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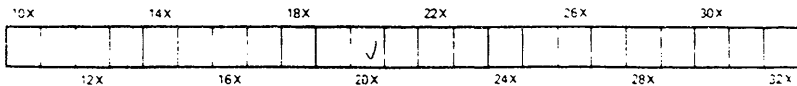
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THE
COTTAGER'S FRIEND,
AND
GUIDE OF THE YOUNG.

L. II.]

MARCH, 1855.

[No. 3.

HOW PRAYER IS SOMETIMES ANSWERED.

(*Concluded.*)

was to start early the next morning. The Portsmouth coach left inn at eight o'clock; and I had some distance to pass through streets before reaching it. We were all up, therefore, long ere it was light, for it was winter. It was a silent breakfast, as such times often are, when there seems to be the most to do but no one ventures to speak. It might be that I was away for ever; or, if I returned, should I find them all living? More than a year, at any rate, would pass away before I could return, and what changes a year often brings about in a family!

"I cannot say much to you, George," said my father, who had been trying to keep up all our spirits without much success; "let us pray together once more before we part."

My prayer that morning was a short one; it was principally for my father to have a safe journey that day, and a safe voyage out to sea; or rather, that God would take me under his care and protection, and deal with me as seemed good in his sight, so as that it might be well in the end—well for eternity.

I never had any reason to remember this part of my father's prayer.

It was as a fine frosty morning, though scarcely light when I took my seat on the outside of the coach, and shook hands with my mother and brother for the last time; but the gloom soon cleared away, and when we were fairly on the road, the sun shone out brightly, and my spirits began to rise again.

My journey was more than half-way over, and we were going down a hill, when I felt a sudden lurch, and without any warning, felt myself violently thrown forward in the air. My tree, as I afterwards learnt, had snapped asunder, and the

coach, which was heavily laden, was overturned with great force.

I was ignorant of this at the time, however, and of all the else. When I came to myself, I was lying on a bed, at a roadside inn, in great pain. I tried to move, but could not; and the agony caused by the attempt was so great that I shrieked, and again sunk into insensibility.

This did not last long, however; and when I once more recovered, I found myself under the hands of a surgeon, who was forming my head. I had barely sense enough to answer a few questions this gentleman put to me; but I gave him my father's name, direction, and the next day, both he and my mother came to the inn.

It was some days before I was pronounced out of danger. I was unable to be moved; and then, by short stages, and in an easy carriage, I was taken back to my home. By this time I understood how narrowly I had escaped with life. I had been thrown from the coach-top on to the hard frosty ground, and fell on my back. The violence of the fall was partially broken by a thick fur coat which I wore that day; but for this I should probably have been killed on the spot. My collar-bone was also broken, and my nervous system received a shock from which I was long in recovering. Strange to say, I, of all the passengers, was the only one who received any severe injury.

I need not say that this accident at once put a stop to my voyage. The *Burbampooter* sailed without me; and my prospects seemed irretrievably marred.

For some weeks I felt indifferent about this, as about all else; I was incapable of much thought, and was only thankful that the accident had occurred within reach of my father's house. As I slowly recovered health and strength, sad murmuring feelings were uppermost in my heart, and sometimes I gave them utterance. Instead of being grateful that my life was spared, I groaned with impatience at the disappointment which my hopes had undergone.

"Mother," I said one day, "I cannot make it out at all."

"What cannot you make out, George?" asked my mother, who was sitting beside me, as I lay on the sofa.

"How is it I got this hurt? You believe that God answers prayer, I know, mother."

"Yes, I am sure he does. He does more than hear prayer, George; he hears and answers."

"Always, mother?" I asked; and if I spoke as I felt, it was with a tone of scorn and unbelief.

"Always, I firmly believe," said my mother, with energy, when the prayer is fervent and goeth not out of feigned lips: ways in God's own good time, and in his own best way."

"Father prayed for a safe and prosperous journey for me," I said bitterly; "and see what came of it: I was the only one on the coach who did not have it."

"How do you know that?" my mother asked quietly; "I mean," she said, "how do you know that all the other passengers had a safe and prosperous journey?"

"I know that they escaped, and I did not," I said; "and, at all events, you cannot say that mine was either safe or prosperous."

My mother was a meek and gentle woman; she did not like argument; she used to say that she could not argue about religion, but she could trust and pray and believe. She looked mournfully at my face when I said *that*, and I could see that her eyes were filled with tears. I repeated my words: "Now, can you say, either, that my journey was safe or prosperous?"

"We shall tell better about that by and by, George," she answered, in her mild, submissive way. "We cannot see yet what the end will be: perhaps we shall not see the answer to that prayer before we reach another world; but I am sure we shall see it then."

Many months passed away before I was sufficiently restored to go out for sea; and then I had to wait a long time before another good opening could be found for me. At last I obtained a berth, though not so promising as that I had lost in the *Burhampooter*, and I was once more making hurried preparations for the voyage.

A few days before going on board, I was in a coffee-room in the city, and took up the day's *Times*; more from habit than desire, my eye rested on the shipping intelligence, and the first words I read were these—"LOSS OF THE BURHAMPOOTER."

With dazzled eyes and reeling brain I read on, that on her homeward voyage, the *Burhampooter* had foundered in a heavy gale; that the catastrophe was witnessed without power of relief; and that all on board had perished.

My story is told. You may say that my accident was a stroke of good fortune; others have said so when they have heard my story; and they smile when I say it was an answer to my father's prayers. I am not to be daunted by a smile.

THE VOICE OF THE SEASONS.

There is, in the revolution of time, a kind of warning voice which summons us to thought and reflection; and every season, as it arises, speaks to us of the analogous character which we ought to maintain. *From the first openings of the spring to the last desolations of winter, the days of the year are emblematical of the state and of the duties of man; and whatever may be the period of our journey, we can scarcely look up into the heavens and mark the path of the sun, without feeling either something to animate us upon our course, or to reprove us for our delay.*

When the spring appears, when the earth is covered with a tender green, and the song of happiness is heard in every shade, is a call to us to religious hope and joy. Over the infant year the breath of heaven seems to blow with paternal softness, and the heart of man willingly partakes in the joyfulness of awakened nature.

When summer reigns, and every element is filled with life, and the sun, like a giant, pursues his course through the firmament above, it is the season of adoration. We see there, as it were, the majesty of the present God; and wherever we direct our eyes, the glory of the Lord seems to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

When autumn comes, and the annual miracle of nature is completed, it is the appropriate season of thankfulness and praise. The heart bends with instinctive gratitude before Him whose beneficence never slumbers nor sleeps, and who, from a throne of glory, yet remembereth the things that are in heaven and earth.

The season of winter has also similar instructions. To the thoughtful and the feeling mind it comes not without a blessing upon its wings; and perhaps the noblest lessons of religion are to be learned amid its clouds and storms.—*Alison.*

A NEEDFUL EXHORTATION TO YOUNG PROFESSORS.

It has always appeared to me to be very inconsistent in the professors of vital godliness to have their children taught to dance; it places them in the way of temptation, gives Satan an advantage over them, wastes the LORD'S MONEY, and can do them no good. *But for members of a Church of Christ, and Sunday-school teachers, to meet together and spend their time in such vain amusements, must be more inconsistent still; and yet I am informed that this is done. My dear young friends, did you not profess to*

out of the world, and devote yourselves to Jesus? Are you not required to make him your pattern and example? Are you not his representatives on earth? Should you not be like unto servants who are waiting for their Lord's coming? And is dancing consistent for such?

Your direction is, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Did you dance in the name of the Lord Jesus? "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Did you dance that you might glorify God? You are exhorted not to be conformed to this world, but is not dancing worldly conformity? Only think of "temples of the Holy Ghost" hopping about to a merry tune. Of persons who are "crucified with Christ" spending their time and energies in such folly. Is it right? One day at the Lord's table, singing—

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do."

And a few evenings after, joining in what carnal worldlings call the merry dance." Ought these things so to be? Added to which, the thought of war raging, and the pestilence not yet passed away, the Churches of Christ being nearly all in a declining state, masters discouraged, and missions to the heathen in a most affected condition. Is it any wonder that the Spirit is grieved, that the word preached is powerless, and that our Churches decline? O to ye believers full of the Holy Ghost, standing out in bold relief from the world, and consecrating all their energies to the Lord!—
See James Smith.

THE PARENTAL RELATION.

PIETY OF PARENTS.

See that lovely babe in the arms of its mother. As she gazes at it, how it calls up all her soul into her eyes! No one can but feel the sincerity and depth of her love. She would leap into the sea to save her child, without one thought how she was to save herself. There is the picture of natural affection. It is pure, and strong; and strong; a love which no words can utter.

But has that mother thought how *her personal piety* affects the life of her darling boy? God has given him capacity; she is the channel through which that capacity is filled. If she lack what is most essential to that child's welfare, he must be the sufferer.

Property descends from parent to child, and remains in the family for ages. This is notorious in happy England. But is it less true that genuine religion flourishes "from generation to generation?" Who can doubt that, if the fond mother had it in her power to confer a fortune on her child, she would do it? Would she not exult in securing for her loved little one all the varied enjoyments which wealth can give? But what are all the comforts of being rich, compared with the pleasures of being pious? A poor wise man said, with strong emphasis, to the writer, in his youth, "*I would be religious, if I were to die as a sheep.*" Civilized man bequeaths to his own child all the advantages of civilization; the savage, all the wretchedness and misery of savagism. There is no mistake about this: we see it before our eyes. Look at lands civilized, and at lands savage. As is the parent, so is the child. The child is melted wax from heaven; the parent, in an important sense, the ready signet on earth. There may be a "good impression," or not; but it is as true in philosophy as in Scripture, that man begets his own image. Who would sincerely wish it otherwise? Could a man who chooses *earth* for himself, wish his child to choose *heaven* for his portion?

Mothers! do you wish your little ones to be happy? Have you considered the bearing *your* piety has on this? You could not knowingly be cruel to your child. You love it "with a pure heart fervently." You *so* love it, as far as intention goes. But if you are not pious, how *can* you "bless your household?" If you have not "the true riches," "the true riches" you cannot bestow. You cannot draw the tender souls of your children to God, if you do not live *Godward*. You cannot apply "the cord of love" to bringing your children to Jesus, if you do not live in union with Him. You are its first "minister of God for good." If you do not bless, no one with equal advantage can do it for you. Worse than that. Parental authority and affection are so disposed of by you, as necessarily to produce *repulsion*, when you ought so to have placed them as to increase and create *attraction*,—attraction to Christ Jesus the Saviour. You say, with all the eloquence and witchery of a "mother's example,"—"Leave God, leave religion, leave heaven, leave the fountain of living waters, leave Divine grace and its blessedness,"—when you *ought* to say, day and night by actions, words, and tears, "Come to Jesus; come to your mother's God; come with me to heaven; I have a commandment to bring you; you are in my heart to live and to die with you; I must carry you in arms of love to my God and your God; I

not, I cannot, give you up! Your mother is going to glory: come with her; O come, come, come!"

Honoured parents! seek to be blest yourselves, that you may be a blessing to your offspring. I am often grieved at the sight of two things: infants in the arms of parents who have not taken the first step to "be a blessing;" and infants in the charge of those who *have* taken that first step,—who have, to a certain extent, secured the "power of religion," but there is a distressing want of holy anxiety to bring that power to bear on the eternal salvation of their children. Parents without piety lead their offspring as lambs to the slaughter: parents with piety, but comparatively careless about their children's souls, "leave them to themselves," till both parents and children are too often "brought to shame." He that "as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;" (and around the habitations of professors he specially prowls,) often finds opportunity to seize on children of parents who have a measure of piety, but are nevertheless cruelly negligent of the tender lambs of the domestic fold. Parents, seek religion for your children's sakes. Your children are heaven-sent arguments to enforce piety on you. A child born to you incalculably enhances the importance of your own existence. Did you die in your sins childless, "it would be more tolerable for you in the day of judgment." A mother, with a babe in her arms, has incalculably more to answer for, than before the child was born. Parents are "more honourable" for the title of "father," or "mother." But it is bought with a responsibility which is terrible. At the moment "a man" has "joy that a man is born into the world," how appropriate the command, "Rejoice with trembling!" If her first words are, "Thank God!" let her next be, "Lord help me!" When the exulting father for the first time takes the babe in his arms, and kisses it, while he thanks God for the "honour," before he delivers it back to the nurse, let him not forget to pray that *he may wear his honours well.*—*Pastor.*

THE DYING MOTHER.

One afternoon I walked through a village in Staffordshire, in order to visit the afflicted. I called at the house of a poor woman who had been ill several weeks, and of whom the medical attendant had just said that nothing more could be done to save her. She was happy in God; and, though in great pain, resigned and patient. Her kind sister was waiting upon her, to whom I said, "She seems

to be feeble." She replied, "Yes; but it is her mind that is troubled about something, and I tell her that she must leave her children in the hands of God." "Ah!" thought I, "who can tell how an undutiful child hurries a fond mother to the grave; and, on her way thither, makes her heart bleed!" I knew that her daughter, who was a servant, had been led astray through love of dress and fondness for improper companions; and I mourned to see how bitterly these sins disturbed a mother's dying bed. While trying to comfort her, by saying that the prayer of faith might yet be answered in the salvation of her erring child, she faintly whispered, "I hope it may! I did not bring her up to her present ways, but took her to the house of God, and to the Sabbath-school; and when she could read, I saved a penny and two-pence a week, and bought her a Bible, and told her it was the best fortune I could ever give her, and that, if she read and obeyed that book, God would bless her, and, though fatherless and motherless, she would never want a friend." She turned away, and wiped her tearful eyes, saying, "I must leave her to God." Is the reader wounding a mother's heart, and gathering thorns to pierce her even on the bed of death? Your mother's heart is tender: break it not, or, in death, and after death, you may have to weep that you can never bind it up.—*Twice.*

ON LISTENING TO EVIL REPORTS.

The longer I live, the more I feel the importance of adhering to the rules which I have laid down for myself in relation to such matters. 1. To hear as little as possible of what is to the prejudice of others. 2. To believe nothing of the kind till I am absolutely forced to it. 3. Never to drink into the spirit of one who circulates an ill report. 4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness which is expressed towards others. 5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter. I consider love as wealth; and I would resist a man who should come to rob my house, so would I a man who would weaken my regard for any human being. I consider, too, that persons are cast into different moulds; and that to ask myself, What should I do in that person's situation? is not a just mode of judging. I must not expect a man that is naturally cold and reserved, to act as one that is naturally warm and affectionate; and I think it a great evil, that people do not make more allowances for each other in this particular. I think religio

people are too little attentive to these considerations; and that it is not in reference to the ungodly world only that that passage is meant, "He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey;" but even in reference to professors also, amongst whom there is a sad proneness to listen to evil reports, and to believe the representations they hear, without giving the injured person any opportunity of rectifying their views, and defending his own character. The more prominent any man's character is, the more likely he is to suffer in this way; there being in the heart of every man, unless greatly subdued by grace, a pleasure in hearing anything which may sink others to his level, or lower them in the estimation of the world. We seem to ourselves elevated, in proportion as others are depressed. Under such circumstances I derive consolation from the following reflections:—1. My enemy, whatever evil he does of me, does not reduce me so low as he would if he knew all concerning me that God knows. 2. In drawing the balance, as between debtor and creditor, I find that if I have been robbed of grace, there are pounds and talents placed to my account, to which I have no just title. 3. If man has his "day," God will have his. See 1 Cor. iv. 3.—*Simeon*.

THE DEATH-WATCH.

The ominous death-watch, when drawn from its hiding-place in a perforated floor or wainscot, picture-frame, chest or black-lettered volume, comes forth (a mouse from a mountain of fear!) a beetle, of some quarter of an inch in length, and in its prevailing hues of grey and brown resembling the colour of the time-worn wood, whose decay it helps (especially in its grubhood) to accelerate. That alarming "tick," to which at midnight many a timorheart has beat in unison, is generally to be heard first in May, and continues on to autumn, by day as well as night; and, being considered analogous in purpose to the "call" of pairing birds, has, in reality, little of ominous about it. The sound is not vocal, but consists of a series of quick successive beats, produced, usually, by the striking of the insect's mailed head upon the hard substance where it may be standing, or into which it has penetrated, most likely, a grub. Some have supposed the grub itself to be the drummer; but, if this sometimes be the case, the perfect beetle is a drummer too, various accurate observers having been eye as well as ear witnesses of its performance. . . .

The ticking of this apterous death-watch, instead of being re-

peated at intervals a certain number of times, (usually from seven to eleven,) as that of the beetle, is continued, like a veritable watch, without intermission.

Such is the living main-spring of the death-watch when taken from out its wooden case; and, though all its terrors vanish on being brought to light, it is easy enough to account for their origin in connexion with place, time, and circumstance.

Most heard in old (perhaps *haunted*) houses, proceeding from wainscot or from bed's-head, perhaps from picture-frame of green old portrait, as if the "tick, tick," of the invisible time-piece issued verily from the laced fob-pocket of some buried ancestor; or heard, possibly, with creeping awe, to proceed, "tick, tick, tick," from the elm-wood of a coffin before consigned with its mute tenant to the earth; heard, too, by night-wakers, the sick and the solitary—or night-watchers, keeping the vigil beside the dying or the dead,—who can wonder that, with such concomitants, the hearing of the ignorant should have often echoed, and may sometimes still echo, fearfully, the beat of the death-watch? And, perhaps, with all our little knowledge, our own might, under the like circumstances, do the same.

Science, in removing partially the veil which conceals from us the mechanism of created things, leaves them still invested with every charm thrown around them by the imaginative mind. We need the rout of superstition—which is only imagination in a distorted form—loosen one legitimate tie betwixt our visible earth and the unseen worlds of which ours is a type. That, truly, is the connexion which, by every excitement, save that of terror, it is well to keep up; and for what, but for this end, has imagination been numbered amongst our faculties? Let us, then, cultivate this precious gift, which has the power of investing the meanest objects of sight and hearing with beautiful associations. . . . Let us, through the visible millions which fill the earth and shake with insect music, be led to a pleasant but chastening consciousness of the presence of those "millions of spiritual creatures" which

"Walk the earth

Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep;"

and whose appointed office, besides that of "singing their grand Creator," may be to fill with harmony the moral elements which make our world of mind.—*Episodes of Insect Life. Third Series*

IS IT A SIN ?

"Prove to me that it is a *sin*, and I will never take another new," said a brother some time ago. "You call it an *evil*, a *bad* and *filthy habit*, and all that; but why don't you call it a *sin*, and prove it."

For the special benefit of this most conscientious class of tobacco users, I now propose to prove that the habitual use of the "vile weed" is, in most cases at least, an immorality. The number who use it lawfully and religiously is not large; the reasons assigned by many—tooth-ache, neuralgia, water-brash, etc.,—when honestly analyzed in the light from above, vanish into mere excuses for a fleshly gratification which they have not the moral courage to deny themselves. It is not strange that smoking and chewing Christians are slow to admit the sinfulness of such a practice; from their childhood they have been taught, by the examples of parents and pious persons, that tobacco and religion are at least good friends. Drunkenness was once considered in this country an innocent and useful practice. And even now, in some portions of this favoured and enlightened land, the buying and selling of men, women and children, and holding them as property is not considered an immoral act. Men professing Christianity, and ecclesiastical bodies are willing to call such an enormity as American slavery an *evil*; but they will not admit that it is a *sin*. No marvel, then, that those who were reared amidst smoke and spittle should defend the "peculiar institutions" with which they have been familiar from infancy. It is hard for men to condemn as a sin, a practice which has been defended by their parents, religious teachers, and other persons of acknowledged goodness and worth. But the practice of even the best men is not the rule of right. To the law and the testimony. Let God be true though every man be proved a liar. If men's practices are found irreconcilable with the Bible, upon them be the consequences.

It is not necessary to find the use of tobacco prohibited by *name* in the Bible in order to prove it sinful; if it is condemned by the *principles* taught therein it is enough. Let the following positions be candidly weighed by every habitual user of tobacco whose eye is light upon it, and then let conscience give an honest verdict.

Tobacco is a deadly poison, is injurious to the health of the body. It is given as the opinion of eminent physicians, that not less than fifty-thousand persons are brought to a premature death in this country annually, by diseases induced by its use. Its effects on

the mind are worse, if possible, than on the body. It brings on early dotage and premature old age: it destroys the vigor of the intellect, and blunts the moral feelings. The wonder is, that such an incessant narcotizing and intoxicating influence upon the brain does not destroy the mental activities sooner. Is it not a sin to take a poison daily that cannot fail to injure both body and soul?

The habitual use of tobacco is a waste of time and money. Time and money spent for that which is injurious to soul and body and which imparts no good to others, is worse than wasted. These gifts belong to God, and no man can squander them without sin.

Tobacco leads to other and greater vices. Drunkenness and licentiousness, for instance. The mind once debased and kept in chains by a lesser evil, what security has it against the greater when the temptation is presented? Gamblers and sots are almost universally slaves to the weed. And is it not time that Christians were purging themselves from this mark of the beast? Be ye *clean* that bear the vessels of the Lord.

Every Christian is solemnly commanded that whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, to do all to the glory of God—to do all, whether in word or deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus. Be ye who of all the army of chewers and smokers buy and use the filthy and disease producing weed with an eye to God's glory. Who asks a blessing on the plug or the pipe for which he has paid a portion of the Lord's money?—money which might have gladdened the heart of some poor and famishing child of want, or have sent the word of life to those who are destitute of it. Art thou the man, thou minister of the sanctuary—class-leader, exhorter or more private Christian? If you answer in the affirmative, and say you have no convictions of wrong-doing in this matter, then we leave you for the present, and turn to that larger and more enlightened class, "who see the wrong and yet the wrong pursue."

"Happy is he that condemneth not himself," says the word of inspiration. "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is *sin*." The man who continues a practice which he knows is wrong, is placed in a most fearful position by this passage. He *doubts*, and yet he eats. He sins knowingly against acknowledged light. He is condemned by his own heart, and judged out of his own mouth. He feels mean in his very soul when he takes the Lord's money to the grocery to throw it away on an unholy appetite. If he is a preacher of righteousness and purity, he ought to blush while attempting to preach self-denial and victory over

lusts of the flesh to others. How can he preach with faith or power, while the voice within is constantly saying, "Physician heal thyself?"

But there is an important principle involved in this matter that must not be over-looked. Such a man *is in eminent danger of backsliding*. The man that can deliberately persevere in one act that he knows to be wrong, *may*, and *will* whenever the temptation to do so is equally strong, practice any other wrong act. Say not this is a small matter, and is not to be compared to great moral evils; it is by far a greater matter than that to which the apostle refers in the above passage; he was speaking of eating meat, which was lawful and harmless in the abstract of any conscience concerning it; and even in that, "he that doubteth is damned if he eat,"—because by such an act he reveals a state of mind that is prepared for any other sin whenever the temptation to it is strong enough. He has broken down the hedge upon which his safety depended; having gone contrary to the voice of conscience and of God in one thing, what security has he that he will not do it in any other. The breach once made in the levy, who can tell when and where it will stop. Brethren, how many of you are standing in so fearful a position? We hope, at least, soon to see the ministry, and especially all who profess entire consecration to God, abandon the pipe and quit at once and forever.

"I have tried, and cannot quit it." Then there is one thing you cannot do—one chain you cannot break. Then of course you are doomed to live and die a bondman. But hold—how did you try? Did you make it a *religious* matter? Did you do it by faith! Did you say in your heart, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me?*" As a Christian, as a man who walks by faith, you may avail yourself of the power of Omnipotence to conquer this and every other evil. Will you try it? This is so weak; many never do anything but *try*;—will you, in the name and strength of Christ, *quit*, at once, this sin? A victory by faith on this point will give increased confidence, and consequently increased power to conquer every other sin that now troubles you.—*Unity Magazine*.

IS IT RIGHT ?

This is a question which, it seems to me, is not asked with sufficient frequency and seriousness. By this question, however, should every course of conduct and case of conscience be tested.

Is it right? "Well, I do not think any special harm can result from it." That is more than you can decide. None but God can foresee consequences. Though it may seem to be but a slight deviation from the rigid law of rectitude, it must do harm to yourself, and may result in injury to others. A little wrong is an "offending in one point." "Little foxes destroy the vines."

Is it right? "Why, everybody does so." "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." We are not responsible nor accountable in masses, but as individuals. We never lose our personality in a crowd; and every wrong done in association with others is as distinctly marked as though it were done in solitude, and must be answered for alone.

Is it right? "It is popular. I shall be commended and praised for it." But human praise cannot change the inherent character of the action. There is no alchemy in words and smiles to transmute the dross of wrong into the gold of right. Better have the approval of thine own heart than the empty praise of crowds.

Is it right? "It seems expedient." Well, the right will always be found the expedient in the end. But some persons think that strict right may, in some cases, be sacrificed to a present expediency. Expediency in such a case is but apology for wrong. It means, Let us do a little evil that good may come. But evil never yet begat good. Good is never the progeny of such evil. It is a universal law, that every seed produces fruit of its own kind; and though God may sometimes, in His wise providence, crush the evil seed that human expediency has planted, and deposit, invisibly to us, good seed in its place, yet the damnation is no less just of those who say, "Let us do evil that good may come."

Is it right? "It is human nature." But human nature is all wrong; and grace is given us for its subduing and sanctification. He who follows the impulses of his carnal nature, is supplying alimony to strengthen "the old man with his deeds." It is a sad proof of our degeneracy, that the right almost always implies self-denial, self-crucifixion.

Is it right? "It is pleasant." Sin makes itself palatable to our depraved nature. But when right and enjoyment present themselves as claimants for our choice, and we must give up the one to gain the other, which shall be sacrificed? Woe to us if we trample upon right in our scramble after pleasure!

Is it right? "If it is not, I cannot help it." Well, nothing is wrong that is forced. If you are literally compelled to do

wrong, if it is against the consent of your will, utterly repugnant to your choice, it is no wrong to you. But this you know to be untrue. If you do wrong, it is because you choose to do it; and, all things considered, prefer it.

“BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD.”

There is great danger that you may be. There cling to our natures elements of depravity, even after our introduction into the kingdom of Christ, by which this world may draw us into affinity with itself too close for eminent spirituality. So peculiar and intimate are our relations to the world, that a too complaisant disposition, a desire of pleasing, a fear of offending, a dread of ridicule, a shrinking from singularity, may influence us to a hurtful affiliation with its spirit and manners.

When I notice that a professed follower of Jesus Christ manifests a more absorbing desire for temporal than for spiritual prosperity, for the accumulation of wealth than for promoting the glory of God, and is more earnest to procure for his children a coffer of gold than a crown of life, I want affectionately to say to him, “*Be not conformed to this world.*”

When I hear a professor of religion conversing with animation and interest about crops, markets, politics, news, and fashions, and then notice that he is silent and indifferent when religious subjects are themes of conversation, I want to remind him of the exhortation of Paul, “*Be not conformed to this world.*”

When I observe a professor of religion seeking and enjoying the society of ungodly men more than that of the saints, more punctual and cheerful in his attendance at the social and convivial party than at the prayer-meeting and the sanctuary, I should like kindly to whisper in his ear, “*Be not conformed to this world.*”

When I behold a professor of religion panting and grasping after the plaudits and honours of earth, eager to bind about his temples a fading wreath, climbing upon a crumbling pedestal of earthly fame, I want to direct his eye to the exhortation, “*Be not conformed to this world.*”

When I see a female Christian professor decorated with the gaudy trappings of fashion, eager to catch the gaze and admiration of the vain and thoughtless, imitating the glitter of the dissolute, and exciting the envy of the poor, I want to thunder in her ear, so loudly as to startle and awaken her conscience, “*Be not conformed to this world.*”

When I observe a mother, professing to be a Christian, sending her children to the ball-room, the fashionable assembly, and the festive party, among the profligate and the licentious, to perfect their education, and polish their manners, whilst I weep for her children, I want to repeat to the misguided parent the charge of Paul, "*Be not conformed to this world.*"

HERE ARE THE MOUTHS, BUT WHERE IS THE MEAT?

I remember (observes Bishop Hall) a great man coming into my house, at Waltham, and seeing all my children standing in the order of their age and stature, said, "These are they that make rich men poor." But he straight received this answer, "Nay, my Lord, these are they that make a poor man rich; for there is not one of these whom we would part with for all your wealth." It is easy to observe that none are so grapple and hard-fisted as the childless; whereas those who, for the maintenance of large families, are inured to frequent disbursements, find such experience of Divine Providence in the faithful management of their affairs, that they lay out with more cheerfulness those they receive. Wherein their care must be abated when God takes it off from them to Himself; and, if they be not wanting to themselves, the faith gives them ease in casting their burden upon Him, who has more power and more right to it, since our children are more like than our own. He that feedeth the young ravens, (Psalm cxxv. 9.) can He fail the best of His creatures? Worthy Master Gresham tells us of a gentlewoman who, coming into the cottage of a poor neighbour, and seeing it furnished with a store of children, could say, "Here are the mouths, but where is the meat?" But not long after she was paid in her own coin; for the poor woman coming to her after the burial of her last and now only child, inverted the question upon her: "Here is the meat, but where are the mouths?"

LOSS AND GAIN.

I remember (says the Rev. George Burder) reading of a woman whose house was on fire. She was very active in removing her goods, but forgot her child, who was sleeping in the cradle. In length she remembered the babe, and ran with earnest desire to save it. But it was now too late! The flames forbade

entrance. Judge of her agony of mind when she exclaimed, "O, my child! my child!" Just so it will be with many a poor sinner, who was all his life "careful, and troubled about many things," while the "one thing needful" was forgotten. What will it then avail for a man to say, "I got a good place, or a good trade, but lost my soul! I got a large fortune, but lost my soul! I got many friends, but God is my enemy! I lived in pleasure, but now pleasure is my everlasting portion! I clothed my body gaily, but my soul is naked before God!"

SABBATH RAIN.

"It is very bad for the health to sit in a place of worship with wet clothes and damp feet."

Well, it is. At the same time, Sabbath rain is not worse than week-day rain, although there is apparently a much greater terror about it. The following considerations may suit the case of some "far-weather" church-goers.

1. *It is as bad for the Minister as for the people; and yet he must be there.* Through rain, and snow, and cold he must go; or, if he can; but if not, *he must go.* His health is no better than that of the male members of his congregation generally; usually not so good. And if the rain furnishes no excuse for *his* absence, it furnishes none for *theirs.* If you say it is *his business* to go, so it is *theirs:* there is one law for both. And,

2. *A wedding, a concert, a party, a fair, seldom waits for weather.* They are never put off on account of the storm. You may have noticed that when people are *excited*, they rarely suffer from exposure. If there were a little more *interest* in church-going, a little moreunction in the worshippers, would it not be favourable to health?

3. *Bad weather reduces a congregation quite out of proportion to almost every other gathering of people.* Why, the other day, (says one,) a Thursday meeting was given up on account of the weather, no one but the Minister and one lady coming, which was hardly enough to plead the promise and secure the *stagnation*; and yet the Minister met some twenty-five people that evening assembled in a parlour, who seemed to be quite unconscious that it was *raining!* And how they ever got there on a day without soiling their dresses or getting damp feet, has been a mystery to him ever since. Here was a religious meeting broken up, and a social party reduced only about *twenty per cent.*, and all by the same storm. How is it that the rain is so much more

terrible "hard by the synagogue," than it is about town? It is quite true that many "women and children" are precluded from attending God's house in storms. But verily ninety-nine per cent is *too much to allow for necessary absences* in a common congregation. We should be less the sport of circumstances. Satan waits not for fair weather. He does his work in "thunder, lightning, and in rain;" and we ought to be as busy as he. God has never said, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary, *except when it storms.*"

THE TREE THAT NEVER FADES.

"Mary," said George, "next summer I will not have a garden. Our pretty tree is dying; and I won't love another tree as long as I live. I will have a bird next summer, and that will stay all winter."

"George, don't you remember my beautiful canary-bird? It died in the middle of the summer, and we planted bright flowers on the ground where we buried it. My bird did not live as long as the tree."

"Well, I don't see we can love anything. Dear little brother died before the bird; and I loved him better than any bird, or tree, or flower. O, I wish we could have something to love which wouldn't die!"

The day passed. During the school-hours, George and Mary had almost forgotten that their tree was dying; but at evening they drew their chairs to the table at which their mother was sitting, and began to arrange the seeds they had been gathering. The remembrance of the tree came upon them.

"Mother," said Mary, "you may give these seeds to John: I never want another garden."

"Yes," added George, pushing the papers in which he had carefully folded them towards his mother, "you may give them away. If I could find some seeds of a tree that would never die I should like then to have a garden. I wonder, mother, if there ever was such a garden?"

"Yes, George: I have read of a garden where the trees never die."

"A real garden, mother?"

"Yes, my son. In the middle of the garden, I have been told, there runs a pure river of water, clear as crystal, and on each bank of the river is *the tree of life*, a tree that never fades. That is to

en is heaven. There you may love, and live for ever. There will be no death, no fading there. Let your treasure be in the tree of life, and you will have something to which your young hearts will cling, without fear and without disappointment. Love the Saviour here, and He will prepare you to dwell in those green pastures, and beside those still waters."

LETTERS FROM A MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTERS.

Written many years ago by the wife of a Wesleyan Minister.

In the introductory letter the writer thus prefaced her instructions:—"It is the extreme desire I feel for your present and eternal happiness which prompts me to address you on the following subjects. They have already been treated in a manner so superior to anything I can advance, that I should despair of my undertaking, were it not for the hopes I feel that your affection will lead you to more than ordinary attention to what a mother suggests. Perhaps these letters may exist when I am no more. The solicitude I have felt from the earliest dawn of reason in each of you, is known only to God and myself. I have, on this account, often wept when you were asleep; and for this cause I have many times poured out my soul in cries and tears when you have been repeating yourself in the innocent playfulness of childhood. It was to fix right ideas of things in your minds that I strove in infancy to engage your attention by every object my imagination could devise. For this purpose I proposed different exercises for every thing, and viewed with pleasure that you were never more entertained or delighted than when your understandings were exercised, and you comprehended the truths I wished to inculcate."

LETTER I.

ON THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

MY DEAR GIRLS,—There is no exercise which opens so large a field of entertainment and instruction as reading. It excludes idleness and dulness, banishes solitude, and precludes the necessity of going to company for recreation. It expands the intellectual powers, makes us familiar with the characters of great men, and presents to us the heroic deeds of former ages; presents to us the wonders of nature and providence, and brings before us objects to engage our understanding, the affections, and the fancy. I was early taught to value this exercise, and soon learned to love it; nor do I

recollect ever being at a loss how to employ myself, when a
if a suitable book lay within my reach.

But, as in travelling, you must choose a particular road, if
wish to arrive at a particular place, so in reading, if you wish
obtain knowledge, you must fix your choice of books; otherwise
you may spend all your life in reading, and be no wiser when
have done. There are some books which I would have you
scientifically read, and give some part of every day, if you can
time, to a particular perusal of them: such are those which treat
Experimental and Practical Religion. Amongst these, without
doubt, the Bible holds the highest rank, and, in truth, comprehends
every excellence. Let this sacred book be esteemed by you with
reverence and delight; read your duty in it, and copy out its
blessed lineaments which made the Saviour of the world
example for all His followers. Venerate those blessed records
the word of life, and form your lives by the precepts contained
them. Next to the Bible, in the class of religious works, I would
rank the Lives of eminent Christians. These hold a faithful
to the sacred oracle, and are silent but powerful witnesses to
veracity. Polemic Divinity our sex have seldom time to im-
gate; nor do I think it necessary. In general, the argument
strain is severe, and rather tends to promote a decisive dictatorial
manner in conversation, which is totally opposite to that gentleness
and humility which ought at all times to be the ornament of
female character. Mr. Fletcher's works you might read with
danger of this fault: his reasoning is at once mild and strong,
affectionate and conclusive. With Mr. Wesley's writings I
wish you to be well acquainted: his Sermons will instruct
clearly in the principal points of divinity; and they have
advantage above those of many, that they address themselves
immediately to the comprehension, being full, concise, and to the
point. Next to divinity, I should recommend History. There
you see the footsteps of Providence in empires and kingdoms,
provinces and cities. There you see the consequences of
ambition and revenge, and the operation of power and passion.
There you behold a series of events forming one great chain,
concurring to answer the several ends of Divine wisdom in the
lower world. In this, as well as in other branches of useful know-
ledge, you must remember I am not recommending the study of
history: this is out of the province of most females. I only recom-
mend such a general knowledge as may assist you in contemplating
the wisdom and goodness of God, and also aid you in joining

versation as may include such subjects; superseding the low trash of common chit-chat, and the poor insipid remarks of ordinary discourse.

Your own country will hold the first rank in this perusal, as it has the strongest claims upon your regard and preference. Many circumstances render the history of England particularly interesting.

That a little island of savages, unknown and undiscovered till a few days just preceding our Saviour's birth, should become the seat of refinement, the residence of literature and polite arts, *the home of religion*,—that an island once enslaved and shackled, should command the ocean, and bring from the remotest parts every commodity to commerce and comfort,—this must have been accomplished by the interference of that Providence who looks upon the whole creation at a glance.*

You should wish you to read Ancient History; to notice the rise, progress, and decay of the four great monarchies; and especially to notice "the days of these last Kings, the setting up of a kingdom that shall never be destroyed." In the fulfilment of prophecy, you will find a powerful testimony to the veracity of the sacred records. You will do well, also, to gain such a general knowledge of Geography as may assist you in reading history; and of the elements of Astronomy as will teach you something of the relative importance of this "mundane sphere," bringing many curious and wonderful truths to light; all which subjects worthy of a rational mind, and tending to lead to the glory of God. †

Biographies and Travels, are useful and entertaining; but you must compare one account with another, and not receive as conclusive evidence all "tales of travellers." I should wish you to add Lives and Biography in your choice of books. It is, when faithful, the sacred history of mankind. I do not mean that you should devote yourselves wholly to religious biography: the lives of persons renowned for learning, valour, or enterprise, will act as a stimulus; they will strengthen and expand the mind. You will do well to peruse the moral essays of Addison, Steele, Johnson,

It may be well to remark here, once for all, that when these letters were written, Christian Missions to the heathen world did not hold the commanding position which they now occupy, or else doubtless the devoted writer of them would have seen other reasons why this should have intercourse with all the nations of the earth.

To do all this is to enter fairly on the *study of history*, and wisely to keep beyond the limit which the modest writer of the letter herself should have overpassed.—EDITOR.

and Knox. These, with other works of a miscellaneous nature have a good tendency in informing the mind on matters of common life. I must not forget to mention Natural History, as an object of attention; it displays the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty and is a pleasing source of rational entertainment*.

I wish you to acquire a taste for elegant Poetry: it gives polish to genius, and tends to refine the pleasures of the imagination. But too much indulgence would enervate the mind, and degrees vitiate your taste, as also make your style in writing firm and more ornamental.

In addition to what I have said respecting books, let me guard you against two errors. The first is reading in a *desultory manner*; the second error is reading too *hastily*. Do not read to acquire information that you may shine and be admired; but because you are ignorant, and because the Almighty has blessed you with understandings capable of being informed. And always remember that, be as diligent as you may, you can know but little to what is already known by others; and that which is known by others is nothing to the perfection of knowledge which angels and disembodied spirits possess; and their highest attainment bears proportion to the wisdom of the Infinite Mind. The consideration is sufficient to silence human pride.

If you have it in your power to choose your time for reading and can afford two or three hours every day, I should recommend you to read books of piety before breakfast; history, biography, travels, &c., in the afternoon and evening; and to close your day with the sacred writings. But you must remember that duty of greater importance must not yield to your love of knowledge. The less yield to the greater; bearing in mind that the ultimate end of knowledge is to make us more fit for those duties which we are called to practise in the station of life we are appointed to fill.

May God bless you, my dear girls, and fully qualify you to answer the end of your creation: then shall I rejoice to be what I can truly subscribe myself, Your ever-affectionate Mother

THE SLANDERER.

The slanderer is a pest, a disgrace, an incubus to society, should be subjected to show cauterization, and then be lopped like a disagreeable excrescence. Like the viper, he leaves a shining trail in his wake. Like a tarantula, he weaves a web of candor with a *web* of wiles, or with all the kind mendacious

* Not "entertainment" only, but invaluable instruction.—E. C.

whispers forth his tale, that, "like the fabling Nile, no man knows." The dead—ay, even the dead—over whose shrouded forms sleeps the dark sleep no venom'd tongue can speak, and whose pale lips have then no voice to plead, are subjected to the scandalous attack of the slanderer—

"Who wears a mask that Gorgon would disown,
A cheek of parchment, and an eye of stone."

I think it is Pollok who says the slanderer is the foulest whelp of sin, whose tongue was set on fire in hell, and whose legs were set with haste to propagate the lie his soul had framed.

"He has a lip of lies, a face formed to conceal,
That, without feeling, mocks at those who feel."

There is no animal I despise more than these moths and scraws of society, the malicious censurers—

"These ravenous fishes, who follow only in the wake
Of great ships, because, perchance, they're great."

O, who would disarrange all society with their false lap-winged lies! The slanderer makes few direct charges and assertions. His long, envious fingers point to no certain locality. He has an indolent shrug of the shoulders, can give peculiar glances,

"Or convey a libel by a frown,
Or wink a reputation down."

He seems to glory in the misery he entails. The innocent wear the foulest impress of his smutty palm, and a soul pure as "Arctic snow twice dotted by the northern blast," through his warped and colored glasses wears a mottled hue.

"A whisper broke the air—
A soft, light tone, and low,
Yet barbed with shame and woe!
Nor might only perish there,
Nor farther go!
Ah, me! a quick and eager ear
Caught up the little meaning sound;
Another voice then breathed it clear,
And so it wandered round,
From ear to lip, from lip to ear,
Until it reached a gentle heart,
And that—*it broke!*"

Woe-wretch! ruiner of fair innocence by foul slanders, in thine dark, raven-plumed soul distilled—

"Blush—if of honest blood a drop remains
To steal its way along thy veins!
Blush—if the bronze long hardened on thy cheek,
Has left one spot where that poor drop can speak!"

Poetry.

F E J E E.

I dream'd of the land where the Fejee dwells,
 I dream'd of the land of the cannibals ;
 Those blood-stain'd isles in the distant sea,
 The abodes of vice and cruelty.
 Dark, O dark, as the shadow of night
 Was the mist that mock'd the piercing sight,
 As though with a thick, a sombre pall,
 'Twere enshrouding the land of the cannibal.

I dream'd again ; and the soil was trod
 By the hallow'd feet of the Man of God ;
 The lamp of truth in his hand he bore,
 As he traced his steps on the crimson'd shore.
 A halo seem'd around him spread,
 'The shadows flee as his footsteps tread ;
 He knelt, he bow'd his spirit in prayer ;
 He rose, he felt that his God was there.

He blew the Gospel trumpet loud ;
 Around him assembled a savage crowd ;
 Demoniac smiles on their visage play'd,
 But he trembled not, nor was he afraid ;
 Unfolding the simple Gospel plan,
 He spake of the love of God to man ;
 Till a cry re-echoed from shore to shore,
 " Why did you not tell us of this before ?"

I dream'd, and wafted on the breeze
 Came sounds of angel melodies ;
 The Fejee bows before the Lord,
 He pleads the promise of his word :
 His prayer of faith is heard in heaven,
 He knows, he feels his sins forgiven,
 And shouts of holy rapture rise,
 And swell the chorus of the skies.

Salop.

S. A.