessed them, as it ought, for the words which were balm to your wounded spirit. And did you not wish all were like them? Did you not feel the earth would be a paradise indeed, if all the tones of that matchless instrument, the human voice, were in harmony with the kind thoughts of a thoroughly kind heart?

But, friend, while you thus wished, did you resolve to add one to their number? Did you determine to imitate their example? Would I could persuade you that it is your duty so to do—that henceforth you should make it a study. You think it a small matter, requiring little effort. But I assure you it might cost you many a struggle ere you should learn to speak in pleasantness to all whom you might chance to meet, even in one short day; and if you accomplish it, perhaps it would be a better day’s work than ever yet you did, and you might lay your head on the pillow of rest at night with feelings akin to those of spirits around the throne.

Oh! learn this art yourselves, all ye who have felt its kindly influence from others. Speak pleasant words to all around you, and your path shall ever be lighted by the smiles of those who welcome your coming and mourn your parting footsteps.

Mother, speak pleasantly to the little ones who cluster around you, speak ever pleasantly, and be assured that answering tones, of joy, and dispositions formed to constant kindness, shall be your reward.

Sister, brother, friend—would you render life all one sunny day? Would you gather around you those who will cheer you in the darkest hour? Let the law of kindness rule your tongue, and your words be pleasant as the “dew of Hermon, as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion.”

Christian, follower of Him who is passed into the heavens—heir of immortal glory—would you honor the Lord who bought you—would you show yourselves worthy the crown that awaits you, and the society in which you expect soon to mingle? Strive to catch the tones which gladden that celestial city to which you haste. No discord mars those tones. No discontent nor fretfulness mingles with the sounds which by faith we hear. Would you prove that, beyond a doubt, you belong to that company—that you will not be a stranger there, when you have laid aside the vestments of mortality! Then

imitate them in this thing. Go—from this hour speak to those whom you meet, as you would had you already taken your place among the happy ones on high, and, believe me, your Christian character shall rapidly improve; and you may hope to win many a soul to love and seek the religion which can so transform the spirit, and so rule the lips, that, amid all the vexations of this vexing world, no sound shall proceed from them but such as angels might delight in, and even He, whose name is Love, shall always approve!—*British Mothers’ Journal*.

4. LORD NELSON’S KIND HEART.

Lord Nelson, when forced to see men whipped on board of the ship, ascended to the deck precipitately, read rapidly, and in an unagitated voice, the rules of the service, and then cried:—“Boat-swain do your duty.” “Admiral, pardon.” Lord Nelson would then look at his officers; all keeping silence, he would say: “What! not one of you, gentlemen, not one has pity upon that man or my sufferings? Untie the man; my brave fellow on the day of battle remember me.” It was very rarely that the sailor thus rescued by his admiral did not distinguish himself at a later period. One day a man was going to be whipped. He was a marine. A beautiful young girl sprang through the crowd of soldiers; she fell on her knees before Nelson, and seized his hand. “Pardon, your honor,” said she, “pardon, he will never be guilty again!” “Your face,” said the admiral, “answers for his future good conduct. Untie the man; he who has such a beautiful creature as this for a friend, cannot be a bad man.” This marine afterwards became a lieutenant.

5. THE NOBLE EARL AND THE HONEST FARMER.

A farmer once called on the late Earl Fitzwilliam to represent that his crop of wheat had been seriously injured in a field adjoining a certain wood, where his lordship’s hounds had during the winter frequently met to hunt. He stated that the young wheat had been so cut up and destroyed that in some parts he could not hope for any produce. “Well my friend,” said his lordship, “I am aware that we have done considerable injury; and if you can produce an estimate of the loss you have sustained, I will repay you.” The farmer replied, that anticipating his lordship’s consideration and kindness, he had requested a friend to assist him in estimating the damage, and they thought, as the crop seemed quite destroyed, £50 would not more than repay him. The Earl immediately gave him the money. As the harvest, however, approached, the wheat grew, and in those parts of the field which were most trampled, the corn was strongest and most luxuriant. The farmer went again to his lordship, and being introduced, said, “I am come, my lord, respecting the field of wheat adjoining such wood.” His lordship immediately recollected the circumstance. “Well, my friend, did not I allow you sufficient to remunerate you for your loss?” “Yes, my lord, I find that I have sustained no loss at all, for where the horses had most cut up the land the crop is the most promising, and I have, therefore, brought the £50 back again.” “Ah!” exclaimed the venerable Earl, “this is what I like; this is as it should be between man and man.” He then entered into conversation with the farmer, asking him some questions about his family—how many children he had, etc. His lordship then went into another room and returning presented the farmer with a cheque for £100, saying, “Take care of this, and when your eldest son is of age, present it to him, and tell him the occasion that produced it.” We know not which to admire the more, the benevolence or the wisdom displayed by the illustrious man; for, while doing, a noble act of generosity, he was handing down a lesson of integrity to another generation.—*British Workman for September*.

6. TRUTHFULNESS AND ITS REWARD.

Two country lads came at an early hour to a market town, and arranging their little stands sat down to wait for customers. One was furnished with fruits and vegetables of the boy’s own raising, and the other with clams and fish. The market hours passed along, and each little merchant saw with pleasure his stores steadily decreasing, and an equivalent, in silver bits, shining in his little money cup. The last melon lay on little Harry’s stand, when a gentleman came by, and placing his hand upon it said—

“What a fine large melon; I think I must have this for my dinner. What do you ask for it my boy?”

“The melon is the last I have, sir; and though it looks very fair, there is an unsound spot on the other side,” said the boy, turning it over.

“So there is,” said the man; “I think I will not take it.” “But,” he added, looking into the boy’s open countenance, “it is not business-like to point out the defects of your fruits to your customers?”