

A wise man in the East called a der-  
vish, in his wanderings, came suddenly  
upon a mountain, and he saw beneath  
his feet a smiling valley, in the midst of  
which there flowed a river. The sun  
was shining on the stream and the water,  
as it reflected the sunlight, looked pure  
and beautiful. When he descended, he  
found it was muddy, and the water ut-  
terly unfit for drinking. Hard by he  
saw a young man, in the dress of a shep-  
herd, who was with much diligence fil-  
tering the water for his flocks. At one  
moment he placed some of the water in  
a pitcher, and then, allowing it to stand,  
after it had settled he poured the clean  
fluid into a cistern.

Then in another place he would be  
seen turning aside the current for a  
little, and letting it ripple over the sand  
and the stones, that it might be filtered  
and the impurities removed. The der-  
vish watched the young man endeavor-  
ing to fill a large cistern with clear  
water. And he said to him: "My son,  
why all this toil? What purpose dost  
thou answer by it?"

The young man replied: "Father, I  
am a shepherd. This water is so filthy  
that my flock will not drink of it; and  
therefore I am obliged to purify it, little  
by little. So I collect enough in this way  
that they may drink; but it is hard  
work."

So saying, he wiped the sweat from  
his brow, for he was exhausted with his  
toil. "Right well hast thou labored,"  
said the wise man; "but dost thou know  
thy toil is not well applied? With half  
the labour thou mightst attain a better  
end. I should conceive that the source  
of this stream be impure and polluted.  
Let us take a pilgrimage together and  
see." They then walked some miles,  
climbing their way over many a rock,  
until they came to a spot where the  
stream took its rise.

As soon as they came near to it they  
saw flocks of wild-fowl flying away and

wild beasts of the earth rushing into the  
forest. These had come to drink and  
had soiled the water with their feet.  
They found an open well, which kept  
continually flowing; but, by reason of  
these creatures, which perpetually dis-  
turbed it, the stream was always turbid  
and muddy.

"My son," said the wise man, "set to  
work now to protect the fountain and  
guard the well, which is the source of  
this stream; and when thou hast done that,  
if thou canst keep these wild beasts and  
fowls away, the stream will flow of itself  
all pure and clear, and thou wilt have no  
longer need for thy toil." The young  
man did it; and as he labored the wise  
old man said to him: "My son, hear  
the word of wisdom. If thou art  
wrong, seek first to get thy heart cor-  
rect; for out of it are the issues of life,  
and thy life shall be pure when once thy  
heart is so."

In like manner, if we would get rid  
of pride, we should not proceed to ar-  
range our dress by adopting some special  
costume, or to qualify our language by  
using an outlandish tongue; but let us  
seek of God that he would purify our  
hearts from pride, and then assuredly, if  
pride is purged from the heart, our life  
also shall be humble. Make the tree good  
and then the fruit shall be good. Make  
the fountain pure, and the stream shall  
be sweet. Oh! that God might grant  
us all by his grace that our hearts may  
be kept with diligence, so that pride may  
never enter there, lest we be haughty in  
our hearts, and find that afterwards com-  
eth wrath.

III. This brings me to other point,  
which is the consequence of pride—des-  
truction; a fact which we can prove by  
hundreds of instances in scripture. When  
men have become proud, destruction has  
become upon them. See you yon bright  
angel chanting the loud anthem of praise  
before his Maker's throne? Can any-  
thing tarnish that angel's glory, rob him