

world, and thus defy the command of Divine wisdom. Men will not starve in doing right; the promise is as sure they will be fed as that the sun will rise. One of the heart-stirring lines of an old song is—

"Whatever men *dare* they *can* do,"

and Paul says: "I *can* do *all* things through Christ, who strengtheneth me," and Christ says: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." The catechism, which some so earnestly desire to have their children taught, says, in answer to the question, "Is any man able to keep the commandments of God?" "No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed." But Christ says: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." *He* surely did not say these words in mockery; surely it *is* possible to keep His commandments. Then if we do not, it must be because we do not love Him, which in plain words is, we have not the *will* to keep them; in fact, we won't," not "can't," for the Word says: "His commandments are not grievous."

The commandments are generally contained in what are known as the ten commandments. Now, let us see. The first is supposed to be kept by all the Christian world, who, as a rule, would be shocked to be thought to worship more Gods than one. The second, too, is respected, or expected to be kept. These are personal matters, which are not much talked of or interfered with, but are generally understood to be accepted. Public opinion frowns down the breaking of the third, and so in respectable society we don't hear much literal swearing by God's name. The fifth, society demands at least a semblance of, though it might call for more with advantage. To break the sixth is to forfeit our life, though to break the seventh does not now involve the death penalty as in Jewish law, but metes out loss of position in all social life to women, while "society" condones the sin in men, and stamps its *false* "cannot" with a terrible rigour on even the aim to live a chaste life. If the eighth is broken, there is imprisonment, and the violation of the ninth is followed by fine or imprisonment, while the tenth, being more internal than external, man leaves to man's honour to keep. Now we see in this brief glance that men think it possible to keep all the commands (but the seventh), and so attaches penalties of one sort or other to the breaking of some of these laws. If they can be kept for men, why will we not keep them all in their highest, purest sense for God?

Very many men seem to have no fixed principle to guide them through life. There is one rule, we used to call "the golden rule," which points out a right and sure way in all difficulties: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." To do honestly as we would be done by would soon stop all evil doing; for no man, however bad, really wants anything but good to himself, and so if he keeps this law he will not do aught but good to his neighbour. To have the *will* to do this is to bring the beautiful abstraction into a living force; it is to keep all the commandments from love or will; it is to have the Kingdom of Heaven within us.

Now, some one leans o'er the ice-cold *douche* and shakes the head and smiles mournfully, and says "we *can't*." Then if we can't, the Bible is false, and there is no use even to strive after what is *right*, but only what is *pleasant* to the sensual man. But the truth is, we *can* if we *will*. Will power is what moves the world; for the will is the life, and if we will we can be full of the energy and vital fire that overcomes all evils, and so leave far behind us the feeble cry we "can't," as one of those words—

"Bearing endless desolation on its blighting wings."

In our first endeavours after right doing we will not see the fullest meaning of even the simplest command; but as our experience of life widens, every command has a deeper meaning for us, and involves a more thorough obedience, till depths and heights of love and wisdom open before us, more sublime than the fondest imagination ever pictured, and we hasten on our way, entranced with the beauty contained in what looked at first outwardly but a form of morals. Instead, then, of this death-breathing pestilence of "we can't" (because we won't), let us have the soul-stirring, heaven-inspiring, life-giving words as our motto: "We can," and in God's strength we *will*.

"Words are mighty, words are living,  
Serpents, with their venomous sting;  
Or bright angels crowding round us,  
With Heaven's light upon their wing."

*Simplicia.*

### BIGOTRY.

This vice may be defined as an inordinate attachment to any sect or party denomination or creed. This attachment may be also irrational. Our reason will, no doubt, often condemn us for taking the position we have taken, yet we continue thus to act in spite of her warnings. These illiterate feelings proceed very often from ignorance—culpable ignorance. A knowledge of the views or acts of another man, or body of men, can be always obtained with more or less completeness, and a man's remaining in ignorance of the views of others cannot excuse unkind or bigoted feelings towards them.

Bigotry proceeds also from natural hatred of truth. Men seem to prefer falsehood, at least partial falsehood. "A little untruthfulness," say they, "perfect honesty in opinion and action is unattainable." This is true, but while imperfection is the unhappy lot of man on this side of heaven, yet that imperfect state should always be improved. *Excelsior* should ever be man's motto. This state of mind is to be found in those who refuse to be convinced of the falsity of any ideas which they hold to be true, or the truth of any which they hold to be false. This absurd mental conservatism is often to be found.

Bigotry shews itself, too, in an unscrupulous use of means to advance men's views. The end—the party or personal platform of doctrine or action—justifies the employment of all means, good or bad, good if possible, but bad if necessary, to bring about the success of that platform. Persecution of a weak opponent, and detraction of a strong one, are means not to be despised by your bigot. This fearful evil carries with it many accompanying ills. Its effects are to be seen in the destruction of peace in families, communities and States. The imperious obligation of every man to do the greatest good to *all* his fellow-men is neglected by your bigot, who only thinks of the greatest advantage of himself or party.

Bigotry is the offspring of pride; liberality, of humility.

Bigoted feelings are found in ignorant men; liberal thoughts in wise heads.

The bigot spurns the counsels of others, while the liberal man is always ready to receive advice from every good and proper source. Bigotry is founded on hatred; liberality, on love.

The approach of bigotry may be likened to that of a terrible thunder and hail storm. The fields of golden grain, ripened and ready for the sickle, seem, as the dark clouds close around them, to be vocal with fear and apprehension, and then the clouds rush against each other, and the roaring thunder is heard, and the brilliant lightning is seen, and the pouring rain and destroying hail descend, the latter levelling to the earth the farmers' prospective wealth. Such a metaphor but poorly depicts the advent and effects of bigotry upon families and communities.

*Liberalis.*

### LEAVES.

Deep among forest-quietudes of green  
My steps have wandered, and about me now,  
In soft complexities of shade and sheen,  
On many a lavish-clad midsummer bough,  
The innumerable breezy leaves, above, around,  
Move with melodious and aerial sound.

I pause to look, in meditative mood,  
Where all their murmurous myriads richly throng,  
And think what touches of similitude,  
What dark or bright analogies belong  
(As bonds that Nature's mystic shuttle weaves)  
Between the lives of men and lives of leaves!

Some in the loftiest places burst their buds,  
And get the sun's gold kiss while they uncurl;  
They front the stars and the proud moon that floods  
Pure domes of limpid heaven with airy pearl.  
They see the damask of cool dawns; they gaze  
On smiles that light the lips of dying days!

And some in lowlier places must abide,  
And gain but glimpses, perishably dear,  
Of altering cloud and meadow glimmering wide,  
And the large lovely world beyond their sphere!  
And some have rare dew's thrill each thirsty stem,  
Or rarelier yet, a bird's wing brushes them!

And some amid their perfect emerald prime  
Are torn from nurturing bough at storm's caprice,  
And some turn old and sere before their time,  
And flutter down as if in glad release.  
And all to Autumn's bleak dismantling blast,  
Even all, inevitably yield at last!

But when I mark how some that once were fair,  
From edge to edge in flawless gloss arrayed,  
Must feel the worm's fang gnaw them through, like care,  
I seem to have dimly guessed why God has made  
So many tremulous leaves, for their frail parts,  
Wear, as they throb, the shapes of human hearts!

*Edgar Fawcett.*