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APRIL, 1882.

# The MONTHLY

# ADVOCATE

*Devoted to the interests of the Church and the world.*

VOL II.

No. 12.



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ST. JOHN N. B. A. W. B.

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

As the second year of the **Advocate** is now complete, we furnish, at the end of this Number, a carefully prepared Index of both volumes inclusive, for the benefit of those who wish to have the Magazine bound. The two years' numbers will make a large volume of over 500 pages, and we have arranged to have it neatly and substantially bound with leather back and corners, and lettered, and returned to any address by mail, postage paid, for One Dollar. The whole twenty-four numbers can be put up in one package and sent to us by mail from any part of Canada, for eight cents postage, and we will return the Book when bound for the amount stated above. We have a few back numbers on hand which will be supplied at four cents each.

Subscribers who desire to have the **Advocate** bound would do well to attend to it at once.

We send bills this month to subscribers who are in arrears, and trust our friends will not delay in handing the amount to one of our local Agents or forwarding direct to us. Postage Stamps can be sent instead of cash for single subscriptions.

To all who have assisted us in any way, we beg to tender our sincere thanks. We ask our young friends and others to continue their labours in the interests of the **Advocate**, and we will reward them liberally.

We will send Premiums in a few days to all who are entitled to a premium for their past services.

Subscribers whose term has expired, who will renew their own subscription and send us 50 cents additional, for one new subscriber, before the end of the present month, shall have a copy sent free to their address, of a valuable household manual advertised on 3rd page cover, entitled: "Practical Guide to Housekeeping in all its Departments."

The **Advocate** is hailed everywhere as a messenger of Glad Tidings. "Speaking the Truth in love," is the motto inscribed upon its banner. The advancement of the cause of truth and righteousness will ever be its exclusive aim, and "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," it will be the monthly advocate of "these things."

# The Monthly Advocate.

VOL. II.

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## THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER.

The great principle of religion is *faith*. The real Christian lives by faith. But this is just the governing principle of human life. The fact is that it is faith which gives form to the life of every intelligent person, and the man is a fool who lives not by faith. The difference between religion and irreligion does not turn upon the principle of action, but on the object on which that principle rests. The irreligious man believes any thing or any person but God; whereas piety has its foundation in an unwavering faith in God. The faith of the former rests on an uncertain basis, and his course fluctuates as he discovers that his confidence is misplaced. The faith of the other gives fixedness and consistency to his whole life, because God is incapable of departing from His word, and is always able to execute His purpose and His promise. It must be evident, therefore, that the really pious man occupies an immeasurably more elevated position, sustains a more consistent character, and is entitled to greater confidence than other men. It holds good then that, all other things being equal, the true Christian must be the best king, the best legislator, the best magistrate, or the best soldier. I say all other things being equal, for there is many a good Christian who is utterly unfit to hold any official position either in peace or war with honour to himself or advantage to society. When God shows who should be chosen to rule, he recognises the common sense principle that it is not enough that rulers are men fearing God, men of truth, and hating covetousness. They must be *able* men. Oliver Cromwell, whose character and memory were under a cloud for nearly two centuries, and are not yet free from the misrepresentations of ignorance and prejudice, furnishes an example of the happy combination of ability and piety. He knew men, and gathers round him men of intelligence and integrity. His Ironsides marched to victory as often as they marched to battle. Every one of them had faith in the God of armies, and in the justice of their cause. As the first magistrate Cromwell did more for England than any of the kings who preceded him. He raised her to a position among the nations of Europe, which she has not yet lost—the folly and profligacy of some subsequent rulers notwithstanding. We can only conjecture what Gustavus Adolphus might have achieved in Europe, or General Jackson in the Confederate States of America, but they occupied a false position, were sustaining an equivocal or a bad cause, and God took them from the earth.

When God would confer a substantial and a permanent blessing upon a people, He raises up men who honour Him and are honoured of Him. What kind of men these are will appear from a survey of the character of Gideon, the son of Joash. He is classed by Paul with those whose lives exemplify and illustrate the effects of faith in God.

There is something very suggestive in the position in which we find Gideon when he is first introduced to our notice. John Newton, whose praise is in all the Churches, wrote three essays, which he was pleased to call A, B, and C. The one describes grace in the blade; B, grace in the ear; C, the full corn in the ear. A young clergyman, in conversation with Newton, with singular modesty, told him he recognized his own likeness in C. "Ah!" says Newton, "I made a serious omission in describing C's character. I left out a very prominent feature." "O, what is it?" "C never recognizes his own likeness." This is a characteristic of true greatness. It is better known to others than to the professor. Self-conceit and true eminence never meet in the same person. Gideon was better known by others than by himself. Remarkable is the salutation of the angel—"Thou mighty man of valour." In the translation we see only a man of great physical strength, and brute courage to bring it into exercise. The word rendered "valour" is used to express intellectual and moral eminence as well as natural superiority. The "able men," entitled in God's judgment to rule, are according to the translation before us as "men of valour." Pharaoh wished Joseph to set such of his brothers as he knew to be "men of activity"—*men of valour*—over his cattle. There can be no doubt that in the former case there is more respect to *intellectual* than physical power; in the latter, Pharaoh must be understood to attach special importance to intellectual and moral qualities. Samuel's "virtuous woman" is a woman of *valour*. Ruth was known to be a *woman of valour*. We cannot doubt, therefore, that God's estimate of Gideon was founded on mental qualities rather than corporeal strength. The people of Abiezer knew him to be a man of great decision and energy of character. Although prudence suggested the propriety of destroying his father's idolatrous altar and grove by night, that he might do it without obstruction, there was no difficulty in fixing on the perpetrator of the outrage on the popular worship. So soon as the question is raised, any one can tell that it was Gideon who had done it. His father knew his worth; and when his life is demanded by a furious rabble, he is not so utterly besotted by idolatry, but that his natural good sense is called into exercise by parental affection, he refuses to give him up, and sternly insists that if Baal be a God he can take care of himself; and if not, the man who pleads for him should be promptly executed. Gideon seems to be the only one who was ignorant of his own great qualities. He was ready to acknowledge the humble position of his father's family, and esteemed himself the least in it. If ever the aspiring hope of taking a lead in Israel, or of successfully interposing for their deliverance from Midian, took hold of his mind, we have no recorded evidence of it. When the angel addresses him, we find him acting in conformity with the depressed circumstances of himself and his people—he is threshing wheat by the wine-press to hide it from the Midianites. God calls him to occupy a higher sphere. When God called Moses, he was tending the flock of his father-in-law in the desert. While still in Pharaoh's palace, the young courtier seems to have cherished some ambitious aspirations, and was disappointed that his brethren did not recognise their future deliverer; and God puts him into harness, to teach him that the man who is qualified to rule must have learned to serve. Court

dandies make neither the best generals nor the best kings. When God called Saul, he was looking after the lost asses of his father. When he called Elisha he was in the midst of his farm servants ploughing. When God called Matthew he was sitting at the receipt of custom. He never calls any one who is living in idleness and ease, in dreamy expectation of stepping into some elevated and honourable position, worthy of his distinguished powers. As for ourselves, we may not expect, like Gideon, to have an immediate call to occupy a high, responsible, and useful position, but there are few who are found diligently and resolutely attending to present duty, adapting themselves to present circumstances, and improving present advantages that are not called forth by providential conjectures or the voice of their fellows, to take a place as prominent and honourable and influential as they are competent to fill.

It is melancholy to contemplate the number of talented, accomplished and fashionable young men who sink into the lowest places of society, degraded beyond the hope of restoration, and who, in the outset wanted nothing but somebody to give them a *start*. They would have been successful and opulent farmers, rich and influential merchants, had it not been for a stingy old father who limited their acres or kept back a few hundreds. A hundred acres more or a hundred pounds more, and all would have gone on triumphantly; and for the want of that they have fallen into the ditch! There are others who have qualifications which, brought into full exercise, are equal to the ruling of a province, or even an empire, only that the members of the community are so stupid that they are not able to apprehend real worth, and our embryo rulers would never have been found out if they had not found out themselves; and instead of place seeking them, they must condescend to the drudgery of seeking place! Others are ambitious of distinction as scholars, but their circumstances are unpropitious. They have no money to buy books or to pay teachers; no time to devote to study; they have to perform their daily labour for their daily bread. There is a radical mistake in this estimate of circumstances. Colleges and schools are like the favouring breeze which fills the sails of the steamer. It may relieve the engine, but it can be dispensed with. The progress may be slower, but eventually the power lodged within, in spite of opposing winds and currents, brings the vessel into harbour long before the ship that is depending upon the winds to carry her forward to her place of destination. History introduces us to hundreds who have triumphed over difficulties, sternly met opposition, and reached as lofty a place as might satisfy the cravings of the most ardent ambition, by simply doing with their might what their hand found to do. When they could not do what they would, they did what they could, and in the end found that they had the object of their ambition within their grasp. We may not have thousands, but thousands are made up of dollars, and dollars of cents. We may not have years, but years are made up of days, and days of hours. No money! What supports taverns, purchases tobacco, sustains caravans and mountebanks, pays fiddlers and itinerant lecturers? When we have money to throw away upon vanity and foolery, we have too much money. No time! Every man has plenty of time except the dying man who has made no provision for his last journey.

Who has not heard of Benjamin Franklin? He ended his days honoured among men of science, and among the first statesmen of the Old World and the New. He landed in Philadelphia with skill to set types and a dollar in his pocket—that was all—having set out in youth to seek his fortune. As a journeyman printer he wrought in Philadelphia and in London. But he found time without neglecting his daily toil to improve and store his mind. He would borrow from a kind bookseller a book as he returned to his lodgings, borrow time from sleep to devour its contents, and return it in the morning. Reads while he makes his meal on a biscuit and a glass of water. “O! I am so tired when I come home from work in the evening, I cannot study. I would not be able to work a week unless I have my regular meals.” O, very well, *you* prefer ease to improvement, and animal gratification to intellectual gratification. Take them, and let us hear no more grumbling at your hard lot. I know a great many creatures who would divide their time between eating and resting, and work only because they must. As far as you and they are concerned, Dr. Franklin must be left alone in his glory.

The name of Hugh Miller is familiar to every one who has read anything except novels. Every one in any measure conversant with science knows that his works are read wherever the English language is spoken. Every one acquainted with geological writers knows that perhaps there is not one of them who uses our tongue who would not concede to Hugh Miller a superiority in the ease and perspicuity of his writings. Yet few may know that Hugh Miller was never more than perhaps a year at school, and that was a very humble one; and that the foundation of his eminence was laid while pursuing the laborious business of a stone-cutter and by improving the spare hours or holidays of a journeyman, following his employer over the length and breadth of Scotland. One need of our times is such *men of valour*.

Another feature worthy of notice in the character of Gideon demands superlative admiration. It is indicated by one little monosyllable, and may escape the notice of nine out of ten readers. It is probable that Gideon himself was not aware how fully he laid open his whole soul in the very trifling verbal distinction between the address of the angel and his reply. “The Lord is with thee thou mighty man of valour,” said the angel. Now mark his reply—“If the Lord be with *us*.”—He is nothing. His country, his brethren is everything. He seems incapable of realising a blessing in which his brethren do not share. What is praise to him if his brethren are a reproach? What is honour to him when his brethren are degraded? With his fellows he has cast in his lot, and he will stand or fall with them. He would say to God, “If thou wouldst bless me, bless my country.” After he had led the victory over Midian, his unselfish and patriotic spirit is invested with fresh lustre. Ephraim, a proud and assuming tribe, glorying in their numbers, not so forward to strive for the mastery in perilous circumstances, as ambitious of the honour and spoils of success, contended with Gideon because he had not called them out in the beginning of the war. It is not enough for him that Israel is victorious and free; and for his own fame in leading them to victory and freedom he is not solicitous. Let Ephraim have the glory if they will. He will grant that the gleanings of Ephraim are better than the vintage

of Abiezer. He is offered the throne of Israel in perpetuity; but aware that he could not live for ever, that his son might be a tyrant or a fool, and that it belongs not to man to give peace, stability and success, he refuses the tempting offer, and at once suggests that he who can command the blessing must rule. "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you,"—a ruler little thought of, or at least spoken of, at the present time. What a contrast to those who would empty the public purse to fill their own pockets; who would tread upon the necks of thousands to secure their own elevation; who would sacrifice the independence of nations to gratify their insatiable ambition.

We have here exemplified the well-defined difference between the Christian—I do not say professor—and the unbeliever. Put him where you will, the Christian lives for *others*; the unbeliever lives for *himself*. By both that situation is most coveted that is most directly subservient to the object contemplated. Hannibals, Cæsars, and Napoleons, you find in the world; but Moseses, who choose affliction with the people of God rather than the pleasures of sin; Gideons who refuse a crown that the people may be free; Pauls who suffer the loss of all possessions and prospects that the cause of truth and righteousness may prosper; and Calvins, who, leaving their impress on nations and generations, with the proceeds of a library can bequeath three hundred crowns, are found nowhere but under the banner of Him who sits in Heaven. I know there are some who would tell you they would place more confidence in others than professors of religion. But there is not one of them who, obliged to seek the hospitality of a solitary hut in the forest, would not feel himself more safe, and sleep more securely, under the roof of the man who reads a portion of Scripture, and bows his knees in prayer to God before retiring to rest, than of him who bids good night to his guest over a decanter of rum. The mountain and the plain meet, but no one laughs at the idea that the mountain is more elevated than the plain. You may find a point where the lowest in the Church and the most elevated in the world seem to meet, and the distinction between them could not be precisely indicated, yet that does not prove that there is not an essential difference between the Christian and the infidel.

Consider the character of our great example himself. We see Jesus identifying himself with his people, never standing alone, never for a moment forgetting in himself their responsibilities, sufferings, temptations, joys, hopes, their temporal as well as their spiritual necessities—in His life, in His death, in His resurrection, in His glory they are a part of himself. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; though He was rich, yet for their sakes He became poor, that they through His poverty might be made rich.

Are we Christians at all? Are we true men, which is the same thing? Then beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image, and the perfection of humanity; and of blessedness stands in union with Him, and being like Him as He is. As Gideon said to his soldiers, so the Captain of salvation says to us, "Look on me and it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do."—*Rev. W. 'ommerville.*



## AN INTERESTING PRAYER MEETING.

How shall we make our prayer meetings more interesting and attractive? is an oft-repeated inquiry. A few suggestions may assist in answering this question.

I. Go from a place of prayer to the place of prayer. Invoke God's blessing upon the approaching meeting. Visit the place "where prayer is wont to be made," in the spirit of humble, earnest supplication. Expect to meet your Saviour there.

II. Go to the prayer-meeting as a contributor. Carry your offerings with you. Be a *doer* as well as a hearer of the word. Bring gifts. Think sometimes of this: What would the prayer-meeting be if every one did just as I do? Count prayer-meeting service a *privilege* instead of a duty. Let your Lord's vineyard bear the marks of your diligence. Act as a reflector there, and not a mere absorbent. Do not ask your pastor and one or two elders to "carry on" the prayer-meeting, and then complain of a lack of interest. You have a work there as well as they. Remember, the prayer-meeting will be what you make it, and if you sit inactive, silent and unconcerned, you will do what you can to make it uninteresting. Thus you will help very materially, to answer the question that stands at the head of this article.

III. Be punctual at the hour set apart for the meeting. Punctuality is a virtue. In this little thing show interest. Be sure that the singing is earnest, animated, appropriate and hearty. Observe the time. Make melody. "Sing with the spirit." There is wonderful power in music. Do not kill the meeting with drawling, dismal minor-keyed dirges. "Windham" is good; but a prayer-meeting is not a funeral. Good singing has very much to do with the interest of the prayer-meeting, and so emphatically has poor singing. Murdered music murders prayer-meetings. What a ghostly array of murdered meetings rise to view!

IV. In prayer and speaking, observe religiously these three things, viz.: *point*, *brevity*, and *earnestness*. Do not scatter. Catch the keynote of the meeting, and hold on to it. Follow out the line of thought presented by the leader. Make a point. Be brief. Avoid prolixity. Shun details. Do not glory in the grace of continuance. Blessed is the man that does not "*enlarge*." Shun the rock of amplification. For the Master's sake be brief and pointed. And be *earnest*. Leave the impression that you mean what you say, and that you feel the importance of your theme. Suffer not a dry theme to come in dreary, mournful accents from cold lips and a colder heart. "Dying of respectability" is a sad comment. Dying of a pointlessness, tediousness and lukewarmness, is no better.

Seek God's Spirit. Work—be prompt; sing with spirit and animation. Be brief, pointed and earnest. Lay your hands altogether to the plow and look not back, and see if the question asked at the outset is not satisfactorily answered.—*Exchange*.

Masters who write copies must write as perfectly as possible. Any defects will be increased by the scholar. So Christians, who are to make their lives copies to others, must live as holy as possible.

## CHRISTIANITY CLAIMS THE ALLEGIANCE OF NATIONS.

1. *Civil government is a divine institution.* It is not a voluntary association, like a business corporation, and it does not originate in any social compact. Historically, man never existed without some form of civil society, nor can he escape from it if he would. He does not enter it of his own will; he is born into it. The tendency to political organization is imbedded in human nature, and is therefore divine. Thus the Scriptures teach: "The powers that be are ordained of God." The will of God, however revealed, is therefore of supreme authority in civil government.

2. *The Lord Jesus Christ has been clothed with authority over the nations.* Those who entertain the most diverse views of his person and the nature of his mission to the earth concur in ascribing to him the rights of Supreme Governor of the world. It is difficult to see how any one who accepts the Bible as the word of God can think otherwise. He himself says: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He is declared to be "Head over all things to his church, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." And lest any doubt should remain whether these vast moral persons, the nations of the earth are included in these declarations, he is expressly announced as the "Prince of the Kings of the earth," and appears in vision wearing "on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords.'" These are not empty titles. They invest the teachings of Jesus Christ with the force of supreme law on all points which may be involved in the conduct of nations. Hence,

3. *The Bible, as a revelation of the will of Christ, is of supreme authority in civil affairs.* A great part of the Bible is the record of God's dealings with nations, and much of it is directly addressed to nations by the prophets who spoke in his name. These things are written for our instruction. On all moral questions, for nations as for individuals, the Holy Scriptures are the ultimate standard of appeal.—*Christian Statesman.*

## THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.

The following, which we copy by permission from "*Ismael on the Temperance Question*," is a true story of rum's doings and we trust shall prove interesting and profitable to our readers:—

In a remote section of Western New Brunswick there lived many years ago a man whose career was shrouded in mystery, and of whose antecedents the most rying curiosity could gain no knowledge. He was about fifty years of age, of portly appearance, of gentlemanly manners, and easy and unassuming in all his ways. He had evidently moved in respectable circles, and his decidedly English accent left no doubt as to his nationality. If not rich, he was comfortable, and, considering the isolation of the place in which he resided, enjoyed many of the luxuries of life. He had neither wife nor child, and his whole establishment consisted of himself and a male and female domestic who had accompanied him thither. And while master and servants were kind to all they were

intimate with none, and so shut themselves out from the world as soon to be known to all as the Hermits.

Why such a man should have chosen to bury himself in the wilderness, was hard to be accounted for, and gave rise to many a curious conjecture. Some said he was a political offender, some a criminal, hiding from justice, some one thing and some another; but perhaps the most generally received opinion was, that he had been disappointed in love, and, rather than cross the path of his successful rival, or meet with the one who had deceived and rejected him, he had sought a home in this remote region where the associations would recall nothing that was painful.

But, unconscious of or indifferent to all this, Mr. Hall pursued the even tenor of his way, and, as year after year rolled by, his neighbours knew no more of him than they did when he first came among them. Neither letters nor papers came to him, nor was he ever known to correspond with any one, and the mystery that hung around him was as great as ever. Meanwhile important changes had taken place in the surroundings: the forest was rapidly disappearing; a prosperous settlement had sprung up; a church and school-house had been erected; and a young and talented minister had recently been settled among them. But, in proportion as the place became known, Mr. Hall grew more and more retiring, and latterly was rarely seen beyond the limits of his own garden.

About that time the great crusade against intemperance was in full blast, and the subject was discussed on the platform, in the pulpit, and through the press. Temperance lectures were the order of the day—the public mind was greatly agitated—and there was a great uprising against the demon drink. The minister at Mapleton threw himself into the movement with all his heart, and with true apostolic zeal went from house to house to enlist the public sympathy in the good cause. And when he thought the time had come for some decided action, he announced his intention to discuss the subject from the pulpit on a certain Sabbath evening.

Impelled by a feeling he could not account for, Mr. Hall attended the service. As the place was crowded he took a seat near the door, where he remained unnoticed until the exercises were half over. Although he had aided in the erection of the building he had never been in it before, and though contributing to the ministers' support they had rarely met. For a time Mr. Hall took no interest in what was said but sat as one in a dream, while memory was busy recalling the scenes of other days. Roused from his reverie, by the ringing utterances of the young and gifted man before him, he leaned forward as if trying to identify him with some one he had previously known. The longer he had looked and listened the greater his interest became, and his whole soul was strangely excited. His agitation grew intense, his whole frame quivered with emotion, and hiding his face in his hands he wept bitterly.

When I was a boy, said the speaker, I had one of the happiest of homes, and as good a father as ever lived. My mother was one of the excellent of the earth. My every wish was anticipated, my every want supplied, and as I think of my childhood's happy days, I sometimes wish I was a boy again. But the tempter entered our Eden, robbed us of peace, and wrecked all our earthly prospects. My father became addicted to drink,

the habit grew stronger, he sank lower and lower, until he became powerless in the grasp of the destroyer. My poor mother did all she could to save him, but her efforts were unavailing. When sober he was the same tender parent and loving husband as ever, but under the influence of strong drink he was often furious. The usual results followed, prosperity, character, and health were squandered and lost; but that was not all. In a fit of madness he felled my mother to the ground, from which she only recovered to kiss me and die. With the cry of a maniac he seized me and dashed me upon the ground, from which I was taken up for dead. Sobered by what he had done, and supposing he had killed us both, he fled at once and took passage for America; but the vessel in which he sailed was wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia, and all on board perished.

Thus was I at once deprived of a mother I had idolized, and a father whose only fault was a love of strong drink. Had he lived to know that his child recovered, and that the last words of his noble wife were those of forgiveness and affectionate remembrance, he might have been rescued and saved; but he went down into the deep waters with that heavy load upon his heart. To me these are heartrending memories, and I only refer to them in the hope that others may be persuaded to shun the path of the destroyer. Can you wonder that I feel deeply and strongly upon this subject? Can you wonder at my earnest advocacy of the Temperance cause? Or can you wonder that I feel forced to fight the demon to the death?

Tell me I hate the bowl?  
Hate is a feeble word—  
I loathe, abhor, my very soul  
Where'er I see, or hear, or tell  
Of this deadly drink, that leads to hell!

A deep groan startled the audience, as all eyes turned instinctively to the place from whence the sound proceeded, Mr. Hall was seen forcing his way to the stand. Grasping the pulpit stairs to keep him from falling, he cried out in soul-thrilling tones, "Oh, William! William! my dear boy," and with that he swooned away. What followed we shall not attempt to describe; the meeting broke up, the son returned home with the father, and the mystery was at length cleared up as to who and what he was. As might have been supposed, Hall was only an assumed name, the real one being Stanley. All had not perished in the wreck as had been supposed, for he and his two domestics had been picked up and carried to Portland. Having secured some money he persuaded his fellow voyagers to accompany him to Mapleton, and here they had since remained.

The rest of our story is soon told. The case was at his own request investigated, and taking all the circumstances into account, the matter was allowed to drop. The son continued to minister to the people in holy things, and is well and favourably known, and with him the father quietly settled down. And however painful these disclosures were at first, they relieved him of a heavy burden, melted away his reserve, led him to mix more in society, and after a few years of useful and active effort he peacefully passed away, and is still kindly remembered as *The Mysterious Stranger*.

## COUNSELS FOR YOUNG MEN.

Wealth is desirable for what it enables us to do or enjoy : but it is not desirable at the cost of honesty and honor and true manhood. It is not desirable when truth and virtue and religion—when honorable usefulness and happiness here, and eternal happiness hereafter, must be sacrificed for it.

Young men, be industrious and enterprising, but shun every avenue of dishonest or disreputable gain. As you value the esteem of the wise and good ; as you value your own happiness and the approval of a good conscience ; and, above all, as you value the approval of God and the hope of eternal life, shun what is wrong—pursue only what is right, according to the standard of God's word. I give you as the rule in this matter, the words of Paul addressed to the Philippians (4 : 8) : " Whatsoever things are true ; whatsoever things are honest ; whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue and any praise, think on these." Pursue such, and only such, and you will have praise of men and favor of God.

To be successful in life is not merely to amass wealth, nor to surround yourself with the luxuries and elegancies of life—to have the means of the unlimited gratification of your appetites : nor yet to attain the highest position of honor or emolument among men ; but it is, according to the circumstances in which God has placed you, and the opportunities he has given you, to fill up the sphere of usefulness which is open to you. To be good, to do good and to get good, and, in all, to aim to glorify God. He is most successful in life who does the most good, who most glorifies his Maker, and secures for himself, through faith in Jesus Christ, eternal blessedness when this life is over.

But do you ask, are we not to seek and enjoy happiness in this life ? You are, indeed ; but in just the way indicated you will find it in greatest degree. Be in earnest in what you undertake ; consider well how you may best provide for your own wants and for those who may be dependent on you ; and when you enter upon any lawful and honorable business, lawful I mean in the sight of God, prosecute it with energy and perseverance, and when prosperity comes, as it generally does to such, be thankful to the great Giver of all mercies, and show your gratitude by a life of love and devotion to him. I say again, be industrious and enterprising and persevering ; but never prosecute your business, lawful and honorable though it be, *in such manner* as to dishonor God.

Farming is a honorable business ; but if in selling your produce you give snort measure, or make misrepresentations as to the quality you are dishonest—a cheat and a liar, not worthy the confidence of your fellow-men, nor the favor of God, and these you will surely lose if you continue in such course. The business of a merchant is an honorable one ; but if you make wilful misrepresentations, or falsify your accounts toward trustful debtors, or charge them double or five-fold the standard price of an article, simply because, trusting to your honesty, they did not

ask the cost, you are dishonest—a cheat and a liar, unworthy the confidence of men, and sure of losing the favor of God.

In whatever business then you engage, be honest, be honorable, be true—be *trustworthy*. Set a high standard before you: for this is in accordance with the rule of God's word, by which I counsel you, in all things, to direct your steps. Doing this you will, in so far, have the praise of men, and the favor of God.

How many have started on the pathway of life with fairest prospects of honorable usefulness and success, accompanied with fondest wishes of parents and friend, but who, not being anchored on the principles of God's truth, have fallen under some one of the ever-varying temptations which beset the way of life, and made shipwreck of their hopes before they had scarcely begun life's voyage. Such temptations are all around you, and will meet you in the way. It becomes every young man to be on his guard, and to be fortified against them, by having his principles well established according to the teaching of God's word. Its lessons, well stored in the mind, will save from a thousand snares, and guide into the paths of prosperity and honorable usefulness here and into preparation for a happy future beyond the grave.—*H. P. Thompson.*

#### PRAYING WITH CHILDREN.

When children are offered in baptism, there is a solemn covenant administered to the parents who bring them. It is well understood by all, or at least ought to be, that the good, which the ordinance is in any sense to be expected to bestow, depends upon the faithfulness with which its provisions are kept. Now, among these it is specified that the parents shall "pray with them and pray for them."

A mother once came to me sad at heart, bemoaning the continued impenitency of her household. She had eight children, and not one of them had ever been converted to the Saviour. In the course of the conversation she alluded to the fact of her having brought each in turn to be baptized. I asked her whether she had been faithful in dealing with their souls. She told me she had often talked with them, and tried to make them see their sin. But, I continued, have you ever prayed with them? She paused a moment at the suddenness of the question, but replied somewhat faintly, No. Do you mean to have me understand that you never took any one of them with you apart, to implore the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. I inquired again. She answered that she had never had the courage to do so. I am afraid I shall misjudge you, I pressed on; I want to know if it is possible that you should have come eight times to this ordinance with your children,—from that young man down to the babe I received last week,—on every occasion solemnly promising to "pray with and pray for them," and yet never offering a single petition according to your engagement? Her only admission was in the tears into which she burst. My dear madam, said I, you know now why your family are unblest. When you think of covenant promises, you must remember your own as well as God's. Nineteen years of wrong are behind you.

There is something very impressive even in the mere sight of a praying Christian. I have read within a little while the story of a faithful worker in the ministry, who had been away from home for a week assisting in a revival. When he started to return, he was accompanied by the pastor and a young friend to the limits of the village. There, on the hill-top, full of solemn feeling, they parted with a joint supplication. Climbing the fence, they were hidden from the road, and there knelt among the branches of a fallen tree, that no eye but the All-seeing might rest upon them. They all prayed and separated. A few weeks thereafter, among the converts, came a rough honest farmer to join himself to the people of God. He told how he was ploughing in the field one day, and saw up by the road-side three men kneel to pray. The very thought of it moved him. And the more he pondered his own prayerless life came into review. And he found no peace till he himself became a follower of the Saviour likewise.

There ought to be in every Christian Church one season specially set apart for prayer in connection with the ordinance of baptism. Where the ordinance of the Lord's supper is administered four times a-year, call it the "Quarterly meeting for parents and baptized children." Announce it by name. Ask parents to bring their children, and ask children to come. If it be a full service, let both sermon and prayers and praises be appropriate to the general theme of the ordinance, its duties, its privileges, and its obligations. No harm if it comes oftener; bring it on immediately after communion, so that those who join the Church that Sabbath can present their children the same week. There are two ordinances in the Church of Christ. We have "preparatory lectures" often enough, but did you ever hear one "preparatory" to baptism?

This affords an opportunity for familiar explanation of this whole ordinance. But above all, it gives the most fitting time conceivable to urge upon the baptized children their duties. And then the union of faith in the prayers that are offered cannot fail to avail much. Hold up the children in the arms of a warm trust in God, and then see how soon he will come to let his light shine on them.

*Family* prayers also afford opportunity for "praying with and praying for" the children under the covenant. A strange notion seems to have crept into the minds of *fathers* that they are not ever expected to perform this duty. But they will search the Scriptures in vain for any passage to warrant such immunity. And the very least they can do, unless they are desirous to break outright their engagements, is to assemble their home-circle every day for united offering to God.

I know a father who was accustomed every evening to draw his little children to his knee, immediately as they left the table after the last meal, before they were drowsy, that they might repeat their own prayers; and then take his Bible to read and pray himself with all the household. Trained to it from the earliest practicable hour, those boys and girls grew up to honour the custom; and one of the severest punishments in that admirable family would have been for him to refuse permission for me to bend by his side. And I have seen as manly a lad as ever grew, go meekly and willingly to the dear old spot, and long never to outgrow the love of it. That I take to be one of the ways of "praying with and praying for" children.

Ten years ago, when an unconverted man, I boarded in the house of a pious woman, whose husband was not a Christian. There was a daughter of nineteen, another of fourteen, and a son of ten. Every morning after breakfast, I heard that humble woman gather her family in the kitchen, and read with them a chapter—"verse about"—in the Bible. Then as I could not help listening, there was a peculiarity of service which mystified me. At last I asked one day if I might remain. She hesitated, her daughter blushed, but said I could do so if I really desired it. So I sat down with the rest. They gave me a Testament, and we all read. Then kneeling on the floor, that mother began her prayer audibly for her dear ones there, her husband, and herself; and then pausing a moment, as if to gather her energies or wing her faith, uttered a tender affectionate supplication for me. She closed, and her daughter began to pray. Poor girl, she was afraid of me; I was from college; I was her teacher; but she tremulously asked for blessing as usual. Then came the sweet daughter, and at last the son—the youngest of that circle, who only repeated the Lord's Prayer, with one petition of his own. His amen was said, but no one rose. I knew in the instant they were waiting for me. And I, poor, prayerless I, had no word to say. It almost broke my heart. I hurried from the room desolate and guilty. A few weeks only passed, when I asked them for permission to come in once more; and then I prayed too, and thanked my ever-patient Saviour for the new hope in my heart, and the new song on my lip. It is a great thing to remember, that there is in the gospel as in the law, provision made not only for "thy son and thy daughter, thy man servant and thy maid servant," but also even "for the stranger that is within thy gates."

Now I give these two instances, among many, that through my remembrance, to show how, in default of any better way, this duty of family prayer may be conducted. I cannot now, if I would, discuss the obligation in this matter; I have only to say that I cannot understand how any parent, who offers his children under the covenant, can manage to quiet his conscience with less than this.

But there will always be left with mothers the main responsibility, I suppose, in this praying with children. Many a man there is who blesses God for his "mother's prayers," who never heard his father lift his voice. I want to say a few words, therefore, directly to mothers, if I may be permitted to do so, but they must be reserved for another communication.

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The perfections of the creature are like the gildings which may be laid on or upon vessels of wood or stone—the matter is one thing and the varnish or ornament another; but the perfections of God are like a vessel made of pure beaten gold, where the matter and splendour or adorning are the same.

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We see many scrupulous persons that at first made conscience of all things afterwards grow so loose as to make conscience of nothing. When the chain of truth is once broken, man is "at large."



## O, WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF MORTAL BE PROUD

O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?  
 Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,  
 A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,  
 He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,  
 Be scattered around, and together be laid;  
 As the young and the old, the low and the high,  
 Shall crumble to dust and together shall lie.

The infant a mother attended and loved,  
 The mother that infant's affection who proved,  
 The father that mother and infant who blest,  
 Each, all, are away to that dwelling of rest.

The maid on whose brow, on whose cheek, in whose eye,  
 Shone beauty and pleasure, - her triumphs are by;  
 And alike from the minds of the living erased  
 Are the memories of mortals who loved her and praised.

The head of the king, that the sceptre hath borne;  
 The brow of the priest, that the mitre hath worn;  
 The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,  
 Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant, whose lot was to sow and to reap;  
 The herdsman, who climbed with his goats up the steep;  
 The beggar, who wandered in search of his bread,  
 Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

So the multitude goes, like the flower or weed,  
 That withers away to let others succeed;  
 So the multitude comes, even those we behold,  
 To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same our fathers have been;  
 We see the same sights our fathers have seen;  
 We drink the same stream, we see the same sun,  
 And run the same course our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers did think;  
 From the death we are shrinking our fathers did shrink;  
 To the life we are clinging our fathers did cling,  
 But it speeds from us all like the bird on the wing.

They loved, - but the story we cannot unfold;  
 They scorned, - but the heart of the haughty is cold;  
 They grieved, - but no wail from their slumbers will come;  
 They joyed, - but the tongue of their gladness is dumb.

They died, - ah! they died; - we, things that are now,  
 That walk on the turf that lies over their brow,  
 And make in their dwelling a transient abode,  
 Meet the things that they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,  
 Are mingled together in sunshine and rain:  
 And the smile and the tear, and the song and the dirge,  
 Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'T is the wink of an eye; 't is the draught of a breath  
 From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,  
 From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud;  
 O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

WILLIAM KNOX.

## THE HOME CIRCLE.

BY M.

## No. 10.—FAMILY BEREAVEMENTS.

Although home is the repository of the purest pleasures, highest interests and unsullied joys, it is also the scene of the saddest bereavements, darkest trials, unmitigated pain. The family circle may be found to-day basking in luxury, happiness and peace, and to-morrow as poor and disconsolate as Job. However we may flatter ourselves in the hour of prosperity that we sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow, the day of adversity will come when our nest, like the eagle's shall be stirred up, to remind us that this is not our home. Our pilgrimage in this world is but a chequered scene at best, and everything in connection with our family relationship proclaims in language not to be mistaken that there is no certain dwelling place for man upon earth. Our happy firesides now ringing with glad voices, must become silent and hopeless and sad; and all the earthly interests which cluster around the domestic circle shall pass away like a noon-day dream! Yes, the members of home must separate, the fondest earthly ties break, the brightest hopes fade! Every beat of the heart tells us that the hour of separation is drawing near! How soon this may take place we know not. One thing is certain however that bereavement will come! Experience teaches us that no sooner than childhood is changed, separation begins to take place. One member of a family is removed by death, another is borne by the winds and waves to a distant land, while a third enters the deep forests of the West, and is heard of no more! Well may it be said, "There is no union here of hearts that finds not here an end." In almost every household there are tears and sorrows, as well as hopes and joys. How few families can say "We are all here!" Where is the home that has not some memorial of departed ones,—an empty crib, a vacant chair, garments laid aside—ashes of the dead, or absent treasured up in the urn of memory! Were it otherwise the joys of home might be complete and the mansions beyond the skies forgotten. Hence the providential discipline of the household involves bereavement; and it is no sign that we are without God and without hope in the world, if we are thus called to mourn. On the contrary, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." Although we may often be led to exclaim, "Whose sorrow is like unto my sorrow!" our present affliction, which we look upon as unbearable may be working out for us an eternal weight of glory.

The bereavements of the household are often varied. Adverse fortune may deprive us of property and compel us to struggle with poverty amid the scorn and ridicule of the world. Our character or good name may be lost for ever, in a moment of temptation. "But the greatest bereavement of home is generally death. They only who have lived in the house of mourning, know what the sad bereavements are which death produces, and what deep and dark vacancies this last enemy leaves in the stricken heart of home." The first sad event in the family can

never be forgotten. Whoever it is, the first death makes a breach there which can never be healed!

It is a painful bereavement when children are called away by death. It makes our home dark and desolate, especially if it be an only child, or the first-born; nothing can supply its place. Your heart continues lonely and sad; its strings are broken; its tenderest fibers wrenched, and you feel that life has no more charms for you.

Another sad bereavement is the death of a husband and father! It makes a widowed and an orphaned home. The disconsolate members are often left helpless in the world; the widowed mother sits by the dying embers of her lonely cottage, overwhelmed with grief, and poor in everything but her children and her God, who has promised to be "A father to the fatherless, and a judge of the widows." These orphans are often turned 'out upon the cold charities of an unfriendly world, neglected and forlorn, without any one to care for them but a poor, broken-hearted mother, whose deathless faith points them to the bright spirit-world to which their sainted father has gone, "where parting grief shall weep no more."

But the death of a wife and mother is the greatest of all bereavements. The centre of home-love and attraction is gone, when the mother is laid upon the cold bier. Children who have no mother are truly desolate! "She, who fed them from her gentle breast and sung sweet lullaby to soothe them into sleep,—she, who taught them to kneel in prayer at her side, and ministered to all their little wants, and sympathized with them in all their little troubles,—she has now been torn from them, leaving them a smitten flock indeed, and the light of her smile will never again be round their beds and paths. As the shades of night close in upon that smitten home, and the toll of the clock tells the hour in which the mother used to gather them around her for prayer, and sing them to their rosy rest, with what a stricken heart does the bereaved husband seek to perform this office of love in her stead; and as he gathers them for the first time around him, how fully does he feel that none can take a mother's place!

Who can forget a mother, or lose those impressions which her death made upon our deeply stricken hearts? None,—not even the wretch who has brutalized all the feelings of natural affection. The memory of a mother's death is as fadeless as the deep impress of a mother's love upon our hearts. As often as we resort to her grave we must leave behind the tribute of our tears."

Although hard for flesh and blood to bear such trials, yet "in all the bereavements of the Christian home we have developed the wisdom and goodness of God; and the consideration of this we commend to the bereaved as a great comfort. They are but the execution of God's merciful design concerning the family. Pious parents can, therefore, bless the Lord for these afflictions. It is often well for both you and your children that bereavements come. They come often as the ministers of grace. The tendency of home is to confine its supreme affections within itself, and not yield them unto God. Parents often bestow upon their children all their love, and live for them alone. Then God lays his rod upon them, takes their loved ones to his own arms, to show them the

folly of using them as abusing them. If home had no such bereavements, eternity would be lost sight of; God would not be obeyed; souls would be neglected; natural affection would crush the higher incentives and restraints of faith; earthly interests would push from our hearts all spiritual concerns; and our tent home in this vale of tears would be substituted for our heavenly home. We see, therefore, the benevolent wisdom of God in ordaining bereavements to arrest us from the control of unsanctified natural affection. When we see the flowers of our household withered and strewn around us; when that which we most tenderly loved and clung to, is taken from us in an unexpected hour, we begin to see the futility of living for earthly interests alone; and we turn from the lamented dead to be more faithful to the cherished and dependent living.

Let us, therefore, remember that in all our afflictions God has some merciful design, the execution of which will contribute to the temporal and eternal welfare of our home. He designs either to correct us if we do wrong, or to prevent us from doing wrong, or to test our Christian fidelity, or to instruct us in the deep mysteries and meandering ways of human life, and keep before us the true idea of our homes and lives as a pilgrimage. Nothing, save supernatural agencies, so effectually removes the moral film from our intellectual eye as the hand of bereavement. Death is a great teacher. Sources of pensive reflection and spiritual communion are opened which none but death could unseal. A proper sense of the spirit-world is developed; life appears in its naked reality; heaven gains new attractions; eternity becomes a holier theme,—a more cheerful object of thought; the true relation of this to the life to come, is realized; and the presence of the world of the unseen enters more deeply into our consciousness," and we are enabled to say:—

O thou my soul, bless God the Lord; and all that in me is  
 Be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless.  
 Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be  
 Of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee,

All thine iniquities who doth most graciously forgive:  
 Who thy diseases all and pains doth heal, and thee relieve.  
 Who doth redeem thy life, that thou to death may'st not go down;  
 Who thee with loving kindness doth and tender mercies crown.

Who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth;  
 So that even as the eagle's age, renewed is thy youth.  
 God righteous judgment executes for all oppressed ones,  
 His ways to Moses, he his acts made known to Is'el's sons.

The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious,  
 Long suffering and slow to wrath, in mercy plenteous.  
 He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still,  
 With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did requite our ill.

For as the heav'n in its height the earth surmounteth far;  
 So great to those that do him fear his tender mercies are:  
 As far as east is distant from the west, so far hath he  
 From us removed in his love, all our iniquity.

# THE CHILDREN'S PORTION.

## TALKS ABOUT THE BIBLE.

BY ALPHEUS.

No. 2.

In the city where Alpheus lives there is a very large man. The boys call him the giant. He is between seven and eight feet in height, and very heavily built. It is a great sight to see him.

I wonder if in the days of Adam, Enoch and Noah men grew much taller than that. We are told there were giants in those days. This we do know, that men lived to a very great age.

We need not wonder how Moses got all the information to enable him to write the Book of Genesis, when we remember that Adam lived two hundred and forty-three years after Methuselah was born, and till one hundred and twenty years of the birth of Noah, and that Noah lived within two years of the birth of Abraham. It was only a short period from that during the lives of the Patriarchs to Moses, and God was during all that time revealing himself in different ways to our early fathers.

His special revelation to Abraham that in him and his seed all families of the earth would be blessed and his promise of the land of Canaan to him were for a special purpose. The world at large having rejected Him he was about to manifest himself specially to a family and a nation that through *them* the world might be saved. This made every Jew anxious to preserve all their records.

Josephus, who wrote shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, tells us that they had only twenty-two books of Divine authority, the first five are those of Moses. The Prophets, who are the successors of Moses, wrote thirteen books. The remaining four contain hymns to God and precepts for the regulation of human life.

They made the number of their books to correspond with the letters of their alphabet which were twenty-two in number. This was done by counting the twelve minor Prophets as one book; the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles each as one book. The Poetical Books of which Josephus speaks, were the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. The whole was divided into three parts known to them as The Law, The Prophets, and The Psalms.

The books of the Bible were not written in the order in which we have them; for instance, we know that the book of Job is as old as Genesis, and that Nehemiah and Ezra should come in at the close of the Old Testament.

The arrangement as we have it, is taken from the Greek translation by the seventy Elders, commonly known as the Septuagint, of which I will say something at another time.

The books of the Bible were not at first divided into chapters as we have them; our new version of the New Testament is nearer to the way the books were originally written.

The divisions into verses in the Old Testament are very old; those in the New Testament were hastily made by a printer, named Henry Stephens, for his concordance, published in 1594.

Do you think you could repeat all the books of the Bible from memory? How many of you will be able to do this before the next number of the "Advocate" appears. I have seen boys looking in the New Testament for the book of Esther, and in the Old for 1st Corinthians: this makes a boy or girl appear very ignorant. Every person ought to learn and be able to repeat all the books of the Bible.

The utmost care was used by the Jews to prevent errors in copying their Scriptures. They had very strict laws as to the preparation of the parchment and ink with which they wrote. They counted the lines, words and even letters in their manuscripts so that the slightest error could be at once detected.

There are a great many books named in the Bible that we have not got; such as the book of Jashez, the book of the Wars of the Lord, Gad the Seer, Ahiga, Ido, and many others. These books are not needed to teach you and me the way of salvation. All that God intended for our good has been preserved, and holy men have been specially fitted to gather together all the books which form our Bible: so that while it does not contain anything for idle gratification or amusement, yet it contains everything that man needs for his soul's welfare, and some things are so beautifully and simply told that a child can understand them.

How thankful we ought to be that God has given such a book to us.

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In the New York *Weekly Witness*, one of the best and cheapest newspapers published, "A Christian Merchant" from week to week, "talks with young people," and what follows forms part of the good counsel he gives:—

CHOOSING COMPANY.—I remember a youth who was very truthful, and who up to sixteen on seventeen years of age was never known to prevaricate under any circumstances. He was very conscientious, and always sought to be found at the post of duty. He formed the acquaintance—or rather was inadvertently thrown into the society—of a youth who was a very agreeable and entertaining companion, but whose integrity was not to be relied upon. Although to appearance he seemed candid and honest, he was lacking in moral principle, and his training had been very lax in many important particulars. It was not a year until he had gained such an influence over the truthful and honest youth that the latter accompanied him to places of amusement which were entirely at variance with his former sense of propriety, and soon he became untruthful, and before he was nineteen purloined his employer's money to spend in sinful pleasure. Up to sixteen he seemed to be so very conscientious and so disposed to seek only that which was right and in all respects elevating and noble, that I could attribute his ruin to nothing else but his companionship and intimacy with the youth of weaker morals but stronger will.

No young man or woman should ever in the least degree give friendship or confidence to one below his or her own moral standard.

I do not advise the seeking of the companionship of those who have more wealth, or whose social position is above our own, unless their *moral* character is also higher than ours; but I do advise that we never become in any way intimate with, or cultivate the companionship of those whose association we would wish to conceal from our parents and friends.

Young people, I think, need the counsel and advice of their parents and elders as much, if not more, in regard to the character and moral training of those that seek their companionship as in any other matter affecting their present or future well being.

The habits of swearing, using obscene language, idleness, drinking, smoking, as well as the beginnings of gambling, thieving and the loss of moral character, are in nine cases out of ten to be traced to the evil influence of companions and associates; and young people ought never to become in the least degree familiar with those who indulge in any sinful practices or who speak against anything that we have been taught is right and pure.

I know that it is hard to keep off such associates and to treat them coldly, but I have learned by experience and observation that they have very much more respect for us when they find that we are beyond their power of influence, and unless they are altogether lost to virtue and goodness, we may often inspire them to reformation.

When I see a youth or young girl going into society that I know their parents would not approve of, I make up my mind that the chances are that ruin and degradation will follow.

“Go not in the way of evil men.”

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DECISION OF CHARACTER.—There is nothing more needed in the formation of character than the ability to say *yes*, or *no*, when duty or inclination are in conflict. The great majority of young people seem to care more about being popular with their companions than they do about following their convictions as to duty and future well-being.

It is much easier to go with the popular tide than it is to stem the current of opposition and act in accordance with what we feel to be our duty and the dictates of conscience. I have seen very many of the most promising young lives I ever knew wrecked because of their desire to be popular and fear of being thought singular by their young companions.

The truth is, that no young man or young woman is so much respected and so much trusted, as the one who has the ability to decide for him or herself in all matters where conviction as to right and wrong is called in question; and while those who are themselves too weak to endure ridicule may sneer and laugh outwardly, still they inwardly respect and trust a friend with decided convictions, and firmness to maintain them, more than they do one whom they can influence and lead. Young people are generally much interested in trying the principles and proving the character of their associates, and a straightforward and consistent companion wins their greatest respect and highest confidence. The world is full of people who is one thing to our face and another behind our back, and no one cares to trust them any more than is absolutely necessary.

I remember a youth who had the best Christian training, and who became a Christian about sixteen years of age. His young companions made every effort possible to lead him into positions the most trying for a young Christian, in order to see what stuff he was made of, and test his principles. They tried to get him to drink wine, to dance, to engage in questionable amusements, and, in short, left no stone unturned to win him back to their companionship; but he was proof against all their arts and allurements, and finally succeeded in winning most of them to Christ. He maintained his integrity through the greatest possible temptations in his future life, and was always known—even by those who opposed him—as a consistent, straightforward and reliable man under all circumstances. On the other hand, a companion, who at the same time made a profession of religion, thought it would be a small matter to yield a trifling point, as he did not want to be called too particular; so he went to a party, and danced rather than offend a lady friend. But he found that the dance had taken away his religious enjoyment; so he gave up and drifted back. He lost the respect of himself as well as of all who knew him, and the habit of indecision and instability soon caused him to become unreliable and of little or no account as a companion or business man; so he failed, and to-day is a wreck. “Unstable as water thou shalt not excel.” Genesis xlix. 4.

INTEGRITY.—Henry Clay declared that he “would rather be right than President of the United States.” I believe that the greatest hindrance to the development of character on the part of our young people is the disposition that is so generally manifested to compromise with wrong. If they could but realize that formation of character is the only sure foundation for a successful and happy life, it seems to me that they would be less temporizing and yielding of principle than we now see.

By the best people we are honored and respected for what we *are*, very much more than for what we *know* or *have*, and yet most young people act as if they thought that knowledge and wealth were of more importance to their future than the formation of character and cultivation of correct principles.

From wide observation and experience I can say that no want is so much felt in all departments of social, professional and commercial life, as the need of men and women whose word can be depended upon under all circumstances and whose promise to perform any duty can be relied upon on all occasions.

Two boys, of about 15, were engaged at the same time by a firm with which I was connected some years since. One of them was very talented and had a splendid education, and at first was a general favorite. He was quick to take hold of any task required of him, and in general was very obliging to all. The firm thought he would be very valuable when he learned the business. After a few months, however, he was caught telling an untruth and denying facts that were proved against him. He was also found to be borrowing money of all that would lend, and so confidence in him began to be gradually impaired. He was so very



intelligent and had such agreeable manners that his associates little suspected that he was losing the confidence of the firm. But one day we were all startled by the discovery that he, although a minister's son, had been detected in theft, and everybody said: "What a pity!" "He will never be trusted again." The other boy was not so prepossessing in appearance nor so agreeable in his manners. Neither was he so quick to take hold of and understand what was required of him; and it was a question at first whether he could be made useful at all or not. After a while, however, a circumstance showed that he was a boy who would stand up for the truth under very great trial; and so the firm began to trust him to go to the bank with large sums of money, and after watching him closely found that he had sound principles, that could not be overcome. He stood test after test, when he was not aware that he was being watched at all. The firm found that he had the material in him they wanted, and he was advanced higher and higher till he is now considered almost indispensable to the business.

I give no favor to the declaration that "Honesty is the best policy," as a proverb. Any boy or girl who is honest only because it is "policy," can never stand the test of severe trial. We must be honest as a matter of principle, and must never in the least compromise with conscience, no matter what present loss or disgrace may seem to be impending. There is nothing so conducive to permanent success in life, nor that gives the satisfaction which alone is the foundation of all true happiness, as the consciousness of true integrity, and of motives that are pure. "Be sure you are right, then go ahead."

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**FORMING HABITS.**—If our young men and women could only realize the terrible power that habit has over humanity, and how completely we become its slaves, they would be extremely careful never to begin any indulgence or extravagance that their judgment shows them is evil, or in any way injurious to their physical or moral nature and intellectual growth. I remember that my first thought when I was a youth was the pursuit of pleasure, and I blindly allowed myself to become habituated to many practices, and gave free rein to thoughts and desires that my judgment condemned: but I have never failed to suffer very much more in pain and disappointment since, than I received in enjoyment and satisfaction in my youth, while a habit of thinking and acting was formed at the time which is still an obstacle to complete success in my life work.

As life opens to boys or girls, their future is generally a very beautiful picture to their imagination, and they think that the infirmities which they detect in the characters of their elders will be easily avoided by them, and *they* have strength of mind and will sufficient to prevent their ever leading such lives; and so they try this and that sort of pleasure, and the gratification of one appetite and propensity after another, thinking that plenty of time exists in which to give up the bad and cultivate the good, until they wake to the realization that they are bound with fetters too strong for them to break. Even if they are rescued from this position by Divine grace, they can never be the same afterward, as if they had never been slaves to evil habits.

I remember a young man whose father was in quite good circumstances and doing a very good business. The young man left school at eighteen, and his father gave him employment and paid him \$18 per week for his services, taking only a nominal amount for his board. The young man was moral and industrious, but knowing little by experience of the difficulty of starting in life and the necessity of economy, he was very lavish in spending money, and thought there was no necessity of saving anything out of his earnings, as his father expected to take him into partnership at twenty-one. He never had any immoral habits, and was, and is now, a professing Christian, honored in his church relationship by all its members. When he became of age, his father took him into partnership, but the young man had become habitually so extravagant in his expenditures and manner of living that it was only a few years before they made a bad failure, and they have never done a successful business since.

I have no doubt that the habit of spending money freely, and indulging every desire that could be indulged without being immoral or sinful, caused him to become improvident and extravagant in living, which led to the bankruptcy of his father as well as himself and a large family of brothers and sisters. It seems a little thing that he should spend \$18 on himself at eighteen, but he was cultivating habits that controlled him until they resulted in financial ruin.

Habit soon becomes second nature, and we should stop and *think* before we *begin* doing anything that is in the least against our convictions and judgment.

It is our sayings and doings that indicate what our future will be very much more than what we learn or inherit. Each action and thought is the material out of which character is made. What we say or do to-day will be said and done with less effort to-morrow, and the habit of thought, and manner of spending our time, will soon grow into and become the atmosphere in which we live and act.

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**SELF-CONTROL.**—Unless young persons learn to control their appetites and inclinations to evil before they become men and women, it is probable that they will never get the mastery over them. Parents control when children, but they of necessity must give up force, and only counsel and advise when we get to be fourteen or sixteen years old. We then begin to feel the first approach of manhood or womanhood, and often are sorely tempted to allow the tempers, propensities and desires that we then feel for the first time to have full sway and yield ourselves entirely up to their influences.

Young people often seem to me to become possessed with the idea that they are as much justified in giving way to appetite and natural desire as animals are, and they seem to lose all control of their temper and appetites when tempted to give way to them.

We are more than animal, and the intellect and heart must bring our physical nature under control, or we shall become slaves to evil habits that will totally unfit us for life's duties, cares and obligations.

It is a fearful fact to contemplate, that most of our young people are

becoming slaves to evil tempers and appetites; and this is best illustrated by the item that our land expends more for tobacco alone than for all educational and religious institutions combined. Most of our young men are spending in self-gratification very much more than would supply them with the best intellectual and moral culture to be obtained anywhere. In other words, if the boys and young men under twenty-one years of age would take the money they now spend for tobacco and spend it in books and means for improving their minds and condition in life, they would develop very much more capacity for happiness and usefulness than they now dream of. If our young women could only control their love for display and inclination to follow the dictates of fashion, as well as their fondness for vain and idle or useless amusements, they would fit themselves for the enjoyment of life very much more completely and effectually than they now do.

If young people would only *think* more than they do, and if they would live less in the present and more with reference to what is before them in the future, it would be very much more to their interest. Life is a whole, and if we lose control of ourselves in our youth, we become unable to enjoy our lives at the time when we should be happiest.

I know a young man, who allowed his passion for novel-reading to almost entirely absorb his spare moments, until he became unable to read anything but the most sensational and intoxicating romances; and he seriously impaired his mental and moral powers in consequence.

An old writer says, "the proper study of mankind is man," and the best study in that direction is to know ourselves and learn to bring ourselves entirely under control of our judgment and will.

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#### SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

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Afar they watch my whole arise,  
 Its summit seems to touch the skies:  
 "When all is done," the crowds exclaim,  
 "Then shall we make ourselves a name!"

Remove a letter, and behold!  
 A shepherd issue from his fold,  
 With blood devoutly draws he nigh,  
 Himself, alas! how soon to die.

Remove a letter still, and now  
 Before an idol-god they bow;  
 To wood and stone is worship paid,  
 And men adore what men have made.

Remove a letter yet once more,  
 We see an altar stained with gore;  
 And he who built it named it thus,  
 To teach a precious truth to us.

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