

"I KNOW A THING OR TWO."

"MY dear boy," said a father to his only son, "you are in bad company. The lads with whom you associate indulge in bad habits. They drink, smoke, swear, play cards, and visit theatres. They are not safe company for you. I beg you to quit their society."

"You needn't be afraid of me, father," replied the boy, laughingly; "I guess I know a thing or two. I know how far to go and when to stop."

The lad left his father's house twirling his cane in his fingers, and laughing at the "old man's notions."

A few years later, and that boy, grown to manhood, stood at the bar of a court, before a jury which had just brought in a verdict of guilty against him for some crime in which he had been concerned. Before he was sentenced he addressed the court, and said, among other things: "My downward course began in disobedience to my parents. I thought I knew as much as my father did, and I spurned his advice; but as soon as I turned my back on my home temptation came upon me like a drove of hyenas, and hurried me into ruin."

Mark that confession, ye boys who are beginning to be wiser than your parents! Mark it, and learn that disobedience is the first step on the road to ruin. Don't take it!

HOW TO KEEP YOUR TEMPER.

SKIN in a letter to young girls says: Receive the thing that is provoking or disagreeable to you, as coming directly from Christ's hand; and the more it is like to provoke you, thank him for it the more, as a young soldier would his general for trusting him with a hard place to hold on the rampart. And remember that it does not in the least matter what happens to you—whether a clumsy school-fellow tears your dress or a shrewd one laughs at you, or the teacher does not understand you. The one thing that does matter is that none of these things should vex you.

"Say to yourself each morning, just after your prayers, 'Whose forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple.' This is exactly and completely true, meaning that you are to give all you have to Christ to take care of it for you. Then, if he doesn't take care of it, of course you know it wasn't worth anything. And if he takes anything from you, you know you are better without it. You will not, indeed, have to give up houses and lands, or boats or nets, but you may, perhaps, break your favorite tea-cup or lose your favorite tumbler, and might be vexed about it, but for this second Saint George's precept."

SINGLE TEMPTATION.

WELL, each boy has his own Temptation—different in different cases, but always some one thing which keeps coming back and back—back and back, day after day till he is tired and sick. What though he score off all the other balls, if this one takes him? It's not new sins that destroy a man; it's the drip, drip, drip of an old one.

"Have you ever heard of the castle that was taken with a single gun? It stood on the Rhine, and its walls were yards thick, and the old knight who lived in it laughed when he saw the enemy come with only a single cannon. But they planted the cannon on a little hill, and all day long they loaded and fired, and loaded and fired, without ever moving the muzzle an inch. Every shot struck exactly the same spot on the wall, but the first day passed and they had scarcely scratched the stone. So the old knight drank up his wine cup, and went to his bed in peace. Day after day the cannonade went on, and the more they fired the louder the knight laughed, and the more wine he drank, and the sounder he slept. At the end of a week one stone was in splinters; in a month the one behind it was battered to powder; in ten months a breach was made wide enough for the enemy to enter and capture the castle. That is how a boy's heart is most often taken. If I had any advice to offer anybody I should say, Beware of the slow sins—the old recurring Temptation, which is powerful, not so much in what it is or what it does *once*, but in the awful patience of its continuance. It is by the ceaseless battery of a commonplace Temptation that the moral nature is undermined and the citadel of great souls won."—Prof. Drummond.

A TEMPERANCE FABLE.

THE rats once assembled in a large cellar to devise some method of safely getting the bait from a steel trap which lay near, having seen numbers of their friends and relatives snatched from them by its merciless jaws. After many long speeches and the proposal of many elaborate but fruitless plans, a happy wit, standing erect, said: "It is my opinion that, if with one paw we can keep down the spring, we can safely take the food from the trap with the other." All the rats present squealed assent. Then they were startled by a faint voice: and a poor rat, with only three legs, limping into the ring, stood up to speak. "My friends, I have tried the method you propose, and you see the result. Now let me suggest a plan to escape the trap: *Let it alone.*"—Anon.