

tribe which believes the virtues of an enemy become the property of his destroyer, so that if a coward kills a brave man or a fool a wise one, the coward becomes brave, the fool full of wisdom. The tale-bearer imagines that in destroying another's reputation he raises his own; to show one is false proves him to be true, that in proportion to the character he destroys he is raised in public esteem.

But *we* are not blameless in this matter; tale-bearers would not be so flourishing but for *our readiness to receive scandal*. This is a strange and painful feature in human nature, shewing itself in many ways. If in a large company you say, "have you heard about Mr. Q?" instantly all is attention. "What is it?" is eagerly asked. "One wet day as Mr. Q was walking up the street he saw a poor fellow shivering in the rain, so he took off his overcoat and gave it to him." Instantly all interest dies from the faces of the listeners, a look of disappointment succeeds, blank silence follows, broken by the remark, "Oh! is that all!" Now if instead of this you had said Mr. Q was drunk, or beat his wife, or was bankrupt, the result would have been very different; eyes would have brightened, and tongues been loosened. And it is this propensity in human nature, which too often encourages the abominable tale-bearers.— And now in the last place we notice.

IV.—THE CURE OF TALE-BEARERS.

To the tale-bearer I would say: *try to gain more self-knowledge*. Look at your own feelings as keenly as your neighbours'. Examine your actions as closely as theirs, and you will soon cease to slander. The time you employ in discussing the mote in your neighbour's eye, will be better spent in detecting the beam in your own. Be as diligent to correct your own faults, as you are to discover others, and you will soon cease to go up and down as a tale-bearer, "and he that is without sin let him first cast a stone." Try to think of others as you wish them to think of you; speak of them as you desire them to speak of you; think the *best* of them. Jesus Christ acted in the belief that in the very worst and abandoned there was a spark of goodness. His constant aim was to get at this, so that by love and sympathy, he might cherish and make it grow. To this end He became a friend to publicans and sinners; He pitied those whom society cast out, and in His vast arms of love all the penitent outcasts found refuge. Will you try and imitate Him whom you profess to follow; seek after the good in them as diligently as you have sought after the evil; you will find the occupation pleasanter, and the reward