

## Youth's Department.

## THE OBEIENT CHILD AN HONOUR TO HIS PARENTS.

All children are alike in many things—alike in their dependence, their transient pleasures—their quick and over-varying impulses; but they are not alike in docility, in obedience, in reverence, in truthfulness, in piety. I remark, therefore,

First—that cheerful obedience is a conspicuous trait in a pleasant child. Cheerful, in distinction from compulsory obedience; for an exacting tyranny in any household, is an evil as stupendous as an imbecile indulgence. That which is secured by frowns and stripes is not obedience, but forced submission—the overawed subjection of the weak to the will of the strong—the service of the bondman between the eye and lash of the master. I mean by the term, the constant and uniform recognition of this fact, that the parent is the divinely appointed conservator of the child—his governor and guardian—so bound to him by the bounds of love as to look, only for his good, both in the thwarting and gratification of his desires. The instincts of nature, the words of Holy Scripture, the maxims of experience and expediency, all unite in elevating the known will of the parent to the dignity of a fixed and sacred law; a law only to be evaded and broken, in extreme cases—and to observe this law cheerfully, to be obedient. While the years of dependence and immaturity last, this compliance is to be unreserved—for the parent must give direction to the child's thoughts and actions, and be in a measure answerable for them. No matter how remarkable the natural endowments, no matter how distinguished by precocity of temper or imagination, the order of precedence must not be reversed, the parental supremacy must not be overborne by the superior education or showy attainments of the child. God has attached to obedience no such limitations, and although son or daughter be a prodigy, praised and petted at school, the eternal law, Honour thy father and mother, stands unabrogated. It is proper that the young should be reminded of this, in an age when educational advantages are almost without limit. The stately academy of the present day may provoke invidious comparisons, when the humble structure in which the elders were taught is ushered into view; and the prodigality with which knowledge is dispensed through admirable text books, and accomplished teachers, may reflect derisively upon the scanty opportunities of a past generation. The child may perceive the difference,—may detect it daily by the hearthstone in some obsolete idea, or theory, or ungrammatical form of speech, and in pride or vain pretensions may be led to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. I repeat it, therefore—superior advantages and acquisitions alter in no respect the great law of subordination. The authority and counsels of the parent are still to be held supreme. It is not privilege or accuracy of learning that always bring wisdom. The soberness of age is generally wiser than the pert brilliancy and fluency of youth, while respect to a guiding will—a will ordained of God and not to be questioned—is absolutely indispensable to a right training for all the duties and demands of life.

But, as has been intimated, the obedience of a pleasant child will be a ready and spontaneous offering.—It will not be a sacrifice, forced out of him by overstrained prerogative, or rigorous compulsion, but rather the spontaneity of a loving, loyal heart. It will be a high sense of what is due from the offspring to the progenitor—a willing and cheerful consent to the known precepts and principles established at home. These, in rare instances, may be so faulty as to embarrass both the conscience and the obligations of the child—even then he is bound to be dutiful, while he discriminates between what he owes to his parent, and the misleading habits or sentiments which his parent may have adopted. Generally speaking, the voice of home is to follow and actuate him. He is to hear it and obey it, always and everywhere, in the house and by the way, when he goes out and when he comes in. I have recently met with an illustration which will more fully explain my meaning. Said a young boy to one who was enticing him into an avenue of shame, I promised my mother before I came to this city, that I would read my Bible and go to Church on Sunday. I promised her, when she wept over me at parting, that I would avoid bad company, and never enter the theatre, and I intend to keep my promise—for I love my mother; she is very kind to me, and I believe she is right. That was to honour a parent—that was obedience—the pure-hearted principle of a pleasant child, starting back in the recollection of a mother's words from the first eddies of the whirlpool of perdition.

And this elevated type of obedience has another quality beside, which I desire you to observe. It not only yields readily to each expressed and absolute command, but goes beyond and acts continually upon what is implied and expected under the parental rule. It anticipates the audible prohibition; it waits not for the check or caution, for the law once revealed is thenceforth written on the mind and heart. Knowing that to do right is the measure of this law, the constant aim will be to do right, whether it is expressly required or not. Parents lack the attribute of omnipresence. That belongs alone to God. They cannot be present in every place where their children are tempted to do wrong. They cannot always follow after their beloved ones with the voice of warning or remonstrance. Children, you have it in your power to elude observation in a thousand ways. Beneath the roof of home, and the ever watchful glance of father or mother, you may seem to tender an implicit and most commendable obedience. But is that all? I tell you it is but a fraction. When you go forth companionless and unobserved; when you are left to yourselves and to all the manifold enticements around you and within you—then it is that your obedience is put to the actual test, and therefore, it is then that each teaching the tone of home counsel and home example, the true child will decide, almost by intuition, what is right, and will be as much upon his guard against secret and unnoticed sins, as against those which, with "line upon line, and precept upon precept," he has been taught to avoid. He will not act one part to win approbation, and another to promote his own wicked thoughts and desires. He will not be one thing by the hearthstone, and another by the wayside: one thing in the school room, and another on the play ground: one thing when watched, and another thing when left only to the All Seeing Eye. No. The principle of obedience will be ever alive and manifest in his conduct. Under all circumstances, and in every place, he will strive to keep the commandments of God: to be truthful: to be kind: to govern his tongue and his temper: to avoid obscenity and profaneness—in a word, he will conform to the tenor of those instructions, which, like Timothy of old he has heard from his earliest years. And while doing so, the world looking on will say, This is a dear son—he is a pleasant child—an honour to his parents.—From "A Pleasant Child," a Sermon by the Rev. W. F. Morgan, Rector of Christ Church, Norwich, Conn.

## Selections.

## CONFLAGRATION OF CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL.

We have to announce the destruction of this edifice by fire on Wednesday morning. At about midnight the city was startled by the cry of "fire." This, we believe, was first raised by a man who observed the fire breaking out at one of the windows of the cathedral. The "monster" bell of the Church of Notre Dame rung out loudly the fire alarm a short time afterwards; and, with intermission, continued for some time.

At one time, however, the fire seemed to be subdued within the body of the church, a circumstance which may be accounted for by the peculiar construction of the building, which enabled it to steal unperceived from the place where it was first discovered to the roof. Between the plaster in the interior of the church and the stone walls, there was a framework of wood and an open space of about 9 inches. This space acted as a species of flue for the conveyance of the fire, by means of the wood work, to the roof, as we have said, unperceived until it had obtained such headway, as to render hope of subduing it quite out of the question, or even to afford time to remove anything of value from the church, except the painting over the communion table, which was a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's celebrated picture of the Last Supper.

Jets of fire began to show themselves in various places on the roof, burning embers here and there slowly fell from it, as sparks of fire sometimes fall from a rocket—bright circles of flame appeared on the tops of the Corinthian columns, twining among the leaves of their capitals—making it evident the old church had little time to stand—that its hours were numbered.—Many an association of the old times—at least for Montreal—rushed upon the mind. The church, it is true, was not exteriorly a model of architecture, but its interior was Corinthian, and it was a monument of the early struggles of the English Church in Lower Canada.

At this moment one thought of the splendid organ from which beautiful, solemn and thrilling strains had so many times proceeded for the public worship of

Almighty God, about to be silenced forever—the beautiful and impressive prayers so often offered up from the hearts of worshippers, in the simple Anglo-Saxon language of the Book of Common Prayer—one thought also of the dead who had worshipped there, as the eye rested on the monumental tablets around the walls. But short time was there for such thoughts as these; for the flames had done their stealthy part thoroughly well, and we had hardly reached the door, after a few minutes' gazing on the impressive scene before us, when the roof fell down with a tremendous crash, and buried everything in the church in one common ruin.

By this time the fire had made its way to the belfry, where it raged with fearful fury. The crowd which had gathered outside now became breathless with excitement; for it was evident the steeple could not long stand. Which way will it fall? was the natural question or thought of all. This steeple, it may be stated, was built of wood, covered with tin. The flames, as they burst through the belfry windows, hurled the blinds into the street, or on the surrounding buildings, with much force. Fiercely and after a noisy fashion did the flames do their work. They went roaring up the steeple, devouring all in their way.—The old clock riveted many an eye. On it went in the midst of the tumult around—tick, tick, tick, till the fire—fellow laborer with time in his work of destruction—reached it too; its own fate was come, its own hours numbered.

The night was beautifully fine. The moon shone out clearly and brightly, making the night nearly as light as the day. The snow was white beneath, the sky and the stars as well as the moon were bright above—so bright and so clear, that the flames scarce made any reflection—added nothing to the lightness. They belched out with furious rage, and lashed wildly round the doomed steeple, as they fiercely darted upwards, and twisted themselves into wild contortions. The red, lurid flames threw out a cloud of black smoke, which contrasted strangely with the silvery light of the moon. The firemen paused, and rested on their brakes, for it were idleness now to attempt to control the monster which had possession of the steeple, whose fall was momentarily looked for by the strained eyes of those around. It tottered for awhile, swayed to and fro, and at last toppled over and fell, a huge mass of fire, with a tremendous crash, prone upon the adjoining building, crushing through the roof with its ponderous bulk.

The clock struck for the last time at two o'clock! at twenty minutes past two the hands ceased to move and fell helplessly to a pendent position. It was twenty minutes more ere the steeple fell, the molten lead and other metal pouring down in the meantime in such volumes as to render it impossible to remain in its vicinity, except at the hazard of men's lives. The burning debris of the wood, too, literally paved the adjoining houses with living fire. As soon as water could be had these were deluged, and the attention of everybody was now directed to efforts to save Mr. Mussen's property. The word was passed to the firemen—"down with your brakes," and right gallantly did they and the men of the 39th obey the order. The excitement again grew tremendous. It was uncertain if men inside had not been hurt or slain (none received serious injury); it was far from certain if this house could be saved after being fired with so huge a torch, made up of a ton weight of burning wood and red hot metal. But now the full supply of water had come, and in fifteen minutes the firemen had won the victory. By four o'clock all was safe, and nothing was left of the church but four bare walls and a smouldering heap of embers and ashes inside.

Different opinions have been expressed with regard to the origin of the fire. It seems to us there can be no doubt that it had taken from the stoves or flues attached, and had been smouldering for some time between the ceiling and the walls.

Let us add, the Registers, Records, and Diocesan Library, are all safe, as well as the Communion service, table cloth, cushions, prayer-books, &c.

The insurance on Christ Church Cathedral, building, organ, clock, bell, and officers' salaries was about £17,500.

On Mr. Thomas Mussen's stock, the insurance was £19,000.—*Montreal Gazette*, Dec. 11.

HEATHEN IDEAS OF DEATH.—Death, the much dreaded enemy of our race, is looked upon with horror by the heathen of Africa: "Through fear of death," in the language of the Apostle, "all their lifetime is subject to bondage."

Though they believe in a future state of existence and have no fear of a coming judgement, they look