

concealed," or can be. Not one of you can go through life, all the way, with the reputation and character of a good scholar, if you are not really such. Things will be constantly occurring to reveal you, and society will not be long in ascertaining your precise height and depth—your solid contents and superficial dimensions. In the same way, you cannot pass for what you are not in respect to your actual moral character; somehow or other you will come to find yourself weighed and measured. You will pass among your fellows for what you are worth, and for nothing more: if you are worthless, the world will soon make the discovery, and it will let you know that it has made it. Depend upon it, the best way to be thought good is to be good; the surest mode of being bad in reputation, is to have a character.

If at this moment I could gather together here all the pupils that have ever been located within these walls; if I could summon them from wheresoever they sojourn, and cause them to surround you in visible forms, and thus show you exactly what they really are, it would be a most affecting and instructive spectacle. Many, probably, would have to rise from their graves; of these some would appear as spirits of light—some, it is to be feared, with the awful aspect of lost souls. Others would be brought from the ends of the earth and the isles of the sea—from under ancient dynasties and new republics—from continents and colonies of the other hemisphere. Of these, some would be found to be honourably engaged in commercial enterprise; some to have been driven from their fatherland by folly or misfortune; some to have gone voluntarily, forth as ministers and missionaries, the highest form and office of humanity. Of those that would come from the metropolis, and from the towns and cities of our country, how great would be the number, how varied the pursuits, how different in their tastes, habits, and character, how changed in appearance, perhaps in opinions, sympathy, belief, from what they were when, in this scene, as little boys, they plied their tasks or bounded in the play-ground, or knelt in prayer! Some would come with university honours and literary reputation, some as presbyters of the Established Church, some as the guides and bishops of our own. Many would be here, there can be no doubt, who have passed through life, and are passing through it, with honourable characters and spotless reputation; many who are enjoying the fruits and rewards of steadiness and industry; and many besides, who, adding to their virtue, faith, and following on their religious training, are known and esteemed as religious men and adorn the community in which they move. Pleasant would it be to look upon the countenance of such men—men of intelligence, virtue, and religion; pleasant for you to hear their words of encouragement, and their united testimony to the advantages of learning, the worth of goodness, the possibility of securing, and the satisfactions flowing from the friendship of God!

While such as these might allure and attract you toward holiness and heaven, there would be some others whose career and appearance would operate upon you in another manner; whose ruined characters and blighted prospects, debilitated health, reckless habits, wretchedness, and shame, would alarm and deter you from following their courses, and move your hearts by pity and terror. Some of these, perhaps, when at school, were gay and buoyant, loved by their associates, and worthy to be loved; they entered life with high hopes and bright prospects; they were the pride of their parents; everything was done for them to secure and facilitate their advancement and success: with all this, they have come to what I have described—a ruin and a wreck. If such could speak, they would probably tell you that they fell from not having a fixed, settled, and serious aim in life; that they gave themselves up to the satisfactions of the moment, whatever they might be; passed thoughtlessly from pleasure to pleasure; cared for nothing but immediate enjoyment, having no idea of living for any great or honourable purpose: thus wasting their talents and squandering time, they easily proceed from folly to vice, till they found themselves utterly and irretrievably ruined. But, instead of fancying what they might say, I will tell you what actually was said by a man of good abilities and finished education, who thus wasted life, and saw his error when too late. I refer to Sir Francis Delaval, who, when he was on his death-bed, sent for Mr. Edgeworth, and thus addressed him:—"Let my example warn you of a fatal error into which I have fallen. I have pursued amusement, instead of turning my ingenuity and talents to useful purposes. I am sensible that my mind was fit for greater things than any of which I am now, or was ever supposed to be, capable. I am able to speak fluently in public, and I

have perceived that my manner of speaking has always increased the force of what I said; upon various important subjects I am not deficient in useful information; and, if I had employed half the time and half the pains in cultivating serious knowledge which I have wasted in exerting my powers upon trifles, instead of dissipating my fortune and tarnishing my character, I should have become a useful member of society and an honour to society. Remember my advice, young man. Pursue what is useful to mankind. You will satisfy them, and, what is better, you will satisfy yourself."

Such was the melancholy close of a sinful course. God looked that any of the bright eyes that are now before me, glistening with the dew of their young life, and sparkling with the light of innocence and joy, should come to be dimmed with regrets like these! Nay, God forbid that any of you, my dear boys, should neglect to learn the important lesson, that what formed the highest object of this dying man's ambition and desire, even if attained, however it might really "satisfy" the world, ought not always to "satisfy yourselves." The best that he wished he had lived to and aimed at, is short of the best that you should pursue. God is to be satisfied as well as "mankind." However the one may be content with virtue, the other requires piety and faith. He demands character founded on religion—"usefulness" flowing from love to himself. Your best doings will be imperfect; you need mercy to pardon sin, the Holy Spirit to implant principles of heavenly strength, grace to renew and sanctify the heart, the atonement of Christ believed, trusted in, pleaded in prayer, as the source of hope and the ground of acceptance. "Seek first the kingdom of God." "Study to show yourselves approved unto Him." "Serve him with reverence and godly fear." Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." "See that ye neglect not the great salvation." "Flee, also, youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Pursuing a course of holy action and religious youthfulness, you will come to know the truth of the memorable words of one of our devout and illustrious ancestors.—"You have been accustomed," said Phillip Henry to a friend standing by his bed-side as he was about to die, "you have been accustomed to note the last words of dying men; these are mine.—*A life spent in the service of God is the happiest life upon earth.*"

"Behold the happy man!

"I have watched him from his infancy, and seen him in the grasp of death.

"He knelt beside his cradle, and his mother's hymn lulled him to sleep.

"In childhood he loved holiness, and drank from the fountain-head of peace."

"Wisdom took him for her scholar, guiding his steps in purity.

"He lived unpoluted by the world; and his young heart hated sin.

"Thus did he walk in happiness, and sorrow was a stranger to his soul.

"He put his hand with constancy to good, and angels knew him as a brother.

"And the busy satellites of evil trembled as at God's ally.

"He bent his training to religion, and religion was with him to the last:

"For I saw him after many days, when the time of his release was come,

"And I longed for a congregated world, to behold a dying saint.

"As the aloe is green and well-liking till the best summer of its age,

"And then hangeth out its golden bells to mingle glory with corruption.

"As a meteor travelleth in splendour, and then bursteth in dazzling light,

"Such was the death of the righteous; his death was the same at his setting."*

—*Christian Witness.*

* Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy." First Series.