

### A DEADLY SERPENT.

Some time ago a party of sailors visited the Zoological Gardens. One of them excited by the liquor he had taken, and as an act of bravado to his companions, took hold of a deadly serpent. He held it up, having seized it by the nape of the neck in such a way that it could not sting him. As he held it, the snake (unobserved by him) coiled itself around his arm, and at length it got a firm grasp, and wound tighter and tighter and was unable to detach. As the pressure of the snake increased the danger grew, and at length the sailor was unable to maintain his hold on the neck of the venomous reptile, and was compelled to loose it. What did the snake then do? It turned around and stung him and he died. So it is with the appetite of strong drink. We can control it at first, but in a little while it controls us. We can hold its influence in our grasp for awhile, so that it shall be powerless, but afterward "it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." — *Philadelphia Methodist.*

### THE WORK OF A MOMENT.

Did you ever write a letter, and just as you were finishing it let your pen fall on it, or a drop of ink blot the fair page? It was the work of a moment, but the evil could not be effectually effaced. Did you never cut yourself unexpectedly and quickly? It took days or weeks to heal the wound, and even then a scar remained. It is related of Lord Brougham, a celebrated English nobleman, that one day he occupied a conspicuous place in a group to have his daguerreo-type taken. But at an unfortunate moment he moved. The picture was taken, but his face was blurred.

Do you ask what application we would make of these facts? Just this:—"It takes a lifetime to build a character; it only takes one moment to destroy it." "Watch and pray," therefore, "that ye enter not into temptation." "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." — *Baptist Weekly.*

### THE DIFFERENCE.

A commonplace truism of Christian ethics is that right giving carries with it two blessings: one to the receiver; and another, and a greater one, to the giver; but however trite is this phrase, the truth

which it teaches can never become commonplace. An anecdote which is told of the late Professor Sophocles, of Harvard, by a Philadelphia gentleman of his acquaintance, provides a fresh illustration of this truth. Walking together, Professor Sophocles and his friend passed an organ-grinder on the street, and the Professor, seizing an opportunity when his friend appeared to be looking away, pressed some money into the musician's hand.

"I did not know that you gave alms to these fellows," said his companion, who had not been so unobservant as he appeared to be.

Professor Sophocles was confused for a moment. Then he said simply:

"I did it for my own sake—to keep my heart open." That simple sentence speaks eloquently for the reflex blessing of beneficence.

### WHILE THEY WENT TO BUY THE BRIDEGROOM CAME.

Deeply solemn to me and useful was the following *fit* lesson is still with me. What a speaking text too!

I had been for my holiday, and returned on the afternoon of a sultry day in August, thoroughly weary. I was preparing for a quiet hour, when a message arrived from a sick man with a request that I would visit him. It was a momentary temptation to postpone the visit till my hour of rest had been realized; but often since I have been thankful that in resistance to that suggestion I took my Bible and proceeded immediately to the house indicated.

My messenger had barely entered when I arrived. We were met on the threshold by a weeping woman, who uttered brokenly the appalling words, "Too late, sir, he's gone!"

"Why did you not send for someone before? I asked for the man had led a reckless life, and I was shocked to think he had gone to his account without hearing of Jesus' power to save.

"He would not hear of it," she cried, "until just now, and the messenger had hardly left the house when he died."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

To the extent that a profession of religion does not carry with it purity, chastity, truth—in a word, integrity of moral nature—it is an evil and not a good. — *Principal Fairbairn.*