



24
A. K. Kennedy

Don Pratt

The path I tread, I never

Shall retrace.

When ere it leads, I never

May retrace.

Nor all my tears or van regret-

May exchange the past, or make amends

For it.

Nor all my deeds, redeem, redeem

A single crime.

Yours
Pratt.

THE YOUNG MAN.

HINTS

ADDRESSED TO THE YOUNG MEN

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

BY JOHN TODD.

NORTHAMPTON:

PUBLISHED BY J. H. BUTLER.

BUFFALO...J. H. BUTLER & Co.

1844.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year
1844, by J. H. BUTLER, in the Clerk's Office of the
District Court of Massachusetts.

To SAMUEL T. ARMSTRONG, Esq. Boston.

Sir :—

By placing your name on this page, and by dedicating this little volume to you, I accomplish two objects ; first, I may remind you, that though it is now many years since an unbefriended youth was struggling hard to overcome difficulties and prepare himself for a life of usefulness, and though the words of encouragement and other acts of kindness which you bestowed may have passed from your memory, they have not from his. And secondly, I may point my young countrymen to you, as one, who, surrounded by discouragements, has done much for himself, been

highly honored in a community where honors are not often and repeatedly bestowed upon any but the really deserving, and yet who has never forgotten that "none of us liveth to himself." May your life be long and happy, your usefulness increasing, your setting sun go down in brightness, and your immortality be glorious.

With great respect and affection,

THE AUTHOR.

PITTSFIELD, JUNE 1, 1844.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

CONTENTS.—Anxiety of the Author. Reflections of manhood,—solemn. Why write a new book for Young Men. Work must be truly American,—and why? Contrast between Europe and this country. Curious ideas of foreigners in regard to this country. Every man here on the side of law. One very peculiar feature in the organization of this nation—and what? How the right of primogeniture and inalienable property was obtained at first. Results of this principle in Europe. Results of the antagonist principle in this country. We belong to a peculiar race of men. Its characteristics—power and enterprise. The destiny of America two-fold. What it is. What needed to meet it. Dangers. What our Young Men have to do with this. What they need. Their dangers. Wish of Burns. 13

CHAPTER II.

CHARACTER:—ITS VALUE.

CONTENTS.—Character the foundation of respect—peculiarly so in this country. Example of Bowditch:

John Q. Adams. The principle applied to the adoration of God. Station cannot, of itself, command respect. Example of Nero and the martyr. Talents cannot command respect. Melancholy example. Wealth cannot do it, except on two conditions. The sinking creek. Character must be earned. The young preacher of Crete. Philosophy of this. Beauty of this law. Its wonderful extent—its application not confined to this life or to this world. Character valuable in every situation. Equality of human occupations. Two great principles—individual responsibility, and combination. Self-observation. The rain-drops. Obscurity no bar to usefulness. What causes our troubles in life. The fools of ancient noblemen. The wise servant. What alone destroys a man. The keen remarks of a shrewd man. . . . 45

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER:—ITS FOUNDATIONS.

CONTEXTS.—The great aim of the young man. His first disappointment. Definition of character. A great law of heaven—character must be of slow growth. Illustrations. Desire of early maturity. Ambition to be great. Why we do not regret the *existence of this law*. Illustrations—*Moses, David, Newton, Luther*. Great good which men do is to prevent evil. Small impressions become great in their results. Lockhart. A second great law of heaven—Reaping what we sow. Illustrations—*indolence, dissipation*. How God uses this law. Its extent and strength. Decision of character. Two things mistaken for it. What decision is. Illustrations.

tions. Lord Mansfield,—the hunter. Moral courage in saying *no*. Integrity. The Quaker's story. Matthew Hale. John Marshall. Beautiful incident in his life. Tenderness of feeling. John M. Mason at his son's funeral. The missionary's jewels. 74

CHAPTER IV.

TEMPTATIONS OF YOUNG MEN.

CONTESTS.—Temptations common to all—come upon young men with peculiar power. The blast on the flower—the deer hunter—the otter. Why the young men of this country peculiarly exposed to temptations. First temptation—to seek to live in great cities. The boy when he first entered a great city. Its peculiar temptations. The conscience and sensibilities blunted. Illustration. The Morgue. Why young men thus seek the city. High living and mean thinking. Gentility. The scene in the stage coach. Second temptation: To waste time, enfeeble the intellect, and corrupt the heart, by foolish and wicked books. How the taste is created and cherished. Impure authors. Third temptation: Bad company. Power of associates—danger of hasty friendships. Progress in ruin. The beauty of a virtuous and pure young man. Thirst for intoxicating drinks—how created—its dangers—its only remedy. Fourth temptation: Reveries of the imagination. Its power—danger even in business—awful when imagination is impure. *Castle-building*. Fifth temptation. To shrink from the path of duty. The story of the highwayman. Justice Spread. Application. 116

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER V
HABITS.

CONTENTS.—Why his Maker has put man under the control of Habits—easily and early formed—their power—their constant action—their unfelt control—power in old age—the maniac—shame of a bad habit—pleasure of a good one. First habit: early rising—proper allowance of time for sleep—Cobbett's testimony—luxury of early rising. Second habit: viz. of system in every thing—ambition of doing things quick—is a misfortune. English system of charity. System of John Jay—Jeremiah Evarts—the porcelain slate. Third habit: finish what you begin—the curse of want of perseverance—the farm—the shop. Fourth habit: continued self-improvement—how to go about it—even if long neglected—Sir William Jones. Fifth habit: punctuality—importance of little things—punctuality in fulfilling promises—in paying debts. Sixth habit: regard to truth—great stories—boasting. Seventh: gentlemanly habits—what constitutes the gentleman—Dean Swift and Faulkner—use of tobacco—politeness—good humor. Eighth: habit of procrastination—evil and shame of this habit—ruins the soul. 149

CHAPTER VI.

INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY.

CONTENTS.—Men naturally indolent. The savage. Habits of labor to be formed early. Philosophy of forming them in childhood. How age is affected by

them. The voice of mankind. Three Spirits wait on the Industrious—*Health—Cheerfulness—and Independence*. Feeling of New England. Daughters of Clergymen—noble examples. Story of the poor Student. Other examples. Remark of Washington. Industry the parent of enterprize. Illustrations—our villages,—whale-men,—the West,—seal hunters,—isles of the ocean,—stages among the mountains of Mexico,—hunters in South Africa,—factories. Industry preferable to dispatch. Much may be accomplished. Illustrations, John Wesley, Matthew Hale. Lawyers—their character and influence. An unfortunate mistake. The Monk. Madame De Stael. William Wick. The extravagance of the age. Economy urged. 182

CHAPTER VII.

CULTIVATION OF THE MIND.

CONTENTS.—Wrong notions. How men are equal. Denmark and U. States. Dignity of the mind. Story of the Governor. Improvements depend much on men in common life. Illustrations—Iodine—the scurvy—Admiral Hooper. Franklin. Light Houses and Life Boats. Quinine. Grinding needles. Cotton gin and vaccination. Scotland and N. England education. Nine objects to be sought in cultivating the mind. What they are. The higher one still. Meaning of the term education. *Sources of Improvement*. 1. Culture of the memory. 2. Reading—three kinds, and books. 3. Conversation. Hints. 4. Literary Societies. A peculiar club

5. Observation and meditation. The carpenter's square. Franklin's works. 6. The Sabbath. 7. The Bible. *Discouragements*—and hints. 1. Work laid out great. 2. I am poor. 3. I have a laborious occupation. Story of the sea captain. 4. I have no teacher. 5. I have but ordinary talents. . . . 206

CHAPTER VIII.

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE HEART.

CONTENTS.—The heathen's view of self-government. What is essential to enjoyment. Extent of the power which we may obtain over ourselves. Story of the French philosopher. The schoolmaster at Cairo. The three assistants. Curious anecdote of Jeremiah Flatt. Wilberforce and the State paper. What self-control implies. (1) Government of the tongue. *A bad habit noted. Great talkers. Dr. Mason and the iron spoon. Madame de Genlis and the flower-pots.* (2) Government of the thoughts. Two things necessary. (3) Governing your feelings. Parity of thought. Woman. THE HEART. Description of it by Jeremy Taylor. The conscience to be cultivated. A right standard. The young physician and the cholera. Trials and disappointments must come. Seek to know yourself. Three aids. Cultivate humility of heart. Have a liberal heart. . . . 239

CHAPTER IX.
RELIGIOUS VIEWS.

CONTENTS.—Dilemma of the Atheist. Dangers of infidelity. Report of the National Assembly of France. Its results. What the danger of the present age. Infidel arguments. Seven questions to be put to the infidel. Death of Hume. His melancholy letter. Franklin's advice to Paine. Man must be a religious being. 1. His intellect needs it. John Bunyan. Curious description of Voltaire's mind. Colleges cannot live without religion. Experiments made and making. 2. Safety of our country demands religion. Experiment of 1790. Comparison between Holland and France. Dangers which surround us. 3. Religion necessary for the young man personally. What needed in order to religion. (a.) The Sabbath. The shuttle invention. (b.) The Scriptures to be read. (c.) Prayer. (d.) Beware of the first step in sin. The two apprentices. (e.) Shun secret sins. 275

CHAPTER X.
THE GREAT END OF LIVING.

CONTENTS.—Three modes of revelation. One great law lying at the foundation of the happiness of a created and intelligent being:—what it is. Judgment of this world wrong. Striking illustration. Works of God teach one great lesson. The rose. The old tree. The mountain brook. The bright star. Washington and Buonaparte philosophically

compared. Wilberforce. What the first and great aim of every young man should be. Howard and the prisoners. Doing good in little things. How indomitable energy acquired. The great thing to be learned by man—is—to know God. Two great mistakes of young men. How and why they commit them. What it is to know God. Effects of a perfect standard. What part of the divine character is most glorious. Results of this knowledge upon the young man. The great end of writing this book. Concluding remarks. 318

THE YOUNG MAN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

CONTENTS.—Anxiety of the Author. Reflections of manhood,—solemn. Why write a new book for Young Men. Work must be truly American,—and why? Contrast between Europe and this country. Curious ideas of foreigners in regard to this country. Every man here on the side of law. One very peculiar feature in the organization of this nation—and what? How the right of primogeniture and inalienable property was obtained at first. Results of this principle in Europe. Results of the antagonist principle in this country. We belong to a peculiar race of men. Its characteristics—power and enterprise. The destiny of America two-fold. What it is. What needed to meet it. Dangers. What our Young Men have to do with this. What they need. Their dangers. Wish of Burns.

HERETOFORE, when I have entered upon any work which to me seemed great and important—such as writing a book, I have felt

a kind of buoyancy,—the mingled emotion of hope and fear and curiosity—a feeling highly desirable at the commencement of any great and laborious undertaking. But at the present moment I have such an impression of the good which is most desirable to be accomplished by this humble effort, that my fears preponderate and become the alkali which overpowers all other ingredients and gives its own color and taste to the contents of the cup.

Who that has passed the season of youth and gone into manhood, has not looked back with many a sigh, and almost murmured aloud, that he could not here and there have received such hints as would have prevented mistakes? Who has not looked back, and with a sadness that is inexpressible, seen how in youth he formed habits that are to abide through life, how his character was moulded into shapes that are little less than deformities, and how his mind was taught to roam in paths that are barren of all that can yield food or refreshment? And who has not mourned that he is doomed to pass through life, accomplishing little or nothing; neither

meeting the hopes of friends nor satisfying his own conscience,—vainly looking for some outward circumstances to push him to do that which inward energy alone can move a man to do—and all because, in his youth, he had not such hints, such instructions, and such counsels as would have made him a character altogether different? If my own experience accords with that of others, the very attempt to throw light in the pathway of the Young Men of this land, is praise-worthy. Should the attempt be a failure, I shall have the consolation that it was in my heart to do it. Should it succeed in any measure in accordance with my wishes, my heart will greatly rejoice.

I address you, Young Men of my country, not because others have not given you many and wise counsels; but because, so far as I know, no one has occupied the ground which I have selected, nor said just the things which I am wishing to say. If, in the course of these pages, you meet with passages which indicate a warm pen, or passages not altogether flattering to the pride of the heart, believe me that I feel that the diamond which

the fairy is called upon to polish, is so precious, that we may excuse her if her wings grow warm while she fans it, and if she turns it over and over, ever bringing the darkest spots into light. The fairy may soon be forgotten—but the jewel which she burnishes, shall yet sparkle on many a crown of royalty from generation to generation.

I speak to you as AMERICAN YOUNG MEN—and have no expectation that what I shall write will meet with approbation or notice beyond the limits of my native land. The circumstances in which the American youth is now coming forward in life are so very peculiar, the age in which he is to act is so marked,—the social organization with which he is to be united is so constructed,—and the responsibilities which rest upon him are so heavy, that I may be excused if I feel that he needs and deserves the best hints, the clearest counsels, and the wisest instructions which can be given him. Let me call your attention to these circumstances which are yours by birth-right.

In almost all the old world, the mind of man is fettered, and the soul is clogged by

other things besides the body. The whole machinery of society is based upon the assumed principle that men are not competent to take care of themselves, and that every thing which relates to man, as a social, intellectual, moral and even immortal being, must be minutely taken care of by a superintending wisdom called *government*. Hence the government provides, endows, directs and governs all the schools: founds the Colleges, prescribes the studies, appoints the Professors, marks out their duties and fixes salaries: the government regulates all trades and professions: the government decides what is religion and what is not, what modes of worship shall prevail, who are christians and who are not; it appoints, pays, removes, or banishes the Teachers of religion at its pleasure, and all the relations of man, family, social, intellectual and moral are regulated by government. If you have thoughts of your own on political subjects, you may not utter them, for the very walls of your dwelling have ears,—you may not communicate them in the confidence of friendship, for the Post Office is a spy over all the country; you may not print

them, for the press is under close and severe censorship. Government is all, and the individuals of the nation are nothing. Hence it is that there is no public opinion to govern men; and hence it follows, that in little things with which the government does not interfere, they are under less restraint than we are here. Here, public opinion governs all and decides every question. It decides how you shall furnish your house,—how you must dress and live, in order to have such and such a standing. There, government gives you your standing, and you have no regard to public opinion. You may live as you please, in splendor or in plainness, and no one questions the propriety of your course. The government decides what is or is not respectable, and gives every man his standing. Hence it is, that being governed here by public opinion alone, foreigners are surprised to find us furnishing our dwellings so much alike, and to see so much that is cut out by the same pattern.

Very few have any but a faint conception of the difference of character which is thus formed in the old world and in our own coun-

try. In that, a man is a christian by law, and his children are, by law, made christians, on being baptized. The high questions relating to eternity are all settled before he is born, and the citizen has nothing to do with them. The Schools and Colleges and Seminaries, and Churches have all been provided for by government, and he has no anxiety about them. The army, the press, the newspapers, are all taken care of, and he need not worry about them. Every burden of the kind is wholly taken from his shoulders; and he has no cares for the public, for these too would be useless. From the cradle to the grave, he is not a moment free from the control, the guidance and the powerful hand of government. He has nothing to do but to eat and drink, pay his taxes and obey, as his father did before him. Now we are told how happy these people are! They can eat and digest four times as much as we can: they can drink four times as much, and they can sleep a great deal sounder, and they can laugh a great deal easier, and they pass through life without worry, anxiety and fatigue. Less medicine will cure them if sick, for if they

will only stop eating and drinking, they will recover without any medicine,—or, if they must die, they die far easier than we do!

But is it not plain that if a man be laughing and happy in this condition he must be reared and trained and educated very much like an animal? That he must be animalized to a degree that debases, cramps and almost reduces man from the scale in which his Maker placed him? In this country, we prefer to live in our own way; and we prefer to be thin in flesh, haggard in countenance, dyspeptic in our stomachs, but, to be free in our thoughts, free in our speech, free in our press, and free to use our powers and influence as we see best. We prefer taking the responsibilities of governing upon our own shoulders,—to undertake the mighty task of ruling through public opinion,—to have all the anxieties of guarding as well as endowing, our Schools, our Colleges, the press, the Sabbath, and all that pertains to man as a social and immortal being. We choose to govern by public opinion, even if we sometimes have to manufacture that public opinion which we want, *by slander and the aid of a sharp*

tongue, or even by the press. This is a part of the philosophy of all the hard and severe things which are spoken and written under a free government. We wish to regulate our neighbors and our public men, and keep them in their places, and we do it by ridicule, or severe speaking or writing, and in proportion as *law* is not felt or seen, there the tongue is the mightiest in its inflictions. We sometimes hear great complaints of the tyranny of public opinion. There is no need of complaining. If public opinion be correct, it is the best ruler in the world; if it be not correct, let every man do his best to set it right. If it be ignorant, enlighten it. Strangers from abroad, as they pass through the land, wonder where our police is to be found. They see no tipstaves, no public men with the button on the hat, and hence they talk about our laws being a rope of sand. A friend of mine was lately gravely asked in Europe, if a man could safely travel through this country at the present time! And when told that in the summer we frequently leave the front door open all night in order to have the house cool, and that we

have neighbors who never drew a bolt or turned a key in their house for forty years, they cannot comprehend it. They cannot conceive of a condition where every man is on the side of law, and every man is the guardian of law and a maker of law, and where every man helps to create public opinion—the most powerful of all kinds of law.

Now, my young friends, you are coming forward to live and act in a nation unharnessed and free,—where the whole machinery is planned with a view to have men make their own rulers,—to make every man a lord in the sphere which he occupies. There is one feature in the organization of this government which is peculiar, and, if I mistake not it lies at the foundation of our social fabric. It places man in a new position,—keeps society always in motion, and is intended to make us love our country with a devotion, beyond that of any other people in existence. *I refer to the abolishing the right of Primogeniture.*

In our father-land, the right of primogeniture is a part, and a very important part of the foundation of the nation, and of national character. The oldest son inherits the home

of his ancestors. He may adorn it and beautify it, and know that it will go down to his descendants to the latest posterity. When he looks at the furniture, when he walks over the grounds, he knows that he is looking upon the furniture of his ancestors, is sitting in their seats, and is walking in the paths in which they walked. He may be himself a tippler, and unprincipled, and not worth a shilling, still, the homestead is there. It cannot be alienated, it cannot be sold, or taken for debt. The younger sons have nothing, or next to nothing. They must cut their own way through life. The results are many and various. It makes a permanent population. It creates a powerful family pride. It creates a powerful love of home. It beautifies and adorns the country—since the possessor knows that every tree which he plants, every blemish which he removes and every improvement which he makes, is so much done for his posterity. This part of the population is permanent and staid, and upon it the government can always rely. A man is measured, not by his personal worth, but by his acres of inalienable ground, and the standing which his family have had. The older

the family, other things being equal, the more respectable. It is plain however, that there must be another side to this picture.

In the first conquest and division of a country, the territory is given to a few—who are the favorites of the conqueror, or who have been peculiarly successful in aiding him and who claim it as their reward. In this way, the territory of Europe was at first mostly parceled out. In addition to this, their territory was made permanent in the family by hereditary descent, as I have stated, through the eldest son. Here, then, is a favored class provided for: they are the proprietors of the soil, they are contented. They have delightful homes secured to them and to their families. No change in the government is desired, since their condition cannot possibly be made better; they make things look stable, and settled and firm. Such is good old England at the present time.* But this system of proprietorship must necessarily leave a very large class unprovided for. They cannot possibly *ever hope to become proprietors of the soil*, for there is no soil to be bought or sold, and

* It is stated that all the land in England is owned by 36,000 individuals, out of a population of 20,000,000.

they must be restless and uneasy, or else degraded, besotted and paupers, without a particle of self-respect. Hence the temptation to the government to plunge into wars and to the proprietors to pay the taxes of war in order to find employment for the uneasy, unprovided class of men. For it is this unprovided class, that feeds war, fills colonies and breeds seditions and daring enterprises. In some parts of Europe they congregate as robbers. And it is this large class, almost cut off from hope, which, unless the colonizing system be vigorously pushed, produces revolutions and civil wars.

Now the antagonist principle to this, is to divide all the property every generation: to favor no one child above the rest,—but to cause them all to share alike. This destroys forever, the old English idea of home. We have *no homes here*. *Very seldom does a man build a house or plant a tree with any expectation that his children will occupy the one, or sit under the shade of the other.* Our boys all expect to leave their home and go out as soon as possible. Thus is each family aiding to send out new colonies all over the

land. This is a new experiment made upon these shores. We have abolished the old system of ages, cured some great evils, and probably created some that are new. The principle designed to be introduced, is, that *our country shall be our home*; and that the attachment which in other circumstances is given to the homestead, shall now be bestowed on the whole country, and that there shall be no spot on which character may pause and stagnate. Here we let the Saxon race loose, and have made office, and property things that roll continually and which any man may chase, with the hope of grasping either. There is but a single step from the log cabin to the highest office within the gift of a great and free nation; and the orphan child picked up by the Overseers of the poor, may, as I have myself witnessed, rise to great distinction and occupy the most important civil or ecclesiastical stations. This one feature of our organization as a nation, is destined, if it has not already done it, to have a wonderful effect upon our character. Every generation must start in the race on an equal footing, and this must and will create a character that

is eager, restless and powerful. On this one thing, our wisest men depend for the permanence of our institutions. Here character must be created, which, for skill, enterprise, energy and greatness, is unequalled on the face of the earth. If it be said that this system has not hitherto produced as great men—as tall cedars—as are to be seen in the old world, I reply that for the time we have been a nation, no other population of the same amount has produced half as many men who will live in the future, solely by their character and the great deeds they have achieved, as we have; and I reply moreover, that the plan of this nation was not, and is not, to see how many *individuals* we can raise up who shall be distinguished, but to see how high, by free schools and free institutions, we can raise the *great mass* of population. On this point, the world may be challenged to produce what we have produced. It is an interesting fact, however, that those great minds which are the glory of England, and which stand as a galaxy of light around the throne, came, not from among the oldest sons, and the contented, provided class, but from those

whose situation most nearly resembles that of our youth—who must carve their own fortune and shape their own destiny. I have alluded to this peculiar feature,—the removal of what some would contend to be the balance wheel of society,—not only because it will, in less than a century, affect the globe, but because also, it brings peculiar responsibilities upon the young men of my country. Our fathers, centuries ago, when in their pagan state, used to bury their gold and silver at their death, that they might compel their sons to seek it again in piracy or war, and to find it at the hazard of life. Inherited wealth was despised. The organization of our nation is on the same principle.

We belong to a peculiar race. In his wise providence, God many centuries ago, gathered and clustered a choice selection of the Saxon race on a little island—a race as restless as the ocean which breaks around that island. It seemed to be his plan to make that the starting point for the race. They fill the island, and then swarm and come and subdue this continent and make the rearing up of a great nation the work of a day. Left

to ourselves here, we work off a small part of our restlessness in such small enterprises as *subduing forests, filling valleys, leveling and tunneling mountains, sending the canal boat through the heart of a continent, or starting the deer by the snort of the iron horse as he scours over the plains, or by the panting steamboat that seems like a bird, to dip her wings in the water merely to cool them as she winds her way up every river in the land.* In the meanwhile, England, the old hive, is constantly sending out new colonies all over the earth and making use of her very criminals to raise up a new nation. You can hardly go to an island, which is the natural breakwater to the continent and which commands that continent, but you see the flag, and hear the drum of the Saxon race—there filling the island and all ready to go over to *the continent kindly to regulate their affairs, and to eat them up.* While we have been at work here, they have gone through all the East. Saxon laws and customs and dress, energy and religion are radiating in all directions, and the earth seems to be bending before the spirit of the race. To borrow the

imagery of one of our greatest minds, the morning drum-beat of the Saxon race salutes the sun at his rising on every spot on the globe, and follows him all round the world, and the whole face of the earth is dotted over with this people. There is a sagacity and a penetration to this mind which lets no opportunity escape, no flood-tide be lost. It would seem as if they were destined to eat up all other people—save the handful of Jews—who are miraculously preserved for noble purposes. That indomitable genius, which, with the eager, burning eye of the savage, looked out of the forests upon Rome, when, like a helmed queen she sat clad in her warlike power, and which unflinchingly grappled with her, and finally placed its foot on her neck, and sat down on her throne, still lives in all the race,—softened indeed, by christianity, and enlightened by knowledge, but in no respect, I apprehend, enfeebled as to strength, or more near-sighted in laying its plans, or less undaunted in executing them. Should England grow old, and decay and perish,—should the owl hoot and the satyr dance where her palaces now stand,—the seedlings

of at least twenty Englands are planted elsewhere, and among them will live her iron language, slow and simple as her ox,—and there will her arms and laws and arts and literature, her religion and language and glory live, as long as the earth shall endure.

The continent which we tread, is computed able to sustain a population of at least three thousand, six hundred millions!—a number as great, by five times, as all the population of the globe at the present hour. And what makes this fact so startling, is, that they will all be here within three or four centuries after we have laid our heads in the grave. In about two centuries, there will be on this continent from one to two thousand millions of souls—speaking our language, bearing our lineaments, thinking our thoughts, and formed by our deeds. Here will be a sight such as the sun never looked down upon. And what will be their character? Will they be the bold, the fearless, the brave, the free, and at the same time able to control themselves with the light of education, of science, and of religion, or, will they be the slaves of savage passions, the dupes of superstition, the tools

of demagogues—a continent filled with madmen, howling in their self-inflicted misery, and rending the heavens of brass, by their wild cries of agony? Mighty for good or for evil,—the destiny of this nation must be great—a blessing to the human family unspeakably great, or a curse too heavy to be weighed within the limits of time. Shall this land be the great laboratory of the world, in which mind, and heart, and enterprise and energy will be formed—the great school-house from which the educated and the educators of the earth will flow, or the hissing, the by-word and the scorn of mankind? This land is free. The mind is here free,—and the child is yet to be born, if indeed he ever will be born, whose powers and faculties may not be called out and cultivated. There is no bondage to forms or precedents; but the whole mass may be seasoned, leavened and moved, and is at liberty to do what is great and good in the way that is most convenient.

The world is looking to this as the most wonderful experiment ever yet made,—and as the one which is to decide the question for the earth—*can men govern themselves?* We

have a lofty pride of ancestry and of character to begin with,—we have the inheritance of renowned men, we have the press free,—we have christianity untrameled to aid us. Can we, with these aids, retain and transmit a free government, and shew the world a successful experiment? If, under these circumstances it fails, I doubt whether the experiment will be repeated. It can hardly be repeated on a scale so grand, under motives so pressing, and under circumstances so favorable. Hence it is, that our young men are coming on the stage of action, in circumstances which compel them not only to look to themselves for all that they are to be,—there being no old and despotic government or usages to take them by the arm and lead them through life,—but they have to share the responsibility of the mighty destiny of at least a continent. In running the fearful race, young men, you must use your own feet, and run in your own person. If you gain a respectable standing and influence and help to control your generation, it will be not by sighing and wishing that you had this and that outward circumstance in your favor,—but by

having something *within* you that will move and guide you.

Political men will thus point you to the high destiny of your country, and to the fearful experiment which she is called upon to make for the world, and on this ground merely, you stand in a position of great interest, and have a responsibility that is immense. But you will permit me to say that I feel this to be a minor part of the destiny and of the responsibility of this nation. And when I talk of political freedom, and of my country as one called upon to shew the world that men can govern themselves, I feel little like saying this in the spirit of boasting or of gasconading. I feel that as if I were belittling the destiny of my country, and as if I were sinking the star of her glory to make that star shine only on the path of time. To my mind, (and you do not wish me to descend from the platform on which God has placed the christian minister) to my mind—the great and the grand destiny of my country is, that she shall be the gateway of immortality. Her destiny is to let a great nation come in contact with God's revealed word and to meet

the responsibilities of the Gospel unshackled, and to be a mighty instrument of saving a world lying in sin. The Bible never places men or nations on a scale so low, that they are to act for *time* merely. It bases the perpetuity of every nation upon its righteousness, and declares that the nation which will not serve God shall perish: and at the same time it connects every individual with Eternity, and makes all that is future hang upon this life. You have a two-fold destiny, coming on the stage of action as you now do. Each one of you must have a distinct character and influence, and must leave impressions for good or for evil.

Why should we attempt or wish to divorce man, created on the scale of immortality, from the destiny to which God hath ordained him, or the responsibility which God hath laid upon him, and make him a mere creature of time? Why should we suppose that a country as exalted as is ours,—which has been led as this has, should have no other end, than merely to let man be free to act out his energies as a being of time? I pay you a poor compliment and my free country a

poor compliment, to speak to young men as if they had only the responsibility of guarding these free institutions, and transmitting them down to other generations—only the responsibility of holding forth before the earth, a country free and self-governing. I do insist upon it that if the Ruler of nations intends to bestow an honor upon us that shall be worth naming, it will be the honor of marching in the van, leading the earth towards civil freedom, towards civilization, and above all, towards that immortality of holiness which the Scriptures reveal. With the proclamation that the great problem is solved, and that man can govern himself, which goes from this land, must also go the Bible—the inspired chart and guardian of freedom—the Sabbath, the holiday of the soul,—the preacher of righteousness and the free school—the profession of medicine, the science of law, the principles of justice; and thus must we become, by divine appointment, his almoners to the whole earth.

Young men are coming up, then, at a day, when the great end to which this nation is destined is becoming more clearly manifested

—when the curtain which hangs over all the future is more and more rolled up, and they cannot but see what they have to do. Young man! when you breathe the free air of these hills and of these valleys,—when you tread the sods of this land, there comes a voice to you from the future, urging you to do something personally and individually to make the stakes of your country firm,—to make these institutions safe for the good of the unborn millions yet to live here on her soil, for an example to the whole earth—and for the purpose of being God's steward in distributing these, and the higher blessings of immortality to all who live on the face of the earth.

You have doubtless read the history of our fathers and felt the fire burn within you as you followed them in their sufferings, their irrepressible efforts for civil and religious liberty, and the indifference with which they looked upon their lives in comparison with these objects. You perhaps have silently wished that you could have lived in their day, and shared with them their sufferings. But the man may stand up in years as distant from you, as you stand from our fathers, and

sigh more deeply that he could not have lived when you live. Interests are to be committed to you, as great, to say the least, as were ever committed to them,—and if you are faithful to your trust, as high rewards shall await you, as were bestowed upon them. Contests on a scale fearfully grand are to take place here. The wicked and the enemies of human freedom among men and among fallen spirits, will do all they can to put out the beacon-light of civil and religious freedom which has been for more than half a century throwing its beautiful light over this land. Infidelity and scepticism will muster and take the census of their forces, and if there is any hope that either alone, or by uniting, they can turn back the tide of life and render turbid the waters which flow from the throne of God, they will sound the onset and blow the trumpet and wage a warfare, compared with which, all other wars have been toysome games. In any other situation I would take the young man by the hand, encourage him, entreat him, point to his own happiness, to the expectations and the hopes of friends, and by all these, urge him to prepare himself for

the conflicts and the duties of life; but as we are situated, I almost lose sight of so small a thing as the *individual* happiness of the young man, and the hopes of friends,—in my deep anxiety that every young man should be prepared to meet even higher duties than these. And if I fail to impress, in any measure, my own feelings of responsibility upon my young reader, I hope the visions of the *future which rise up so vividly before me*, may at least impart that vigor to my pen and that warmth to my heart, that will make some of the chapters of this little work useful, and *approve themselves to Him, whose approbation is of importance unspeakably great.*

A great part of man's life is occupied in making good resolutions—determining to commence plans shortly, and to enter upon schemes presently which will accomplish much. At no period of life are these more abundant than when we are young. How do we promise ourselves that by and by we shall begin to accomplish great things! How often do young men determine that they will not go through life in the tread-mill of their fathers. They will be known and felt! Every

returning year finds them still resolving to do great things—but the opportunity has not yet arrived! So passes life away, and the hopes of the heart are as far from being fulfilled as ever. Now I wish to warn you—and I may as well do it here as any where—against these good resolutions. Not that you may not make them if you choose; but the warning I wish to give you, is, that you are not to wait for opportunities to do great things; but to begin to do whatever comes to hand and to do it well. No matter what you are called upon to do first,—do it immediately and do it as well as possible. There are but few great occasions in life; but few opportunities in which to do great things; but there are daily and hourly opportunities of doing little things and of doing them well. It is said that the present king of the French, is up and in his closet by three o'clock every morning; and though the wealthiest individual in Europe, he is his own Book-keeper, and manages all his vast property, and still probably gives more time to his government than any king in Europe. When his character shall have been fairly drawn out on the page of history,

it will probably be found, that his great talent consisted in doing a multitude of little things and doing them all well. Thus in every station, he is truly great, who promptly meets and fulfils the duties of that station. If a man were called to be a boot-black, I should wish him to see how beautifully he could polish them, and then, how many he could polish in a day.

Oh, if the young man who is just entering upon life could form right habits of mind and of body, could see his true position, and gird on the armor which Providence has prepared and laid at his feet, each one would not only pass over the narrow stage of life with comfort to himself, but he would also leave the footsteps of a man behind him. When temptations sought him, he would stand like the nest of our own eagle, visible to all, but accessible to none. When he came to the mire of worldliness, he would know how to pass through it without sinking down out of sight. He would know in what waters he might bathe in order to be refreshed, with what armor to be girded in order to fight, and where to obtain the oil which would keep his

lamp brightly burning. He has no conception of the temptations to which he is to be exposed—their strength, their number, or their subtlety. He has no experience—that stern schoolmaster—which he can consult in the hour of trial, of doubt, and of temptation. The wishes of friends, the hopes of his kindred, and the prayers of his pious friends hang over him like a bright cloud,—but he needs and must have something within him that is prompt and stern to rebuke temptation, that is quick to discover danger,—that is alive to the fine sensibilities of our nature, that can hush the clamors of passion, and that can measure all events and things in a light that never deceives, and by a scale that never varies.

Alas! my young friend, when you have reached that period of life when your temples will begin to be gray,—and you cannot conceive how soon that period will be here,—let your efforts for good have been what they may, you will often feel like sitting down and mourning that you have done so very little: that so small a part of what you expected to do, has been accomplished. But the hour of

solemn review, has not yet arrived, and I am anxious that you should now so commence the race of life that when it does arrive, you may have many a bright spot in the vision as you turn your eyes back upon your course; that the memories of the past may be filled with the images of dangers which you have manfully met, of temptations which you have *unhesitatingly resisted*, and that you have passed, unscathed, through the ordeal of youth. Do not forget the majesty of the destiny of Manhood, and though you will pass through foes as numerous as the leaves of autumn, yet you are not to forget that you are in the midst of a boundless magazine, filled with every kind of armor and of weapons, which you can possibly need. God has thrown wide open the door of this magazine, and you have not to storm and *break down iron doors to reach its stores*,—nor to go out alone and unarmed, and do the best you can. If in these pages I may lift a single straw out of your path, or throw one ray of light in your way, drop one hint that shall aid you, or say a word that shall encourage you, I shall rejoice—not for your sake

merely, but also for the sake of my own native land. For her I feel as did the Poet of Nature when he spake of his own native Scotland. He has one strong wish forever in his heart—

—“a wish, (I mind its power,)”

A wish, that to my latest hour
Will strongly heave my breast
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.”

CHAPTER II.

CHARACTER:—ITS VALUE.

CONTENTS.—Character the foundation of respect—peculiarly so in this country. Example of Bowditch: John Q. Adams. The principle applied to the adoration of God. Station cannot, of itself, command respect. Example of Nero and the martyr. Talents cannot command respect. Melancholy example. Wealth cannot do it, except on two conditions. The sinking creek. Character must be earned. The young preacher of Crete. Philosophy of this. Beauty of this law. Its wonderful extent—its application not confined to this life or to this world. Character valuable in every situation. Equality of human occupations. Two great principles—individual responsibility, and combination. Self-observation. The rain-drops. Obscurity no bar to usefulness. What causes our troubles in life. The fools of ancient noblemen. The wise servant. What alone destroys a man. The keen remarks of a shrewd man.

IN some circumstances men may command influence and receive tokens of honor irrespective of their own personal merits. Titles and estates, in some countries, may descend from father to son. But we cannot claim any such circumstances to aid us. To have a

name that is of any worth here, we must have character of our own. It is but a poor passport to distinction here that a man had ancestors who were distinguished—if this be all. Nay, in some respects it is a positive disadvantage, because more is expected of such a one, than of others. Nor is it any disadvantage that your father was a mechanic, a farmer, or even a wood-sawyer. The nation will ever call Bowditch the great and the good though he spent his boyhood in the shop of the tallow chandler. I am aware that we are often accused of being inordinately covetous, because it is said, nothing but wealth can make a man respectable here. I know that we are too covetous, and too greedy of gain, and too reckless in its pursuit, but I know that there is something vastly more valuable than wealth, in the estimation of our country—and that is *character*. Property, office, or station cannot be compared with it.

Within a short time we have witnessed a curious and a beautiful spectacle. An old man, not in office, and never to be in office, not rich, but plain and simple in dress and appearance, has been passing through the ev-

ery-day routes of travel in our country. Wherever he went, the community—not his own or any other political party,—but the community, embracing every party and every class of men—has risen up and gathered around that old man, and bowed in the most respectful manner. He has been greeted in one place by the roar of cannon, and in another by the silence of the forge and the trip-hammer and the stoppage of all machinery. All delighted to honor him, from the old man with the silvered head, to lisping infancy. His name announced without any notice, would, in a few moments, call out the city's crowd, and the worth of the village, so that the journey of a plain citizen has been more glorious than the triumph of the proudest general that iron-footed Rome ever welcomed. *He* would have the lictors go before him, and his own car of triumph follow, and then the long train of prisoners in irons—about to be beheaded at the Capitol,—and then the shouting army and the untold multitude drawn out to see *the show*. But in the case before us, it was to honor a man, who had never waded in blood, had never gained

a name on the field of battle. And what was the secret of all this? It was that this old man had earned a *character*, and there is nothing so valued in an intelligent community as character. Wealth may command respect to a certain degree, but it is so much easier to acquire money than character that they can never be placed on the same level. What is it in the highest and loftiest Being in the universe which calls creation around him in solemn and silent adoration, and in unshaken confidence? Is it the silver and the gold which are his? Is it the cattle upon a thousand hills, or is it, that through all his works, his providences and his revelations which he has made to his creatures, he shews that he possesses a character so great, so harmonious, so wise and so good, that all his creation cannot but cry aloud, "just and true are all thy ways?"

You are in danger, Young Men, of feeling that if you can acquire station, or the reputation of talents or of wealth, you cannot fail of being respected. Let us examine this point a few moments. Look at *Station*. I will not pretend that station may not be surround-

ed by sycophants who are ever ready to fawn and flatter even tyranny itself; but in the respect and opinion of our race, station cannot protect itself from scorn if it deserve it. Go back to the time when the Emperor of Rome held the highest station which the earth could yield. *He has wealth to any amount, power, armies, station, and almost a world bowing at his feet: but instead of using all this to bless his mighty empire and to be a benefactor to the human race, you see him one day driving a chariot and running races with other charioteers; and the next day on the stage with low actors, himself one of the lowest; then murdering his own mother Agrippina, and then consulting necromancers how he might call back her ghost and ask her pardon; then setting fire to "the eternal city" and in his palace playing on his fiddle while it was burning,—then charging the crime upon the christians to bring the popular fury upon them, and finally giving up his own splendid gardens, to be the place where this fury might expend itself every night, by kindling huge fires into which the meek sufferers were thrown.*

Go now to one of Nero's dungeons. By the little grated window sits an old man in heavy chains. The jailer has just told him that to-morrow he must die. He is calm and the sunshine of the heart enlightens the countenance. He has only a single piece of property. It is a scroll of parchment lying by him. He takes it up and calmly reads a single sentence. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge will give me." And now the morning comes. The mighty theatre containing eighty thousand souls, is already filled. The Emperor is there: the officers of state, the ladies, the fashion and the glory of the world are there. From his dark dungeon the old man is called forth. The altar of Jupiter is there, and he is commanded to throw a little frankincense on that altar, or lose his life. The block and the sword are there. The hungry wild beasts are heard howling in their cages beneath. He is called to die for his Master. There

are no traces of wavering—no color coming and going in his countenance, no courage fed by pride. He is old and feeble and weary. But his brow remains serene—his eye hath lost nothing of its firmness—and the parched lips betray no quivering. On his head hang the silver ringlets of age; on his breast, the white, venerable, untrimmed beard. On his brow sits all that is lofty in mind and all that is meek in feeling. Even Nero is awed for a moment in the presence of Manhood. But paganism has no heart. That old man has now forgotten all eyes, and is lost in meditation and prayer. But he sees the dark executioner take up the sharp, glittering sword. Without waiting to be dragged, he calmly walks to the block—then kneels in prayer. You see his lips move, and just hear him say “Lord Jesus!” And now he stretches out his head over the block. It hardly touches it ere that noble forehead, that beaming eye, and those moving lips are forgotten. The sword falls, the head rolls off, and the blood spouts from the trunk. He dies for Jesus Christ and the spirit goes straight up and stands in white before the throne! The Em-

peror goes to his palace to feast ! Which of these do you respect and which despise ? Do you not see my proposition to be true, that station cannot command respect—but that it does and must depend on *character* ?

Talents are equally impotent to protect you and make you respected, if unaccompanied by moral character. The picture which I am about to draw is no fancy sketch. A young man, born of the most respectable parentage—his boyhood spent in unclouded sunshine, comes on the stage. In the morning of life he shews uncommon powers of mind. In his studies, he seems intuitively to grasp all the elements of learning. While others slowly toil up the hill, studying day and night, he reaches the top at a single bound. — He comes out of college in advance of all his fellows. He acquires his profession, and uniting uncommon beauty of person, with great brilliancy of mind, his prospects are fair in proportion. He marries one who would have honored a throne. He is admired, caressed, promoted and placed early and high in office. His fellows pay a willing homage to his talents, and will place any trust in his hands. But now

the picture begins to darken. The breathings of the serpent are on it. He is found to be destitute of all moral principle. He begins to drink deep, and continues to drink deeper and deeper. He has no companionship with truth, and will lie when truth would answer his purpose better. He is known to be unprincipled, licentious and a drunkard. And yet all acknowledge the great powers of his mind. But he is doomed and is every where shunned. When the last shred of patience and love is gone, the wife of his youth leaves him. His children blush at the mention of his name. He is found in the gutters of the street—a disgrace to his species. Now why do not his great talents save him? Because it is impossible for the human heart not to despise him. The brilliant comet hath voluntarily broken from its orbit, and is rushing away in its madness, and will dash other stars in ruins, unless God keeps them out its way; and you feel no compunctions when you say, "let it go—let it sink down and become a star of darkness, and let it dwell in the blackness of darkness forever." Arcturus and his sons, Orion and Pleiades shall be honored so

long as they walk in the beautiful pathway which God hath marked out for them ; but if, of their own accord, they shoot off and run a mad career through infinite space, we will say, let them go, and we will turn to the lesser star of the North and honor her so long as she holds her place and fulfils her destiny. Talents, perverted, however splendid they may be, cannot secure a man from contempt. Nor can you help respecting real worth of character, however modest its claims.

It were easy to point to illustrations of perverted talent and to shew the wreck of many a noble mind thrown aside as odious. What powers were wasted by RICHARD SAVAGE—a poet who might have earned a most enviable immortality ! What shall I say of THOMAS DERMODY—with a genius surpassing almost all that biography had ever dared tell of genius—with a host of patrons who took him up eagerly and dropped him as hastily—who exhibited talents of the most brilliant order—only to make his vices and degradation the more conspicuous, and who, at the early age of twenty-six died a drunkard's death in a most wretched, forsaken hovel ? *

Shall I point to SAMUEL BOYSE alike remarkable for genius, ingenuity, imprudence and vice? He who could write poetry worthy of the highest order of intellect died loathed, and was buried at the expense of the parish. And though the surpassing powers of the genius of BURNS has saved his poetry—and though it will be sung, probably as long as impetuosity and fire will move men, yet men gladly forget the poor poet himself. His vices drove away his friends before he died, and he went to an early grave—having *outlived personal respect*. Great efforts have been made to embalm the memory of this decidedly gifted man,—but it is like embalming the putrid body of one who was thrown hastily into the grave because he *committed suicide*.

The names of Chatterton, Otway and Morland will also occur to the reader as examples to illustrate my position. Probably the most gifted created being in the universe, is the one who has most *fearfully prostituted* his powers, and who will be the object of the deepest scorn to eternal ages. The talents of Satan were they ten times greater than they

are, would only add to the contempt with which he will forever be clothed.

I think it still more easy to demonstrate that *wealth aside from moral character, cannot procure respect.* If wealth is to secure respect, two conditions are indispensable. The one is, that it be honestly and honorably obtained; and the other is, that it be used for the benefit of others beside the possessor. If either of these conditions be wanting, the possessor will most assuredly be disappointed. A stream of water that runs under ground for miles, as I have seen in some of the valleys of Pennsylvania, may be pure and sweet, and yet perhaps be the very opposite of a blessing. It may murmur sweetly in its dark recesses, but it drains off the showers as fast as the heavens shed them down, and leaves all the valley, which would otherwise be a golden valley, dry and uninhabited. Sycophants will flatter wealth, and want will minister to the vanity of manumon, but if the rich man lives to himself, to honor himself, and to bless himself, the curse will most inevitably overtake him. He will be despised. It is not a matter of choice with men; for while

money will purchase eye-service and short-lived attentions, it cannot purchase respect. Let the man of selfishness die, however wealthy, and then see how it is! The community will rejoice that now this property will be scattered, and will benefit more than one man. On the contrary, a nation will mourn for such a man as Samuel, though he had no property; but he was a good man—a character which no man can despise. *Respect depends upon moral character more than upon all other things; and it is in the power of every one to command respect.*

The most valuable thing in the universe is character. And character cannot be obtained by demanding it, nor by seeking it. It must be *earned*. You may acquire wealth to any amount, but you want character that can be confided in. You may have great skill in any profession, or a genius that can surmount any difficulties, or an eloquence that may enrapture men, yet if you have not a character worthy of the respect and confidence of your generation, they will not bestow it. In this country, of all others, is character valuable. I believe there is not a spot on the globe

where professional men have to possess so much character as in this country ; and as a general thing there is none on which they are so willingly paid for it. From the work-shops of our mechanics, and from the cottage of the poor widow come the men who have the greatest influence in their day ; and the reason is, that character is all that we want ; and we are willing to commit any trusts and any honors to such as will convince us that they possess it. It is a plant which every one may cultivate ; but it is of slow growth and requires great pains-taking. It must be symmetrical, conscientious and honest, self-commanding and benevolent. If a man tells you that you are a liar, you may knock him down, and very possibly shut his mouth, but have you altered his opinion of you ? Can you beat into him respect for your character by blows, or shoot it into him with the pistol ? Men often quarrel with the world because they have not that respect and influence and honor which they demand,—but this will do no good. You must *have character*, and then the world cannot help respecting you.

I am the more anxious to impress this upon

you, because under a free, republican government, there is great danger of feeling, that, since we are all on a level in natural and civil rights, that therefore, character must all be on a level; and that the man who has never earned a character, has as much right to respect, and influence and standing, as the man who has earned a god-like character. But this cannot be: for the simple reason, that God has so created men that they must respect virtue and despise vice, wherever seen. You will recollect that the great Apostle, when writing to a young minister on the island of Crete, charges him "let no man despise thee." Most men would have charged the Cretians not to despise the young preacher: but Paul understood human nature, and he well knew that it was not for them to say, *whether they would or would not despise him*. This question was in *his* hands. There are some ministers of the gospel whom the community cannot despise. There are those whom they fear, or even hate; but they cannot despise them. You may try to ridicule certain characters, you may be afraid of them, —you may stand in awe of them; but they

themselves must give you the power, before you can despise them. This great principle is confined to no station, or rank in life, to no age, and to no world. It is a law which holds good through all the universe of God. What a wise provision under the government of God, that the only being in the universe who can hurt you, is—yourself! that a man is injured only by what he himself does! This is true of any station—from that of the slave, to that of the monarch on the throne.

Human governments may guarantee to you life, liberty, and the unmolested pursuit of happiness, and you may praise those who *bequeath to you a legacy so rich*; but God has bestowed something beyond all this, when He wrote a law, not on paper nor on parchment, but on the living heart of his intelligent creatures, that they shall honor and respect a virtuous character, and despise the opposite. It is with all men as it was with Cain; if they do well they shall be accepted; but if they sin, the sin lies at their own door, and no one will carry it away or bury it out of sight. I know that it is in human nature to feel that it is owing to envy, or to

some obliquity in our fellow men, if we have less of respect or influence than we demand; when the truth is, however humiliating and painful it may be, men are not to blame. It is out of the power of men to withhold respect where it is really deserved. What encouragement for the young man who is coming forward in life, to study to deserve influence! You need make no demand; for if you deserve it, the boon will fall to you by an unchanging law of God. Honor and respect delight to crown him who has earned their wreath. It is not to George Washington the American General, nor to George Washington the President, that the world pays its homage; but it is to the *character* which that name embodies, and which will be admired in all future ages. It is not our form of government that gives you this glorious principle; but it was given by the great Ruler of men when He made the human soul, and when He put it out of the power of man to bestow the same meed of praise on the Priest and the Levite who left the wounded man to perish, that he does on the Samaritan who shewed compassion.

Lest I be misunderstood, let me say that under a free government, the man who deserves the best, will not receive the highest honors and offices, of course. You cannot expect that party feeling and party politics will be so overcome by this beautiful law, that honors and offices will always fall where most deserved; nor am I saying that a man will receive all that *he* may think he deserves; but I am saying, that in their hearts men respect or despise you according to your *real character*. *You are to blame, then, if you are despised.*

This is so important a nail that I not only wish to drive it home, but if possible, to clinch it. Follow me then, with this in your eye, while I add one more remark upon it: viz. that it is a universal, eternal principle, not confined to the narrow limits of time which lie between us and the grave, nor to this little world *merely*, but it reaches all worlds and all future being. And at the final consummation of all things, when the great drama of time shall be closed, when the wicked shall stand speechless before the throne of judgment, it is not the arbitrary

command of God that clothes them in shame and everlasting contempt, but it is their own character. It would be out of the power of God to make the angels in heaven, the saints clothed in white, and fallen spirits in the world of sorrow and misery, respect those who will be clothed in shame and everlasting contempt. The very laws of being must be altered before this can be done. If there were no Almighty arm to bring down the wicked, they would certainly act out this law, and thrust one another down, and pour shame and contempt upon those who deserve it. It is this fearful law carried out and acted out, that makes hell what it is. It is not merely the estimation in which *God* holds character, nor a punishment which his high wisdom inflicts merely; but it is the aggregated opinion of the moral universe, gathered from all worlds, that makes hell so dreadful. And its inhabitants are clothed with shame and contempt, because the whole universe, good and bad, have decreed that they deserve it all! On your own character, then, for this life and for the next, depends the decision of the question whether you shall be despised; and

I beg that you will understand that God has written over your chamber door, in letters of light—to be read when you enter it, and to be read when you leave it—"let no man despise thee." I therefore say to you as Cromwell did to his army, "Fellow soldiers, trust in Providence, and be sure to keep your powder dry!" Am I not on the right ground, then, when I say that the character of every young man is the jewel which he alone can burnish and bring out, and make it of all things below the heavens, the most valuable!

It may be the feeling of my young reader, that if he were calculating to enter one of the learned professions, as they are called, viz. that of Medicine, Law, or Divinity, all that I say about the value of character would be in point; that he would then be in a situation so conspicuous, that he would need to have a character not only without blemish, but also of positive excellence. Did it ever occur to my reader that it is *man* who is respected, and honored, and who becomes immortal? As John Newton says, "a wise man looks upon men as he does upon horses—all their comparisons of title, wealth and place, he considers

but as *harness* !” So it is. The profession or occupation of a man, is only the livery in which he is to serve his day and his God. The remarks which a venerable, gifted and very extraordinary patriot* has lately dropped, express my feelings on this point most forcibly. He was addressing a company of Lawyers: “Brethren of the profession of the Law: Perhaps my estimation of the profession, notwithstanding what I have said, is not so high as that which many of you make. So deep are my impressions of the natural equality of mankind, and of the fundamental rights which that natural equality confers upon every human being, that I have been accustomed and have accustomed myself to transfer that principle of equality to all the professions of men—the honest professions adopted by men in the great and various pursuits of life.

“It is common to say that the profession of the Law is the highest, most honorable, and most dignified that can be exercised by man. Possibly some of you may think so. It is possible that you may have entered upon

* J. Q. Adams.

the profession with that impression. But that impression is not mine. I do not consider it in point of dignity, in point of importance, beyond that of the shoemaker, or the tailor, or the housewright, or the mason, or any mechanical profession. I consider it not superior to the profession of the healing art, destined to alleviate and remove the physical evils of the human race; far less do I consider it superior to that profession which connects man with the future and with God.

“My opinion is, that the profession of Divinity stands upon the same foundation as the profession of the Law. The professors of both are bound by the laws of nature and of God, to pass lives of purity and of innocence, doing all the good they can to their fellow-creatures on earth. And if it is the privilege of the profession of Divinity to stand as mediators between God and man, it is equally that of those of the Law to maintain at all hazards, every individual right conferred upon man by Nature and God. I would say, therefore, that we ought to refer the whole question of the relative dignity and importance of trades, to that sacred principle of

natural equality, which is the law of nature between man and man. If there is any one profession which can claim superiority over all the rest, it is that of *the cultivator of the earth*. For him more than once, that claim has been asserted. But to him I should assign precisely equal rights with all the rest. Because he in number counts more than all the rest—though his profession numbers more than ten to one of all others together—I cannot admit superiority on his part over the mechanic, the merchant, or the Lawyer.”

It seems to me that the young man of this day stands on high vantage ground. He lives at a time when communication is so rapid that intelligence can be circulated with incredible despatch. He can, for a very small sum, command as much reading, and that of the very best kind, as he can digest. He can look back and see all the past,—the whole field covered with the carcasses of mighty men. He can look into the vast graves of mighty nations and see how the glory of earth perishes at the rebuke of an insulted God. What lessons on the vanity of man may be not read! What wells of wis-

dom are open to him from which he may draw inexhaustible supplies!

There are two principles to be kept before the mind on which we are called to act: the one is, individuality of character, and individual responsibility; the other, is having our influence combined and united with that of the millions who compose our generation. *On these two principles we are all called to act.* The one calls, not for what you actually are, and *what you actually accomplish, but for what you might do.* It demands the actual and the possible. And there are thousands of opportunities constantly occurring, in which your individual character will be weighed, and when it will have all the influence of its weight. And then, again, God has so arranged matters, that each one is to accomplish much by being combined with others. *A single man, on this principle, does not seem to count much; and yet of such units is the community and the nation made up, and each one gives a hue to the character of the nation or the age in which he lives.* The rain-drops cannot claim that each one is a great affair, and yet on their combined influence depends

the beauty of the landscape, the stream that gladdens the valley, and the food of man and of beast. Be it so, that you are never called to tread the halls of legislation,—that you are never called to walk on the high places of the earth, and that your chief influence in the world is that of combination: are the dew-drops any the less precious because one alone is not of much worth, while the combined influence of all covers the landscape with diamonds?

*“The dews come down unseen at eventide,
To teach mankind unostentatious charity.”*

What though you may think you dwell in a valley that is small and humble: you may feel assured that there is more in that valley than the proudest philosopher has yet been able to explore, or to explain. That humble vale has enough of sorrow which you can alleviate,—enough of darkness which you can aid in dispelling,—enough to whom you can become a benefactor. Do not feel that responsibility does not rest upon you because the eye of the public is not fixed upon you. Do not feel that there is a spot in this wide world so

obscure or so lonely that you cannot use all your powers upon it to the very best advantage. Do not sigh for some lofty station in which you would do great and good things if you could only occupy that;—but keep a pure light burning, even though it be small, rather than spend your strength in striking brilliant sparks from flint and steel.

Almost the whole amount of our smarting through life arises from defects in our personal character. In all the circle of your acquaintance can you look upon one who has *not striking defects of character*? Now can you rationally suppose that *you* are free from these defects, though you cannot point them out? I want you should become a real self-observer, and be so determined to possess a valuable character of your own, that you are willing to receive hints from any source, and that you will cheerfully bear beating, if wisdom may be beaten into you. It is said that the great men in ancient times who used to keep fools about them, learned more truth from them than from all the rest of the world. "When I was young," says Cecil, "my mother had a servant whose conduct I thought

truly wise. A man was hired to brew; and the servant was to watch his method in order to learn his art. In the course of the process, something was done which she did not understand. She asked him and he abused her with the vilest epithets for her ignorance and stupidity. My mother asked her, when she related it, how she bore such abuse? I would be called, said she, worse names a thousand times, for the sake of the information which I got out of him."

A very few years of contact with the world, and of observation, will teach you how infinitely character is superior to every thing else. You may be poor, you may be unfortunate, you may be a cripple, your lot may be among the lonely; but if you possess moral character, you will never be overlooked by God or man. "Never is a man undone who has not lost his character; but when that is lost, for all moral and useful purposes, he is ruined. Envy and calumny will follow a man's success like his shadow, but if he is true to himself they will be powerless. Virtues may be misrepresented, but they are virtues still. In vain will an industrious man be

called an idler,—a sensible man a fool,—a prudent man a spendthrift,—an honest man a knave. A good character is inherent. Its possessor may ruin it,—no one else can." More than once have I known a man who had earned a character, assailed, and that too by a bitterness which none but the most malignant heart could pour out, and for a time it seemed as if that man must be crushed. It was supposed he was destroyed. But such a man will not stay destroyed. The sword may go through and through, but like that of Æneas when he was cutting down the ghosts in the world of spirits, it does no hurt. The wounds will most assuredly heal of themselves. "Every thinking man," says the great writer last quoted, "will look round him, when he reflects on his situation in the world, and will ask, 'What will meet my case? What is it that I want? What will satisfy me? I look at the rich—and I see Ahab in the midst of all his riches, sick at heart for a garden of herbs! I see Dives after all his wealth, lifting up his eyes in hell, and begging for a drop of water to cool the rage of his sufferings! I see the rich fool summoned away, in the

very moment when he was exulting in his hoards! I look at the wise—I see Solomon, with all his wisdom, acting like a fool; and I know, that, if I possessed all his wisdom, were I left to myself I should act as he did! I see Abithophel, with all his policy, hanging himself for vexation! If I turn to men of PLEASURE—I see that the very sum of all pleasure is, that it is Satan's bed into which he casts his slaves! I see Esau selling his birth-right for a mess of pottage! I see Solomon after all his enjoyments, leaving his name a scandal to the church to the latest age! If I think of HONOR—I take a walk to Westminster Abbey—there is an end of all inquiry. There I walk among the mighty dead! There is the winding up of human glory! And what remains of the greatest man of my country? A boasting epitaph! None of these things, then, can satisfy me! I must meet death—I must meet judgment—I must meet God—I must meet eternity!"

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER.—ITS FOUNDATIONS.

CONTEXTS.—The great aim of the young man. His first disappointment. Definition of character. A great law of heaven—character must be of slow growth. Illustrations. Desire of early maturity. Ambition to be great. Why we do not regret the existence of *this law*. Illustrations—Moses, David, Newton, Luther. Great good which men do is to prevent evil. Small impressions become great in their results. Lockhart. A second great law of heaven—Reaping what we sow. Illustrations—indolence, dissipation. How God uses this law. Its extent and strength. Decision of character. Two things mistaken for it. What decision is. Illustrations. Lord Mansfield,—the hunter. Moral courage in saying *no*. Integrity. The Quaker's story. Matthew Hale. John Marshall. Beautiful incident in his life. Tenderness of feeling. John M. Mason at his son's funeral. The missionary's jewels.

THAT upon which the young man fixes his eye with so much earnestness and confidence, is **SUCCESS**: by which he means, all that is needful to gratify his personal desires, and to obtain an influence among men,—or, the pow-

er to influence men. Whatever attainments the young man may have made—whatever of respectability of parentage he may boast, he soon finds, on entering life, that he must make and rely upon his own character. He must set out at the bottom of the hill. But a new phenomenon now meets him. He listens to a “great Oration,” to “a great Sermon,” or he reads a “masterly review,” as these are called, and wonders at the small effects produced. He wonders that the results are not in proportion to the calibre of the gun, or the quantity of powder burned; and here he finds that one of those great laws of Heaven comes in—laws which meet him all the way through life: and that is, *that character and influence cannot be gained by any one effort, however gigantic. For the same reason it is that I cannot nourish my body by eating one great meal.* It is by a succession of impulses and stimulants that we are to be kept alive and invigorated. Hence it is that a single effort by a public teacher, however brilliant, seldom does more real good than an ordinary discourse. This is a law of our being; and this is the reason why, if I wish to acquire influ-

ence and have my character impressed on others, it cannot be done by a single effort, though gigantic, but by *repeated efforts*. It is not so in all cases with matter. You can often split off the rock in proportion to the quantity of powder employed, and you can shake the earth in proportion to the size of your cannon: *but in dealing with mind and heart, you must rely upon repeated impressions and efforts.*

Were I to define what I mean by character, I say *it is that which makes free and intelligent beings have confidence in you.* The very definition shews you that it must be of slow growth. You cannot acquire it in a day nor in a year. A marksman makes a wonderful shot, and it is known and talked about; —a young Lawyer makes one eloquent plea, and* by seizing a strong point of law which had been overlooked, he carries the jury with him, and his effort is talked about. A mechanic does a single job of work with great dispatch and skill, and he is talked about: the young farmer raises one great crop and it is a wonder; and the young Divine throws off a sermon which is greatly admired, and is

much talked off; but this is not reputation, or character,—it is merely a short-lived *notoriety*. The physician cures in one remarkable case, and he acquires this notoriety of an hour. But that marksman has got to be able to make a good shot whenever he raises the rifle, to be allowed to be a good shot: that young Lawyer has got to take the strong *points and the law, and the weak ones too*, many times, and with them carry the jury with him, ere he has acquired the *character* of a sound lawyer; that young mechanic and that young farmer have yet to shew perseverance and skill and success many times before they can acquire character: that young Divine has yet to think out many an eloquent passage, and seize many a figure of speech, and produce many masterly strokes at reasoning, before he can be called a great preacher: and that young physician has to hang over more than one desperate case and study the deranged body of more than one poor sufferer, and bring up from the borders of the grave more than one patient, ere he can claim the name of a great physician.

I know that young men frequently want to

quarrel with this law, and feel that it is too hard that minds as gifted, as accomplished and as wise as theirs, cannot at once receive the homage which is paid to character that has cost many years of persevering toil and well-doing to acquire. And this, too, is the *philosophy of the failure of so many young men*, who are willing to make a few powerful efforts, and then stop discouraged. This obstinate law lies at the foundation of all success and quarrelling with it will do no good. You would be sorely disappointed should you suppose that any amount of genius, or any greatness of mind, could take the rough block of marble, and by a single stroke of the mallet upon the cold chisel, could strike out the beautiful statue; even a Phidias must strike thousands and thousands of little blows, ere he can bring out the form that almost breathes. It is in consequence of the stern necessity of obeying this law, that a powerful mind, however coveted or desired, is not necessary to your success. Few things are valuable which are not of slow growth; and of nothing is this more emphatically true than of character. The gourd of Jonah

springs up in a single night; but a single worm in another night cuts it down. In a single season the willow can grow to something of a tree, while the oak on the hills requires a century in order to become great; but it is *the oak* and not *the willow* when once grown. The young men in our country are apt to feel that because they are early admitted to the rights of men, that therefore they are mature men at an early age. And hence, long before a man was considered old enough to enter the Senate in Rome, we consider him almost superannuated. By setting your mark to become mature early, you commit a great mistake, inasmuch as you attempt to force the laws which God has established. Medicines even which are slowest in their operations, are for the most part the most valuable. If then you find that your reputation acquired under your father's roof, or in your school days, does not carry you far, do not feel discouraged. Persevere. It is by lifting the calf every day, that you are able to carry the ox by and by. I love to commend the efforts of young men, and they deserve commendation; but we must

expect more from them the longer they live. We would commend him, who as a novice in love, should manfully endure the summer shower while on his way to see his mistress; but shortly we must expect him to swim the Hellespont, if necessary, in order to gaze on her face.

It is natural, too, to feel that if we were only laboring in some conspicuous field, occupying some distinguished position—doing some great work—we should not only be willing to labor, but to labor most intensely. But did you ever reflect that it is a matter of joy that God does not need many tall cedars among his forests? When He has some great work to be done, he calls forth the instrumentality; but the very existence of these remarkable men, presupposes some great calamity, or some great darkness. Would you have the church sink into slavery for four and a half centuries, that *you* might be the Moses who should lead her out;—or would you have her hedged in and surrounded by nations bent on her extermination, that *you* might be the David to lead forth her armies and scatter her enemies? Or would you

have the world thrown back into darkness,—“nature and nature’s laws lie hid in night,” till God says “let Newton rise, and all is light”—that *you* might be that Newton? Would you have the glorious reputation of Martin Luther, if you must purchase it at the expense of having a night of a thousand years settle down over the christian world? If every young man who aspires to distinction were to become some mighty reformer, some immortal leader of armies, some renowned legislator, how immense must be the evils which must fill the earth, and to remove which God must raise up so many wonderful instruments! When such instruments are needed, you will be none the less likely to be called that your condition is lowly. He chose such an instrument from the cottage of the slave on the banks of the Nile,—from the sheep-cote on the hills of *Bethlehem*,—and from the mines in Germany. Men in their wisdom hasten to the palace of kings to see the greatest benefactor of the earth; but the shepherds have first found him in the manger, and there must the wise go if they find him at all.

I feel that I hold out false views of life, if I lead you to suppose that all, or even many of our young men are to become such luminaries as to draw all eyes upon them. If the field of action were to be confined to *this* life merely, and if you were to live for time only, I should mourn that some great opportunity, some crisis in the affairs of men did not give you the power of doing some great work. But this is *not* so. You live in a world so connected with another, that the beggar who, to-day, lies at the gates of luxury desiring to be fed with the crumbs, with dogs for his companions, may hereafter fly on errands of mercy with an angel's wing, and in the eternal flight of years, may serve God in ways now unknown, but which will make him a greater blessing than any mere mortal who has yet lived, has been to this world. Every one is on a state of probation, and for such there is no middle destiny. The powers of the soul must grow more active, and its emotions deeper forever. The harp can never lie still. Its notes must be full,—the notes of the blessed, or the deeper, piercing notes of sin. It is a thing that will be led to green

pastures, and to still waters, or it will be a *thing to be driven* over those eternal, barren mountains which lift themselves up beyond the limits of time,—rising up in everlasting proximity and succession, lashed and goaded to phrensy by the Spirit of Evil, without rest for the foot—without cooling waters for the lips, and without hope for the heart. It shall be clothed in light so pure, that the sun would be useless, like a taper at noonday—forever rising higher in activity, usefulness and blessedness; or it shall be a spirit still, *panting in the race of guilt, flying from conscience and from vengeance as from a pursuing spirit*, like the deer over the mountains, but unlike the deer—not daring to hope it will find the cool lake into which it may plunge, and escape its foe, or at worst, be throttled and killed by the pursuer. It is because we are to act on the broad theatre, embracing *two worlds, and all future ages*, that we mourn not, that all are not to do great things here,—nor even that many bright and promising youth are cut down in the very morning of their days. Removed the good and the young may be: lost they cannot be.

Let it be remembered, too, that the chief good which most men do, is to *prevent* evil. Who can say how many young Mahomets have been born into this world, but who have not caused the earth to mourn, because they have been brought under a good influence? To prevent the rise of one such spirit, is equivalent to doing the work of many profound statesmen. From the dark unenlightened corners of the land where there is little or no influence from the good, come those, who, like the unclean frogs seen in vision, fill the land with their croakings and their slime. From the dark alleys of our great cities, or the suburbs of some mighty metropolis, where light and love and goodness are not felt, come those who become robbers and pirates. The great influence, and the great good which an individual man does, is not seen and known or marked. The leaven is not seen in the flour, but it is there—and there it will work till the whole mass—even to every particle, feels its presence and influence. We love to point to men of brilliant action, and lofty achievement, and bid our young men go and *imitate them*; but the *highest triumphs of*

heart and of manhood, consist in the silent, secret influence which a great and a good man exerts upon society. The periodical return of the shooting stars has been watched with great interest; but I have yet to learn that all the stars which ever shot so brilliantly athwart the heavens, ever did so much real good as the clear shining of the sun for a single day.

Another fact to be borne in mind is, that we can do little more, in a world like ours, than to kindle little fires here and there, which will continue to burn, and from which other fires still may be lighted, after we have passed away and are forgotten. You may give bias to the character which is now forming, you may make an impression on the mind of some companion, perhaps unknown to him and to yourself, which will influence thousands yet unborn, for their good. I believe it is Lockhart, the accomplished writer of Walter Scott's memoirs, who mentions that in those days of mirth and revelry which came near being his ruin, the room in which he and his associates met, was opposite that in which Scott was writing. While thus assembled he used to

watch that unknown hand—turning off sheet after sheet—untiring, unceasing. In the midst of mirth and folly, he would turn his eyes and feel a pang of severe reproof by that silent, unknown, everlasting hand! How little did Scott know that his diligence was rebaking and forming the character of a young man who would one day even honor him by writing his life! And in a thousand ways are we thus making impressions upon others, if we are faithful to the talents committed to us, which will live long after we have passed away. The hand that dropped the pebble into the smooth waters has passed away and is forgotten, but the wake is widening and spreading till it has been felt in every part of the lake.

Another law which lies at the foundations of character, and which I deem of great importance to be understood, is, *that you gather the very things you sow.*

When applied to the vegetable world, this law is recognized at once as unvarying; but this is the lowest field to which it can be applied. It is universal in the mental and in the moral world. If you know a young man

who in his youth is idle and indolent, you expect that he will reap the same thing sowed, and become an indolent man. And very seldom are these expectations disappointed. Every time he gives way to indolence, he strengthens his love for it, and his dislike to effort is proportionably increased. He who educates his mind to rebel or even to reluctant at the calls for mental effort, will have his mind gradually become torpid. I cannot but lament that Shakespeare should have drawn such a character of Henry V;—to-day a wild, reckless, shameful debauchee, and to-morrow, by a volition, throwing off all the habits of his life, and becoming a great, a wise and a good king! The picture may be beautiful in poetry, but it is calculated to make a wrong impression on the mind of a young man. In real life, when you find a young man training his mind to be dull and stupid, you will find it becoming more and more so all the way through life. On the contrary, the mind that is often girded up with vigor, and often called upon to do its best, will become more and more powerful all the time of its action here; and hence a balanced, disciplined mind, is of-

ten in its greatest strength at the age of seventy. How often do we see men,—though not half as often as we might, if they had understood it when young—who have made powerful efforts all their lives, and who in their age, keep on the wing untired, going up higher and higher into the regions of what is intellectual, and seeing wider and wider into places where the infinite mind loves to expatiate. Even to extreme old age, such retain the eye that was never keener;—a flight that was never more lofty, and powers that were never more strong or gigantic.

We too frequently see young men sowing the seeds of imbecility of mind and of body, by dissipation. We should esteem it almost a miracle, if the harvest were not premature old age, or an early grave, or both. Every prostration of the mind or of the body, makes the next easier and deeper; and hence by *the inevitable law of God, the harvest of ruin must follow such sowing.* What gives any appetite such mighty power over men, when it has for a long time had indulgence? The answer is, the victim sows appetite and he reaps appetite. Hence it is that the

young man who begins to use any intoxicating stimulants, however mild, must, and will, have the appetite grow stronger and stronger. Hence it is too, that men who think they are not such slaves to appetite but that they can break off from indulgence at any time, find it no easy matter when they attempt it. How often do we see men ready to weep over their thralldom and have their friends weep with them—and who vow and promise, and all in vain? Every year they reap a larger and a larger harvest. This universal law applicable to bodily, mental and moral habits, is a chain of amazing strength. Here you may see how divine agency comes in—if I may tread so near theological ground—and how God is said to harden the sinner. I have no doubt he does do it; not by laying the iron hand of Omnipotence on the creature, but through this unchanging law. A man sows obstinacy—Pharaoh is an example in point—under the government of God, and he reaps obstinacy, the same thing sowed. If I sow tares or thistles in my field, does it require any interposition of God to cause that field to produce tares and thistles? The laws already

established do that. The Bible never made this great law—it is laid in our very being. The finger of God hath written it on all his creation. When men stifle the convictions of conscience and play with a thing so sacred as truth, they are left to reap a conscience that is seared, and to be more ready to embrace falsehood than truth. You may not intend to entrench yourself in error by sowing baseness of heart, but you just as surely do so, as you gather from the fields the very thing you sow. It requires no direct agency of God—no divine decree to do this. It results from a natural principle. Suppose a rich man is selfish, hoards his property,—never causes the widow's heart to leap for joy, and never dries the tears of the orphan, and does no good with his property? What does such a man sow? Why, selfishness,—cold selfishness, say you. Let these riches suddenly vanish,—let him suddenly come to want. I will not say that murmurs of exultation will be heard, but will not the world feel cold and selfish towards him—and his field yield him the same barren crop which he sowed? Look at another man,—the very opposite of this:

a wealthy man who is ever ready to do good, and who lives not to himself. Let him suddenly be stripped ; and is there not now a tide of kind feeling and sympathy and benevolence setting towards him ? And that benevolence and kindness which he sowed, are they not precisely the same thing which he now reaps ? This is a law of great strength. It thrills through heaven,—it vibrates through hell. Th's certainty of reaping the very thing you sow, makes it easy for a man to select one sin—one master-lust, and make it the darling lust of the soul.

And what makes this law so terrible, is, that it holds a man, like the grappling irons of the war-ship, in all future existence. You see a man create a taste for what intoxicates. God does not interfere and whet the appetite. He lets the man alone, and lets this law take its course. The seed reproduces itself, till the *poor creature will cling to his cups when he sees character gone, reputation gone, the body and mind in ruins, and on the face of the heavens reads, "no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God."* God stands aloof and lets him alone. And let this law go on—sin

reproducing itself, and what more is necessary to produce hell? What daggers will *reproach there learn to use*? What *broilings* and tempests of the soul will there be when passion shall have heated her caldron ten thousand times, and every time prepares the way for a more intense heat! Ah! what a state will it be when murder shall become the father of ten thousand murders, and each one of these the parent of as many more! Thus is every man the husbandman of his own destiny, and the husbandry of the wicked will be eternally going forward. You sow to the flesh, and you reap unquenchable, ungratified desires. The hunger of sin will be unmitigated, and the thirst quenchless. The master-lust of time will scream for gratification through eternity. If *avarice* haunt you here,—the same demon will haunt you there, and will kindle his fires and call for gain and gain, without ever receiving enough to produce one grim smile. If *lust* be the demon here,—the unclean spirit will go with you, and mantle you in sheets of fire forever! If *ambition* be the ruling spirit here,—this sleepless demon will lead you to the harvest field

of disappointment and chagrin forever. Oh! the destiny of man! The master-lust of time, the master-lust of eternity! Sowing and reaping, sowing and reaping sin forever! No matter if the mark of Cain be not on the brow of murder; no matter if the dark cave which witnessed the deed, or the deep caverns of the ocean which concealed the victim,—no matter if the earth be burned up, and the ocean be gone and no witness of the crime be left,—no matter if the recording angel do not read over the crime for ages,—and if no tablet in the universe shew the record, you read the crimes of earth on the brow, and in the face, and stamped on the soul of the sinner, and by the harvest eternally growing, shall you know what were the besetting sins on earth!

Thus by a simple and beautiful law, is the destiny of the soul chained to itself, and thus will the sinner become his own punisher. It will be punishment enough if the passions which have already learned to master us here, are forever to increase by every indulgence. The wisdom and the justice of this law will be clearly seen at once, if you will notice its ap-

plication to a good man. You have doubtless observed that when a man loves the word of God, he loves it more and more: that he who gives of his property to bless mankind, gives more and more cheerfully—is sowing liberality and will reap a liberal spirit, while he who sows sparingly, reaps a sparing disposition. Thus every virtue is strengthened by exercise and repetition. It is this law that echoes through the regions beyond time, let him that is holy,—let him that is filthy remain so forever! The angels of light, and men, and the spirits of darkness, all come under the same law, and it sets them all onward towards the eternal, infinite throne, or downward in the slavery of sin. It is the uncompromising nature of this law, that disappoints so many young men. They think they can go so far in indulgence, and then stop, and that moral character shall stop and hold itself in obedience to reason and conscience; but they find, too late, that this law has bound them and their darling sins too closely together to be separated as they expected. Oh! how many have I seen who have struggled with hopes and resolutions, till

•

the blossoms of the grave were upon their heads, and they found no deliverance! They sow the seeds of estrangement from God, and this law carries them on in the path which they have chosen, and they can sow no new seed. It will eternally be setting every man onward in bliss or in woe. Need I urge you, then, to watch every habit which pertains to the body, and see that nothing is there sown which you would not be willing to have grow *like* the seed, and willing to have the world see? Shall I charge you more fully that all mental habits which you form and cherish, good or bad, will strengthen till there is no throwing them off, and no resisting their power? And that what relates to moral habits is graven there to abide—never to be erased;—and that what you write upon the soul is to be read more and more distinctly—the writing to grow more and more legible, as long as the soul endures? This you may say, is nothing more nor less than the power of habit. Be it so. But the philosophy of habit lies among the wonderful and invariable laws which God has established, and this philosophy is what I have been trying to explain.

All writers will insist upon DECISION of character as an essential part of it; and rightly too;—for you can lay no very strong claims to character without it. But all writers are not so clear in shewing in what it consists. The prediction of the aged patriarch concerning his son, is still true of the man who lacks this trait: “unstable as water—he shall not excel.” But decision is a single word, and no single word can well express an idea as complex as that which we have in the mind when we call a character a decided one; for it requires a concentration of mind upon a given question, a cool power of looking at the reasons for and against, and a balanced judgment to weigh those reasons; and then,—when the purpose is once formed, or when the mind has once come to its results,—the power of holding before it all the reasons on which the decision was founded, so that no opposition and no power can cause the decision to waver.

There are two things which are not unfrequently mistaken for decision of character. The one is *obstinacy*—coming to a result and then doggedly clinging to it, whatever reasons may be alledged against it, and whatever new

light the subject may be placed in. The other is *precipitancy*, as if impulse were a safe guide—when you dash headlong into a conclusion, without weighing the reasons for or against. I have known many dupes to each of these mistakes; and while they congratulated themselves upon their decision of character, very likely the eyes of others saw only what was ludicrous or painful. That decision of character which will bear the cool and close review, which will approve itself to the conscience afterwards, which ingenuous minds would approve so far as they understand the case, is what I am pleading for. It does not follow that a decision must be come to at *once*—*this is precipitancy*. Take time to think and weigh over the matter, and let it lie a few days, if need be, and then you will not regret your decision. A gentleman of great symmetry of character, and a wonderful man for comprehensive business plans, told me that when he came to a decision on some important point, he retired alone, and first looked at all the possible and actual reasons on the one side, and then at those on the other. He then laid it aside for a few days, in

order to see if any new views would arise, or new light break in, and then decided according as evidence on *the one side or the other* preponderated. He seldom has to regret a decision. Once formed, it is to be carried out in practice. *From the time that the boy drives his hoop, or draws his little sled, or rolls his marbles, to the day of his death, he will constantly be called upon to make decisions which may have important bearings. Refusing to make them is in fact making them—for you do decide that you will take no responsibility, while the very decision to do so is a responsibility. Decision must be founded on fixed principles, so that if need be, you can fall back into the arms of Omnipotence, and he will sustain you. Who can avoid admiring the conduct of Lord Mansfield, when, during the trial of a case, the press and the mob and the whole community tried to intimidate him with threats, even to his life. His language is worthy of the occasion, and deserves to be committed to memory by every young man in the world.*

“But here let me pause! It is fit to take some notice of the various terrors hung out;

the numerous crowds which have attended *and now attend in and about the hall, out of all reach of hearing what passes in Court, and the tumults which, in other places, have shamefully insulted all order and government. Audacious addresses in print, dictate to us, from those they call the people, the judgment to be given now and afterwards upon conviction. Reasons of policy are urged, from danger to the kingdom, by commotions and general confusions."*

"I pass over many anonymous letters I have received; those in print are public; some of them have been brought judicially before the Court. Whoever the writers are, they take the wrong way; I will do my duty unawed. What have I to fear? That mendax infamia *from the press, which daily creates false facts and false motives?* The lies of calumny carry no terror to me; I trust that my temper of mind, and the color and conduct of my life, have given me a suit of armor against these arrows. If, during this king's reign, I have ever supported his government, and assisted his measures, I have done it without any other reward, *than the consciousness of doing*

what I thought to be right. If I have ever opposed, I have done it upon the points themselves, without mixing in party or faction, and without any collateral views. I honor the king and respect the people; but many things, acquired by the favor of *either*, are, in my account, objects not worth ambition. I wish *popularity*; but it is that *popularity* which *follows*, not that which is run after; it is *that* popularity which sooner or later, never fails to do justice to the pursuits of *noble ends* by *noble means*. I will not *do* that which my conscience tells me is *wrong*, upon this occasion, to gain the huzzas of thousands, or the daily praise of all the papers, which come from the press. I will not avoid *doing* what *I think is right*, though it should draw on me the whole artillery of libels—all that falsehood and malice can invent, or the credulity of a deluded populace can swallow. I can say, with a great magistrate upon an occasion and under circumstances not unlike, "*I was always of opinion, that reproach acquired by well-doing, was no reproach, but an honor.*" (Ego, hoc animo semper fui, ut invidiam, virtute partam, gloriam non invidiam, putarem.)

“Once for all let it be understood, that no endeavors of this kind will influence *any* man who at present sits here; if they had any effect, it would be contrary to their intent. Leaning against their impression might give a bias the other way. But I hope, and I know, I have fortitude enough to resist even that weakness. No libels, no threats, nothing that has happened, nothing that can happen, will weigh a feather against allowing the defendant upon this and every other question, not only the whole advantage he is entitled to from substantial law and justice, but every benefit from the most critical nicety of form, which every other defendant could claim under the like objection.”

“The threats go *further than abuse*; *PERSONAL violence*. I do not believe it; it is not the genius of the worst men of *this* country, in the worst of times. But I have set my mind at rest. The last end that can happen to any man never comes too soon, if he falls in the support of the law and liberty of his country; (for liberty is synonymous with law and government.) Such a shock, too, might be productive of public good; it might awake

the better part of the kingdom out of that lethargy which seems to have benumbed them, and bring the mad part back to their senses, as men intoxicated are sometimes stunned into sobriety."

I have made this valuable quotation in order to shew you what I mean by true decision of character. Let me urge you to read the admirable essay on this subject by John Foster. Let your station or situation be what it may, you will need to keep the mind cool, the judgment awake, and the soul prompt to act. I knew a hunter who was once in the forest alone far from the habitations of men. Just at sun-set he heard the hunter's signal—three guns discharged as rapidly as they could be loaded. He immediately put off in his bark canoe to find the signal-maker. Presently the signal was repeated, and he plied his paddle most lustily. After going a few miles from one lake into another, he saw a small smoke among the trees on the shore, and on reaching the shore, heard a faint groan. On running up the hill, he found a man who had struck his axe into the artery of the leg, and was nearly dead by bleeding. Without a

moment's hesitation, he stripped off the bark of the black alder with his teeth, made a decoction and a poultice in his mouth, then girded up the leg, stopped the bleeding, carried the poor fellow out of the wilderness on his back and in his canoe, and thus saved his life. This also was decision, though not, perhaps, so much of the moral nature, as the preceding illustration.

Multitudes of young men are ruined by not having decision enough to say *no*. They meet with companions who invite them to step into the fruit shop, or into the confectioner's, or into the oyster-cellar or the bar-room. They know they ought not to yield. They are perfectly aware that they would not like to have their parents see them go into these places,—they are aware that those who entice them are as yet below themselves in moral character, but they have not firmness enough to say *no*. When they allow themselves to be led away once, they will again; and then they must return the compliment. This is the beginning of that course which leads to drinking, to tavern-suppers—to street-smoking—to the theatre—to the house of her

which is the way to hell, and then to the ruin, the utter ruin of the young man for time and for eternity.

I cannot urge too strenuously, nor insist too strongly, upon *integrity*—strict, unwavering *honesty*, as an indispensable part of character. It is a foundation stone, and if this be wanting, all the rest must eventually fall. He who allows himself knowingly to withhold a shilling from another—to take that amount with the secret promise of restoring it, has already begun to sap the foundations of his character. Ruin has often commenced by taking fruit from a neighbor's field, by concealing the thing picked up, by the small piece of coin borrowed from the drawer, or by some other apparently small thing. He that is unjust in that which is least, is unjust in that which is much, if he have the opportunity presented. Let me entreat you by all the value of character, and by the worth of the soul, in handling property of any description, which you must do all the way through life,—make it a rule which you will never violate, let the cost of keeping it be what it may,—that you will never appropriate a farthing which is not

strictly and honestly your own. Don't allow yourself to borrow. Begin life with the fixed purpose of living within your own income, be it what it may. (Do not ask if such an one is not better dressed, has more pocket-money—makes more show—or in appearance is above you.) Appearance is not what you want. A great and an honest heart would disdain to purchase appearance at the expense of the strictest integrity. Do not ask what the world will say, if you do not dress better, or spend more. Who is the world? Whom do you think of when you speak of the world? Not the great, the wise, or the good, but it may be, a small circle of thoughtless young men. In dealing with men—do as the Quaker preacher says one of his neighbors did—give more than full measure. "Why do you do so," said one to him. "Because, I have only one life to live here, and when I get through, there will be no coming back to correct mistakes." It is easier to commit the mistake than to correct it. Integrity, integrity of character is absolutely essential to valuable character. Other qualities may be splendid, but if this be wanting their splendor must

shortly fade. Suppose I describe to you a character who claims admiration—a man who is gifted in intellect, eloquent in speech, beautiful in person, commanding in attainments, captivating and shining in all that he does, and then tell you he is a man full of deceit *and cannot be trusted*.—I ask if I have not dashed the cup, and if all his endowments do not appear like the beautiful hues on the back of the serpent, the more hideous in proportion to their power to charm the victim? I have seen men who were self-disciplined to an extent that they were never thrown off their guard, cool, cautious, having the shining and cold lubricity of the serpent, as well as his tortuousness,—who obtained power and wealth,—but who were never great, never beloved, though universally feared and dreaded. Their movements are felt like the chill of the hail-cloud in summer, before the cloud is seen. The man who wants transparency of character may be honored externally, but never in the secret thoughts of men. Magnanimity cannot dwell in the same bosom with cold selfishness, and a deceit that will wrong others out of property or character. Depend upon

it, the man who does not possess an internal principle of integrity, will never be able to act with boldness, or open vigor. Open hearted action cannot be his. He is timid, cautious, casting side glances on the right hand and on the left, watching, like the fat spider on the wall—anxious lest his web be swept away by an honest broom, and lest the fly which he sees at a distance, will not fall into his meshes. Conscious rectitude will inspire firmness, and give force to your exertions whenever effort is demanded. Your abilities may not be great, but this will in a measure well supply the place of your abilities. You will thus gain friends and admirers, without seeking them. Men will know where to find you. Your course may be slow at first, but it is sure : and in times of trial, this fixed principle of integrity will bear you aloft in the sunshine, while storms are raging and bursting beneath you. What noble resolutions, or rather, principles of action, do you find adopted by the great Matthew Hale, when a young man! "Resolved," says he, "that popular applause or distaste have no influence upon me in anything I do. Not to be solicitous

of what men will say or think of me, so long as I keep myself exactly according to the rules of justice." The foundation of Hale's character was an uncompromising regard for what he deemed right and just. Cromwell found him the legal adviser of the throne, and seeing his integrity of character, that far-sighted man clothed him with new honors, and made him judge under his own energetic government. His son sought to do the same; and when monarchy was once more restored, Charles exalted him to be chief justice of the kingdom. Through all these changes, he was ever the same man of unbending integrity. He aspired to no offices, and yet men of all political parties sought him and heaped honors upon him—because they knew that the foundation of his character was integrity. Every party knew that it was an honor and a bulwark to have such a character in its service. Now it is not possible for you to believe, that if he had been one of those cautious, cool, selfish beings who are sent among us in judgment, he could have been honored by that and all following generations as he has been.

If you wish to see a character the very op-

posite of the concealed and selfish one, look at our own John Marshall. "It has happened to him," says Judge Story, "as to many other distinguished men, that his life had few incidents: and those which belonged to it were not far removed from the ordinary course of human events. That life was filled up in the conscientious discharge of duty. It was throughout marked by a wise and considerate propriety. His virtues expanded with the gradual development of his character. They were the natural growth of deep-rooted principles, working their way through the gentlest affections and the purest ambition. No man ever had a loftier desire for excellence; but it was tempered by a kindness which subdued envy, and a diffidence which extinguished jealousy. Search his whole life, and you cannot lay your finger on a single extravagance of design or act! There were no infirmities, leaving a permanent stain behind them. There were no eccentricities to be concealed; no follies to be apologized for; no vices to be blushed at; no rash outbreakings of passionate resentment to be regretted; no dark deeds, disturbing the peace of families, or leaving

them wretched by its desolations." I cannot forbear introducing here an incident which illustrates the entire simplicity, transparency and beauty of his character. "It is not long since a gentleman was traveling in one of the counties of Virginia, and about the close of the day stopped at a public house, to obtain refreshment and spend the night. He had been there but a short time, before an old man alighted from his gig, with the apparent intention of becoming his fellow guest at the same house. As the old man drove up he observed that both of the shafts of his gig were broken, and that they were held together by withes formed from the bark of a hickory sapling. Our traveler observed further, that he was plainly clad, that his knee-buckles were loosened and that something like negligence pervaded his dress. Conceiving him to be one of the honest yeomanry of our land, the courtesies of strangers passed between them, and they entered the tavern. It was about the same time that an addition of three or four young gentlemen was made to their number—most, if not all of them, of the legal profession. As soon as they became conveniently

accommodated the conversation was turned by one of the latter upon an eloquent harangue which had that day been displayed at the bar. It was replied by the other, that he had witnessed the same day, a degree of eloquence, no doubt equal, but that it was from the pulpit. Something like a sarcastic rejoinder was made to the eloquence of the pulpit, and a warm and able altercation ensued, in which the merits of the Christian religion became the subject of discussion. From six o'clock, until eleven, the young champions wielded the sword of argument, adducing with ingenuity and ability, everything that could be said pro and con. During this protracted period, the old gentleman listened with all the meekness and modesty of a child; as if he was adding new information to the stores of his own mind; or perhaps he was observing with philosophic eye the faculties of the youthful mind, and how new energies are evolved by repeated action; or, perhaps, with patriotic emotion, he was reflecting upon the future destinies of his country, and on the rising generation upon whom these future destinies must devolve; or, most probably, with a sentiment of moral and

religious feeling, he was collecting an argument, which, (characteristic of himself,) no art would be able to elude, and no force resist. Our traveler remained a spectator and took no part in what was said.

At last, one of the young men, remarking that it was impossible to combat with long established prejudices, wheeled around, and with some familiarity, exclaimed, "Well my *old gentleman what think you of these things?*" If, said the traveler, a streak of vivid lightning had at that moment crossed the room, their amazement could not have been greater than it was with what followed. The most eloquent and unanswerable appeal was made for nearly an hour, by the old gentleman, that he ever heard or read. So perfect was his recollection, that every argument urged against the Christian religion, was met in the order in which it was advanced. Hume's sophistry on the subject of miracles, was, if possible, more perfectly answered, than it had already been done by Campbell. And in the whole lecture, there was so much simplicity and energy, pathos and sublimity, that not another word was uttered. An attempt

to describe it, said the traveler, would be an attempt to paint the *sunbeams*. It was now a matter of curiosity and inquiry, who the old gentleman was. The traveler concluded that it was the preacher from whom the pulpit eloquence was heard—but—no—it was the "CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES."

There is one more trait of character to which I would allude, and which must be cultivated from youth. I refer to a spirit of tenderness,—the power of sympathizing with what is tender. Afflictions must come to all, and you will find opportunities enough to console the distressed and to cause the heart of suffering to bless you. Some are afraid to cultivate this trait of character, lest it destroy the spirit of manliness and be considered a mark of weakness. They need not fear but the whirl and action and contact with the world which is the inheritance of our sex, will give them rough points enough. It should be remembered too, that this spirit of tenderness is usually the concomitant of the most lofty and powerful minds. The man to whom I have just made allusion, was re-

markable for this. In the sanctuary of private friendships, he would pour out his soul, and dissolve in tears, as he called up the visions of other days, and brought back friends from the darkness of the grave. Perhaps few minds in the world could claim the attribute of greatness with more justice and propriety than the late John M. Mason of New York, and yet few men ever had a greater degree of sensibility, or had like him the privilege of having his approach to the abodes of sorrow hailed with joy, as if he were a second Barnabas. How beautiful the expression of this man after being repeatedly and severely afflicted, when he was called to bury a beloved son. The young men were lifting up the bier on which the stricken youth lay, when the overpowered father raised his hands and exclaimed, "tread lightly, young men, tread lightly,—you carry a temple of the Holy Ghost!"

Poetry dwells in the heart of sensibility, and the man whose affections are easily moved, is the man who will be likely to have refined feelings. What an image was in the mind of the father who wrote the short sen-

tence I am about to quote! He was a missionary in a distant land, and he was describing how his children were, one after another, dropping into the grave—"my jewels are dropping away—but Christ is making up his crown!"

I purposely omit the necessity of religious principles as an indispensable foundation of character, because in a subsequent chapter, I propose to speak of it more at length than I can here.

CHAPTER IV.

TEMPTATIONS OF YOUNG MEN.

CONTENTS.—Temptations common to all—come upon young men with peculiar power. The blast on the flower—the deer hunter—the otter. Why the young men of this country peculiarly exposed to temptations. First temptation—to seek to live in great cities. The boy when he first entered a great city. Its peculiar temptations. The conscience and sensibilities blunted. Illustration. The Morgue. Why young men thus seek the city. High living and mean thinking. Gentility. The scene in the stage coach. Second temptation: To waste time, enfeeble the intellect, and corrupt the heart, by foolish and wicked books. How the taste is created and cherished. Impure authors. Third temptation: Bad company. Power of associates—danger of hasty friendships. Progress in ruin. The beauty of a virtuous and pure young man. Thirst for intoxicating drinks—how created—its dangers—its only remedy. Fourth temptation: Reveries of the imagination. Its power—danger even in business—awful when imagination is impure. *Castle-building*. Fifth temptation. To shrink from the path of duty. The story of the highwayman. Justice Spread. Application.

IN marking out our path through this world, it was no part of the plan of Infinite Wisdom

that any period of life should be free from trials of character, or, as we usually say, temptations. They commence with our being, and follow, or rather meet us all the way till we reach the grave. The winds which try the strength of the lofty tree, do not forget the humble sapling, however lowly it may stand. To every period of life, too, there are temptations peculiar to that state. In childhood, there are the impatience of restraint, the setting at naught the counsels of those who are older, the longings for time to go away, and the thousand frettings over its own imprudencies. In manhood, the cold graspings for property, or ambition, seize the soul, and the man who has surmounted the point which lies between poverty and thrift, becomes cold, selfish, and miserable—unless he be very guarded. In old age, the cup of life has been exhausted, and the old man is disappointed that he has accomplished so little, that he has gained so little, and that the joys of time are so hollow, and so mocking. With nothing to which he can look forward this side of the grave, is it any wonder that he shews outwardly the frettings of his spirit.

within, or that he retires within himself and goes back to the rainbow days of his youth, or dreams about a morning of life fairer and more delightful than mortal ever enjoyed—that he enshrines himself in imaginary youth and vigor and beauty, and enthrones himself in ideal perfection?

{ But upon none do temptations come down with so much power, as upon young men. The great enemy of all goodness seems to understand that character is then forming most rapidly, habits are becoming settled, and the gristle of youth is becoming the bone of the man. Then is his time. ¶The blast and mildew, the worm and the insect all hang around the wheat when its blossoms are opening. The still hunter seeks the deer in the forest that is beautiful, and where the moss is so thick that the fall of his foot-steps cannot be heard. The gins and the traps for the poor bird, are set thickest where the flowers are the most profuse, and are the most successful in taking their victims on the brightest mornings. } Even the otter might escape, if the hunter would not sink his trap under the moss

where the stupid creature plays his uncouth gambols.

I am wishing to point out a few of the more prominent of those temptations which are peculiar to young men. To know where the danger lies, at what hour the thief will come, at what window he will attempt to creep in, is in a great measure to ensure our safety.

It is probably true also, that in no part of the world are temptations to young men greater, than in this country. This may startle you, if you recal Paris to mind. But recollect that however great the temptations may be in Paris or in London, they constitute but a small portion of the inhabitants of the countries of which these cities are the capitals. But here, the whole body of young men in our country are fearfully exposed. The reason is, that our circumstances are such, that our very boys have to buffet those waves of temptations which men can hardly resist. Long before they are grown up, they leave the homes of their childhood—they must go abroad and play the part of men, and long before experience has had time to

teach them, they must tread over quicksands that are to be found in the country, and the breathing-holes of hell which fill the great city. Let me enumerate a few of these temptations.

1. *Our young men are tempted to rush into large cities for employment.*

It would be incredible could we know the draft which a great city makes annually upon the country, in order to keep its population from diminishing. Not a steam-boat reaches the wharf, nor a rail-road car the depot, without bringing a great number of inexperienced youth,—who have come to the great city to seek their fortune. They may or may not have employment engaged. But others have come—the poor lads—who reached the city years ago without a dollar in their pockets, and are now rolling in wealth,—and why should it not be so with them? They forget that out of one hundred who thus rush to the city for mammon, only *three* succeed—while the ninety-seven sink down under the waves and are forgotten. Or, if they think of this, it would seem that their eagerness is in proportion to their hazard. It becomes a kind of lottery,

and though the prizes are but few, yet they are so splendid that they dazzle the eye of the young. And then there is something so bewitching and so exciting in the race—that were there no prizes, I can hardly believe it would greatly alter their feelings. What a spectacle is a great city to a young man! (I can well recollect,—though no language could describe—my emotions when, as I had just entered my teens—I reached the great city at candle-lighting in the evening—the city of which I had heard and thought so much—where I expected to spend my life in seeking this world! I can well recollect standing on a neighboring hill and looking down upon the long line of lamps that hung upon the various bridges, and in the streets,—the colored lights that hung in the shop windows, and then heard that indescribable hum which a busy city sends out at the close of a busy day. Tears of ecstasy started in my eyes, and had I been transported to the evening planet, I doubt whether my emotions had been deeper or more thrilling. Alas! how little did I know what a city meant—what aching of heart unalleviated

by sympathy,—what temptations which youth can hardly resist—what tears of bitterness I was destined to shed within the precincts of a great city !] The moment the inexperienced youth sets his foot on the side-walk of the city, he is marked and watched by eyes that he never dreamed of. The boy who cries his penny-paper, and the old woman at her table professedly selling a few apples and a little ginger-bread, are not all who watch him. (There is the seducer in the shape of the young man who came before him, and who has already lost the last remains of shame.) There is the hardened pander to vice who has as little remorse at the ruin of innocence as the alligator has in crushing the bones of the infant that is thrown into his jaws from the banks of the Ganges: and there is she—who was once the pride and hope of her parents—who now makes war upon virtue and exults in being a successful recruiting officer of hell! Surrounded by these he must be—tempted by these he will be—thrown upon whatever principle he may have, he will be—but Oh! I do not begin to describe the sources from which temptations

come, nor the overpowering strength with which they come. Let all praise be given to those who resist, and stand firm and unscathed amid these fires; but few are aware how few their number is compared with those who are consumed.) Even if you escape all these, there is a hardening of the sensibilities and of the heart amid the multiplicity of new objects and the constant succession of new excitements, which is any thing but healthful to the soul. In Paris just aside from the great thoroughfares, is an old, gloomy, solitary building. They call it the Morgue. It is the place to which the bodies of those who have committed suicide or met with sudden death are conveyed. There they are stripped and laid upon marble slabs in a glass room, in a dismal row, for friends to come and recognize; and there a stream of men and women—a living tide is seen to flow day after day. The house is thronged and the rooms crowded to suffocation! They are those who go as they would go to a theatre—to see the dead—to see the grief of friends—to feel a new thrill of excitement! They have worn out all the usual aliments of excitement, and

here they come to feed the morbid appetite ! This is not unnatural. The same process is going on continually—though unknown—with all who live in the crowded streets of the great city. And there the young man wants to go. He feels uneasy in growing up in the ungenteel garb of the country—forgetting that a tailor can never make him a man. He feels uneasy to think of the slow gains which he must expect where he is—forgetting that it is not what a man receives—but what he spends, that decides the question whether he is to be a rich man or a poor man. There he wants to go—for there Mammon has his costliest temples and his shrewdest priests and his most numerous and devoted worshippers—forgetting that health must be left behind, or at most, that it can stay there but a short time—for it is found that rabbits shut up in the same proportion and with the same degree of confinement, must die in a few months. Oh ! if you knew the dangers, the troubles, the sorrows, the haggard cares that must be yours, if you succeed in a great city—how much you must certainly sacrifice and how little certainly gain,

you would not have the temptation to leave your home, and the country which God made for man, and bury yourself in the great city.

Do refinement and luxury make the great city their peculiar dwelling place? I beg you to consider for a moment how nearly related are "high living" and "mean thinking." It is vastly easier to be nice in your person than in your mind. The appearance of wealth and splendor, the luxuries of the table and the niceties of cooking, are all compatible with an intellect that is poor and mean. You will see the saloons and parlors thronged by gormands; who in their hearts despise the vulgar and illiterate minds of those who pamper them, and who have no other possible claim to respect. How often have I seen the young man whose clothes were of the finest quality, made by the most fashionable tailor, admitted where the cooking was of the nicest zest, because his outside was fair, but whose reading was of the most frivolous kind, or of the lowest possible vulgarity. In the enjoyment of what gratifies the animal taste, he was an epicure—but the dirtiest pig in the gutters was pure and clean compared with his mind,)

—for the pig will eat the good and the nice, as well as the bad and the filthy, but his mind will feed only on intellectual carrion. If you could see the minds of many whose persons are so neat and trim, and who know how to enjoy the highest animal luxuries, what deformities, nakedness, poverty, emptiness and desolations would you see! What dwarfs in bodies six feet high—what lepers in clean cases, what garnished sepulchres containing rottenness! The beggar in the street is to be envied before him; for the beggar has some of the last shreds of shame left, and he knows he is not in an enviable situation; but this intellectual pauper takes upon himself airs, and feels that he is superior to others, appropriating all that is good to himself! We would do well to calculate how much of himself is made by the tailor and the cook—to turn himself inside out and see the vile and empty chambers of his soul, and then put on the airs.

(This desire to be genteel—which usually means, to enjoy a nice covering for the body and nice food for the stomach, constitutes a powerful temptation for the young man. I

know not but I ought to have made a separate head for it. It is by no means uncommon now to see a young man with a fifty-dollar bosom-piece stuck in the nicest linen bosom, with the rest of his dress corresponding, whose parents are denying themselves the very comforts of life to furnish him these things, or whose employer is robbed for this purpose, and whose intellect and heart, are most certainly robbed—for they are both starving. At no period of the world could food for the intellect and the heart be obtained so readily, and at no period perhaps, has the mind been so contented with garbage, while the body receives the most unbroken attention. I have seen too many nice coats, rich cloaks, heavy gold chains, sparkling diamonds, oyster-suppers, and heard too much of the small talk, and frivolous talk which accompany such follies, not to know their power over the young, and their dreadful consequences. Let me assure you that the man who has benevolence in his heart towards his fellow-man, is a polite man. Benevolence cannot be otherwise than polite, and intellectual worth will sooner or later be appreciated, whatever may be the

garb of the outward man. I have often been amused on entering a stage crowded with passengers. At first, the spruce, nice young man, who looks as if he had just come from the milliner's band-box, usurps all the conversation. He is easy, flippant, and has small change by the handful. That plain looking man in the front corner says nothing. You would think him a child sitting at the feet of wisdom. After a while some subject that is grave, that requires thought and information is started. The young man discharges a pop-gun and is silent. Now your plain man speaks and draws out the hidden stores of his mind, his reading, his classified facts, and throws a broad and a mellow light over the whole subject. The company say nothing; but they instinctively give him the first place after that, and if the young man had been annihilated, he could hardly be less the subject of attention.

2. *Young men are tempted to waste time, enfeeble the intellect and corrupt the heart, by light, foolish and improper reading.*

{ Some learn to smoke, because they feel it to be awkward not to be able to discuss the

flavor of a cigar; and for the same reason, many feel that they must wade through the light, trashy, puerile and foolish stuff which the press so plentifully scatters at this day. They begin to read for the purpose of having the material for small talk. Shortly they begin to love the ideal world into which they can so easily step. The monstrosities of character, and the utter incongruity and impossibility of characters and events, are so covered up by the dust which the speed of the reader creates, that he is not shocked. The imagination soon becomes so morbid, that it cannot endure plain truth, real characters, and possible virtues. Then another class of these writers takes him into a different world. Men are demons; and carnage and blood are their element. Such fightings, such battles, such deep passions, such streams of blood, nobody ever saw before: and the young reader soon becomes like the Spaniard who has once eaten blood-pudding—all other dishes are tame after that. In any age but this, such writers would each be an anomaly; in any other age, it would seem to be out of the bounds of possibility, that highwaymen and

pirates, and buccanneers could be dressed up and made to pass in the society of the most refined and genteel. To say nothing about the time wasted over these more than foolish writings—a volume of which, can be had for a shilling,—how is it possible for you to have the imagery of blood and carnage, and thieves and out-laws, filling your imagination, without having the soul defiled and chilled by the dark shadows which they cast? It is about twenty years since the flood-gates of fiction and extravagance were raised and every year since has the stream been increasing, and every year growing more and more foul and turbid. I shall have occasion to give further hints on this subject when I come to speak of reading. But I would like to have you now pause a moment, and see, if among all your acquaintance you can recollect one, of either sex, whom you think has been benefited in any degree by these writings.

And what shall I say here of another species of books which the young man is tempted to read—books, the very names of which would spread a blush over your face? Tell me not that I am speaking of things imagina-

ry. Have you ever seen the young man who has passed through boyhood and not had one of these awful books put into his hands? Happy youth—who has escaped! Oh! how many have groaned here on earth and in the pit beyond the earth—over the poison and ruin inbibed from this source! The leprosy of hell fills the imagination, and eats into the soul, cankers every feeling of the heart, and prepares you to walk this life under a sense of self-degradation, compared with which the mark on the brow of Cain would be nothing. If the supposition be possible that you have never read one of these books, I do beseech you never to do it,—and I ask it by all that is pure, and lovely in the human heart—and by all that is blessed in hope. If you *have* read them—and you will never probably sink so low as to own it if you have—I entreat you forget it, forget it; and whenever the thoughts turn that way, at once start upon your feet and put yourself a doing something that will otherwise occupy your thoughts.

3. *Young men are strongly tempted by bad company.*

Were depraved hearts confined to the ill-

formed, misshapen, and the uncouth,—was there any thing in the outward appearance which would repel, we should not need to guard so closely. But the serpents that charm with the most powerful fascination, are those whose colors are the most gorgeous. Probably more young men are ruined by bad company than by all other causes combined. We cannot tell how it should be so that any disease—whether pertaining to mind or body should be propagated so easily. But we know that a single diseased sheep will ruin a whole flock—if not removed—that a single decayed apple, will ruin all that the barrel contains,—and that a single vile young man, is able to corrupt a large circle. Among those who delight to destroy the unwary, are those of high mental qualifications, of pleasing address, and of enticing manners. It is in the very nature of youth to be confiding,—to desire intimacies and to give the heart to proffered friends. So strong is this desire, that the young man who would be very careful in selecting a horse, a dog, a gun, or even a penknife, will not hesitate to take up acquaintances and even friendships, without any

inquiry, and without any examination. Real worth of character is very slow in bestowing its confidence and friendship. It is slow in selecting its intimates; and therefore, you may know that the stranger who is so very ready to stretch out his hand to you, and to give you his confidence, and become your warm friend without knowing who or what you are,—is not likely to be the friend you need. “Evil communications corrupt good manners,” and you will find it vastly more easy to sail down stream than up. (Those who boast of their freedom from parental restraints,—who talk flippantly of the quality of a cigar,—who now and then drop the profane oath,—who are not delicate in their language or their allusions,) and who now and then hint that they have cast off Bible-notions and are sceptical or infidel in principle, are the companions of all others whom you should shun. You might as well take pitch into your bosom, and expect to be undefiled. The enticer will court your acquaintance, will take you, at his own expense, to the confectioner’s, then to the beer-shop, and the oyster-cellar. By degrees he leads you on till you find yourself

in the billiard-room, then in the theatre, and probably next entering the door of her whose house is the gate-way of hell. In all this progress there is nothing violent. You pass by easy and natural stages. But when you have once given your hand to such an one, you are as surely his victim as is the fly when he enters the meshes of the spider, and which seem so very thin that he thinks he can break through them in a moment. (Alas! a man may much more easily carry off the gates of Gaza, than break away from the allurements of bad company.) Multitudes have mourned with inexpressible bitterness over their situation, when they found themselves within the coils of the serpent; but it was then too late. They must go on—consume their small means to keep the name of being generous, then borrow, then defraud their employers, till shame is gone and the prospects of an honorable life are crushed forever.

There is not in the wide world an object so interesting as the modest, the virtuous and the honorable young man;—we may admire the virtue, and the helpless, confiding, and pure beauty of the other sex;—but we know God

has ordained that if woman be weak, she shall be protected, and not exposed to the rude, rough and violent storms of the world:—but the young man, we know, has them all to buffet—all to meet, and all to break over him, while with the spirit of man, he neither flinches nor bends. We know his bark must be tossed on the ocean of life, and that the waves must swell and the winds must roar, and the storms must break, and he must stand unmoved at the helm, while his bark holds on her way, like the white bird of the stormy ocean. (And if he be what he ought to be, he need never fear but he will have enough to cheer him and encourage him and befriend him: he need not go to the vile, or to the light and frivolous for society or for friends.) There are hands enough that will readily be extended to aid him. Why, then, place yourself among those who have no character, and allow yourself to be seen in the company of those whom you know to be worthless? Few, very few escape, in some part of their youth, being led away; but in after years they have deep mourning over the time wasted, the habits and tastes formed, the imagination irretrievably polluted, and the

heart awfully corrupted. If I could persuade you, my reader, to shun bad company as you would the poison that destroys even by contact,—to be more careful of your company than of almost anything else, I should rejoice. If you select a bad book, you may conceal it, and it will not injure your character openly at once, because you will take care not to be seen in its company. It will not follow you and come to you whether you will or not. But your companions who are vile, will not only corrupt you like the book, but they will follow you and seek you, and compel you to blush at being seen in their company. The profane or obscene book will do its work of poisoning slowly; but the vile associate disgraces you and sinks you in the eyes of others while doing his work. Depend upon it, the old proverb is so true—"a man is known by the company he keeps"—that you will be ranked with the lowest character among your associates.

I should be held inexcusable were I to omit to mention the temptation of young men to use intoxicating drinks. The appetite for these drinks is not one of nature's planting.

Hence the infant must have his pass through the milk of his mother; the child must have his highly sweetened: the young man must have his disguised by herbs, acids, sweet and bitter ingredients and new combinations, till his original taste is destroyed and a new one created. Hence, too, it is in the excitement of companionship, in the hilarity of company that he begins to learn the power, and love the excitement of the cup. He hates to be considered eccentric, or bigoted, or unwilling to do his part towards what is manly and fashionable. Here the taste is created and the habits are formed, so that by and by you will take it when nothing but the desire of excitement can tempt you. The catalogue of sorrow and wo would be too long, were I to-attempt to tell what these drinks have done in every neighborhood in this land. Scarcely will you find a family which has not had some of its branches, if not the trunk itself, scathed. It is comparatively easy to resist the very beginnings of evil. You may in a moment put forth the hand and pull up a troublesome weed,—but if you let it grow, it may, in two generations, overspread a continent. There

is no safety for you but in total, entire abstinence from all that can intoxicate. All my observation and experience go to prove this, and I should feel very little confidence in the safety of the young man who, at this day, refuses to nail his colors to the mast, and wage the warfare of life, as a cold water champion. He who cannot follow the path of life, with all the bright hopes which God has hung over him, without these artificial stimulants, is most surely destined by his own folly, to become a miserable being. I do beseech my young friends to shun the cup as the deadliest foe, and the most specious poison that the earth ever saw. And if I could make my voice heard by the mothers in the land, I would say, how can you expect that we, your sons, should not love the intoxicating cup, when you mingle strong drinks with the milk of infancy, when you set it before us on occasions when you wish to shew yourselves peculiarly polite,—and when you mingle it with your cakes and pies and make us eat it, and associate it with the choicest luxuries which a mother's hand can prepare! Is this the way to rear up virtuous sons?

4. *Young men are tempted to indulge in the reveries of imagination.*

In no period of life are the appetites so strong and the relish so keen, as when we are young; and it is then too, that the imagination plays us all manner of tricks, and commences a system of domestic tyranny which is to last through life. It is a beautiful mirror in which are imaged forth what is most pure and beautiful in all the works of God, or it may become the vilest place on earth. It is there that the unholy and the impure thought is turned over and over a thousand times—just as a room filled with a thousand mirrors standing in different positions would reflect a vile object, by multiplying it a thousand times. I doubt whether all the faculties of the mind put together afford the great tempter so fair an opportunity to debase, defile, enslave, and ruin the soul, as does the faculty of the imagination.

Even in business, where one would think it harmless, it must be kept in strict subjection, or you are unfitted to succeed. A young man in setting out in business may be neither a simpleton nor an ignoramus. He may have

an honest heart, and yet if the imagination is suffered to hold the reins, he will certainly build castles in the air, which are as baseless as the element in which he builds them. He must begin on a large scale. He takes his stock on credit. He calculates how great his profits are, thinks he can turn his capital over at least six or eight times a year, and is at once rich in the prospect. He must, of course, increase his expenses in proportion to his income; but alas! more ships sink by having a worm-hole in them, than by having a cannon ball pass through them. Such a man may lose neither by fire, nor water, nor by bad debts, and yet he will grow poorer every year. He tries new schemes, and is very sanguine that he must now succeed; but there is too much sail for his boat and she must swamp. Multitudes are ruined in their worldly concerns and kept poor all their days, by having the imagination predominate, and living upon what they *suppose* will be their income by and by. They are led into perpetual slavery by having the imagination predominate over reason and judgment.

But this is a small evil, and this is inco-

cence itself, compared with having the imagination become the habitation of unclean spirits. An habitual permission of the imagination to go where it will, always leads to this. Other mistakes may be corrected—other misfortunes may be recovered from,—other sins of youth may be out-lived and out-grown; but when once you have the beautiful chambers of the imagination stained and soiled and polluted, there is no recovery. Tears will not purify them. Care and pains-taking will not do it. Mingling with the virtuous and the good, will not do it. The fountain is so corrupted, that no salt cast into it will cause the waters to be pure. Of all the living reptiles that can gnaw and creep in the heart of man, none are so terrible as this. Age will not bring relief. It would seem as if the spirit itself within, was blighted;—and you may leave youth and manhood far behind and totter on the staff of old age, and the leprosy acquired in youth, will hang upon you still. Oh! remember to shut the eye, the ear, the heart against the very first approach of what corrupts the imagination. I cannot speak on this subject as I would like to do;—but if I

mistake not, you will often see the time when you will feel that it would be easy to meet all other temptations and conquer all other sins, if this might only be removed.

I ought to give one word of warning also against what is usually denominated *castle-building*. It is so much easier to sit down and imagine ourselves great, wise, distinguished, rich, or useful, than it is to gain either of these by persevering efforts, that the temptation to indulgence is very strong. In a few minutes we may so intoxicate the imagination that we fancy ourselves in positions which it would require years of effort to reach,—and which perhaps are forever beyond our reach. The effects are, to waste, in dreaming, the time which might be profitably employed; to weaken the mind by committing it to the direction of fancy,—to indispose the soul to effort and labor, and to make the heart dissatisfied with the realities of life.

5. *Young men are tempted to refuse to walk in the path of duty promptly, when that path is difficult.*

It is no trial of virtue to follow the path of duty when all is in accordance with our in-

clinations. But we cannot be virtuous without constant self-denial. A thousand times will you be solicited to go here and there and to do this and that, when you lose ground unless you have the firmness to say no. A thousand times will indolence plead with you to omit doing this and that, and excuses and apologies will voluntarily present themselves, while duty puts in her plea, and to whom you must say *yes*, or you lose ground. The temptation is sometimes very sudden. You must be prepared for what is sudden. It will be very strong; you must promptly meet it. Set it down as a fixed principle which you may lay up for any emergency, that the path of duty, is always the path of safety. Joseph found it so. David found it so. Daniel found it so; and so will you find it. However sudden or strong the temptation to do wrong, do not yield. A brief story with which I have somewhere met, will clearly illustrate what I mean.

Many years ago, said a lady in England, a youth was brought before my grandfather for stealing sheep. It was his first known crime, but the proof was positive against him. My

grandfather was a magistrate, and while he was making out the committal, the Bailiffs shut him up in his back yard, which was surrounded by a high wall, with only one door, and which was safely locked. The prisoner sat down on a stone, placed his head between his knees and wept bitterly. My father, who was then a little boy, was awed and subdued by the eloquence of grief. Creeping timidly up to the criminal, he enquired why he cried? The unhappy young man told him the cause. The Bailiffs were about to take him to prison: and it might result in his being hanged. "Why don't you run away from them?" said the little boy. The prisoner pointed to the high walls and the locked door. "I will let you out," replied the child. In the utmost simplicity of his heart he ran in, took the key from the table upon which the magistrate was making out the committal, unlocked the door, and the young man just stopped long enough to bless him and bounded off. When the officers came to carry off their prisoner he was far beyond their reach.

The child grew up to manhood, inherited his father's estate and honors, and himself be-

came a magistrate. Nineteen years after the event, and when it had nearly been forgotten, he had occasion to go to a neighboring city in great haste to prevent a note from being dishonored. It was night before he reached the town, and for miles before he reached it, he had to pass through a region infested by a gang of desperate out-laws. But he felt compelled to push on, though he had much money about his person, and he knew that his life was endangered. When within about five miles of the end of his journey, he was stopped by a foot-pad who presented a pistol at his breast and demanded his money. He frankly told the out-law his circumstances, and that to lose his money would be his ruin. *But this was not his business.* After the robbery was completed, the out-law in the light of the moon gazed earnestly at the face of the gentleman and demanded his name. Now was the trying moment. He was a magistrate, and from the earnest look of the robber he concluded that he had been cited before him. "If I tell my name," thought he, "I shall probably lose my life. If I do not tell it I may go into eternity with a lie upon my

lips. I shall place myself without the protecting care of God. No, I will not die with a lie upon my tongue." "My name is *Spread*." The robber then asked him if he recollected the deed of his having unlocked the door of the prison yard some nineteen years ago? It was recalled. "Well, I am that man." He then restored the money to my father, and not only let him go, but forced him to take enough to meet his engagement, and himself accompanied him till through the region of robbers, walking by his side. They passed five others who would have intercepted him, had he not been thus protected. My father earnestly entreated him to leave his present mode of life, and received many solemn promises to that effect.

It is not needful to follow the story further. The point I wish to illustrate is this: that the path of duty is always the path of safety; and that whenever we leave that path, we cease to be able to claim the promise, "I will give my angels charge over thee: and they shall keep thee in all thy ways." You have no vision that can pierce through the clouds which hang over the future; you

cannot say that any event will prove a blessing or a curse. *You cannot calculate the chances or the results of what you do, and you are mad indeed, to throw yourself without the protecting care of Heaven. Let the path of duty be ever so narrow, let it be ever so rugged—ever so difficult to follow, you must not swerve from that path. Worldly motives, sensual pleasures, evil temper, timid fears, sanguine hopes may tempt you to leave this path; but you tempt your eternal destiny by so doing. Duty and truthfulness and holiness are God's appointed path; and if you refuse or neglect these, you walk in your own light and under the frown of Heaven. You may be called a fool, you may have to walk through the arid desert, or even through the fiery furnace;—you may suffer the loss of professed friends, and lose opportunities to enrich yourself; but He who made the path of duty the path of safety, will carry you through, give you peace of conscience, the smiles of his face, and ultimately the respect and honor of your fellow men, and his own eternal rewards. Satan might have been the highest angel in heaven when he seduced the rest to*

follow him, promising to shelter them under his wings if they came to evil by leaving the path of duty ; but they have been taught that the eternal condition of creatures must turn upon the approbation, or the disapprobation of God. Snares are constantly besetting your path, and you cannot, by fixing your eyes on the ground, and exploring by the lamp which you carry in your own hand, make yourself safe. Light must ever come from above ; and you in vain look elsewhere for safety.

No pain-taking of parents, no watchings over your childhood, no home education, can prevent the young man from meeting with temptations. Come they will and must, sooner or later. There is no hiding-place where they will not find you. There is no unfrequented path which you can tread, where you will not meet them ; but remember that if you are faithful to yourself, they will never be greater than you can bear, and overcome. You must gird yourself to swim manfully,—to rise over the buffeting of the waves, not fearing but you will have strength according to your day, if you look for it where strength can alone be found.

CHAPTER V.

HABITS.

CONTENTS.—Why his Maker has put man under the control of Habits—easily and early formed—their power—their constant action—their unfelt control—power in old age—the mania—shame of a bad habit—pleasure of a good one. First habit: early rising—proper allowance of time for sleep—Cobbett's testimony—luxury of early rising. Second habit: viz. of system in every thing—ambition of doing things quick—is a misfortune. English system of charity. System of John Jay—Jeremiah Evarts—the porcelain state. Third habit: finish what you begin—the curse of want of perseverance—the farm—the shop. Fourth habit: continued self-improvement—how to go about it—even if long neglected—Sir William Jones. Fifth habit: punctuality—importance of little things—punctuality in fulfilling promises—in paying debts. Sixth habit: regard to truth—great stories—boasting. Seventh: gentlemanly habits—what constitutes the gentleman—Dean Swift and Faulkner—use of tobacco—politeness—good humor. Eighth: habit of procrastination—evil and shame of this habit—ruins the soul.

MAN is designed by his Maker to be constantly in action, and that too under an unceasing accountability for every action. To

govern him, he has conscience; but lest these should be too late when temptations come suddenly, or lest a constant recurrence to them should impair their strength, we have a third aid—and a very powerful one it is. Dr. Paley tells us that men are governed by habit in nine cases out of ten in all that they do. Without deciding how exact this arithmetical calculation may be, we are sure that this power is immensely great. When habits have been long upon us, we call them second nature, and find it impossible to say what was originally nature, and what habit. These are formed at any and at all periods of life, but especially when we are young. They pertain to the body and to the mind. The infant may speedily be brought under their power, and the old man is fettered by them. We talk about principles and conscience—and they are of unspeakable importance—but the value of one good habit acquired in early life, and the evils of one bad habit are also of immeasurable importance. When you see a child indulging a habit of cruelty, you rightly expect he will be a bad hearted man. If you had known that Benedict Arnold was

in the habit of torturing birds, and children in his youth, and even his widowed mother till she went to the grave with a broken heart, you would not have been surprised to learn that in manhood he had the heart of a traitor. *Principle and conscience may be more benumbed at sometimes than at others; but habit is always acting.* The former may be compared to electricity which now and then darts out light and fire and startles you; the latter, is like gravitation—in that its power is never for a moment suspended.

To call up reason and conscience every time you act, to decide whether you shall do this or that, is like going to hunt up a suitable garment every time you go out. How much better to have a garment on with which you can go out without ever thinking of your clothing! Bad habits, acquired in early life, are not only always with you and all you have is *theirs*, but *they always mortify you by their tyranny.* On the other hand, there is a delightful feeling connected with being under the control of good habits. They sit easy. You are never ashamed of them. If you are tempted, they will check you and hold you

back. If you are weak, they will strengthen you. They are always at work, but you never feel any iron in their chains. Even when old age enfeebles the man so that he cannot reason, or when reason is dethroned, habits still prevail. I have known one, who, for half a century was a maniac, but who in her childhood formed the habit of keeping the Sabbath and of reading the Scriptures,—and never did the Sabbath return in all that dreary course, without her being quiet and subdued on that day, or without her sitting down to read the Scriptures as in her childhood.

To borrow a thought which I believe is in Dr. South's writings—Providence has so ordered events and the course of things, that there is no action which is useful, and which is therefore a duty, and which may ever become a profession, but a man can bear the continual pursuit of it, and the perpetual recurrence of it, without loathing or satiety. Can any custom make a bad habit pleasant? *Let a man give himself up to debauch, and low sensual enjoyments, and can any habit or repetition make them pleasant to him?* On the contrary, you will see a man who entered

the industrious shop in his youth, go into that shop every morning as long as he lives, with cheerfulness and pleasure. He will, to old age, rise fresh and go to his bench or his anvil, and pass the day in singing. His shop is his element, and he is not only happy in it, but uneasy out of it. God has thus woven choice flowers among the very toils of life, and so arranged things, that the purest water may be filtered from the blackest charcoal.

While a small volume might be most usefully filled up with suggestions in regard to habits, I must condense all I have to say in a single chapter. I shall therefore, only mention a few of the habits on which I must insist, as essential to the usefulness and happiness of life—and which must be formed by the young man very early.

1. I place *early rising* among the very first.

Few things depend more upon the habits in which we allow ourselves than the time spent in sleep. If Buonaparte could so habituate himself to labor that he required but *four hours of sleep* out of the twenty-four, others can so educate the system that ten and

even twelve hours will hardly satisfy them. No physician will tell you that you need over six or seven hours of sleep. Your own experience, if you take the trouble to observe, will teach you the same thing. The only possible reason, then, for not rising early, is indolence. I am aware that custom has assigned the evening to social intercourse, to seeing friends, and to the student, this portion of his time as the time for study. But I am *perfectly satisfied that any man, whether farmer, mechanic, or student, who would habituate himself to early rest, and early rising, would be decidedly a gainer by the habit.* The old English hour of going to rest used to be eight o'clock, and rising at three or four. One of the most remarkable men of our generation—a self-made man, and one who has accomplished more than many would dare dream of in imagination—Cobbett,—tells us that this has been his habit through life. He says that more than half of his immense labors have been accomplished before ten o'clock in the morning. Suppose you could have eight hours a day for ten years for mental improvement. Would you not esteem this

a liberal allowance? But if you arise at five o'clock, instead of seven, and thus save the two hours daily, in forty years you gain the ten years of time, counting eight hours each day! You thus add ten years to life. What would be the use of rest by sleep, if it were not that we are refreshed by it, so that we can do any thing with more vigor in the morning than at any other part of the day? Any man knows, who has ever made the experiment, how much more we can do, and how much easier we can accomplish it, when we can drive our work before us, and when we feel, what Walter Scott calls the neck of the day's work to be broken before breakfast. Then there is a joyousness, a freshness, a purity and an elasticity to the morning air, wholly unlike that of evening. The mind is clearer,—the thoughts are more free,—the feelings more buoyant, and the whole man seems bathed in a new element. Did you never see the time, when on some particular occasion, you left your room very early, and soon found yourself as fresh as the morning, and then wondered at the stupidity and the

sloth which were holding the sleepers so soundly upon their pillows? Did you never experience a glow of health and a quickening in the circulation of your blood, as you stood and watched the dawn? Wisely did John Wesley resolve when young, that he would rise with the dawn—would rise so early that he should sleep unconsciously through the following night. Once form the habit of rising early, and the work is done for life. Very few young men will find any difficulty in thus saving at least two hours every morning for mental cultivation. Let your occupation be what it may, you may press these hours into your service and make them the most pleasant and profitable of any in the whole twenty-four. There is a consciousness of thrift, and self-command, and economy and energy in the habitual early riser, which is unknown and unconceived of by him who retires and rises late. At first you may find it irksome, and tedious; but not after a little faithful perseverance. Could I persuade you now to form this habit, and should you live to be fifty years of age, I have no doubt you

would say that it has been at least a thousand dollars in property to you, and a very great addition to your happiness and usefulness.

2. *Form habits of SYSTEM, in every thing.*

In the regular return of the seasons, of day and of night, our Creator has not only given us the opportunity to be systematical in all our plans and duties, but has most decidedly intimated that this is the desirable course. And in practice, there is a beauty and an ease accompanying it which are peculiar. The man who has system will accomplish more, by far, whatever may be his business; and he will do it with an ease and a pleasure to himself, which are astonishingly great. I very much doubt whether any man ever accomplishes much, or can do any great things for himself or others, who is not systematical. With many it is thought that this is an old-fashioned way of doing things; and of few acquisitions are young men apt to be so vain as to say that they can do a thing quick. The farmer can go over such a field so quick, and the mechanic can slip up a house so quick! I can only say that if any one who has this talent, does a thing as it ought to be done, it

is because it is accidental, or because he cannot from the very nature of the business, do it otherwise than well. I can say, too, that when a man has acquired the power of great dispatch in business, he may have acquired a great misfortune. I would a thousand-fold prefer to have the power of systematical and continuous labor. How often do you hear it said of a man, that he dispatches business rapidly,—what a pity he cannot do it thoroughly! Such a student has the faculty of dispatching more in a given time, than any one in the region, what a pity that he who writes so easily, cannot write better! When I hear that a man can plough an acre in a half day, I know his harvest will be in proportion; that a mechanic made such an article so quick, I am careful not to purchase that article: and when I hear a clergyman say he can write a whole sermon after dinner, I do not hesitate to tell him he ought to burn it before tea. And if there is any misfortune over which I have deeply to mourn, it is the habit which I acquired when very young, of dispatching business too quickly. It is not to be confounded with promptness, or punctuali-

ty. It is the fox running the race with the tortoise. He runs fast while he does run, but knowing his power, he sleeps and plays on the way, while the slow, steady tortoise holds on his way and gains the victory. The feeblest one can accomplish much, if he be systematical. "The ants are a people not strong, but they lay up food in summer." The charities in England for the spreading of the Gospel are annually about three millions of dollars. In this country, with about the same population, ours are but half a million. How do we account for the difference? Are they richer than we? No, for almost the whole of this comes from the poor. Are they more devoted than we? We do not allow it. But the secret is that they work by system. Every Monday morning the collector calls in his small district and gathers a penny from each family. Take a single example. A poor seamstress was appointed to collect for the Bible cause. Her district was so poor that almost every room in every house, from the garret to the cellar, contained one family. She soon had an hundred subscribers at a penny a week. This amounted

to over ninety-six dollars a year! Among the men whose names will long be dear to our country, that of John Jay will ever stand high. He was a great man, in every sense of the word. But there were two secrets which account for his great labors and great success. He had system in every thing. He rose very early and had his plans for the day before him. At nine o'clock in the evening his day's work was over; and let who might be there, at that hour, family worship was always attended; and at that hour he usually retired to rest.

Among the recollections of my boyhood, those connected with Jeremiah Evarts, are among the most pleasant. I spent some years in his family—his mother and my father being sister and brother. If I have ever accomplished any thing, it is owing to the example of that man. I seem now to see his thin, mild form seated at his writing desk long before light. At a particular moment I knew he would rise, at a particular moment I knew he would be brushing his teeth, and at an exact moment I knew I should hear the rapid scratching of his pen.

4. *Form the habit of continued self improvement.*

I might here give a long and wonderful catalogue of self-made men—men who have accomplished wonders in their day; but I presume their names, from that of Ferguson to our own Bowditch, are familiar to you. Thoughts, like money, will accumulate wonderfully, if you keep all; but like money too, they will not remain with you without great care. How many thoughts have you heard in conversation, and seen in books, or heard from public speakers, which would be of great value to you, if you could only make them your own, by classifying and retaining them. When I come to speak of reading, I shall point out to you the sources of knowledge. I would now only say that you must *think* yourself; you must *recol* thoughts that you have met with,—you must read, and you must converse with those who have mind and thought.

I have often had young men, such as clerks, and apprentices come to me and say, in substance as follows; “Sir, I had very poor advantages for education when I was

a boy. My mother was a widow and poor. I now find myself growing up, ignorant and uneducated, and begin to feel my deficiencies. I need improvement. What can I do to aid myself? What course can you put me upon?"

This is not imaginary. I have had young men come more than one or even two hundred miles to converse on their situation. I always try to give them self-confidence and self-respect, and resolution. I then say, —(suppose I am speaking to an apprentice) —you have a little spending money. Take the first dollar, or two dollars if you have them, and fit you up a plain, simple lamp, and lamp-filler, and get your own oil. You will then have the feeling of independence, and your employer will not complain on this point. Next fit you up a plain desk in your room at which you can stand, if possible. Then get your pen, ink, paper, and almost any book. It may be history, or geography. It makes but little difference with what you begin. Now go to rest early, and be up one hour and a half every morning before you are called to go to work. With your pen,

make yourself the master,—completely the master of that book. One hour and a half every morning, standing up, and with your pen in your hand, will make you an intelligent, large-minded, and respectable man. You will do just as much work; you will sleep all that you need, and you will put the mind in a school where these results will certainly follow. Remember that new habits of body, and especially new habits of mind are difficult at first. But perseverance and resolution will overcome old habits and form new ones: and he who makes daily improvement, even though it may be but small, will, in the end, make great advancement. Keep doing with untiring effort, and all your early losses will be made up to you.

Sir William Jones has long been admired as a prodigy for methodical habits, for industry, and for attainments. He was never known to depart from the following simple, but comprehensive rules.

1. Never to neglect *any* opportunity for self-improvement.

2. To believe that whatever others had done, he could do, and that therefore, no real

or supposed difficulties formed any reason why he should not engage in any undertaking with confidence of success.

3. Not to be deterred by any difficulties which *could* be surmounted, from prosecuting to success, and to its termination, any plan which he had once commenced.

These three rules made Sir William,—and followed, will make any man—great.

5. *Form habits of punctuality in every thing.*

We can perform great actions on great occasions, much easier than we can meet and punctually perform little things on *all* occasions. In the former case we are girded up by excitement, sustained by self-complacency, and raised up by the admiration of those whose eyes are upon us. Many would more readily die a martyr at the stake, than give up their wishes in all the little events of life. But remember that the clock which is to do the public good, must not only strike loud and clear and regular when the hour comes round, but every swing of the pendulum must be punctual and exact. We are apt to feel that we may be negligent in little matters, and it

is of no consequence; but life is made up of these little things. Character is made up of them. There is a luxury in being prompt and punctual in every thing, of which those know nothing, who never practice it. I do not mean now, punctuality in eating and sleeping and in habits that respect yourself, but in all things that relate to others. How often do you see a man who will promise to meet you at such an hour, or to do this or that piece of mechanical labor for you, or to bring you such an article which you wish to purchase, when the promise is never kept, and there seems to be the feeling that this is not morally wrong? But it *is* wrong. You have no right to make others wait for you. You have no right to put others to inconvenience by not fulfilling your promise. Doing it sometime, some days or hours afterwards, is not fulfilling your promise. You injure and sour the temper of the man who receives your promise, and you injure yourself more. You contract a habit which will grow upon you, which will destroy your veracity, and which will make you negligent in great matters.

Some have the foolish notion that there is

elevation of mind connected with negligence in small things; but they are sadly mistaken. Does it detract from the greatness of God, that he provides for the wants, feeds, shelters, adorns and watches the minutest creature that lives? Those men with whom I have been acquainted who have been the most remarkable for greatness, have been among the most accurate and punctual in small things. It is hard to form the habit, and you may be afraid it will make you mechanical, or that it will make you stiff and formal in your manners, or that it will be-little you in the eyes of others. No such thing. Punctuality and attention to the little things of life are virtues too valuable to be injurious, and too highly prized to be sneered at by the truly wise. We are very sure that the man who is punctual as to time, and in his attention to little things, will be no less so in greater matters. When once the habit is formed, it will be easy to be punctual in everything. For your own happiness and the happiness of others who will every day and hour be affected by your habits in this respect, I do entreat you to begin, at whatever cost of struggles or

inconveniences to yourself, to form these habits.

Especially let me urge you to be punctual in paying your debts. No matter how small the sum may be, *pay it punctually*. Deny yourself anything, make any sacrifice short of life and honesty, to be prompt and punctual *here*. There is a luxury in paying a debt punctually which is very decided. You feel that you have redeemed your promise; you are once more a free man; you rise in your own estimation; you feel that you have risen in the estimation of your creditor, and you have done something to make a friend of him. If I could influence you as I would, I would say, *if possible*, never run in debt. Owe no man anything; but if this cannot be, get out of debt the first moment possible. A young man should avoid debt as he would the cholera, and bear it in mind that the independence of manhood can never be attained so long as any man can look you in the face and say you owe him. Begin now to make these duties into habits, and God will shortly make them easy; for his wisdom has ordained that what is for our good and for the good of our

fellow men, shall not long be unpleasant to us, if persevered in.

6. *Habituate yourself to the most sacred regard to truth.*

Men sometimes fall or lose their character, which was fair in youth. They may be enticed away by associates, or they may be drawn away by intoxicating drinks. And from these, even after years of declension they can possibly be recovered. But if in addition to all this, you be told that the fallen man never had a regard for truth, the case is hopeless. It implies such a want of moral principle, that we have no hopes of the recovery of such a man. You know how we are tempted to exaggerate, in speaking of the virtues of our friends or the faults of our enemies; how we are tempted in telling a story to make it a good one, by amplifying here and omitting there. I have known men who acquired such a habit of loose speaking in youth, that even after they became men, and ministers of the gospel too, it was very difficult for them to tell the same story twice alike. They did not *intend* to say what was not true; but they seemed to have no moral

perception of truth. I have known men ruin all their influence by telling marvellous stories of what they have seen and done ; and more *bad feelings are created* among men by mis-reporting what professes to be their very words, than in any other way. Indeed the world has reached that pass that we can hardly believe any report about men. It is very unsafe to do so. And as to those marvellous narrations usually known as boastings, the *fewer* you make the better ; for however highly you may enjoy them, others will neither enjoy nor believe them. Truth is like a very sharp instrument from the surgeon's case—you must handle it carefully or you cut yourself. He who habituates himself to tell great stories, will shortly believe them himself, though he is the only one among all his acquaintances who does. You cannot be too cautious, or too anxious on this point—for if you form the habit of disregarding truth, your character and influence are ruined.

7. *Form the habits of a gentleman, while young.*

When I speak of a gentleman I do not mean a man who wears rich broad-cloth, walks

with a gold-headed cane, or lives without manual labor. But I mean one whose dress and address are adapted to his situation, and who, from principle, strives to make every one as happy as he can. Benevolence must lie at the foundation of such a character. If you mistake so widely as to suppose that dress makes any part of a gentleman, or that this character cannot be found in the shop of the blacksmith as well as in the parlor of the richest, you are greatly mistaken. A tailor can make a good coat, but he cannot make you into a gentleman, if you have no other materials except those which he can manufacture. *How many young men take up the notion that the barber and the tailor can make them into gentlemen!* If there be any one spot where the ludicrous and the painful always meet, it is on the person of a young fop,—the poorest imitation that Manhood was ever called upon to disown. All sensible men feel like Dean Swift in regard to it, though few can rebuke it so appropriately. “When George Faulkner, the printer, returned from London, where he had been soliciting subscriptions for his edition of the Dean’s Works,

he went to pay his respects to him, dressed in a laced waistcoat, a bag-wig, and other fopperies. Swift received him with the same ceremonies as if he had been a stranger. "And pray sir," said he, "what are your commands with me?" "I thought it was my duty, sir," replied George, "to wait on you immediately on my arrival from London. "Pray sir, who are you?" "George Faulkner, the printer, sir." "George Faulkner, the printer! why you are the most impudent, bare-faced scoundrel of an impostor I have ever met with! George Faulkner is a plain, sober citizen, and would never trick himself out in lace and other fopperies! Get you gone you rascal, or I will immediately send you to the house of correction!" Away went George as fast as he could, and having changed his dress, he returned to the Deanery, where he was received with the greatest cordiality. "My friend George," says the Dean, "I am glad to see you returned safe from London. Why, here has been an impudent fellow with me just now, dressed in a laced waistcoat, and he would fain pass himself off

for you, but I soon sent him away with a flea in his ear!"

If foppery constitutes no part of a gentleman, slovenliness is no less removed from it. There are very few situations or employments which will not allow you, at least once every day, by a liberal use of soap and water, to appear clean. Even the coal-miners, who spend their days and nights under ground, may usually be seen once a day, clean, and fine looking men. But there is one exception to my remark. There is one man who can never, with propriety, call himself a gentleman. I mean the habitual user of tobacco! You cannot use that poisonous weed without having your breath, your clothes, and the very air that surrounds you, tainted and defiled. If my taste becomes so perverted,—and the supposition is possible,—that I should wish daily to regale myself with asafetida, either by smoking or chewing, I know of no right I have to intrude myself into the society of others, and claim the standing of a gentleman. I would urge you in early life to beware of forming a habit which has not one single thing to recommend it,—which is too often accou-

panied by fetid breath, a filthy person, semi-savage manners, and a dry throat. And as to taking it in the form of snuff,—I think I have *somewhere seen the intimation* that if nature intended the nose for a snuff-box, she made a sad mistake in making the box with the bottom side up!

As to the particular rules which form a polite man, there is only one that you need. Follow that rule closely, and you are a polite man: and that is, *on every occasion, endeavor, from the principle of benevolence, to make all others happy.* Such a heart will make any man a gentleman, and what is called *manners, will take care of themselves.* As a nation we are charged with wanting this politeness. But all may have it, the apprentice at the anvil, the farmer driving his team, as well as the Senator of the nation. Take for your definition that *politeness consists in benevolence in little things,*—and exercise this, and you will have no occasion to feel that you are awkward or unpolished.

There is another quality which some men have born in them,—and which others can acquire only very moderately, by culture—[

mean good humor—a most desirable quality. Some are born with an irascible temperment, and can by no efforts engraff this quality upon their vine. But surely every one can do much to make himself and others happy or miserable, as he looks on the bright or the dark side of things; for everything has both of these sides, even a tear. You will not understand me as recommending low buffoonery, or an everlasting effort at being witty, odd, or peculiar. These are not compatible with respect,—but if you cultivate a disposition to look at the best side of men and things, and to make the best of everything, you will not only find yourself much happier, but you will create happiness all around you. He who is a real gentleman will try to make all with whom he associates, happy, while the imitator of a gentleman is too much taken up in trying to be happy himself, to be so, or to let any body else be so.

8. I have one more habit to urge upon you—and that is *to beware of contracting a habit of procrastinating duties.*

Perhaps there is no habit which is so insidious, and so in accordance with the natural

inclinations of the heart, as the habit of procrastination. We are by nature indolent; and duties are not to be met and performed from the time we rise, till we go to rest, without self-denial, and especially, without overcoming indolence. We will let this duty lay over till to-morrow; we *intend* to have another one performed in season,—but alas! how much is lost in good intentions. You may have an amiable disposition and a kind heart, be full of good resolutions, yet if you have acquired the habit of postponing duties, you have very little prospect of ever accomplishing much. How many golden opportunities are lost,—how many valuable friends are sacrificed,—how many expectations are blasted by this one habit! I know not how many instances I can recall, in which I have been mortified and grieved with myself for having postponed till to-morrow, what I might have done to-day. There is a kindness which you may do a friend,—but more than half the value of all kindnesses depends upon the promptness with which they are done—and yet you put it off till to-morrow. To-morrow comes, and the feeling that you must delay has increased

by indulgence, and so you put it off again and again, till it is too late. You have a letter of introduction as you go into a new place. You delay and delay to deliver it, till you are ashamed to do it. After a while the gentleman to whom it was addressed learns that you had such a letter,—and you have forfeited his esteem, probably forever. In all your way, you are surrounded by neglected duties, which stare you in the face, and seem to hiss upon you like so many serpents. Your thoughts are distracted because you must be in a perpetual hurry,—you must be dissatisfied with yourself because you are constantly wounding yourself, and you are depriving others of the power of having confidence in you. And finally, by the habit of procrastinating duties, you will be likely to put off the more irksome duties of cultivating the mind and subduing the heart. You will be more likely to pass through life, neglecting the highest of all duties,—those which you owe to God, and upon which your eternity is suspended. This result—the most deplorable of all others, will probably be the consummation of the habit; and he who in early life puts off duties be-

cause they were irksome, will be likely at last to find that the loss of his immortal soul is the price which he must pay for his folly.

Multitudes and multitudes will be the cases in which good habits will protect you when exposed to temptation. They will hang around you like angels on golden wings, to keep you from all that is harmful. They will go with you through life—nay—grow stronger and stronger, as we have reason to believe, in that world where they will not be needed as a shield of protection, but where they will still aid in bringing the soul nearer to God and to perfection.

CHAPTER VI.

INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY.

CONTENTS.—Men naturally indolent. The savage. Habits of labor to be formed early. Philosophy of forming them in childhood. How age is affected by them. The voice of mankind. Three Spirits wait on the Industrious—*Health—Cheerfulness—and Independence*. Feeling of New England. Daughters of Clergymen—*noble examples*. Story of the poor Student. Other examples. Remark of Washington. Industry the parent of enterprise. Illustrations—our villages,—whale-men,—the West,—seal hunters,—isles of the ocean,—stages among the mountains of Mexico,—hunters in South Africa,—factories. Industry preferable to dispatch. Much may be accomplished. Illustrations, John Wesley, Matthew Hale. Lawyers—their character and influence. An unfortunate mistake. The Monk. Madame De Stael. William Wick. The extravagance of the age. Economy urged.

Very few will question the fact that man is naturally indolent—"as lazy as he can be." Raise him in affluence so that he is not compelled to labor, and he will not. Find him in the savage state where he can

scarcely live without labor, and he will not toil. In the one case, he will purchase the use of hands and feet rather than use his own. In the other he will almost starve on the most precarious subsistence, rather than submit to regular labor. The Indian hunter will, it is true, now and then watch all night at the deer-lick, or he will all night paddle his noiseless canoe to shoot the deer by torch-light as he comes to the margin of the lake; or he will chase the moose, it may be, two or three days together without resting; but this is only when the necessity of the case compels him and when under high excitement. He will hardly move again till a similar necessity presses him.

He who neglects to form early habits of patient labor in the hope that he will hereafter love it better than he now does, commits a great mistake. There is a wide difference between activity and labor, though frequently confounded. The child loves activity. The boy will run of errands—especially if he may drag a sled or drive a hoop on the way—he will be eager and untiring in chasing his ball, or upon his skates, but put the hoe

into his hand and set him to dress a field of potatoes, and you will soon see that he tires and loathes it. The moment he becomes sensible of fatigue, labor becomes irksome. No one can ever hope to reason himself into a love of labor. And yet each one may learn to love it, and on one condition—which is—that he acquire the habit when young, and pursue it steadily all the way through life. Most wisely has God so arranged it that the child loves activity,—and is miserable without it. If now, he be wisely trained and have this activity expended in doing what is useful, and the results of which he can plainly see, he will hardly be sensible of fatigue, and ere he is aware, it will become a positive pleasure. The habit must be formed early and pursued unremittingly till it becomes a kind of second nature, and then if idle, you will be unhappy. You have often noticed that old men who have led laborious lives, will continue to be active and do all they can—not from any necessity, but because the habit is so strong that they are uneasy without it. The grandmother as she sits down in the quietness of age, as much needs her knit-

ting-needles to make her happy, as the little children at her feet need their blocks, their scissors and their toys to make them happy. He who has learned to love labor by making it a habit, may lose the freshness of youth, the strength of manhood, and his eyes and his hearing, but so long as he has hands and feet, he will never lack sources of enjoyment.

It is as really the design of Heaven that man should labor, as it is that he should be honest and useful. This is also the opinion of mankind; for all who have made laws, have tried to give the greatest encouragement *so as to have the greatest number employed* in labor; and to refuse to labor, is as really to rebel against the will of God, as if you refused to obey any other command. The assertion that man should gain his bread by the sweat of his brow, was not merely a prediction—it was a command.

There are three noble spirits who dwell in the house of the industrious man. They very seldom fail of affording him their smiles and their approbation. To gain these, the learned would frequently give away all their

learning, and the rich all their wealth. The name of the first is *Health*.

As Infinite Wisdom has seen fit to make labor the condition of man, he has so fortified the body that it cannot long enjoy health without it. It is not that men undervalue health so much that so many are invalids, but because they rebel against the only condition on which health may be enjoyed. Wealth sighs for it, and envies the poor tenant on the corner of his estate. He will pay the physician any amount,—he will have his carriage cushioned in the softest manner,—he will wrap his gouty limbs in the finest fabrics,—he will spread his bed with the choicest down of the swan,—he will load his table with the costliest viands,—he will call for art and science to cook his food, and nurse him. No expense will be spared, or grudged, in order to woo health into his dwelling. But health stands aloof, and had rather sleep out on a rock than toss and tumble on a bed of down. If the rich man would only obey the laws which God has laid down, he might have health. But so long as he refuses to labor, steadily and decidedly, he cannot have this

blessing. We may rebel against this law as much as we please, and draw upon the *freshness of youth, or upon the vigor of manhood* to carry us over this law; but it will be screaming after us, and we must pay a terrible penalty by and by for our folly.

The second spirit to which I referred is Cheerfulness.

Here again men are in rebellion against the designs of Heaven. The smile of politeness and the look of kindness may be found on the countenance of the man who foregoes labor—for he may be a benevolent and good, though a mistaken, man. But that buoyancy of feeling which throws an indescribable *charm and richness over life,—which makes the sunny day more bright and the cloudy day less dark,—which makes difficulties appear few and small,—which makes the voice of hope to ring constantly in the ear,—which removes the lead which hangs on the wings of sorrow as we are pressed under the ills of life, are not his. He sits down to his table without appetite, eats without enjoyment,—walks without feeling elastic,—meets the duties of the day with a clouded brow,—lies*

down at night without fatigue,—sleeps without rest,—awakes without being refreshed, and drags through life without living. “The sleep of the laboring man is sweet whether he eat much or little;” and it may be added, his appetite is keen, and his relish exquisite. I have no doubt that the poor, laboring man has often, over the plainest food, a relish and an enjoyment, that the richest dishes which wealth can procure, cannot afford the indolent. You not only want to live, but to make life pleasant to others, as well as to yourself; you want to enjoy food which it was designed we should enjoy; you want to enjoy the duties of life; but you cannot—you cannot have cheerfulness dwell with you, unless you so acquire the habit of labor that it becomes a positive pleasure. All attempts to shun this condition of happiness are in vain.

The third spirit to which I made allusion is *Independence*.

Under any form of government and in any state of society riches will make to themselves wings and fly away; but in our country it is emphatically so. Property here

must be continually rolling. How few families retain wealth from generation to generation! And of those whom we to-day call wealthy, how few will certainly be so to-morrow!

We really have but little wealth in this country; but that is so universally diffused and so constantly moving, that industry can always command a sufficiency to be independent: but it is no less true that no man can feel that he is independent, unless he acquire the habit of labor. In almost every kind of business in our country, labor is one half, and the materials the other half. In what other spot on the globe is this true? Therefore can no man hold up his head and feel that he is worthy of the respect,—of his generation, or even of his own, who feels above or averse to labor. It is not in human nature to esteem or even patiently to bear with a man who is dependent upon others, because he will not work, and make himself independent by honest industry. I feel an inexpressible delight in saying that in New England, this feeling has hitherto been one of great influence, that it is very rare to find any

one who would willingly be dependent. I can point to more than one daughter of clergymen—the orphan daughters of most respectable men—who are among the operatives of our factories, laboring from twelve to fourteen hours daily, with but fifteen minutes to sit down during all these hours!—Why do they do so? Because they wish to be independent. They first support themselves: then they aid their widowed mothers: and not a few are saving their hard-earned wages that they may educate their young brothers—even to give them a Collegiate education, and fit them for usefulness! Noble spirits! If there be a character on earth whom I would honor, it is such orphan daughters—who—instead of cringing to some wealthy acquaintance, or catching the cast-off clothes of some rich relation,—thus aid themselves and others!

And while we have too many sons who feel that gentility and labor are incompatible, we have not a few who are in no measure behind their sisters in industry and economy. I may literally say that a multitude are now occupying high stations of influence and use-

fulness, who have fought their way up from poverty by industry and personal effort. The following account of one of these—so far from being exaggerated or fictitious, I verily believe falls short of some whose personal history I have myself known. "In paying a visit to ——— College, I was introduced to a young man of peculiarly modest and interesting deportment. I had before learned from the President, that he had traveled an hundred miles on foot to get to College; that he had come there with but seven dollars in his pocket, to defray the expense of a four or five months' term; and that he was one of the first men in the institution as a scholar and a christian. I was prepared, in my interview with him, to witness further developments of his christian self-denial, not unlike those of the more sainted missionary of Palestine, when he trained himself on his daily quart of bread and milk, for the honors of treading in the footsteps of his divine Master on Mount Zion, and of ascending with him from the holy city to the New Jerusalem above. Inquiring of him whether he was associated with some young gentlemen who

were boarding themselves at fifty cents a week, he replied, that he could not afford to pay his proportion of the expense, and therefore boarded alone. I wished to know if he could board himself for less than fifty cents a week. Here my young friend seemed to hesitate and was struggling with emotions too delicate and tender to utter. I told him I wished not to scrutinize his circumstances from motives of curiosity, but for his benefit. "I will tell you," said he, in accents that melted my soul—"how I live. I purchase a bushel of corn meal for twenty cents. I get a loaf baked each week for six cents. I live upon my corn bread and water, and it costs me but twelve and a half cents a week! With this fare I am well contented, if I can prepare myself for usefulness in the vineyard of the Lord; and at the close of the session I doubt not I shall be as healthy as any of my companions." His seven dollars would have carried him independently through the term—he having paid his tuition by teaching writing—were it not that he was now and then taxed with a letter the postage of which was equal to two weeks' board!"

When we can point to many of our most distinguished sons—ministers of the Gospel who fill the most important pulpits—missionaries of the cross who are an honor to their country,—physicians who stand at the head of their profession,—legislators and judges who are *felt the land over*,—farmers, mechanics and merchants who are honoring their several professions, their country and their race—men who have carved their own way, can we help admiring that love of independence which is ours by birthright and which is the inheritance of every man among us, who chooses to be industrious and economical? So long as you can and will earn your living by the honest toil of your own hands, you will never feel dependent, never lack self-respect,—but will feel that you are a blessing to your generation. The immortal Washington well said that any man who has seven acres of good land, may with industry and economy, be independent; and he who has health and the use of his hands, be his employment what it may,—has an equal power of claiming independency.

Industry will inevitably lead to enterprise.

Perhaps there is no trait of character at the present time for which the sons of New England are so much distinguished as for enterprise: and our home-industry lies at its foundation. The stranger who should visit our soil, climb our hills and examine our climate would wonder that men could live here—to say nothing of thrift and taste and wealth. But from childhood we are taught to work—to work diligently, and to work hard. We can send out upon the world annually more in value than any other territory of the same size on earth. We can do more with the same capital and in the same time than any other people: we can do it cheaper, and we can do what others never suppose they can do. One small town will point you to a fleet of seven hundred ships which are chasing the whale wherever he has a home. If you will go to the west, you shall see the forest giving way, and villages, cities and states rising up like magic: if you will go to the isles of the ocean, you shall see the little schooner there from New England, hunting the seal on islands not on any chart, and which have yet to be discovered by other nations: or if you

stop at the fairy isles inhabited by men, you will find our sons there rearing up a nation from the lowest scale of being; if you go to the mountains of Mexico, you will find regular and beautiful coaches running through a country infested by robbers and free-booters: if you go to the wilds of darkened Africa, you shall find those who bury themselves for years in the unhealthy and dangerous forests, that they may catch the full-grown wild beast, tame him, lead him captive and send him home to recruit our menageries. I believe it is Sir James Mackintosh who says, that were a prize to be offered for the best translation of the Greek Bible, and were there not a Yankee in the world who could read Greek, still, he would learn the language and carry off the prize! In the little shop by the side of a small brook,—a shop that hardly takes the notice of the traveler's eye, you may find machinery that seems to be but little short of intelligent, and things manufactured that shall be known over the globe, and whose brand others, of distant countries, will steal.

Let me ask you to remember that patient

industry is far better than the power of great dispatch. He who has the latter quality, will not be likely to be persevering; but to depend upon impulses, fits, and strong resolutions. He will not be so likely to persevere to the end. Keep doing all the time, and though you go apparently slow, yet the amount you will accomplish will be amazingly great. The man who throws away no fragments—who can be said never to lose an hour, is in a most enviable position. Let your plans be laid every morning and reviewed every evening, and be sure and keep yourself fully occupied. It is better to have one thing too much for the day, than one thing too few. What an amount may not diligence and untiring industry accomplish—where no time is wasted—in one short life! Take such a man as John Wesley for example—a man with a constitution by no means iron. His peculiar views, of course, have nothing to do with the point under consideration. For upwards of fifty years he traveled eight thousand miles annually on an average, visiting numerous societies, and presiding at forty-seven annual conferences. For more

than sixty years, it was his constant practice, *to rise at four o'clock in the morning, and nearly the whole of that period to preach every morning at five.* He generally preached near twenty times a week, and frequently four times a day. Notwithstanding this, *very few have written more voluminously than he;—Divinity, both controversial and practical; history, philosophy, medicine, politics, poetry &c. were all, at different times, the subjects on which his pen was employed. Besides this, he found time for reading, corresponding, visiting the sick, and arranging the matters of his numerous society; but such prodigies of labor and exertion would have been impossible had it not been for his inflexible temperance and unexampled economy of time. In the course of his life he preached near forty thousand sermons, and traveled about four hundred thousand miles."*

It is evident that such a man must have had not only a powerful determination to save every fragment of time, but he must have daily laid his plans with great care and executed them with astonishing vigor. What was true of him is true of every man, be his

calling what it may, who accomplishes much that is valuable.

The following short paragraphs on the life of Matthew Hale are so much to the point that I should hardly be excusable were I to omit them. "Much of the success of every man's life depends on his diligence. Any talents, however splendid, will fail of accomplishing much without habits of patient and untiring application. We wish this sentiment, trite as it is, could be impressed on all our young men, who are panting for honorable distinction in future life. We wish to see less reliance placed on genius and other accidental things, and more placed upon what is in every man's own power, a patient and faithful use of the means which God has given him; and particularly, the exercise of a diligence, which, in the pursuit of a worthy object, *never grows tired or discouraged*. This was one of the causes, marked, evident, every where to be seen, of Hale's great success. When he applied himself seriously to the study of the law, then at the age of twenty, he devoted sixteen hours out of the twenty-four to those investigations which were af-

wards to make him so useful and so eminent. His mental labors were incredible, and on any other principle than that of great diligence, impossible. Before he began his practice, he had perused and abridged in two volumes folio, all the old and new law then extant; had read over a great part of the Records; had looked into the canon and civil law as far as it contributed to the knowledge of the common law, and in short, had read whatever was to be found, in law, history, or other books, whether in print or manuscript which he thought would advance him in the skill and knowledge of his profession." Then as to time: "there is much time wasted even by diligent men. This is owing to a want of plan, and system, and general previous arrangement in the use of it. Hale always had his work marked out. There was something for every hour, and an hour for every demand upon his exertions. Time and the employment of it, were appointed to each other. The fragments were gathered up, that nothing might be lost. Indeed, in the life of such a man, there will be few fragments; systematic arrangements will prevent

it." It is hardly possible to recommend such a model too highly.

There is one habit into which young men are in great danger of falling, but of which I ought to speak with decided reprobation. I refer to the habit of *lounging*. In all our cities, and in almost every village you will find lounging-places, where the idle resort to hear and tell the news, and to pass away time. You will always find a certain number who go the rounds from one rendezvous to another—the same individuals. Let an industrious man go in among them and what a stir! What an appearance of business and of having come together on some important errand! They are ashamed and very likely will make apologies for being found thus idle. But the habit and the love of it, like the love of anything that excites, grows upon them continually: and you will frequently find old loungers who have been at the same lounging-posts ever since the memory of man. How much time have they wasted! How much gossip have they retailed! How many slanders have they propagated! Now the objections to this habit are—that it grows upon the

lounger,—he is useless to society,—he is unhappy himself, for no idle man, who must despise himself, can be happy,—he is often in mischief, traducing character and misrepresenting his neighbors,—he loses his credit, for every one knows a lounger cannot be earning property,—and he uniformly sinks in character. Who are these loungers? What are their places of resort? I reply, they are those who do not love labor, and they select the oyster-shop, the porter-house, and the bar-room, as the places of resort. Lounging creates a love of idleness, restlessness, impatience of restraint and neglect of duty. Where do you hear vulgar stories—indecent language—obscene jests—and profane oaths? Who are first to waste the precious hours of the Sabbath? For whose benefit is the play-house, the theatre, the gambling-room, the ten-pin alley, the race-ground, and the cock-pit? Loungers are the parents of all these. Do honesty and lounging go together—or is the lounger always a poor paymaster? Do patriotism and lounging go together,—or is the lounger his country's moth and curse? Let a young man once acquire a taste for loung-

ing, and it will require little short of a miracle to make him a useful or a respectable man.

Some young men get the idea that they are *geniuses*. A genius, of course, must be above work—and some get this idea of themselves. A youth is so unfortunate as to write a composition that has a smart sentence or two in it, or he is still more unfortunate in that he has written some *verses*. They are copied, and the parents, and the whole circle of friends read them over and come to the conclusion that he is a *genius*. He must now say and do and write smarter things than anybody else. He is flattered and has his vanity cultivated by the injudicious praises of friends, till he believes, what he will never find true, that he has hitherto under-estimated his character. I do not blame the youth so much, but he is really unfortunate; and if he is flattered till he is above labor he is ruined. As to those who take up the idea that they are geniuses, I believe they are for the most part as free from deserving the title, as the honest Monk was when he complained in barbarous Latin, that he was cruelly beaten by the angel because his style so much re-

sembled Cicero's. Let me urge upon you to remember that the *mind* is the glory of man, —while the eye, the ear, the hands and the feet are mere servants. And who feels above calling upon his servants to harness his horse or brush his boots? It no more degrades the soul to use the hands or the feet, than to use the ear to hear a discourse, or the pen to write a paragraph, or the tongue to utter an eloquent oration; and when I see a man or a woman who feels degraded by work, whatever else they may have, I need no further evidence that they have not an enlarged mind. They do not understand the real relations of man. Madame De Stael filled Europe with her fame as an author. A gentleman called on her as she was surrounded by proof sheets, music, harpsichords, guitars and the like. "How is it possible," said he, "to attend to all these at once?" "Oh!" said she, "these are not what I am proud of. Anybody can do these; but what I value myself upon, is, that I have no less than seventeen different trades by any one of which I could and would earn my living with my hands, if necessary."

“*Take it for granted,*” says the accomplished William Wirt, “*that there is no excellence without great labor. No mere aspirations for eminence, however ardent, will do the business. Wishing and sighing and imagining and dreaming of greatness, will never make you great. If you would get to the mountain top, it will not do to stand still, looking and admiring and wishing you were there. You must gird up your loins and go to work with all the indomitable energy of Hannibal scaling the Alps.*”

The age in which we live is proverbially an extravagant era. The change which has taken place within fifty years is great almost beyond belief. Where the fashion for expenditure will end we know not; but we do know that it is an age of excited passions—that it is an age of failures in business, of cheating and awful delinquencies of moral character—an age of suicides, of maniacs and of murders. How much of this is owing directly to extravagance I know not, but I believe very much of it is: and I would most earnestly beseech my young reader to make up his mind, cost what it may,—that he will be truly and strict-

ly economical. Remember that every cent you spend has got to be earned again, if you ever have any property. Remember too, that your *real* wants are very few, while the name of imaginary wants, is legion. Once begin to meet *these*, and every supply will create two new wants. It is not merely foolish to spend all you can get, but it is positively wrong. It is positively a sin to waste property.

CHAPTER VII.

CULTIVATION OF THE MIND.

CONTENTS.—Wrong notions. How men are equal. Denmark and U. States. Dignity of the mind. Story of the Governor. Improvements depend much on men in common life. Illustrations—Iodine—the scurvy—Admiral Hosier. Franklin. Light Houses and Life Boats. Quinine. Grinding needles. Cotton gin and vaccination. Scotland and N. England education. Nine objects to be sought in cultivating the mind. What they are. The higher one still. Meaning of the term education. *Sources of Improvement.* 1. Culture of the memory. 2. Reading—three kinds, and books. 3. Conversation. Hints. 4. Literary Societies. A peculiar club. 5. Observation and meditation. The carpenter's square. Franklin's works. 6. The Sabbath. 7. The Bible. *Discouragements*—and hints. 1. Work laid out great. 2. I am poor. 3. I have a laborious occupation. Story of the sea captain. 4. I have no teacher. 5. I have but ordinary talents.

It has sometimes been thought that the cultivation of the mind would be an injury to those who obtain their livelihood by manual labor; that supposing every man, be his occupation what it may, were to have his mind

highly cultivated, it would render him uneasy in his lot. Nothing can be wider from the truth. A single word will explain it,—and that is, that as you raise men towards equality in intellect and education, you bring them nearer actual equality,—and the distinctions of property and occupation will sink away to nothing. Was Washington any less respected when he became a practical farmer, than when at the head of the nation? No cultivated, intellectual man can be degraded by his employment. It is the *mind* that makes the man, and that makes one man equal to another: *and if I were to solve the problem how to make a whole community contented, I would raise them as near to an equality in education as possible.* The two best educated nations on the face of the earth, are, it is supposed, Denmark and the United States. The government of the one is despotism, and that of the other, its opposite, republicanism. And yet the inhabitants of these two countries are probably the best contented of any *in the world.*

An educated mind has so many resources within itself that it has not to depend upon

outward circumstances for happiness. A man with a cultivated intellect would feel neither disgrace nor uneasiness to have you find him at the anvil; nor would you, if you had a mind rightly educated, respect him any the less. I well recollect calling in my college days, to deliver a letter of introduction, to a gentleman whom I found cleaning out his barn-yard, with his leather apron girded round him and his team his only helpers. I knew that he had led men in battle in other days, and that then, he was the honored Governor of one of the New England States: and I received a lesson from him by the call, *which I trust I shall never forget.* The interview made a deep impression on my heart. What must be the contentment of a community who needed so little of government that their Chief Magistrate might till his own little farm, and gain his bread by the sweat of his brow!

A very great number of our most valuable inventions and improvements are to be traced to intelligent men in the common walks of life. And I have no doubt that in proportion to the intelligence of the mass of community

will be the advancement of the world towards its final glory. I might occupy a volume in illustrations of what I mean.

An intelligent man was a soap-maker. He noticed that after all the alkali had been exhausted, the ley would rapidly corrode his copper kettles. Unable to explain the phenomenon, he took some of it to an eminent chemist. On analyzing it, the chemist discovered a new substance hitherto unknown, viz. the metal now called *Iodine*. Further investigation traced this to the ashes, then to the sea-weed from which the ashes had been made,—then to the ocean, to salt springs and to all marine substances. A physician in Germany reads the account, and recollects that he had heard that burned sponge had been known to cure the horrible and till then incurable disease called the *goitre*—which afflicts whole districts in the south of Europe. He conjectures that it is the Iodine in the sponge which effects the cure, and he accordingly applies the Iodine to the goitre, and it is found that it is an almost infallible cure. Thus a world of misery is prevented by the shrewdness of the soap-boiler.

A few years since the scurvy was the terror of the seas. Whole crews were cut down and more than once the case has been known, in which the bodies of the dead sewed up in sail-cloth, have lain rolling on the deck day after day, because the crew were too much withered to raise them over the nettings and commit them to the deep. Admiral Hosier, who sailed for the West Indies with seven ships of the line, during the last century, lost all his men twice over, during the single voyage, and himself died of a broken heart before he reached home. What a blessing did that man bestow, who informed the world that the simple acid of the lemon taken daily would banish this fearful disease? It is now almost unknown even in the most crowded ships.

The discovery of Franklin, a man at that time in common life, by which the lightnings of heaven are brought under the control of man, is an example in point. In France and Germany, where the lightnings are far more destructive than with us, this discovery is valued as it ought to be.

I might lead you to look at the Light house as it was and as it now is, to see the immense

improvements which have been made, and in consequence of which human life is saved in multitudes of instances. I might point you to *the Life boat which will now shoot out in the howling storm, and which will ride over any raging of the deep, and shew you that it is to the intelligence of every day laboring mechanics, that we owe this invaluable machine for saving human life. I might take you over the sections of Europe where the atmosphere is poisoned by malarious exhalations, and shew you what an amount of sickness and death have been prevented by Quinine—a simple discovery, but one of immense value.*

Once more. It was found that the steel dust which was created by grinding needles, and which is inexpressibly minute, filled the atmosphere, filled the eye and the lungs, and *invariably caused consumption. Gauze veils of the finest texture were tried, but all to no purpose. No veil would prevent it from entering the eye and the lungs. At last a workman notices a child playing with a magnet,—drawing the needles and the steel dust after it—as we have all done in childhood. The discovery is now made. A veil of fine*

magnetic wire is drawn over the face,—and the air is *strained* pure—all the dust of the steel being attracted and held by the wire, and the labor of grinding needles is now hardly more dangerous than any other business.

I have adduced these examples—they might be greatly extended—and wonders, like those achieved by the cotton-gin and by vaccination, might be dwelt upon almost indefinitely,—not because they are of course new, but because they shew you that mind and intelligence in the workshop are as valuable, and of as much use to the human family, as if they were employed in writing folios. One single fact brought into notice,—one single phenomenon brought into view and its explanation obtained, may be unmeasured in its results upon the world. Usefulness and respectability come from the union of a good heart and an intelligent mind, and are to be monopolized by no station or occupation. Seek, then, to obtain these as your own.

While Scotland sends more of her sons to College, in proportion to her population, than any other country; two of the New England States, Massachusetts and Connecticut, are

next to her in this respect, and all New England and also New York, far before her, in giving their children the blessing of free schools. We feel that these schools, far in advance of any thing of the kind on the face of the earth, are the glory and the safety of our institutions. We feel that we may safely commit the dear interests of liberty to an educated community : and that next to the religion of the Book of God, there is no such safeguard to these institutions. Every increase of intelligence in our land, gives an increase of confidence in the stability and permanence of our institutions.

Now the objects to be obtained by cultivating the mind, and for the sake of which, I am urging you to cultivate yours, are these. To give you the power of fixing the mind on any subject you wish, and holding the attention upon it as long as you please. This is a very important thing, and he who has acquired this power, has done a great work for himself. It cannot be acquired without many and long efforts.

2. To fix in the mind the elementary principles of all that pertains to life : such as,

the principles of science, of business, of politics, government, laws and religion.

3. To give the mind precision of thought.

4. To give you the power of using language and of defining what you mean by such terms as we commonly use when we speak or think.

5. To fill the mind with the materials of thought, such as facts which we read, observe and hear.

6. To teach the mind where to go for information,—that is, from what sources it may draw.

7. To teach the mind how to take up a subject, investigate it, and draw conclusions on which you may rely.

8. To cultivate the judgment as to what facts are worth preserving and what are applicable in proving or illustrating a particular subject.

9. To cultivate the memory so that the materials which you gather, may not be dissipated and lost as fast as gathered.

You will think, perhaps, that I have laid out the work of a life here, and so I have intended to do ; but if you will read these ob-

jects over again, I believe you will say that no one of these can be omitted in cultivating *the mind in a proper manner*. You will *not* of course, have all these objects specially before the mind whenever you exercise it; but they are to be the points to which you are to bring the mind in all its wanderings, and in a cultivated mind these several points will unconsciously receive attention.

Perhaps this is not just the place, but it cannot be greatly out of place to say—that in my estimation, all this only looks to a far higher and nobler object—which is to prepare *that mind to be the receptacle of light and knowledge, the image of God, and the unseen glories of an Eternal state*. In all my contemplations of the mind, I look upon it as an immortal existence, and that it is for that state it is now to be disciplined and prepared. Education does not mean going to school during your boyhood, or going to College in youth, but it means the power to take your *mind and make it an instrument of conveying knowledge and good impressions upon other minds, as well as being itself made happy*. To cultivate the mind, then, does not mean

to read much or little, to converse and to observe, but to discipline it in all ways in your power. You must not have narrow views on this subject, or else I lose all my labor. I do not expect that every one will discipline his mind so that he can observe and think as well as Franklin;—but what then? Is this a reason why you should not do what you can? Neither could Franklin reason like Isaac Newton, and bring the universe at his feet. What then? Was this a reason why he should not do all he could?

It is useless to urge you to any course of duty, were I to omit to point out to you the best methods of performing it. I am, therefore, now wishing to shew you what are the *Sources of Improvement*.

1. *The cultivation of the memory.*

A man must be a very accurate observer of himself to be aware how little light we have that is not reflected, and with which the memory has not much to do. Some are afraid to cultivate this faculty, lest it make the mind mechanical, while others feel that it is of little importance. But few things, however, make a greater difference between one

man and another than this, whether you have *a memory that is strong or weak*. Some will complain that they have a very poor memory, and undoubtedly there is naturally a wide difference between men in this respect; but did you ever see a man who could not and did not remember the evil—the thousand things which he had better forget? And is there any faculty more susceptible of cultivation than this? He who can clearly remember an argument which he has heard or read, or the volume and page where he has seen a fact stated, so that he has it at his command at all times, has a treasure indeed. But you may educate the memory wrong, as really as you can train a horse wrong. You may learn it to be tenacious of some things and feeble in others;—thus you will see men who are able to remember and tell a story a thousand times, and yet not be able to remember whether they are telling it to *you* for the first or the thousandth time. Like the purse, more depends upon what leaks out of the mind, than upon what goes in. He who could remember every thing he learns which is worth remembering, would shortly be a very intelli-

gent man, while he whose memory leaks out all that he reads or hears, will ever be learning and yet never be wise. By proper efforts, almost every one, if he will begin early in life, may acquire a powerful memory. I know a scholar who is almost unsurpassed for accuracy, who has seen the day when he had to look out a word in his Greek Lexicon at least fifty times before he could remember it. Be careful, in the cultivation of the memory, to read and learn only that which you wish to remember, because the more you pass through a riddle-seive, the larger the holes become, and the more will run through. So the more you take into the mind with no desire or expectation of retaining it, the more you habituate the memory to let things escape. It is better to get one new thought every day and make it fast so that it will stay with you, than to have hundreds pass into the mind, and out of it as soon. Who would not rather have a small lamp in his hand in the dark night—a lamp that burns steadily, than the most brilliant flashes of lightning which may occasionally burst upon his path? Do all you can, then, to strengthen the memory,

till it becomes like the Empire of China—the receiver of all the silver that comes near it, without letting any of it get away again.

2. *Reading.*

There are three kinds of reading. First, that which is designed for the discipline of the mind, like the works of Stewart, Locke, and Edwards. Second, that which is designed for information, as politics, history, travels, and the works on the arts and sciences. Third, such as is intended for amusement only,—such as stories, novels and the like. The young man does not need amusement from reading. He can pick up flowers enough as he passes along, without planting a garden on purpose to raise them. The first object you need to accomplish, is to discipline the mind. The second is to store it,—or, as the hunters say, first put the rifle in trim and then load it carefully. On these two points should the eye be fixed in all your reading. In the selection of books, remember that you want but few at first. Don't try to see how much, or how fast you can read, but how slowly, and how thoroughly you can make it your own. The distinguished

Grimke says he was six months in reading a single volume of the size of Stewart on the Mind, when he began to read to real advantage. The books which you need are those which have stood the test of time—such as have been the means of disciplining multitudes of minds that have gone before you. The young man who has mastered Stewart, Butler's Analogy, and Edwards on the Will, has done a great work. He may safely turn to history and begin to drink at inexhaustible fountains. Poetry—such as successive generations have pronounced to be poetry, will refine the taste, quicken the imagination, and purify the feelings. But that world of light reading, in the shape of periodicals without morals, and novels without sense, I pray you to shun. You can hardly abuse the mind more than to make it feed upon such trash. It would shortly starve the most vigorous intellect, benumb the finest sensibilities of the heart, and create a morbid appetite for fiction the most improbable, adventures the most marvelous and unnatural, deeds the most fool-hardy, and scenes the most revolting to a noble heart. To attempt to point out the

books which you may not read, by name, would be like the physician who, at the request of the indulgent parents, attempted to prescribe what the convalescent patient might not eat. The list was formidable in length, and the physician thought it very complete. Unfortunately it did not contain *roasted goose*, and so that was procured, eaten, and the patient ruined. Better lay it down as a principle that you will not read, at least for *years to come*, any thing that can waste your time without adding to the discipline of the mind, or to your stock of information. I believe a single volume read in the manner of Grinto, even if it takes six months to read it, would be more valuable than six volumes read every week in the manner that books are too often hurried over. You might try to live upon the floating islands which fill the dish and sit so gracefully upon the top of the lady's whip, but if you expected to strengthen the body or prepare the taste for ordinary food, you would be much disappointed. The food on which the swan feeds and which makes her so beautiful, so strong and so long-lived, grows deep at the bottom of the clear

running river, and she works hard to wrench it up from its moorings among the stones on the hard bottom.

3. *Conversation.*

This is the most agreeable method of obtaining knowledge; and to a man with a disciplined mind and a strong memory, a very valuable one. Every man gives out his information in his own peculiar way, and we associate it with the looks, and the tones of voice which accompany it. When you read a book, if it so happens that you do not understand the author, or if you wish some point further illustrated, you have no redress. But in conversation, you can ask for explanations, or for further and particular information. To make conversation most valuable, you need to associate with those who have had experience, who have been close observers of men and things, and who have a good judgment. One hour rightly improved, in the society of such a man, will be worth more to you than many of solitary study. But it is not from the learned, the great and the wise only, that we can learn much. There is not probably a man living from whom you might

not obtain hints on some subject or other, that would be valuable to you. Walter Scott declares that the most stupid groom that ever took care of his horse could give him *hints that he prized highly*. I have myself never yet met the man of whom I could not bear the same testimony. But in order to derive benefit from such men, you must ask them many questions about things with which they are acquainted, and let them answer them in their own way. My own method has been to ascertain on what subject my companion has had the greatest experience, and then civilly to ask him questions till I have the result of that experience. You never need be afraid of asking questions, provided you do not broach personal history; and let the gain be ever so small, still it is gain. Recollect that scraps of information on any subject, will sometime or other come *into use*. Be assured also, that it is not random conversation which is to benefit you, any more than it is random reading that is useful. You will need to select men, as you do books, and turn the conversation into the desired channel, just as you would turn to particular

pages of a book for such information as you needed. When you want information which you cannot readily find, it would be well to reflect who has the information which you need, and bear it in mind when you meet that individual. You are to spend, I will suppose, a part or the whole of an evening in the company of an intelligent man. You will be a gainer to think beforehand what information he can give you, and what questions you will put to him in order to elicit the information. Thus you will never lose the opportunity of enlarging the boundaries of knowledge, and of growing wise by the experience of others.

4. *Literary Associations.*

In our cities and in almost every village in our land, the young men are known as a distinct class. They have some kind of literary bond which brings them together. In some instances they have Lecturers from abroad: in others they discuss such questions as are of interest at the time, and concerning which they can readily command information. There ought to be such a bond in every village and town. They ought to have a pleasant, convenient and inviting room—and to it, attach-

ed a Library that shall be choice and growing. *I would have the room made attractive.* The meetings should not be formal. One of *the most pleasant clubs of the kind* I have ever seen, was that of about twenty-five *young men who used to meet me in my study* once a week. The exercises were all performed by themselves. Without an officer, or a constitution, or rules of any kind, the meetings were every thing that could be desired. I never saw more rapid and manly improvement. Had I the memorandum of the subjects upon which they wrote, I should be tempted to transcribe it. In all such societies, there should be opportunity for the pen and for oral discussion. Information which is gained thus by their own efforts, is not only valuable in itself, but doubly valuable inasmuch as it shews how and where to find it. It is very plain that to derive the most benefit from a public Lecture, the mind cannot be too well disciplined, nor the memory too tenacious.

5. *Observation and meditation.*

You will be surprised, should you turn your thoughts to the subject, to find how many

things around you remain unexplained, simply because you have not observed them. You go into a carpenter's shop and take up his square. Ask any one of the half a dozen apprentices present, what those numerous figures on the square mean. He cannot tell you—for he has only noticed that the square is full of figures. And yet they lie directly in his line of business. A few minutes' study, with the aid of his master, would teach it to him;—but he has never thought of it. So we all do. But there is no character, no event in nature or in providence which may not instruct us. The habit of minutely observing is of unspeakable advantage to all. Then the power of comparing, thinking, and reasoning will follow. If you would know precisely what I mean here, I would refer you to the third volume of Franklin's works, as a beautiful illustration of the principle I am inculcating. Study also yourself. No one can study his own mind and heart, and be a close self-observer, without becoming acquainted with his fellows, or, without gaining a reasonable share of common-sense.

6. *The Sabbath is a wonderful source of intellectual improvement.*

This is one seventh part of life. I shall not here speak of it as a means of moral improvement. I now speak only of the intellectual benefits to be derived from this day. On its return, you lay aside all cares, anxieties and labors. You give yourself up to be improved by hearing, reading, and thinking. In twenty-eight years it is equivalent to a College course, so far as *time* is concerned. What a world opens before you on that day! How the mind is elevated and enlarged by looking at the moral history of the earth, at the government of God, at the prospects of the soul, and those mighty questions compared with which, the questions of earth are nothing! I would urge you to have a course of reading laid out for that day which is peculiar to the time, and which is of a high order. I would urge you to spend some of the day in *self-study*, and upon those great subjects to which I have just alluded. The mind is enlarged and strengthened by coming in contact with great subjects. I would especially entreat you to be regular at the

house of God on every Sabbath, and to give your best and your whole attention to the preacher. I will suppose that he is not interesting; that he never thunders nor lightens: that he never startles you by the novelty of his ideas, by the vividness of his paintings, or by the originality of his thoughts. What then? You receive an immense benefit, intellectually, by the habit of giving your attention—of being able to lay your mind on the line in which his is traveling and to hold it there through the discourse. Were there no other possible benefit in hearing preaching, except that it increases the power of attention, it would abundantly reward you for all it costs. The power of attention is one of the most difficult things to be obtained, and one of the most valuable when obtained.

7. *The Scriptures are a mighty source of intellectual improvement.*

There has never yet been any thing to be compared to the Bible for arousing the intellect. The country or the section of country where it is most read, is the most enlightened; and seldom do you find a constant reader of this book, who is not an enlightened

man. The books which infidels write,—the blasphemy of the wicked, and the sneering paragraph in the weekly paper, are so many witnesses to the power of the Bible to awaken the intellect. The Shasters of Veda, the precepts of Confucius, and the Koran of the false prophet have no such effect to call out opposition, and strength, argument and ridicule. The Bible leaves no intellect with which it comes in contact unmoved. Its claims are so high and sweeping, its story is so overwhelmingly great, its laws are so rigid, its morals are so pure and lofty, and its penalties are so awful, that when a man looks at it, *it seems like the angel with the mill-stone in his hand with which he is about to dash the beholder in ruin. To say nothing about its effects upon the heart—of which more hereafter—there is nothing that will cultivate the intellect like it. The views which you get from it are clear and distinct; the knowledge of the human character which you there obtain, is correct, and the motives under which you are brought are the strongest that can reach the human soul. Let me commend it to you, then, as an intellectual com-*

panion, to be used daily. The history there, is the oldest, the simplest and the truest ever penned. The story there is inimitably beautiful. The songs and the poetry are exquisite. The language and the imagery are so far superior to any thing human, that you feel fairly sick whenever you take up the Apocrypha and see what men can do. A man with good eyes could no more be brought into the clear light of the sun, without seeing, than you can bring your intellect into contact with the Bible without having that intellect every way improved. It has to do with the thoughts, and it will awaken them.

I cannot but flatter myself that you would like to have me advert to the *discouragements* which you have to encounter in cultivating your mind. I shall mention them briefly and meet them as well as I may. You will feel *then,*

1. *That it is a great work to cultivate the mind.*

It is true that it is a great work, but it is not all to be done at once. It is not to be expected that you will learn every thing, nor that you will learn all you ever learn to-day.

Suppose you were to attempt to walk round the earth—climb all the lofty mountains and pass over all the rivers. What a task! And yet you have to take only one step at a time to accomplish it. If you cannot walk twenty-five thousand miles in a day, possibly *you can twenty-five—and this would carry you round the world in less than three years.* I recollect when a child of meeting with the history of the world in about one hundred and forty-five or fifty small volumes. I was allowed to set myself to read them through, on condition, that I would read only so many *pages daily*; and I well recollect my amazement on completing my work so soon. Do something towards cultivating the mind, even if it be but little, every day, and you cannot fail of success. The reason why so many utterly neglect their intellect is, that they cannot sit down and make a business of it, as *a man would make a business of building a house.*

2. *You are poor.*

This is no objection, for it has nothing to do with the question whether you shall have a cultivated mind or not. No one is so poor

in this country that he cannot buy, or borrow all the books he needs—and he who can get at books need not be ignorant. Besides, if you will gird on energy enough to cultivate the mind, you will soon see ways by which you can leave poverty behind. It is the mind that commands the purse, and the mind that sees openings, and if you will elevate that, you will have no difficulty with your poverty. How seldom do you see a man with a cultivated intellect who is very poor! You need not a key of gold to open the temple of knowledge.

3. *You have to follow a laborious occupation.*

Here, too, you over-rate the difficulty. How few are there, who do not daily waste scraps of time either in idleness or in sleep, or in useless conversation! Suppose by close application, you could save only an hour a day,—half an hour in the morning and half an hour at night. Suppose you should read five pages in fifteen minutes, which would be very moderate reading. This would give you over thirty-six volumes of two hundred pages each, every year! By saving the

fragments of time from sloth and sleep, it is *incredible how much you may accomplish*. You know we have in our State a laborious blacksmith who is almost self-taught, and who, without hardly leaving his anvil for a day, can now read over fifty different languages—*probably more than any other man in the country*. Let me point you to another example. There is a sea-captain raised in New England, who sails from New York. He has been to sea constantly since he was ten years old. He “is not only acquainted with the popular languages of Europe, French, Spanish, German, Danish and Dutch, with some other minor dialects, but is also a scholar in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Last winter this “inhabitant of the mountain billow” held a public debate, four different evenings in the city of Rotterdam, in the French and German languages, with a learned (Jew) Professor of Languages on the Divinity of the New Testament and Jesus Christ the Messiah of God “the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe.” The Old Testament was read in its original language; the New Testament was read in Greek;

while the fidelity of the Protestant interpretation was shewn from the Prophecies in six different languages. The Professor acknowledged to the American Captains, "Your countryman, the Captain, is better acquainted with the Old Testament than any man I ever conversed with; and his knowledge of the Books of Moses, with the customs of our people, is scarcely equalled by any Jew in Rotterdam. Really, there are some things that he is better acquainted with, (having seen them practiced on the coast of Africa by the Jews) which the laws of Holland, and indeed of all christian Europe, and our sense of decency, will not permit us to practice." It was the report among the common Jews that "the Captain was a Jew." The Captain weekly attends, including English and the Synagogues, the worship of God in five different languages in this city. He says "I attend the Synagogue to hear their new German Reader, as an American or Englishman cannot read Hebrew with any probable degree of its original pronunciation." He was asked what induced him to attempt an acquaintance with the Greek and Hebrew.

He answered, "when young, my mind was seriously impressed with the import and sublimity of the Christian religion; but my knowledge and delight in astronomy made me a skeptic in its reality and divinity, contrary to all the internal evidence that forced itself on my soul, in conviction of sin, or joy of redemption. My mind was continually crowded by,—it is impossible that God would take upon himself the likeness of human flesh to make an atonement for such a contemptible pebble as this, the most inferior of all planets, (except the moon) when he is the adorable Creator of innumerable worlds of splendor, that excel in glory and magnitude our very sun!" I doubted all interpretations, and external evidence of every kind, I dared not venture upon. I was resolved to attempt the Greek. I surmounted its difficulties to my peace and satisfaction. Then I grappled Hebrew as for life and death, until I understood it sufficiently to the removal of all my doubts, and establishment in the fullest confidence in the Divine Mission of Him who emphatically claims the appellation of Christ the Son of God, the Saviour of the world."

4. *You have no teacher.*

I reply to this difficulty that a teacher is not necessary. Every educated mind will tell you that the most valuable parts of his education were those which he acquired alone; and the most valuable discoveries have been such as have been made alone without aid. Self-taught men have ever risen high in character and influence. It is of very little consequence where you begin, or upon what you begin, compared with the question, *will you begin?* Will you apply your own powers, bend your own energies to the work of self-improvement, and use such opportunities as you may have to pursue this work? If you will, you will not long lament the want of a teacher. I once had a young man come a long distance to see me, to ask how he might improve himself. He said his early education had been neglected, he being an orphan. His business occupied him from the hour of breakfast till evening, and frequently till ten o'clock. I gave him such hints as I thought *he needed.* *He returned home, fixed him a simple desk in his room at which he could*

stand, with light, pen and paper. He now rises so early that he daily gets two hours of close study before breakfast. The whole expense of his "fitting up" did not cost a dollar; he does no less business; and if he lives, I have no doubt he will so far surmount the difficulties of having no teacher and no *early advantages, that he will make an intolli-*gent and most valuable character. So I would say to all. If the sun is up before you have begun the day's work of mental improvement, you have no more time to lose. Begin at once, and be diligent hereafter. If your sword is short, let it be seen that you can remedy the difficulty by taking a step forward. Do not lose any time in mourning over lost opportunities.

5. *You have but ordinary talents.*

Be it so. They will gain the more by cultivation. It is not genius that overcomes difficulties and surmounts the obstacles which lie in the path of knowledge, but it is application and perseverance. These are of more value than any amount of genius. If you have good common sense enough to do your duty in your station, you have what may ena-

ble you so to improve the mind that your happiness and usefulness will be greatly increased. What if you do not become a Bacon or a Locke? You may become a wise, an intelligent, a happy and a useful man. Lay it down as an eternal truth, that no difficulties which arise from outward circumstances, can stand before a cool determination to excel in what is good and praise-worthy. Finally, remember that God helps those who try to help themselves:—that he loves to see his creatures seeking knowledge, and that it is one of his choicest promises that the sinner who seeks him, shall be renewed in *knowledge*, after the image of God. He will smile upon every attempt, and bless every effort, and crown every exertion with success, and if now, you choose to dream away life in sluggishness, to grow up a mere animal, to neglect the immortal mind within you, the folly will be visited upon your own head.

CHAPTER VIII.

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE HEART.

CONTENTS.—The heathen's view of self-government. What is essential to enjoyment. Extent of the power which we may obtain over ourselves. Story of the French philosopher. The schoolmaster at Cairo. The three assistants. Curious anecdote of Jeremiah Flatt. Wilberforce and the State paper. What self-control implies. (1) Government of the tongue. A bad habit noted. Great teachers. Dr. Mason and the iron spoon. Madame de Genlis and the flower-pots. (2) Government of the thoughts. Two things necessary. (3) Governing your feelings. Purity of thought. Woman. THE HEART. Description of it by Jeremy Taylor. The conscience to be cultivated. A right standard. The young physician and the cholera. Trials and disappointments must come. Seek to know yourself. Three aids. Cultivate humility of heart. Have a liberal heart.

You would pronounce that man a fool, who should purchase a present, short-lived pleasure, at the expense of all his property, or of weeks and months of pain and sorrow. And yet this is what multitudes are constant-

ly doing. God has planted certain bodily appetites within us, which if governed wisely answer the ends for which they were created, viz. to conduce to our happiness, but which if indulged beyond what he intended, will increase in strength by indulgence, and will ruin the whole man, by degrading him below the brute. Self-government is a great acquisition. "He that ruleth his spirit, is better than he that taketh a city." "It is a shame," says an ancient heathen moralist, (Seneca) "for a man to place his felicity in those entertainments and appetites that are stronger in the brutes than in him. They have not only a quicker relish of their pleasures, but they enjoy them without either scandal or remorse. If *sensuality* were happiness, beasts were happier than men: but human felicity is lodged in the soul, not in the flesh. The most miserable mortals are they, that deliver themselves up to their palates, or to their lusts. The pleasure is short, and turns shortly nauseous, and the end of it is either shame or repentance. It is a brutal entertainment and not worthy of a man to place his felicity in the service of his senses. A horse con-

tents himself with one meadow, and one forest is enough for a thousand elephants; but the little body of man demands more variety than all other living creatures. We do not eat to satisfy hunger, but ambition; we are dead while we are alive, and our houses are so much our tombs, that a man might write our epitaph over our very door. A voluptuous person can be neither a good man, nor a good patriot, nor a good friend."

What the poor heathen declares so feelingly, is corroborated also by the word of God. 'They that live in pleasure, are dead while they live.'

Every one wishes,—and the wish is right and proper—to enjoy life:—but this is out of the question, unless reason and judgment and conscience govern the appetites, the passions, and the soul. Not till you have acquired this self-command can you call yourself your own master. Not till you can feel contented in your lot and circumstances and cheerfully fulfil the duties which are yours, may you expect to be happy. Contentment will follow self-command. By contentment I do not mean apathy or sluggishness, but a cheerful-

ness in doing your duty in the sphere in which you are called to act.

The ills of life are many. The vexations are constant. It would be easy, indeed, to be happy if every thing within us and without us, went according to our mind.

Those who are naturally irritable and uneven in temper, may, by proper care, acquire an ascendancy over themselves so entire, that they are never disturbed. It was said of Abauret, a philosopher of Geneva, that he had never been out of temper. Some persons by means of his female servant were determined to put him to the proof. The woman in question, stated that she had been his servant for thirty years, and she protested that during that time, she had never seen him in a passion. They promised her a sum of money if she would endeavor to make him angry. She consented, and knowing that he was particularly fond of having his bed well made, she on the day appointed neglected to make it. Abauret observed it and the next morning made the observation to her. She answered that she had forgotten it. She said nothing more, but the same evening neglected

to make the bed. The same observation was made on the morrow by the philosopher, and she again made some excuse, in a cooler manner than before. On the third day, he said to her. "You have not yet made my bed; you have, apparently come to some resolution on the subject, or you probably found it fatigued you. But after all, it is of no great consequence, as I begin to accustom myself to it as it is!" She threw herself at his feet and avowed the whole plan to him.

I do not know whether Abauret was a christian or not. It is possible for perhaps one man in a million to subdue his temper thus, without the aid of the Gospel; but *with* its aid, it is possible for every one to do it. Stephen Shultz mentions a school-master in Cairo, who kept a large and bad school in perfect order, by the aid of three assistants—whose names were Faith, Prayer and Patience. These are all christian graces, and with these, even a school-master may obtain entire command over himself. A beautiful illustration of the aid derived from these three assistants may be found in the memoirs of Flatt, a teacher in Stuttgard, Germany. This

man was always even, cheerful and happy in his laborious occupation;—a peace-maker out of school, an agreeable companion and a guide to heaven. “I was,” says he, “for more than fifty years superintendent of the Orphan House, and had a room full of children to instruct. Every morning I used to pray for patience and meekness. Once, while walking up and down among my scholars, I observed a boy of twelve years old who leaned upon the table with both elbows. I reproved him for it, as being improper, and went on. When I passed by him again, he was again leaning in the same manner upon the table, for which I a second time reproved him. He obeyed this time for a moment, but when I came to him the third time, I found him insolently leaning still, and read in his countenance a contempt for my reproof. Now the gall was stirred within me. I checked myself, however, immediately, and prayed to God:

“Make me patient towards this child, as thou art patient towards me an old child.”

My anger was at once allayed. I was composed and silent, and proceeded in my

instruction. The boy remained in the same impudent posture, but I heeded him not. After school I called him to me, and mean while I prayed, before he came, for wisdom and meekness. He came up in a noisy, rude manner, shutting the door after him with great violence.

"Why do you slam the door to?" I asked.

"I did not slam it," he answered insolently.

"Indeed you did slam it," said I.

"No I did not slam it to."

I now went up to him, took him by the hand and asked him in a mild tone,

"Do you know, my son, whom you offend, and against whom you sin? Not against me do you sin, who have never done you harm! Reflect. Why do you do thus!" The boy's heart was broken: he began to weep and with sobs asked my pardon for his wicked conduct.

"I had," said he, "resolved to-day, industriously to provoke you by disobedience, till you should strike me. This I supposed would pain you more than it would me. I

beg you would forgive me. I will never do so again as long as I live."

And thus he continued to entreat further. I now represented to him how wicked his conduct had been and let him go with the assurance that I had already forgiven him. He went away, however, inconsolable. In the afternoon when I had finished my instructions in the other classes, and was alone in my chamber in the evening, there was a knock at my door. The boy came in with eyes red with weeping.

"It was not possible," he said sobbing, "that I could have forgiven him. He had acted towards me so like a demon, and therefore he could not rest. If I would tell him that I would forgive him, he would certainly never offend me any more, even by a look."

"I told him, as I had done at noon, that he might be assured of my forgiveness, but he should pray to the Saviour for forgiveness, for he had offended Him most, and it was his part to forgive who had suffered the injury. The boy went away weeping. The next morning I had scarcely risen when my little offender came again, weeping so much that I

was quite surprised. He had not slept, he told me: his conduct yesterday preyed upon his mind, and he begged me once more with all his heart not to withdraw my former love from him. He could not comprehend how he could yesterday have formed such a shameful purpose, but that he could assure me, that he should have adhered obstinately to his purpose, notwithstanding any punishment which might have been inflicted, but my love and meekness had so affected him that he could not withstand them: I must tell him how it was possible for me to bear such wanton provocation with so much patience? Upon this I answered him;—

“Dear child, this I cannot tell you exactly. I would, however, express it briefly thus: “I have received forgiveness from the Lord, therefore I can forgive you.” This story was related by old Jeremiah Flatt, and he added,

“The boy, from that time was my best scholar, and lives still at Stuttgart, as a respectable citizen.”

The true secret of that command which Flatt had attained over himself, is undoubted-

ly given above, and the mysterious influence which self-control has over others, is beautifully illustrated. But the same self-control is within the reach of every one, however varied or hurried may be his duties. A gentleman says he one day found Wilberforce in the greatest agitation, looking for a dispatch which he had mislaid—one of the Royal Family was waiting for it—he had delayed the search till the last moment—he seemed at last quite vexed and hurried. At this unlucky instant, a disturbance occurred in the nursery overhead. The gentleman said to himself,—now for once Wilberforce's temper will give way!" He had hardly thought thus, when Wilberforce turned to him, and said, "what a blessing it is to have these dear children—only think what a relief, amidst other hurries, to hear their voices and know they are well."

Self-control, to enable you to do what you ought, implies,

1. *That you can govern the tongue.*

The tongue is an instrument of great good and of great mischief. It is so easy to use it—it is so keen an instrument—and as there

is no defence against it, so we are tempted to use it for doing hurt. Some writers think we do more hurt, and commit more sin with it, than in all other ways. However this may be, we know that the unpardonable sin—that which hath never forgiveness—is the sin of the tongue: that the man who can bridle his tongue is pronounced to be “a perfect man,” and that the religion of the man who cannot govern his tongue, is declared to be “in vain.” What a sweet instrument is the human voice when used in conversation to enlighten, to instruct and to make happy! And when perverted, what an instrument of evil! There is not on earth a more loathsome sight than the honey-comb, when corrupted and inhabited by the moth. Let me urge you to plant yourself against the temptation to evil speaking, like a rock. It will prevent your saying many brilliant and keen things, it may be;—it will prevent your displaying the keenness with which you can look into and dissect character, it may be;—but remember, that your keen and brilliant things are so many barbed darts aimed at the bosoms of your fellow-sinners, and that as to the dissecting

process, God never intended that living men should be dissected. It might enable you to see the muscles and fibres better, and it may be, the pulsations of the heart; but it costs too much pain. Besides, you may be assured, that the same measure will be meted back again to you, and that he who indulges himself in the habit of evil speaking, will have others pay him back in the same coin.

And here let me say a word on a habit into which young men, at some period of their youth, are in great danger of falling—I refer to that of *profane swearing*. This is a sin into which the human heart loves to plunge. It is the natural language of the old serpent. All the heathen world are, and ever have been, awfully profane. When a heathen begins to speak our language, he begins in oaths and blasphemies. It is not merely that we catch the sounds as a parrot does, but we love the sin. Fishermen will tell you that they must carefully bait their hooks—with one kind of bait for one kind of fish, and another for another;—and when a fish bites at the naked hook, they call him a fool indeed. But the profane swearer bites at the naked

hook which Satan throws before him. He gets no good,—he does no good,—he neither pleases himself nor others—he does it for the mere love of biting at the naked hook, and tasting sin uncompounded. His throat is an open sepulchre, and you can look in and see rottenness and dead men's bones. But so strong is the love of this sin, that the children of pious families—the sons of praying fathers and mothers, will often fall into it, and practice it, till almost every word becomes an oath. Such young men have sold themselves to do evil, without any reward. They will not and cannot read the Bible—will not and cannot pray—and cannot be happy. And if ever conscience awakes and they become good men, what struggles—what tears does this habit cost them! What a world of filth to be carried out before the heart is fitted to become the temple of the Holy Spirit! Remember that every oath is a challenge from a worm of the dust to his God, and that the arm of Omnipotence will one day accept the challenge—and rain fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest upon him. As for the plea that you mean nothing by it,—that you do

not think of it,—I have only to say, it is not true. Why do you not use profane language before your mother and sisters, before your minister, or before a company of virtuous young ladies? Never allow yourself in anything that borders on profaneness. Never allow yourself to jest with serious things,—nor to quote scripture in a light, trifling way, to give point to wit, or edge to sarcasm.

You will be very unwise to train yourself to be a great talker. “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.” There are two great evils in being a great talker:—the one is, that you must and will say a great many foolish things. The race horse must ever run light; and it is impossible for any mind that is constantly putting forth its thoughts, not to have many of them crude and disjointed. And it is equally certain that a great talker will say much that ought not to be said—much that is wrong and positively wicked. We are all free and equal in this country, and the temptation to use the tongue too freely, is very great. Very seldom will you be called to repent of your silence,—but very often of having used your tongue too

freely. Foolish, vain, and wicked conversation,—to say nothing of that which is indelicate—is a besetting sin of young men: but a single word “fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” A single word may wound, and you should be as prompt to heal as you are to wound. Dr. Mason was once returning from a visit to some feeble churches, before the days of steam-boats. He traveled on horseback, and among the mountains at the house of a poor woman, ate some bread and milk with an iron spoon. On reaching home, and being asked how he fared, he humorously mentioned this meal. The story soon got back over among the hills, to his hostess, who meekly said, “that she was sorry the Doctor should make himself merry with her hospitality;—that if she had owned a silver spoon he should have had it; but as it was, she gave him the best she had in the world.” On learning this, Dr. Mason felt that he had done wrong, and actually rode fifty miles on horseback to ask the good woman’s pardon!

The power of a soft answer to turn away wrath was known as early as the days of Gid-

coa; and it will never lose anything of this power. You will never regret having restrained yourself when provoked, and having been so God-like as to pass by a personal affront. When Madame de Genlis was residing at Berlin, at the time when her fame was so extensive, she says:—"My saloon had two doors; one opening into my chamber, and the other conducting to a private staircase descending to the court: on the platform of this staircase was a door opposite to mine, belonging to the apartments of an emigrant. This man was of a savage disposition, and never saw any one in his house. Some one had given me two pots of beautiful hyacinths. At night I placed them on this platform between my neighbor's door and my own. In the morning I went to take them again and had the disagreeable surprise to see my beautiful hyacinths cut into pieces and scattered around the pots which held them. I easily guessed that my neighbor was the author of this deed, who had been excited to do it, doubtless, notwithstanding his French politeness, by the libels which were published against me. Not wishing the affair to be

known, I did not ask more flowers from the person who had given me these: but directed a servant to buy me some. Having placed them in the pots, I attached to them a slip of paper, on which I wrote these words: "*Destroy my works, if you will, but respect the works of God.*" At night I placed them on the platform,—in the morning I went with eagerness to see what had been their fate, and saw with great pleasure that some one had been content with simply watering them. I carried them immediately into the saloon, and placing them on the table, perceived that there were attached to them two silk strings, each having a charming cornelian ring."

2. Self-control implies that you can govern your thoughts.

To be able to feel that you can govern your thoughts requires two things:—that you are able to command your attention, so that if you fix your thoughts on a page which you are reading, or on a discourse which you are hearing, they shall *stay* there, and not wander off on other things. Multitudes, who would feel almost offended to be told that

they had little or no self-control, are unable to follow a discourse through, or to read a chapter through—without having the attention lost or the thoughts lost. The second thing implied is, that you have the power to turn your thoughts off from any channel in which they incline to roam, and hold them fixed on whatever you please. You know how the imagination loves to roam, sometimes on objects which are useless, and sometimes on those which are positively sinful. But this need not be: and if you do your duty to yourself you will acquire the control over them so as to be their master.

3. Self-control implies *that you can govern your feelings.*

Some few are of a placid, even temperament. They have no excitement that throws them off their guard, or irritates them. But most men govern their feelings and temper only by decided, and frequently by long efforts, and long after they have so far subdued themselves that no visible marks of anger or irritation are seen, the fires rage and glow, pent up within. Now you have not arrived at the point desired, till you can so far con-

trol your feelings that there will be no emotions of anger or irritability within the breast. Not only do you want to control the fist so that it will not strike, and the tongue so that it will not break out in imprecations and wrath, and the countenance so that it will not flush up as if the fires were about to burst through,—but you want to control yourself so that the feelings do not become angered, or excited in the least. And this can be done. Multitudes of men, naturally, very irritable, have done it. To have weight of character, to have influence among men, to have peace in your home, and peace in your own bosom, you need to attain to this state.

One word more, on the subject of keeping the thoughts pure. The command of the God of heaven is “keep thyself pure.” Sin begins in the thoughts, and a man always acts his sin over many times in the thoughts, before the sin is acted out. The annals of eternity alone can tell the amount of the guilt of the sin of impurity. What think you must be the woes,—the tears of fathers and of widowed mothers—the heart-breakings of the ruined, which take place every year in this

land, to supply the place of thirty thousand who annually die, abandoned of man and of God! What must be the curse of God upon man for this sin, when you read such facts as these: that France publicly abrogated the *seventh* commandment with the other nine, and the year following there were eight hundred and seven suicides and murders in the single city of Paris; that within eighteen months, there were over twenty thousand divorces in that heaven-forsaken kingdom, and that in the space of ten years, it is computed, *three millions perished by violence in that land of lust and infidelity!* I ask that young man who allows himself to speak or to think lightly of female virtue, to reflect on the unmanly, contemptible and dastardly position in which he places himself. Woman was committed to man to be protected, and to be guarded, because she needs a protector,—is it manly to think of her with lightness because she is weak? Is it not contemptible to think lightly of female virtue, when your face would glow with indignation should the virtue of your mother or your own sister be questioned? Is it not dastardly to do the

virtuous and the good that injustice in your thoughts which the tongue would not dare to lisp? Let me say unequivocally and distinctly, that woman is by nature, and by her training too, vastly more pure than is man; and you do her awful injustice to place her on a level with yourself in this respect; and the young man who can degrade himself so far as to speak or to think lightly of her, has taken many descending steps in company with that spirit, which, in the emphatic language of God, is called an "unclean spirit."

As to the HEART,—the first part of knowledge is to know that is deceitful above all things. Every man deceives his fellows and puts the best of his character on the outside. But we deceive ourselves more than we do others. We have faults of which we are ignorant—many and great. We have others of which we have suspicions that they are ours, but we disclaim the relationship. We excuse, palliate and diminish others,—and we flatter ourselves that even what we must see, are unknown to others;—when the fact is, that all about us read us and see through us,

not only better than we suspect, but better than we do ourselves. I cannot express myself better here than to quote the racy language of Jeremy Taylor. "Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me, to represent the falseness and the baseness of the heart. 1. We are false ourselves and dare not trust God. 2. We love to be deceived and are angry if we be told so. 3. We love to seem virtuous and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholic and impatient and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things and are careless of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures. 7. We believe things not for their reasons and proper arguments, but as they serve our turn, be they true or false. 8. We long extremely for things that are forbidden us; and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily when it is taken from us. 9. We love ourselves more than we love God; and yet we eat poison daily and feed upon toads and vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosoms, and will

not be brought to quit them ; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but virtue, which is most honorable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all the means we can to make death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busy in the faults of others and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others and to be unknown ourselves. 13. We worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of greatness and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it is, that we are more beautifully tempted ; and a troop of clients run to us as to a pool, which first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make ourselves unsafe by committing wickedness, then add more wickedness to make ourselves safe and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one courtesy that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain certain slanderers, and without choice spread their calumnies ; and we hug flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the abuse, and impieties and deceptions of the heart, as Chrysippus did

the oracular lies of Apollo into a fable, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure and watchfulness of religion. Indeed they are great and many; but the grace of God is greater: and if iniquity abound, then doth grace superabound, and that is our comfort and our medicine, which we must use.

1. Let us watch our heart at every turn.

2. Deny it all its desires that do not directly or indirectly, or by consequence, end in Godliness. At no hand be indulgent to its fondness and peevish appetites.

3. Let us suspect it as an enemy.

4. Trust not to it in anything.

5. But beg the grace of God with perpetual and importunate prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils; and that he would throw the salutary wood of the cross, the merits of Christ's death and passion, into these salt waters and make them healthful and pleasant. For without great watchfulness and earnest devotion, and a prudent guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sense, which Plutarch affirmed of a man's body in the natural: that of dead bulls, arise bees; from the carcasses of horses, hor-

nets are produced; but the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions will produce nothing but issues of hell, and images of *the old serpent the devil*, for whom is promised *the everlasting burning.*"

Let me urge the young man *to cultivate his conscience.*

I need not stop to define what I mean by the conscience. We all have it, and it decides constantly upon our actions, thoughts, and feelings. But it can be educated wrong in two ways—*first by neglecting to hear its admonitions.* If the ear be quick, you can hear the chidings of conscience whenever you do wrong; but it has well been compared to an alarm clock, which you set to awake you in the morning. If you heed it promptly the clock will always awake you at the right moment; but if you neglect it and refuse to rise at its call a few times, you will shortly sleep on notwithstanding its striking. This neglect of the conscience is called hardening it—because the soul grows numb and less and less susceptible to its voice. To cultivate it you must never knowingly or deliberately neg-

lect or slight its admonitions. You know that the child of virtuous and religious parents, if he becomes wicked, usually goes great lengths in sin: the reason is, that he has had great light and knows what he ought to do and to be, and he resists the calls of conscience with a determined spirit.

Another way in which the conscience is educated wrong, is by not having a proper standard by which to form it. Even good men often sin in this way. John Newton went out as the captain of a slave-ship, several voyages, after he became a Christian:—not that he went *against* his conscience, for he says he never had a doubt all this time, but that the business was becoming a Christian. The truth was, his conscience was not enlightened by a proper standard. Saul of Tarsus tells us that he verily thought he *ought* to persecute Jesus Christ. Surely he did not go against his conscience while doing what he verily thought he *ought* to do. But his conscience was educated wrong. What then is the standard and the means of educating the conscience? I merely say here, the Bible, the Bible. That will enlighten, guide,

stimulate, and educate the conscience. You must do right—I do not mean simply to do justly—but do your duty at all times, under all circumstances and at any hazard. During the prevalence of the cholera, a young physician called on his father for advice. His case was this. Just before the breaking out of the cholera, he had been appointed by the city-government as a physician in one of the hospitals. He was now ordered to go into that which was exclusively devoted to cholera patients, and stay there day and night. What should he do? Shall he resign his post, or go into what was almost certain death? His father was a clergyman. He calmly replied, “my son, if you go into that hospital, I think it almost certain that you will take the disease, and most likely your life will be the price; but I advise you to go. You accepted this appointment with *the understanding that you were to fulfill your duties.* The providence of God has made it your duty to go there and do all in your power to alleviate misery. I shall bear you on my heart every hour in prayer; but you and I must do our duty. Conscience would

never give you peace should you now turn back." Such was the advice of the father. Was he right or was he wrong? In a few days he had an express reach him saying that his son was taken down with the cholera. In an hour or two he was by the bed-side of that son nursing him. Was he right or was he wrong? In the profession of the minister of the Gospel there are often cases in which he must act not only without the notice, and the approbation of men, but when hardly a voice will fail to condemn his course; he must do it against the feelings, the prejudices and the opinions of men whom he loves, and respects; for, it is impossible, if he keeps his conscience clear and stimulated by the Bible, not to have his conscience, at times, in advance of those around him.

School the heart to meet with trials and disappointments. There is no part of life so joyous and so full of hope as youth; and some feel that it is wrong to dash the cup with a single fear, or to point to a single cloud that may gather. But is this wise? Must not troubles and disappointments come? Will not friends prove treacherous,—enemies

prove powerful,—will not losses and crosses meet him,—will not the grave call him to mourning, and sickness waste away his strength? And is he not to be told that the days of darkness will come and that they will be many? As well might the young sailor neglect to prepare for the storms, the winds and the raging of the deep as he passes round Cape Horn, because it is fair and unclouded sun-shine to-day. When these disappointments and sorrows do come, you must be prepared to bow to the will of Heaven,—not because it *must* be so, and you cannot help it, but because a Being wise and holy sits at the head of the universe, and directs all things for the best. It is one of the highest gifts of christianity that she can make men contented in whatsoever state they are: and this she can and will do for you, if you seek her aid. When you have brought your heart so that it will not roam in forbidden paths,—when you can say that you covet nothing which God has given to others while he denies it to you,—when you can truly say you are contented in your lot,—that you can bear what is laid upon you,—then you are prepar-

ed to be happy. You have built your happiness on something that will not fail you.

Seek to know yourself.

A man will most assuredly be deceived in regard to his powers of mind—his attainments, his standing among men, and especially his moral character, unless he studies himself very closely. There are three methods by which you may be aided to know yourself.

(1.) By self-examination: i. e. sitting down alone frequently,—and it ought to be done every evening,—and reviewing your time, your labors, your conversation, your thoughts and feelings. Books have been written to aid you to know yourself, but one hour of faithful self-examination is better than many hours of reading. Learning from a book *how* to do a thing is not *doing* it. Any man can sit down and review a day, a week, a course of conduct, and can weigh himself with a good degree of accuracy, if he will do it. I know that it is an irksome duty, and simply because it is unpleasant to have our good opinion of ourselves abated. But it is a medicine most useful to be taken often.

(2.) You may be aided to know yourself by reading. History and biography are, or should be a statement of facts, shewing how men have done and acted in such and such circumstances. As you read, you always decide most promptly whether this and that action or character was right. You thus learn how men have acted and how they ought to act. The result is, that you know how you ought to act. This will give you what we call an *enlightened* conscience. Especially will the word of God give you a knowledge of yourself which is full and accurate. If you had a glass into which you could look and see your mind and heart, conscience and feelings, it would be all that you need to make you know yourself. Such a mirror is in your hands; and the man who daily looks into it, knows himself,—becomes a balanced, humble man,—for “the spirit quickeneth.”

(3.) You may be especially aided to know yourself by prayer. All the light we have comes from above; and He who has created the spirit within us, who knows its wants, trials and temptations, has offered to interpose and stand between us and dangers, on the

single condition, that we ask his aid. But do not forget that prayer, to be acceptable must be daily, sincere, and fervent. This last thought is of great importance. Even the righteous man must offer the *fervent* prayer to have it avail. There is the prayer of the lips, which is mockery,—the prayer of the understanding, which is cold and selfish, and the prayer of the heart, which is fervent and effectual. Most beautifully does Taylor thus describe fervent prayer. “The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollows, and spreads itself into small portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness, and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted with little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels: So is a man's prayer; if it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is

carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and an hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermediate regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits *and thence sends showers of holy refreshment.*"

Cultivate humility of heart.

Pride is inherent in every heart. It requires no maxims or instruction to cause it to grow. But that humility which arises from a just knowledge of our own characters compared with those of our fellow-men, and compared with what we might be, and ought to be considering our opportunities, and compared with the requirements of our Maker, is, like all other jewels, difficult to be obtained. But the humble man has the promise of this life, were there no other. Just consider, if you had improved every hour of your life as you might have done,—if you had never abused the mind or the body,—what attainments you might have made? If you had never abused your temper or your tongue, and if the law of kindness had always been in your heart,—what friends might you not

now have had? If you had neglected no opportunity to receive or to do good, what might you not have done for yourself and others! In looking back even upon the short space which you call life, and upon your present habits and tastes, and upon the future, is there not cause of humility?

Cultivate liberality of heart.

In a former chapter I urged you to practice economy—not that you might become covetous, but that you might become liberal. We are all brethren, and God has made it our duty to consider every human being a brother,—and the law is, do good according to your opportunity and ability. It is a part of our moral discipline to see what we will do with our talents, our time, our faculties, and our property; and for them all must we give an account. If you give to the poor, you lend to the Lord: if you do so much for Christ's kingdom as to give a cup of water, you will be rewarded. Some confine all their charities to aid in relieving the *bodies* of men, and these, in their place, do good; but for one, as I feel that the immortal mind is immeasurably superior to the body, and, as I

am sure that if a man has his mind properly enlightened, and his heart made holy, he will himself take care of the body,—so, I feel that the greater part of charity had better go in that channel. Some will reason differently, and chide you for doing any thing for the spiritual condition of men, so long as there are so many poor around you; but do they reflect that were the mind and the heart neglected, and our charities to be confined to the body, the poor would shortly be increased tenfold? Begin early to devote a *part* of your income, however small that income may be, to charity, and you may feel sure that you have taken the right method to have your means increased. God is never long under obligations to his creatures.

While much is said and taught on the cultivation of your person, of your manners, your habits, and your intellect, I fear that too little is said about the heart. But you might have the beauty of an angel, and the manners of a Chesterfield, and the intellect of the mightiest of the fallen spirits, but if the heart *be neglected, you are a curse to yourself and to others.* The glory of the great God is not

that he is mighty,—that he is great,—that he is all knowledge, but that he has such a *heart* that the whole universe ought to love him. No love can long remain centered upon you unless it be founded upon your possessing a good heart. It is the foundation of character,—and of all that is lovely. It fits you to live and do good here, and your eternity depends upon it. “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” Beauty of earth will perish,—knowledge shall vanish away, but the fruits which rise in a good heart will be eternal in their duration, and eternal in their advancement to perfection.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS VIEWS.

CONTENTS.—Dilemma of the Atheist. Dangers of infidelity. *Report of the National Assembly of France.* Its results. What the danger of the present age. Infidel arguments. Seven questions to be put to the infidel. Death of Hume. His melancholy letter. Franklin's advice to Paine. Man must be a religious being. 1. His intellect needs it. John Bunyan. Curious description of Voltaire's mind. *Colleges cannot live without religion.* Experiments made and making. 2. Safety of our country demands religion. Experiment of 1790. Comparison between Holland and France. Dangers which surround us. 3. Religion necessary for the young man personally. What needed in order to religion. (a.) The Sabbath. The shuttle invention. (b.) *The Scriptures to be read.* (c.) *Prayer.* (d.) Beware of the first step in sin. The two apprentices. (e.) *Shun secret sins.*

SUPPOSE a man deny that there is a God. Invariably you find such a man wicked,—and we may, therefore, conclude that he *wishes* there may be no God. I never heard of such an one who mourned because he had no God, or because the universe had no keeper.

He hopes, of course, that if there be no God, there will be no punishment of sin, and no misery after this life has closed. Suppose it to be so that there is no God, and that we came here and are kept here by chance, or without any cause, and that we die in the same way. I wish to ask a simple question. Can any man prove to me that chance will not continue him in life forever, or that it will not make him wretched too? If you *came into being by chance, or without any cause*, may you not find misery and wo, as well as existence, forever? What then do you gain by the poor supposition, that if there be no God, you may be annihilated? Atheism can insure neither annihilation at death, nor freedom from misery after death.

There is no class of men so much in danger of being tinctured with infidelity, as young men. You would be amazed to see an old, white-headed man, just dropping into the grave, avow himself an infidel; you would be shocked to hear a child do it; and you would be disgusted to hear it from the lips of a young lady claiming to be respectable. But young men, in the hey-day of

youth, when in the flush of health, and in the strength of life, often embrace such notions *without examination or thought*, because such are held by some fashionable men, or because by them, they can be emancipated from God and from conscience at the very time when they wish to give themselves up to pleasure.

I am happy to say to you that the day for men of mind and talents to become infidels, *seems to have gone past*; and yet there are now second or third rate men at work trying to do away all government, the Sabbath, the churches, the ministry, and make this a nation of Atheists. God permitted one grand experiment to be made by infidelity, and the ears of all in the world were made to tingle *with the report*. *Voltaire and Rousseau* prepared a nation to become infidel. When all things were ready, the experiment began. "The National Assembly of France appointed a Committee to inquire and report whether there were, or ought to be a God: and the committee reported that there could be no *liberty on earth while there was believed to be a God in heaven*; and therefore there ought not to be, and there is no God; and

that death is an eternal sleep. The Assembly adopted the report, abolished the Sabbath, burnt the Bible, instituted the decade, and ordained the worship of the Goddess of Liberty in the person of a vile woman. But the consequences were too terrible to be endured. It converted the most polished nation of Europe into a nation of fiends and furies, and the theatre of voluptuous refinement into a stall of blood. The mighty mind who governs the universe,—whose being they had denied, whose word they burnt, whose worship they had abolished, whose protection they denied, withdrew his protection and gave them up; and with the ferocity of famished tigers, they fastened on each other's throats, and commenced the work of death, till quickly few were left alive to tell the tale of woe. And yet this dreadful experiment Infidels would repeat upon us. The entire corroborating action of the government of God, with all its satellite institutions, they would abolish, to let in upon society, in wrath without mixture and without measure, the impatient depravity of man. The family—the foundation of the political edifice, the methodizer of

the world's business, and the mainspring of its industry,—they would demolish. The family—the *sanctuary of the pure and warm affections*, where the helpless find protection,—the wretched sympathy,—and the ward *undying affection*, while parental hearts live to love, and pray, and forgive,—they would disband and desecrate. The family—that school of indelible early impressions and of inextinguished affection,—that verdant spot in life's dreary waste, about which memory lingers,—that centre of attraction which holds back the heady and high-minded, and whose cords bring out of the vortex the ship-wrecked mariner, after the last strand of every other cable is parted—these political Vandals would dismantle. The fire on its altars they would put out; the cold hand of death they would place on the warm beatings of its heart,—to substitute the vagrancy of desire, the rage of lust, and the solicitude, and disease, and desolation which follow the footsteps of irregulated nature exhausted by excess."

"Thus would they suspend the kind attractions of heaven upon us, and let out the

storm of guilty passion, and by one disastrous wave, from stem to stern, make a clear breach over us,—sweeping us clear of what patriots and Christians, and Heaven have done to render us happy. They would unspiritualize our souls, cut off eternity from our being, to hang their leaden weights upon the wheels of our machine, till it run down and stop forever. They would teach us to regard accountability as a fiction, and right and wrong as obsolete terms without use or meaning,—while, with single inconsistency they anathematize the ministry of Christ, eulogize the most abominable crimes, and cover the most exalted virtues with contempt and obloquy.”

While there is no danger at present, that infidelity will attempt to make proselytes among the educated and the learned in this country, there is every reason to fear that it will turn to the artizan, and the laborer, and by sowing the seeds of radicalism in the name of republicanism, by decrying human governments, and inflaming and maddening the passions, set a stone rolling which will not stop till it has crushed the liberties of our country.

Other nations have started as free as we have, and have maintained their liberties longer than we have; but finally their star sunk in a night that will know of no dawn. Can we keep our liberties? That is the great question. Who will help us to do it, if we turn away from Heaven? These men who decry government, and set laws at defiance, and set the poor and the rich against each other, and inflame the minds of men with the mad desire of cutting away the cords which bind our country to the throne of God, and who wish to make the fearful experiment of rending asunder all laws human and divine, and call this freedom,—who wish to take away the soul and make men mere upright brutes, and who will reduce human life to the value of a beast's life,—these are the men who prowl around our factories, sow the seeds of alienation and bitterness wherever they can—and who hope to make the nation cast off the Sabbath, the Book of God, the hopes of the soul, the guardianship of high Heaven, and draw down the curtains of eternal night over all the hopes of immortality.

Let me assure you that you can never

gather from the writings of all the infidels in the world, difficulties as solid as those which spring up in the mind of a child, or of a savage. "Why was sin permitted?" "What an insignificant world is this to be redeemed by the incarnation and death of the Son of God!" "Who can believe that only a few will be saved?" Fallen nature produces these and the like difficulties. The nurse of infidelity is sensuality. Youth is sensual. The Bible stands in their way. It prohibits the indulgence of *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.* But the young mind loves these things; and therefore it hates the Bible which prohibits them. It is prepared to say, "if any man will bring me arguments against the Bible, I will thank him; if not, I will invent them." You will be amazed, if you ever turn your mind to the investigation, to learn on what superficial and weak foundations, the arguments of infidelity rest. Ignorance is, in a word, the whole. A very little reading or thinking will scatter all that they can offer in the shape of *arguments.* What do facts say? "What sort of men are infidels? They are loose—fierce—over-bear-

ing men. There is nothing in them like sober and serious inquiry. They are the wildest fanatics on earth. Nor have they agreed among themselves on any scheme of trust and felicity. Contrast with the character of infidels, that of real Christians. Why do young men listen to infidelity? Is it not a low, carnal, wicked game? *Why, why* will a man be an infidel?" I have never yet met with infidels or the writings of infidels that did not bear the evidences of being exceedingly superficial.

The following is a very fair picture of *the young men* who profess to be infidels. A dashing young man of about twenty-five years of age was a passenger on board of one of our steamers which was winding her way up one of the rivers of the west. The deck was filled with passengers of both sexes. Being delighted with himself, the young man took occasion to speak loudly and fluently on a great variety of subjects, and among others, seemed delighted when he could loudly reiterate the phrases, "the imposture of Christianity," and "the fable of the Christian religion," so that all the company could hear him and perceive that

he was not one of those common creatures who admit the truth of a revelation. After he had exhausted his rhetoric, and by his bold impieties had drawn much attention upon himself, a man in the humble garb of an huntsman stepped up to him and said,—

“Sir, you seem to have a perfect knowledge of almost every thing, and, I doubt not, can satisfy a little piece of curiosity which I have in relation to a few particulars. Will you be so obliging as to tell me *the precise time when Ptolemy Philopater reigned in Egypt?*”

“I know nothing about it,” said the young man.

“Indeed!” said the hunting-shirt man, “I thought you might probably know. Then, sir, will you do me the favor to inform me *the precise time when Constantine was converted to Christianity?*”

“Neither do I know that.”

“Ah! I supposed you might know that, and am sorry you do not. Then sir, perhaps you can let me know the time when the Greek church separated from the Latin, and what the cause of the separation was?”

"I have given myself the trouble to know nothing about the Greek or the Latin church."

"I am sorry you cannot inform me on any of these subjects," said the poor-looking man.

Then approaching the young man and leaning his head forward as if to speak in a whisper, he added,

"Sir, I have only one more question to ask, and as I do not wish these bystanders to hear it, I will speak in a low voice. The question is this: as I heard you speaking about matters which I thought took a great deal of knowledge to understand so well, it occurred to me that you would be a proper person to tell me several things which I wish to know; but finding you do not know the matters I have asked you about, I now wish to ask you, sir, *what do you know?*"

By this time the eyes of the whole company were turned to the scene, while their looks expressed contempt for the young infidel, and admiration for the hunter. The young man took occasion immediately to glide off, and no more was heard of his conceited pratings.

You will sometimes meet with the flippant

talker who will annoy you by what he calls arguments against Christianity. Not unlikely you may not have the materials and the facts at hand by which to confute him; and if you had, argument will not reach him. The best way is to carry the war directly into the camp, and ask him a few plain questions—such as—

1. What testimonials can infidelity bring that she ever enlightened, purified or blessed a nation, or tribe, or even a family on the earth? Or, has she nothing to give us but assertions the most arrogant, and assumptions the most bare-faced?

2. Ask him to account for it, that if there be any thing good, pure, holy, and heavenly on earth, the Bible exhorts us to practice it; if there be any thing evil, base, selfish, and wrong in the world, the Bible forbids us to practice it. How came it to do so, if it be the work of impostors?

3. Ask him if it be not so, that the Bible contains more light, knowledge, and wisdom than all other books besides; and that those who read it most, follow it most, have most

comfort through life, and the most peace in death? How does he account for this?

4. Ask him how it is, that the wisest, coolest, most learned men in the world have believed that the Bible came from God, revealing a plan of salvation through the Redeemer, and have clung to it as their guide through life and their hope in death?

5. Ask him, before he casts the Bible away, to point to any other book that has done a thousandth part as much good, in changing the manners and habits of nations, and giving peace and joy to all its friends?

6. Ask him to account for the fact, that the world are never surprised when an infidel is found to fall and commit some scandalous sin, while if a Christian commits the same, it is noised through the land! How is it that the world do such homage to Christianity as to demand so much more of her disciples?

7. Ask him to point to the man whom infidelity has aided in the least through life, or supported in death.

He will point you, if he be an intelligent man, to the death of David Hume, as being one in which infidelity could render a man

calm, cheerful and happy when he came to die. I beg leave to say that there can be no truth in the story of Hume's peaceful death. Let me quote his own words, written *some time before his death, and tell me if they are the breathings of a happy man? And if such were his feelings while in health, what must they have been when death was about to enter his chamber?*

"Methinks I am like a man, who having struck on many shoals and narrowly escaped shipwreck in passing a small strait, has yet the temerity to put out to sea in the same leaky, weather-beaten vessel, and even carries his ambition so far as to think of compassing the globe under these disadvantageous circumstances. My memory of past errors makes me diffident of future; the wretched condition, weakness, and disorder of the faculties, *I must employ in the inquiry, increase my apprehensions; the impossibility of correcting or amending these faculties reduces me almost to despair, and makes me resolute to perish on the barren rock upon which I am at present, rather than enter upon that boundless ocean which runs out into immensity.* This

sudden view of my danger strikes me with melancholy, and I cannot forbear feeding my despair with all those desponding reflections which the present subject furnishes me with in such abundance. I am first affrighted and confounded with that forlorn solitude in which I am placed in my philosophy, and fancy myself some uncouth strange monster, who, not being able to mingle and unite in society has been expelled from all human commerce, and left utterly abandoned and disconsolate. Fain would I run into the crowd for shelter and warmth but cannot prevail on myself to mix with such deformity. I call upon others to join me in order to make a company apart, but no one will hearken to me: every one shuns me and keeps at a distance from that storm which beats upon me on every side. When I look abroad I see on every side dispute, contradiction, anger, calumny and detraction; when I turn my eye inward I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. All the world conspires to oppose and contradict me, though such is my weakness I feel my opinions loosened and fall of themselves, when unsupported by the approbation of others: every

step I take is with hesitation, and every new reflection makes me dread an error and absurdity in my reasoning; for with what confidence can I venture on such bold enterprises, when besides those numberless infirmities peculiar to myself I find so many which are common to human nature. The intense view of manifold contradictions and infirmities in human reason, has so worked upon my brain that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as *more probable or likely than another*. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return; whose favor shall I court, and whose anger shall I dread? What beings surround me, and on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me? I am confounded by all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of the use of every member and faculty."

Let me urge you never to take one step towards infidelity—never "sit in the seat of the scornful, nor walk in the way of trans-

gressors." Our wants and woes are so many, that we need the religion of the Bible. Franklin has one fine turn in his letter written to Paine when that infidel sent him his Age of Reason in manuscript. On returning it he says, "I would advise you not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person. If men are so wicked *with* religion, what would they be *without* it."

Man must be a *religious being*—or he cannot accomplish much that is great or good. It is the design of heaven that his weakness should be aided by Divine strength, his darkness by Divine light, and his folly by Divine wisdom.

1. Religion is necessary to enable you to maintain a proper balance in the powers of the mind.

There is nothing that can clothe the mind with so much dignity and value as religion. By its side, in this light, all other things seem small. To cultivate and enlighten it, is to polish what is to be eternal in duration. You will always find that religious men value the cultivation of the mind more than others

—that they live in a world more intellectual, and that they are the best balanced, other things being equal. One reason why the memory is not better and stronger in many people is, that they have not had conscience enough, in all their conversation, to say the *exact truth*, without any abatement, exaggeration, or alteration. By cultivating the conscience, you insensibly cultivate the memory, you treasure up facts as they are, and habituate the mind to contemplate truth in its relative proportions. Do you suppose there would be any such thing as slavery in this or any other land, if all men looked upon the immortal *mind* as the religious man ought to do? Would there be such a thing as slavery interposed between the immortal mind of the slave and his being enlightened, if all men had a proper sense of the worth of that mind which God created in his own image? I ask you too, to look around on the circle of your acquaintance, and see if it be not so, that the minds which are balanced the poorest, whose judgment is the least to be relied upon, and who have the least stability of character, are not those who are the farthest from religion?

Who does not know that the same mind is worth more to itself, to its family and to the community after it has had religion engrafted upon it, than before? On the contrary, the mind that is cultivated ever so highly, divorced from religion, will be wayward, and monstrous, or fickle, flighty and puerile? Compare John Bunyan after his conversion to God, with John Bunyan before. Who can believe, that as a mere *intellectual effort* he could ever have produced any thing to be compared with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, had he not had his mind brought under the influence of religion? The mind of Voltaire is a specimen of the human intellect cut loose from religion. Says a Dutch Magazine, "the brilliancy, variety and versatility of his parts, his rapidity of apprehension, his ready wit, his activity of mind, perpetual—and yet ever without effort—the power, the vivacity, and the ease with which he grappled with all sorts of subjects, and most styles of writing, whether light or profound, whether literary, scientific, metaphysical, historical, political, or relating to common life and manners;—these high qualities when viewed in union

with the eternal grin, the grimace, the chatter, the antics, the mischievousness, the indelicacy, and the apparent want of native dignity, that belong to his character, form a most strange compound. Never, surely, were talents so lofty, united to thoughts so low. Never did genius appear at once so astonishing, and so little amiable or respectable. His knowledge was wonderfully extensive and as wonderfully superficial. He *half* knew every thing, from the cedar to the hyssop, and he writes of them all, and laughs at them all. The most suitable appellation which could perhaps, be applied to him, would be that of an *inspired monkey*."

Two attempts, if not more, have been made in this country during the present generation, to have Colleges in successful operation without any connection with religion. One was founded by an illustrious name, and nursed with all possible care; but it could not prosper. There was a blight upon it. They could keep neither professors nor scholars, till at last they altered the plan, brought in a man of God to teach religion, and the Institution has since been very prosperous.

A more splendid experiment has been made by all that wealth could do, to found a College for orphan children,—from which religion is not only to be excluded, but the ministers of the gospel are insulted by name, and treated as no slave in the land would be treated. It is now twenty years and more since millions of money were devoted to this object. Not an orphan has yet been educated. Heaven has hitherto blowed upon the whole scheme, and the half-finished marble columns, each of which would place one hundred and forty orphans in as many good families, to be trained and educated as our farmers train their own sons—stand as so many witnesses of his frown. Without aspiring to be a prophet, I have no hesitation in saying, that I do not believe God will ever allow the attempt to succeed, or that he will allow any man the honor of doing good, who publicly insults him in doing that good; and I believe he will make it manifest, that the words of Christ are forever true, “he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me, and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth Him that sent me.” Had it been carved in the entablature in large letters,

—"God shut out of this institution," the insult to heaven could not have been more direct than it is. *How* it will be brought about, I pretend not to say; but I think it will all come to nought, and stand as a monument, that "those that honor me, I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed," saith the Lord. Colleges and institutions of learning will find that to have the blessing of God, they must exalt his Son. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

2. Religion is necessary for the temporal salvation of our country.

What has dug the grave of the mighty nations of old? They had every thing human that could render them permanent,—and yet they are all gone, and many of them sunk so fearfully that their very graves are unknown. When men cast off their allegiance to Heaven, they have thrown away their sheet-anchor, and cannot be sure that they can out-ride any storm. Never was a nation more exalted than was poor France previous to 1790; never did a people sin as they did,—and never was one punished as they were.

Instead of sending down an army of barbarians to crush them in war, or of sending volcanoes to bury them, or earthquakes to shake their cities into the dust, Heaven called for the spirit, fierce, tiger-like, fiend-like,—from their own bosoms, and cities became cauldrons of blood, and men seemed like fiends playing the part of butchers in the very crater of a volcano.

Holland is a christian country, and since that time she had to pass through a storm that was fearful indeed—a storm which none but a christian nation can pass through and survive. Her king was a religious man. He acknowledged God in all his public acts, and when in trouble, he was among the first to bow at his altar and call upon him. What was the result? Money was wanted, and the citizens loaned millions in a few days; men were wanted, and the young men through the nation enrolled themselves to follow the drum-beat. For two years her citizens allowed themselves to be taxed to an almost incredible amount, without a murmur. There was no excitement—no insurrections, no martial law. The nation went through

the difficulties as a private individual would have done. But Holland is a land of Sabbaths. There is no Sabbath in France. The mind there is not disciplined by pulpit teaching. Her citizens can feel, but cannot weigh and reason. And if circumstances should occur to let that nation loose again—a nation without religion—who would be surprised to hear that civil blood flowed again, and that the nation was heaved from its foundations. “Man must be governed by the united influences of the Bible, or by the arm of tyranny. *There is no alternative. May this truth so often taught, and so often written in characters of blood—never be forgotten.*”

What shall become of us? Let the young man whose eye is following me, remember that so many are the dangers that threaten us that the arm of patriotism often hangs drooping, and the heart is faint.

I believe that it is a general conviction that something besides patriotism is needed in a land tainted by the breath of more than two millions of slaves—whose unmeasured forests have too often been filled with the groans of oppression,—and whose moral des-

olations are such that the heart of a Nehemiah might ache a thousand times during a single journey through the land. I know I am speaking the sentiments of thousands when I say, that were Buonaparte now master of the thrones of Europe, and were his fleets covering the ocean now on their way to conquer us, he might bring dismay and suffering,—but he could hardly bring greater dangers than those which now threaten us. An arm might be raised up powerful enough to arrest him and send him off to some rock in the ocean, there to read a lesson on human greatness to the astonished nations; but what human arm can arrest an enemy that springs up from our very soil, and comes in the shape of political ambition, party animosity and strifes? We cannot rely on cabinets. Straws may dissolve them, and make them a laughing-stock. We cannot rely on legislation. The halls of senates may be stained with blood, and polluted by party wrangling. If these be all our hope, our death-warrant is sealed and the executioner is at the door. But I have one other place of hope. If the Sabbath can be rescued, sanctified,—if the word of God can

become familiar under every roof,—if the Sabbath School can flourish in every parish,—if our churches may all be supplied with holy pastors,—if our press may send out full and wholesome streams, if the God of heaven may see us placing ourselves under his protection and living for him—there is safety. Here is the spot on which I would take my stand in urging every young man to feel that he is to respect and honor religion; that he is to uphold its institutions. Let him learn now that we cannot rely upon *men*; we must have the aid of the God of heaven, or we crumble and sink under our sins and follies.

3. Religion is necessary for every young man personally.

There is no religion on the face of the earth so unwelcome to the human heart, as the religion of Jesus Christ,—and for the plain reason, that no other religion requires sacrifices so great. Hence, you will be tempted to disbelieve it—to cavil at it,—to ridicule it,—and to reject it. But after all, at whichever of these steps you stop, you will have a secret, lingering conviction that religion is a reality, that all men need it be-

fore death, and that you must and will have it before that time arrives. What a contrast is there between the death-bed of an infidel and a Christian! On his death-bed, Hume tried to joke about the fabled Styx, over which his soul would be carried in a boat by Charon;—while the believer, Finley, had his soul filled with the bright hopes of immediate glory. On his death-bed, Voltaire wished he had never been born;—while in the same circumstances Wallyburton praised God that he had been created.

Suppose in consequence of a freset you should find that you could go out and pick up valuable goods,—would it be right to do it, and call them your own? When God brings the Sabbath along to you to be improved,—is it right for you to take it from him or to pervert it to your own pleasures? Suppose a friend commit an invaluable diamond to your keeping, and you know its worth, but refuse to give it back to him when he asks you to return it,—is this right? God has committed such a jewel to you, and he asks you to return it back to him. Will you

do it? That diamond is the immortal soul within you.

There is only one thing which will bear the name of religion, or which will ever afford the heart any satisfaction. I mean, direct, personal intercourse with your God. All else will be falling short, or going round about it; and everything that bears the name of religion will be pleasant or irksome in the same degree that you have personal intercourse with your heavenly Father or not.

It may be that I am addressing a young man who has not had religious parents, or early religious teaching. You have lost immensely,—but let me entreat you to make religion your first, and by all comparison, the most important study to which you can turn your mind. Do not let the flippancy of some acquaintance who has grown too wise to fear God, or the arguments of another who has made a covenant with death, induce you to set down experimental, practical religion as a fable or as useless, or to put it out of your thoughts. But give your mind to it. If you want to investigate it, search it, prove it, you can do so: it will bear any scrutiny that you

can bestow upon it; but let me entreat you not to neglect it. If you have found any hints or any honesty of purpose in the pages which I have written,—any desire to instruct or aid you, let me assure you that it all centres on this point—your possessing personal religion. If there was any thing that saved me through the temptations of youth, and shielded me when I had no human friend to do it, and for which I have to bless God, it was, that at a very early age I consecrated myself to heaven; and if there be any one thing over which the heart can have a deeper sorrow than over all other things, it is, that I have had so little intercourse with my God. And this, I venture to say, will be the testimony of all in like circumstances. My dear young friend, you are immortal; your eternity must be looked after; you are depraved, you must be renewed by the Spirit of God. You are a sinner,—you must seek God by repentance, and through the atonement of Jesus Christ. You are unholy in all your deeds and words and thoughts, and you must be cleansed by the washing of regeneration. May the voice of entreaty urge you, now, in

the morning of life, to seek an interest in the everlasting kingdom of heaven, and then all other things will seem of small value to you.

In order to possess religion, you need to guard yourself especially on five points.

1. *The Sabbath.*

If you are industrious and active during the day, you will find that at night you need rest. You have consumed much of your animal life. To rest, you need the most easy position of the body. The bed gives you this position, so that you do not have to labor to sustain any portion of the body. You need quietness, and God has put the world at rest, and hushed the world that you may have quietness. Light is a powerful stimulus to the human system, and so he has withdrawn light, and covered the world with a mantle, that you may rest. In the morning you find that you are refreshed and invigorated by sleep. The machine is wound up again. Still, you have not regained *quite* all that you have consumed; and every night you fall short a little, so that by the end of the week, you are quite spent and need a whole day to recover what has been lost.

And this day has been provided for you. It is the rest of the Sabbath. It was made for man, because his body, and mind, and soul needed it. Who does not know that the man who has kept the Sabbath is fresh for his work on Monday morning? When France instituted her Decade and made every *tenth day, a day of rest, it was found that those who rested once in ten days, could not do as much labor as those who rested once in seven days.* The human body is a wonderful machine; and it is one of the laws of its being, that it cannot labor over six days, without rest. It is so with the animal creation around us—it is a great law of heaven. Hence the *man who undertakes to labor seven days in the week, will not prosper, whether it be the labor of the hands or of the mind.* As a mere creature of time—to say nothing about a higher end—I would urge you to keep the Sabbath. Never allow any pressure to tempt you to labor on that day. It is a day of rest to the body. Let the body have the full *benefit of it.* *I have never known an habitual Sabbath-breaker—one who was educated to know its design—who was prospered.* I

have seen farmers who worked on that day—mechanics who did so,—merchants who spent the day in their counting-rooms, and banks which kept all their clerks at work during the Sabbath, but I have never known one of these that did not grow poor and fail. Says one of our Judges in Pennsylvania in his charge to the Jury, “I presume it will be admitted by any intelligent mind that religion is of the utmost importance to every community. The history of the past shews abundant evidence of the truth of this proposition. It is the basis of civilization. Without it we should be in a state of moral darkness and degradation, such as usually attend the most barbarous and savage states. It is to the influence of it that we stand indebted for all that social order and happiness which prevail among us. In short we owe to it all that we enjoy either of civil or religious liberty. Here then give me leave to say, that the institution of the Sabbath, is, in my humble opinion, not only admirably adapted to promote and establish religion among us, but to secure our physical as well as moral health and strength.”

I have already spoken of the Sabbath as a source of mental improvement; but as a means of recruiting the body, of reviving the spirits, cheering the whole man, there is, and can be, no substitute.

But when I connect time with eternity, and look upon it as the time especially appropriated by the wisdom and mercy of God in which the soul shall realize his presence, enjoy his teaching, and prepare for its eternal state of being, I cannot speak of it as I ought or would. So fully impressed is the community in which I reside that the Sabbath is essential to man, that even a young man who violates it, loses respect and character. Very seldom if ever, will you find a man who keeps the Sabbath as he should, lose his character; and still more seldom will you find such an one in the State Prison. The young man who makes up his mind to become wiser than God, and to say that the Sabbath was not made for man, and therefore he does not need it, is on the way to ruin. A gentleman told me how he became poor. "I was engaged in manufacturing," said he, "on the Lehigh River. On the Sabbath I used to

rest, but never regarded God in it. On one beautiful Sabbath when the noise was all hushed, and the day was all that loveliness could make it, I sat down in my piazza and went to work inventing a new shuttle. I neither stopped to eat or drink till the sun went down. By that time I had the invention completed. The next morning I exhibited it—boasted of my day's work, and was applauded. The shuttle was tried and worked well; but that Sabbath day's work cost me thirty thousand dollars. We branched out, and enlarged, and the curse of Heaven was upon me from that day onward."

Let me urge every young man to begin life with the determination that he will keep the Sabbath. Whatever be his business, his duties, or his station, let him not fail here, if he would have the blessing of Heaven. Make it a day sacred to religious reading, meditation and worship. Always be found in the house of God on the Sabbath. Have a particular place where you worship, and go not from one church to another. Let the Scriptures be the centre to which and for which all your reading and meditations flow.

This leads me to say that in order to religion it is essential,

2. *That you read the Scriptures much.* *

There is no book so distasteful to one who seldom reads it as the Bible. I have seen men read an old paper, or an old almanac by the hour, even to the old advertisements, rather than the Bible, which was lying by them. And there is no book so delightful as this, to one who reads it habitually. Try it for one space of time equal to six months, and see if it be not so. You ought always to use the same Bible, so that you will have the pages familiar to the memory. It ought to be a Bible with references, so that you can compare scripture with scripture. If you can, you should also have a small concordance. As to commentaries and helps, a good concordance is worth more than all other helps. If you were to study architecture by examining a beautiful building, such as the Parthenon was, it might aid you somewhat to have ladders to climb, and guides to point out this and that massy part, this and that beautiful part,—but after all, it is the building and not the ladders and guides, that is to form your

taste and instruct you in architecture. Their telling you that each column must be so many times its diameter in height, and the intercolumniations so and so, is not teaching you. You must study the building yourself. So of the Book of God. You want to read it to imbibe its spirit—to be baptized in the waters of life. Some feel that they cannot study the Scriptures because they have not a world of helps. They might just as well say that they cannot drink out of the beautiful, cool fountain, because they have not all manner of cups and pitchers with which to dip up the waters. To praise the Bible seems to be to degrade it. You might as well praise the sun. It is above all praise. The man who walks in its light and drinks of its spirit, is guided by unerring wisdom, and endowed with superhuman strength. The young man who should commit the book of Proverbs to memory, and be in the daily habit of applying them to the duties and business of life, though he should have no other instructor, would be wise in all that pertains to this life. And he who makes the revelation which God has given, his guide to eternal life, will be

most likely to gain the most important of all things,—the salvation of the soul.

3. *Prayer is necessary, if you would possess religion.*

Since sin has entered this world, and we have all come under its power, we can have no visible intercourse with Heaven. The white-robed sons of light are not permitted to come to us; and God does not allow us to see him face to face; still, we may have intercourse with the Infinite Father, that shall be daily, that shall be beneficial, that shall be delightful. I know that prayer is not natural to you,—nor do you love the duty or enjoy the privilege naturally. But I know too, that he who begins to pray and continues to do so stately and daily, though at first he may find his thoughts wander, and other thoughts rush in upon him, yet if he continues, these will intrude less and less, till he can have almost unclouded access to God.

There is but one Being who has all things in his own hand and under his own control. *We* pass and change like shadows. Is it not amazing strange that when we can have his strength to gird us, his wisdom to guide us,

his years to live in, and his mercy to deliver us from sin, and fear, and make us eternally blessed,—and all this on the simple condition that we confide in him sufficiently to ask him,—is it not amazing that we are so unwilling to do it?

The old proverb in the primer, that “praying will make us leave off sinning, and sinning will make us leave off praying,” is true to the letter. Were I to be asked what is the great remedy for sin, and what the thing that can destroy the love of it in the heart, I should say, beyond all other things,—*prayer*. Indeed, without this aid, all other attempts and efforts made to obtain the mastery over your sins, will be in vain. Do not say you have not time. Daniel could pray three times a day, though the prime minister of one of the greatest kingdoms that ever existed. Do not say you see no use in it. God has prescribed it; and has styled himself a God who will hear prayer. Try it every night and morning for six months faithfully, and if at the end of that time you see no use in it, you may then stop.

4. In order to possess religion, *you must beware of the first step in sin.*

There is no such thing as a little sin. A sin that God has seen fit to condemn, and disapprove, cannot be a small sin. The first setting out in sin is like the letting out of waters. It is the first half-uttered oath that paves the way for another, and that for another, till you become a profane swearer. It is the first shilling that is taken from the drawer that prepares the way for a dishonest character. It is the first sip at the glass of wine that prepares the way for you to die the death of the drunkard. It is the first rebellious word that you utter against Heaven, that prepares you to be the cold sceptic, or the sneering infidel. The temple of sin has many apartments, and there are the mysteries of iniquity within them, and they all have descending floors when once you have entered them,—the first place for caution and resolution and firmness is at the threshold. If you will not cross that, you are safe. A very little resolution and effort can keep you from temptation and sin; but when once you have yielded, you are carried away as on the wa-

ters of a flood. I once knew of two apprentices who lived in a Christian family. They were very intimate—ate at the same table, and slept in the same bed. There was a *very unusual attention to religion in that village*. They were both interested, and apparently, both equally so. One evening, there was to be a very solemn meeting—what we call an “inquiry meeting.” It was the first of the kind that had been held. The young men set out together, and walked nearly to the room. They then stopped, and one said he would not go in. The other said he would. Up to that point, they were both apparently on their way towards the kingdom of heaven. The one who went to the meeting soon found peace in believing. In a few months he stood up before the congregation and publicly made a profession of religion. The same day the other young man was locked up in State Prison for crime! Oh! beware of the first step in sin.

5. In order to possess religion, *you must shun secret sins.*

I think it is Walter Scott who says that if men could read each others thoughts and

feelings, they who now sit so friendly at the dinner table together, would rise up in horror and fly from each other in terror. There are two kinds of secret sins—viz.—those of *neglect*—such as neglecting your Bible, neglecting the room of prayer, and neglecting the heart;—and the sins of the thoughts. Who, that knows his own heart, will deny that the great amount of sins for which we shall answer at the Judgment Day, are the sins of the heart—secret sins? Sometimes we have occasion to mourn that we have broken such and such resolutions, and have omitted such and such duties. Now no human eye can see you when you neglect prayer, or the word of God; but this secret sin will kill all your hopes of heaven, and will make you wretched indeed.

The repining thoughts, by which you secretly rebel against the providences of heaven, are secret sins,—but they cut you off from religion. The envy of the heart by which we covet what others have, but we have not—and the thought which is unholy and impure, is a secret sin;—but, indulged

in, they will destroy your hopes of eternal life. It is not the passing thought that darts into the mind suddenly, but which finds no welcome there, that I mean. It is those that you allow to stay and nestle and brood in the heart; or, as an old minister of the Gospel once said, "if an unclean bird alights on your head a moment, you are not to blame; but you are to blame, if you allow it to make its nest in your hair!"

Remember too, that really there are no secret sins. The eye of God reads all. The scant measure, the hard bargain, the crowding of the poor, the covetings of the soul, the mental sins, are all naked to his eye. No darkness can conceal your deeds; no silence of earth can silence him, at the last great Day. He will bring every secret thing into judgment. Those sins which you would not commit, if your mother or sister, or even a child were with you,—those which defile the soul and make you despise yourself,—those that burden and corrupt the heart—those which grieve the Spirit of God from your heart—are what I mean. I say they are in-

compatible with religion. I say that a single leak however small may be enough to sink the proudest ship. I say that he who allows himself habitually to indulge in secret sins, will most assuredly find that he cannot claim the hopes of possessing religion,—and he now begins to drink one of the horrors which will eternally be in the cup of sin—the horror of despising and abhorring himself—without any power to overcome these sins of the heart.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT END OF LIVING.

CONTENTS.—Three modes of revelation. One great law lying at the foundation of the happiness of a created and intelligent being:—what it is. Judgment of this world wrong. Striking illustration. Works of God teach one great lesson. The rose. The old tree. The mountain brook. The bright star. Washington and Buonaparte philosophically compared. Wilberforce. What the first and great aim of every young man should be. Howard and the prisoners. Doing good in little things. How indomitable energy acquired. The great thing to be learned by man—is—to know God. Two great mistakes of young men. How and why they commit them. What it is to know God. Effects of a perfect standard. What part of the divine character is most glorious. Results of this knowledge upon the young man. The great end of writing this book. Concluding remarks.

THERE are three ways in which God reveals himself to men. First—through his works, which every where bear marks of design and wisdom. Second—through the conscience—which every where shews the law of God written on the heart; and thirdly,

through his written revelation which we call the Bible. In one of the Psalms a beautiful comparison is drawn between the first and the last of these methods, and the superior excellence decidedly accorded to the written revelation. In the light of these three revelations we may see the great end for which we live.

Through all the universe of created minds God has made one law essential to the happiness of his creatures; and that, is, *that they live to do good, and make this their aim.*

I know that men may sometimes play a conspicuous part on the stage of life, and be applauded and almost deified, while their aims and desires are wholly selfish. But we must not take the opinion of the world, on moral subjects, as being that which we shall admit when we see in the light of eternity. For example, the world admires what we denominate a patriot—the man who will spend time, and money, and even life, for his country, and that admiration is bestowed without any particular inquiry as to his motives. But why is not Paul of Tarsus as much admired as a hero—say the hero of the Nile? Was his

moral character less pure,—his views less lofty and far-reaching,—his enthusiasm less fervent,—his courage less tried,—his perseverance less enduring,—his labors less constant,—the good he effected less permanent? No,—none of these. He planted twice as many churches as the other destroyed ships. He saved the souls of twice as many as the other sent into eternity unprepared; and the banner under which he fought, will wave high on the golden battlements of heaven, long after that of the flag-ship shall have perished under the foot of oblivion and shall have passed away forever!

Why then is not Paul as much admired as the hero? They were both great, and uncommon men; both influenced the destiny of the globe; but alas! they were great in two very different senses of the word. The one lived, acted, and measured on the scale of time; the other on the scale of eternal ages. The one lived to exalt man; the other to exalt God. The one would have sunk a nation at a blow, if in his power, and then claimed the glory: the other would have shuddered to see even a hard-hearted jailer lose his life,

and would willingly be a babbler, a madman, an outcast in the eyes of men, rather than not to do good, and, that on the highest scale, to his fellow men. I know that the man whose aim and end of life, is to do good, is not as much caressed and admired, as the man who acts merely to gain the applause of men. But I say this is not the time nor the place for the decision of this question, nor is the opinion of the world the proper tribunal for its decision.

What does God teach us in his works? What is the lesson which he there bids us read concerning the great end of life?

On the frail little stem in the garden hangs the opening rose. Go speak to it.

“Why do you hang there, beautiful flower?”

“I hang here to sweeten the air which man breathes—to open my beauties to kindle emotion in his eye, to shew him the hand of God who penciled every leaf and laid it thus carefully on my bosom. And whether you find me here to greet him every morning with my opening face, or folding myself up

under the cool curtains of evening, my end is the same. I live not to myself."

"But suppose you hung on the distant mountain side instead of the garden"—

"Why, then I should live in brightness under the bare possibility, that man might direct his footsteps there and smile to see me there already awaiting his arrival, or that other spirits might see that God loves to give so freely that he throws his glories even on the desert in vast profusion. Even there I should not live to myself."

Beside you highway stands an aged tree, solitary and alone. You see no living thing near it and you say surely that must stand and live for itself alone.

"No" says the tree; "God never made me for a purpose so small. I am old. I have stood here more than an hundred years. In the summer I have spread out my arms and sheltered the panting flocks which hastened to my shade. In my bosom I have concealed and protected the brood of young birds as they lay and rocked in their nests. In the storm, I have more than once received in my body the lightning's bolt, which had

else destroyed the traveler: the acorns which I matured from year to year, have been carried far and wide, and groves of forest-oaks can claim me as their parent. I have lived *for the eagle* which has perched on my top,—for the humming-bird that has paused and refreshed its giddy wings, ere it danced away again like a blossom of the air; for the insect that has found a home within the folds of my bark; and when I can stand no longer, I shall fall by the hand of man, and I shall go to strengthen the ship which makes him lord of the ocean, and to his dwelling to warm his hearth and cheer his home. I live not to myself.”

On yonder mountain side comes down the silver brook, in the distance, resembling the ribbon of silver, running and leaping as it dashes joyously and fearlessly down. Go ask that leaper, “what are you doing there?”

“I was born high up the mountain,—but there I could do no good; and so I am hurrying down, running where I can and leaping where I must, but hastening down to create the sweet valley,—where the thirsty cattle may drink,—where the lark may sing on my

margin,—where I may drive the mill for the convenience of man, and then widen into the great river and bear up his steam-boats and shipping, and finally plunge into the ocean, to rise again in vapor, and perhaps come back in the cloud to my own native mountain to live my short life over again. Not a drop of water comes down my channel on whose bright face you may not read, ‘none of us liveth unto himself.’”

Speak now to that solitary star that hangs in the far verge of heaven and ask the bright sparkler, “what are *you* doing there?”

Its voice comes down the path of light and cries,—

“I am a mighty world. I was stationed here at the creation, and had all my duties marked out. I was among the morning stars that sang together, and among the sons of God that shouted for joy at the creation of the earth. Aye, I was there,—

“When the radiant morn of Creation broke,
And the world in the smile of God awoke,
And the empty realms of darkness and death
Were moved thro’ their depths by his mighty breath,
And orbs of beauty and spheres of flame
From the void abyss by myriads came,

In the joy of youth, as they darted away,
Through the widening wastes of space to play,
Their silver voices in chorus rung,
And this was the song the bright ones sung"—

"Great and marvelous are thy works,
Lord, God, Almighty ;—just and true are all
thy ways."

"Here among the morning stars I hold my
place, and help to keep other worlds balanced
and in their places. I have oceans and
mountains, and I support myriads of immor-
tal beings, on my bosom, and when I have
done all this, I send my bright beams down to
earth, and the sailor takes hold of the helm
and fixes his eye on me, and finds his way
across the great ocean. Of all the countless
hosts of my sister stars who walk forth in the
great space of creation, not one, not one lives
or shines for herself."

And thus has God written upon the flow-
er that sweetens the air, upon the breeze that
rocks that flower on its stem, upon the rain-
drop that refreshes the smallest sprig of moss
that lifts its head in the desert—upon the
ocean that rocks every swimmer in its deep
chambers,—upon every penciled shell that

sleeps in the caverns of the deep, no less than upon the mighty sun which warms and cheers millions of creatures that live in his light, —upon *all* his works he has written—“none of us liveth to himself.” And probably, were we wise enough to understand these *works*, we should find that there is nothing, —from the cold stone in the earth, or the minutest creature that breathes—which may not in some way or other, minister to the happiness of some living creature. We admire and praise that flower that best answers the end for which it was created, and bestows the most pleasure. We value and praise that horse which best answers the end for which he was created; and the tree that bears fruits the most rich and abundant. The star that is the most useful in the heavens is the star which we admire the most.

Now is it not reasonable, that *man*,—to whom the whole creation, from the flower, up to the spangled heavens all minister,—*man* who has the power of conferring deeper misery or higher happiness than any other being on earth,—*man* who can act like God if he will, —is it not reasonable that *he* should live for

the noble end of living,—not to himself, but for others ?

Let me point you to two men—both great, conspicuous, and immortal in fame,—both *having the finest opportunities to bless their race*—the one living for himself,—the other for the good of others. You will not be surprised to see the names of Buonaparte and Washington, as those about to be compared. More conspicuous or known examples I could not select. The beautiful comparison made by Chateaubriand, yet to be published in his memoirs, and which will be given to the world after his death, is very nearly what I mean. With a very few alterations I could adopt it as my own.

“If Washington and Buonaparte are compared, man with man, the genius of the first will seem to take a less lofty flight than that of the second. Washington belongs, not like Buonaparte, to the race of the Alexanders and Cæsars, who surpassed the ordinary stature of the human race. He creates no sentiment of *astonishment*. He is not seen contending, on a vast theatre for glory, with the greatest captains and most powerful monarchs of the

earth. He traverses no seas ; he hurtles not from Memphis to Vienna,—from Cadiz to Moscow. His work is the simple one of defending himself, with a handful of citizens within the narrow circle of domestic hearths, in a land without a past and without celebrity. He gains none of those battles which renew the bloody triumphs of Arbela and Pharsalia ; he puts not his foot upon the necks of kings ; he does not say to them, waiting on the vestibule of his palace, *how often you come ! and how you weary Attila !*"

"A certain spirit of silence envelops the actions of Washington : slow caution marks them all. One would say that he had ever the sentiment of his great mission with him. And that he feared to compromise it by rashness. His own personal destiny seems not to have entered into the calculations of this hero of a new species. The destinies of his country alone occupied him, and he did not permit himself to risk or gamble with what did not belong to him. But for this profound obscurity, what light breaks forth ! Seek through the unknown forests where the sword of Washington glittered, and what will you find

there? Tombs? No! A world. Washington has left the United States as a trophy of his field of battle."

"Buonaparte possessed no single trait of this great American. His wars were all waged upon an ancient continent, environed by splendor and stunning with noise. His object was personal glory. His individual destiny filled all his thoughts. He seems to have known that his mission would be short; that the torrent which fell from such a height would quickly expend its force. He hurried forward to enjoy and to abuse his glory, as if aware that it was a fugitive dream of youth. Like the gods of Homer, four steps must suffice him to reach the end of the world. Every shore sees his apparition. His name is inscribed on the records of every nation,—but precipitately. In his hurried career he scatters crowns to his family and his soldiers. His monuments, his laws, his victories, are all the work of haste. Hanging as a portent over the world, with one hand he overthrows kings, and with the other strikes the revolutionary giant to the earth. But, in crushing

anarchy, he stifled liberty, and in the end, lost his own on his last field of battle."

"Each of these men has been recompensed according to his works. Washington, after having raised a nation to independence, slept peacefully, as a retired magistrate, under his paternal roof amid the regrets of his countrymen and veneration of all people."

"Buonaparte, having robbed a nation of its independence, was hurled, a dethroned emperor into exile, and the terrified earth hardly thought him secure enough under the custody of the ocean. Even whilst exhausted and chained to a rock, he was struggling with death, Europe dared not lay down her arms, for her fear of him. He died; and this event, published at the gate of the palace, before which the conqueror had proclaimed so many funerals, hardly arrested the passer by. What, indeed, had citizens to weep for!"

"Washington and Buonaparte both arose out of the bosom of a republic; both were born of liberty; the first was faithful to it; the second betrayed it. Their lot will be according to the different parts they choose,

—very different with future generations. The name of Washington will spread with liberty from age to age, and mark the commencement of a new era for the human race. The name of Buonaparte will be pronounced also by distant generations, but no benediction will be attached to it,—it will serve on the contrary, as an authority to oppressors, great and petty of all times.”

“Washington represented completely the wants, the ideas, the state of enlightenment, and opinions of his epoch. He seconded, instead of thwarting, the advancing movement. He willed that which he ought to have willed—the fulfilment of the mission to which he was called. Hence the coherence and perpetuity of his work. This man, who strikes the imagination so slightly, because he was natural, and kept within his just proportions, has confounded his history with that of his country. His glory is the common patrimony of increased civilization. His renown rises like one of those sanctuaries whence a stream, pure and inexhaustible, flows forth forever, for the solace of the people.”

“Buonaparte might also have enriched the

public domain. His action was on the nation the most civilized, the most intelligent, the most brave, the most brilliant of the earth. What a rank would he have occupied at present in the universe, if he had joined magnanimity to his other heroic qualities; if, Washington and Buonaparte at the same time, he had nominated liberty the inheritrix of his glory!"

"But this disproportioned giant did not completely identify his destiny with that of his country. His genius belonged to the modern,—his ambition to ancient times. He did not perceive that the miracles of his life by far surpassed the value of a diadem, and that this gothic ornament but ill became him. Sometimes one might see him take a step with the age; at others he would retrograde towards the past. But whether he reascended the stream of time or followed its course, the prodigious force of his genius seemed to command a flow or a reflux at his will. Men were, in his eyes, only a means of power; there was no sympathy between their welfare and his own. He promised to liberate, and he enchained them. He separated himself

from them, and they shrunk back from him. The kings of Egypt built their funeral pyramids, not amid fertile plains, but sterile sands. On a like site has Buonaparte constructed the monument of his renown."

How different the immortality on earth which awaits these men! The one shall have his name pass before the minds of men like a sweet vision of some spirit of benevolence that came down from the skies to bless mankind. The other, like war and selfishness inhabiting the same body. It is impossible to gain the approbation of men and live in their grateful memory, in any other way except by making it the great aim of life to do good. God will let no day pass in which he will not give you an opportunity to make some human being happier, if you love and desire to do this. I always admire Newton's description of life—consisting of two heaps—one of happiness and the other of misery; and he is the happiest man who can add to one of these heaps, or take away from the other, though ever so little.

We cannot of course, have the ability to do good or evil on a scale as great as the

men spoken of above. This is not the lot of one in many thousands of millions; but you can make yourself beloved and revered while you live, and remembered with tenderness when you die, if you act on the principle of making all around you as happy as is in your power. This is the great law of God, without the fulfillment of which it is impossible for an intelligent being to be happy. Obedience, entire and full, creates heaven. Refusing it, makes hell. You cannot in all the circle of your acquaintance, find a selfish man whom you can call a happy man;—nor can you find one who lives not to himself, whom you will call unhappy. When will the time arrive when the name of Wilberforce or of John Howard will be pronounced with other than feelings of reverence and admiration? What makes such men so much honored? And the name of the greatest benefactor the world ever saw,—will eternally call forth the deepest admiration and gratitude, because his was the highest exhibition of disinterested love and action, of which the created mind ever began to conceive!

What, then, so far as this present life is

concerned, should be the end and aim of every young man? I reply—*usefulness—usefulness*. To do good—to communicate the greatest amount of happiness in his power—to strive to resemble that Being who pours his rains and his dews upon all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works. He loves a cheerful giver, and is himself a cheerful giver. On the desert where no man is found, he send his dews—though the arid sands alone drink them up. On the lofty mountain where human footsteps never trod, he hangs his mantle of light, and paints the icy summit with a pencil dipped in his warm sun-beams. In the ocean-bed so deep and so low, that no human being has found even a grave there, has He walked, as he arranged the shells, and painted them all in heaven's own colors. In the heart of the lamb, and in the heart of the insect has he poured the vial of joy and gladness, and made creatures happy who will never know or praise their benefactor. In the wilderness has he been and planted the flower, and taught the songster to whistle his wild notes of joy. We might have had a sun lesser in magnitude, and

shedding less light and glory, and we could have lived. We might have had no moon to walk the sky at night and pour the soft silver of her light over the earth, and we could have lived. But in all he does, God loves to set us an example, and to teach us not only that he loves a cheerful giver, but that he himself *is* a cheerful giver. It seems to add to his own happiness,—or rather his happiness seems to consist in creating from generation to generation myriads of creatures over whom he may pour the expressions of his own benevolent heart; and that man who would enter into his joy—the highest joy in the whole creation—must imitate him, and live to do good.

If you were to seek for happiness for this life merely—having no regard to the future, there is no way so certain to accomplish this, as to live for the good of others. There is a gratification of the purest feelings of the heart unlike any thing that can arise from selfishness, which is a continual feast to the soul. Can any one doubt but that Howard, who went from prison to prison, and on whose arrival, the prisoners would rush the length of

their chains to fall at his feet—had pleasures as much more intense and delightful than those who live unto themselves, as his object was more noble and God-like than theirs? And then the conscience!—to lie down at night feeling that you have contributed in some degree, even if it be small; to make others happy,—and this, not by accident or chance, but a daily occurrence—what a life must this be! How different from that of the young man who puts on the airs of some superior being, and feels that he must worship himself, and is to be caressed and admired by all, and that the great end of life is to see that his important self has the best of every thing. Do not say you have not the appliances with which to confer happiness. You have a father or a mother, a brother or a sister, whose heart you can gladden—not by some generous act now and then, but by ten thousand acts constantly recurring. You have an employer whom you can make happy by letting him see that you can make his interests your own, and are faithful even in the smallest things. You have, or may have companions and friends whom you can make

happy by forgetting yourself and making him happy in having such a friend. There is not a situation in which man can be placed, in which he cannot render himself a blessing by the tones of his voice, by the expression of his countenance, and by a thousand nameless ways. And he who shews that he has it in his heart to live not unto himself, will find that God will open new ways of doing good, and give him enlarged means of conferring happiness on others.

Cherish, then, as the noblest feeling which the human heart can have, a continued, unquenchable desire of being useful to mankind. Make this a principle of action on all occasions, and you have something that will give you indomitable energy. You need not seek distinction and honor—for it is impossible to withhold these from that man so that he will not sooner or later have them, who lives to be useful to mankind. You need not think about the approbation of men,—you will have that most certainly without seeking. I love to look at such a man as Matthew Hale, —a man who never asked nor sought an honor, but whom both pursued and overtook.

Bad and selfish as this world is, it will admire and honor those who make constant self-denial and labor to do good, with the hope of no reward but the secret consciousness of having done good, and of seeing others made happy. "I will not," says Hale, "concern myself to ask what others may think or say of me, so long as I keep myself exactly to the doing of my duty." Remember that any man lives in vain who does not make the world better for his living in it. I want you in the morning of life to gird on resolution as Hannibal did when his father led him up to the altar of his gods, and made him swear everlasting enmity to Rome. I beg you not to put off the dedication of yourself to the high purpose of living to be useful till you reach manhood. The muscles will become rigid before that time. The habits of life will be formed, and what you do not wish to do to-day, you will then hate to do.

I wish now to call your attention to a subject of all others the most important, and the most interesting to a being created with rational and immortal powers. I mean a knowledge of the character of God, and of

our relations to him, and the duties which grow out of those relations. In the beautiful language of the prophet we are charged in these words. Thus saith the Lord, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth me."

The young man is in danger of feeling that this knowledge is the least important to him at present; that it is well adapted to the low, the ignorant, and the darkened. Their aims are low, their wishes circumscribed; they will have superstition if they have not religion; but that the young, the clear headed, the enlightened, and strong minded, or rich man would feel religion to be a strait-jacket, cramping his powers and shutting him up in gloom; that the sick one who must spend days and nights, racked with pain or prostrated by disease, who can go no more out in the busy world, but who must look into the darkness of the grave,—that he needs religion to keep up his spirits, to relieve his anxieties, —while the young, the strong, the healthy,

and the vigorous who can walk abroad and crowd his way among men, can have no time to attend to religion, has no need of its aid and no enjoyment in its exercise: that religion is admirable for the weaker sex, for the cowardly, and the feeble, for it feeds the hopes with the strength of the Lord God Almighty; that it is necessary for the dying, in as much as the soul must then let go of earth, and it wants then to lean upon the anchor of hope,—but for the living man, just in the morning of life, religion is not necessary.

Now here is a very great mistake! Religion is suited to the wants of the low, and the ignorant, for it makes wise the simple, enlightens the eyes of the blind, gives courage to the timid and to the dying, as his spirit prepares to leave the house of clay—but is your lofty one, puffed up by a little learning, buoyant with youth, or elevated by riches, is such an one the man who does not need religion? What will bring down the loftiness of pride, keep him from forgetting God, and neglecting the interests of his immortal soul?

Religion is adapted to the poor sufferer whose days and nights are passed in pain, and

whose hours move on wings of lead: the whispers of hope and of mercy *are* sweet to him; but the young, the strong man whose veins are full of life,—whose step is full of elasticity, whose heart bounds with present enjoyment, and who, heedless of all his relations to God, and of the future, is liable at any moment to be cut off from probation—does he need no religion?

The dying man needs the Bible and its consolations! And are not all dying men,—and can any living man say that he will be a living man to-morrow?

What a mistake is that which you commit when you suppose that because a man is in the flush of youth, or has any external superiority over others, such as wisdom, sagacity, health, or riches, he does not need to know God, while the poor, the ignorant, and the lowly cannot be too intimate with him! Has God revealed himself only for the poor, the lowly, the bruised, and the distressed, or are the hopes and teachings of the Bible, its counsels and cautions suited to all men, and designed for the benefit of all men?

There is a second mistake which young

men are especially liable to make; and that is, that because certain things, such as wisdom, power, and riches, are valuable and desirable, therefore *they are the most valuable of all things and should be the end and aim of life.*

Wisdom is very valuable and very desirable, but will it do to forget that the wisest man is but an infant in knowledge, and that all he knows, is, as the great Newton expresses it, but picking up a few pebbles on the shore, while the great ocean lies beyond wholly unexplored? Do you forget that a slight blow on the head would make the wisest man an idiot?—that the bursting of a small blood-vessel would cut down the strongest one in the glory of his strength?

Power is very desirable and valuable, but will it do to forget that its possession tempts us to use it too much and make it oppressive; that we can never use it to any extent without having it excite opposition;—that it must pass away at death, and that if not used aright, it leaves us with a fearful account to give for its exercise?

Wealth is valuable, and in some respects

very desirable ; but do not forget that riches tempt us to be vain, proud, overbearing, oppressive, and to lift the heart up against God ; that the richest man can enjoy but little more than his food and clothing ; that his riches are at any moment liable to make to themselves wings and fly away, and at all events they must leave him at death.

These are valuable. The minister of the Gospel needs wisdom to teach the way of life and to feed the deathless spirit with knowledge suited to its capacities : the civilian needs it lest he mislead and pervert justice and become a curse to the community : the senator needs it to keep him from involving the nation in his folly : the physician needs it lest he becomes an assistant to disease and the tormentor of his species ; the merchant needs it to keep him from embarking in wild speculations and aiding to ruin enterprize and credit ; and the mechanic and farmer need wisdom lest they spend life in chasing shadows, and fritter all they have away in making useless experiments. All these are valuable ; but remember, that they are all small things when you measure on a proper scale. They

really give men less power than we suppose, —they continue but a very short time and then are gone, and especially when compared with the higher knowledge of God, the higher hopes of the Bible, and the higher ends of immortality, they are nothing. Like a small light when you are wandering in a huge, dark cavern, and which helps you to see where you are, these things will aid you. But the taper of the cavern is small compared with the glorious sun in the heavens. It is valuable only to lead you out to the light of the sun. And thus all attainments or advantages are valuable only as they lead you to a knowledge of God. The learning of ages would be mere useless lumber if it stopped short of this.

The wealth of the mines would canker the soul and debase the image of God, unless it be consecrated to his service. The wisdom of Solomon would only lead an immortal spirit astray and destroy its eternal destinies, if that wisdom was only expended upon the things of time. You might have an intellect which, as the Apostle expresses it, should comprehend all knowledge, and be the wonder and admiration of the world,—yea, you might

take hold of knowledge with an arch-angel's grasp, yet if it be expended here within the boundaries of time, you have prostituted those noble powers and perverted the rich gifts of your heavenly Father, and wrecked all the hopes of immortality.

The word of God declares that we need wisdom beyond any which is the gift of nature; that human wisdom is a blind leader and a traitor to God and to man. How often do men fall though they carry a light in their right hand! Was Ahithophel the only wise man on whose brains God wrote folly? Was the crafty, foxy Herod the only subtle man whose plans came to naught but vexation and shame? Has any man ever been led astray by distrusting his own wisdom, and following that which is from above? What would you say of the boastings of the spider who spins her thin web so curiously and so cunningly, and talks of her wisdom and strength and glory, though her web will be swept away the next hour? Or of the boastings of that man whose plans and schemes may all be blown away by one breath of God, and blasted forever by a single frown of Almighty Power!

AN old writer says, "our wisdom has run out since the fall." The vessel was then broken and all is gone. There is indeed a spirit left in man, but it is the "inspiration of the Almighty that giveth him understanding." What a pointed question is that which the sacred writer puts to men and of men? "They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?" You must go to a higher fountain than your own heart for wisdom.

I say the highest end to which you can attain, is to know God, your relations to him and the duties growing out of these. What does this imply? Some content themselves with knowing and coolly acknowledging that there is such a being as God. But this is not enough. The mightiest sinner on earth, or in any other world might know and acknowledge this, and tremble too, but it would do him no good. It is not enough either that you read the eternal power and God-head in his works, —in the spangled heavens and in the beautiful earth, or in the sun which travels from age to age proclaiming God in every beam of light.

But to know God is to select him as an Infinite, unchanging object, to be enthroned on your heart,—towards whom your best thoughts and feelings shall forever flow in confidence, love and hope. He is the sun in the moral heavens, by whose light you are to walk, by whose beams you are to be cheered,—a Being unmeasured and immeasurable in all his nature, whose character will forever expand and enlarge the conceptions of created beings as they study it.

All that is created must alter and change. Mutability is stamped upon all things from the mighty sun, the beautiful moon, the garnished heavens, and the illimitable sea, to the smallest thing that exists. Creatures will change—the good and the holy rise up in light, intelligence and glory, and the wicked sink in darkness and sin forever. But with God there is no change. Around him will be gathered all that is bright and lovely, and holy, and pure,—forever to be drawing nearer to him.

The created arm must often feel its weakness: the mind of the creature must often feel that it is dark, and feeble,—that its

strength can go no further; but where the creature stops, is within the circle of what is finite. Beyond that circle dwells One whose strength knows no limits,—whose arm never tires, whose ways are everlasting.

To know God, is to have a perfect standard before you. Suppose you know no God but the gods of the heathen, or the Prophet of the Koran. Your character will be like the object you worship. You are vile in proportion to your faithfulness in becoming like the object you worship. But when you worship the God of heaven, you have your character constantly assimilated to his, and you rise in all that is great and good. It is this which causes the spirits in the light of heaven to be eternally rising up in glory.

The bright Seraph who bows before God and worships in his immediate presence, always keeps this character before him as his standard, and thus he becomes more and more like God.

The true knowledge of God will lead you to love the "beauty of the Lord"—which is, holiness. It was not the *presence* of the Lord that David longed for, for he knew that

in heaven, or in hell, in the most distant verge of creation, in darkness or in light, God was present. It was not the Almighty power of God that he longed for;—he knew that the voice of the Lord was all around him, breaking the cedars of Lebanon, making the hills to skip and the everlasting mountains to bow. Nor was it the omniscience of God,—for he knew that he was besetting him before and behind, marking his footsteps, his words, and his feelings; but it was the *holiness* of God that he wanted. “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so my soul longeth for God,—for the living God,—that I may dwell in thy house forever, that I may see thy beauty.” It is this spotless holiness of God that makes heaven, even the heaven of heavens unclean, which attracts all holy beings towards it and makes them more spotless in proportion as they draw near.

What is time? What is its object, end and aim? The true answer is, to be linked in with eternity, and to prepare the soul to spend eternal ages in the service and enjoyment of God. When this is done, when your taste and will have become conformed

to his, when you appreciate your destiny, and by the eye of faith see what lies beyond time, when your low, earthly desires are bowed so that eternity becomes the great aim and end of living, then time dwindles down to a mere point, and becomes merely the birth-place and the infancy of the soul. The soul is a deathless thing—to become an angel of light and to live in light inexpressible and full of glory, or the most wretched of the creations of God.

I want you should become so acquainted with God that when the storm comes, and disappointments and sorrows overtake you, they may be met by you,—not as the lion endures his captivity by tearing his cage and growling and glaring at his keeper, but with the calm feeling of assurance, that all events and all trials, whether they come from the hand of man, or directly through the providences of God, are designed for your best good.

I want you to feel that when God comes down from heaven to teach you that a life of sin is a life of folly and madness, and is death eternal, that you may not stake your wisdom

against his, or glory in any thing which he declares to be folly.

But I do not speak to you as to those who may, unless you are careful, fall into sin, and forfeit the approbation of God. That has already been done. You are already sinners, and are already under the dominion of a power too mighty for you to deliver yourself from without divine aid. I should commit the most unpardonable error, should I close these hints which I have been giving you, without saying that you cannot understand God, or your relations to him, or the plans of his vast government without seeing God in the face of Jesus Christ his Son. In the New Testament you will find unfolded a mystery which for ages had been hidden, and a plan of mercy so great, that belief is staggered, and infidelity will not believe, because she cannot comprehend the magnitude of such mercy. Let me beseech you with all the earnestness of which I am capable, to begin at once to understand the scheme of redemption revealed in the New Testament. Make that book your companion. You will soon learn that you are already a lost sinner.

—that your very taste is opposed to the things which God loves and commands, that your heart is full of sin,—that your life is one of guilt and transgression, and that you need the power of the Spirit of God to make you holy and to prepare you for the service and enjoyment of God. Jesus Christ is the way, the door, and the life; and if, in these chapters I have seemed to give much attention to what pertains to this life, it has been that I might gain your ear so that I might say, before I lay down my pen, that I beg you, as your first, your great, indispensable, and delightful duty, to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness—which is to be found through Jesus Christ the Redeemer. I would use all my feeble strength, and all my little influence with you, to bring you to cast your crown of life eternally at his feet, and to be everlastingly delivered from the power and dominion of sin. This is the great end of living here. In the little field which we have here, we may raise precious fruits which shall never perish, and flowers that shall never fade.

And now, my young friends, I have finished my task. In the chapters which I have written I have not sought to say new things, to strive after what was original, or to express them in an original way; but I have sought to give you such plain and practical hints as I thought you would value. I have left much ground untouched—fearing that I should write more than you would be willing to read. In reviewing what I have said I cannot believe I have made any impression *that is bad, even if I have done no good.* The generation who are acting with me on the stage of life will shortly be gone, and you will be occupying our places. We pray that you may come—a generation enlightened, strong, noble, and expansive in all your views and feelings. We pray that the choicest blessings of heaven may rest upon you; and that you may use them all to the glory of God. Strong and mighty are the men who are to be swimmers with you in the stream of life,—high the waves which you are to buffet,—swift the currents which are to *set against you, and fearful will be the re-*

suits. What results will the coming generation of men witness! What questions will they settle! What a multitude are to be eternally affected by their character! Oh! if it may at last be found that I have encouraged one, strengthened one, or helped one to meet the responsibilities of life, and to gain the approbation of God, I shall not have written these pages in vain, and I shall be thankful that I had the opportunity thus to address the most important class of my fellow men now on the face of the earth.

sults. What results will the coming generation of men witness! What questions will they settle! What a multitude are to be eternally affected by their character! Oh! if it may at last be found that I have encouraged one, strengthened one, or helped one to meet the responsibilities of life, and to gain the approbation of God, I shall not have written these pages in vain, and I shall be thankful that I had the opportunity thus to address the most important class of my fellow men now on the face of the earth.

