

in the criminality of licentiousness, — in order that before they have run those lengths which there is reason to apprehend, before they have given full scope to enslaving passions, they may be induced to stop, and to reflect, and to impose a check upon unholy feelings, and, perhaps, by the blessing of God upon their exertions, enabled to change altogether the current of imagination and desire, and to yield their hearts to the constant influence of pure and worthy affections.

I know I do not urge the young to a generally easy task, when I urge them to watch over and regulate their thoughts and feelings. Those who have enjoyed the inestimable advantage of parents more attentively to the future welfare of their offspring than to their present gratification, and their own present enjoyment, and who, by the wise direction of parental care, have been early taught the habit of self-restraint, — who in small things have learnt to subdue their inclinations, — who can cheerfully give up an immediate pleasure in obedience to the directions of the beloved guardians of their early years, — they have the rudiments prepared for that control over their passions which will make their voice, if not unheard, at least not obeyed, — for that noble, dignified self-command which will make the sacrifice of inclination comparatively easy and certain, whenever duty demands the sacrifice. — If this prudent self-control (which one who was dreadfully deficient in it pronounced to be “wisdom’s root,”) have not been cultivated, the difficulty will be much greater; but a strong sense of duty will sometimes well supply the deficiency. At any rate the work must be attempted, for the happiness of life, the happiness of eternity, greatly depends upon it.