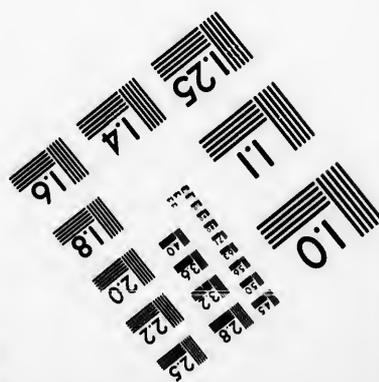
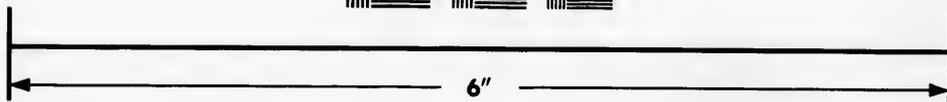
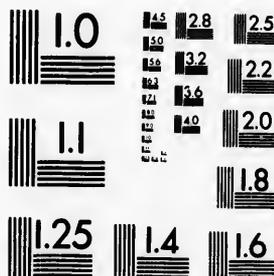


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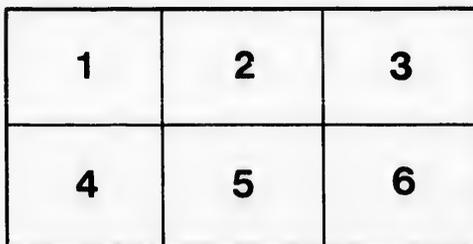
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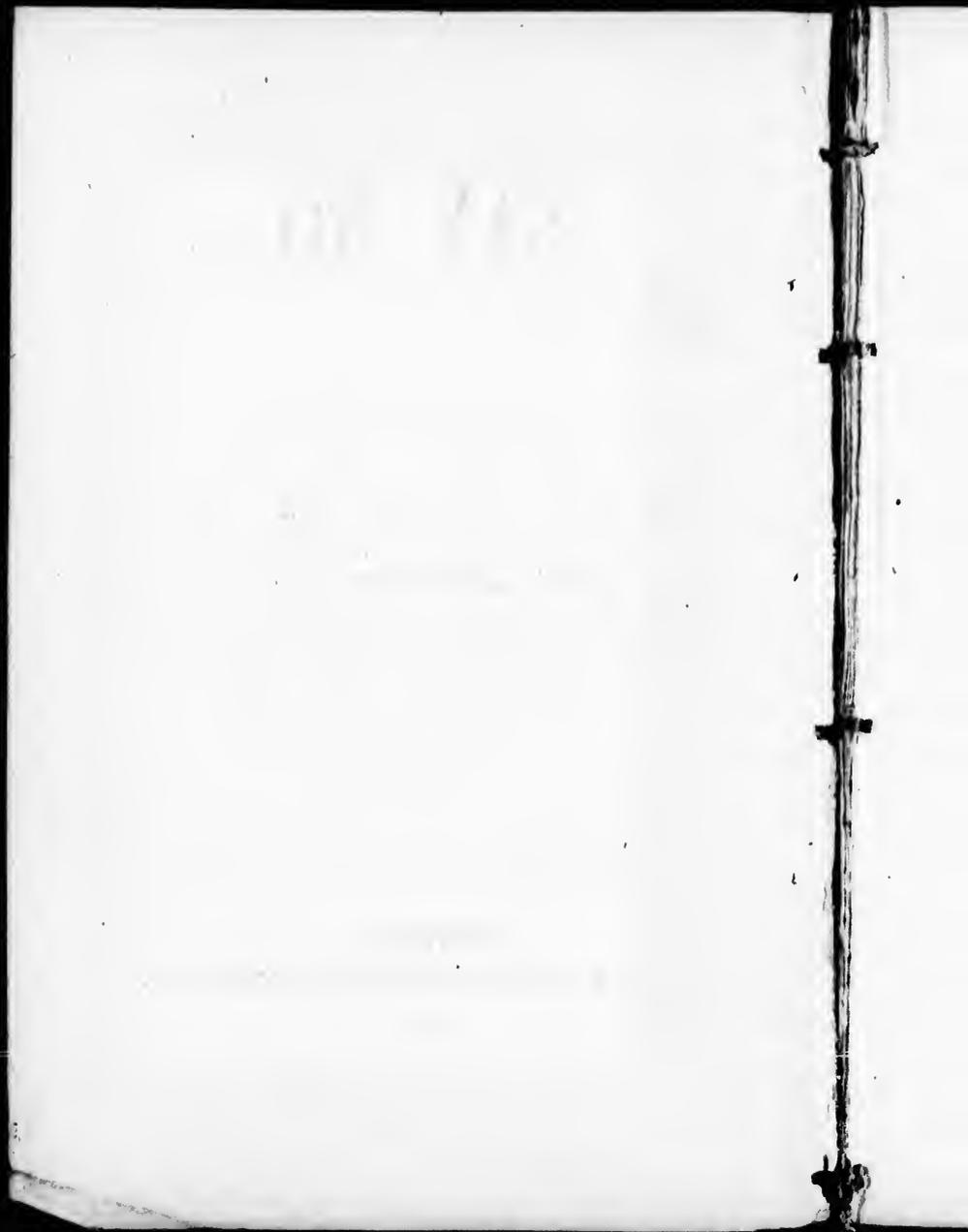
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SAY—NO.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH, YOUNG MEN
AND MAIDENS, HEARKEN !

I need not begin by asking how many of you wish to be happy. I take it for granted that you all do,—every one. You have one heart and one tongue for happiness. I never knew or heard of any, such as you, who did not desire to be happy; but I have known a great many who did not take the right way: who thought happiness was in the gratification of self will, and that it could not be found in endeavouring to obey their Christian parents, Sabbath School Teachers, and Ministers. Well, some of you may have got a wrong notion of it, and perhaps some of your parents, I am sure unwittingly, have done you harm by frightening you with what you call religion. I do hope none of you have parents who punish you for some fault, by making you learn some verses of the Bible, or some answers in the Catechism. You do not like the rod of correction; and certainly you will not love the

Bible the better, if it is made one. If any of your parents do this, ask them very earnestly, and very kindly, not to do it any more; and say to them, you would rather be punished some other way, than be made angry at that which is good. Tell them too, that you would like to be educated to read and learn the Bible as a pleasure, but never as a task.

Another thing, I hope your parents take care to avoid, and that is, frightening you with the minister, and threatening, when you are headstrong and naughty, they will tell him about it; so that when you see him, you expect a censure, rather than a smile. Oh, no, your minister does not wish you to be afraid of him, but rather that he be welcomed as your true friend, ever glad to see you happy, and to tell you how to be happier still. Our Lord Jesus loved little children, and little children loved Jesus. Your minister is to follow the example of Jesus toward you, and you should follow the example of those little children toward him. He would like you to be the happiest children in the world. No matter who tells you differently, never be afraid of him, and though you have been very naughty, and the older ones have gone astray in bad courses and with bad companions, always look

on your minister as one sure friend you have, who will be happy to advise you, and to encourage you to that which is good, and tell you and help you all he can, how to be happy.

But do you know that you often mistake pleasure for happiness? Do you know that there is often a great difference between them? Happiness springs from feeling and doing right, and is that which conscience, and the Bible, and God approve. Happiness is never lost, for it is a joy to remember for ever. Pleasure, real pleasure, is a twin sister to happiness, and they go hand in hand together, as God hath set them on the way. You remember those lines speaking of wisdom, or the Bible, or religion, which say:—

“She guides the young with innocence,
In pleasure’s paths to tread;”

And as the young grow older, and also grow better and better, then

“A crown of glory she bestows
Upon the hoary head.

According as her labours rise,
So her rewards increase;

Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.”

But there is what young people, and old

people, too, call pleasure, which is a mere momentary emotion like the plucking of the beautiful flower, but from that instant its bloom begins to fade and die. A man has what he calls pleasure in the theatre, but he would not like to die there. A man has happiness when he worships God in the church, and he would not be afraid to die thus and there. Pleasure cannot always stand reflection; happiness always can. Some of you, perhaps, have been so sinful as to play truant one day, or one afternoon from school, and you were so pleased with the amusement, or with the companion you had, and it was all very fine, and far better than being shut up at those lessons, but—you did not go home, and tell father and mother what you had been about;—you did not go home, and across the door-step with a right merry laugh, and run and say,—“I played truant today.” No, no. You did not do that, you were afraid to do it; and why? because you knew you had not done right. You had pleasure, you played truant to have pleasure, but you were afraid to tell the truth, and therefore you were not happy.

Still you will tell me that you desire to have pleasure; I know you do, but I am trying to

show you that much you call so is not good for you; It would hurt your mind, your heart, your soul, and make you deeply regret, maybe all your days, that you ever had anything to do with it. I wish you to have pleasure of the right kind, and just as much as you can possibly obtain. I am sure he has a cold eye who looks on you and grudges you your heartiest frolic of innocent glee; he has a little heart who cannot have sympathy with you in your youthful days; and he has a stern authority who would deny you your sports and gambols, which a kind Heavenly Father has implanted inclinations within you to seek for, and which he allows to the little lamb frisking on the meadow, to the bird that hops and sings on the spray, and even to the wolf's whelp playing in the forest, and to the tiger's cub having its enjoyment in the jungle. To tell you that you should not have pleasure, would be to say what is both unnatural and unscriptural. "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth." "Rejoice" always, though, as accountable to God: and let your "cheer" ever be such as you will not be afraid of on the judgment day.

I advocate for you pleasure that will make you happy, but then do not mistake what I mean. The ancient Roman and Greek children were taught a story like this, that there were three sisters of great beauty, who dwelt on the islands on the south coast of Italy, and who by their charms and music, attracted those who sailed through the narrow channels to come on shore; and they so adapted their songs of enticement according to the dispositions of the persons who listened—as the ambitious, or voluptuous, or covetous,—then got them in their power, lulled them to sleep in a false security, killed them, and afterwards devoured them. Only twice did ships' crews escape.

Once, Ulysses filled the ears of his men with wax; had himself bound securely to the mast, lest the temptation, when he came near, might be too strong for him, and commanded to steer straightly and steadily on. And once, again, when Orpheus, setting up his own music from his own voice, and his fingers sweeping the strings of the harp, prevented himself from hearing the songs of the sirens. By those fictions, the old poets meant to convey the moral that, often what seems to be so charming is but the temptation to ruin, and we can only find our safety in refusing to

hear. Always allow the better heart to have its own music of innocence and contentment and then the seductions of evil cannot effect us. A very similar story was wont to be told of a beautiful lady, who took up her abode at a little distance from the highway ; and whenever she saw a traveller, began to sing most lovely songs. The stranger became fascinated, and desired to be near, and nearer. He left the highway, on a path that led through most beautiful flowers, and was so pleased with the sights, and sounds, and smells, till, all at once, he plunged headlong over a concealed precipice ; and then she ceased her song, and the charmer became the fury. It means temptation, unholy pleasures that lead from virtue and God, to vice and destruction.

Take Ulysses' plan, and when any one would advise you to do wrong, put wax in your ears. Or take Orpheus' plan, to have a singing happy heart and happy life, and then you do not want to have or to hear anything better. A British nobleman, a fine youth he was, became a celebrated poet, but also a bad man,—determined to have a life of pleasure, as he called it. He was to live to please himself and not to please God ; and so he spent his means, his character and health, and with wasted time, wasted talents,

wasted everything, before he reached half the ordinary age of man, wrote in this most melancholy strain respecting himself.

“My days are in the yellow leaf.

The fruits, the flowers of love are gone ;
The worm, the canker, and the grief,
Are mine alone.”

That was Lord Byron. With pity, we say, “poor Lord Byron !” Better be humble and poor and good, than be high and rich and wicked. The happy life is in virtue and piety, and the poorest of you can be far happier than a King, if you will only be good.

But you must DO something to be happy. God does not make happiness for us, and give it to us, whether we seek for it or not. No, the way of God is this, that if we desire to be happy we must work for it, and work for it according as He directs us in the Bible. Now there is a very great deal you can do, and I could give you a great many advices what to do, how to do, and when to do, but I purpose to tell you only about one. I am going to advise you to do one particular thing, and if you do it you will be happy. Now, are you beginning to say, “Ho ! Ho ! one thing only ! that’s not much, that’s first rate, I can easily do one

thing!" I am not so sure about that, my dear child. "Well what is it?" do you say. It is just at the right time, to be able to say the right word to the wrong thing. Do you think you will be able and willing always to do that? Do you think you will be able to say NO? That is a short word, and soon said. Indeed it is, though a great many are either not able or not willing to say it when they should; who if they would only boldly, and firmly say it with all their mind, would be kept away from a great deal of mischief, suffering and sin. I wish you to learn to be happy, and to live happily, and therefore I am going to urge and entreat you, to be ready and determined, always, when you should, to say, with a resolute heart, NO.

Come, now, let us see about this, how you are to say NO. In war, cannon balls are fired against the enemy, as hard, and as far as gunpowder can drive them; and likewise I desire your NO, NO, to be your cannon balls against the devil and the flesh; against bad companions, bad teachings, bad example, bad everything.

You like stories, and illustrations from personal acts and experiences. You remember best the teaching which has plenty of these

in it. Now I could find a great many in general history that would do very well, and be instructive and pleasing, but there is a wonderful library that all of you can carry in your pocket, most of you I believe have carried it already—a library of many volumes, if each book were bound separately—and it is in this library that I am to find the people, the stories,—real true stories,—and true examples. That wonderful library is the Bible. You love the Bible, and the more you know it you will love it better still. Many think the Bible a dull book, but it is not. It is full of stories, and all to teach us when we should say, NO.

God in His inspired word calls you "son." That does not mean only the boy, but the girl as well. God speaks to and counsels girls as well as boys. Both require advice. Both need to be told to do good. Both have to be told not to sin. For example, God says, "My son if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Now that is "my child," whether boy or girl: whether big or little: whether man or woman; for all are God's children, because He has made and preserved them, and what He means is, when bad people ask you to go with them

in bad ways, and to do bad things, you are to say NO,---and stick to it.

Now, FIRST, I shall tell you of some persons who did not say No, when they ought to have done it, and what happened to them because of their refusal; and SECOND, I shall tell you of other persons who did say NO, and what became of them.

I can merely mention a few out of the large number, and also say but little on each. Indeed, many of you may say that you know all about them the moment I give the names, but perhaps you will learn a little more of them, and a good deal more from them for your own conduct and character, just as you find that they did or did not say, NO.

I. Those who did not say NO when they should have done it.

You remember about Eve, the first mother of all living. Why did she fall—then was ashamed—then driven out of Eden? It was because, when the devil came tempting her, she said NO, but in such a way, that he saw he could try again; and try again he did, and she listened to his advice. She felt willing to listen—she began to be pleased at what she heard—she thought she was receiving good advice—she forgot God, her

Father Friend—she disobeyed Him, and at length said YES, when she should, from first to last, have said NO. She ought to have said, "God told me what to do, and I shall do it: go away from me, I shall not listen to you: go away, you tell me what is not true; I know you do not tell the truth; I know you tell what is false, for you do not speak like my Friend and Maker, God; and now, once for all, go away, I shall not listen to you"—but she did not do that, and she sinned and fell, and became unholy, and lost her innocence, and immediately her happiness, at the very time, too, when she imagined, at the devil's advice, she was to be far better and happier than before. And just as at the instant she ate of the forbidden fruit, it tasted so pleasantly, she advised Adam to partake too, and he did not say NO, even once, but ate, like her, and then our first parents fell; the fountain head of the one great stream of human life became poisoned at its spring, and since then "there has been none righteous, no, not one." You know what immediately followed their transgression, how they became so afraid—afraid then, for they never knew what fear was till they sinned; and they became so unhappy—unhappy in themselves and afraid of God.

O ! dear young people, what a sinful world this has become ! a world in which death reigns ! a world in which there is no paradise, now ! and all that change has been, and all that evil is, because the first man and woman did not say NO !

Did I say to you that there is no paradise on this earth ! Yes, not indeed such an one as Adam and Eve had, and over which God can now pronounce His benediction ; but nevertheless, there is a little one that all can carry within them ; for try to keep your conscience void of offence towards God and man ; try always to obey the word of God ; try always to say NO, to what is bad, and you will have an Eden, a very happy Eden, in your own hearts.

You remember Cain, the first man who was ever born in this world. God had told him to worship. He had instructed him how to be religious, how to express his thanksgivings for daily mercies ; how to confess his sins ; how to supplicate for pardon ; how he was to be saved ; how, as he had lost the liberty of living in the old Eden, from which his parents had been driven, he might get, after he died, to the Paradise in heaven ; but Cain said NO, to God. Cain would not be religious according to God's rule. He would not go to heaven in God's way,

and so God became displeased, and would not accept his worship. Then Cain was angry; yes, he was angry even at God. Then he became angry at his good brother Abel, who had done right; done exactly as God had told him; and just because God was well pleased with him. Then Cain began, maybe, to be angry at himself, and to let

——“His angry passions rise,”

when he should have said, “I shall not be angry at my brother; I shall not wish any harm to my brother; I shall not do any injury to my brother; rather, I am glad God is pleased with Abel, and I shall try to do, and to be like him.” Cain should have said NO, to sin in his heart, but he did not. He permitted sin to grow to anger, and anger to grow to murder in his heart, and then it came from his heart to his hand; and he killed his brother. He shed the first human blood on the earth, and you know how he was afterwards punished, and became so miserable, and went away with a great burden on his soul, and a great wail on his lips, crying “my punishment is greater than I can bear.” Why? Because he said NO, to God!

You remember Jacob, the grand-son of the man who had the noblest title that ever any

Abraham was his name, but that was his title in the peerage of the Kingdom of God, and far higher than that of a duke, or even a king. Jacob was the grandson of that great man ; and with all the advantage of his good example, should have tried to be as good as, if not better than, his grandfather, but he did not. Well, but I would take the blame from him a little ; for a good deal of a young man's character depends on his mother, and Jacob's mother did not do right. The Bible does not say a word whether she was good or bad, but merely tells us what she did ; just as it tells us of many other persons, some good and some wicked : and even of some good people who said and did that which was wrong ; and so, by what Jacob's mother did, no one can say she did right. O ! what a blessing, a most precious blessing to have a good, kind, teaching, watching, praying, and exemplary MOTHER ; one respecting whom a son or a daughter can say, with great love and thankfulness, "Mother mine, you never advise but to what is true, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. God bless my mother." Ye children who have good pious mothers, love them with all your heart ; be obedient to them with a ready and simple will ; for such mothers never, intentionally, ask

you, or direct you, to do anything contrary to the law of God, your own best welfare, or that of any one else. But Jacob's mother, Rebekah, had a preference for Jacob rather than Esau, and wished to cheat Esau out of the blessing that belonged to him as the first-born. It is true that the purpose of God was accomplished through it; for He controls all things, so that even wicked persons and wicked devices are wisely overruled for fulfilling the wise ends of His Providence. It would be dreadful for the world, if wicked people could do as they liked, and God could not help it, nor make their evil designs work for ultimate good! But Rebekah did not know anything about the purpose of God. It was her own purpose she was bent upon, and that purpose was wrong; for it never can be right of any mother to injure one child, in any way at all, even if it be to benefit another. To accomplish her favouritism for Jacob, Rebekah asked him to deceive his father Isaac, who was then old, and frail, and blind; and with her words, and her own hands, she told him what to say, and how to pretend to be his brother Esau. It was very bad. Jacob knew better. He knew it was wrong. He had fears about doing it. He was mean and covet-

ous enough to like to obtain the blessing from his old father ; but just because it was wrong, he was afraid of being found out and punished. He was not afraid, or ashamed, of the sin, as he should have been, but he had a cowardly fear of the consequences, if he should be detected. It is generally so with bad boys—bad-hearted boys—that they are mean, selfish, and cowardly. Even against the advice of his mother, Jacob should have determined to do to Esau as he would have Esau to do to him, but he listened to her, and did not say NO. Disguised from the likelihood of detection ; disguised by his own mother, he consented and went to the bedside of his old, blind, father, and pretended to be Esau ; and to be so kind and affectionate ; and there lied, and lied again to him. It was terrible. And what anguish of heart he caused his venerable parent when he knew it ; how he “trembled very exceedingly !” and how, when Esau came and found what had taken place, it caused him to “cry with a great and exceeding bitter cry !” What misery Jacob’s conduct caused, by his not saying NO !

Ah ! but is it thought, “well, Jacob got what he wanted ; he got the blessing, the promise of

the family possessions—the blessing was the title-deed—and he must have then been very happy?" Many a one has obtained his desire, but instead of being happy has been very miserable; and so it was with him, and with his mother too. After the sin was committed, Rebekah soon had another view of the matter. She heard that Esau was very angry with Jacob, and therefore she must part with him, her favourite son; now she must send him far away, hundreds of miles away, and that was her great grief—but she had to do it. She parted with him and never saw him again. Thus she was punished with a living grief; Esau away in anger from her, and Jacob away in fear of his life, and she left in loneliness of heart, the worst of all. I hope it did her good before she died.

But Jacob did not escape. "Be sure your sin will find you out," is a great truth, which God has declared; and more or less, and sooner or later, it does so, even in this life; and so it found Jacob and punished him. He found himself, for many years, banished from home, and thrice most painfully deceived both in his tenderest affections and property. He would not say NO to what was wrong; and he came to feel how bitter it was to have others say NO to him,

when he was asking only that which was right. Beware then, of doing wrong, for depend upon it you will suffer, in your person, or property, or conscience, and it may be, even, in all the three. The Germans have a proverb which has a great and true meaning, and when translated reads thus. Jacob knew and felt its truth;—

“The mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.”

I do trust that none of you have parents who ask, or advise you to cheat, or steal, or tell lies. I pity you if you have. And if so, I give you an earnest counsel that, if they bid you sin, even to them you are to say NO. Say NO, even to father and mother, if they desire you to do anything contrary to what God commands. It is quite right, it is a duty to say NO to your parents, if they ask you to sin. You read your law in the Bible, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.” That does not mean you are to obey them if they ask you to do wrong, but it is, “in the Lord,” they are to govern you. They are to do to you as is commanded in the Bible, and then you are to

obey them, but whenever they command you to do what the Bible condemns, then, you are to refuse "in the Lord," and say NO. Your first duty is, always, to feel and say, "I must obey my Father who is in Heaven." Here is a good "Law of Life,"

"Live I! so live I,
To my Lord heartily,
To my Prince faithfully,
To my neighbour honestly.
Die I! so die I."

You remember Absalom, and how cruel he was to his old father. It is very sinful to be harsh, and hard, and disobedient to parents when they are comparatively young; or in middle life, and hale and hearty; but it is far worse when they are old and feeble, and, it may be, in circumstances of trouble and trial. It was very cruel of Absalom to his father, King David. He was ambitious of honor and power; and taking advantage of some discontented subjects, and trying to make more, he gathered an army to drive his father from the throne; and, indeed, did not care though those angry people took his father's life away, as well as his crown. Absalom was young, wayward, unfilial, disrespect-

ful. He listened to bad advisers, and associated with bad companions, instead of honoring his father, and duty, and love, and truth. Temptation was in his heart; it also came in his way, and he did not say NO. He should have said to rising disobedience in his own heart, and to the evil counsels of others, "I shall do no hurt or harm to my father. It would be highly sinful if I did. I shall be a good son, not a bad one." But he did not resolve so, and his wicked conduct soon cost him his life. If he had said NO, he might have lived long, lived well, and at last died happily. How often it is that the young hurry themselves into an early grave! They are so apt to think that they are wiser and know better than their parents and older friends; and therefore determine on their conduct and course of living, in spite of all admonitions and warnings; and still anticipate avoiding the fate of others who have gone before them in the same career. Somehow, many young people flatter themselves that they have the power of escaping the consequences of wrong doing, though they know that others, like themselves, did the same, and fell victims to their folly. It is true: the Bible says it: and experience confirms it, "He that walketh with wise men

shall be wise, but a companion of [fools shall be destroyed."

You remember Solomon. He was very good while he was "young and tender." When he was raised to the throne as successor to his father, he was very pious, earnest, and exemplary. One might suppose that, like a great many—like the most—with flattering prospects, he would desire to be rich and renowned ; to be successful in his wars ; to add valuable territories to his dominions, and have kings to bring their tribute to his feet ; but such was not his anxiety. His solicitude then was to do right. He wished to be a good king and a good man. So, on one occasion, he went to have a great public worship of God, and after it was over, God appeared to him, very likely that night, in a dream or vision, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." By that, God meant to bestow on him what he should say he liked best. A proud, or covetous, or avaricious boy may say "What a capital chance to get plenty of money, and property, and all earthly good !" I fear, that too many would embrace the opportunity, if they had it, just to gratify their selfishness. Solomon did not make that great mistake. He asked for "wisdom and knowledge" to enable him to be a

just and wise monarch. And because he had done so, instead of praying for wealth, honor, power, and long life, he received from God the gift of wisdom and knowledge; and besides, all that he might have requested, "riches, and wealth, and honour, such as no king ever had before him or ever would have after him." He was to stand in history alone, in his royal greatness, and grandeur. All that early history of him is delightful; like a summer morning, all so beautiful and bright, before the black thunder clouds roll up the sky. Solomon could do as he pleased. He commanded every means and opportunity to gratify himself; so by and by, he began to put his wisdom to a wrong use, and set out on a search for "experience of wisdom and knowledge." He was not contented as he was. He wished to know what people call "the world." He desired to see what foolish and reckless youth call "life;" and so he was tempted to try one thing that was called "pleasure," and did not say NO; and then he was tempted to try another, and did not say NO; and so on he went, faster, and faster, as every such young man does; worse and worse; wicked, and more wicked, and most wicked. Everything that was called pleasure, or that was

thought might cause pleasure, Solomon tried, but each one, in turn, failed to satisfy him. Each rose had its thorn. Each cup had its dregs. Still he went on trying to find pleasure in doing what he liked, but he was never contented, never happy after he would not say NO: and actually went so far as to build a temple to idolatry. He got heathen wives and heathen people about him, who advised him to do that, and he did not like to say NO; and besides, he made a trial of it to see how it pleased him. The first and second commandments, which he knew very well, should have been his law, and from them he ought to have learned to say NO to all advice, and to all temptations to forsake the God and Guide of his youth. Thus it was that the fine, good, young Solomon, became the bad old Solomon; though before he died it is to be hoped he repented and reformed, and gave his heart and life again to God. He wanted to drink his fill of happiness, but for a very long time he always went to a poisoned spring. He allowed his own inclinations to direct him, instead of the law of God; but he tells us, after every trial, now of this, "It is vanity;" and then of that, "It is vanity," "all is vanity." All

mere worldly happiness, away from goodness is "vanity of vanities;" it is an emptiness: the soul is unsatisfied: and the life has the worm of discontent gnawing greedily at its core. Solomon knew it all too well, and from his own experience he preached a sermon to the young, and, by the Holy Ghost, he is preaching it still, and saying the more earnestly to you, just because he forgot it, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." All your young days keep remembering that; remembering the law of the Bible, to obey it with a pure heart, and it is not very likely you will forget it when you grow older. Yet, after everything Solomon did, and tried to find and enjoy, he said that this is "the conclusion of the whole matter," this is the way to live, to begin life and to carry through life: "Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Solomon's whole sermon has this great lesson, to say NO, to sin, whether it come dazzling like an angel of light, or black as a demon from the pit. O, I need not speak about sin coming to you as a black demon. It never does. I wish it did, for then it would frighten you. Sin comes smiling like an angel; but it is after you obey sin that it be-

comes black and forbidding. Solomon, in seeking for new pleasures, saw new angels, as he thought; but from his experience he has warned you against their deceptions. His angels did not always keep smiling. I think if he were living now he would say again

“In life’s gay morn, when sprightly youth
With vital ardour glows,
And shines in all the fairest charms.
Which beauty can disclose;
Deep on thy soul, before its powers
Are yet by vice enslaved,
Be thy Creator’s glorious name
And character engraved.

You remember the Prodigal Son, delineated by our Saviour. By the parable, **THE LORD** meant to liken the Gentiles, or all people except the Jews, who had forsaken God and got lost and wretched in idolatry; but it has also a great, true, individual lesson. The younger brother was wild in his heart, and he sought for the means to be wild in his life. He would not stay at home. He must be his own master. He must have his own will and way. He must go where he pleased. That is the picture of wicked waywardness, and head

strongness; and there are too many who can, if they choose, see themselves in it. The Lord who knows human hearts, and wills, and ways, has in that given their own many accurate likeness;— accurate but not beautiful.

There is a young man who would not say NO to his own desires and passions: and who would not have NO said to him, either, if he could help it. He got his will, and as in all such cases, he went from bad to worse. An old proverb states the truth of such like: "they run fast whom the devil drives." He lost his money; he lost his character; he lost his self-respect; and at length sank to the very lowest depths of degradation; for what could be meaner, and especially in the eyes of a Jew, than to be a swineherd! When he left home he did not contemplate such a result. He left for pleasure; but landed in wretched abandonment. He never would say NO to sinful ways, till he could not get any farther, and he then said it. Oh! that was a blessed result, for many sin, and sin on, and go down, and down, body and soul, and never repent and are lost, all of them lost, for ever lost. The prodigal "came to himself," Jesus said. He "cam to himself." He had not been "himself," that is in his right state of mind. Just so, for

Satan "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not," that they believe a lie. Sin deceives; and if any of you should have the disposition of the prodigal, then you are saying Yes, to what, all the time, you should be saying NO. Take care of the first thoughts of self will, or a perverse heart, which may lead to the first steps from under the old parental roof tree. If from home you must go--and it may be a duty for you to do it--never depart in anger; never by stealth; never in disobedience. No good will come of it if you do. Never cross the door step, one inch even, to go out into the world for honest labour, without carrying your parents' blessing to cheer your heart, if you can get it. I like these lines of the genial Thackeray.

" And if, in time of Sacred youth,
We learned at home to love and pray,
Pray Heaven that early love and truth
May never wholly pass away."

You remember about the terrible Demoniack of Gadara. On one occasion, when the Lord Jesus crossed the lake of Galilee, and landed on the eastern shore, among a mixed people--though chiefly heathen--there ran to Him a wild man; who was attracted by His

lovely and benign appearance. That man would live in no house, but preferred to dwell among the tombs—the excavations, or natural caves in the limestone rocks there. He was very strong and fierce, and broke the chains, with which his friends and neighbours had repeatedly bound him, and escaped away again to the mountains, to have his dismal habitation with the dead. He must have presented a pitiable sight, as well as a terrible one.

Imagine that you see a splendid ship,—a full rigged steamship—with full steam on, and all sail set, right out in the ocean under a heavy gale, with a broken and useless rudder, and a drunken crew. How she plunges; how she yaws; how she rolls; how the seas sweep over her; how she goes down, broadside down, as if she may not come up again; how she rises, but to take another plunge; how the masts bend; how the sails split into ribbons; how the yards break; how the paddle wheels keep turning through the great waves, and how the very power of fire and steam below, and the spread of canvas above, drive her on the more rapidly and certainly to become a wreck! Suppose that spectacle, and you exclaim, “Save the ship! let a good captain and crew get on board; shut off the steam:

take in the sails; rig out a temporary rudder, and keep her from destruction!" Now, such like, in one way, was that Gadarene. He was in splendid animal health; strong as a giant; could live out in all weathers; but that very strength of his made him the more a terror to the country side, and also more hurtful to himself. His mind was broken. The God-given intellect that makes man, and guides man, was broken in him. The Devil had done it, by what was called "possession." I am not going to say anything about the many means and ways by which people may lose their reason; but I earnestly desire you to set the very highest value on it, and take the greatest care of it. As the rudder is to the ship, so is your reason to you. O! take care of it; and, above all, pray God, everyday, to take care of it for you.

But I have something more to say about that man.

When he beheld and came to Jesus, he was very subdued and respectful. It was strange that he should be so mild now! See him with his big, broad chest; his strong naked limbs; his matted hair; his gashed and bleeding flesh; his yet wild and rolling eyes; and how he comes and stands so meekly before Jesus! He was under the won

derful power of the loving and sympathizing face of Jesus. The devil's work was there, and He, whose mission was to destroy the works of the devil, felt that He must save that man; and so, at once, He commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. Then began a dreadful struggle, and the evil spirit urged the man to cry, as loudly as he could, to be let alone. He did not wish to be better. He was happy as he was. He wished to have no blessing, or health, or happiness from Jesus. He was pleased enough to stand and look at Jesus; but he desired, all the while, to have the unclean spirit remain in him. Or, rather, the evil spirit made him feel so. But now, when Jesus would restore him, he is made to cry, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee, by God, that thou torment me not."

Now the same thing is constantly going on in many still. So long as the devil can keep hold of the mind, the will, the ruling passions and inclinations, he does not care how much people look at what is good, and go to church, and remember to say their prayers, and be

outwardly respectful to religious things. In fact he manages them all the better by that. But whenever Christ would work in the heart, and cleanse it, and renew it; whenever He would correct and direct the mind, then the devil urges you, with all your might, to get away from Jesus, or get Jesus away from you. All are, more or less, under the power and influence of Satan, and can only get him well away from them, just as they resist him, and do not permit him to dwell in them, or tempt them. Remember, then, that it is only the man with a ruling, reigning devil in him, who says NO, to Jesus. When Jesus seeks to take away the bad heart, and give you the good one—the bad spirit, and give you the good one—remember, that the devil is in you, and bidding you say it, if you say NO! You are told and intreated to be good; to love Jesus; to believe on Him as your only Saviour; to obey His laws; to follow His example; and, therefore, I hope none of you will act like the man who had a devil, and to all the dying love, and living love of Jesus say NO! It is true that Jesus made the devil to come out of that man against his will; and so He can res-

pecting the devil in you, and you under his power: but your duty is not to believe only respecting what Jesus can do, but to think what He bids you do, and at once to do that. He asks you to give Him your young heart, your young love, and your young life; and O! do not then allow the devil to tempt you to say NO!

You remember Judas Iscariot. Somehow the very sound of his name is bad, and I am sure you do not like it. I suppose he was a fine boy, and a diligent, industrious young man; for he was highly honored to be invited by Christ to follow Him, as one of His publicly attached friends; and, also, to be instructed under His personal ministry. He was even ordained, by Christ, as an Apostle, and thus obtained the very highest rank in the church. He was considered by the other Apostles honest and careful, and more of a business man than any of them; and, therefore, became their Treasurer, to receive money, now and then, from themselves or their friends, to provide for daily wants, if need be; to purchase what was necessary for the religious feasts, and also to give to the poor. Yes the poor! for

though Jesus and the Disciples were poor themselves, they had a treasurer, whose duty it was to save, as much as he could, for other poor. What an example of compassion and benevolence! But Judas was a greedy man. That was the great defect in his character. Avarice was the open door by which Satan got into his heart. You learn it when Mary of Bethany poured the alabaster box full of very costly perfume on Jesus' head and feet. Several of the Disciples grudged it a little—maybe a good deal—for they thought it useless waste; and that, in their circumstances, Jesus did not require so much, when they and other poor, had need of the price of it for food and clothing. But Judas grumbled most of all, and complained, upon the plea that the poor should have got the worth of it.

St. John says, "not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." He was covetous, and having the opportunity he became dishonest. He thought it was not known, and, perhaps, it was not, at first, but it became so at length. His own actions betrayed him. It is so, almost always, because it is very difficult for a

thief to completely hide his crime. He may think he does, but unexpectedly he is detected; and then the sin and the disgrace punish him, and often ruin him. How many a child has become bad, by stealing from his parents, just a little, a very little, and thought that it was not much; and again a little, very little, and that was not much; and so the desire for stealing grew stronger, and the thoughts about the sin grew fewer, and the heart grew harder, and at length he became the pickpocket—the house-breaker—the robber—the murderer! I remember, just as long ago as I can, that I was taught this, among other words and ways, to deter me from taking what was not my own—

“They who begin to steal needles and pins,
Will end with horn'd kine.”

That is, if you once begin to steal a little, and not think it sinful, you will go on to steal more and more, larger and larger, till you will steal all you can. Beware of the beginning!

Judas Iscariot was greedy; that was his natural character, and it seems singular he should have been chosen for an office that would bring temptation in his way; but then, had he been the

man he professed to be, the office should have stimulated his truth, his honour, and his conscience, always to say NO to his covetousness. But he did not restrain it, on the contrary he encouraged it; and so, of his own act and will, became the betrayer of his Lord and Master.

Just see how he was punished! He knew, quite well, that Jesus was innocent of all crime; but he knew also that the rulers of the Jews were eager to apprehend him; and he began to reason with himself this way: "Well, if I can get good pay from these priests and rulers, I'll betray Jesus, by telling them where, some night, he can be found, and when the multitude of the people, who are his friends, will not be there to hinder them. I'll then get the money, and if they seize Jesus, He can take care of himself, and make his enemies utterly powerless against Him; so then I'll obtain the money; no harm will come on Jesus; and those priests and rulers will lose the prize they seek, for it will be no sin to deceive them." It seems as if he reasoned so; and that Satan led him to do it; for it is impossible to suppose he had enmity to Jesus, or that he saw the sin then, in its awful enormity, for if he had, he would have shuddered

at it. But he was led on by his greed to try to cheat the enemies of Jesus, by thinking no injury could come on Him, and thus he would gain the "thirty pieces of silver." He should not have considered a moment, even, about Jesus' power to protect Himself, but his heart should have cried out, to the first wrong thought, "NO! NO! NO! it is sinful, and away with it." But instead, he cherished it, and it seemed desirable. Money was to be made by it. That was the great thing, money; so, at present, he would say nothing about it to Jesus, and in the long run all would come right; for then he would have a fine sum for his own use; beg forgiveness from Jesus; and laugh at those high and wicked people in Jerusalem.

That is the way sin, greed, and selfishness work in the mind; and that also is the way thieves and robbers are made. John Flavel, a clever old divine, said, that "the heart of the bad man is the devil's workshop." Just so, and he is always busy there; and our Lord has told us what he makes and sends out, and among other things there are these, "evil thoughts, murders, thefts." Take care, and keep your young

heart from being a workshop for any such purposes.

The whole scheme, however, seemed at first an excellent one to Judas Iscariot; but when he saw that Jesus suffered himself to be seized, and led away from Gethsemane, he might wonder and have misgivings. When he heard, or saw that He was taken to the palace of the High Priest, and next before Pilate and Herod, and never escaped, or vindicated Himself, he might get very uneasy; but when he heard the sentence of death pronounced on Him! and in spite of Pilate's remonstrances too, then! Oh! then! his sin, his guilt, his greed, turned upon him to devour him. Jesus was to be put to death! and he had been instrumental in doing it! He must do everything to save Jesus! He then took those "thirty pieces of silver" and rushed to the temple, and told the Chief Priests and Elders, "I have sinned, in that I betrayed the innocent blood;" but they scorned him away. They had been very friendly and confidential so long as he was to be the traitor, but now when the end was gained, and that was all they wanted, they turned from him with disgust and contempt—as all people do from mean

and wicked men who have served their purpose. They cared not for his declarations, or his anxiety to save the life of Jesus, or for all his protestations that he had acted falsely; but instead, only sneered at him, and said, "What is that to us? See thou to that." They then turned their backs on him. So with useless endeavours to undo his awful crime, and with his conscience all ablaze, and the "thirty pieces of silver" in his hand, feeling like burning him to the bone, he cast them on the floor, and in his agony of remorse rushed out to the parapet wall and threw himself over, sheer down five hundred feet, into the valley of Kidron, "that he might go to his own place."

That is the christian tradition respecting the place and manner of his fate. In the account by St. Matthew, it is said that he "hanged himself;" but the intention is not so much to tell the mode, but rather the fact that he, from the terror of an accusing conscience, committed suicide. In The Acts we read respecting him that, "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out;" a statement which is in harmony with the tradition.

You read in the Bible that "The love of

money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Now, do not commit the common mistake of supposing that "money" is the root of all evil. It is not: but rather it is at the root of a great deal of good. In almost all good works we cannot do without it. Money is a gift from God. He made the silver and the gold. But "the love of money," that is it, the "love" of it, the simple "love" of it, the greed for it, the endeavor to get it by dishonorable or dishonest means, "is the root of all evil." The love of it was the "root" of all that prompted Judas' heart, and was the first cause of his awful end. How the "love" of it made him to act so sinfully, and "pierced" him at last, with such a dreadful "sorrow!". Had he acted like Peter, and "gone out and wept bitterly" the salt tears of a penitent heart, I am sure Jesus would have forgiven even him; but instead, he tried to escape, by a sinful death, from his present misery. "It had been good for that man if he had not been born," said Jesus; and why? Because he can never die; and having gone to the eternal world, but not by Jesus, who is "the way to the Father," he must

live on with his soul "pierced" through and through with unabating sorrow. "The love of money" did it all. That "love" is working still. It is causing daily frauds in business, and men to betray those whom they should defend. It is this which makes the great insecurity of commercial life. It is this which does more to corrupt individual character, and society, than all besides. It is this which leads so many to the jail, and the penitentiary, and often to the scaffold; though, indeed, many are not in the penitentiary, who, from the way they have "loved" money, well deserve to be there. Take heed that you never deserve to be there. Beware of the beginning of that sinful "love of money." Say NO to it. It was one of the prayers of King David, and let it also be yours :

My heart unto Thy testimonies,
And not to greed, incline.

I have now finished all that I intend saying on the first part, and it is to be hoped that you see the great importance of saying NO; and the serious consequences to soul and body, which may result from not doing it.

II.

THE SECOND PART—I make the conclusion of the subject ; and it only requires some brief notices of examples for your imitation and encouragement.

It is on those who did say NO when they should have done it ; and how they were rewarded.

You remember Noah. He came to be a kind of second father of the human race. When he lived, for no less than six hundred years, he was among very wicked people ; in fact, just as bad as they could be. They did not deserve to live, and so God determined to destroy the whole of them. But why preserve Noah and his family ? Just because he was good. He never engaged in their wickedness, but always condemned it. He was a “Preacher of righteousness” to them, though to no good result. The people did not like his preaching ; and when he warned them of the deluge they would not listen to him ; and while, for one hundred and twenty years, he was building the ark at the command of God, they laughed at him : but still he was determined to believe and obey God. They might be infidels, but he would be a believer. They might ridicule the revelation

which had been given to him; nevertheless, he would boldly believe and act on it. They tempted him to scoff, and scorn the threatenings of God, but he would not join them. He would not say NO to God, when he was told to prepare to save himself and his family. He was like one very bright star, shining out on a very dark night, in a very black sky. He would serve God in spite of all opposition and temptation; and so it was, when the deluge sea swept around the world, and became the common grave of its great and guilty population God housed Noah and his family safely in the ark till the danger was past.—Now the Bible gives a lesson in that history, to teach us how it is quite possible for even one man, alone, in the face of a whole world of wicked men, to say NO to them all. Let him do it, and God will protect him! Noah did it, and God bore him up in, and brought him through, the perils of that awful judgment time.

You remember Lot, who dwelt in Sodom. He chose that country for the sake of his cattle, because "it was well watered everywhere." In making his choice, he should have thought, also, of the character of the people among whom he

was to live and bring up his family ; but he did not ; though it would have been far better for him, in the long run, if he had.

The inhabitants of Sodom, and all around, were as bad as it is possible to conceive them to have been ; and we are told that Lot was grieved every day with their abominable conduct. You may say, ‘ Why then did he not leave the place ? ’ Why ! because it is generally very easy to keep away from wicked cities, and society ; but when one is there, and in business, and with property, and associates, it is difficult to leave. Besides, it is astonishing how soon people get accustomed to sights and sounds and deeds of wickedness, even though they do not join in them. Lot seems to have been in such a position. He should never have gone there ; but now there, and not ten righteous persons in it, Lot endeavoured to be as good as possible. He was known as a religious man. The people knew that they need not ask him to join in their wickedness, for he would instantly say NO.

Perhaps some of you live near to those who are very wicked ; but remember Lot, and endeavour not to be like them. Rather be good,

and try to make them like you. Every one has an influence for good or evil ; either a restraining influence to keep the bad from getting worse, or a constraining influence to make them better. Try your influence for good. The Bible gives you light. If you believe it, and obey it, it makes you a light. Then if you are a light, this is the law of Jesus for you, " Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven !"

You remember the four princely Hebrew youths who were led captive to Babylon. They were all of the royal blood ; and taken to honor and serve the Babylonian court. Now, many, had they been in their place, would have said, " We are going to Babylon, and we must do all we can to obtain favour and success there. We must live there as the inhabitants do. We must be as agreeable and conforming to their habits and customs as possible, and so make the best of our circumstances." But, not so with them. They took their stand at the very outset. They were to be educated and trained for royal service ; yet, lest they should partake of anything contrary

to the Jewish ceremonial law—meat that had been offered to idols, or wine that had been offered to the gods, and so considered to be blessed by them—they resolved to live on simple bread and water, and to all entreaties or expostulations to change their diet, they firmly said NO. Their religious duty was first. They felt that they could not be happy, and did not deserve to prosper, if they were not strictly religious. They made it their rule “whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” These were young men, who would not do what they thought was wrong, to please any one, and their decision in the right laid the basis of their further success. They could say NO, and they did it ; and it was the making of them.

They gained the favour of the King, and were speedily promoted to the highest positions in the government, under himself. Daniel was prime minister, and the others, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were subordinate to him.

But on one occasion, Nebuchadnezzar—who was a great idolater—determined to have a splendid celebration in honour of a new statue of his idol, Bel, and commanded that all who did

not bow down to it should be cast, as a sacrifice into the furnace before it. Where Daniel was at that time, we do not know—probably away in a distant part of the Empire—but the other three were in Babylon, and were reported as refusing to worship the idol. They said that they neither did, nor would worship it. They were told that the furnace would be their fate if they persisted. They replied that they would rather be burned to death than be idolaters. They boldly refused the King! and the like of that was never heard of before. All the people tried to please King Nebuchadnezzar; but they had a higher King, Jehovah; and they would please Him first, come what would. So they were cast into the "fiery furnace, heated seven times," but lo! they walked in it, and were unharmed, for God protected and preserved them; and when they were brought out they had not even "the smell of fire on them." God acknowledged them by his miraculous care, for saying NO. And Nebuchadnezzar also honored them for their decision, boldness and piety; and was almost converted to be a worshipper of the true God. These right hearted and high principled youths, when threatened for their resolution against

wrong, told the King decidedly that they had not been considering consequences at all, they had simply been considering duty, and were resolved, come weal or woe, come life or death, that they would not worship the golden image he had set up. That was a certain thing, for perish rank, office, power, life, all but truth; and for truth, and a good conscience they were prepared to die—and they could do no more.

God teaches, by their conduct and history, that none should calculate the temporal advantages of doing right or wrong, but resolve to do right at all hazards. And to do it with the firm faith that, at length, it vindicates and rewards itself; for though it may have its furnaces of trial, it walks unscathed in the midst of them; and comes from them all the brighter for having been there. In respect to some persons it may take a long time, almost a lifetime, before a false charge is disproven, or a wrong impression removed, and they obtain what is due to their principles and integrity; and some even die before their characters are truly vindicated. But never mind, feel right and do right:

“Keep conscience as the noon tide clear,”
and as the sailor on his watch, though the

waves run mountains high, so long as he knows that he has a good ship and is on an open sea ; and with his bright eyes ever looking ahead, can sing out with a sense of security, and a heart of hope, "ALL'S WELL," SO ALL'S WELL, when you try to do right. And ALL WILL BE for ever well with the good, when all wrongs shall be righted, and all duty rewarded, as they receive from Christ's own mouth their welcome home, "Come ye blessed of my Father ; inherit the the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

You remember Daniel, the most eminent of those Hebrew princes. Daniel the Great, I would call him ; for he was a most remarkable man, with a wonderful history. His noble character in boyhood and manhood, for piety, truth and decision, is set forth in the Bible as a lesson and example to all.

After the Babylonian Kingdom fell it formed part of the Medo-Persian empire, and Daniel rose to the very highest office under Darius. But the nobles were envious of him. They could not, indeed, say a bad word against him, but then " what right had he, a foreigner and a captive, to rule, and lift his head so high." Upon the whole, as

poor human nature is, it is not wonderful that they disliked it, as they would have preferred their own exaltation: but they took a very wrong way, a very sinful way, to accomplish his degradation, and, if they could, his death. They did not go and tell the King what they really were aiming at; but under pretence of pleasing and honoring him, they asked a decree—a Medo-Persian decree, which, when given, never changed—and to this effect, that the man who should be known to ask a petition of any god or man, for thirty days, save of Darius, should be cast into the den of lions. It was given. The King, vain-glorious man, was gratified that for thirty days he was to rank above the God of all the earth.

Daniel heard of what had been done. He very likely suspected that it was aimed at himself; at his dishonor or his death; for to him dishonor, respecting his conduct to his God, or his fellow men, was worse than death. He heard the law. He knew his duty. He foresaw the consequences. And what will he determine? The nobles eagerly wait and watch. Up they get on next day, by sunrise, to see what Daniel will do. And they look to the wonted place where

he made his devotions ; and there he comes, with his firm step, and his undismayed eyes that can bravely look all the world in the face, and he kneels upon his knees looking towards Jerusalem, and prays and gives thanks before his God as he did aforetime! He prays, but not a single petition is made to Darius. Jehovah, openly and avowedly gets all the glory of his worship. At high noon they watch again, and there comes Daniel to his prayers to his God. At evening they watch once more, and Daniel, true to a minute, is there at his prayers again. Through the whole day he has been unbending against the decree. In the matter of religion and conscience he has boldly refused to acknowledge Darius as having the right to limit or control his devotions, let the consequences be what they may.

Darius was told of Daniel's conduct, and was required, by his own decree, to punish him. He now saw that the whole plan for honoring him was but a plot to destroy his faithful servant : still he must execute his law, and command that Daniel be cast into the lion's den. It was done. The King did it against his inclination, but with a hope that Daniel's God would preserve him. And so it was : Daniel had

not forgotten God, and God did not forget him.

Daniel did not neglect to pray ; and was not ashamed or afraid to let men know that he prayed. It was not for show, but from a sense of duty he did it. Now he has, by his whole conduct, given to young and old a noble example of resolute, holy purpose, never, on any account to neglect doing what they know is right. O ! for the spirit, the heart, the devotion, the courage, the conscience of Daniel ! He, and his three companions left Jerusalem with the determination, go where they might, and come what may, that they would say NO, and act it out, too, when it was against sin. It was that which under God, was really the secret of their success.—Now, go from home, young man, or maiden ; but first of all, before you leave it, go to that old bed side of yours, that you may not kneel to pray at for many a long day again, and there implore God to help you to battle against impiety and vice with a defiant NO. Having first done that, go forth strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Go forth then, and His care be over you, and His blessing be on you, to keep you and prosper you in all your ways. And now I give you last, and best, and great-

est of all, the example of the Lord Jesus, your own blessed Redeemer.—You remember the first special temptations by the devil, which assailed Him ; and how, to each of them, He at once, and firmly said NO. Now Jesus is very particularly our Teacher, both by His law and by His life, and in these He shows us what we have to resist, and, then, how we are to overcome. Jesus fell back, for his defence, to get hold of “the sword of the spirit which is the word of God,” and with that He fought the tempter thus, “It is written.”

Because, “It is written,” He could not do what the devil asked and urged ; and He told him so. “It is written,” O! what a precious lesson Jesus gives, to go to the Bible for the rule of duty. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ?” How shall he make his way in life clear, and correct, and comely ? The answer is, “By taking heed thereto according to thy word.” That was Jesus’ way, “It is written,” and that was reason enough why He should say NO. Yes, Jesus—even Jesus!—felt the necessity of being guided by the Bible, and how much more should you !

“Jesus, my all, to Heaven is gone ;

He that I placed my hopes upon ;
His track I see ; and I'll pursue
The narrow way till Him I view."

If tempted to break the Sabbath and make it a holiday, instead of a holy day ; if your own heart should, at any time, whisper it to your soul to forsake the worship of God, say NO. " It is written," " Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," " Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil."

If tempted to disobey your parents or be unkind to them, say NO, for " It is written," " Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Remember too that Jesus was " subject" unto his parents, and " increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." It is true " that a wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

If tempted to blaspheme and use sinful invocations and bad words, say NO, for " It is written," " Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in

vain." "Swear not at all." "Let your communication be Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

If tempted to licentiousness and to associate with bad companions, remember "It is written," "Hear thou my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not thou among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Say NO, for "It is written," "He that walketh with the wise shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed."

If tempted to defraud, or cheat, or steal, or covet; say NO to the first, and to the last, for "It is written," "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not covet." "Covetousness, which is idolatry," sets up another God, and the worship of it is in every base, and mean, and dishonorable thought and deed.

Take care of yourself, if you wish and hope to get to heaven. Take care of all you think and say and do, for "It is written," "Know ye not the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with man-

kind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

If you should, at any time, feel that you need not attend to religious duty now; that you are too young now; that it will do many years hence to seek for the salvation of your soul; then remember that you have no to-morrow; you have only to-day; and "It is written," "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." It is in your youth, your early youth, when you have the "dew of thy youth" on you, that God urges the solemn request, "My son give me thine heart." Do not say NO.

"It is written." How much is written! and all to make us wise unto salvation. Learn then, from the Holy Scriptures, how and when, to what and to whom, to say NO. Make it, henceforth, your purpose, your prayer, your life, to say Yes to all that God's law enjoins, and NO to all that it forbids. Do that, and you will live in the outer court of heaven; happy, though less happy than those above; but preparing, by the Lord's grace, for the full enjoyment of the sinless, the sorrowless, and the deathless land.

You sing :

“ There is a happy land,
Far, far away ;”

and so there is, thanks be to God for it, and to Jesus who opened the way to it, and has marked it by his own holy steps ; but also

“ There is a happy land,”

that the true-hearted Christian youth find here, wherever they go. Happiness is in them, and thus they carry it with them ; and were it not so, it could not be found by them, even at the very right hand of God.

A Dieu. That is the French way of saying the English good-bye ; and good-bye is the contraction for the social hand-shaking benediction of our Saxon ancestors, who called God “ THE GOOD.” Each expression is, in reality, a prayer ; a commending of our friends to the care and keeping of God.

I ought to ask no less, and I can ask no more than,

THE GOOD BE WITH YOU.

