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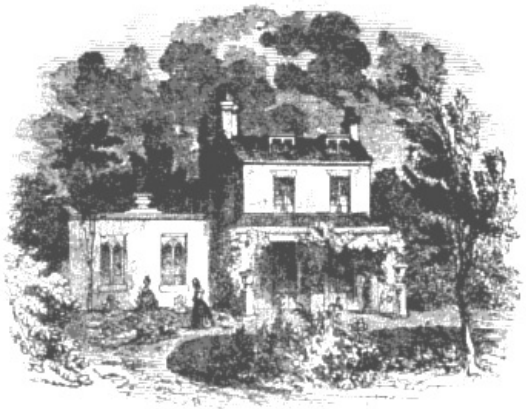
Anecdotes for Boys



Mrs. S. C. Hall's Residence Brompton.—
***See page* 118.**

A N E C D O T E S

FOR

B O Y S .

ENTERTAINING NARRATIVES AND ANECDOTES,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTER.

BY

HARVEY NEWCOMB,

AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE A LADY," "HOW TO BE A MAN," ETC.

SIXTH THOUSAND.

BOSTON:
GOULD AND LINCOLN,
59 WASHINGTON STREET.
1851.

STEREOTYPED BY S. N. DICKINSON, BOSTON.

PREFACE.

[v]

I HAVE noticed that young people are fond of reading anecdotes, narratives, parables, &c. This taste of theirs sometimes leads them to devour all the trash that comes in their way, with no other object than mere amusement. But, if properly guarded, it may be the means of conveying truth to their minds in a form not only more attractive, but more readily understood. The design of this book is, to supply reading of this kind, which shall be not only *entertaining* but *instructive*. I never write for the amusement of the reader merely. But I am glad if he is entertained at the same time that he is instructed.

This book is not a mere compilation of stories. Its main object is to illustrate truth and character. No anecdote has been admitted but such as could be turned to this account; and if suited to this purpose, the question has not been asked whether it [vi] was new or old. But nearly every one has been entirely rewritten, presented in a new dress, and made to bear on the object in view. The work was suggested, while writing my last two publications, "How to be a Man," and "How to be a Lady." I had designed to illustrate the topics there treated of, in this manner, but could not find space. The favor with which these works have been received, has encouraged me to undertake something of the kind separately. I have prepared two volumes, one for boys and one for girls, but the matter in each is entirely distinct. The same anecdote is in no instance introduced into both books; though in some cases the topics are similar. They form *a pair*, for the rising youth of both sexes; and if they shall contribute in any degree towards forming their characters, after the true model, my object will be attained.

Grantville, Mass., Sept. 1847.

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ANECDOTES FOR BOYS.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOY MAKES THE MAN.

A MAN'S character is formed early in life. There may be some exceptions. In some instances, very great changes take place after a person has grown to manhood. But, even in such cases, many of the early habits of thought, feeling, and action still remain. And sometimes, we are disappointed in the favorable appearances of early life. Not unfrequently the promising boy, in youth or early manhood, runs a rapid race downward in the road to ruin. All the promising appearances failed, because they were not formed upon religious principle and a change of heart. But, as a general rule, show me the *boy*, and I will show you the *man*. The following cases afford illustrations of this principle. [10]

Benedict Arnold.

I suppose all my readers have heard of Benedict Arnold, the traitor; and of his attempt to betray his country into the hands of the British, during the Revolutionary War. His name is a by-word in the mouth of every lover of liberty in the land. But there are few that know how he came to be such a character. When we come to learn his early history we feel no more surprise. His father was an intemperate man; and at an early age, Benedict was placed with an apothecary, in Norwich, Connecticut, his native town. His master soon discovered in him the most offensive traits of character. He seemed to be entirely destitute of moral principle, and even of conscience. He added to a passionate love of mischief a cruel disposition and a violent, ungovernable temper. He had no sympathy with any thing that was good. His boyish pleasures were of the criminal and unfeeling cast. He would rob the nests of birds, and mangle and maim the young ones, that he might be diverted by their mother's cries. He would throw broken pieces of glass into the street, where the children passed barefooted, that they might hurt their feet. He would persuade the little boys to come round the door of his shop, and then beat them with a horse-whip. All this showed a malicious disposition, and great hardness of heart. He hated instruction and despised reproof; and his master could not instil into his mind any religious or moral principles, nor make any good impression upon his heart. [11]

Before Benedict had reached his sixteenth year, he twice enlisted as a soldier and was brought back by his friends. He repaid his mother's kindness with baseness and ingratitude; so that, between the intemperance and wretchedness of the father, and the cruelty and depravity of the son, she died of a broken heart. When he grew up, the same character followed him. We need not be surprised, then, that, in the most critical period of his country's history, he betrayed his trust. He was a General in the American Army, in the Revolutionary War; and by his extravagance, and his overbearing behavior, he brought upon himself a reprimand from the American Congress. His temper, naturally impetuous, had never been controlled, and he could not bear reproof. He was bent on revenge; and to accomplish it, he entered into a negotiation, through Major André, to deliver up West Point, of which he had the command, to the enemy. If the plot had not been discovered and prevented it would have been a very great calamity to our country. It might have turned the scale against us. I have some personal reason to feel indignant at the traitor, besides what arises from the love of country; for my father was on picket guard at West Point, the night in which it was to have been delivered up, and would have been the first man killed. If Arnold had been caught, he would have closed his career on the gallows; but, as it was, he escaped, and a more worthy man suffered. He received, as the reward of his treachery, the appointment of Brigadier General in the British Army, and ten thousand pounds sterling. But his name will go down with the history of his [12]

country, to the latest generation, black with infamy. He was a bad boy, and he made a bad man. And, as Solomon has said, “The name of the wicked shall rot.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

A single incident, in the history of *George Washington as a boy*, furnishes a clew to the character of *George Washington as a man*. I refer to the well known story of the [13] new hatchet and the cherry-tree, with his refusing to tell a lie; which I need not repeat, because it is preserved in the books that are read in our common schools, and embalmed in the memory of the rising generation. This incident shows that he had already in his bosom a deep-seated principle of stern integrity, which no temptation could shake. This was the leading feature in his character when he became a man. We have evidence, also, from other incidents which have been related of his early life, that strong, deep-seated, filial piety, was one of the prominent elements of his youthful character. He had learned, in early life, to honor and obey his parents; and this taught him to love and reverence his country, instead of making himself a despot, as most successful generals do. But, at the bottom of all, was the religious element. Religious principle controlled his conduct both in private and public life.

GOVERNOR RITNER.

Joseph Ritner, who was for some time a member of the legislature of Pennsylvania, and afterwards Governor of that state, was once a bound boy to Jacob Myers, an independent farmer, who brought him up. While he was governor, there was a [14] celebration of the fourth of July, at which Mr. Myers gave the following toast:—“Joseph Ritner—he was always a *good boy*, and has still grown better; every thing he did, he always did *well*; he made a good *farmer*, and a good legislator; and he makes a *very good governor*.” All this man’s greatness was the result of his being a *good boy*.

ROGER SHERMAN.

Roger Sherman, in his public life, always acted so strictly from his own convictions of what was right, that Fisher Ames used to say, if he happened to be out of his seat in Congress when a subject was discussed, and came in when the question was about to be taken, he always felt safe in voting as Mr. Sherman did, “*for he always voted right*.” This was Mr. Sherman’s character everywhere. But, if we inquire how it came to be such we must go back to his early life.

Mr. Sherman’s character was formed upon the principles of the Bible. And, when he was an apprentice, instead of joining in the rude and vulgar conversation, so common among the class to which he then belonged, he would sit at his work with a book before him, devoting every moment to study, that his eyes could be spared from [15] the occupation in which he was engaged. When he was twenty-one years of age he made a profession of religion. He was as familiar with theology as he was with politics and law. He read the Bible more than any other book. Always, when he went to Congress, he would purchase a copy of the Bible, at the commencement of the session, to read every day; and when he went home, he would present it to one of his children. Mr. Macon, of Georgia, said of him, that he had more common sense than any man he ever knew. Mr. Jefferson, one day, as he was pointing out to a friend the distinguished men in Congress, said of him, “That is Mr. Sherman, a man who *never said a foolish thing in his life*.” Mr. Sherman was a self-educated man, a shoemaker, *and a Christian*. He was brought up, after the old New-England fashion, in a pious Connecticut family. *And, as was the boy, so was the man.* If you would be a good man, you must be a good boy. If you would be a wise man you must be a studious boy. If you would have an excellent character, it must be formed after the model delineated in the Holy Bible. The basis must be a change of heart. The

superstructure must be laid up on the principles of God’s word.

CHAPTER II.

FILIAL PIETY.

BY *Filial Piety*, I mean the exercise of those feelings of reverence, submission, and love; and the faithful and conscientious discharge of those duties, which children owe their parents.

The first duty which man owes, is to *God*; the second, to his *Parents*. They are his appointed guardians, in the season of helplessness and inexperience. God has entrusted him to their care; and in return for that care, he requires *honor and obedience*. A child cannot be pious toward God without being pious toward his parents. The *corner stone* of a good character must be laid in piety towards God; the rest of the foundation, in piety towards Parents. Show me the boy that honors his parents, and I will show you the man that will obey the laws of his country, and make a good citizen. Show me the boy that is disobedient to his parents, and turbulent and ungovernable at home, and I will show you the man that will set at naught the laws of his country, and be ready to every evil work. When a boy ceases to respect his father or to love his mother, and becomes tired of home and its sacred endearments, there is very little hope of him.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

When George Washington was about fourteen years of age, he wanted to join the Navy. Accordingly, all the arrangements were made for him, in company with several of his young companions, to go on board a man of war. When the time arrived, he went into the sitting-room, to take leave of his mother. He found her in tears. He threw his arms about her neck and kissed her, and was about bidding her “farewell;” but seeing her so much afflicted, he suddenly relinquished his purpose. The boat which was taking officers, men, and baggage, from the shore to the ship, went back and forth, in his sight. At length it came ashore for the last time. A signal flag was raised to show that all was ready. George was standing, viewing all these movements. Several of his companions now entered the boat, and as they approached the ship, signal guns were fired; and soon after, the sails rose majestically, one after another. George could no longer bear the sight, but entered the room where his mother sat. Observing that his countenance bore a strong expression of grief, she said, “I fear, my son, that you have repented your determination to stay at home and make me happy.” “My dear mother,” he replied, placing his arms round her neck, and giving vent to his feelings in a gush of tears, “I did strongly wish to go; but I could not endure being on board the ship, and know that you were unhappy.” He was young, ardent, and ambitious, and had doubtless anticipated, with great delight, the pleasure he should have, in sailing to different places, on board a man of war; and, although the expectation of pleasure which boys sometimes indulge, in the prospect of a sea-faring life are delusive; yet, it was a noble generosity to sacrifice all the high hopes he had cherished, to the feelings of his mother.

Obey God rather than man.

As a general thing, it is the duty of children to obey their parents; but, when a parent commands what is wrong, the child should not obey. A poor woman told her

son to cut down a large pear tree, which stood in the garden of the cottage where they lived, for firewood, as they were suffering from cold. The boy made no answer. His mother repeated her command; but he still hesitated, and said, “Mother, I ought to obey you, but I must first obey God. The tree is not ours. It belongs to our landlord; and you know that God says, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ I hope you will not make me cut it down.” She yielded, for the time; but after suffering from cold a day or two longer, she told him he must cut down the tree. He then said to her, “Mother; God has often helped us, and supplied our wants when we have been in trouble. Let us wait till this time to-morrow. Then, if we do not find some relief, though I am sure it will be wrong, yet if you make me do it, I will cut the tree in obedience to your command.” To this she agreed. The boy retired to his closet, and prayed earnestly that God would help them, and save him from being compelled to break his law. The next morning, he went out and found a man whose wagon had broken down under a heavy load of coal. He told the man his case, who agreed to let him carry away the coal, and they might pay for it, if they were able, when he called for it. But he never called. It is *always safe to do right*.

A son’s love.

[20]

A man in Sweden was condemned to suffer death for some offences committed while he held a public office. He had a son, about eighteen years of age; who, as soon as he heard of it, hastened to the judge and begged that he might be allowed to suffer instead of his father. The judge wrote to the king about it; who was so affected by it that he sent orders to grant the father a free pardon, and confer upon the son a title of honor. This, however, the son refused to receive. “Of what avail,” said he, “could the most exalted title be to me, humbled as my family already is in the dust?” The king wept, when he heard of it, and sent for the young man to his court.

Filial piety rewarded.

Frederick, king of Prussia, one day rung his bell, and nobody answering, opened the door and found his page fast asleep. Seeing a letter in his pocket, he took it out and read it, and found it was a letter from his mother, thanking him for having sent a part of his wages to relieve her wants. The king was so much pleased that he slipped [21]
a bag full of ducats into the young man’s pocket, along with the letter.

Filial Tenderness.

A young man, newly admitted to the military school in France, would eat nothing but bread and soup, and drink nothing but water. He was reproved for his singularity; but still he would not change. He was finally threatened with being sent home, if he persisted. “You will not, I hope, be displeased with me,” said he to the Principal of the institution; “but I could not bring myself to enjoy what I think a luxury, while I reflect that my dear father and mother are in the utmost indigence. They could afford themselves and me no better food than the coarsest of bread, and of that but very little. Here I have excellent soup, and as much fine wheat bread as I choose. I look upon this to be very good living; and the recollection of the situation in which I left my parents, would not permit me to indulge myself by eating any thing else.”

Filial impiety punished.

God has promised long life and prosperity to the child that honors his parents. Of course, this promise is not meant to be *absolute*; for many die before they have an [22]
opportunity of obeying the command, and others are taken away for wise reasons. But, as a general principle, the promise is verified. On the contrary, the word of God declares, “The eye that mocketh at his father, and scorneth to obey his mother, the

ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it;" meaning that God will visit with sore punishment those that despise and ill-treat their parents. Boys, when they begin to approach manhood, are very apt to think themselves wiser than their parents, and to be restive and turbulent under restraint. Two young men in England, the sons of pious and wealthy parents, wanted the family carriage to ride out and seek their pleasure on the holy Sabbath. This being repeatedly refused, they resolved to resent it; and accordingly went off with the determination to go to sea. Their father sent word to Rev. Mr. Griffin, of Portsea, requesting him to find them, and try to persuade them to return. He did so; and among other things, urged the feelings of their parents; who, after watching over them with so much care and tender anxiety, must now see all their hopes blasted. This touched the heart of the younger, and he consented to return; but the elder was obstinate. The carriage, he [23] said, had been refused, he had made up his mind to go to sea, and to sea he would go. Mr. Griffin then requested the young man to go with him to his house, and he would get him a ship that he might go out as a man and a gentleman. This he declined, giving as a reason, that it would make his parents *feel* to have it said that their son went out as a common sailor; as a common sailor, therefore, he would go. "Is that your disposition?" said Mr. Griffin; "then, young man, go; and while I say, God go with you, be sure your sin will find you out, and for it God will bring you into judgment." The younger son was restored to his parents, while all traces of the elder were lost, and he was mourned for as for one dead.

After a considerable time, a sailor called on Mr. Griffin, and informed him that there was a young man on board one of the ships in the harbor, under sentence of death, who wanted to see him. What was his astonishment, on finding the young man, who had gone to sea to be revenged on his parents for refusing him a sinful indulgence, a prisoner, manacled and guarded! "I have sent for you," said the young man, "to take my last farewell of you in this world, and to bless you for your efforts to restore me to a sense of my duty. Would to God that I had taken your advice; but it is [24] now to late. My sin *has* found me out, and for it God *has* brought me into judgment." Mr. Griffin spent some time with the young man in conversation and prayer; and then hastened to London, to see if he could not get him pardoned. But, when he arrived there, the warrant had already been sent for the young man's execution. He returned home, and arrived on the morning that the young man was to be executed. Within a few minutes after his arrival came a pardon, with which he hastened to the ship, where he met the young man's father, in the greatest agony, as he was returning from taking, as he supposed, his last farewell of his son. Mr. Griffin entered the vessel at the moment when the prisoner, pinioned for execution, was advancing towards the fatal spot. In a few moments, he was restored to the embrace, of his father. Thus he suffered shame and ignominy, and the agonies of death, as a punishment for his disobedience to his parents; though, in consequence of his penitence, his life was spared.

Think how you will feel when your parents are gone.

A young man was lamenting the death of a most affectionate parent. His companions, to console him, said that he had always behaved to the deceased with [25] tenderness, duty, and respect. "So I thought," he replied, "while my parent was living; but now I recollect with pain and sorrow, many instances of disobedience and neglect, for which, alas, it is too late to make any atonement." If you would avoid this bitter reflection, ask yourself, when disposed to do any thing that will grieve your parents, "With what feelings shall I think of this, when they are dead and gone?"

Benefit of Obedience.

A boy wishing, one afternoon, to go with some other boys, on a sailing excursion, asked permission of his mother, which was not granted. After a severe struggle in his mind between inclination and duty, he gave up his anticipated pleasure, and

remained at home. The other boys went. A sudden flaw of wind capsized their boat, and two of them were drowned. The boy, when he heard of it, was much affected, and said to his mother, "*After this I shall always do as you say.*"

Reward of Disobedience.

Another boy was charged by his father, as he was going away, to be gone a few [26] days, not to go on the pond. Saturday, being his holiday, he asked permission of his mother to go a skating. She told him he might skate about in the fields and by the sides of the road, on such patches of ice as he could find; "but," said she, "be sure you do not go on the pond." He went out; and contrary to the strict charges he had received from his parents, he went on the pond. He thought there was no danger; for the ice was a foot thick. But there was a place that had been cut open to get ice, where he and his companions fell in, and he was drowned!

Some years ago, a boy in Woburn, named William Wheat, came to a terrible end in consequence of disobedience to his parents. Three Sabbaths before his death, he left the Sabbath School, and went to a public house—a place where no boy should go, on any day, unless sent on business. The next Sabbath, his teacher reproved him, and he was very angry, and declared it was the last time he should ever enter the Sabbath School; which proved true. The next Sabbath, he did not go; and the following Wednesday, he got an old gun barrel, which his parents had repeatedly forbidden him to meddle with, and charging it with powder, applied a lucifer match, to "fire off his *cannon*," as he called it. The gun burst and killed him instantly. Here was a boy of [27] a turbulent ungovernable disposition, despising the authority of his parents and the law of God. He only came to the end to which the road, in which he walked, naturally leads.

Boys should never attempt to set up their own judgment against that of their parents. When a parent denies the requests of his children, he does it, not to deprive them of pleasure, but because he sees a good reason for it. If the child submits, he will one day see that his parents had a good reason, although he could not then perceive it. Let this reflection silence all murmuring: "*My father and mother know better than I.*" The truth of this is clearly proved in the foregoing cases.

Conscientious Obedience.

Some children obey their parents because it is right, and because they love them. This is true, conscientious obedience—the obedience of the heart. And those who render to their parents this kind of obedience, will be just as careful to obey them, when out of their sight, as in their presence; and they will be careful not to *evade* their commands. They only want to know the wishes of their parents, promptly to [28] obey them.

The shouts of half a dozen children were heard from the piazza of one of the large boarding houses at Saratoga Springs—"O yes; that's capital! so we will! Come on now! there's William Hale! Come on, William, we're going to have a ride on the Circular Railway. Come with us?" "Yes, if my mother is willing. I will run and ask her," replied William. "O, O! so you must run and ask your *ma*. Great baby, run along to your ma! Ain't you ashamed? I didn't ask my mother." "Nor I." "Nor I," added half a dozen voices. "Be a man, William," cried the first voice,—"come along with us, if you don't want to be called a coward as long as you live. Don't you see we are all waiting?"

William was standing with one foot advanced, and his hand firmly clenched, in the midst of the group, with flushed brow, flashing eye, compressed lip, and changing cheek, all showing how the epithet *coward* rankled in his breast. It was doubted, for a moment, whether he would have the true bravery to be called a coward rather than do wrong. But, with a voice trembling with emotion, he replied, "I *will not* go without I ask my mother; and I am no coward either. I promised her I would not go from the

house without permission, and I *should* be a base coward, if I were to tell her a wicked lie.” [29]

In the evening, William was walking in the parlor, among the crowd, with his mother, a Southern lady, of gentle, polished manners, who looked with pride on her graceful boy, whose fine face was fairly radiant with animation and intelligence. Well might she be proud of such a son, who could dare to do right, when all were tempting him to do wrong.

Cheerful Obedience, Sullen Obedience, and Disobedience.

When children are away from home, they are bound to obey those to whose care their parents have entrusted them. Three boys, Robert, George, and Alfred, went to spend a week with a gentleman, who took them to be agreeable, well-behaved boys. There was a great pond near his house, with a flood-gate, where the water ran out. It was cold weather, and the pond was frozen over; but the gentleman knew that the ice was very thin near the flood-gate. The first morning after they came, he told them they might go and slide on the pond, if they would not go near the flood-gate. Soon after they were gone, he followed them to see that they were safe. When he got [30] there, he found Robert sliding in the very place where he had told him not to go. This was disobedience outright. George was walking sullenly by the side of the pond, not so much as sliding at all, because he had been forbidden to venture on the dangerous part. This was *sullen obedience*; which is, in reality, no obedience at all, because it comes not from the heart. But Alfred was cheerfully enjoying himself, in a capital long slide, upon a safe part of the pond. This was true obedience. Suddenly, the ice broke where Robert was sliding, he immediately went under water, and it was with difficulty that his life was saved. The gentleman concluded that Alfred was a lad of integrity, but that his two brothers were not to be trusted. Obedience secured him happiness, and the confidence of the kind gentleman with whom he was staying; while the others deprived themselves of enjoyment, lost the gentleman’s confidence, and one of them nearly lost his life; and yet, to slide on the dangerous part of the pond would have added nothing to their enjoyment. They desired it from mere wilfulness, *because it was forbidden*. This disposition indulged, will always lead boys into difficulty; and if they cherish it while boys, it will go with them through life, and keep them always “*in hot water*.”

CHAPTER III. [31]

SOCIAL VIRTUES AND VICES.

Section I.—Brotherly Affection.

Sergeant Glanville.

CUSTOMS vary in different countries. In England, when a man dies without making a will, his property goes to his eldest son. Mr. Glanville, who lived in the days of Charles II., had an eldest son, who was incurably vicious; and seeing no hope of reforming him, the father gave his property to his second son. When Mr. Sergeant Glanville died, and his eldest son learned what was done, he became greatly dejected, and in a short time his character underwent an entire change. When his brother perceived this, he invited him and a party of his friends to a feast. After several dishes had been served, he ordered one, covered up, to be set before his [32] brother; which on being opened, was found to contain the writings that conveyed to him the estate. This, he remarked was what he was sure his father would have done,

had he lived to witness the happy change which they saw.

Generosity of an elder brother.

Mr. H——, an ingenious artist, for want of employment, was reduced to great distress, and applied to his elder brother, who was in good circumstances, and begged some little hovel to live in, and some provision for his support. His brother was melted to tears: "You, my dear brother," said he, "you live in a hovel! You are a man; you are an honor to the family. I am nothing. You shall take this house and estate, and I will be your guest, if you please." The two brothers lived thus affectionately together, as if it had been common property, till the death of the elder put the artist in possession of the whole. How happy every family of brothers would be, if they would thus share with each other all they have! It would save all disputing about *mine* and *thine*. Every one would be equally pleased that his brother was enjoying any thing, as if he had it himself.

Section II.—The Golden Rule.

[33]

GENEROUS BLACKSMITH.

MR. Wilson, passing late one evening by a blacksmith's shop, and hearing the sound of the hammer much later than usual, stepped in to inquire the cause. The man told him that one of his neighbors had just been burned out, and had lost every thing; and he had undertaken to work an hour earlier in the morning and an hour later at night to help him.

"This is kind, in you," said Mr. Wilson; "for I suppose your neighbor will never be able to pay you again."

"I do not expect it," replied the blacksmith; "but if I were in his situation, and he in mine, I am sure he would do as much for me."

The next morning, Mr. Wilson called and offered to lend the blacksmith fifty dollars without interest, so that he might be able to buy his iron cheaper. But the man refused to take it, but told Mr. Wilson that, if he would lend it to the man whose house was burned down, it would go far towards helping him rebuild his cottage. To this, Mr. Wilson consented, and had the pleasure of making two men happy.

[34]

Michael Verin.

Michael Verin, a Florentine youth, was always foremost; and his compositions being more correct than those of any other boy in school, he always obtained the first prize. One of his school-fellows, named Belvicino, studied hard night and day, but could never get the prize. This grieved him so much that he pined away and grew sick. Verin was strongly attached to Belvicino; and, discovering the cause of his illness, he determined to remove it. The next composition day, he made several faults in his Greek version. Belvicino's was judged the best, and he took the prize. This so delighted him that he quickly recovered his health and spirits. But he would never have known to whom he was indebted for his success, had not the preceptor pressed Verin to tell him why he had made such palpable faults in his composition.

Section III.—Gratitude and Benevolence.

[35]

PLANTING TREES.

AN old man was busily employed in planting and grafting an apple tree. Some one

passing by, rudely accosted him with the inquiry, “Why do *you* plant trees, who cannot hope to eat the fruit of them?” The old man raised himself up, and leaning on his spade, replied, “Some one planted trees before I was born, and I have eaten the fruit; I now plant for others, that the memorial of my gratitude may exist when I am dead and gone.” It is a very narrow, selfish feeling that confines our views within the circle of our own private interests. If man had been made to live for himself alone, we may justly conclude that every one would have been made by himself, and his bounds marked out, so that he might live alone. But since God has made us to live in society, he [36] designs that we should be helpful to each other. The truly ingenuous, benevolent mind, takes more pleasure in an act which will confer blessings upon others, than in one that terminates on himself. The selfish man wraps himself in his cloak, and cares not for the sufferings of others, so that he keeps warm himself. This old man, however, remembered how much he was indebted to those who had lived before him, and resolved to pay his debts. If we would look around us, we should find ourselves indebted to others, on every side, for the comforts which we now enjoy—first to God, and under him, to those whom he has employed as his agents to give them to us. Ought we not, then, to strive in some measure to repay these obligations, by doing something to promote the happiness and well-being of others? Who gave us the Gospel? The missionaries, who preached the gospel to our Saxon ancestors, and the Reformers, who opened the treasures of God’s word, when they were hid under the rubbish of Popish superstition. Ought we not, then, in return for this, to send the blessed gospel to those who are now destitute? Who gave us our civil and religious liberties? Our fathers who braved the ocean and the wilderness to establish it, and the sword of the mother country to maintain it. Ought we not, then, to transmit this precious boon to our posterity? And [37] so in whatever direction we look, we shall find some blessing for which we are indebted to the noble generosity, public spirit, or christian benevolence of others. Let us return the blessing, with interest, into the bosom of others. Dr. Franklin, having done a favor to some one, and being pressed with thanks, requested the person whom he had obliged to embrace the first opportunity of doing a kindness to some other person, and request him to pass it round, as all mankind are friends and brothers. A greater than he has said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Thomas Cromwell.

Francis Frescobald, a rich Florentine merchant, had become noted for his liberality to the needy and destitute. A young Englishman, named Thomas Cromwell, the son of a poor man, had gone into Italy with the French army, where he found himself in a destitute condition. Hearing of the liberality of Frescobald, he applied to him for aid; who, having inquired into his circumstances, took him to his house, clothed him genteelly, and kept him till he had recovered his strength. He then gave him a good horse, with sixteen ducats of gold in his pockets; with which, after expressing his [38] gratitude to his benefactor, he made his way home. After his arrival in England, he was taken into the service of Cardinal Wolsey, who was then the favorite of King Henry VIII., and his Prime Minister. After the death of the Cardinal, Cromwell became the King’s favorite; who made him a baron, a viscount, Earl of Essex, and finally, lord chancellor of England.

Frescobald the rich Florentine merchant, by repeated losses both at sea and on the land, was now reduced to poverty. Some English merchants, however, were owing him fifteen thousand ducats, and he came to England to collect the money. The lord chancellor, as he was riding to court, met him in the street, and immediately alighted and embraced him; and without waiting for his old friend to recognize him, invited him to dine with him. Frescobald, after recollecting himself, concluded it must be the young Englishman whom he had assisted, and therefore complied with the invitation. When the chancellor returned from court, with a number of the nobility, he introduced them to the merchant, and related the story of the assistance he had

received from him in a time of need. After the company were gone, Cromwell inquired of Frescobald what had brought him to England, who related to him his misfortunes. “I am sorry for them,” said he; “and I will make them as easy to you as I can. But, because men ought to be just before they are kind, it is fit I should repay the debt I owe you.” Then leading him to a closet, he took out sixteen ducats and gave them to Frescobald, saying, “My friend, here is the money you lent me at Florence, with ten pieces you laid out for my apparel, and ten more you paid out for my horse; but, considering that you are a merchant, and might have made some advantage by this money in the way of trade, take these four bags, in every one of which are four hundred ducats, and enjoy them as free gifts of your friend.” These Frescobald would have refused, but Cromwell forced them upon him. He then took the names of his debtors and the sums they owed, and sent his servant to demand their payment in fifteen days. In a short time, the entire sum was paid. During this time Frescobald lodged at Cromwell’s house; and the latter would have persuaded him to remain in England; but he chose to return to Florence. Here is a fine illustration of that passage of Scripture, which says, “Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.” [39]

Lending to the Lord. [40]

Solomon says, “He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.” The following anecdote affords a very striking illustration of the truth of this passage:

In the year 1797, as Mr. M.—— was travelling among the mountains in Vermont he was overtaken by a thunder shower, and sought shelter in a small house, on the borders of a great forest. On entering the house and finding no one but a woman and her infant he apologized, and asked the privilege of stopping till the shower was over. The woman said she was glad to have him come in, for she was always terrified by thunder. The gentleman told her she need not be terrified at thunder, if she only trusted in God. After conversing with her some time on this subject, he inquired whether she had any neighbors, who were religious. She told him she had neighbors about two miles off, but whether they were religious or not, she could not tell. She heard that they had preaching there once a fortnight, but she never attended their meetings. She appeared to be extremely ignorant on the subject of religion. The rain had now passed over, and all nature smiled. The traveller, as he was about to leave, thanked the woman for her kindness, and expressed to her his earnest desire for the salvation of her soul, and besought her to read the Bible daily, and give diligent heed to its instructions. But she, with tears in her eyes, confessed that she had no Bible. They had never been able, she said, to buy one. “Could you read one if you had it?” he inquired. She said she could, and would be very glad of the privilege. “Poor woman,” said he, “I do heartily pity you: farewell.” [41]

As the traveller was preparing to go, he thought to himself, “This woman is in very great want of a Bible. O that I had one to give her! But I have not. As for money to buy one, I have none to spare. I have no more than will be absolutely necessary for my expenses home. I must go: but if I leave this woman without the means to procure the word of God, she may perish for lack of knowledge. What shall I do?” These passages of Scripture then came to his mind, “He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord.” “Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.” He said in his heart, “I will trust in the Lord.” He took a dollar from his purse, went back and gave it to the woman, telling her to buy a Bible with it. She promised to do so, and said she knew where one could be obtained. [42]

The traveller set out, and when night came he took lodgings at a private house. He had a little change left, but as he had two days more to travel, he thought he would make his supper on a cold morsel, which he had with him. But, when the family came to the table, he was urged to take a seat with them, and invited to ask a blessing. He now began to feel himself among friends, and at liberty to speak of divine things; and the family seemed gratified in listening to his conversation. In the morning, he

offered to pay for his lodging, but the people would take nothing. He travelled on, till late in the morning, when, finding no hotel, he stopped at a private house for breakfast. While waiting, he lost no time to recommend Christ to the family. When ready to depart, the mistress of the house would take nothing for his breakfast, or the oats, which his horse had eaten. And so he went on, asking for and receiving refreshment when he wanted it, and offering to pay for it, as any other traveller would do; but no one would take any thing, although they did not know but he had plenty of money. “What does this mean?” said he to himself. “I was never treated in this manner on a journey before.” He recollected the dollar he had given the poor [43]
woman, and the passage of Scripture, which induced him to do it, and said, “I have been well paid. It is indeed safe lending to the Lord.” On the second day after he left the cottage in the wilderness, he arrived safely at home, having been at no expense on the way. The Lord has the control of all events. The hearts of all men are in his hands. It was He who inclined the hearts of the people to be kind and hospitable to his servant, and to ask no pay for what they gave him.

About a year and a half after this, a stranger called at Mr. M.’s house, and asked for some refreshment. In the course of their conversation, Mr. M. asked the stranger whether the people in those parts where he lived paid much attention to religion.

“Not much,” he replied; “but in a town twenty or thirty miles distant, there has been a powerful revival. The commencement of it was very extraordinary. The first person that was awakened and brought to repentance, was a poor woman, who lived in a very retired place. She told her friends and neighbors that a stranger was driven into her house by a thunder storm, and talked to her so seriously, that she began, while listening to his discourse to feel concerned about her soul. The gentleman was [44]
much affected, when he found she had no Bible; and after he had left the house to go on his journey, returned again, and gave her a dollar to buy one; and charged her to get it soon, and read it diligently. She did so; and it had been the means, as she believed, of her salvation. The neighbors wondered at this; and it was the means of awakening them to a deep concern for the salvation of their souls. As many as thirty or forty are rejoicing in God their Savior.” Mr. M. who had listened to this narrative, with his heart swelling more and more with wonder, gratitude, and joy, could refrain no longer; but with hands and eyes raised to heaven, exclaimed, “My God, thou hast paid me again!”

When we lend to the Lord, he always pays us with “good measure, pressed down and running over.”

An Indian story.

In the early settlement of this country a strange Indian arrived at an inn in Litchfield, Connecticut, and asked for something to eat; at the same time saying that, as he had been unsuccessful in hunting, he had nothing to pay. The woman who kept the inn, not only refused his reasonable request, but called him hard names. But a [45]
man who sat by, seeing that the Indian was suffering for want of food, told her to give him what he wanted at his expense. When the Indian had finished his supper, he thanked the man, and assured him that he should be faithfully recompensed, whenever it was in his power.

Some years after this, the man had occasion to go from Litchfield to Albany, where he was taken prisoner by the Indians, and carried to Canada. Some of them proposed that he should be put to death; but an old woman demanded that he should be given to her, that she might adopt him in place of a son, who had been killed in the war. This was done, and he passed the winter in her family. The next summer, while he was at work alone in the woods, a strange Indian came and asked him to go to a certain place on a given day, which he agreed to do; though he had some fears that mischief was intended. His fears increased, and his promise was broken. But the Indian came again and renewed the request. The man made another engagement, and kept his word. On reaching the spot, he found the Indian provided with

ammunition, two muskets, and two knapsacks. He was ordered to take one of each; which he did, and followed his conductor. In the day time, they shot the game that came in their way, and at night, they kindled a fire and slept by it. But the Indian [46] observed a mysterious silence as to the object of their expedition. After travelling in this manner many days, they came to the top of a mountain, from which they saw a number of houses in the midst of a cultivated country. The Indian asked him if he knew the ground, and he eagerly answered, "*It is Litchfield?*" The Indian then recalled to his mind the scene at the inn, and bidding him farewell, exclaimed, "*I am that Indian!* Now I pray you go home."

Example of Disinterested Benevolence.

A traveller in Asia Minor, in a time of distressing drought, found a vase of water under a little shed by the road-side, for the refreshment of the weary traveller. A man in the neighborhood was in the habit of bringing the water from a considerable distance, and filling the vase every morning, and then going to his work. He could have had no motive to do this, but a kind regard to the comfort of weary travellers, for he was never there to receive their thanks, much less their money. This was benevolence.

Section IV.—Manners. [47]

POLITENESS.

REV. Dr. Witherspoon, President of New-Jersey College, once gave out *Politeness*, to a division of one of his classes, as a subject for composition. The young gentlemen were delighted with it; and when the time came for reading, some of them expatiated upon it largely, learnedly, and politely. After they had all read, they waited for the President to sum up their observations, and then state his own views. But, he told them, he should only give them a short definition, which they might always remember. "Politeness," said he, "is real kindness, kindly expressed." This is the sum and substance of all true politeness; and if my readers will put it in practice, they will be surprised to see how every body will be charmed with their manners.

Good Breeding. [48]

Gassendi was a youth of such extraordinary abilities and attainments as to command universal admiration; but in his manners he was generally silent, never ostentatiously obtruding upon others his own knowledge. He was never in a hurry to give his opinion before he knew that of the persons who were conversing with him. He was never fond of displaying himself.

I knew a young man whose behavior was directly the opposite of Gassendi's: a *compound of ignorance, self-conceit, and impudence*. He was forward to talk in all companies. His opinion, on all subjects, was *cheap*—a gift that went a-begging. He could tell the farmer how to till the soil; the mechanic how to use his tools; the merchant, how to make his gains; the doctor, how to cure his patient; the minister, how to preach; and the cook, how to bake her bread. He wanted only a *pair of long ears* to complete his character.

Section V.—Overcome Evil With Good. [49]

A BLACK BOY

SOME boys are mean enough to ridicule others for natural defects, for which they are not to blame; and it is a very common thing to consider the color of the skin as a

mark of inferiority. But even if it were so, it would be no ground of reproach, for it is the color which God gave. Mr. Southey, the poet, relates that, when he was a small boy, there was a black boy in the neighborhood, who was called *Jim Dick*. Southey and a number of his play fellows, as they were collected together one evening at their sports, began to torment the poor black boy, calling him "*nigger*," "*blackamoor*," and other nicknames. The poor fellow was very much grieved, and soon left them. Soon after, these boy's had an appointment to go a skating, and on that day Southey broke his [50] skates. After all his rude treatment of poor Jim, he was mean enough to go and ask him to lend his skates. "O yes, John," Jim replied, "you may have them and welcome." When he went to return them, he found Jim sitting in the kitchen reading his Bible. As Southey handed Dick his skates, the latter looked at him with tears in his eyes, and said, "John, don't ever call me blackamoor again," and immediately left the room. Southey burst into tears, and from that time resolved never again to abuse a poor black—a resolution which I hope every one of my readers will make and never break. But, if you will follow the example of this poor colored boy, and return good for evil, you will always find it the best retaliation you can make for an injury.

The converted soldier.

A soldier in the East Indies, a stout, lion-looking, lion-hearted man, had been a noted prizefighter, and a terror to those who knew him. With one blow he could level a strong man to the ground. That man sauntered into the mission chapel, heard the gospel, and was alarmed. He returned again and again, and at last, light broke in upon his mind, and he became a new creature. The change in his character was marked and decided. The lion was changed into a lamb. Two months afterwards, in [51] the mess-room, some of those who had been afraid of him before began to ridicule him. One of them said, "I'll put it to the test whether he is a Christian or not;" and taking a basin of hot soup, he threw it into his bosom. The whole company gazed in breathless silence, expecting that the lion would start up, and murder him on the spot. But after he had torn open his waistcoat, and wiped his scalded breast, he calmly turned round and said, "This is what I must expect: If I become a Christian, I must suffer persecution." His comrades were filled with astonishment. This was overcoming evil with good. If the reader will follow this man's example, he will save himself a world of difficulty.

The forgiving school boy.

In a school in Ireland, one boy struck another; and when he was about to be punished, the injured boy earnestly begged for his pardon. The master inquired why he wished to prevent so deserved a punishment; to which he replied, that he had read in the New-Testament that Jesus Christ said we should forgive our enemies; "and I forgive him, and beg he may not be punished for my sake."

Section VI.—Use of the Tongue. [52]

ADVANTAGES OF SPEAKING THE TRUTH.

IT is a great advantage to any one to have the confidence of others, so far that his word will always be taken for the exact truth. This confidence is to be acquired only by always speaking the truth; and especially, by adhering so closely to the fact that people will not only believe that we mean to speak the truth, but that they will feel confident that we have neither mistaken the facts, nor added any coloring, nor kept back any thing, to make it appear different from the reality. The following story shows how great an advantage one may derive from having this confidence in his strict veracity established:

Petrarch, the celebrated Italian poet, by his strict regard for truth, secured the unbounded confidence of Cardinal Colonna, in whose family he resided. A violent quarrel broke out among the Cardinal's [53] numerous family of servants, which ended in a fight. The Cardinal, in order to investigate the affair, and punish the offenders, assembled all his people and put them under oath to tell the whole truth. Everyone took the oath, not excepting the bishop of Luna, the Cardinal's own brother. Petrarch, in his turn, presented himself, but the Cardinal closed the book, saying, "As to you, Petrarch, your word is sufficient." Our readers will perceive how great an advantage it will be to them to have always such a strict regard to the exact truth, that their word will be considered as good as an oath.

Remember the bright side.

When Peter the Great heard any one speaking ill of another, he would inquire, "Is there not a *fair side*, also, to the character of the person of whom you are speaking? Come, tell me what *good* qualities you have remarked about him." If, in speaking of others, we should look always at the *fair side*, and see what good things we can say of them, it would make us feel better towards them; it would be doing them a service instead of an injury; it would tend to make *peace*, rather than foment strife.

Section VII.—Punctuality. [54]

EXAMPLE OF WASHINGTON.

WHEN Washington appointed the hour of twelve to meet Congress, he never failed to be passing the door of the hall while the clock was striking twelve. His dinner hour was four o'clock. If his guests were not there at the time, he never waited for them. New members of Congress, who were invited to dine with him, would frequently come in when dinner was half over; and he would say to them, "Gentlemen, we are punctual here. My cook never asks whether the company has arrived, but whether the hour has." In 1799, when on a visit to Boston, he appointed eight o'clock in the morning as the hour when he would set out for Salem. While the Old South clock was striking eight, he was mounting his horse. The company of cavalry, who had [55] volunteered to escort him, was parading in Tremont street, and did not overtake him till he had reached Charles River Bridge. On their arrival, the General said, "Major, I thought you had been too long in my family not to know when it was eight o'clock."

Samuel Wesley, Esq.

Samuel Wesley, Esq., was one of the greatest musicians of his age. His musical powers were developed while he was a child, and excited the greatest admiration. But he was as great a lover of regular habits as of song. No company or persuasion could keep him up beyond his regular time for going to bed. For this reason, he could seldom be persuaded to go to a concert in the night. The moment the clock struck eight, away ran Samuel, in the midst of his most favorite amusement. Once he rose up from the first part of the *Messiah*, saying, "Come, mamma, let us go home, or I shan't be in bed by eight." When some friends talked of carrying him to the queen, and his father asked him if he was willing to go, he replied, "Yes, with all my heart; but I won't stay beyond eight." This was a wise resolution; for children are sadly injured, by being kept up late at night.

Five minutes too late. [56]

The following amusing sketch, though perhaps fictitious, gives a pretty faithful picture of many a man's life:

"When a child, I was scolded for being too late at school; when a boy, I was cuffed and kicked for being too late at my work; and when a man, I was turned away for being behind my time on a particular occasion when my services were wanted.

"My uncle Jonathan was well to do in the world, and as his nephews were his nearest relations, we had reason to expect that his property would come among us. He had, however, one peculiarity, which effectually shut his door against me. He never was five minutes too late in an appointment in his life, and thought most contemptuously of those who were. I really believe that I was a bit of a favorite with him until my unfortunate failing justly offended him.

"He had occasion to go a journey, and I was directed to be with him at seven in the morning, to carry his portmanteau to the coach. Alas! I was "Five minutes too late," and he had left the house.

"Knowing his particularity, I hurried after him, and running till I could scarcely [57]
stand, arrived at one end of the street just in time to see the coach go off with my uncle at the other. Dearly did I pay for being "Five minutes too late."

"My Uncle did not return for a month, and certainly showed more forbearance toward me than he was ever known to do on a similar occasion; for in a letter he stated, that if I could be punctual, he should wish me to meet him on his return, to take charge of his portmanteau, and thereby make some amends for my misconduct. Off I set, but knowing that coaches frequently arrive a quarter of an hour after their set time, I thought a minute or two could be of no consequence. The coach unfortunately, was "horridly exact," and once more I was after my time, just "Five minutes too late."

"My Uncle Jonathan never forgave me, fully believing that I had done it on purpose to get rid of the trouble of carrying his portmanteau. Years rolled away, and I was not so much as permitted to enter the door of my Uncle Jonathan.

"Time, however, heals many a sore, and while it ruffles many a smooth brow, smooths many a ruffled temper. My Uncle Jonathan so far relented, that when about to make his will, he sent to me to call upon him exactly at ten o'clock. Determined to [58]
be in time, I set off, allowing myself some minutes to spare and pulling out my watch at the door, found that for once in my life I had kept my appointment to the second. The servant, to my surprise, told me, that my Uncle Jonathan had ordered the door to be shut in my face for being behind my time. It was then I found out my watch was too slow, and that I was exactly "Five minutes too late."

"Had I been earlier on that occasion I might have been provided for, but now I am a poor man, and a poor man I am likely to remain. However, good may arise from my giving this short account of my foolish habit, as it may possibly convince some of the value of punctuality, and dispose them to avoid the manifold evils of being "Five minutes too late.""

Few young persons are sensible of the importance of punctuality, because they are not aware of the value of time. But time is money; and to rob a man of his time, by obliging him to wait beyond the appointed hour to meet your engagement with him, is equivalent to robbing him of so much money as he could have earned in the lost time. The *habit* of punctuality must be acquired early. Be punctual in the family and school, and you will be a punctual man.

Section VIII.—Contention. [59]

DANGER OF CONTENTION.

QUARRELLING generally arises from selfishness and anger. Selfishness is grasping. It respects not the rights of others. It will yield none of its own. The selfish person is

therefore continually coming in conflict with others; and, as impediments are thrown in the way of his gratification, his passions are roused. Anger is a species of insanity. When one yields to his passions, he loses self-control. He takes an enemy into his bosom, and suffers himself to be nosed about by him at will. No one can tell what dreadful thing he may do when once he gives a loose rein to his passions.

"The beginning of strife is as the letting out of waters." When you open a little drain to a pond of water, it runs slowly at first, in a very [60] small stream; but the body of water above rushes into the channel and wears it deeper, and that increases the pressure and widens it still more, till presently the whole body comes pouring forth in an irresistible torrent. One dry season, in the summer, a man in Vermont, who owned a mill, on a small stream near a large pond, found his water failing, so that his mill was likely to stop. To prevent this, he collected together a few of the neighbors, and dug a little trench from the pond to the stream that carried his mill. At first it ran very slowly and quietly along, till it began to wear away the channel, and to turn the force of the body of water in the pond in that direction, when it increased violently, tore away the banks, and poured the whole contents of the pond into the little stream, carried off the mill, and rushed on with impetuous fury through the valley, sweeping away fences, bridges, barns, houses, and every thing that came in its way.

At a place called *Brag Corner*, in the State of Maine, a small stream falls into the Sandy river, on which a superior grist-mill was erected a few years since. The stream not affording water enough, a pond containing fifty or one hundred acres, having no outlet, and lying two hundred feet above the level where the mill stood, was connected with the stream that carried the mill by an artificial canal. The water of [61] the pond began to gully away the gravel over which it was made to run, and having formed a regular channel, defied all human control, and, in the space of six hours, cut a ravine seventy feet deep, and let out the whole pond, sweeping away the mill, foundation and all, and carrying away a house and blacksmith's shop, which stood near, not giving the owner time to save any thing of consequence from his house.

Such, Solomon says, is strife. When you begin to quarrel, you know not where it will end. It not unfrequently terminates in the death of one of the parties, as in the following case: A boy about eleven years of age, son of Mr. Philip Petty, of Westport, R. I., took his father's gun, as he said, to go a gunning. His elder brother attempted to take it from him. A quarrel ensued, between the two brothers, and in the course of the scuffle, the gun went off and lodged the contents in the younger one's bowels. He lingered a few hours in great agony and died. How must the other one feel, to think that the quarrel, which he began, led to the death of his brother. How much safer to take Solomon's advice, and "leave off contention before it be meddled with."

Danger of Indulging anger. [62]

Frederick Jones was the son of a rich manufacturer. His father being engrossed in business, the children were left to the care of their mother, who, being a weak woman, did not restrain them as she ought. There were four, but three of them died; and Frederick being left the only child, was indulged still more. At a very early age he showed his angry temper; and he became such a little tyrant that the very dogs and cats about the house were afraid of him. Once, when he was three years old, he insisted that he would have the silver tea-urn, to drag about the room by a string for his coach. And, because his mother refused to let him do so, he seized her cap and tore it from her head.

When Frederick was ten years old, he went into the kitchen, where the servants used to let him do as he pleased for fear of his dreadful temper; for they called him "*Mamma's pet lion*." He had not been long there before he upset the table, knocked down the shovel and tongs, and broke several plates. Not satisfied with this, he

collected all the tin things in the middle of the floor, and began battering them with the tongs. The cook, not being very well pleased with this destruction, undertook to [63] lead him out of the kitchen. But the little fury, by shrieking and scratching, got free, and seizing a fork, he threw it at the cook, which struck her in the eye and put it out. Thus, by the foolish anger of this little boy, a poor woman lost the sight of her eye entirely. This shows the danger of indulging angry passions; for no one knows what a dreadful deed he may commit in a fit of anger. It shows also the danger of throwing things at others. It is a very dangerous practice, and sometimes leads to the loss of life.

A little while after this, Frederick was playing at the front door of the house, when a boy passing on the other side of the street, called out, “Hallo, Master Fred., have you put any more people’s eyes out lately?” This was enough to make him angry. He immediately picked up a large stone, and chasing the boy some distance, threw it at him with all his might. The boy was out of the way of the stone, but it struck a large bull-dog, which, naturally enough, concluded that he was unjustly attacked, and turning upon Frederick, gave him a severe bite in the leg, and tossed him into the gutter. Frederick roared aloud with pain and rage, and had to be carried home to his bed, where he lay for several weeks. But nobody pitied him. The people who heard of [64] it, knowing his temper, thought the dog had done a praiseworthy act.

After this, Frederick’s father sent him to a boarding school, about twenty miles from home, to a very strict master. Here he was in continual broils with his school-fellows. There was scarcely a boy in the school with whom he did not have a fight. But generally he came off with a bleeding nose or a black eye, because his passions took away his strength, and the other boys were an overmatch for him. His schoolmates generally did not like to fight; but this angry boy would fly at them for the most trifling thing, and force them to defend themselves.

Frederick’s father died before he was twenty years of age; and as he loved amusement better than business, he sold the manufactory, and travelled in Europe; where he was very dissipated, and fought two duels, in both of which he was wounded. During his absence, his mother had become a good woman; and on his return, he found her company disagreeable. She entreated him to break off his evil courses. But this only made him angry. To get rid of her reproofs, he left her and went to one of the Western States. There, while he was engaged at a public house, with some of his wicked companions, talking politics, one of them called him a liar, [65] and he drew out his dirk and stabbed him to the heart. He ran away from the place, but the image of the murdered man haunted him day and night, and made him wretched. He gave himself up to intoxication, and at the age of twenty-three years, fell into a drunkard’s grave, some time after his mother had died of a broken heart on his account. All this came upon Frederick, in consequence of not restraining his passions while a boy. His violent, ungovernable temper might have been subdued, when he was a child; but by indulgence it increased in strength, till it became perfectly unmanageable.

Be kind to your sister.

The following affecting story, which is given in the language of the brother himself, will admonish every boy who reads it, to be kind to his sisters, and especially to avoid blows on the head, as it is probable the blow given this little girl by her brother was the cause of her death. What a shame for a brother to strike his sister!

“One morning in my early life, I remember to have been playing with my younger sister, not then three years old. It was one of those bright mornings in spring, that bring joy and life to the heart, and diffuse gladness and animation through all the [66] tribes of living creatures. Our feelings were in perfect harmony with the universal gladness of nature. Even now I seem to hear the merry laugh of my little sister, as she followed me through the winding alleys of the garden, her cheek suffused with the glow of health and animation, and her waving hair floating in the wind.

“She was an only sister, the sole companion of all my childish sports. We were constantly together; and my young heart went out to hers, with all the affection, all the fondness, of which childhood is capable. Nothing afforded me enjoyment in which she did not participate; no amusement was sought which we could not share together.

“That morning we had prolonged our play till near the hour of breakfast, with undiminished ardor, when at some slight provocation, my impetuous nature broke forth, and in my anger, I *struck* my little sister a blow with my hand. She turned to me with an appealing look, and the large tears came into her eyes. Her heart was too full to allow her to speak, and shame made me silent. At that moment the breakfast bell summoned us away, and we returned to the house without exchanging a word. The excitement of play was over, and as she sat beside my mother at breakfast, I [67] perceived by occasional stolen glances at her that she was pale and sad. A tear seemed ready to start in her eye, which her little self-possession could scarcely repress. It was only when my mother inquired if she was ill, that she endeavored to eat. I was ashamed and grieved, and inwardly resolved to embrace the first opportunity when we were alone, to throw my arms round her neck and entreat her forgiveness.

“When breakfast was ended, my mother retired with her into her own room, directing me in the meantime to sit down to my lesson. I seated myself by the window, and ran over my lesson, but did not learn it. My thoughts were perpetually recurring to the scene in the garden and at table. It was long before my mother returned, and when she did, it was with an agitated look, and hurried step, to tell me that my poor Ellen was very ill. I asked eagerly if I might go to her, but was not permitted, lest I should disturb her. A physician was called and every means used for her recovery, but to no purpose. The disease, which was in her head, constantly increased in violence, and she became delirious. It was not until evening that I was permitted to see her. She was a little recovered from the severity of her pain, and lay with her eyes closed, and her little hand resting on the pillow beneath her head. How [68] I longed to tell her the sorrow I felt for my unkindness to her in the morning and how much I had suffered for it during the day. But I was forbidden to speak to her, and was soon taken out of the room. During that night and the day following, she continued to grow worse. I saw her several times, but she was always insensible of my presence. Once indeed, she showed some signs of consciousness, and asked for me; but immediately relapsed into her former state.

“On the morning of the third day, I rose at an early hour, and repaired to the sick room. My mother was sitting by the bed. As I entered, she drew me to her, and for some time was silent, while the tears flowed fast down her face. I first learned that my sweet sister was dead, as my mother drew aside the curtain that concealed her from me. I felt as though my heart would break. The remembrance of her affection for me, and my last unkind deed, revived in my mind; and burying my face in the folds of the curtain, I wept long and bitterly.

“I saw her laid in the coffin, and lowered into the grave. I almost wished to lie down there with her, if so I might see once more her smile and hear my forgiveness in her sweet voice.

“Years have passed away and I am now a man—but never does the recollection of [69] this incident of my early life fail to awaken bitter feelings of grief and remorse. And never do I see my young friends exchanging looks or words of anger, without thinking of my last pastime with my own loved Ellen.”

Teazing and being teazed.

Some children take great delight in teazing. The way to avoid such annoyances is, to take no notice of them. Respect yourself too much to be disturbed by those who disregard the common courtesies of life. If they find they cannot teaze you, they will cease to make the attempt. The late Dr. Bowditch (a man who attained to great

eminence, as a man of learning and science), was the son of a poor sailor. His parents were so poor that he was obliged to wear his summer clothes to school, during the whole winter. His schoolmates would sometimes laugh at him, because he wore such thin clothes. But they could never make him angry, or disturb his equanimity. All the notice he took of their jeers was, to laugh at them for thinking that he was unable to bear the cold. If you follow his example, you will never suffer much from being teazed.

CHAPTER IV.

[70]

BAD COMPANY AND BAD HABITS.

DO you remember what Solomon says about bad company? “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. For they sleep not except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.”

Mr. Green, the Reformed Gambler, relates that, at the age of sixteen, he was laboring industriously, in the city of Cincinnati, and saving his wages. But he became acquainted with a bad set of boys, who visited a ten-pin alley. In his leisure hours, instead of spending his time in reading and treasuring up useful knowledge, he would frequent this den of iniquity; and Sabbath days, instead of going to meeting, he would go with the same set of boys to a place of amusement and sin, a little way out of the city. In a short time, this evil company had [71] erased every tender affection from his bosom. On one of these misspent Sabbaths, he fell in with a rough set of lawless boys, and got into a fight with them, and was seen thus engaged by the city marshal.

The next morning, a stranger, whom he met at his boarding house, inquired of him respecting the different places of amusement in the city, and he took him to the ten-pin alley, where he was in the habit of going. While they were there, engaged in bowling, a man came staggering in, to all appearance, half drunk. He pulled out three thimbles, and tried to find some one to play with him for drink. This is a swindler’s game, through which he picks the pockets of fools, by persuading them to bet that they can tell under which of three thimbles he places a ball. It is all a cheat. The landlord played and won, and the man appeared very angry; but this was only a bait, to blind the eyes of the young men, and induce them to bet. They were caught; and they lost what money they had, Mr. Green two dollars, and the stranger, twenty-five. They tried in vain to get back their money. At length, the man who was with Green went to the Mayor’s office, and related the story; and the city marshal, having seen Green the day before engaged in a fight, suspected that he was leagued with [72] the gamblers, and had him arrested; and though no proof was brought against him, he was fined and sent to jail. There he was kept for several months, in company with counterfeiters, murderers, highwaymen, and gamblers, whose principal amusement was card-playing; when he was discharged penniless, in rags, and with a bad character. This was the commencement of his career of vice, his reformation from which is the next thing to a miracle. All this came upon him in consequence of keeping bad company. Learn from it to avoid evil company and *betting*. The boy that suffers himself to *bet* the smallest amount, has already entered the downhill road of the gambler’s career. And there is no evil that can be named but he may be drawn into, who begins to keep bad company. You might as well expect to go into *lazarhouse*, without being infected, as to go into bad company, and not fall into evil habits.

Profaneness.

Perhaps there is no bad company to which boys are more exposed than the *profane*; and none which is more corrupting. Young people insensibly fall into the habits of those with whom they associate. If they hear them interlard their conversation with by-words and oaths, they will be strongly tempted to do the same. [73] They will begin, perhaps, with by-words and little oaths, which show a disposition to be profane, without courage to carry it out. But they will not long stop here. They will soon overcome the chidings of conscience, and then they can be as foul-mouthed as any of their companions. This vice hardens the heart, and prepares it for every other; for he who despises God will despise man. He who takes the name of God in vain, will not hesitate to break all his commandments. Profaneness is one of the meanest of all vices. It involves every thing that is little and mean. It is treating with the utmost indignity our Greatest Benefactor. It is a kind of gratuitous wickedness; for there is no motive for it but a disposition to do evil. The profane boy is a dangerous companion. He will lead you into you know not what mischief and difficulty. The only way is to avoid him, as you would a black snake, or a person that has the small pox. If you go with him, he will, most likely, lead you to ruin.

Washington's opinion of profaneness.

No *gentleman* will use profane language. It is an outrage upon good manners. No one can be called a gentleman, who is guilty of it. It is a vice that has always been [74] held in detestation by the great and the good. General Washington would never allow it in his army. In 1757, while a colonel, at Fort Cumberland, when he was a young man, he issued an order, expressing his "great displeasure," at the prevalence of profane cursing and swearing, and threatening those who were guilty of it with severe punishment. The day after he took the command of the Revolutionary army he issued a similar order. In August, 1776, he issued another order against this vice, in which he speaks of it as "a vice so *mean and low*, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." He also strictly forbade gaming and drunkenness.

Howard's opinion of Swearers.

Howard, the Philanthropist, standing in the street, heard some dreadful oaths and curses from a public house opposite. Having occasion to go across, he first buttoned up his pocket, saying to a by-stander, "I always do this, when I hear men swear, as I think that any one who can take God's name in vain, can also steal, or do any thing else that is bad."

God has set a mark upon this vice. He not unfrequently punishes it, by directly [75] answering the prayer that is profanely uttered. J. H. was a notorious swearer. He had a singular habit of calling on God to curse his eyes. After some years, this awful imprecation was verified. He was afflicted with a disease in his eyes, which terminated in total blindness. This so affected his general system, that he gradually sunk under it, and went to give up his account. A number of similar cases, some of them still more awful, you will find in the tract entitled, "The Swearer's Prayer."

Playing Truant.

Playing truant when sent to school, is almost always the means of getting into bad company; and bad company leads to ruin. A boy thirteen years old, was brought before the police court in Boston, charged with stealing a gold pen from a lawyer's office. He had been in the habit of coming into the offices, in the building, and selling apples. The gentleman from whom he stole the pen had furnished him money to fill his basket; and he returned his kindness by stealing his pen, which was worth three dollars. His mother appeared before the court, and plead earnestly for her boy, [76]

saving that he was a good boy to her, except that he *played truant from school*. He then got into the company of a gang of boys, who peddle apples,—a thievish set,—and of them he also learned to steal. He was sent to the House of Reformation; which is a prison for boys, where they are kept at work and study, but not allowed their liberty.

Ruin of a Deacon's son.

Several years ago, a young man about twenty years of age, filthy in his appearance, and shabbily dressed, called at the house of a clergyman in the city of New York. His countenance, though haggard, bore the marks of intelligence. The young man said he had been at his church the previous evening, and was desirous of having some conversation with the minister. He was requested to open his mind freely. He said he was the son of a deacon of a Congregational church in Connecticut. His father was a man of property and influence, and he himself had always moved in the most respectable society. He had come to New York in order to become acquainted with business, and prepare himself for an active and useful life. But he soon found himself surrounded with new temptations, without the restraining influences of home and [77]
friends. He fell into bad company. His vicious associates led him to the theatre, and when his passions were excited by what he saw, and stimulated by intoxicating liquors, he was persuaded to visit places of infamy and crime. These indulgences called for more money than he could honestly obtain; but his appetites, once excited, could not be easily restrained; and he had recourse to his employer's money drawer to supply the deficiency. He eased his conscience, in this act, and deceived himself, with the hope of repaying it before he was detected. But in this he was mistaken. He was detected, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to the penitentiary for six months. He had now been out of prison a week, during which time he had been wandering about the city, ashamed to be seen or known. He had come to ask advice. The clergyman advised him by all means to go home to his father; assuring him that it was his only hope, for if he remained in the city, he would fall into the company of his old associates and be ruined. With the deepest agony, he exclaimed, "How can I ever return to my father's house? How can I ever meet him or the virtuous companions of my youth? No! No! I am fallen—disgraced! I have been a felon, and in prison! No, I [78]
would rather die a vagabond in the street, than to see the face of my father, or the faces of the young people, who were my associates in the days when I felt myself as good as they." He was yet unhumbled. He was yet unwilling, like the prodigal, to return to his father's house. However, after much persuasion, he promised that the next morning he would set off for home. But he had not the moral courage to fulfil his purpose. He was ashamed to arise and go to his father. He continued to roam about the streets, and was again detected in stealing.

This anecdote shows not only the danger of bad company, but the peril of young men who go from the country to the city to engage in business. They had better remain at home, unless their principles are firmly established upon the foundation of true religion. There is nothing to be gained in the city that is worth the exposure of morals and character.

Bad Books.

Books are company; and the company of bad books is as dangerous as the company of bad boys or bad men. Goldsmith, who was a novel-writer of some note, writing to his brother about the education of a nephew, says, "*Above all things never let your* [79]
nephew touch a novel or a romance." An opinion given in such a manner must have been an honest opinion. And, as he knew the character of novels, and had no nice scruples on the subject of religion, his opinion ought to have great weight.

An Example for boys.

A boy in London, in destitute circumstances, was put out as an apprentice to a mechanic. It is the business of the youngest apprentice to do all the errands and drudgery of the establishment, and frequently of his master's family also. He was often sent by the workmen and older apprentices, to procure intoxicating liquors for them; of which all of them partook, except himself, because, as they said, it did them good. But because he refused to drink he was made an object of ridicule among them. They said he had not sufficient *manhood* to drink rum. But he had sufficient manhood to *refuse to drink rum*; and it requires much more to refuse than to drink.

Nothing can be more false than the idea that it is courageous and manly to fall in with the habits and practices of those with whom we are obliged to associate. It is a sign of *cowardice* rather than of *courage*. The *sheep* is the most timid of animals. But [80]
if a man is driving a flock of sheep, and one of them gets frightened and turns out of the way, all the rest will follow, no matter if it is over the railing of a bridge into a river. The boy that drinks or swears or plays truant, or breaks the Sabbath, because his companions do, is as courageous as—*a sheep!*

While the workmen and apprentices were revelling over their rum, and insulting and misusing this boy, he often retired and vented his grief in tears. But a few years changed the aspect of things. As they grew up, and entered upon the world for themselves, all the older apprentices fell into habits of dissipation, and finally sunk into the drunkard's grave. But the little boy, at whose abstinence they used to scoff, grew up a sober and respectable man, engaged in business for himself, and a few years ago, was worth a hundred thousand dollars, and had in his employ one hundred and ninety men, none of whom used ardent spirits. All this came from his having courage to say NO, to those who held the poisoned cup to his lips.

Poison.

A little boy, four years old, wandered from his home, one day, in the town of Turin, N. Y., to a field where some men were at work. There he found a bottle of spirits, of [81]
which he drank freely. When found, he was lying on the ground, unable to speak. He was carried home to his mother, and the Doctor was sent for; but he could do nothing for the poor boy. He remained stupid till evening, and then died. The rum had poisoned him. Not a great while before this, his father was drowned in a fit of intoxication. "Touch not, taste not, handle not."

"Am I to blame, Mother?"

A lad in Philadelphia, some years ago, joined the Temperance Society. The father and mother, who were what are called *moderate* drinkers, were displeased with him. The boy said nothing for sometime, but bore patiently the chidings of his mother. At length, he undertook to vindicate his conduct: "Am I to blame, mother? Sister Mary has married a drunken husband, who abuses her every day. Sister Susan's husband was intemperate, and has gone off, and left her, and you are obliged to take her home, and take care of her children. Brother James comes home drunk almost every night. And because I have joined the cold water company, and you are likely to have [82]
one sober person in the family, you are scolding at me! Am I to blame?"

How it happened.

There was a young man in college, one of the brightest, who was greatly beloved for his personal attractions, frankness, good nature, and generosity. But he was occasionally found flushed with wine, and then he was turbulent and ungovernable. At length, in one of these fits of excitement, he committed a misdemeanor for which he was expelled from college. Soon after this, he became very dissipated, abandoned his studies, and finally became a sot. People wondered how such a lovely young man could fall into such ruinous courses. A young lady, conversing about him, said she

remembered that, when he was a little boy, just beginning to study Latin, she saw his mother bring him a loaf of cake and a glass of wine for a lunch. She then thought that perhaps he would become a drunkard, and so it turned out. Beware of the first glass.

GOING TO THE THEATRE.

[83]

VILLIAM R. was a young man of good habits—a lovely youth, "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." He was sent from the country, where he had been brought up, to the city of New York, where he was employed as a clerk. Hearing much of the *Theatre*, and seeing it puffed in the newspapers, he thought he would *go once*, just out of curiosity, to see what was done there. But, he was so fascinated with what he heard and saw there, that he went again; just as some birds are so charmed with the gaze of the serpent, as to run straight into his mouth! There William fell into evil company, who enticed him away to the haunts of infamy. Intoxicated with these things, he continued to frequent the theatre until the expense was more than his earnings. He then began to steal money from his employer. He was [84] detected and fled. After some time, his friends, hoping he had learned something from experience, sent him to another city. For a time he seemed to be thoroughly reformed. But evil habits once acquired are not easily overcome. He soon fell into the same round of folly and sin, till he lost his character and his employment, and in his despair, committed suicide!

Here, again, my readers will see that TOTAL ABSTINENCE is the only safe rule. This boy's ruin was the consequence of going to the theatre *just once*. If he had resisted an idle curiosity in the beginning, he would have been saved. There are some things that we ought not to desire to see. Among these, are the things that are done at theatres and other places of amusement and pleasure, which abound in cities. It is dangerous to look upon them. It is like looking down from a giddy height upon a rapid current of water. It turns the head, the foothold is endangered, and the life put in jeopardy.

The Passion for Gaming.

The following anecdote shows the strength of this passion, when once it has gained the ascendancy:

A colored man employed as a fireman on board a steamboat, between Cincinnati [85] and New Orleans, lost all his money, at play with his companions. He then staked his clothing, which he also lost. Having nothing more, he laid down his free papers and *staked himself*. Losing this time, also, he was actually sold by the winner to a slave dealer.

What a power must this passion have over a man, when he will play at the hazard of his own liberty, which most men esteem dearer than life! Young man, if you once contract this habit, you will have no power to restrain it. You will gratify the passion at the hazard of every thing. My mother used to relate an anecdote of some young men, who retired to a garret to play at cards, where they would not be seen. There was an open cask of powder in the room, and they had stuck a lighted candle into the powder, which served the purpose of a candlestick. The man at whose house they were, coming to the loft for some purpose, observed them a few moments before the candle had burned down to the powder, and creeping softly so as not to alarm them, snatched away the candle. In a few moments more they would have been blown to atoms.

The only security against gambling is similar to that against intemperance: TOTAL ABSTINENCE FROM GAMES OF CHANCE. If you never learn any play that can be used in [86] gaming, you will be safe from the snare. But with the knowledge of such games, you

will scarcely escape its seductions.

Danger of Playing for amusement.

There was a family, consisting of the father and mother, two sons, and one daughter, who lived in Tennessee. The father and mother used to play cards with the children for amusement. The sons went to college, and the father's business required him to be much of the time from home. On one occasion, while the sons were at home, during vacation, the father wrote a letter requesting the eldest son to bring him five thousand dollars. The young man was accordingly despatched with the money. He went on board a steamboat, where he met a company of gamblers, in the garb of gentlemen, who professed to be only playing for amusement. To this he had been accustomed, from his childhood, at his father's house, and thought no harm of it. He was solicited to play, and consented. After playing a few moments, they agreed to bet one dollar on the game. He lost, and then doubled his bet, and went on so, till soon he had lost what little money he had about him. He became much excited, went [87] to his state-room and drew out a large package of bills, and returned to the table, where very soon he had lost twelve hundred dollars. He now came to the place where he was to leave the steamboat and go to his father; but he was so intoxicated with the excitement of the gaming table, that he went on. He played on, and continued to lose. Several of the more respectable passengers tried to get him away. But the passion for gaming had taken such possession of his heart, that he was held to the spot, till his package of five thousand dollars was all in the hands of three hardened gamblers. Two of them afterwards won from him his watch and his diamond breast pin, and left him without money enough to buy a meal of victuals.

About ten days after he left, his mother received a letter from his father, saying that he had heard nothing from him. She immediately took her younger son and went in pursuit of him. But, the only intelligence they could gain concerning him was, that he had been ruined by a company of gamblers. The father immediately started for New-Orleans, in search of his son, but hearing nothing from him, he, in despair, took to drinking, and returned, after two years' absence,—"his frame worn—his cheek pale—his eyes wild and fevered—his lips parched—his hopes crushed—his very life [88] only the motion of excitement and passion—his very soul shattered—his property mortgaged." In a short time he went again in pursuit of his son, but returned home, heart-broken, and died of *delirium tremens*, the drunkard's disease. The daughter and the other son, both became maniacs. Thus was a whole family ruined, in consequence of the foolish habit of playing cards for amusement. If that young man had never learned to play cards, he would, in all probability, have gone on his way, and reached his father in safety, with the money. And, if he had been firmly principled against playing, his answer, "I *never play*," would have stopped all solicitation. I travelled on those Western waters, when I was a young man, at a time when gambling was carried on every hour of the day, and almost the live-long night; and yet I was never solicited to play. And why not, as well as this young man? Because, (1.) I did not know how to play; (2.) I felt a great aversion to it, and did not hesitate to show it; and (3.) I made myself known as a *religious man*. These three things will always be sufficient to defend a young man against the most wily gamesters in the world.

The case I have related, is only one among hundreds that might be stated, in which the ruin of many a promising young man has been accomplished, by alluring him to [89] play cards for amusement, and then gradually leading him on to stake first small sums, which he is permitted to win, and then he is persuaded to go on, till he has not a farthing left. There is a set of men, in all parts of the country, who make a business of gambling, and league together to draw in unwary youth and strip them of all they possess, and of more, if they can lay their hands upon money not their own.

Beware, then, how you excite a passion for gaming, by playing for amusement. I am afraid of *all games*; but, especially, all games of chance. I think there is a strong tendency in them all to excite a passion for gaming, which will not be satisfied

without something more stimulating than mere amusement. If I see a boy rolling marbles, or a young man shuffling cards, I think he is in the high road to ruin. Marbles is a dirty play. It treads on the heels of low company and gambling. We frequently hear boys crying out, with all the braggardism of a practiced gambler, "*I'll bet*" so and so. But all betting is gambling. "TOUCH NOT, TASTE NOT, HANDLE NOT."

CHAPTER V.

[90]

INDUSTRY, LABOR, &c.

EARLY discipline, in laborious and useful occupations, is indispensable to the formation of a good character. If God had designed that we should live at ease, without exertion, he would have furnished every thing to our hand, without any effort of our own. In his holy word he has taught us the necessity of helping ourselves, requiring us to labor six days for one of rest, and ordaining that, "if any would not work, neither should he eat." The same lesson he taught an untutored Indian, by the voice of Nature.

A lesson from the Birds and Fishes.

Rev. Mr. Heckewelder, a Moravian Missionary, remarked to an Indian, whom he saw busily employed fencing his cornfield, that he must be very fond of working, as he had never seen him idling away his time as was [91] common with the Indians. "My friend," replied the Indian "the fishes in the water, and the birds in the air have taught me to work. When I was a young man, I loitered about, doing nothing, just like the other Indians, who say that working is only for whites and negroes, but that the Indians were made to hunt the deer, and catch the beaver, otter, and other animals. But one day while I was hunting, I came to the banks of the Susquehannah, and sat down near the water's edge to rest awhile. There I was forcibly struck at seeing with what industry the sun-fish heaped small stones together to make secure places for their spawn; and all this labor they did with their mouth and body, without hands. Presently a little bird, not far from me, raised a song, and while I was looking to see the little songster, its mate, with as much grass as it could hold in its bill, passed close by me, and flew into the bush, where I perceived them, both together, busily employed in building their nest, and singing as their work went on. I entirely forgot my hunting, to contemplate the objects that were before me. I saw the birds in the air and the fishes in the water working diligently and cheerfully, and all this without hands. I thought it was strange and I became lost in wonder. I looked at myself, and saw two long arms, provided [92] with hands and fingers, and with joints that might be opened and shut at pleasure. I could, when I pleased, take up any thing with these hands, hold it fast, or let it loose, and carry it along with me. When I walked, I observed that I had a strong body, capable of bearing fatigue, and supported by two stout legs, with which I could climb to the top of the highest mountains, and descend at pleasure into the valleys."

"And is it possible," said I, "that a being so wonderfully formed as I am, was created to live in idleness; while the birds, which have no hands, and nothing but their little bills to help them, work with cheerfulness, and without being told to do so? Has then the great Creator given me all these limbs for no purpose? It cannot be: I will try to go to work. I did so, and went away from the village to a spot of good land, where I built a cabin, enclosed ground, sowed corn, and raised cattle. Ever since that time, I have enjoyed a good appetite and sound sleep. While others spend their nights in dancing, and are suffering with hunger, I live in plenty. I keep horses,

cows, hogs, and fowls. I am happy. See, my friend, the birds and fishes have brought me to reflection, and taught me to work!”

If any of my young friends, who read this book, think it a hardship to work, I hope [93] they will go into the fields, and like this untutored Indian, learn lessons from the creatures whom God has made. There they will find the little ants busy in rearing their habitation; the mole in raising his hill; the birds in building their nests; and the little busy bee, in sucking honey from every flower. Yet all these little creatures appear happy and contented with their lot. If God made them to be happy, as we suppose he did, why did he not make them to live an idle, inactive life? Evidently because activity is necessary to enjoyment. If you would be happy, then, you must be active. Laziness, or idleness, will certainly make you discontented, wretched, and miserable.

As I was one day walking in one of those beautiful avenues that lead out of the village of Saratoga Springs, my attention was arrested by two of those insects, which children call by the homely name of “*grand-father-long-legs*.” They were laboriously occupied in rolling a round ball, of the size of a walnut, covered with a glutinous substance, dried hard in the sun. I could not be so cruel as to break it in pieces, to gratify my curiosity; but I suppose it must have contained some treasure that was dear to them—probably their eggs. They would labor and tug, with their long arms, [94] to roll it up an ascent; and if it rolled back again, they would patiently return, and roll it up, showing an example of perseverance well worthy of imitation.

Thus God has made all things to be active. All nature, animate and inanimate, calls man to labor. If old ocean did not ebb and flow, and roll its waves, it would stagnate, and become so noxious that no animal could live on the face of the earth. If the earth did not pursue its laborious course around its axis, one half of its inhabitants would be shrouded in perpetual night, while the other half would be scorched to death with the ever-accumulating intensity of the sun’s rays. Can you find any thing, in all the vast creation of God, that is idle? The sluggard, of all God’s works, stands alone —*idle*! He resembles the stagnant pool, whose impure waters, filled with the loathsome creatures, and all manner of filth, saturate the atmosphere with pestilential vapors, and spread around it disease and death. But, the active, industrious man, resembles the running brook, whose waters are kept limpid and clear by their unceasing flow.

“Business first, and then Pleasure.” [95]

A man who is very rich now, was very poor when he was a boy. When asked how he got his riches, he replied, “My father taught me never to play till all my work for the day was finished, and never to spend money till I had earned it. If I had but half an hour’s work to do in a day, I must do that the first thing, *and in half an hour*. After this was done, I was allowed to play; and I could then play with much more pleasure than if I had the thought of an unfinished task before my mind. I early formed the habit of doing every thing in its time, and it soon became perfectly easy to do so. It is to this habit that I now owe my prosperity.” Let every boy who reads this, go and do likewise, and he will meet a similar reward.

Industry.

A gentleman in England had an estate which was worth about a thousand dollars a year. For a while, he kept his farm in his own hands; but at length, he found himself so much in debt that he was obliged to sell one half of his place, to pay up. The rest, [96] he let to a farmer for twenty-one years. Towards the end of that time, the farmer on coming to pay his rent, asked him whether he would sell his farm. The gentleman was surprised that the farmer should be able to make him an offer for his place. “Pray tell me,” said he, “how it happens, that, while I could not live upon twice as much land, for which I paid no rent, you are regularly paying me five hundred dollars

a year for your farm, and able in a few years to purchase it?" "The reason is plain," answered the farmer: "You sat still, and said '*Go*.' I got up and said, '*Come*.' You lay in bed, and enjoyed your ease. I rose in the morning, and minded my business."

This anecdote shows the folly of those young men, who set up for gentlemen, and despise labor and useful employment. Though they may begin with a good capital, they will soon run down, if they depend upon others to do their business. If they have nothing, they will certainly gain nothing. Laziness, poverty, and rags, will go together.

CHAPTER VI.

[97]

TRUE GREATNESS.

True Greatness does not consist in feeling above others.

FOOLS think themselves *great*, in proportion to the show they can make; but it would take a great heap of copper coins to make as much value as a very little piece of gold; and an empty tin kettle will make more sound than a golden vessel filled with the choicest delicacies.

When Mr. Jefferson was President of the United States, he was passing a stream on horseback, in Virginia. A beggar approaching it at the same time, asked him to help him over. The President let him get behind him on the horse and ride over. When they had got over, the beggar discovered that he had left his bundle; and Mr. Jefferson went back again and brought it over. This was true greatness. A man can never be too great to do a kindness to the humblest individual in the world.

True Greatness lies not in being too proud to wait on one's self.

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Chief Justice Marshall was in the habit of going to market himself, and carrying home his purchases. Frequently he would be seen returning at sunrise, with poultry in one hand and vegetables in the other. On one of these occasions, a fashionable young man from the North, who had removed to Richmond, was swearing violently because he could find no one to carry home his turkey. Marshall stepped up, and asking him where he lived, said "That is my way, and I will take it for you." When they came to his house, the young man inquired, "What shall I pay you?" "O, nothing," said the Chief Justice, "you are welcome, it was on my way, and no trouble." "Who is that polite old gentleman, who brought home my turkey for me?" inquired the young man of a by-stander. "That," replied he, "is John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States." "Why did he bring home my turkey?" "To give you a severe reprimand, and teach you to attend to your own business," was the reply. True greatness never feels above doing any thing that is useful; but especially, the truly great man will never feel above helping himself. His own independence of character depends on his being able to help himself. Dr. Franklin, when he first established himself in business, in Philadelphia, wheeled home the paper which he purchased for his printing office, upon a wheel-barrow, with his own hands.

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True Greatness does not make a man difficult about his own

accommodations.

At a time when the court was sitting in Buffalo, N. Y., and all the public houses were full, there came to the principal hotel a starched up little Frenchman, and called for lodgings. He was shown into a small, but well-furnished room, which was the only one in the house that was vacant. He thought himself insulted; and with much warmth said, “Me gem’man—me no sleep here!” A little while afterwards Chancellor Kent, the highest judicial officer in the state, called for lodgings. The landlord told him he was full, excepting one little room, which he did not like to offer to such a man as he. But the Chancellor wished to see it; and on being shown into it, said, “O, this will do very well—it is a fine room.” Which do you think was the greater of these two men? A small mind makes much ado about little things.

True Greatness does not consist in being in the fashion.

[100]

When Dr. Franklin was received at the French Court as American Minister, he felt some scruples of conscience about complying with their fashions of dress. “He hoped,” he said to the Minister, “that as he was a very plain man, and represented a plain republican people, the king would indulge his desire to appear in the court in his usual dress. Independent of this, the season of the year,” said he, “renders the change from yarn stockings to fine silk somewhat dangerous.” The French Minister made him a bow, but said that fashion was too sacred a thing for him to meddle with, but he would do him the honor to mention it to his majesty. The king smiled and returned word that Dr. Franklin was at liberty to appear at court in any dress that he pleased. In spite of that delicate respect for foreigners for which the French are so remarkable, the courtiers could not help staring at first at Dr. Franklin’s Quaker dress. But it soon appeared as though he had been introduced upon this splendid theatre only to demonstrate that great genius, like beauty, “needs not the aid of ornament.”

CHAPTER VII.

[101]

ADVANTAGES OF HONESTY.

Colbert.

GO the world over, and you will find that “honesty is the best policy.” Jean Baptiste Colbert was born at Rheims, in France, in the year 1617, of poor parents. When a boy, he was apprenticed to M. Certain, a woollen draper. Young Colbert was very fond of books, and spent his leisure in reading. He had indeed a taste above his station. But his mind was so much on what he read, that he was sometimes absent-minded and forgetful. M. Certain, who thought of nothing but of selling cloth, would ridicule him, and tell him he would never make any thing. One day he sent him and the porter with four rolls of cloth, to the hotel of M. Cenani, a French banker, who wished to buy hangings for a country house which he had purchased. The pieces were marked 1, 2, 3, and 4; and as Colbert left the house, M. Certain told him that No. 1 was marked three crowns a yard; No. 2, six crowns; No. 3, eight crowns; and No. 4, fifteen crowns. The banker selected No. 3, and asked the young man how much it was a yard. Colbert replied, “fifteen crowns.” The porter grinned, but seeing the mistake was on the side of his master he said nothing. There were thirty yards in the piece, and the money was counted out, four hundred and fifty

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crowns.

When Colbert returned, M. Certain said, “you have made no mistake, I hope.” “I don’t think I have,” replied Colbert. “But I think you have,” said the porter. “Do you think so, Moline? Do you think so?” cried the old man, throwing down the cloth and examining the tickets. “But, indeed, I might have expected this; the little rascal could not do otherwise. But I warn you, if you have made a mistake, you shall go to M. Cenani to ask of him the surplus money; and if he refuses to give it, you shall pay it out of your wages. No. 3 is wanting. No. 3 was worth—it was worth six crowns; no, eight crowns. I am quite puzzled.” “Eight crowns! Eight crowns! are you sure of that?” cried Colbert. “Perhaps you would like to make out that it was I who made the [103] mistake. I tell you No. 3, was worth eight crowns. I am half dead with fear. I will lay a wager that he sold it for six.” “On the contrary,” replied Colbert, “stupid creature that I am, I sold it for fifteen.” “Fifteen! Fifteen!” cried M. Certain. “You are a fine boy, a good boy, Baptiste. You will one day be an honor to all your family. Fifteen!—I could cry with joy! Fifteen crowns for a piece of cloth not worth six! Two hundred and ten crowns profit! O happy day!” “How,” said Colbert, “would you take advantage?” “O, perhaps you want to go shares. Certainly I agree to let you have something.”

“I cannot agree to any such thing,” said Colbert. “I will go to the gentleman I have treated so badly, and beg of him to excuse me, and return him the money he overpaid me.” So saying, he bounded out of the door, leaving his master in a rage of disappointment. In a few moments, he was at the hotel of M. Cenani. It was with great difficulty that he was admitted to his presence, and then he was ordered away. But he persisted in speaking; and after apologizing for his mistake, he returned the money. The banker asked him if he knew that he was no judge of cloth. Colbert assured him that it was not worth more than eight crowns. “And you might easily [104] have kept this money for yourself.” “I never thought of that, sir,” replied the young man. “But, if you had thought of it?” inquired the banker. “It was quite impossible, sir, that such an idea could come into my head. I should as soon have thought of carrying off all that you have here.” “Suppose I should make you a present of this money that you have returned to me with such admirable integrity?” “What right have I to it? And why should you give it to me? I would not take it, sir.” “You are a fine fellow and an honest fellow,” said the banker, and inquired his name. The conversation was suddenly broke off by the arrival of the banker’s carriage. As young Colbert went out, he was seized by the collar, by his enraged master, who abused him in the most frantic manner, and dismissed him from his service.

The young man went home; but his parents were affrighted to see him at that time, fearing some disaster had happened to him. After hearing his story, however, they heartily approved his conduct, and rejoiced that they had such a son.

It was but a little while, however, before M. Cenani arrived, and, praising the nobleness and integrity of the boy, proposed to his parents to take him to Paris and put him in his banking house, where he might make a fortune; which was readily [105] agreed to. Young Colbert soon found himself in a new world. But, denying himself the brilliant attractions with which the city abounded, he gave himself diligently to his business, as clerk in the banking house. His diligence and faithfulness gained for him the esteem of his employers. He soon mastered the business. No accounts baffled him. And, on arriving at manhood, he became a thorough financier. The most important duties were now entrusted to him; and he soon became the travelling agent of the bank; which enabled him also to gratify his taste for the arts and sciences. He made the tour of the French provinces, making commerce his study, and devising means to render it flourishing. In 1648, he was introduced at Court, where his rare merit and conscientiousness in all affairs gained him great esteem. He was created Marquis of Croissy, and afterwards became Prime Minister. In this capacity, he was eminently useful to France. He improved the roads; encouraged trade; founded a chamber of commerce; colonized India and Canada; established naval schools; built ships; introduced manufactures; encouraged the fine arts. One cannot go even a small distance in Paris, even at this day, without finding a trace of

the great Colbert. The Observatory, the beautiful gardens of the Tuilleries and Rue St. Dennis, the Hotel of Invalids, and many other things of like nature which adorn and do honor to the city, owe their existence to him. He also raised up his father's family from great poverty to wealth and honor. [106]

Colbert's first step to distinction was an act of honor and honesty which deprived him of the means of earning his daily bread. If there was ever a case, which, to human appearance, would seem to contradict the old proverb, and show that honesty was not the best policy, one would think his was such a case. But the event proved its truth. And to this single trait in his character may be traced all his greatness. His honesty and integrity made him faithful to his employers. This raised him in their esteem, and contributed to strengthen and confirm this trait of character. This he carried into public life; and his honesty there led him to regard the public benefit as paramount to private interest. The whole of this story may be found in Chambers' Miscellany, published by Gould, Kendall and Lincoln.

Would you be *great*? Honesty and integrity of character lie at the foundation of all true greatness. You must cultivate sincerity, honesty, and fair dealing in early youth, if you would lay the foundation of future greatness.

Two opposite examples. [107]

Two boys were passing an orchard on their way from school, in which there were some plum trees, full of nice fruit. "Come, Thomas," said Henry, "let us jump over and get some plums. Nobody will see us. We can scud along through the tall corn, and come out on the other side." Thomas replied, "It is wrong. I don't like to try it. I would rather not have the plums than steal them, and I will run along home." "You are a coward," said Henry. "I always knew you was a coward; and if you don't want any plums, you may go without them. But I shall have some very quick." Just as Henry was climbing the wall, the owner of the field rose up from the other side. Henry jumped back and ran off as fast as his legs could carry him. Thomas had no reason to be afraid, and he walked along as if nothing had happened. The owner, who had heard the conversation between the two boys, then asked Thomas to step over and help himself to as many plums as he wanted.

This story teaches two lessons: (1.) It shows the advantages of *honesty*. An honest person is not afraid to look others in the face; and honesty, in the end, always turns out more to one's advantage than dishonesty. (2.) It teaches wherein true courage consists: It is, in being *afraid to do wrong*. Henry called Thomas a coward, because he was afraid to do wrong; but he himself sneaked away like a whipped spaniel, the moment he saw any danger. Henry was the coward. He had neither the courage to resist temptation nor to face danger. [108]

Fruits of dishonesty.

A young man from the State of Maine, of good abilities, went to Washington city, where he was admitted as a member of the bar, to practice law, with fine prospects. He was respected in society, and was a leader in the choir, in one of the churches in the city. But, in an evil hour, he discovered that there was a considerable amount of money in the Treasury, which had been allowed to claimants, but which had never been called for, and was not likely to be. The young man, thinking he should not be likely to be detected, forged drafts, and obtained money to the amount of several thousand dollars. But, it was not long before his sin found him out. He was detected, found guilty, and sent to the state's prison.

CHAPTER VIII.

[109]

PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.

Section I.—Reading.

HE that reads to be amused, will be like him that eats to gratify his appetite—an *epicure*. But he who reads to obtain useful information, and to improve his mind, will be like him who eats to sustain nature—*strong and healthy*. The former will be satisfied with nothing but dainties—the latter will prefer plain strong food.

Sir William Jones rose to great eminence. When he was a mere child, he was very inquisitive. His mother was a superior woman of great intelligence, and he would apply to her for the information which he desired; but her constant reply was, "READ AND YOU WILL KNOW." This gave him a passion for books, which was one of the principal means of making him what he was. But, it is not every one who *reads* that will become wise.

Robert Hall.

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This great man, when he was a boy about six years of age, was sent to a boarding school, where he spent the week, coming home Saturday and returning Monday. When he went away on Monday morning, he would take with him two or three books from his father's library to read at the intervals between the school hours. The books he selected, were not those of mere amusement, but such as required deep and serious thought. Before he was nine years old, he had read over and over again, with the deepest interest, *Edwards on the Affections*, *Edwards on the Will*, *and Butler's Analogy*.

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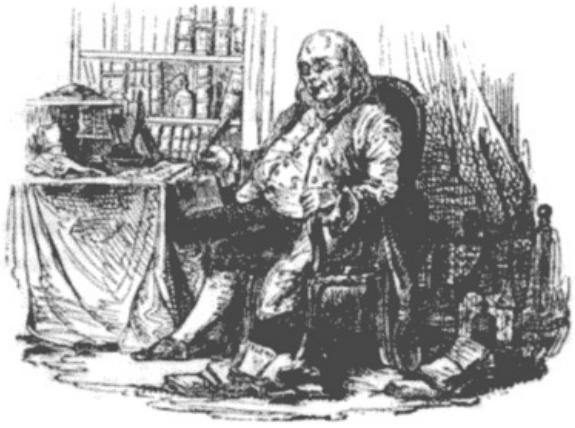

Section II.—Love of Learning Encouraged.

THERE are many young persons, who have an ardent thirst for knowledge, and a strong desire to obtain an education; but their circumstances in life seem to forbid the attempt. There are many examples, which afford them encouragement to make the attempt. A large proportion of the men who have risen to the highest distinction, have struggled against the same difficulties which they have to encounter; and, when they see what has been done by others, they will perceive that it can be done by themselves.

Sir Isaac Newton.

When Sir Isaac Newton was a boy he was employed in servile labor. Sometimes he was sent to open the gates for the men that were driving the cattle to market. At other times, he carried corn to [112] market, or attended the sheep. One day his uncle found him in a hay-loft, working out a mathematical problem, and he was sent to school. There he discovered his great and various talents. At the age of eighteen he was sent to the University at Cambridge, England, where he soon distinguished himself.

Benjamin West.

West, the celebrated painter, early manifested a genius for this art. His first attempt was made with pens, and red and black ink, upon a portrait of his sister's child, lying in the cradle. For a long time he had no pencil. Having been told that they were made of camel's hair, he pulled hairs out of the tail of a cat, of which he made his first brush.

Other eminent Persons.

Dr. Franklin was the son of a tallow-chandler, and served an apprenticeship to a printer; Rev. Dr. Scott, author of the Commentary, was employed in the most laborious work on a farm; William Gifford, one of the most celebrated literary men of his age, was an apprentice to a shoemaker, and wrought out his problems in algebra on a piece of sole-leather, with the point of an awl.

Section III.—Dislike of Study. [113]

LATIN AND LABOR.

JOHN ADAMS, the second President of the United States, used to relate the following anecdote:

"When I was a boy, I had to study the Latin grammar; but it was dull, and I hated it. My father was anxious to send me to college, and therefore I studied the grammar, till I could bear it no longer; and going to my father, I told him I did not like study, and asked for some other employment. It was opposing his wishes, and he was quick in his answer. 'Well, John, if Latin grammar does not suit you, you may try ditching; perhaps that will; my meadow yonder needs a ditch, and you may put by Latin and try that.'

"This seemed a delightful change, and to the meadow I went. But I soon found ditching harder than Latin, and the first forenoon was the longest I ever experienced. That day I ate the bread of Labor, and glad was I when night came on. [114] That night I made some comparison between Latin grammar and ditching, but said not a word about it. I dug next forenoon, and wanted to return to Latin at dinner; but it was humiliating, and I could not do it. At night, toil conquered pride; and though it was one of the severest trials I ever had in my life, I told my father that, if he chose, I would go back to Latin grammar. He was glad of it; and if I have since gained any distinction it has been owing to the two days labor in that abominable ditch."

Boys may learn several important lessons from this story. It shows how little they oftentimes appreciate their privileges. Those who are kept at study frequently think it a hardship needlessly imposed on them. But they must do something; and if set to ditching, would they like that any better? The opportunity of pursuing a liberal course of study is what few enjoy; and they are ungrateful who drag themselves to it as to an intolerable task. You may also learn from this anecdote, how much better

your parents are qualified to judge of these things than yourselves. If John Adams had continued his ditching instead of his Latin, his name would not probably have been known to us. But, in following the path marked out by his judicious parent, he rose to the highest honors which the country affords.

CHAPTER IX. [115]

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

Section I.—Fickleness.

Hunting Squirrels.

OHN ALSOP was about fifteen years old, when his father, who had just moved into a new settlement, was clearing land. One day the father and a neighbor were engaged in building a *log fence*; which was made of the trunks of the trees that were cleared off the lands. First, they laid the fence one log high, with the ends of each length passing a little way by each other. Notches were cut in the ends, and a block was laid crosswise, where the ends lapped, and then another tier was laid on the cross pieces, till the fence was high enough. To roll up the top logs, they would lay long poles, called *skids*, one end on the top of the logs, and the other on the ground, and roll up the [116] logs on these. But, as the logs were very heavy, they were obliged to stop several times to rest, or to get a new hold; and it was John's business, when they stopped, to put a block the under side of the log, above the skids, to keep it from rolling back. Having given a hard lift, and tugging with all his might, the father called out, "There, Johnny, put under your block quick." John started nimbly, and snatched up his block, when suddenly the loud chirp of a squirrel struck his ear. Instantly, down went his block, and away he ran after the squirrel, leaving his father and the other man to hold the log till he came back.

This anecdote gives you John's character. He was too fickle to follow any one object or pursuit long enough to accomplish any thing. Thirty years after this, a gentleman who had known him in his youthful days, inquired about him of one of his neighbors, who related this anecdote, and added, "*he has been running after squirrels ever since*." He never was steady and persevering in pursuit of any thing. When he was a young man, he could never make up his mind decidedly what employment to follow. He would try one, and get tired of it, and take another; but followed no business long enough to get well acquainted with it. When he had a family, and found it necessary to make exertion, he was busy early and late, but to little purpose. He moved from [117] one place to another; and "a rolling stone gathers no moss." He very often changed his employment, and by that means lost all the advantage of past experience. Now, he was a farmer, then a trader, then a post-rider, then a deputy sheriff, then a mechanic, without having learned his trade. By the time he had got fairly started in a new business, he would hear or think of something else, and before any body thought of it, he would change his business. In this way he wasted his money, and kept his family poor, and neglected his children's education. He was always *hunting the squirrel*.

Now, boys, don't hunt the squirrel. Whatever you begin, stick to it till it is finished —done, and well done. If you always follow this rule faithfully, you cannot fail of being somebody and doing something. But, if you go through life hunting the squirrel, when you die, nobody can tell what you have done, and the world will be neither wiser nor better for your having lived in it.

Section II.—Independence of Character. [118]

THERE is a certain kind of Independence of Character, which is indispensable to success in any undertaking. I do not mean a proud, self-confident spirit, which despises advice, and makes one self-willed and headstrong. This is *obstinacy*. But true independence is that sort of self-confidence and resolution which leads one to go forward in what he has to do, with decision and energy, without leaning upon others. Without this, a man will gain to himself that unenviable distinction described by the homely but expressive term *shiftless*. The following description, from Mrs. S. C. Hall's "*Sketches of Irish Character*," furnishes an admirable illustration of the results of a want of independence of character:—

"Shane Thurlough, 'as dacent a boy,' and Shane's wife, as 'clane-skinned a girl,' as any in the world. There is Shane, an active, handsome looking [119] fellow, leaning over the half-door of his cottage, kicking a hole in the wall with his brogue, and picking up all the large gravel within his reach, to pelt the ducks with. Let us speak to him. 'Good morning Shane.' 'Och! the bright bames of heaven on ye every day! and kindly welcome, my lady; and won't ye step in and rest—its powerful hot, and a beautiful summer, sure,—the Lord be praised!' 'Thank you, Shane. I thought you were going to cut the hay-field to-day; if a heavy shower comes, it will be spoiled; it has been fit for the scythe these two days.' 'Sure, it's all owing to that thief o' the world, Tom Parrel, my lady. Didn't he promise me the loan of his scythe; and by the same token I was to pay him for it; and *depinding* on that, I didn't buy one, which I have been threatening to do for the last two years.' 'But why don't you go to Carrick and purchase one?' 'To Carrick. Och, 'tis a good step to Carrick, and my toes are on the ground, (saving your presence,) for I *depinded* on Tim Jarvis to tell Andy Cappler, the brogue-maker, to do my shoes; and, bad luck to him, the spalpeen, he forgot it.' 'Where's your pretty wife, Shane?' 'She's in all the wo o' the world, ma'am, dear. And she puts the blame of it on me, though I'm not in the fault this time, any [120] how. The child's taken the small pox, and she *depinded* on me to tell the doctor to cut it for the cow-pox, and I *depinded* on Kitty Cackle, the limmer, to tell the doctor's own man, and thought she would not forget it, becase the boy's her bachelor; but out o' sight out o' mind—the never a word she tould him about it, and the babby's got it nataral, and the woman's in heart trouble, (to say nothing o' myself;) and its the first and all.'

"'I am very sorry, indeed, for you have got a much better wife than most men!' 'That's a true word, my lady, only she's fidgety-like sometimes, and says I don't hit the nail on the head quick enough; and she takes a dale more trouble than she need about mony a thing.'

"'I do not think I ever saw Ellen's wheel without flax before, Shane?' 'Bad 'cess to the wheel!—I got it this morning about that too. I *depinded* on John Williams to bring the flax from O'Flaharty's this day week, and he forgot it; and she says I ought to have brought it myself, and I close to the spot. But where's the good? says I; sure, he'll bring it next time.'

"'I suppose, Shane, you will soon move into the new cottage at Churn Hill? I passed it to-day, and it looked so cheerful; and when you get there, you must take Ellen's advice, and *depind* solely on yourself.' 'Och! ma'am dear, don't mention it; sure it's [121] that makes me so down in the mouth this very minit. Sure I saw that born blackguard, Jack Waddy, and he comes in here, quite innocent-like—'Shane, you've an eye to squire's new lodge,' says he. 'Maybe I have,' says I. 'I'm yer man,' says he. 'How so,' says I. 'Sure I'm as good as married to my lady's maid,' said he; 'and I'll spake to the squire for you my own self.' 'The blessing be about you,' says I, quite grateful—and we took a strong cup on the strength of it—and *depinding* on him, I thought all safe; and what d'ye think, my lady? Why, himself stalks into the place—talked the squire over, to be sure—and without so much as "by your lave," sates himself and his new wife on the lase in the house; and I may go whistle.' 'It was a

great pity, Shane, that you did not go yourself to Mr. Churn.' 'That's a true word for you, ma'am dear; but it's hard if a poor man can't have a frind to *depind* on.'"

If you want any thing well done, you must see to it yourself. If you want it half done, leave it to servants. If you want it neglected, impose it upon your friend, to save yourself the trouble.

Section III.—Contentment.

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THE true secret of happiness lies in a *contented mind*. If we would be happy, we must be satisfied with our lot as it is. There is no condition in which there is not something unpleasant. If we seek for perfection, we may roam the wide world over, and never find it; but, if we learn to bear patiently what we cannot help, almost any situation in life will be tolerable. Every one, however, is disposed to think his troubles the worst of all. The following story shows that no situation is exempt from trouble.

The old black sheep.

A gentleman in England was passing by where a large flock of sheep were feeding; and seeing the shepherd sitting by the road-side, preparing to [123] eat his dinner, he stopped his horse, and began to converse with him. "Well, shepherd," he said, "you look cheerful and contented, and I dare say, have very few cares to vex you. I, who am a man of large property, cannot but look at such men as you with a kind of envy." "Why, sir," replied the shepherd, "'tis true, I have not trouble like yours; and I could do well enough, was it not for that *black* ewe that you see yonder among my flock. I have often begged my master to kill or sell her; but he won't, though she is the plague of my life; for no sooner do I sit down at my book or take up my wallet to get my dinner, but away she sets off over the down, and the rest follow her; so that I have many a weary step after them. There! you see she's off, and they are all after her!" "Ah, my friend," said the gentleman, "I see every man has a black ewe in his flock, to plague him, as well as I."

Hunting after contentment.

A man had a number of houses, and would move from one to another, because he could be contented but a little while in a place. A person asked him why he moved so often, and he said he was *hunting after contentment*. But *content* is never found by *seeking*.

CHAPTER X.

[124]

RELIGION.

Section I.—Religious Knowledge.

THE WILL.

KNOWLEDGE is acquired not only by *reading*, but by *thinking* of what we read.

A minister in Ireland met a boy going to school, and asked him what book it was which he had under his arm. "It is a *will*, sir," said the boy. "What will?" inquired the

minister. “The last will and testament that Jesus Christ left to me, and to all who desire to obtain a title in the property therein bequeathed.” “What did Christ leave you in that will?” “A kingdom, sir.” “Where does that kingdom lie?” “It is the kingdom of heaven, sir.” “And do you expect to reign as a king there?” “Yes, sir; as joint-heir with Christ.” “And will not every person get there as well as [125] you?” “No, sir; none can get there but those who found their title to that kingdom upon the ground of the will.” This boy was not only a *reader* but a *thinker*. The minister told him to take care of a book of such value, and to mind the provisions of the will.

A Little Reasoner.

A little boy asked his mother how many gods there were. A younger brother answered, “Why, one to be sure.” “But how do you know that?” inquired the other. “Because,” answered the younger, “God fills every place so that there is no room for any other.”

A Wise Answer.

A boy six years old was offered an orange, if he would tell where God was. “Tell me,” said the boy, “where he *is not*, and I will give you two.”

A Bad Bargain.

A Sabbath School teacher was talking to his class about that passage in Proverbs, which says, “Buy the truth and sell it not.” “He who buys the truth,” said he, “makes a good bargain. Can any of you recollect any instance of a *bad bargain*, mentioned in [126] Scripture?” “I do,” replied one of his scholars:—“Esau made a bad bargain, when he sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage.” Another said, “Judas made a bad bargain, when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver.” A third observed, “Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain, who, to gain the whole world, loses his own soul.” Alas! how many such bad bargains are made every day!

Simple Faith.

A missionary in Africa asked a little boy if he was a sinner. The boy replied by asking if he knew any one who was not. The missionary then asked him who could save him from his sins. He replied, “Christ.” “What has Christ done to save sinners?” “He has died on the cross.” “Do you believe Jesus Christ will save you?” “Yes.” “Why do you believe it?” “I *feel* it; and not only so, but I consider that, since he has died, and sent his servants the missionaries from such a far country to publish salvation, it would be very strange if, after all, he should reject a sinner.” It would be so indeed, with respect to all that come to Him; for he has said, “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.”

Proof that there is a God. [127]

A converted Greenlander, conversing with a missionary concerning his former state, said that, before he had ever heard about God or Jesus Christ, he used to have such reflections as these: A boat does not grow into existence of itself, but must be made by the labor and ingenuity of man. But the meanest bird has far more skill displayed in its structure than the best boat, and no man can make a bird. But there is far more art shown in the formation of man than in any other creature. Who was it that made him? I thought perhaps he proceeded from his parents, and they from their parents; but some must have been the first parents—whence did they come?

Common report informs me that they grew out of the earth; but if so, why do not men now grow out of the earth? And from whence did this same earth, the sea, the sun, the moon, and the stars, arise into existence? Certainly, there must be some Being, who made all these things—a Being that always was, and can never cease to be. He must be inexpressibly more mighty, knowing, and wise, than the wisest man. He must be very good too; for every thing that is made is good, useful, and necessary for [128] us. Ah! did I but know him, how would I love him and honor him! But who has seen him? Who has conversed with him?

This poor heathen, groping in the dark, was led to the same train of reasoning to prove the existence of God that is used by the learned Christian philosopher; thus proving the truth of that passage in Rom. i. 20:—"The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."

How to prove the Bible true.

At one of the South Sea Islands, which had been converted from heathenism by the labors of the English Missionaries, they were holding the annual meeting of their Missionary Society. A British vessel arrived, and the officers and crew attended the meeting. A native took the chair, and native speakers addressed the meeting, with great effect. Every thing was done in good order; and the speeches were interpreted by the missionaries to the Englishmen present from the ship. But some of them said the natives were mere parrots, and only repeated what the missionaries had taught [129] them. Others said that was impossible. After a warm dispute, they agreed to submit it to Mr. Williams, the missionary; who declined deciding the question, but told them if they would visit him in the afternoon, he would collect ten or twelve natives, whom they might ask any questions they pleased. They came, and about fifteen natives were present, but without knowing the object of the meeting.

The first question asked was, "Do you believe the Bible to be the word of God?" They were startled. They had never heard such a question stated before. A doubt had never entered their minds. After a moment's pause, one of them replied, "Most certainly we do; undoubtedly we do." "Why do you believe it?" they were again asked. "Can you give any reason for believing the Bible to be the word of God?" He answered: "Why, look at the power with which it has been attended, in the utter overthrow of all that we have been addicted to from time immemorial. What else could have abolished that system of idolatry, which had so long prevailed among us? No human arguments could have induced us to abandon that false system."

The same questions were put to another, who replied, "I believe the Bible to be the word of God, on account of the pure system of religion which it contains. We had a [130] system of religion before; but look how dark and black that system was compared with the bright system of salvation revealed in the word of God! Here we learn that we are sinners, and that God gave Jesus Christ to die for us; and by that goodness salvation is given to us. Now, what but the wisdom of God could have produced such a system as this presented to us in the word of God? And this doctrine leads to purity."

Another made the following singular reply, which is worthy of a learned philosopher: "When I look at myself, I find I have got hinges all over my body. I have hinges to my legs, hinges to my jaws, hinges to my feet. If I want to take hold of any thing, there are hinges to my hands to do it with. If my heart thinks, and I want to speak, I have got hinges to my jaws. If I want to walk, I have hinges to my feet. Now here is wisdom, in adapting my body to the various functions which it has to discharge. And I find that the wisdom which made the Bible exactly fits with this wisdom which has made my body; consequently I believe the Bible to be the word of God."

The argument, in this last answer, is the same as that which proves the existence of God: the perfect adaptation of all the works of nature to their design, shows them [131]

to have been the work of a Supreme Intelligence. The perfect adaptation of the Bible to the condition, wants, and necessities of man, proves it to be of divine origin. The Bible just suits the design for which it professes to have been given. It gives us just that information and instruction, which we should expect a revelation from heaven to give. It gives a rational account of the origin of all things; of the object of man's existence, and of his relations and duties to God. It explains how man came to be in his present fallen, wretched condition, and makes provision for his restoration to the favor of God. It provides for a radical reformation of character; gives a perfect code of morals, and takes hold on the heart, and inspires a devotional spirit. Human wisdom could not have produced such a book; but if it could, *good* men would not have been guilty of imposing a work of their own upon mankind, as a revelation from heaven; and *bad* men would not have made a book to condemn themselves, as the Bible condemns all wickedness. We must, then, conclude, that the Bible is a divine book.

Section II.—The Sabbath.

[132]

Nothing lost by keeping the Sabbath.

A PIOUS sailor, on board the steamboat Helen McGreggor, in 1830, was ordered by the Captain to assist in handling freight on the Sabbath; which he objected to do, because he wished to keep the Sabbath. "We have no Sabbaths here at the West," the Captain replied. "Very well," said the sailor, "wherever I am, I am determined to keep the Sabbath." After a few more words, the Captain settled with him, and he left the boat. He was soon offered higher wages, if he would come back; but he refused. In a few days, he shipped at New Orleans for Europe. The first newspaper he took up on his arrival contained an account of the terrible disaster which happened to this boat soon after he left it. On the morning of the 24th of February, 1830, she burst her boiler at Memphis, Tenn., and nearly [133] one hundred lives were lost. This dreadful disaster he had escaped, by adhering, at all hazards, to his determination, wherever he was, to keep the Sabbath.

When George III. was repairing his palace, he found among the workmen a pious man, with whom he often held serious conversations. One Monday morning, when the king went to view the works, this man was missing. He inquired the reason. At first, the other workmen were unwilling to tell. But the king insisted on knowing; when they confessed that they had returned Sabbath morning, to complete a piece of work which they could not finish on Saturday, and that this man had been turned out of his employment because he refused to come. "Call him back immediately," said the king. "The man who refused doing his ordinary work on the Lord's day is the man for me. Let him be sent for." He was restored to his place; and always afterwards, the king showed him particular favor. Here was a strong temptation to break the Sabbath, for the man's employment depended on it. But he found it both safe and profitable to keep the Sabbath.

A wise answer.

[134]

A wicked man said to his son, who attended the Sabbath School, "carry this parcel to such a place." "It is the Sabbath," said the boy. "Put it in your pocket," said the

father. “God can see into my pocket,” the little boy answered.

Danger of breaking the Sabbath.

It is believed that more sad accidents happen to young persons, while seeking their pleasure on God’s Holy Day, than by any other means. A great proportion of the cases of drowning, among boys, occur on the Sabbath. One fine summer’s morning, two sprightly young lads started for the Sabbath School; but they were met on the way by some rude boys, who persuaded them to go and play with them by the side of the river. They hesitated for some time, instead of resolutely saying “No,” to the first temptation. When they yielded, it was with troubled consciences, for they were well instructed at home. They played about the river for some time, when one of them, venturing too near, fell into the water, which was deep. His companions were too much frightened to give him any assistance, and he was carried away by the rapid [135]
current and drowned. Thus were these two boys punished for their disobedience to God and their parents.

But one Sabbath in the week.

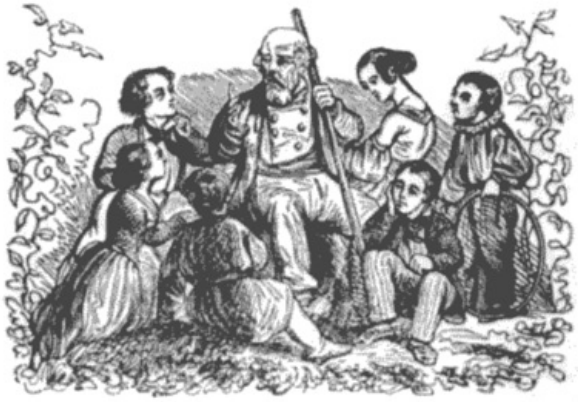
A person being invited to go on an excursion for pleasure, on the Holy Sabbath, replied, “I should like an excursion very well; but I have but one Sabbath in the week, and I can’t spare that.” This expresses an important truth in an impressive manner. When we have but one day in the week exclusively devoted to the concerns of eternity, while six are devoted to the affairs of time, can we spare that one day for pleasure? It is the best of the seven. It is worth more than all the rest. If rightly employed, it will bring us a richer return. What we can earn in the six days is perishable; but the fruits of a well-spent Sabbath will endure for ever. The Sabbath, when properly spent, is the day for the highest kind of enjoyment. If, therefore, you would seek pleasure, you can better afford to take any other day in the week for it, than to take the holy Sabbath.

Section III.—Early piety recommended. [136]

A MAN eighty-seven years of age, meeting another aged man not quite as old as himself, the other inquired of him how long he had been interested in religion. “Fifty years,” was the old man’s reply. “Well, have you ever regretted that you began so young to devote yourself to God?” “O no,” said he; and the tears trickled down his cheeks. “I weep when I think of the sins of my youth.”

Another man between sixty and seventy years of age, said, “I hope I became a disciple of the Lord when I was seventeen;” and he burst into a flood of tears as he added, “and there is nothing which causes me so much distress as to think of those seventeen years—some of the very best portion of my life,—which I devoted to sin and the world.”

This was the experience of David, who, in his old age, prayed, “Remember not, O [137]
Lord the sins of my youth.” And it will be the reader’s experience, should he ever be brought to a knowledge of the truth, after giving the flower of his days to the service of sin and Satan.



Danger of delay.

A—— M—— was an impenitent youth. His friend, who had just embraced the Saviour, in the ardor of his first love, besought him to turn to the Lord. He acknowledged the great importance of the things which were urged upon his attention; and said that, long before, the Spirit of God had called upon him, and he was "almost persuaded to be a Christian." Once he stood almost on the threshhold of [138] heaven. "But now," said he, "I am fallen, fallen—O how far! I know that I am not a Christian now. I am a great sinner. I have quenched the Holy Spirit. If I should die as I am, I know I shall be eternally lost, for I believe the Bible. You may think, because I am so careless now, I shall die unconverted. But no, I have more thoughts about death than many suppose. *I mean to repent before I die*, and become a Christian. I cannot think of dying as I now am; but you need not be concerned about me, *for I mean to repent yet*." Not many days afterwards, he was crossing a river, with a number of others, for the purpose of spending the day in amusement. The skiff upset, and they were plunged into the water. All the rest of the company but A—— (who was the best swimmer among them), reached the shore. He was heard, as he struggled towards the bank, to utter a fearful oath, calling upon God to damn his soul. God took him at his word. He sunk to rise no more—a fearful warning on those who presume on future repentance!

Section IV.—Uncertainty of Life. [139]

"Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain:

"Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.

"For that ye *ought* to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."—James iv. 13, 14, 15.

ON Friday, the Editor of the New-York Commercial Advertiser, met a Mr. Storrs in the street and requested from him an account of an Indian adventure which he had heard him relate. Mr. Storrs replied, "I am going to New Haven in the morning. I will write it there and bring it down for you on Monday. You shall have it on Monday." These were his last words. On Monday he was buried. Such is the uncertainty of all human calculations! Let the business of the day be done to-day; for no one is sure of to-morrow. Especially let the great business of life always be done, and then sudden death need not be dreaded.

Sudden death of an impenitent sinner. [140]

On a cold day in the middle of winter, a carriage drove up to a minister's house and he was summoned to attend the death-bed of a young man, who, in the midst of life and health had been just struck down by a violent kick from a horse, and was not expected to live more than a few hours. The blow had broken his skull bone, and cut out a piece as large as the palm of his hand, presenting a ghastly and horrible sight.

When the minister arrived, he found him just recovering his senses. The physician came soon after, and decided that there was no hope of saving his life. The minister, after saying a few words, and engaging in prayer, proposed to retire for a short time, to give the young man a little rest. "No, no," he exclaimed, "do not leave me for a moment. I have but a short time to live, and I dare not die as I am. O what shall I do? Tell me quickly before the light of reason forsakes me."

"James," said the minister, "there is but one way in which a sinner can be saved, and that is, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ;—whether an hour only, or years be [141] allowed you, the only way for you to secure salvation is, by casting yourself unreservedly into the Saviour's hand. Only his blood can save you; and you are welcome now, this moment. All things are ready—come now."

The young man, with a look of anguish, replied, "Do you remember, sir, when I was putting up some shelves in your study, eight months ago, that you asked me to stop, while you talked with me about religion, and prayed for me? It was then that I felt that I was a sinner, and after going home, I endeavored to pray for myself, and determined that I would seek religion. Two or three days, these feelings continued; when, unhappily for me, I took up a book, which I had commenced reading before our conversation, and though conscience remonstrated, I went on and finished it. My feelings were much enlisted in the story, but when I got through I had no disposition to pray; and my anxiety about religion was gone. I resumed novel-reading, of which I had been very fond, and compromised with my conscience, by resolving that at the end of one year I would throw all such books aside, and seek the salvation of my soul. Only two thirds of that year are gone, and here I am dying! Fool, fool that I was, to sell my soul for a novel—to prefer the excitement of an idle tale to the joys of [142] religion."

The minister begged him, whatever had been his past folly and guilt, to look to Christ for the forgiveness of all. But while he was speaking, the young man's reason began to fail. In a short time he was delirious. "Fool, fool!" he would exclaim, at intervals, and this was all he said. In this state of mind, death overtook him, four months before the period arrived, to which he had put off attention to the concerns of his soul—a sad warning to those who defer this first and great concern!

Sudden Death of a Christian.

William G. was a young man in vigorous health and of ardent temperament, with great energy of character. His office was that of a brakeman upon the Railroad. A long line of freight cars had been delayed a few minutes behind the time, and must hasten to reach the turnout in season for the passenger train, which was expected to pass in a few moments. Two cars were to be detached; which, by a dexterous movement, could be done without entirely stopping the train. The moment the engine is slackened, the cars behind will gain a little upon those in front, when the connecting pin can be removed, and the hinder cars detached. This the young man [143] had often done before, and he sprang forward with alacrity to perform it now. But, in the path lay a pebble, so small as to escape notice, and yet large enough, as he stepped rapidly backwards, to throw him prostrate on the track, while the heavy-laden cars passed on over his body. It was the work of an instant, but it was done. There lay, mangled and writhing, the young man, who, not one moment before, was buoyant, healthful, full of enterprise and hope. There was no hope of his life. With one arm extended, the only unbroken limb in his body, he speaks: "I must die—I know it—I must die, but thank God I am ready to die. Yes, I am willing to die, if it is God's will. And yet, I should like to live. My poor mother—who will take care of her?

My poor sisters—and oh, my *poor dear Mary!* Send for them—send for them. Send now. I must see them once more. I have much to say to them. Oh, my God, thy will be done!" They came, and there was such a burst of grief as is seldom witnessed. Yet, amid all this, he was calm. Not a groan, not a murmur had escaped him through the long hours of bodily suffering which he had endured, and not a murmur nor a groan did he suffer now, when the heart-strings were broken. He spoke calmly and clearly to them all, gave them counsel, bade each a tender farewell; then closed his eyes, [144] and sunk into the sleep of death. What would this scene have been without the Christian hope? This young man had anchored his hope firm upon the Rock of Ages. It had supported him in the busy scenes of life. It now sustained him in the sudden hour of trial, when the pains of death seized upon him without warning. "LET ME DIE THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS, AND LET MY LAST END BE LIKE HIS!"

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