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The Family Monitor or A Help to Domestic Happiness (Part 2)

John Angell James

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8. Then follows the prayer, which should be not so long as to weary, nor so short as to seem like a mere form. It should be fervent; for a dull, cold, heartless repetition of almost the same things, in almost the same words, is sure to destroy all the interest of this delightful service, and render it a mere form, which wearies and burdens, if it do not also disgust. How difficult is it to keep up the life and vigour of this engagement! And why? Because we do not keep up the life and vigour of our own personal religion. It is worth while to remark, that the habit of reverential reading the scriptures tends to feed the flame of devotion, and to kindle the fire of the sacrifice of prayer. The prayer of the head of a family should be, in a very peculiar degree, FAMILY prayer. It should respect the children, the servants, the circumstances of the household. All should feel that the service belongs to them, and not merely to the individual who prays, or to the church and the world. But fervour, and life, and earnestness, as opposed to what is dull and formal, are of immense consequence. A few petitions, breathed forth with a fervour that kindles the fire of devotion in all around, are far better than half an hour's talking about religion to God.

Oh! with what dignity, and grace, and sanctity, and authority, does a holy and fervent father rise from his knees, and take his seat in the midst of his family, while yet the rays of divine glory play upon his countenance! "Children," says Dr. Dwight, "naturally regard a parent with reverence, but they cannot fail to reverence him more or less on account of his personal character. Wherever they have been accustomed to behold their parent daily sustaining the office of minister, or servant of God, they necessarily associate with every idea they form of his person and character, this solemn and important apprehension. Every image of this venerable relation presented to their minds, will include in it that of a divinely-appointed guardian of their spiritual concerns; a guide to their duty given them from above; a venerated and beloved intercessor for their salvation." And the same writer, in speaking of family worship, says, "In the devotion of this little assembly, parents pray for their children, and children for their parents; the husband for the wife, and the wife for the husband; while

brothers and sisters send up their requests to the throne of Infinite Mercy, to call down blessings on each other. Who, that wears the name of a man, can be indifferent here? Must not the venerable character of the parents, the peculiar tenderness of the conjugal union, the affectionate intimacy of the filial and fraternal relations; must not the nearness of relations long existing, the interchange of kindness long continued, and the oneness of interests long cemented,—all warm the heart, heighten the importance of every petition, and increase the fervour of every devotional effort?"

It may be now proper to inquire how it comes to pass that such a system as this is so often unsuccessful. For it may, with very great propriety, because with truth, be affirmed, that the families of professors are not always, as it might be expected they would be, the nurseries of the church. It is not enough to resolve the matter into the sovereignty of divine grace, till we have first inquired whether any thing can be found in the conduct of parents, which can be said, with truth, to account for the painful fact of irreligious children being found in religious families.

Have parents really adopted and pursued a judicious system of religious education? Can it be said, that means, such as I have directed, or any thing at all like them, have been regularly pursued? Has there been a deep, a constant solicitude for the eternal welfare of their children?

In the introduction of my volume, entitled, "A Christian Father's Present to his Children," I have stated the obstacles which often prevent the success of a religious education, and have enumerated the following:—

1. Religious education is oftentimes very ignorantly, negligently, and capriciously maintained, where it is not altogether omitted. It is not a *first* object; it is attended to with no earnestness, no anxiety, no system, no regularity. It does not run through every thing, and is opposed by many things at variance with it. The parent's eye and heart are more intently fixed upon the worldly prosperity and respectability of the children than on their religious character.

2. The relaxation of domestic discipline is a powerful impediment in the way of success. There is, in some

households, no family government, no order, no subordination. The children are kept under no restraint, but are allowed to do what they like; their faults are unnoticed and unpunished, and their tempers allowed to grow wild and headstrong, till, in fact, the whole family become utterly lawless, rebellious against parental authority, and unamiable to all around them. How many have had to curse the over-indulgence of fond and foolish parents! How many, as they have ruminated amidst the desolations of poverty, or the walls of a prison, have exclaimed, "O, my cruelly fond parents, had you exercised that authority with which God intrusted you over your children, and had you checked my childish corruptions, and punished my boyish disobedience; had you subjected me to the salutary restraint of wholesome laws, I had not brought you with a broken heart to your grave, nor myself with a ruined character to the jail."

Over-indulgence is awfully common, and continually making shocking ravages in human character. It is a system of great cruelty to the children, to the parents themselves, and to society. This practice proceeds from various causes; in some instances, from a perverted and systematic sentimentalism; in others, from absolute indolence, and a regard to present ease, which leads the silly mother to adopt any means of coaxing, and yielding, and bribing, to keep the young rebels quiet for the time; in others, from a mistake as to the time when restraint should begin, or a spirit of procrastination, which leads parents to say, "I shall take them in hand by and by: there is no time lost; when their reason is a little more matured, I shall lay upon them more restraint:" and, in some, it is "mere animal affection," without the guidance of a particle of judgment, a mere instinct, like that which, in the irrational tribes, leads to a blind and busy care. It is not uncommon for parents to be smiled at than as faults to be reformed. "O," says the mother, "it is only play; he will know better soon. He does not mean any harm. I cannot chide him." No; and if the father, wiser than herself, does, she cries, and perhaps, in the hearing of the child, reproves her husband for cruelty. From whatever cause it proceeds, it is in the highest degree injurious to the

character of the children. Let those who are guilty of it read the fearful comment on this sin, which is furnished for their warning, in the history of Eli and his family.

3. Undue severity is, perhaps, more injurious than over-indulgence; and it is, perhaps, a conviction of this, and an observance of the mischievous consequences of extreme rigour, that has driven many into the opposite extreme. I have seen the dreadful effects of parental tyranny, and the reign of household terror, in the broken spirits, the reckless desperation, the hardened contumacy, or the deep and sullen melancholy of those who have been the subjects of these hard measures. It is a truly revolting sight to see a *father* employing the iron rod of the oppressor, to beat, and bruise, and crush the minds of his own offspring into the most abject submission. He may succeed, but let him not wonder if, at the same time that he has suppressed rebellion, he has extinguished affection. I have known parents, who, too late, have seen their error, and who would give the world, did they possess it, if it were possible to do away the ill effects which their severity had produced in the character of their children; but the mischief was irreparable. No subsequent kindness could expand the heart which they had closed for ever against them, or win that confidence which they had repulsed from them. A close, sullen, melancholy disposition had been nurtured; a susceptibility to the emotions of wretchedness had been planted in the bosom, which no future tenderness on the part of the parent could remove. He saw it, and repented it, but could not alter it. "Ye fathers, provoke not, then, your children to anger, lest they should be *discouraged*." This language is really very striking, and well deserves the serious attention of every parent.

4. The inconsistent conduct of parents who are professors of religion, is a great hinderance to the success of religious education. Many persons have no need to wonder that *their* children are *not* pious; it would have been a wonder with every body else if they were, for they have seen nothing at home but what was calculated to disgust them with religion. They would have been far more likely to have thought well of the ways of godliness, if their parents had said nothing about them.

5. The bad conduct of an elder branch of a family

often counteracts all the efforts made for the benefit of the rest. Let parents see the importance of *beginning* upon a good system. Children are creatures of imitation, and the models they copy after are their elder brother or sister. A mother should educate the character of her *first* child, with the recollection that he will be a pattern which the rest will, in all probability, more or less conform to. I do not think this has been sufficiently considered.

6. Partiality has a very corrupting and fatal influence. The history of the patriarch Jacob, first the victim, and afterwards the subject, of this sin, will remain for ever a warning to all parents, against the dangers of domestic favouritism. The balances of government must be held in every family by even-handed Justice, or misery is sure to ensue. Envy and jealousy are the natural consequences of partiality. Father and mother are sometimes embroiled; the children are set against each other, and all conspire against the favourite.

Behold these obstacles, and avoid them.

And now, can *motives* be necessary to admonish Christian parents to the diligent performance of their duty? If so, take the following:—

1. Are you zealous for the cause of religion in the world, for the prosperity of Zion, for the interest of the Redeemer, for the glory of God? Be diligent and anxious to train up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Would you have them the enemies or the friends of God and his cause? Dare you pretend to be the disciples of Christ, if this is a matter of indifference to you? If you are neglectful in this manner, you may expect to see your offspring united with the children of this world, if not with infidels, scoffers, or the profane. But if you are anxious and conscientious to train them up for God, that daughter over whom you watch with such parental care and tenderness, may be joined with the female worthies, who, by their chaste conversation, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and their zeal for the cause of Christ, have done so much to diffuse religion in the world. That son whom you now train with such holy solicitude, for future usefulness, as a disciple of the Saviour, may become eminent in the church as a consistent and intelligent

member, or an able and faithful minister. "Many a congregation," says Baxter, "that is happily fed with the bread of life, may thank God for the endeavours of some poor man or woman, that trained up a child in the ways of God, to become their holy and faithful teacher." The church of God looks to the families of the righteous, and expects and asks from thence those supplies which are to recruit its numbers, and to repair the ravages of death.

2. I urge this duty by a due regard to the temporal and eternal welfare of your children. You love your children, and would deem it a most cruel and insulting insinuation to have your affection for a moment questioned. But, do what you will for them; devote as you may the energies of body and mind; the sleep of your nights, and the activity of your days, to your children's comfort; wear out your strength in ceaseless labour and solicitude, and yet at the same time neglect the religious education of your children, you are guilty of a species of most horrid cruelty towards them, the dreadful consequences of which may begin in this world in profligacy and vice, and extend to the other in all the bitter pains of eternal death. Unrestrained by sentiments of piety, uncontrolled by a conscience which has never been enlightened, what is to prevent them from being plunged into infamy by their unbridled passions? Have not many young men, at the hulks, in the land of exile, or at the gallows, and many unhappy females, when closing in misery a course of infamy, cursed their parents for not giving them a religious education? But even though they live and die in worldly honour and respectability, what will this do for them amidst the sorrows of life, the agonies of death, the solemnities of judgment, and the torments of perdition! Hear them, as they stand shuddering and affrighted on the brink of that gulf into which they are about to plunge:—"Of what avail are the riches and honours and pleasures of the world, which my parents were so anxious to obtain for me? Why did they not tell me that the salvation of my soul was of more importance to me, as an immortal creature, than the possession of the universe? Cruel, cruel parents! Fool that I was, to be blinded and rendered careless

by you; but my self-reproaches are now unavailing; I deservedly perish; but my blood be upon the head of those that neglected me!" Ah, cruel parents indeed, who neglect the religious education of their children; more cruel, in some respects, than Herod; he slew the bodies of children, these murder souls; he murdered the children of others, these murder their own; he employed the agency of his servants, these do the work of slaughter themselves!

3. Do you regard your own comfort? Do you love yourselves? Are you anxious to avoid painful and incessant solicitude, bitter reflection, domestic disquietude, dreadful foreboding? Then bring up your children with the most unvarying regard to their religious character. Should God crown your efforts with success, what a harvest of joys will you reap, even in this world! When you see your children enter the paths of wisdom, "Thank God," you will exclaim, "my highest ambition has at length reached its object. My children are decided Christians. I am now no longer distressingly anxious for their future prospects in this life. In one way or other, God will provide for them. And as to eternity, they are safe." Who can describe the pure, elevated felicity, with which such parents mark the course of their children, in going from strength to strength in their progress to Zion! What a season of delight is that, when they publicly assume the profession of a Christian, and connect themselves with the church! What joy is felt on beholding them at their side at the table of the Lord, and holding communion with them in the joys of faith and the anticipations of eternity! And what satisfaction is experienced in seeing them enrolling their names as the friends of God and man, and giving their support to those institutions which are formed to promote the highest interests of the human race! As they grow in experience, in usefulness, in respectability in the church, the parents' joy and gratitude are continually increasing, and they feel the honour of having sent such members into the fellowship of the faithful. Should God, in the mysteries of his providence, remove them by an early death, you will be cheered, amidst the agonies of separation, by their dying consolation;

their piety will wipe away your tears, and be a balm to the wounds of your mind; and when they have departed, you will solace yourselves with the healing thought, that they are gone to that world of glory in which you will soon be reunited with them. Or should the order of nature be observed, and you precede them to the tomb, will not *their* presence and attentions in your dying chamber, be more soothing by the consideration, that they are so many saints, as well as children, ministering to your comfort? Will not their piety give a sanctity and a sweetness to all the offices of their affection? "*I die,*" will be your expression, as, like departing Jacob, you address yourselves to them, "but God will be with *you*, and we shall meet again where there will be no more death."

But should you unhappily neglect their religious education, and they, through your inattention, should grow up without any due sense of the claims of God, is there not a danger of their becoming immoral, as well as irreligious? And how could you bear to witness, or to hear of their profligacy and vice, if, at the same time, you were conscious that it was in a measure through your neglect? Perhaps they may be unkind and disobedient to you; for God may justly render that child a scourge to his parent, whose parent did not train him up in the ways of religion. O, what scenes of domestic misery, what heart-rending spectacles of confusion and wretchedness, have profligate children occasioned in the families to which they belong! How many have thus had their hearts suddenly broken, or their gray hairs brought down by the slow process of withering sorrow to the grave! and the sting of all this, in some cases, has been the consciousness of parental neglect. No sin more heavily punishes itself than this, nor mingles for its subject a more bitter cup. But, then, the *eternal* consequences, oh, the eternal consequences of this neglect! See the heart-stricken parent wringing his hands over the dying youth, who is departing without repentance. No, not a syllable escapes his lips that sounds like penitence; the father weeps, and prays, and entreats, but the son hearkens not, and dies, and makes no sign. Now in what a burst of agony does he give vent to

his feelings over the corpse, from which the spirit has departed, but departed not to the mansions of the blessed.—“Oh, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee. O Absalom, my son, my son!”

Or, in the event of your own death, what thorns will it plant in your pillow, with what deeper shades will it invest the descent to the dark valley, to reflect that you had forgotten the religious character of your children, and the eternal salvation of their immortal souls. *Then*, amidst these fearful scenes, to awake to a sense of your duty, when it is too late, except by one parting admonition, to perform it! *Then* to see those around your bed with whom you had been intrusted, but whom you have neglected!

But there are other scenes more dreadful still. The faithless parent must meet his ruined children, at the day of judgment, before the bar of God. Fearful will be the interview; and to us, now, utterly inconceivable. No imagination can portray the scene, and I attempt it not. And then, eternity, oh! eternity!—who shall bring out from the secrets of that impenetrable state, the condition of children lost, in some measure, through the neglect of their parents; and the condition of parents, hearing, through everlasting ages, the imprecations and reproaches of their own offspring, and all these imprecations and reproaches echoed back from their own conscience? But the picture is too appalling—and if the mere anticipation chills with horror, what must be its reality?

Look for a few moments at a *brighter* scene, and anticipate the meeting, at the judgment day, of pious parents and children reclaimed, converted, saved, by the blessing of God upon their affectionate solicitude, and judicious and persevering efforts for their eternal welfare; but this is as much too bright for the imagination as the other is too terrific. It is glory, honor, and felicity too great to be imagined. And beyond all this, everlasting ages remain, for the child to be blessed with salvation, and the parent to be blessed with the consciousness of having been the happy instrument of eternal blessedness to his own offspring.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS.

- "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth."—EPHES. vi. 1—3.
- "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee: and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee."—PROVERBS, vi. 20—22.
- "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice."—PROVERBS, xxiii. 24, 25.

PERHAPS there is no duty, the obligations of which are more generally acknowledged, than filial piety; none which, in the performance, yields greater pleasure, nor which, if neglected, brings a more severe or righteous retribution. All nations, however sunk in barbarism or elevated by science, have admitted the strength and justice of parental claims; and the unhappy youth who resists them, stands convicted, condemned and reprobated before the tribunal of the world. On the other hand, an eminently dutiful child is an object of delight, admiration and esteem, to all who have an opportunity of witnessing his conduct: he goes through society surrounded by a glory purer than that of fame, and far more conducive to his own comfort; he is a blessing to his parents, and is blessed himself. Children, may all of you be such; and for that purpose, I ask your fixed attention to the statement of your duties, as set before you in this chapter. The obligations of social life are reciprocal. If your parents owe to you all that I have enjoined upon *them*, how much do you owe to your parents? I have been your advocate with *them*, I now become theirs with *you*.

Consider well the relation you sustain to your parents. There is a *natural* connexion between you, inasmuch as they are the instruments of your very existence; a circumstance which of itself seems to invest them, as I have already said, with an almost absolute

authority over you. The commonness, the universality of the tie, takes off the mind from contemplating its closeness, its tenderness, its sanctity. You are literally parts of themselves, and cannot dwell for a moment upon your descent, without being struck, one should think, with the amazing and solemn weight of obligation that rests upon you towards a father and a mother. But consider, there is not only a natural, but, in reference to duty, an *instituted* connexion between you. Jehovah himself has interposed, and, uniting the language of revelation with the dictates of reason, the force of authority to the impulse of nature, has called you to filial piety, not only as a matter of feeling, but of principle. Study then the relationship, look narrowly and seriously at the connexion subsisting between you. Weigh well the import of the word PARENT; think how much is implied in it towards its appropriate object, how many offices it contains in itself,—guardian, ruler, teacher, guide, benefactor, provider: WHAT THEN MUST BE THE OBLIGATIONS OF A CHILD?

The following is a brief summary of filial duties:—

1. You ought to LOVE your parents.

Love is the only state of mind from which all the other duties that you owe them can arise. By love, we mean complacency; and surely this is due to a father and mother. The very relation in which you stand to them demands this. If you are destitute of this, if you are without any propensity of heart towards them, you are in a strange and guilty state of mind. Till you are married, or are in prospect of it, they ought, in most cases, to be the supreme objects of your earthly affections. It is not enough for you to be respectful and obedient, and even kind; but, where there exist no reasons for alienating your heart, you should be *fond* of them. It is of infinite importance that you should watch over the internal state of your mind, and not suffer dislike, alienation, or indifference, to extinguish your regards. Do not take up a prejudice against them, nor allow an unfavourable impression to be made upon your mind. Respect and obedience, if they do not spring from love, are valueless in their nature, and very precarious in their existence.

If you love them, *you will delight to be in their com-*

pany, and take pleasure in being at home with them. It is painful to them to see that you are happier any where than at home, and fonder of any other society than theirs. No companion should be so valued by you as a kind father or mother.

If you love them, *you will strive in all things to please them.* We are always anxious to please those whom we regard, and to avoid whatever would give them pain. If we are careless whether we please or displease any one, it is obviously impossible that we can have any affection for them. The essence of piety towards God is a deep solicitude to please him; and the essence of filial piety is a solicitude to please your parents. Young people, dwell upon this single, simple thought, **A CHILD'S PLEASURE SHOULD BE TO PLEASE HIS PARENTS.** This is love, and the sum of all your duty. If you would adopt this rule, if you would write this upon your heart, if you would make this the standard of your conduct, I might lay down my pen, for it includes every thing in itself. O that you could be brought to reason and to resolve thus!—"I am bound by every tie of God and man, of reason and revelation, of honour and gratitude, to do all I can to make my parents happy, by doing whatever will give them pleasure, and by avoiding whatever will give them pain. By God's help, I will from this hour study and do whatever will promote their comfort. I will make my will to consist in doing theirs, and my earthly happiness to arise from making *them* happy. I will sacrifice my own predilections, and be satisfied with *their* choice." Noble resolution, and just and proper! Adopt it, act upon it, and you will never repent of it. Do not have any earthly happiness that is enjoyed at the expense of theirs.

If you love them, *you will desire their good opinion.* We naturally value the esteem of those to whom we are attached; we wish to be thought highly of by them; and if we are quite careless about their respect for us, it is a sure sign we have no regard for them. Children should be desirous and even anxious to stand high in the opinion of their parents; and nothing can be a more decisive proof of a bad disposition in a son or a daughter, than their being quite indifferent what

their parents think of them. All love must be gone in such a case as this, and the youth is in the road to rebellion and destruction; commendation has lost its value, censure its efficacy, and punishment its power.

2. REVERENCE is the next duty.

“*Honour*,” saith the commandment, “thy father and mother.” This reverence has respect to your *feelings*, your *words*, and your *actions*. It consists in part of an inward consciousness of their superiority, and an endeavour to cherish a reverential frame of mind towards them, as placed by God over you. There must be high thoughts of their superiority, both natural and instituted, and a submission of the *heart* to their authority, in a way of sincere and profound respect. Even your love must be that which is exercised and expressed towards a superior. If there be no reverence of the heart, it cannot be expected in the conduct. In all virtue, whether it be that higher kind which has respect to God, or that secondary kind, which relates to our fellow creatures, we must have a right state of heart; for without this, virtue does not exist.

Your *words* should correspond with the reverential feelings of the heart. When speaking to them, your address, both in language and in tones, should be modest, submissive, and respectful; not loud, boisterous, impertinent, or even familiar; for they are not your equals, but your superiors. If at any time you differ from them in opinion, your views should be expressed, not with the flippancy and pertinaciousness of disputants, but with the meek inquisitiveness of pupils. Should they reprove, and even more sharply than you think is due, you must lay your hand upon your mouth, and neither answer them again, nor show resentment. Your reverence for them should be so great, as to impose a considerable restraint upon your speech in their company; for much is due to the presence of a parent. It is exceedingly offensive to hear a pert, clamorous, talkative young person, unchecked by the countenance of a father or mother, and engaging much of the conversation of a party to himself. Young persons should always be modest and retiring in company, but more especially when their parents are there. You should also be careful about the manner of speaking of them

to others. You should never talk of their faults, for this is like Ham's uncovering the nakedness of his father. You must not speak of them in a jocose or familiar manner, nor say any thing that would lead others to think lightly, or to suppose that *you* thought lightly of them. If they are attacked in their reputation, you are with promptitude and firmness, though with meekness, to defend them, so far as truth will allow, and, even if the charge be true, to make all the excuses that veracity will permit, and to protest against the cruelty of degrading your parents in your presence.

Reverence should extend to all your *behaviour* towards your parents. In all your conduct towards them, give them the greatest honour; let it be observed by others that you pay them all possible respect, and let it also be seen by themselves, when there is no spectator near. Your conduct should always be under restraint, when they are within sight; not the restraint of dread, but of esteem. How would you act if the king were in the room? Would you be as free, as familiar, as noisy, as when he had retired, or before he had entered? I am of opinion, that parents let down their dignity, and undermine their authority, by allowing the same rude and boisterous behaviour in their presence as in their absence. This should not be. When reason is expanding in children, they should be made to understand and feel the truth of what I have already affirmed, that there is an outward respect due to the very presence of a parent. All rude and noisy rushing in and out of a father or mother's company is unmeet. It is the etiquette of our court, that no one shall enter the royal presence, when the king is upon his throne, without obeisance; nor, in retiring, turn his back upon the throne. I do not ask for the same obsequiousness in families, but I ask for the principle from which it arises, a respectful deference for authority.

3. The next duty is OBEEDIENCE.

"Children, *obey* your parents," says the apostle in his Epistle to the Colossians. This is one of the most obvious dictates of nature; even the irrational creatures are obedient by instinct, and follow the signs of the parent beast, or bird, or reptile. Perhaps there

is no duty more generally acknowledged than this. Your obedience should *begin early*; the younger you are, the more you need a guide and a ruler. It should be *universal*; "Children, obey your parents," said the apostle, "in all things." The only exception to this, is when their commands are, in the letter or spirit of them, opposed to the commands of God. In this case, as well as in every other, we must obey God rather than man. But, even here, your refusal to comply with the sinful injunction of a parent must be uttered in a meek and respectful manner, so that it shall be manifest you are actuated by pure, conscientious motives, and not by a mere rebellious resistance of parental authority. Your obedience should have no other exception than that which is made by conscience; in your situation, inclination and taste are out of the question; both must be crossed, opposed, and set aside when opposed to parental authority. Obedience should be *prompt*. As soon as the command is uttered, it should be complied with. It is a disgrace to any child, that it should be necessary for a father or a mother to repeat a command. You should even anticipate, if possible, their injunctions, and not wait till their will is announced in words. A tardy obedience loses all its glory. It should be *cheerful*. A reluctant virtue is no virtue at all. Constrained and unwilling obedience is rebellion in *principle*; it is vice clothed in the garment of holiness. God loveth a cheerful giver, and so does man. A child retiring from a parent's presence, muttering, sullen, and murmuring, is one of the ugliest spectacles in creation: of what value is any thing he does in such a temper as this? It should be *self-denying*. You must give up your own wills, and sacrifice your own predilections, and perform the things that are difficult, as well as those that are easy. When a soldier receives a command, although he may be at home in comfort, and he is required at once to go into the field of danger, he hesitates not; he considers he has no option. A child has no more room for the gratification of self-will than the soldier has; he *must* obey. It should be *uniform*. Filial obedience is generally rendered without much difficulty when the parents are present, but not always with the same unre-

servedness when they are absent. Young people, you should despise the meanness, and abhor the wickedness of consulting the wishes, and obeying the injunctions of your parents, only when they are there to witness your conduct. Such hypocrisy is detestable. Act upon nobler principles. Let it be enough for you to know what is the will of a parent, to ensure obedience, even though continents laid, and oceans rolled between you and your father. Carry this injunction with you every where; let the voice of conscience be to you instead of *his* voice, and the consciousness that God sees you be enough to ensure your immediate compliance. How sublimely simple and striking was the reply of the child, who, upon being pressed in company to take something which his absent parents had forbidden him to touch, and who, upon being reminded that they were not there to witness him, replied, "Very true, but God and my conscience are here!" Be it your determination to imitate this beautiful example of filial piety, and obey in all things even your *absent* parents.

4. SUBMISSION TO THE FAMILY DISCIPLINE AND RULE is no less your duty than obedience to commands.

In every well-ordered family there is a rule of government; there is subordination, system, discipline, reward and punishment; and to these *all* the children must be in subjection. Submission requires, that if at any time you have behaved so as to render parental chastisement necessary, you should take it patiently, and not be infuriated by passion, or excited to resistance. Remember that your parents are commanded by God to correct your faults, that they are actuated by love in performing this self-denying duty, and that it costs them more pain to inflict it than it does you to endure it. Ingeniously confess your faults, and submit to whatever punishment their authority and wisdom may appoint. One of the loveliest sights in the domestic economy, next to that of a uniformly obedient child, is a disobedient one brought to a right sense of his misconduct, and quietly submitting to the penalty he has incurred. It is a proof both of strength of mind and of good disposition of heart, to say, "I have done wrong, and it is meet I should bear chastisement."

In the case of elder children, all other correction than that of rebuke, and the expression by language of parental displeasure, is of course out of the question; but where this is necessary, such young persons as have merited it, should exercise profound submission. It is exceedingly painful, when a parent, in addition to the extreme pain which it costs him to administer reproof to such children, has to endure the anguish produced by their utter indifference, smiling contempt, sullen murmuring, or insolent replies. This conduct is the more guilty, because the authors of it are arrived at an age when they may be supposed to have advanced so far in the growth of their understanding, as to perceive how deeply laid are the foundations of the parental authority, in nature, reason, and revelation, and how necessary it is that the reins of parental discipline should not be relaxed. If, then, you have committed one error in deserving reproof, do not commit another in resenting it. Keep all still within; let not your passions rebel against your judgment, but suppress in a moment the rising tumult of the soul. The conduct of some children after reproof is a deeper wound on the heart of a parent than that which preceded and deserved the reproof. On the other hand, I know not a greater mark of nobleness of mind, nor any thing which tends to raise a young person higher in the esteem of a parent, or to endear him more to a father's heart, than a humble submission to reproof, and an ingenuous confession of his fault. A friend of mine had a son, long since gone to join the immortals, who, having one day displeased his father before his younger brothers and sisters, not only meekly submitted to parental rebuke, but, when the family were assembled at the dinner table, rose before them all, and, after having confessed his fault, and craved his father's forgiveness, admonished the junior branches of the family to take warning by his example, and be cautious never to distress their parents, whom they were under such obligations to love and respect. Nothing could be more lovely or more impressive than this noble act. He rose, by his apology, to a higher place in the regard and esteem of his parents and the family, than he occupied even before his fault. Sul-

lenness, impertinence, and obstinate resistance, are meanness, cowardice, littleness, compared with such an action as this, which combines a heroic magnanimity with the profoundest humility.

Subjection requires, also, *a due observance of the rules laid down for the maintenance of family order.* In every well-ordered family, things are not left to chance, but regulated by fixed laws; there is a time for every thing and every thing in its time; a place for every thing and every thing in its place. Meals, prayer, going to bed, and rising in the morning, are all in their appointed season. To these rules it is the obvious duty of every branch of the family to submit. The sons and daughters may be growing up or arrived at full age: this matters not; they must submit to the law of the house, and their age is an additional reason for their submission, as it supposes a maturity of judgment, which enables them to perceive more clearly the grounds of all moral obligation. They may think the rules too strict; but, if the parent has enacted them, they should be in subjection, and that as long as they continue members of the little community, though it be almost to old age. It is for the parents to decide, also, what *visitors* shall be brought to the house; and it is in the highest degree unbecoming for a child to introduce, or even wish to attempt to introduce, any companion, contrary to the known will of a parent. The same remark will apply to *recreations*; parents must determine this point; and no child, that has the proper feelings of a child, would desire to set up any amusements that the taste, and especially that the conscience of a father or mother forbids. Instances have occurred of young people inviting such friends, and joining with them in such diversions, in the absence of their parents, as they know to be decidedly contrary to the law of the house. This is such an act of base and wicked rebellion against parental authority, and such an unprincipled disregard to parental comfort, as language is too weak to characterize. Even the *books* which are brought into the house must be in accordance with the domestic rule. If the parent forbid the introduction of novels, romances, or any other books, a child, in most cases, should forego his own predilec-

tions, and yield to an authority which he cannot resist without opposing the institute of nature and religion.

5. It is the duty of children TO CONSULT THEIR PARENTS.

They are the guides of your youth; your natural counsellors; the family oracle, which you are ever to consult, and the responses of which are to be received with pious reverence. Even if you have just reason to suspect the solidity and penetration of their judgment, it is due to the relation in which you stand to them, to undertake nothing without laying the matter before them, and obtaining their opinion. How much more ready should you be to do this, where you have every reason to confide in their wisdom! You are young and inexperienced; the path of life is in a considerable degree untrodden by you, and contingencies are perpetually arising, which you have yet acquired no experience to understand, and to turn to account. They have travelled the road, and know its turnings, its dangers, and its difficulties. Go to your parents, then, with every affair; consult them on the subject of companions, books, recreations. Let a father's and a mother's ear be the receptacle of all your cares. Have no secrets which you conceal from them. Especially consult with them on the subjects of *trade* and *marriage*. On the former, you perhaps need their pecuniary assistance; and how can you expect this if you take not their advice, as to the best way of employing *their* property? As to marriage, I need not repeat, at any length, what I have already said on this subject. The scripture has furnished us with many fine instances of the deference paid, in patriarchal times, by children to their parents. Isaac and Jacob both appear to have left the selection of their wives to their parents. Ruth, though a daughter-in-law, was willing to be guided entirely by Naomi. Ishmael asked his mother's advice; and Samson sought for his parent's consent. The simplicity of that age has departed, and, in the advance of society, more of the power of selection now vests in the children; but it should not be exercised independently of parental advice. An old divine said thus to his sons:—
“When you are youths, choose your callings, when

men, choose your wives, only take me along with you ; it may be old men see farther than you." Another ancient writer has this remark :—" It may be considered, that parents, who brought forth and bred up their children, should by no means be bereft of them without their consent ; and since they are so much their goods and possessions, it were a kind of purloining to give themselves away without their parents' leave. And on this subject, a heathen may teach many who profess to be Christians ; for Cyrus, on being invited to form a connexion with a particular individual, replied, " I like the lady, her dowry, and family, but I must have these agree with my parents' will, and then I will marry her."

6. IMITATE THE GOOD EXAMPLE of your parents.

I say their *good* example, for if they unhappily set you a *bad* one, it is at the peril of your soul that you follow it. It was a noble answer which Frederick IV elector palatine of the Rhine, returned to the prince, who advised him to follow the example of his father Lewis :—" In the business of religion, we must follow the example of parents and ancestors only so far as they are agreeable to the will of God." Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, when he came to the throne of imperial Rome, publicly expressed his determination not to follow the usual conduct of the Cæsars, but to act as a disciple of the pious Antonine, and to act, and speak, and think, as his foster father did. Survey the conduct of *your* parents ; let their failings be thrown back in shadow, their excellences brought out in full relief. Where they are truly pious, be followers of their religious character. You bear the likeness of their bodies, receive also the impress of their minds. Seek to catch the family feature of their piety. A wicked child, of godly parents, is the most awful character upon earth. With what horror do I look upon such a one ! That *he* should swear who was taught to pray ! That *he* should violate the Sabbath, who was led up, from his infantine days, to the house of God ! That *he* should despise religion, who has ever seen its beautiful form in the example of a godly father and a pious mother ! That *he* should be a friend of profane and unclean persons, who, from a child,

has been the companion of saints! Shocking spectacle! But even where there may be no actual irreligion, there is oftentimes a want of true religion; and this, also, is distressing. What an aggravation is it to the sin of being without piety, to have lived all the earlier part of life with an example of true godliness before our eyes! This is a dreadful and actual resistance of the most alluring means which heaven ever employs for the conversion of a sinner: it is a resolute determination to neglect and forget religion, in spite of an interesting and powerful memorial of it constantly before our eyes. What a meeting will such children have with their parents at the last day!

7. The last duty I shall mention is KINDNESS.

This should extend through the whole of your deportment; but there are several cases in which it will have a more enlarged opportunity for displaying its beauty, and exerting its energy.

When parents are *greatly inferior in talents and acquirements*, it is a fine occasion for the exercise of filial piety. We know instances in which the father and mother are lamentably deficient, not only in information, but in judgment: their weakness is manifest to all, and cannot be concealed from their family; by whom, indeed, the sad effects of their imbecility are daily felt and deplored. Here, then, is an opportunity for a display of noble and exalted kindness on the part of children. Young people, if you are placed in such circumstances, endeavour constantly to remember that, notwithstanding all their weakness, they are your parents still, and hold a parent's claim. Never, never taunt them with their defects, for this is cruelty in the extreme; but, on the contrary, strive to the uttermost to prevent them from suffering any painful consciousness of their inferiority. Do not laugh at their mistakes, nor ever suffer yourselves so to expose or to correct them, as to wound their feelings. If they are obstinate, yield to them; if irritable, bear with them; and when they show their incapacity for governing with wisdom, instead of snatching the sceptre from their hand, insensibly assist them to wield it with greater propriety. It is a beautiful sight to behold a fine, intelligent, strong-minded son or daughter, strain-

ing every nerve, and employing every faculty to endure and conceal the faults of such a parent, and to throw an air of respectability over one that has no respectability of his own.

“There is often, especially in the middle classes of life, as great a difference of mental culture in the parent and the child, as if they had lived at the distance of many centuries. The wealth that has been acquired by patient industry or some fortunate adventure, may be employed in diffusing all the refinements of science and literature to the children of those to whom the very words science and literature are words of which they would scarcely be able, even with the help of a dictionary, to understand the meaning. In a rank of life still lower, there are not wanting many meritorious individuals, who, uninstructed themselves, labour indefatigably to obtain the means of liberal instruction for one, whose wisdom, in after years, where he is to astonish the village, may gratify at once their ambition and love. It would, indeed, be painful to think, that any one, whose superiority of knowledge has cost his parents so much fatigue, and so many privations of comforts, which, but for the expense of the means of his acquired superiority, they might have enjoyed, should turn against them, in his own mind, the acquirements which were to them of so costly a purchase, despising them for the very ignorance which gave greater merit to their sacrifice, and proud of a wisdom far less noble, when it can thus feel contempt, than the humble ignorance which it despises.”

Kindness will show itself *in generous attention to poor parents*. In the revolutions of this world, and by the vicissitudes of human affairs, many children have left their parents behind them in the humble vale of poverty; and some have lost their filial piety in the ascent. Few more shocking scenes can be presented to a feeling mind, than a rich son or daughter ashamed of, and unkind to, his poor father or mother. Such wretches deserve the fate of the proud monarch of Babylon, and would have no more than their desert if they were driven from the company of men to herd with beasts, to which they are more allied in disposition than to human beings. How beautiful a scene,

the very opposite of that which I have just considered, was exhibited in the palace of Pharaoh, when Joseph, then the prime minister of the state, led in a poor old shepherd to the presence of the king, and, before all the lords of the Egyptian court, introduced the decrepit and care-worn pilgrim as his father! Who, after looking at this, will ever be ashamed of a parent because he is clad in the garb of poverty? What a halo of glory did that one act draw round the honoured brow of Joseph! The lustre of the golden chain that hung from his neck was dim compared with the brightness of this action, and the chariot in which he rode with almost imperial pomp before the people, raised him not to so high an eminence, as that which he occupied, when he stood before the monarch with the patriarch of Canaan leaning on his arm. Never be ashamed of your parents, then, because of their poverty.

Let your kindness operate *in the way of affording them all things necessary for their comfort*. The author of the *Æneid* has denominated his hero the *pious* Æneas, because of the heroic manner in which he bore his decrepit father from the flames of Troy. Two inhabitants of Sicily obtained a celebrity in ancient story for their kindness to their aged parents in carrying them upon their shoulders from an irruption of Mount Etna.

We have another instance of modern times. Mr. Robert Tillotson went up to London on a visit to his son, then dean of Canterbury, and, being in the dress of a plain countryman, was insulted by one of the dean's servants for inquiring if *John Tillotson* was at home. His person, however, being described to the dean, he immediately exclaimed, "It is my worthy father;" and, running down to the door to receive him, he fell down upon his knees in the presence of his servants, to ask his father's blessing.

And how has the poet, the historian, and the painter, loved to exhibit that beautiful picture of filial piety, first given by Pliny, of a daughter, who, when her mother was condemned to be starved to death, obtained leave from the keeper to visit the prison daily, and there nourished her parent from her own breast! A similar occurrence took place afterwards, in which a

daughter nourished her father in the same manner : the action was considered so striking, that it obtained the honourable appellation of *the Roman charity*. The senate decreed that the father should be restored to his child, and that on the spot where the prison stood, a temple should be erected to *FILIAL PIETY*.

There are, however, few instances of more touching kindness to parents, than that mentioned by Mr. Bruce, in his *Juvenile Anecdotes*.

“An officer, having remained some time at Kingston, in Surrey, for the purpose of raising recruits, received orders to join his regiment. On the evening before his departure, a *YOUNG MAN* of the most engaging aspect made his appearance, and desired to be enlisted into his company. His air at once indicated a well cultivated mind, and commanded respect.

“He betrayed, however, evident marks of perturbation, and was greatly embarrassed : the officer asked the cause of it ; ‘I tremble,’ said he, ‘lest you should deny my request.’ Whilst he was speaking, the tears rolled down his cheeks. ‘No,’ answered the officer, ‘I accept your offer most heartily ; but why should you imagine a refusal ?’ ‘Because the bounty which I expect may perhaps be too high.’ ‘How much, then, do you demand ?’ said the officer. ‘It is no unworthy motive, but an urgent claim, that compels me to ask ten guineas ; and I shall be the most miserable of mankind if you refuse me.’ ‘Ten guineas !’ said the officer ; ‘that, indeed, is very high ; but I am pleased with you : I trust to your honour for the discharge of your duty, and will strike the bargain at once. Here are ten guineas : to-morrow we depart.’

“The young man, overwhelmed with joy, begged permission to return home, to perform a sacred duty, and promised to be back within an hour. The officer, impressed by the honesty of his countenance, yielded to his desire ; but, observing something mysterious in his manner, he was induced, by curiosity, to follow him at some distance. He saw him hastening towards the town prison, where he knocked, and was admitted. The officer quickened his pace ; and when he came to the door of the prison, he overheard the young man say to the jailer, ‘Here is the money for which my

father is imprisoned; I put it into your hands, and I request you will conduct me to him immediately, that I may release him from his misery.' The jailer did as he requested.

"The officer delayed a few minutes, that the young man might have an opportunity of being alone with his father; he then followed him. What a scene! He saw the son in the arms of a venerable and aged father, who, without uttering a word, pressed him to his heart, and bedewed him with tears. A few minutes passed before he observed the officer, who, deeply affected, approached them, and said to the old man,— 'Compose yourself; I will not deprive you of so worthy a son. Permit me to restore him to you, that I may not regret the money which he has employed in so virtuous a manner.'

"The father and son fell upon their knees at his feet. The young man refused, at first, to accept of his proffered freedom; but the worthy officer insisted that he should remain with his father. He accompanied them both from the prison, and took his leave with the pleasing reflection of having contributed to the happiness of a worthy son and an unfortunate father."

What mind is not enamoured, what heart is not affected, by such touching instances of filial kindness! And what child is not ready to exclaim, "O my father, my mother, I will share with you my last crust, and feel at once both honoured and happy to return upon you, in your old age, the kindness you bestowed upon me in my youth, childhood, and infancy!"

Kindness will manifest itself by *affectionate attention* and *tender sympathy in their sickness*. I do not know where in all our world to find a lovelier, holier, sweeter scene, than that of a pious and affectionate daughter, devoting her time, and strength, and inventive assiduities to the comfort of a mother or a father, confined for years to the room and the bed of sickness. Such children I have known, and ineffably admired, who, at an age when there is usually a taste and capacity for the pleasures of society, have abstracted themselves from all company, to be the constant and almost sole companion of that dear sufferer, to alleviate whose sor-

rows was their only happiness. Scarcely have they permitted themselves to walk abroad and enjoy the scenes of nature, even to recruit their wasting strength, and prepare for fresh activities in the sick chamber, lest in their absence a pang should be felt which none could so well mitigate as they, or a want endured which they could best supply. I knew one such, who, had a sick father lived much longer, would have preceded him to the grave, and died a martyr to filial piety. Nothing could ever tempt her away from his side by day, and not often did a night pass without her stealing quietly to his chamber door, at which, unconscious of the frost which was assailing her delicate frame, she stood listening, to ascertain if all was still, not daring to enter, lest she should disturb that slumber which perhaps he was enjoying. I remember, in another case, visiting a cottage, in which a sick man lay dying, who had been long ill: his wife was ministering to his comfort, and in one corner of the room, there was a girl of twelve years of age busily employed at her needle. On my asking how they were supported in their affliction, the mother replied, "Principally, sir, by that child's work; she is up every morning at four o'clock, and is diligently employed till late at night; she cheerfully bears all this labour, and gives its produce to sustain us." Young people, read and ponder these interesting details, and imitate these beautiful examples. Put forth all your tenderness, shrink from no self-denial, endure, not only without murmuring, but with cheerfulness, any sacrifices to comfort a sick parent. Aspire to the character of being a ministering angel to a father or mother. Let them see that you account it no hardship, but a felicity to wait upon them. It is in your power to alleviate or aggravate to an inconceivable degree their sufferings, according as you are kind or unkind. Covet the testimony which many a one has received, when the sufferer has said with tears in her eyes, "That dear child is my companion, my friend, my nurse, and all my earthly delight." O what is the concord of sweet sounds at the concert, what the gay and glittering attractions of the ball-room, what the dazzling scenes of the theatre, or, to come to more lawful enjoy-

ments, what the exhilaration of the public meeting, compared with the consciousness of having smoothed the bed of sickness, and alleviated the sufferings of disease for an afflicted parent! If the conscience of any that shall read these pages shall reproach them for neglect; if they know that they have heard their parents mildly reprove them for their want of sympathy, let them consider what must be the anguish of those parents' hearts, who have to say, in the bitterness of their soul, to their own children, "Is it nothing to you? all ye that pass by, come, see if there was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow!" and who, disappointed in the hope of tenderness from their own offspring, turn for help to their neighbours, and, taking up the piteous complaint of Job, say, "Pity me, pity me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me!" Unfeeling youth, your neglect will one day find you out, and, at some future time, may be, perhaps, returned upon you by the cruel conduct of your own children.

Kindness will often be put to a severe test *by the bad temper or the stern and tyrannical government* of parents. It is difficult, I know, to be kind to those who are unkind to us; but it is our duty in all cases, much more to a parent. Nothing must allow you to be otherwise than the dutiful, affectionate child. No ebullitions of passion, no manifestation of unreasonable discontent, no caprice, no unmerited reproach on their part, should throw you off your guard. It may be sometimes necessary to remonstrate, but never can be proper to return railing for railing. Kindness may do more, in such circumstances, to soften and remove the evil than angry resistance: "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

"Lovely as virtue is," says Dr. Brown, "in all its forms, there is no form in which it is more lovely than in the tender ministry of offices of kindness; where the kindness, perhaps, is scarcely felt, or considered less as kindness than as the duty which might have been fairly demanded, and which there is no merit, therefore, in having paid. Though we have often the gratification of seeing, in the progress of life, many beautiful examples of age, that is not more venerable for its past virtues than amiable, with a lasting and still increasing gentleness, which softens the veneration, indeed, but augments

While it softens it, it is not always that the last years of life present to us this delightful aspect; and, when the temper is, in these last years, unfortunately clouded,—when there is no smile of kindness in the faded eye, that grows bright again for moments only when there is fretfulness in the heart,—when the voice, that is feeble only in the utterance of grateful regard, is still sometimes loud with tones of a very different expression,—the kindness, which, in its unremitting attention, never shows, by a word or look, the sadness that is felt on these undeserved reproaches, and that regards them only as proofs of a weakness that requires still more to be comforted, is a kindness which virtue alone can inspire and animate, but which, in the bosom that is capable of it, virtue must already have well rewarded. How delightful is the spectacle, when, amid all the temptation of youth and beauty, we witness some gentle heart, that gives to the couch of the feeble, and perhaps of the thankless and repining, those hours which others find too short for the successive gayeties with which an evening can be filled, and that prefers to the smile of universal admiration, the single smile of enjoyment, which, after many vain efforts, has at last been kindled on one solitary cheek!"

Another circumstance remains to be mentioned, which will render it extremely difficult, sometimes, to be at once obedient to God and to your parents; difficult to manifest all the kindness which they may expect, and, at the same time, to regard the dictates of conscience: I mean, where the children are pious, and the parents *are still in an unconverted state*. This is no uncommon case, and always a trying one wherever it occurs. Those who are placed in such a situation need much wisdom and much grace to conduct themselves with propriety, so as to give no unnecessary pain to their parents, and yet, at the same time, to maintain their consistency as Christians. To young persons, in such circumstances, I say, let there be deep and unaffected humility, no spiritual pride, no apparent consciousness of moral superiority, no saying, "Stand by, I am holier than thou;" nothing approaching, in the most distant manner, to contempt of your parents, on account of their state. When it is necessary, as it sometimes may be, to oppose their wishes,

and refuse their requests, because they interfere with your duty to God, let your dissent not assume the shape of disobedience to them; let it be expressed in a mild and respectful manner, and be made obviously to appear to be the result of conscientious motives, and not of caprice, or any want of right feeling towards them. In all other things, in which religion is not concerned, let there be additional effort and ingenuity to please them, so that they may have nothing against you, but as touching the law of your God. It may be sometimes necessary for you to *express* the solicitude which you ought always to *feel* for their spiritual welfare: you must then be careful to avoid the appearance of dictation, lecturing, and reproach, and address yourselves to them in an humble and prudent manner. You should put suitable books in their way, and, if they are not in the habit of hearing the gospel preached, you may invite them to hear the joyful sound. With all this, you must take especial pains that your own religion may be consistent and practical; visible in all your conduct, and more particularly conspicuous in the kind, and tender, and dutiful manner in which you discharge your obligations to them.

Such is a compendium of filial duties. Let children read them, study them, and sincerely desire to perform them, and pray to Almighty God for the grace that is in Christ Jesus to assist them in discharging their obligations.

Many and cogent MOTIVES may be brought forward to enforce the performance of these duties.

Observe the manner in which they are enjoined in scripture. Perhaps there are few branches of moral obligation more frequently alluded to, or more variously enjoined, than that of filial piety. The lives of the patriarchs, from the beginning of the world, are so drawn up as to exhibit and recommend this virtue. It is commanded in one of the precepts of the *moral* law. By the ceremonial law, stubborn disobedience to parental authority was punished with death. The book of Proverbs contains almost innumerable apothegms on this subject. The prophets very frequently allude to it; and Jeremiah, in the history of the Rechabites, has preserved a very extraordinary instance of hereditary filial obedience,

perpetuated through a period, which, in the time of that prophet, had lasted three centuries, and which was rewarded by the following testimony and promise of the Lord:—"Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab, your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; therefore, thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." If we come forward to the New Testament, we find it again and again brought into view. We see it imbodied and enforced in the example of Christ, of whom it is said, Jesus went down and was subject unto his parents. Yes; in the matchless constellation of perfect moral excellences that formed his character, and are presented for our admiration and imitation, one bright and beauteous star is filial piety. Fix, young people, your eye upon that star, so mildly beaming, and so radiantly shining, as an example for you. That wonderful personage, GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, was subject, we have reason to believe, to his parents, till, at the age of thirty, he entered upon his public ministry; and those parents, be it remembered, were a poor but pious couple, who earned their daily bread by the sweat of their brow. With them he dwelt in their humble abode, and laboured, in all probability, for their support. And even amidst the agonies of the cross, neither his own personal sufferings, nor the sublime and glorious scenes connected with the redemption of a world, abstracted his thoughts and solicitude from the mother of his human nature; and even then did filial piety shine forth, a bright speck still visible upon the orb of glory, which was rising upon the world. The apostles enforced it by various commendations. "Children, obey your parents," says Paul, in one place, "*for it is right,*"—a thing not obligatory merely because it is commanded, but commanded because it is right; not a mere positive institute, but wholly moral; a duty enjoined not only by revelation, but by reason; one of the first lessons taught by nature to a rational creature. So right and proper is it, that all nations, ancient and modern, civilized and savage, admit its obligations. In another place, it is declared to be "well pleasing unto the Lord." It

is that in which he delights, because it is the very disposition towards himself which he requires. And, then, in his catalogues of dark deeds, and horrid dispositions, and atrocious characters, the apostle places disobedience to parents. The loud, strong voice of revelation is lifted to proclaim over the surface of the globe, "Children, obey your parents, and honour your father and mother; *for this is well pleasing to the Lord;*" while the voice of nature echoes back the command, "Children, obey your parents, *for this is right.*"

A child of any degree of generosity will be influenced to obey his parents *by a consideration of their comfort.*

The earthly happiness of a father and a mother depends far more upon the conduct of their children, than upon any thing else. Their trade may prosper; their wealth accumulate; they may dwell amidst every kind of luxury and splendour, in the most beautiful spot which creation can present, yet an undutiful child may, by his disobedience and unkindness, throw a dark and chilling shadow over all, and envelope every thing in gloom. On the other hand, affectionate and obedient children supply the lack of riches, soften the weight of care, sweeten the cup of affliction, and shed a pleasing light over what would be otherwise a dark and dreary scene of human wo. Children have their parents' happiness in their keeping. They stand at the fountains of our earthly destiny, and send into our dwelling the waters of bitterness or of sweetness, as their conduct towards us shall be dutiful or unkind. They cannot know, till experience shall teach them, the trembling and exquisite sensitiveness of our hearts, and how slight a puncture draws the life's blood of our peace. So true it is, as was said by the wise man, that "a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother," ay, and of his father too: he is a spot on their character; a blast upon their hopes; a nuisance to their family; and a thorn in their hearts.

Nearly connected with this, as another motive, is *gratitude*. No child can know till he becomes a parent himself, what he owes to *his* parents; and not then till he has added all the cares, and toils, and anxieties which are excited by the child, the boy, the youth, the man, in addition to those which are awakened by the *infant of days*. Parental solicitude is of

course produced by the first sight of the child ; but the infancy of the babe is but the infancy of our solicitude, which grows with its growth, and strengthens with its strength. Children are ever contracting obligations from the first moment of their existence. What owes not the *babe* to his mother, for that watchfulness, and labour, and anxiety, which scarcely rest by day or sleep by night ! Other animals, though nourished by their parents, are taught many things by instinct ; but man, the most helpless of all creatures, must learn every thing from his parents, in the first stage of his existence. Let any one calculate, if he can, the hours of labour, sleeplessness and anxiety ; the tears, the tremblings, the alarms, which one weakly infant costs a mother, before he leaves her arms, and stands erect upon his feet in his own strength. My young friend, had your mother remitted her care for one single hour, or ceased, but for a short season, her vigilant inspection, you might have been consumed in your cradle, or have been now a cripple or an idiot. How many months rolled by, before you could wash away a speck of defilement from your frame, help yourself to medicine or to food, express, in articulate language, a single want, put on a garment, or defend yourself against an enemy so feeble as a wasp ! What, then, are your obligations to the woman who did all this *for* you, and delighted to do it ? I cannot follow you through the successive stages of your existence, at each of which, you were accumulating fresh obligations to both father and mother ; for education, with all its advantages ; for instruction in trade, and that capacity you now possess for attaining to respectability in life ; but, above all, for that ceaseless, and manifest, and earnest solicitude for your eternal happiness, by which you have had the road to glory, honour, and immortality opened to your view, and have been admonished to walk in it ! O, sum up, if you can, your obligations to your parents : but you cannot. And can you resist *this* motive to obedience ? What, has gratitude perished in your soul, till its very root has died in the soil of your depraved nature ? Yes ; it must be so, if you are unkind to your parents : you stand proved before the universe, to have nothing of a

child, but the name and the mere fleshly relation, which you possess in common with the tiger, or the serpent, or the toad; but you have not the feelings of a child; you are a kind of monstrous production, out of the course of nature, and, like all such productions, fill the mind with loathing and horror. Few there are, I hope, that will read these pages, to whom such an expostulation is applicable: on the contrary, many, I believe, will experience, as they proceed, the generous emotions of gratitude swelling higher and higher in their bosom, till, with a burst of virtuous feeling, they exclaim, "Accept, my parents, of the surrender, which a sense of my obligation to you compels me to make, of my whole future life, to the promotion of your comfort."

Interest pleads with children for their dutiful behaviour to their parents.

An undutiful child cannot be a *happy* one. Peace must leave the breast with filial piety, whenever it departs; and uneasiness and misery, and occasional shame and remorse, enter to dwell in the wretched bosom; while the affectionate and dutiful child has a perpetual feast within. And mark the language of the apostle: "Honour thy father and mother; *which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.*" This is an allusion, it is true, to the temporal promises of the Sinai Covenant, and perhaps to the law which doomed the disobedient son to be judicially cut off from the people. But yet, as repeated by a *New Testament* writer, it must, to a certain extent, be in force still. Dr. Dwight has the following remarks on this passage which deserve consideration. "In conversing with the plain people of this country, distinguished for their good sense, and careful observation of facts, I have found them, to a great extent, firmly persuaded of the verification of this promise in our own times, and ready to produce a variety of proofs from cases in which they have seen the blessings realized. *Their* opinion is *mine*, and with their experience my own has coincided.

"Indeed, no small measure of prosperity seems ordinarily *interwoven* with a course of filial piety. The

comfort which it ensures to parents, the harmony which it produces in the family, the peace which it yields in the conscience, are all essential ingredients of happiness. To these it adds the approbation of every beholder, the possession of a fair and lasting reputation, the confidence and good will of every worthy man, and, of consequence, an opportunity of easily gaining those useful employments which good men have to give. Beyond this, it naturally associates itself with temperance, moderation and sobriety, which furnish a solid foundation for health and long life. In my own apprehension, however, these are not *all* its blessings. I do not say that miracles are wrought for its reward. Neither will I say that purer gales breathe to preserve its health; nor that softer suns arise, or more timely rains descend to mature its harvests; nor that more propitious winds blow to waft its ships home in safety. But I will say that on the tide of Providence multiplied blessings are borne into its possession, at seasons when they are unexpected, in ways unforeseen, and by means unprovided by its own forecast, which are often of high importance, which, altogether, constitute a rich proportion of prosperity, and which usually are not found by persons of the contrary character. At the same time, those who act well as children almost of course act well as men and women; and thus have taken, without design, the scion of happiness from the parental stock, and grafted it upon other stems, which bear fruit abundantly to themselves. Here, in the language of Dr. Watts,

‘It revives, and bears
A train of blessings for their heirs.’”

If motives so forcible and tender as these have no effect, nothing is left me to do, but to remind the children of disobedience of that day of judgment, which God hath appointed to judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, and to give to every one according to the things done in the body, whether they are good or bad. “In that most awful season, when the wicked shall see the Judge *sit above them*, angry and severe, inexorable and terrible; *under them* an intolerable hell; *within them*, their consciences clamorous and

diseased; *without them*, all the world on fire; *on the right hand*, those men glorified, whom they persecuted and despised; *on the left hand*, the devils accusing;” then shall it be found that the severest sentence of the Almighty, and the bitterest dregs of the vials of his wrath, will be poured out on the disobedient and ungodly child of those parents who trained him up in the nurture of the Lord.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE FRATERNAL DUTIES.

“ Next in order to the relationship of the parent and the child may be considered the relation which the child bears to those who are united with him by the same tie to the same parental bosom. If friendship be delightful, if it be above all delightful to enjoy the continued friendship of those who are endeared to us by the intimacy of many years, who can discourse with us of the frolics of the school, of the adventures and studies of the college, of the years when we first ranked ourselves with men in the free society of the world, how delightful must be the friendship of those who, accompanying us through all this long period, with a closer union than any casual friend, can go still farther back, from the school to the very nursery, which witnessed our common pastimes; who have had an interest in every event that has related to us, and every person that excited our love or our hatred; who have honoured with us those to whom we have paid every filial honour in life, and wept with us over those whose death has been to us the most lasting sorrow of our heart! Such, in its wide, unbroken sympathy, is the friendship of brothers, considered even as friendship only; and how many circumstances of additional interest does this union receive, from the common relationship to those who have original claims to our still higher regard, and to whom we offer an acceptable service, in extending our affection to those whom they love! In treating of the circumstances that tend peculiarly to strengthen this tie, CICERO extends his view even to the common sepulchre that is at last to enclose us. It is, indeed, a powerful image, a symbol, and almost a lesson of unanimity. Every dissension of man with man excites in us a feeling of painful incongruity. But we feel a peculiar incongruity in the discord of those whom one roof has continued to shelter through life, and whose dust is afterwards to mingle under a single stone.”—DR. THOMAS BROWN.

To secure the comfort and well being of a state, it is not only necessary for the sovereign to be wise and patriotic, and the laws justly and impartially administered, but the people must be well affected both towards the government, and towards each other; there

must be a tie which binds them to each other, as well as to the state; there must be the fellowship of good neighbourhood. So, also, the happiness and welfare of a family depend not exclusively on the conduct of the parents to the children, nor on the conduct of the children to the parents, but also on the conduct of the children to each other. No family can be happy where a right feeling is wanting on the part of brothers and sisters. Nothing can be a substitute for this defect; and it is of great importance that all young people should have this set in a proper light before them. Many households are a constant scene of confusion, a perpetual field of strife, and an affecting spectacle of misery, through the quarrels and ill will of those, who, as flesh of each other's flesh, and blood of each other's blood, ought to have towards each other no feeling but that of love, and to use no words but those of kindness.

I will divide the fraternal duties into three kinds.

Those that are appropriate to the season of *childhood*—of *youth*—of *manhood*.

The general principles which are to regulate the discharge of these duties, and on which, indeed, they rest, are the same in reference to all seasons of life. Love, for instance, is equally necessary, whether brothers and sisters are sporting together in the nursery, dwelling together as young men and women beneath the parental roof, or descending the hill of life at the head of separate establishments and families of their own. Over and above the feelings of friendship, or of moral esteem, there must be those of complacency in them, as related to us by the ties of consanguinity; a consciousness, that, by the dispensations of providence in uniting them to us by a bond of nature, and which nothing but death can dissolve, they have acquired a claim upon our efforts to make them happy, which is stronger than that of any strangers, except it be in those cases, where our brothers and sisters have, by their unkind and cruel conduct, thrown off every thing but their name, and the stranger has assumed towards us the heart of a brother. And even in this case, we must still consider that they are our brothers, mourn their alienation with grief, view their

aberrations with pity, watch them in their wanderings with an anxious interest, and keep the way open for their return to our fellowship. Children of the same parent, who are wanting in love, are wanting in the first virtue of a brother and a sister as such. It is true, they may find companions more to their taste, considered as mere subjects of intellectual or general companionship, persons of more agreeable manners, of more pleasing tempers, of more cultivated minds; but these are not brothers, nor must the perception, which in some cases it is impossible to avoid, of their great superiority in many respects, destroy that natural impulse, which the heart ought ever to feel and to obey, towards a brother or a sister. This love must of course be increased or diminished in its exercise by circumstances, such as good or bad conduct, kindness or unkindness; but nothing must destroy the principle. The scripture, which is so replete with admonitions on almost every other subject, has said little on this; it has left nature spontaneously to send forth its fraternal energies; and, though containing many exhortations to the children of God to abound in brotherly love, has said little on this topic to the children of men; a reserve which seems rather to imply that the duty is so obvious and so easy as not to need an injunction, than that the discharge of it is not obligatory or not important. A child, a youth, or a man, who feels no goings forth of his heart, no peculiar interest, no appropriate and restrictive emotions towards a brother or a sister, is wanting in one of those social virtues, which it was certainly the intention of Providence should arise out of the relative ties.

But I will now go on to state how the various fraternal duties should be discharged in CHILDHOOD.

Brothers and sisters should make it a study to promote each other's happiness. They should take pleasure in pleasing each other, instead of each being selfishly taken up in promoting his own separate enjoyment. They should never envy each other's gratification; if one has a more valuable plaything than the other, the rest should rather rejoice than be sorry. Envy in children is likely to grow into a most baleful and malignant disposition. They should never take

each other's possessions away, and be always willing to lend what cannot be divided, and to share what *does* admit of being divided. Each must do all he can to promote the happiness of the whole. They should never be indifferent to each other's sorrows, much less laugh at, and sport with each other's tears and griefs. It is a lovely sight to see one child weeping because another is in distress. A boy that sees his brother or sister weep, and can be unconcerned or merry at the sight, would, when he becomes a man, in all probability, see them starve without helping them. Children should never accuse each other to their parents, nor like to see each other punished. An informer is a hateful and detestable character; but an informer against his brother or sister is the most detestable of all spies. If, however, one should see another doing that which is wrong, and which is known to be contrary to the will of their parents, he should first in a kind and gentle manner point out the wrong, and give an intimation that if it be not discontinued, he shall be obliged to mention it; and if the warning be not taken, it is then manifestly his duty to acquaint their parents with the fact. They must not tease or torment one another. How much domestic uneasiness sometimes arises from this source! One of the children, perhaps, has an infirmity or weakness of temper, or awkwardness of manner, or personal deformity, and the rest, instead of pitying it, tease and torment the unhappy individual, till all get quarrelling and crying together. Is this promoting their mutual comfort? If there be any one of the family that is in bad health, or weakly, all the rest, instead of neglecting that one, ought to strive to the uttermost to amuse him. How pleasing a sight it is, to see a child giving up his play time to read to, or converse with, a sick brother or sister! while nothing is more disgusting than that selfishness which will not spare a single hour for the amusement of the poor sufferer upon the bed, or the little prisoner in the nursery. As to fighting, quarrelling, or calling ill names, this is so utterly disgraceful, that it is a deep shame upon those children who live in such practices. Dr. Watts has very beautifully said:—

“ Whatever brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home ;
Where sisters dwell and brothers meet
Quarrels should never come.

“ Birds in their little nests agree ;
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out, and chide, and fight.

“ Hard names, at first, and threat'ning words,
That are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs and naked swords,
To murder and to death.”

Children that are removed from home to school should be both watchful over and kind to each other. They should manifest a peculiar and kind interest in each other's comfort, and not neglect one another. It is pleasant to see two brothers or two sisters, always anxious to have each other as playmates, or as members of the little circles with which they associate, defending one another from oppression or unkindness, and striving to make their absence from home as comfortable as they can by their mutual kindness.

I go on now to show in what way brothers and sisters should behave towards each other during THE SEASON OF YOUTH.

I now suppose them to have arrived at the age of fourteen, and state their obligations between that period and the time when they settle in life. There should of course be a *tender attachment*, which becomes stronger, and more visible, as they acquire a greater power of reason to understand their relationship, and the design of Providence in forming this relation. Instead of this, however, we sometimes see brothers and sisters become more and more indifferent to each other, as they recede farther from the period of infancy. They should now reason upon the closeness of their relationship, and let the understanding give an additional impulse to their hearts. They should be *fond of each other's society*, and *put forth all their ingenuity to please one another*. It would have a delightful influence upon their mutual attachment, if their little separate proportion of pocket money were sometimes employed in making each other presents. How happy a state of feeling would be produced, if a sis-

ter, after having incidentally expressed a wish for some little article, were to be surprised soon after by finding that a brother had, unknown to her, purchased the elegant or useful trifle, and placed it upon her toilet or work table! Sisters should put forth all their assiduity to provide for brothers whatever the needle can do for their personal accommodation, and feel a hallowed delight in giving their labour to increase the comforts and conveniences of those whom it should be their study to please. A family of grown up children should be the constant scene of uninterrupted harmony, where love, guided by ingenuity, puts forth all its power to please, by those mutual good offices, and minor acts of beneficence, of which every day furnishes the opportunity, and which, while they cost little in the way either of money or labour, contribute so much to the happiness of the household. One of the most delightful sights in our world, where there is so much moral deformity to disgust, and so much unkindness to distress, is a domestic circle, where the parents are surrounded by their children, of which, the daughters are being employed in elegant or useful work, and the elder brother reading some instructive and improving volume, for the benefit or entertainment of the whole. This is the scene which more than justifies the beautiful apostrophe of the sweetest and most tender of all poets:—

“Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that hast survived the fall!
Though few now taste thee unimpaired and pure,
Or, tasting, long enjoy thee; too infirm
Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets
Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup.
Thou art the nurse of virtue—in thine arms
She dwells, appearing, as in truth she is,
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.
Thou art not known where pleasure is adored,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist,
And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of novelty, her fickle, frail support;
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding, in the calm of truth-tried love,
Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.
Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown!”

Scenes are to be found, (but, alas, how rarely!) which

give meaning and force to these lovely strains. Young people, seek your happiness in each other's society. What can the brother find in the circle of dissipation, or amongst the votaries of intemperance, to compare with this? What can the sister find amidst the concert of sweet sounds, that has music for the soul, compared with this domestic harmony? or in the glitter and fashionable confusion, and mazy dance of the ball-room, compared with these pure, calm, sequestered joys, which are to be found at the fire-side of a happy family? What can the theatre yield that is comparable with this?

“Oh evenings worthy of the gods! exclaimed
The Sabine band; Oh evenings, I reply,
More to be prized and coveted than yours,
As more illumined, and with nobler truths,
That I, and mine, and those we love enjoy.
Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks
That idleness has ever yet contrived
To fill the void of an unfurnished brain,
To palliate dullness, and give time a shove.”

I would advise all young people to read “The Task,” and especially the fourth book; and to read it till they grow in love with those pure and hallowed home-born pleasures, which are at once the most attainable and the most satisfying of any to be found in our curse-stricken world.

It is of great importance to the pleasant intercourse of brothers and sisters, that *each should pay particular attention to the cultivation of the temper*. I have known all the comfort of a family destroyed by the influence of one passionate or sullen disposition. Where such a disposition unhappily exists, the subject of it should take pains to improve it, and the other branches of the family, instead of teasing, or irritating, or provoking it, should exercise all possible forbearance, and, with ingenious kindness, help their unfortunate relative in the difficult business of self-control.

As woman seems formed by nature to execute the offices of a nurse, *sisters should be peculiarly kind and tender to sick brothers*; for there are few things which tend more to conciliate affection, than sympathy with us in our sufferings, and all those gentle and willing

efforts, which, if they cannot mitigate our pains, have such a power to soothe our minds and divert our attention from the sense of suffering.

Mutual respect should be shown by brothers and sisters; all coarse, vulgar, degrading terms and modes of address should be avoided, and nothing but what is courteous either done or said. The intercourse of such relatives should be marked, not, indeed, by the stiffness of ceremony, nor the coldness of formality, nor the cautious timidity of suspicion, but by the politeness of good manners, blended with all the tenderness of love. It is peculiarly requisite also, that while this is maintained at home, there should not be disrespectful neglect in company. It is painful for a sister to find herself more neglected than the veriest stranger, and thus exposed to others as one in whom her brother feels no interest.

Brothers ought not, even in lesser matters, to be *tyrants over their sisters*, and expect from them the obsequiousness of slaves. The poor girls are sometimes sadly treated, and rendered miserable by the caprice and freaks, and iron yoke of some insolent and lordly boy. Where the parents are living, they ought not to suffer such oppression. Of such a despot let all young women beware, for he that is a tyrant to his sister is sure to be a tyrant also to a wife.

It is of great consequence, that brothers and sisters should maintain epistolary correspondence when absent from each other. It must be a very strong regard which separation, especially when it is for a long time, does not diminish. Flames burn brightest in the vicinity of each other. An affectionate letter, received from an absent friend, tends to fan the dying spark of affection. They who can be long separated without such a bond as this, are already in a state of indifference to each other, and are in rapid progress to still wider alienation.

Brothers and sisters should be very careful *not to become estranged from each other after the death of their parents*; of which there is always some danger. While one parent remains, though the other be gone to the sepulchre, there is a common centre of family affection still left, by drawing near to which, the

members are kept near to each other ; but when this survivor has also departed, the point of union is gone, and the household is likely, without great watchfulness, to be divided and distracted. How often does this happen by the division of the family property.* The grave has scarcely closed over the parental remains, before strife, confusion, and every evil work begin in reference to the patrimonial possessions. To guard against this, the father should ever have his will made, a will made upon the obvious principles of wisdom and equity. Any attempt, on the part of one child, to turn a parent's mind from the line of strict impartiality and equity towards the others ; any advantage taken of opportunities of more frequent access to the parental ear and prejudices, to gain more than a just share of his property, is an act so base, so foul, and wicked, as to deserve the most severe, and impassioned, and indignant reprehension. Even in this case, however, the injured branches of the family should not so far resent the matter, as to withdraw from all intercourse with the supplanter : remonstrate they may, and abate something of their esteem and regard they must, but still they are required by scripture to forgive him, and not to cherish hatred, or to manifest revenge. Unless in cases of unusual and extraordinary rapacity, the fraternal intercourse ought not to be stopped by unfair advantages of this kind.

There are instances, however, in which an *unequal* division of property is not an *unjust* one, and ought not to be felt as such, by the party which receives the lesser share. If one child has become possessed of wealth from another source, I do not think that he ought to consider himself unfairly dealt with, if he do not receive so large a portion of the family property, as his brothers and sisters do. Or if there be one branch of the family prevented, by the visitations of Providence, from all active labour, the rest ought not to think it unfair, if a parent make a larger provision for this deformed or helpless child, than for the other branches. The alienation of brothers and sisters on account of pecuniary matters, is usually a matter of

* This, perhaps, rather belongs to the third division of the subject.

deep disgrace to them *all*; not only to the spoiler, but also to the rest.

But in what terms shall I depict the atrocious wickedness of a villanous brother, who, after the death of their parents, would employ his influence to wheedle and swindle an unmarried sister out of her property, and reduce her to poverty and dependence, to indulge his own rapacity, or to avert calamity from himself? Such wretches *have* existed, and *do* exist, who, taking advantage of a sister's strong affection, combined with her ignorance of money matters, never cease, till, by all the arts of subtlety, they have got out of her possession the last shilling she has in the world; and then, perhaps, when she has nothing more for them to pilfer, abandon the victim of their cruelty, with the remorselessness of a highwayman, to want and misery. Let such monsters remember, that there is one in heaven whose eye has been upon all their wicked arts and cruel robbery, and who, for all these things will bring them into judgment. It is an act of cruelty in any brother, who, without any dishonest intention, perhaps, would wish to jeopardize the property of a sister, in order, either to increase his own gains, or to avert his own dreaded misfortunes. *She* may be very unfitted to struggle with poverty, and altogether disqualified for earning support by her own industry, and therefore ought not to be exposed to the danger of losing her property. Cases do occur sometimes in which it may be proper, and even necessary, for the property of unmarried sisters to be employed in the trade of their brothers; but as a general rule it is *unadvisable*: and where it does happen, the latter should let all their conduct be conducted on the principles of the greatest caution, the most rigid integrity, and the noblest generosity.

Brothers ought ever, after the death of their parents, to consider themselves as the natural guardians of unmarried sisters; their advisers in difficulty, their comforters in distress, their protectors in danger, their sincere, tender, liberal, and unchanging friends, amidst all the scenes and vicissitudes of life. It is rarely advisable that a sister should permanently dwell with a married brother; but then, even the much stronger

claims of the wife ought not to cancel or throw into oblivion those of the sister.

I will now suppose the case of one or more branches of the family, who are brought by divine grace to be partakers of true religion, and point out what is their duty to the rest, and what the duty of the rest to them. In reference to the former, it is manifestly their solemn and irrevocable obligation, to seek, by every affectionate, scriptural, and judicious effort, the real conversion of those of the family who are yet living without heartfelt religion. O, how often has the leaven of piety, when, by divine mercy and power, it has been laid in the heart of one of the family, spread through nearly the whole household! How often has fraternal love, when it has soared to its sublimest height, and, with a heaven-kindled ambition, aimed at the loftiest object which benevolence can possibly pursue, by seeking the salvation of a brother's soul, secured its prize, and received its rich reward! Young people, whose hearts are under the influence of piety, but whose hearts also bleed for those, who, though they are the children of the same earthly parent, are not yet the children of your Father in heaven, I call upon you by all the love you bear your brothers and sisters; by all the affection you bear for your parents; by all the higher love you bear to God and Christ, to seek by every proper means the conversion of those, who, though bound to you by the ties of nature, are not yet united by the bond of grace. Make it an object with you to win their souls. Pray for it constantly. Put forth in your own example all the beauties of holiness. Seek for the most undeviating consistency, since a single want of this would only strengthen the prejudice you are anxious to subdue. Let them see your religion in your conscientiousness, your joy, your humility, your meekness, your love. In all the general duties of life, be more than ordinarily exact. Win their affections by the kindest and most conciliating conduct. Avoid all consciousness of superiority. Attempt not to scold them out of their sins. Avoid the language of reproach. Draw them with the cords of love, for *they* are the bands of a man. Now and then recommend to their perusal a valuable book. When

they are absent, write to them on the subject of religion. But, at the same time, do not disgust them by boring them with religion. Seize favourable opportunities, and wisely improve them. Point them to eminently happy, consistent, and useful Christians. Comply with all their wishes that are lawful, but give not up one atom of your consistency. Pliancy on your part to meet their tastes and pursuits, if they are contrary to God's word, will only disgust them: mild firmness will secure their respect. And crown all with earnest prayer for that grace, without which no means can be successful. How knowest thou but thou shalt gain thy brother? And, O, what a conquest!

And what shall be said to the *unconverted* party? Shall such means be unsuccessful? Will you resist this holy, benevolent influence? Will you oppose these efforts to draw you to heaven? Will you leave your sister to travel alone to the skies, and determine to separate from her for ever, and pursue your course to perdition? Will you seek the dreadful, the fatal distinction, of being alone in your family as the enemy of God, the captive of Satan? Shall a sister's solicitude for your salvation, and all the active efforts which it puts forth, be only a savour of death unto death to you? Pause and ponder, young man! Alter your purpose; take her by the hand, and say to her, "Your affection has conquered; I will go with you, for I know that God is with you." But, perhaps, instead of this, you are a persecutor. What, a persecutor of religion, and of a sister, at the same time! Yes, you reject with scorn these efforts for your salvation, and treat her with ridicule and unkindness by whom they are made. Is it so? What, wicked enough for *this*! What, carry your enmity to piety so far as to imbitter the life of a sister, for no other reason than because she bows her heart to its influence! Recollect, the contest is not between you and her, but between you and God. It is not as a sister, but as a Christian, that she is the object of your displeasure, and, therefore, your ill will is against religion, and if against religion, then against God, for religion is the image of God in the soul of his rational creatures. Did you ever read or hear that fearful denunciation? If not, read it now,

—"Wo to him that contendeth with his Maker." This wo is uttered against every persecutor of religion, and therefore is against you.

The responsibility of *elder* brothers and sisters, especially that of the *FIRST BORN*, is great indeed. They are looked up to by the younger branches of the family as examples, and their example has great influence, in some cases greater than that of the parent: it is the example of one more upon a level with themselves, more near to them, more constantly before them than that of the parent, and is, on these accounts, more influential. It is of immense consequence, therefore, to their juniors, how these conduct themselves. If they are bad, they are likely to lead all the rest astray; if good, they may have great power in leading them aright. They bring companions, books, recreations, before the rest, which are proper or improper according as their own taste is. It is a most distressing spectacle to see an elder brother or sister training up younger ones, by his own conduct and precept, in the ways of wickedness. Such a youth is an awful character: like Satan, he goeth about seeking whom, by his temptations, he may destroy; but worse, in some respects more wicked and more cruel than his prototype, he marks out his own brother as the victim of his cruelty, and the dupe of his wiles. Whole families have, in some cases, been schooled in iniquity by one unprincipled elder son. What will such a brother have to answer for in the day of judgment, and what will be his torment in hell, when the souls of those whom he has ruined shall be near him, and by their ceaseless reproaches become his eternal tormentors! In other cases, what a blessing to a family has been a steady, virtuous, and pious elder brother or sister! Many a weak and sickly mother has given daily thanks to God for a daughter, who by her attentions was a kind of second mother to the younger members of the family, whom she did her uttermost to train up in her own useful and holy habits. Many a father has felt with equal gratitude the blessing of having in his first-born son, not only a help to himself in the cares of business, but in the work of education; a son who lent all the power of an amiable and religious

example, to form the character of his younger brothers. Let such young persons consider their responsibility, and at the same time let those who are their juniors in the family consider *their* duty. If they have a good example in their elder brothers and sisters, they should make it not only the object of attention and admiration, but also of imitation: but, on the other hand, if, unhappily, the conduct of their seniors be bad, let them not follow them in their evil course; let no threats, no bribes, no persuasions, induce them to comply with the temptation to do what is wrong.

I have now to allude to the discharge of fraternal duties *during the whole period of our lives, after the season of youth has passed away.* This has been anticipated in part already. Families are soon broken up; the parents die, the children marry and form separate establishments, and bring around them separate families of their own. This division of the original stock does not, however, destroy, although it necessarily must weaken, the fraternal tie. Pope beautifully remarks,

“Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;
The young dismissed to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care:
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace;
Another love succeeds, another race.
A longer care man’s helpless kind demands;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These *natural* love maintained, *habitual* those.
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the interest and the love;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.”

Great care is necessary, however, that when the centre of fraternal charities is gone, and each child becomes himself a centre of similar emotions and impulses, the interest of brothers and sisters in each other do not altogether cease. Brothers and sisters are brothers and sisters still, though they dwell in different quarters of the globe, are each at the head of families of their own, are distinguished in their circumstances by the varieties of affluence and poverty, and have attained to the age of threescore years and

ten: and the tie that unites them ought to be *felt* coiling round their hearts, and its influence ought to be seen in producing all those tender offices, which a common relationship to the same parent certainly demands. The next generation may, from various causes, lose their interest in each other. Regard for remote relations becomes, in every country, less and less, according as law extends its protection, commerce diffuses its wealth, and civilization multiplies its comforts. Where clanship is necessary for mutual protection, "the families that spring from one common stock continue to cling to each other for aid, almost as if they lived together under the same roof; it is truly one wide family, rather than a number of families; the history of the tribe in its remote years of warfare and victory, is the history of each individual of the tribe; and the mere remembrance of the exploits of those who fought with one common object, around the representative of their common ancestor, is like the feeling of the fraternal or filial relation, prolonged from age to age." This is not the case, however, in that state of society in which *we* are placed, where the feeling of affectionate interest, of fraternal love, rarely survives the next generation from the father, and often dies long before *that* has completed its course. Brothers and sisters ought, however, to keep up, as long as they live, their mutual love. They should not suffer new, and, it is confessed, still nearer relations, to produce a total oblivion of, or alienation from, each other. If dwelling in distant parts of the kingdom, epistolary correspondence should be maintained, sympathy in their mutual joys and sorrows should be cherished, occasional visits, as opportunity might allow, should be paid, and, every thing done, by mutual kind offices, to comfort each other, on the rough and stormy journey of life. If dwelling together in the same town, their intercourse should be such as to constrain spectators to exclaim, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" There should be that tenderness, which would lead to all the delicate attentions that affection delights to pay, and at the same time that confidence, which would prevent offence from being

taken, when these were hindered by accident from being paid. How utterly disgraceful is it to see brothers and sisters dwelling together in the same town, yet living in a state of continual strife, and sometimes in an utter suspension of all intercourse! In such cases, there must be faults on both sides, though not, perhaps, in equal proportions. Those who marry into a family should be very cautious not to carry discord into it. Not unfrequently has it happened, that brothers have been embroiled by their wives, and sisters by their husbands; and they who, till they were married, scarcely ever had an angry word from each other, scarcely ever lived in peace afterwards. Happy and honourable is that family, which, though it consist of numerous branches, and those, perhaps, nearly all married, and dwelling in the same vicinity, maintains, not, indeed, a state of coldness and formal intercourse, of which the highest praise is that it is free from strife, but a fellowship of sympathy, helpfulness and love!

If, by the vicissitudes of life, and the various allotments of divine Providence, one branch of the family has been more successful than the rest, peculiar care must be exercised, that the latter should not expect too much from him in the way of attention and relief, nor the former yield too little. For any man to be ashamed of his poor brothers and sisters, to treat them with cold neglect or insulting pride, discovers a littleness of mind which deserves contempt, and a depravity of heart which merits our severest indignation: it is at once ingratitude to God and cruelty to man. It must be admitted, however, that it is extremely difficult to meet the demands and satisfy the expectations of poor relations, especially in those cases where their poverty is the fruit of their own indolence or extravagance. They have claims, it is acknowledged, and a good brother or sister will readily allow and cheerfully meet them; but it must be for prudence, under the guidance of affection, to adjust their amount. It is unquestionable, however, that though there are some few who have most indiscreetly impoverished themselves to help a needy, perhaps an undeserving, brother or sister, the multitude have erred on the other side. Men or women of wealth, who choose to live in celibacy, and who have needy

brothers and sisters, are cruel and hard-hearted creatures, if they suffer such relatives to want any thing for their real comfort. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" And what shall be said of those, who, in bequeathing their property, forget their poor relations? The man who passes over a poor brother or sister and their families to endow a hospital, or enrich the funds of a religious society, to which, perhaps, he gave next to nothing while he lived, offers robbery for a burnt offering.

I have now said all that appears to me to be important on the subject of fraternal duties. Is it necessary to call in the aid of motives to enforce the discharge of such obligations? If so,

Let *your parents' comfort* be a plea with you. How often have the hearts of such been half broken by the feuds of their children! And even where the calamity has not gone to this extent, their cup has been imbittered by the wrangles, quarrels, and perpetual strifes of those who ought to have lived in undisturbed affection.

Your own comfort and honour are involved in an attention to these duties. You cannot neglect the claims of a brother or a sister, without suffering a diminution in your happiness or your reputation, or both.

The interests of society demand of you an attention to fraternal claims. As a son, you learn to be a good subject; as a brother, you learn to be a good citizen. Rebellious children are traitors in the bud; and he who has none of the right feelings of a brother, is training up for a parricide.

And as to *religion*, fraternal duties necessarily arise out of its general principles, are enforced by its prevailing spirit more than by particular precepts, and are recommended by some of its most striking examples; for the first murder which stained the earth with human gore sprung from a want of brotherly affection; and the family in which the Son of God found his loved retreat on earth was that where, in the persons of Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, fraternal love was imbodied and adorned.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUTIES OF MASTERS.

"Ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."—EPHES. vi. 9.

"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal."

COL. iv. 1.

"A party of friends, setting out together upon a journey, soon find it to be best for all sides, that, while they are upon the road, one of the company should wait upon the rest; another ride forward to seek out lodging and entertainment; a third carry the portmanteau; a fourth take charge of the horses; a fifth bear the purse, conduct and direct the route; not forgetting, however, that as they were equal and independent when they set out, so they are all to return to a level again at their journey's end. The same regard and respect; the same forbearance, lenity, and reserve, in using their service; the same mildness in delivering commands; the same study to make their journey comfortable and pleasant, which he, whose lot it was to direct the rest, would, in common decency, think himself bound to observe towards them, ought we to show towards those, who, in the casting of the parts of human society, happen to be placed within our power, or to depend upon us."—PALEY.

"There are duties which we owe to the lowest of those who serve us, that are not fulfilled by the most bountiful allotment of wages, and lodging, and sustenance. Of these duties, which are not duties of supererogation, but flow from the very nature of the bond which connects the master and the servant by reciprocal benefits, the surest rule is to be found in that brief direction which Seneca, in the spirit of the noble Christian precept of morals, has so happily given us in one of his epistles, in which he treats of the cruelty and contumely of Roman masters—'So live with your inferior, as you would wish your superior to live with you.'"—DR. THOMAS BROWN.

"It has been justly remarked, that all authority over others is, in fact, a talent with which we are intrusted for their benefit, as well as our own; and so the discharge of our duty to them is only, in other words, securing our own interest as well as theirs. This, however, is especially manifest in the case of servants, dwelling under our roof, as members of the same family. Thereby how much our care over the souls of our servants contributes to their knowledge of God and themselves, so far have we secured their conscientious regard to our interests, and furnished them with principles, which will not only augment the stock of domestic happiness, but certainly contribute towards the divine favour resting on our dwelling, as well as on all we possess. Thus, then, is the fear of God, in master and servant, found to be at once the only foundation of relative duty, and the only effectual security for the discharge of it."—ANDERSON.

"The highest panegyric that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants; for they see a man without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. And however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice.

"The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one

motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hurtful and despicable than his, who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him, whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted, by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. From that fatal hour when he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, he is in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation; of a controller at home, or an accuser abroad."—JOHNSON.

OF all the domestic connexions, that between master and servant is, perhaps, least understood, or, at any rate, most neglected. In the two preceding cases, nature, imperfect and corrupt as she is, has come in with her aid: but this is a connexion affecting very extensively the vital interests of the family, but which is left by God to conscience and scripture alone. Should these two be neglected, what wonder if the duty on either side is not fulfilled. It is not a connexion founded on mutual love, like that of man and wife; nor in consanguinity, like that of parent and child, or brother and sister; but in mere convenience. It seems, at first sight, a destruction of the natural equality of the human race, and an invasion, by one party, of the rights of the other. It did not exist, originally, but soon grew out of the natural course of things, such as the varied degree of men's acquired property, the love of ease on the one hand, and the urgency of necessity on the other. It was wealth or power that made the first master, and want or weakness that made the first servant; and the very same circumstances which originated the relation preserves it. No one is a servant by choice, but of necessity, and becomes a master as soon as he can. All this shows that there is great propriety and importance in stating with clearness, and enjoining with frequency the duties of this connexion; and that there needs great impartiality in adjusting the claims of both parties so as to prevent the master from becoming a tyrant, and the servant from becoming a rebel: in other words, to guard the master against the disobedience and dishonesty of the servant, and the servant against the oppression and cruelty of the master.

To the right performance of the Duties of Masters and Mistresses, the following qualifications are necessary.

1. A correct view of the nature and design of the family compact, as intended to train up *all* the members that compose it, to be good members of the civil community and of the church of Christ. They must keep in constant recollection, that the domestic constitution has a reference to religion, to heaven, and to eternity; and that they who are appointed to be the head of it, are accountable to God for the manner in which they give it this direction. Every household is intended to be a seminary for virtue and piety, of which the master and mistress are the teachers; the servants, as well as children, the pupils.

2. They should be partakers of true religion.

Hence, you see, they are directed to consider that they have a Master in heaven, and to perform their duties with a believing and constant reference to their accountability to Christ. Without personal religion, they cannot, of course, seek, on behalf of their servants, the highest end of the domestic constitution, i. e. their spiritual and eternal welfare. Nor can they, without religion, be so well prepared to discharge even the *ordinary* duties of their station. True religion will not fail, wherever it exists in full vigour and operation, to teach a man, in reference *to every thing*, the best rules, and ends, and measures of action; and especially will the grace of God, in this case, prevent that pride, passion, cruelty and unkindness, which make a man a bad master; and, at the same time, it will implant those virtues which are the germs of a master's greatest excellence. Religion is the strongest basis and the firmest support of authority; it not only renders all the commandments which are delivered, holy, and just, and good; not only infuses wisdom and equity into all the laws which are enjoined, but invests the lawgiver himself with the beauty of goodness, and the awful power of sanctity. A peculiar awe and dread seem to have been upon the inferior creatures for man in his innocence, as a kind of reverence for the divine image which he bore; and the more holiness there is in a man's character now, the more power is there in his authority, and the more nearly does he come back to his original dominion, at least over the rational creation. If we would govern well, and

easily, and pleasantly, we must inspire reverence rather than fear; and nothing does this like religion. "Them that honour me, saith God, I will honour:" this is never more remarkably exemplified than in the case of eminently holy masters and mistresses.

3. They should entertain correct notions of the nature and design of the relation they stand in to their servants, who are to be considered as their equals in nature, though their inferiors in rank; and not as beings of another and inferior race.

Servants are not mere speaking brutes, but rational men and women, who are bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh, and who, on the ground of natural equality, covenant with you to deliver to you so much service for so much wages. They are your equals in the eye of the laws of the land, and are as much protected as you are; equal in the eye of God, who is no respecter of persons; equal in personal formation, having the same corporeal senses, members and beauty, and the same mental faculties; equal in the church of God, being redeemed by the same blood of atonement, regenerated by the same holy spirit, and entitled to the same heaven; and, on all these grounds, justly claiming the respect that is due to a man and a Christian; as such they are to be addressed and treated; and not spoken to and oppressed like beasts.

I now lay down one or two preliminary remarks.

1. Professing Christians should be very careful in the *selection* of their servants.

It is desirable, where it can be done, to engage such servants as are truly and consistently pious. I know that this cannot always be accomplished in reference even to the household, much less in the manufactory and the shop. In a business that depends upon the skill of the workmen, a master must have such as will suit his purpose, whether they possess moral qualifications or not. But when he cannot get good men, he should endeavour to reform, to the extent of his ability, such as are bad. It must be admitted that there are many, both men and women, who, as to their general qualifications, are most excellent servants, who yet do not possess true piety: they are industrious, good-tempered, honest and cleanly, and

contribute far more to the comfort of the families that employ them, than some conceited, cross, and indolent professors of religion. Notwithstanding this, it is every way desirable to obtain, if we can, those to serve us, who, we have every reason to believe, serve the Lord Christ.

Other things being equal, pious servants are much to be preferred to those who are without the fear of God. They may bring the blessing of God with them into your house. You have the benefit of their example and of their prayers: in the time of sickness, you have the consolations of their remarks as well as their sympathy; and hence they have been, in many cases, sources of inconceivable comfort to the household, in which they have been placed. If you have a family, how immensely important is this matter. Think of what incalculable mischief one unprincipled servant may be the author, in a circle of young children. On this account, if a person of decided piety cannot be found, at least determine that none but such as are strictly moral shall be inmates in your habitation. David determined that no liar should dwell in his family. The utmost caution should be exercised, to keep from the *nursery* all improper persons. Nor ought any mother to trust her children too much to any servants, however excellent; and, on admitting them, she should very minutely instruct them in all points of their conduct towards the minds of her children, as well as their bodies, both what they are to avoid, and what they are to observe. I would sooner take a toad into my bosom, said an old author, than a wicked servant into my family. Well might he say this, for the poor reptile is belied in being said to be armed with poison, but the wicked servant has poison for the mind both of her fellow servants and the children. Christian parents are not perhaps sufficiently cautious on this head. They are not sufficiently impressed with the importance of the subject, till they learn it by the various kinds of mischief that have been done. The present age has peculiar advantages for a good selection, inasmuch as, by the extension of education, many young women of considerable respectability are trained for the important situation of nursery governesses.

2. When you engage a servant, let there be a very

explicit statement of what each party expects from the other.

The master or mistress should most fully explain to the servant all that will be demanded in the way of service, and all that will be given in the way of wages and of privilege, both temporal and spiritual. Nothing should be concealed, or omitted, to be brought forward at some future time: this is in the highest degree dishonourable, and subjects the encroaching party to the justest reproach. It would be well for you to inform your servants, in a very minute and particular manner, of all the religious habits of your family, and what compliance with these you will expect from them.

The Duties of Masters and Mistresses may be classed under three heads.

First. You owe them the duty of JUSTICE.

This demands, *that you should give them a fair remuneration for their labour.* The amount should not only be enough to support them in mere existence, but in comfort. It is an utter disgrace to any man, much more to a professing Christian, to abate and screw down those whom he employs, till they cannot earn enough for their decent clothing, and the nourishment of their strength. Is not this to grind the faces of the poor? But, as in *trade*, there are certain rates of wages, from which it may be difficult for a master, however pious or humane, to vary, I shall merely remark, that such men ought never to be forward in lowering the price of labour, beyond what is actually necessary to keep possession of the market. As to *household* servants, to whom this chapter more especially applies, it is very dishonourable to a mistress to higggle about a few shillings, with a poor, dependent creature, whom she is scarcely willing should earn enough to procure herself reputable apparel. I do not wish servants to be encouraged in dress, and in expensive habits: there is too great a propensity to this in many young women, which ought to be checked, and if it can be done by no other means, by a reduction of wages. But enough ought to be afforded, in all cases, for suitable attire, and for a little surplus fund, which they should be encouraged to make against a time of destitution and helplessness. If we do not furnish them by a sufficiency of wages, with the means of honestly

supplying their wants, are we not tempting them to make up the deficiency by dishonesty? And, of course, their wages should be regularly paid. It is disreputable to be long in debt to any one, but utterly scandalous, when such creditors are unpaid servants, who ask, without success, for what has been due to them for months. I wonder the pride, if not the principle, of some people, does not prevent them from putting on new finery, while the servants in the kitchen are saying, "That bonnet and gown are mine, for I am owed the money which paid for them, if indeed they *be* paid for."

Justice demands that you should pay your servants for *all the work they do*; and that every thing, which, in respect of time or labour, is above the stipulated or usual quantity of service rendered for a given sum, should be most equitably paid for. There are some persons who are proverbially mean, for exacting, not only what is actually due to them for the wages they pay, but for getting, if possible, a little extra service without paying for it: this remark applies, of course, to the case of day work. If a woman be hired to work in the parlour, or the kitchen, or a man be engaged for the garden, such persons will generally detain them, if they can, an hour or two beyond the usual time, on pretence, perhaps, of finishing up the matter, or getting ready something of importance. This would be all very fair, if they paid an extra sum for the extra work; but no; they want the additional hour or two to be thrown in for nothing. But when the case is reversed, and the workman or woman is obliged to go away an hour or two earlier than the usual time, they are then forward enough to make a deduction from the amount paid to them. This is not only detestably mean, but actually dishonest, for it is taking the laboring person's work without paying for it. Many persons, and some of them professors of religion, have no conscience in this matter, and get a character for extortionate selfishness from all whom they employ. In our money transactions with those who serve us, we should always lean to the side of generosity, or, at least, should pay, to the uttermost farthing, for all the work which is done for us.

Justice requires that your domestic servants be well provided for in all the necessaries and accommodations of life.

Their food should be wholesome and sufficient; their lodgings should be such as is convenient for them in respect to warmth and protection, and not such as a person of even tolerable humanity would scarcely allot to the dogs of his flock. If people cannot really afford to give such wages as will procure decent attire, nor such food, both as to quantity and quality, as is necessary to keep up the strength of a servant, they ought not to have one, and should do the work themselves. I pity from the very bottom of my heart, some poor orphans, hired, perhaps, if not from the workhouse, yet from friends that are glad to get them off their hands at any price, who, although burdened with excessive labour, are not allowed meat and drink sufficient to support their strength, and nourish their stunted frame, and are in a condition, which, with the single exception of liberty, is more pitiable than that of many African slaves. Medicine and surgical assistance, also, should be procured for our domestic servants at our cost, as long as they are in our employ. I do not like the practice of hurrying them off, except in the case of contagious diseases, to hospitals and dispensaries, and thus calling upon the public to provide for the relief of those whose cases belong to us. Much less is it equitable to make them pay the expenses of their own affliction. I have known servants who were half beggared by doctors' bills, which ought to have been discharged by those in whose service they contracted the ailments which reduced them to suffering and poverty.

Justice also equally demands, *in the case of apprentices, that they should be well taught the business which they come to you to learn, especially where, as in many cases, a high premium is paid for this very purpose.* No man can honestly retain such property, or, indeed, such apprentice with whom it is given, if he do not even take pains to instruct him. If there be any secret in the trade, it must be thrown open to him, for he comes to you for that very purpose. Nor is it enough not to hinder him from acquiring the business; but you must take pains to help him. I do think that this circumstance is very much forgotten by masters, not excepting those that make a profession of religion. Apprentices, I know, are taken with a primary view to the master's interest; but, in

return for the help which a servant affords towards the accomplishment of this object, a master covenants to instruct him in the trade; and the man who employs an apprentice in any thing else than that which he came to learn, and suffers him, through his neglect, to remain ignorant of the trade, is guilty of a double act of robbery; he robs the parent of the youth of his property, and, at the same time, robs the youth himself of all his future means and opportunities of success.

Justice demands, *that, when they leave your service, you shall dismiss them, as far as you are able, consistently with truth, with a good character.* Their character is their wealth, and, if this be gone, their means of subsistence have all vanished. Do not disallow them the right of leaving you when they please, nor avenge yourselves upon them by insinuating any thing to their disadvantage. On the contrary, do all you can to raise their reputation, and say all the good you can in their favour.

"There is a carelessness and facility in 'giving characters,' as it is called," says Paley, "especially when given in writing, or according to some established form, which, to speak plainly of it, is a cheat upon those who accept them. They are given with so little reserve and veracity, 'that I should as soon depend,' says the author of the Rambler, 'upon an acquittal at the Old Bailey, by way of recommendation of a servant's honesty, as upon one of these 'characters.' It is sometimes carelessness, and sometimes to get rid of a bad servant, without the uneasiness of a dispute; for which nothing can be pleaded, but the most ungenerous of all excuses, that the persons whom we deceive is a stranger.

"There is a conduct the reverse of this, but more injurious, because the injury falls where there is no remedy; I mean the obstructing of a servant's advancement, because you are unwilling to spare his service. To stand in the way of your servant's interest, is a poor return for his fidelity, and affords slender encouragement for good behaviour, in this numerous, and therefore important, part of the community. It is a piece of injustice, which, if practised towards an equal, the law of honour would lay hold of; as it is, it is neither uncommon nor disreputable."

It is but common justice, also, *to do something for the*

provision of servants that have worn themselves out in your service. To leave such to penury and want in the wintry season of their old age, is an instance of great and disgraceful cruelty. How much have they contributed either to your wealth or to your comfort, and perhaps to both! By the Levitical law, it was provided, that a servant who had been six years in the employ of a master, should be treated with great generosity. "He shall not," said the Lord, "be sent empty away; but thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: and of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him." (Deut. xv. 13, 14.) Now, if six years' service, under the law, were considered to entitle servants to such an acknowledgment, surely a whole life's labour, under the gospel dispensation, entitles them in their old age to no less. I ask this, not on the ground of kindness, but of justice; for it partakes of oppression and extortion, to give them no more for their time and strength than they need for the passing moment, and then to cast them upon the parish, when we can no longer render them subservient to our interest.

Secondly. KINDNESS comprehends another extensive class of duties owed by masters and mistresses to their servants.

You must be careful not to overwork them.

A merciful man will not overload his beast. We have been often shocked to see in our streets, or on the public road, how cruelly some weak, half-starved animals have been used, in being compelled to drag along burthens much beyond their strength; but are there not scenes of equal cruelty to be witnessed in some houses, where is to be found a poor, young, friendless girl, whose pallid looks and delicate frame indicate to every one, but her hard-hearted mistress, that she is incompetent to the tasks, without cessation, she is mercilessly compelled to sustain? Her toil commences, perhaps, at five or six o'clock in the morning, and continues without intermission till eleven at night. Of work, she has too much for the robust and well nourished frame, and especially for her weak and ill fed constitution. Some unfeeling creatures seem to think, that the payment of five or six pounds a year gives them a right to exhaust all the en-

ergies of the poor, helpless beings who are unfortunate enough to be employed by them. And even where unkindness is not carried to this extent, I am persuaded that servants are, in very many cases, quite over-worked; they are so urged by incessant demands for their labour, that, from the beginning to the end of the week, they have scarcely a moment to keep their own clothing in proper repair, much less to attend to the concerns of their souls: their employers seem to think, that every moment they sit down is so much time stolen from them. Are there any *professing Christians* who act thus? Yes; and in so far they are a disgrace to the Christian name.

Your method of addressing them, while it accords with your station, and partakes of the dignity of superiority, should be as remote from bitterness and contemptuous pride as it is from familiarity. Do not speak to them as if they were a race of inferior creatures, whom it almost demeaned you to notice. There are some masters and mistresses, who, though they do not swear, or storm, or call reproachful names, yet have a method of addressing their servants, which they would scarcely use to a brute animal. I have myself heard tones, and seen looks, which the authors of them would not, and did not, give to their dogs. Servants are not stocks and stones, but men and women; and how galling to their feelings, how insulting to their rank as rational creatures, must it be to be addressed as a reptile race, who were scarcely entitled to the most common civilities! And as *pride* is improper, so is *passion*. Masters are commanded to "forbear threatening." This is particularly specified, because there is a great proneness to this in many, if not in most persons. When an inferior displeases us, the temptation to undue sallies of wrath, gusts of passion, and threatening words, is peculiarly strong. The individual is so much below us, and in our power, that, let us say what we will, we have nothing to fear in return. But how mean, and cowardly, and execrable is it,—to say nothing of the wickedness of such conduct,—for any one to hector, and bully, and threaten a poor, defenceless creature, because he has no need to apprehend any thing in the way of revenge! We must, as Christians, not only be meek, and gentle, and patient,

but be gentle towards all, to those who are *below us*, as well as to those who are above us. Occasions will, of course, often present themselves, when it will be necessary to find fault, and to *express* displeasure; but this should never be done in a passion. A fury never can be respectable: we never go into a rage without disgracing ourselves in the eyes of our servants: at such times, we may be terrible, but we cannot be reputable. Abusive epithets and ill names lower our dignity and undermine our authority. Mild firmness, rational expostulation, and meek reproof, will do far more, both in the way of punishing faults, and of reforming them, than petulance and passion. Speak kindly to them, then, at all times. Let your words, and even your tones, partake of a dignified courtesy, blending and softening authority with good will. At the same time, *avoid all familiarity*, and do not encourage an obtrusive and encroaching boldness. You must keep *them* in their place, and, in order to this, you must keep *yours*. Do nothing to remove the line of demarcation between you, nor encourage them to step over it. You must not joke with them, nor make yourselves merry with them; you must not enter into gossip with them about the floating occurrences of the neighbourhood, nor encourage them to bring you tales, nor employ them as your purveyors of scandal. Some persons, who would not run the risk of being thought busybodies themselves, scruple not to encourage their servants to bring them all the news of the town. All this is mischievous in the highest degree, and tends to degrade those who are foolish enough to indulge in it, in the eyes of those who should be taught to respect them.

You should manifest an unvarying regard for their comfort. Take a deep interest in their welfare, and make it clear to them that you wish to see them happy. Watch over their health, tenderly inquire into the cause of their ailments, and, by mitigating their labour, and procuring them medical assistance, do all you can for their recovery. Advise them for their good, and refuse not your counsel whenever it can be of service to them. Convince them, by the whole of your conduct, that you are their real friends, and truly anxious to make them happy and respectable.

Bear with patience those lesser infirmities which may comport with substantial excellences. Do not be strict to mark, at least with severity, their more trivial faults. Some mistresses render their servants miserable by incessant complaint; they are such slaves to excessive neatness, that they are always in bondage themselves, and make every body miserable around them.

Kindness to servants would lead us to *administer commendation as often as possible, and to censure with as much lenity as a due regard to justice will allow.*

“There is a certain moral pleasure which we particularly owe them. They may do well, and, in doing well, they have the same title to our praise, which our best actions have to the glory with which we expect the world to be ready to reward us. If we withhold the approbation which is due, we take from them one powerful incentive to continuance of that species of conduct which rendered them worthy of approbation; and, at the same time, we take from them one of the most delightful feelings of which he who has sold his freedom is still capable—the feeling, that he has done something which was not actually sold with the very labour of his hands—that, in the additional duties performed by him, he has been free still, and that our praise is something, which, as it was not an actual condition, like the livery and the daily bread, is an offering to his own gratuitous virtue. The duty of approbation, then, when approbation is due, is another of the duties which the master owes to the servant; and a duty which, though he may *legally* withhold it, he is not entitled *morally* to withhold.

“But servants share not our love of praise only, but passions of a less commendable kind. They are assailed by temptations, like those which assail us; and they sometimes fall, as we, too, fall. They neglect to do what we have desired; and they often do what is positively injurious to us. In such cases, they might deserve all our severity of punishment, if we were not men, and they were not men. Our reproof they unquestionably deserve, not merely because they have failed in their part of our mutual contract, but, also, because our reproof may, even to them, be attended with moral advantage. Yet, though our reproof of any gross inattention

is not excusable only, but, if we consider all its consequences, an act of humanity, it is not to be the reproof of one who seems almost pleased with the offence itself, in the eagerness which is shown to reprehend it. In censuring, we are silently to have in mind the human weaknesses of our own moral nature, and to remember, that, if even we, with better light, and nobler recreations, err, the ignorant, who, by their very ignorance, are incapable of seeing many of the consequences of actions, and who have few recreations but those which seduce them from what is good, may still more naturally be imagined to err. In condemning them, therefore, we condemn ourselves; or we declare that we are frail creatures, of whom less knowledge and less virtue are to be expected than from them. There are beings with gentle voices, and still gentler eyes, and with smiles that seem never to be willed, and scarcely even to fade and brighten again, but to be almost the native character of the countenance, like the very lustre that is ever blooming on the lip and on the cheek;—there are beings who seem to exist thus only in a perpetual moral atmosphere of radiance and serenity, that on the sight of a single particle of dust on a book, or a table, or a chair, as if in that particle a whole mountain of misery were before them, can assume, in an instant, all the frowns and thunders of all the furies; whose delicate frame is too weak to bear the violent opening of a door, but not too weak, after the door is opened, to shake the very floor with the violence of their own wrath on the unfortunate opener of it.”*

Kindness should lead us *to allow our servants all possible indulgences and recreations that are not incompatible with religion.*

They are capable of gratification, like ourselves, and have the same desire of it: at the same time, they are denied, by their very circumstances, access to many of those sources of delight which are continually open to us. Those who seem to grudge domestic servants an occasional remission of their labour, that they may have communion with others at the feast of innocent enjoyment, convert their service into slavery, and render the

* Dr. Brown's Lectures

oppression additionally bitter by the circumstance, that it is exercised in the land of free men. I have often been delighted to see the cheerful faces of female servants at those meetings which are convened for promoting the various objects connected with the cause of religion and humanity, and who seemed to drink in the streams of eloquence and piety, with as eager a thirst, and as exquisite an enjoyment, as their more enlightened and better educated masters and mistresses. And I have known those, who, when going to some neighbouring town or village, to attend, perhaps, a religious service of a public nature, have placed a female servant on the box seat of the carriage that conveyed them, that she might share the pleasures of the day. It is our duty, of course, to keep them from all polluting and vitiating amusements; but it is not less a duty of benevolence to give them, as often as it is convenient to us, and consistent with their interests, an opportunity of enjoying the liberty and the sunshine of innocent and holy pleasure.

It is no credit, but very much otherwise, to any family, to be always changing their servants. Some persons have as many as there are months in the year. Their place has acquired so bad a reputation, that no good servant will offer herself for it. It is astonishing how extensively the character of every household is known amongst persons of this description. Those who keep register offices can tell, perhaps, the repute in which most of the families in a town are held; for oftentimes, upon mentioning a house to one who has applied for a place of service, they receive some such reply as this:—"I will not offer myself there, for I shall not be kept above a month or two if I go." This is not to the honour of any one, much less to the professor of religion; for, as those who leave the place are, naturally enough, anxious to justify themselves to their friends, they scruple not to tell all the faults of the mistress, and oftentimes, of course, with great exaggeration; and thus the credit of religion suffers. Besides, what a risk is it, where there are children, to be always receiving fresh servants into the family! and what an interruption also to domestic comfort! Avoid, then, unnecessary changes, and every thing that leads to them, whether it be bad

temper, inflicting excessive labour, or striving after unattainable perfection.

A kind master or mistress will prevent their servants from being INSULTED OR OPPRESSED BY THE CHILDREN. It is really affecting to see what cruel scorn and impertinence are, in some families, allowed to be practised towards respectable men and women, by those little tyrant masters and misses, whose weak parents never allow them to be opposed in any thing. They may utter the grossest falsehoods, indulge in the most wanton and distressing vexation, vent the most scurrilous abuse, and utter the foulest epithets against the servants, and their pitiless and unjust mother or father, with the full knowledge of the fact, allow this cruel insolence to continue. Children ought not to be permitted, in any kind or degree, to be guilty of such impropriety as this. They should be kept from being familiar, but equally so from being impertinent. I would never allow a servant to strike children, nor to be struck, or in any way oppressed by them.

Peculiar attention, partaking at once of respect and kindness, should be shown to those who have served us LONG and FAITHFULLY. "Reckon," says Mr. Janeway, "that one who has been a faithful servant to you seven years deserves to be esteemed next to a child ever after." Tried fidelity should be marked with peculiar approbation. At the end of each seven years of faithful service, you should present them with some substantial present, as a token of your respect and gratitude, and the present should increase in value at the close of each septennial period. Where there is wealth to be disposed of by will, I think that aged and valuable servants should be remembered. Think how much you owe to their faithfulness, how long your property has been in their power, which they have neither embezzled nor wasted, how constantly you have been served by them, how much they have contributed to your domestic comfort, perhaps to your success! You owe them not only wages, but esteem.

Thirdly. But there are duties of a still higher and more sacred character, owed by you to your servants; I mean those of RELIGION.

They have souls as well as you; like you, are im-

mortal creatures; like you, are sinners; and like you, the objects of redeeming mercy. The very circumstance of their being brought within the comprehension of your domestic circle, has made them a part of that little community, the spiritual welfare of which you are to promote and to watch with all possible solicitude. They are members of the domestic constitution, as well as hired servants. We surely cannot suppose, that the fine and extensive power which is lodged by the family compact in the master's hand, was vested there for so trivial a purpose as the mere payment of those wages, and the affording of that sustenance, which are necessary for supplying the servant's bodily wants. It is also to be recollected, *that moral duties are required from servants, and ought, therefore, to be taught.* With what propriety can we look for truth, honesty, temperance, chastity, if we have never inculcated these virtues? How can we expect they will be faithful in serving *us*, if we have never taught them *to serve God* in sincerity and truth?

1. Our first care must be not to *oppose their religion*, or to *hinder* their salvation. We may do this by the influence of a bad example. In what a heathenish state do some families live! Heathenish? No; for pagans have their household deities, and make some show of religion, though it be a false one, in their houses; but great multitudes, in this Christian land, live as if there were no God, and are, to all intents and purposes, practical atheists. There is no family prayer, no reading of the scriptures, no observance of the Sabbath, no regular attendance upon public worship. The holy day of rest is to them as other days; they keep the same company, and seek the same recreations then as at any time besides. Religion is rarely introduced, but to be an object of contempt, and a source of ridicule. The servants in such families hear swearing, perhaps, but no prayer; see drunkenness, but no worship; witness card-playing, dancing, and conviviality, but no acknowledgment of God. How can such masters expect good servants? If *they* habitually break *God's* commands, how can they expect their servants to keep theirs? Unreasonable men, can you look for sobriety in them, if you set them the example

of intoxication? for chastity, if you teach them lewdness? for truth, if you teach them falsehood? for religion, if you teach them irreligion? O that you would consider that your wickedness ensures not only your own damnation, but hazards that of all the persons under your charge! Is it not enough to have your own sins laid to your charge, but that you must be answerable for your servant's sins also? Is one curse too light, but you must seek to multiply it? Are the flames of hell so cool and tolerable, that you are busy in adding fuel to that terrible fire, to make it burn seven times hotter? Yours will not be the privilege of perishing alone, but will be the fate of the pilot, who sinks others with himself.

Some carry the matter so far, as to *hinder* the salvation of others, not only *by example*, but by DIRECT TEMPTATION. How many masters have, by their atrocious and murderous arts, corrupted the virtue, blasted the reputation, and ruined the souls of those females, whom, having received into their house, they were bound, by every principle of honour as well as of religion, to protect! Such wretches deserve the gallows far more than many who suffer there. How many poor, unhappy women have been sent by such vile transgressors into the career of prostitution, to an early grave, and to that place of punishment, where they will meet their seducer to be his tormentor, through eternity! Neither a word nor a look should ever be given to a servant, which has the remotest tendency to injure her modesty.

Nor ought you to tempt them to sin, *by employing them to practise dishonesty and falsehood in the way of trade*. Do not engage them in acts of fraud upon the revenue; nor make them the spectators of your own evasion of the laws which regulate the taxes; for all such conduct as this is laying a snare in their way, and tempting them to sin. And by what sophistry can any one attempt to justify that wicked practice of *commanding their servants to say to visitors, that they are NOT AT HOME, while they are in the house at the very time?* This is teaching falsehood by system; and ought we to wonder if our servants should lie to us, when we have thus taught them to lie for us? Peo-

ple that make any profession of religion cannot, of course, adopt this iniquitous custom, for it disgraces the most *general* acknowledgment of piety; but it is to be feared that some, who pass for real Christians, and wish to be thought such, are guilty of many things which are quite unworthy of their character in reference to their servants, either by making them the witnesses or instruments of many evasions, artifices, and dishonourable acts; and by which they really tempt them to go much farther astray on their own account. We can easily conceive with what insufferable loathing and disgust some such servants must come to the domestic altar, at the time of the morning or evening sacrifice. It is a most shocking instance of hypocrisy when a master says to his servants, "After you have done so and so,"—alluding to some act of imposition upon others,—“come to prayer.” “Come to prayer,” one might imagine they reply, “thou hypocrite, what! to sanctify the dishonesty thou hast just commanded us to perform?” Many who have witnessed these things, or any thing like them, have taken an inveterate prejudice against religion, by concluding, that all its professors are alike, and that all are hypocrites together.

We *hinder* their salvation, *when we keep them away from the means of grace.* Their work should not be so oppressive, even on week days, as to allow them no time for reading the scriptures and prayer; but to compel them to spend even their Sabbaths in such a manner as to deprive them of opportunity to hear the word of God explained and enforced by the faithful preaching of the gospel, is to place a most powerful hinderance in the way of their salvation. How exceedingly cruel and disgraceful is to keep them from public worship to dress a warm dinner! Without affirming that the Christian Sabbath is to be observed with the same ceremonial strictness as the Jewish Sabbath was, we do contend, that no *unnecessary* work should be done on that day in our dwellings. I suppose no one will contend that a *warm* dinner is necessary. Is it not a crime, then, against the spiritual welfare of our servants, as well as against God, to occupy *their* Sabbath in preparing for our luxurious

gratification? Even as it respects their bodies, it is an act of great oppression; for *they* need rest from *their* labour far more than we do: and as it respects their souls, it takes away both the opportunity and the inclination to attend to these; it occupies their time in the morning, and unfits them for attention in the afternoon. All who thus employ their domestics on the Sabbath, may be truly said to feast upon their servants' birthright, and to gratify *their* palate at the expense of their fellow creatures' spiritual and eternal welfare. How long and how loudly shall the voice of indignant and faithful reprobation be raised in vain against this sinful practice? I put it to any professing Christian's conscience, how he can any longer determine thus to hinder the salvation of those who are under his care. Will he not make even *this* small sacrifice for the spiritual welfare of the members of his domestic constitution? Is *this* his professed zeal for God, and compassion for souls? But perhaps he will reply, Somebody must be at home to guard the house. Be it so. But need they be slavishly occupied in the drudgery of cookery? If they must be deprived of the *public* means of grace, is it necessary that they should be deprived of those that are private also? But they will not improve their time at home. How do you know? Have you tried them? Have you, before you left home, furnished them with a suitable portion of reading?

In some families, the servants are kept away from the house of God far more than they need to be, for other purposes besides cooking. If there are two children, one must be detained from public worship for each, and perhaps a third to guard the house. But is this necessary? I would have all proper care taken, both of the children, and of the property; but I would not have more servants than are absolutely requisite, kept away from the house of God. The Sabbath is of more importance to them than it is even to us. Their incessant occupation through the week renders it more necessary for *them* to have a day of rest and of leisure to attend to their souls' concerns than it is for us. Nor do I think it enough to grant them merely the afternoon of the Lord's day; for that is the very

part of the Sabbath which we find to be the least edifying to ourselves, and, if this be the case with us, how much more so must it be with them! If, then, we keep away our servants from suitable public means of grace, we are placing a hinderance in the way of their salvation; for we know that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" and that God hath ordained the *preaching* of the gospel for the salvation of men's souls.

It appears to me, that we tempt our servants to sin also by *improper negligence and carelessness about many of the more covetable parts of our property*. Some persons are too much away from home, and leave their servants too much to themselves; and when *they* are idle abroad, is it any wonder that their domestics should be dishonest at home? If *they* will gossip away their time by hours, and days, and weeks together, can it be wondered at, that their property should be wasted by those who are only *hired* to watch it? If *you* are so much from home, is it not a temptation to *them* to invite company? Is this habit of neglecting them the way to make them faithful? Will they not learn idleness from you, and do you not know that idleness is a parent sin? Or, if you tempt them not to sin by being too much from home, do you not do it by giving them *too little employment*? If you overwork them, you oppress their bodies; if you underwork them, you endanger their souls. It is said of the wise and virtuous woman, that she would suffer none of her household to eat the bread of idleness. You must account, not only for your own time, but for theirs also. When your servants are idle, said an old author, the devil is at work; and our idle days are his busy ones; if you find them nothing to do, he will. Many have been ruined for both worlds, by having nothing to do—but mischief. Do not tempt them to sin, by *never calling them to account* for what is intrusted to their care, especially in pecuniary matters. They may be honest; then keep them so, and put no temptation in their way to be otherwise, by not examining their accounts. Never let them feel that they are irresponsible. If you keep not your eye upon them, you may find a thief where you expected to find an honest man.

It is your prayer for yourself, "Lead me not into temptation;" act upon this same principle towards them. Honesty itself should always be required to account for the uttermost farthing, and will wish to do it. Do not leave your property too much exposed. Some go to one extreme, and lock up every thing; others go to the opposite extreme, and lock up nothing; and here, as in many other cases, extremes meet, for one tempts to dishonesty by trusting too little, the other by trusting too much. Money, drinkables, and the lighter articles of female dress and decoration, should not be left too carelessly about. Nor should one party in married life ever make a confederacy with servants to deceive the other. Wives should never engage their maids in a scheme of falsehood, imposition, or concealment of any kind, against their husbands, though it be but in trifling matters, for this is teaching them intrigue and duplicity, which may not only be injurious to their own character, but seriously detrimental, in the end, to the interests of the family. If a servant be employed by the wife, to assist her to conceal any part of the husband's property, or appropriate it in any way unknown to him, she is in that act tempted by her mistress, so far as the influence of example goes, to take the same liberty on her own account; for she who is employed to purloin for another, will soon feel no scruples to steal for herself.

2. It is our duty, not only not to *hinder* the salvation of our servants, but *to do every thing in our power* to promote it.

Seriously consider your obligation in this particular, and that as God sent them under your roof, that you might care for their souls, SO HE WILL REQUIRE THEIR SOULS AT YOUR HANDS. Yes, at the day of judgment he will say to you, "Give an account of those immortal beings which were placed under your instruction, inspection and anxiety." Cherish, then, I entreat you, a deep solicitude for their spiritual welfare, and feel desirous to become the instruments of their salvation. In order to this, take care to set them a good example, and let them see in you, not only nothing that is contrary to religion, but every thing that can recommend it, that so an attractive influence may ever

be exerted by your character on theirs. Many have learnt more of religion by what they have seen in their masters and mistresses than by all they have heard from their ministers. They will never forget their example. Call them regularly to family prayer, and make them the peculiar subjects of your earnest supplications, that they may hear your entreaties with God on their account, and be the witnesses of your solicitude for their welfare. See to it that they have Bibles, and take care that they are able to read, for if this be not the case, it is your bounden duty to teach them. Furnish them with a few well selected books, and thus provide for them a kitchen library. Give them opportunities to attend public worship, and to keep holy the Sabbath day. Keep them not too late at work on Saturday evening, lest their worldly business trench upon the Sabbath, or unfit them, by excessive fatigue, for its hallowed occupations. Instruct them in the principles of true religion, that they may have their judgments rightly informed, and that they may not perish for lack of knowledge. It is a great disgrace to a Christian master or mistress, if any servants leave their house, without knowing, at least in theory, the way of salvation. In addition to this, you should talk to them in the most affectionate manner on their souls' concerns, warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and directing them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the-world. Give them no rest till you have prevailed upon them to seek, in good earnest, the one thing needful. Observe what company they keep, and caution them against such as would lead them astray. Acquaint yourselves with the books they read, and examine what they understand and remember of the sermons they hear. Do all you can to convince them of the reasonableness, profit, and sweetness of true religion, and of the folly, and danger, and misery of living without it. If you see no fruit of your exertions at first, do not be weary of well doing, but persevere in your anxious and judicious efforts. Should you notice any solicitude about their souls, nourish to the uttermost their impressions, by giving suitable advice and proper books. Encourage them, when you are convinced of their true

conversion, to connect themselves with the church of Christ, and thus to make a public profession of religion. O, if you should be the instrument of saving the souls of your servants, what an honour and a happiness will be conferred upon you! How many *have been* so honoured! and in what bonds have their servants been held to them for ever after in this life!

To influence you to the performance of these duties, I may call upon you, *to remember that your Master also is in heaven*; and *to consider what a Master he is to you*. Meditate upon his attributes, and upon the manner in which they are manifested in all his conduct towards you. How righteous, how faithful, how holy, how true, how merciful is he in *his* dealings towards *his* servants! And it is your duty to be like him. When in danger of acting improperly, either by a want of equity or kindness, O think of God; meditate on his matchless grace, and surely such a reflection will be an immediate check to every kind and every degree of impropriety. To him also you are accountable, and accountable, as for your conduct in general, so also for your behaviour to your servants. Prepare to meet Him in that awful day, and to meet them also at his bar!

Consider *how much your servants need this kind interposition for their welfare*. They are often young, inexperienced, and ignorant; rash, and imprudent; and they are also an unprotected and dependent race. I know not a class of persons whose situation is more calculated to awaken our tenderest sympathies than domestic female servants. Many of them are orphans, and have no friend in the world, beyond their employers; and no home but what they find in their master's house. When they leave one place of service, they often know not where to find their next home, and are thus repeatedly beginning the world, and setting out on the journey of life afresh. How many dangers are they exposed to! How many snares are laid for their feet! Masters and mistresses, be kind to them: they have found a refuge in your house, and let them find friends in you. Pity their condition, and labour to the uttermost for their welfare. You may be the

means of blessing them for both worlds, and become their spiritual fathers and mothers, as well as their temporal masters and mistresses. Their souls may be given to your kind solicitude, to be your crown of rejoicing in the day of eternity.

The honour of religion is most deeply involved in the way in which you discharge your duties. Bad masters and mistresses bring great dishonour upon Christianity; while, on the other hand, they who in this situation exhibit whatsoever things are pure, and true, and honest, and just, and lovely, and of good report; who abound in that love which is not easily provoked, and thinketh no evil, and is kind; who have the meekness and gentleness of Christ; and who put on bowels of mercy,—are bright ornaments of their profession, and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things. *A good master or mistress* is indeed a most honourable character: good men esteem it, bad men admire it, the world values it, the church applauds it, angels delight in it, and God commends and rewards it. Eyes too dim to see the beauties of holiness in the abstract, discern the excellence of this, and tongues that never speak of religion generally, but to scoff at it, are eloquent in the praise of this. I conjure you, then, by all the regard you bear to the honour of religion, strive to excel in this your appropriate duty.

Interest pleads with you for this. Consider how much your own happiness will be promoted by seeing others happy around you. The heart of that man cannot be in the state in which it ought to be, who is not pleased to see around him, in his dwelling, a circle of happy minds and smiling countenances. A good master, or a kind mistress, is a kind of central luminary in the domestic system, and every child and every servant an attendant satellite, revolving in the force of his attraction, and reflecting the brightness of his glory. Or, to change the metaphor, he is a fountain of gladness, continually sending forth, in kindness and kind actions, streams of pleasure to all that are in the house. And then good masters and mistresses *make* good servants, or *find* them. When I hear persons complain, that they cannot find good servants, I sus-

pect the fault is their own, and that they have a bad character for their conduct towards their domestics. If they are tormented, have they not been tormentors? If they can get no one to serve them willingly and honestly, have they been generous and kind? If they find none but such as are wicked, have they tried to make them holy? If they complain of their lying, their lewdness, their theft, have they not been so selfish as to seek or to produce right dispositions towards themselves, without endeavouring to found these dispositions on a right state of mind towards God? Try, then, to conduct yourselves rightly to those whom you have so much interest in making what they should be. Body, soul, estate, wife, children, character, comfort, all are more or less concerned in this matter. Your servants may rob or enrich you; may defend your reputation or blast it; may corrupt your children or improve them; may tempt you to sin or warn you against it; may injure your health or protect it; may bless you by their prayers or curse you by their vices; may render your dwelling continually pleasant or perpetually miserable: your own interest, therefore, unites with God's commands, to make it your wisdom and your duty to train your servants, as well as your children, in the fear of the Lord.

“What have you to say against what I have been persuading you to? Will you not now, without delay, bewail your former neglect, and in good earnest set to your work, like persons that, in some measure, know the power of divine precepts, the worth of souls, and the greatness of the charge that lieth upon you! O that there were in you such a heart! O that all masters of families were resolved for that which humanity, reason, interest, reputation, and their comfort call for, as well as the law of God! and men oblige them to What blessed families then should we have! What noble corporations! What glorious cities! Might not HOLINESS TO THE LORD be written upon every door? O, when shall it once be?”

CHAPTER IX.

THE DUTIES OF SERVANTS.

“Servants, be obedient unto them that are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will, doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”—EPHESIANS, vi. 5—8.

“Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part—there all the honour lies.”

God is the Creator of all things, and the Disposer of all events: he is, therefore, the Author of all those varieties which are to be found in nature, and of all those differences which exist in society. He that formed the sun to illuminate, and to rule, formed also the planets to be enlightened and to be governed; and he that raiseth the king to the throne, ordaineth the lot of the servant in the house, and of the labourer in the field. There is no such thing as chance; no, not in the material universe, where each bird that flies, each insect that crawls, each flower that blooms, amidst the desert which man's eye never explores, is the separate production of divine power and skill, no less than the Alpine height that lifts its snow-crowned summit to the skies, and receives the admiring contemplation of millions. Nor is there any such thing as chance in society; the rank and station of the poor little servant girl in the humblest dwelling of the most obscure village are as certainly determined by God as the elevation of the conqueror and ruler of nations. “The lot is cast into the lap, but the disposal thereof is from the Lord.” “The rich and the poor meet together, but the Lord is the Disposer of them all;” i. e. not simply their Creator, as men, but the Disposer of their circumstances, as rich and poor. This is comforting, this is reconciling. It prevents the poor from being degraded in their own eyes, or in the eyes of others. They are not like the dust, or the chips, or the dried and withered leaves in autumn, which, amidst the

more stately objects of nature or art, are blown about by the gusts which sweep along the surface; but they are in the place which God intended for them; and God hath made every thing beautiful in its place and season. Who could have mended what he hath done? What cause have we to sit down contented and thankful in the place which he hath ordained for us! What obligation was he under to give us existence? And what did he owe to us, that he should have made us rational creatures, and not formed us a beast or a reptile? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

As God disposeth every thing, so it is the highest excellence of a creature to discharge the duties of his station, and to shine in the orbit, and move with regularity through the course allotted to him. A good servant is more honourable than a bad master, and a valuable subject than a worthless prince. He that is not *relatively* good, is not *really* so; while he that acts *his* part well, is more truly dignified, though his rank be low, than he that stands on a pinnacle, but fails in the duty of his elevated station. What is true honour? Not riches, not rank, not beauty, not learning, not courage. No. But virtue; whether it be clad in the garb of poverty, or the robe of affluence; whether it hold the plough, or grasp the sceptre; whether it be seated at the table, or stand behind the chair. **VIR-TUE IS HONOUR**; let all servants write this sentiment on the heart, and ever act under its influence as the living principle of all their conduct.

In stating, after these preliminary remarks, the duties of servants, I would remind them,

First, *That there are some which they owe to THEMSELVES*, the performance of which will constitute the best and surest foundation of those which they owe to others.

1. **RELIGION** takes the lead of all.

Religion is as much your business as it is ours. You are immortal creatures, you are sinners, you are the objects of God's mercy in Christ Jesus, and invited to seek pardon, peace, and eternal life, as well as we your employers. You have souls that must suffer eternal torments in hell, or enjoy everlasting happiness

in heaven. You must be convinced of sin, repent, confess to God, cry for mercy, commit your souls into the hands of Christ by faith, be born again of the Holy Ghost, lead a sober, righteous, and godly life, or you must depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. God is as willing to have mercy upon you, Jesus Christ is as ready to receive you, as he is us. Your soul is as precious in the eye of Heaven as ours. God is no Respector of persons, and is not to be considered as less friendly to your best interests, because he has placed you in service. *Your situation is no excuse, therefore, for your neglecting the claims of religion.* You are not to imagine that attention to your souls' concerns is not required from you; for it is required: and I repeat it, unless you repent, and are born again, and believe in Christ, you will perish eternally. Your soul is your first concern, and must not be neglected for any thing. Think not that it is impossible for a person in your situation to attend to religion; for it is possible. Great multitudes of servants, both male and female, are truly pious. I have twenty or thirty in the church under my care, who are among its most consistent members. I charge you all to live in the fear of God. Remember your Creator. Set the Lord always before you. Consider, that he is ever about your path, and that you act, speak, and think in his presence. He is now the holy and ever present Witness, and will hereafter be the inflexible Judge of your actions.

In order to cultivate religion, go not into wicked families, where the Sabbath is profaned, the claims of piety are despised and rejected, and you can have no opportunity of going to public worship. Do not dwell in a place where your Sabbath is taken away from you; let no amount of wages tempt you to go to or to remain in such a situation. Always stipulate for the privilege of going at least one part of the Lord's day to the house of God. Insist upon it as your right, and suffer nothing to deprive you of it. Endeavour to find a little time for reading the Bible, and for prayer; never go out of your room in the morning, nor lie down on your pillow at night, without reading a portion, even though it be a short one,

of God's holy word, and earnestly praying for his mercy. Let religion be the basis of all your conduct, the very frame-work of your character, leading you to practise "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report." Do not, then, as you would escape the torments of hell, do not, as you would be brought at last to the felicities of heaven, DO NOT NEGLECT YOUR SOULS. "Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." Your situation is a very dangerous one; you are in a very unprotected state; and you need the fear of God to enable you to depart from evil. Men, and women too, of bad principles, are lying in wait for you, spreading snares for your feet, and seeking your ruin. Religion will guard you, and guide you, and comfort you. It will keep you in safety, and raise you to respectability. "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall lead thee to honour when thou dost embrace her."

2. A REGARD TO TRUTH is another very important duty, and which you will be sure to perform if you fear God. This duty you owe to your employers also; but while the *inconvenience* of the neglect of it will be felt by them, the more dreadful consequence of that neglect will be yours.

Lying is a most hateful and wicked practice. And it is said, that "all liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire." Strive to avoid every thing in your conduct that needs a lie to cover it; but if you have at any time done any thing wrong, do not make one sin two, by telling a falsehood to conceal the matter. Let no temptation induce you to violate truth; rather endure the passion, or the bitterest wrath of the severest master or mistress, than strive to avert it by a falsehood. Lying is bad policy, as well as great wickedness; for, when once detected in this vice, you will ever afterwards be suspected, even when you tell the truth. A servant, whose word can be implicitly relied upon, will always be esteemed. Such a virtue will be made to extend a friendly covering over many little faults. Never allow yourselves to be tempted by your master or mistress to commit a breach of truth.

Inform them at once, that they must tell their own falsehoods, for that you cannot do it for them. A clerk once waited upon me, to ask me what he was to do in a situation, where he was obliged weekly to make a false written return in his own name, to defraud a public company, for the benefit of his employer. "Do," said I, with surprise that the question should have been asked me, "instantly refuse; and rather cast yourself and your family the next hour upon Providence, than ever repeat the falsehood." You must not, dare not, lie for others, any more than for yourselves. If required to adopt the modern practice of saying your mistress is not at home, when she is at the same time in the house, you dare not comply, for it is a falsehood, and, as such, a sin against God. When you are put by your employers upon committing any sin, whether it be cheating, calumny, lying, or any thing else forbidden by the scriptures, let your reply be, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

3. SOBRIETY is a virtue you owe to yourselves, and also to your masters; but, as in the case of lying, the injury done by intoxication to yourselves is far greater than that which you inflict upon them.

Beware of the besotting, impoverishing, debasing sin of drunkenness, and of every thing that leads to it. Household servants have many opportunities and many temptations to practise this vice, if there be any propensity to indulge it. It is impossible even for the most rigid watchfulness always to keep out of their reach the malt liquor, the spirits, and the wine: there are means of gaining access by stealth to these things, on the part of a vicious and ingenious servant, which no vigilant mistress can altogether prevent. If we cannot trust these things to the guardianship of your principles, our locks and keys will often be found an insufficient security. Do, do consider, that if the habit of drunkenness be once contracted, it is all over; and, most probably, you are ruined for both worlds. Let there be a distinct understanding between you and your master or mistress, what beverage you are to be allowed, both as to quality and quantity, and most sacredly abstain from touching a drop more, or a drop

of any thing else. Never put the decanters to your lips, when the stoppers are all out before you. Stolen drams of this kind are double poison; they are venom for the body, and damnation for the soul; they lead to two crimes at once, drunkenness and dishonesty. Beware of the temptation which is presented at those times, when company is in the house, and when, through the supposition that extra exertion requires an additional glass, you may be led to take it, to love it, and to acquire the *habit* of it. I have known excellent servants, both male and female, ruined for ever by intoxication.

As to workmen, the daily servants that occupy the manufactories, this vice is the damning sin that is spreading immorality, desolation, and misery, through almost the whole labouring class of the community. It is distressing beyond the power of language to describe, to think of the effects of this most prevalent, most dreadful infatuation. How many fine athletic forms are enervated; how many wives are broken-hearted; how many families are reduced to beggary; how many souls are damned continually, by this crime! Drunken servants are the torment of almost all our master manufacturers, the curse upon our commerce, and the blight upon our national prosperity.

4. CHASTITY is a duty of infinite importance to the well being of servants.

I am now on delicate ground, and I will endeavour to step with caution; but no false refinement shall hinder me from discharging a duty, which, as a guardian of the public morals, I owe to a very large, and a very much exposed class of my fellow creatures. I will not allow a prudish and affected sentimentalism to turn away my holy and benevolent concern from the interest of female servants, nor prevent me from addressing to them the language of warning and expostulation. When the miseries of prostitution are considered, and when the prevalence of this desolating crime, and all its attendant evils, is at once admitted and deplored; when it is well known, that of the miserable and loathsome victims of seduction that crowd the paths of vice, a very large proportion were female servants, betrayed from the ways of virtue, in

the first instance, by their masters, or their master's sons, or their fellow servants of the opposite sex, surely it is the duty of every one, who is specially addressing young women in service, most solemnly and most pointedly to warn them against the wily arts of the basilisk seducer, who is fascinating them to their ruin. Young woman, consider the value, even in this world, of your character. With an unblemished reputation, you are respectable in servitude; your virtue is your parents' honest boast, your family's only renown, and your own wealth and honour: this will be your passport through the world, your letter of recommendation to good society, and that which will find you friends, and make them, and keep them, wherever Providence may cast your lot. But, if this be lost, oh, what a poor, forlorn, withered, wretched creature you become. Abandoned by your seducer, ejected from your place, disowned by your friends, you have the pains, and the cares, and the labours of a mother, but united with the infamy of the prostitute: you have to bear from without the scorn of the world, the look and language of shame-stricken, heart-broken parents, and the ceaseless reproach and remorse of a guilty conscience from within; and all this, perhaps, but as preliminary to the misery which the prostitute endures, through her loathsome course on earth, and its awful termination in hell. Take warning, then, and reject with disdain and virtuous indignation the very first encroachments that may be made, by any one, upon the most delicate modesty and reserve. Have you been unfortunate enough to draw upon yourself the attention of a master, or a master's son? Consider, it is with the eye of lust, not of love, that he looks upon you; he may flatter your vanity by his admiration of your person, but it is the flattery of a murderer; he cannot mean any thing that is honourable; his passion, that he talks of, is a base, ruffian-like, deliberate purpose to ruin you. Turn from him, flee from him with more haste than you would from a serpent or a tiger, for more than a serpent or a tiger is he to be shunned by you. Make him feel that you are his superior in virtue, though his inferior in rank. If, on the other hand, you allow

him to accomplish his purpose, and decoy you to perdition, he will, in cold-blooded, remorseless cruelty, abandon you and your child to a workhouse, to a broken heart, and the bottomless pit.

Act in the same determined manner towards every one else. Preserve not only your virtue itself, but your modesty, which is its outwork. Allow neither act, nor word, nor look, in your presence, which is at variance with the most scrupulous purity. Let no prospect or promise of marriage throw you off your guard. The man who acts thus is to be regarded as a traitor, deceiving you into iniquity. He that would destroy your reputation will not scruple to falsify his own word: the vows of such a wretch are not to be trusted. Be careful to whom you give your company. Let not an anxiety to leave service, and be your own mistress, drive you to accept the offer of the first individual, without considering whether he be suitable or unsuitable, who may present himself to your notice.

5. FRUGALITY is an incumbent duty upon persons in your situation.

You are in very dependent circumstances. Your support depends upon your own labour, and *that* upon your health. You have no arm but your own to rely upon, and should therefore feel the obligation of laying up something, in the day of prosperity, against the night of adversity. We are all enjoined to *trust* Providence, but not to *tempt* it. To spend all we get in vanity and useless trifles, under the idea that we shall be taken care of in one way or other, is a presumption that generally brings its own punishment. There is, in the present day, a most censurable propensity in female servants, and work-women in general, to dress quite beyond their station. It is not easy, in some cases, to distinguish between the maid and her mistress. What abject folly is it for a young woman to spend all her wages in gay apparel! When she is in ill health and out of place, will it be any consolation to look upon finery, which she is obliged to pawn, one article after another, for her support? The love of dress has led, in some instances, to stealing; in others, to prostitution; in more, to poverty. Charac-

ter is respectability, not dress. Harlots are generally fine and gaudy in their attire. Economize your little property, then; lay up in store for the time to come. I know several servants who have, one forty, another fifty, another one hundred pounds in the bank. Besides, it is desirable to save from unnecessary expense in dress, that you may have a little to give to the cause of humanity and religion. The mite of the servant may mingle, in this age, with the pound of the master, to help in spreading the blessings of Christianity over the face of the earth. And it is to be poor, indeed, to have nothing to give to the cause of humanity or religion!

Secondly. I now lay before you *the duties you owe to YOUR EMPLOYERS.*

1. *Honour them*; for they are your superiors in station. Pay them the respect which is due to them, and, in order to this, cherish for them a proper reverence in your heart. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke," said the apostle, "count their own masters worthy of all honour." Behave towards them with all proper humility and submission; not that you are to crouch and tremble before them, like slaves at the foot of a tyrant. Your address to them must be reverential, not rude, boisterous and impertinent. In talking of them to others, in their absence, there should be no calling them names, no exposure of their faults, no ridiculing their infirmities: on the contrary, you should, to the utmost of your power, as far as truth will allow, defend them against the attacks of slander and the arts of detraction. If, at any time, they speak to you with tones of anger, and in language of rebuke, you must remember the apostle's injunction, and "*not answer again.*" You may mildly and meekly explain, and sometimes expostulate, but you must not reply in an angry and impertinent manner. Should they so far forget their duty, as to let down their dignity, and be too familiar, do not forget *your place*, but respectfully keep your proper distance. Every thing rude in conduct, and obtrusive, insolent or familiar in language, must, therefore, be most sedulously avoided, as an essential part of servants' conduct towards their employers.

2. OBEEDIENCE is founded upon reverence, and is a necessary part of it. Observe the directions of the apostle Paul. "Servants, *obey in all things* your masters according to the flesh." We are of course to except those things which are contrary to the word of God; for if they enjoin any thing that is manifestly sinful, you must mildly, but firmly, refuse to comply, and be prepared to take all the consequences of your disobedience. In all other matters, however self-denying or difficult, however contrary to your own views and wishes, you must submit; you are not to choose your commands, but in all things to obey. You are to obey "*with fear and trembling*," i. e. with reverential regard for their authority, a dread of their displeasure, and, also, which is probably the apostle's meaning, with the dread of the anger of God, who, having enjoined obedience, will punish the disobedient. You are to obey "*in singleness of heart*," i. e. with a willing and cheerful mind, and not with a mere compulsory, outside show of submission, and are to be free from all selfish, personal ends, and obey from the single consideration that it is right. You are to do this, "*as unto Christ, as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will, doing service as to the Lord, and not to men*." You must consider, that God commands it, and, therefore, you are to obey them, as obeying God; they are in God's stead, in this particular, to you; and, from a regard to conscience, and a respect to the divine authority, you are to do what they enjoin. "I do this," you are to say, "not *merely* to please my master and mistress, but to please God." This is turning all you do into religion. It signifies nothing what is the nature of the thing, whether it be an act of the most menial kind, in the kitchen, the parlour, or the garden, if it be done with a view to the divine command, that very aim elevates the humble service into an expression of piety towards God, and a service that will be remembered in the day of judgment. You are not to obey "*with eye-service, as men-pleasers*." How many are there, who need a master's eye always upon them to keep them industrious! No sooner is his back turned, than they are indolent and neglectful. This conduct is as mean as

it is wicked: it is detestable hypocrisy, flagrant injustice, and manifest wickedness; for is it nothing that the eye of God is upon you? Is HE not there? Does HE not disapprove this conduct? And is it a small matter to make light of *his* presence? Such servants will shortly find, to their fearful cost, that the eye of God is far more to be dreaded than the eye of the severest master.

Let it be your *delight* to do the will of your employers. Strive to please them in all things, and feel anxious to draw from them this testimony,—“There is a servant, to whom no command, which it is in her power to obey, comes unwelcome; who never need be told a second time to do a thing; who anticipates my orders; and whose very pleasure seems to arise from pleasing me.”

3. GOOD TEMPER is of great consequence.

There are some servants, who, let what work will come in unexpectedly, and even oppressively, receive all with a cheerful acquiescence, and are never put out of their way. Their mistresses are never afraid of telling them of unlooked-for company having arrived, and extra exertion being necessary. While there are others, who, with many valuable qualities, are withal so peevish, so soon put out of temper, so cross at any little unexpected addition being made to their work, that their mistresses are in constant bondage. I like not to hear it said, “She is a very good servant, and has many excellent properties, but her temper is so bad, that I am quite afraid to point out to her, in ever so gentle a manner, the least imperfection, or to put her in the smallest degree out of her way.” This is a serious blemish upon any excellence, and often proves a very great interruption to the comfort of the family, but a still greater interruption to the comfort of the poor waspish creature herself. Temper is not every thing, but it is very important. Study, therefore, to be obliging, and to avoid crossness, sullenness, and passion.

4. FIDELITY is a duty of the *highest rank*.

What a delightful testimony is that which our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as bearing to his people at the last day,—“*Well done, good and FAITHFUL servant.*”

Such, also, is the testimony which it should be in our power to bear to our servants. Fidelity has reference—

To the property of your masters.

Faithful servants will not STEAL the property of their masters. There are opportunities of this every where if you choose to avail yourselves of them. Consider the horrible disgrace of being called a thief; and add to this, the danger in the present world, and the punishment of such a crime in the next. Write the eighth commandment upon your heart, and when tempted by a favourable opportunity to embezzle the property of your employer, let a voice more awful than thunder repeat in your ears the prohibition, "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL." At that perilous moment in your history, let your imagination look up, and behold the flaming eye of God, intently gazing upon you. In whatever profusion, money, plate, jewellery, lace, may be spread out before you, touch not, covet not. Determine, by God's grace, that, though you be ever so poor, you will, at least, be honest. Honesty is indeed the best policy, to go no higher for a motive and commendation. A single act of stealing may blast your reputation for ever; even to be suspected is dreadful: but what inestimable value is attached to a servant of tried honesty! Be honest even to *scrupulosity*. Touch nothing in the house in the way of *eatables* or *drinkables*, which you do not consider as belonging to you. If you want to taste the luxuries of the larder, ask for them; but do not appropriate to yourself what you think would be denied. I have read of a servant who went into the pantry, only to make free with sweetmeats, but, seeing some articles of plate lying about, he took these, and went on from one degree of theft to another, till he died at the gallows. He was under the influence of a thievish disposition when he saw the plate, for he was going to take what he had no right to, and he was in a favourable state of mind to be tempted by Satan to a greater crime. Servants should not allow themselves to appropriate any refuse articles of dress, nor give away the broken victuals, or other articles of the kitchen, without permission. Habits begin in acts; little sins lead on to

greater ones. She that commences by taking a sweetmeat, knowing that she is not allowed it, has violated so far her integrity, has done something to benumb her conscience, and has taken the first step towards confirmed dishonesty. Sin is deceitful; and the way of a sinner is like the course of a ball, down hill. Servants, beware of the *first* act of sin. But fidelity, in reference to property, requires not only that you should not embezzle your master's property, but that you should not WASTE it. They that carelessly waste are almost as guilty as they that wilfully steal. You cannot be an honest servant, unless you are as careful of your employer's property as if it were your own. Furniture, goods, provisions, must all be thus preserved. You are not to say, "My master is rich; he can spare it, and we need not to be so niggardly." His wealth is nothing to you: if *he* chooses to waste it, he has a legal right to do so; but you have none.

Nor is this all; for fidelity requires that servants *should do all they can to make their employers' affairs prosper*. They should grieve over their master's losses, rejoice in his success, and so identify their feelings with his interests, as to seem as if their fortune were bound up with his. We have a fine instance of this in the case of Joseph while he was in the house of Potiphar.

Fidelity would also lead them to give their employers information and warning when their affairs are going wrong, either through their own neglect or ignorance, or through the injurious conduct of others. They cannot be honest, if they witness in silence any fraud practised upon them, either by their fellow servants, or by friends or strangers. Such connivance is a participation of the crime, although it should not be rewarded by any participation of the profits. A proper feeling of concern for your master's welfare would certainly lead you, if he were flagrantly neglectful of his affairs, to suggest to him, in a respectful manner, your apprehension of the consequences. What man, except a fool or a madman, would be offended by such an appeal as the following, made to him by a servant?—"Pardon me, sir, if I take the liberty of expressing my fears on the subject of your business,

which I am induced to do by a sense of my own duty, and a true regard to your welfare. Your business is certainly declining, and, I fear, through your being so frequently absent from it. Customers are offended by not meeting with the principal in the shop, and by finding the stock so low and ill assorted. I am so concerned for your family, and so distressed at the idea of your doing otherwise than well, that, at the risk of incurring your displeasure, which I entreat you not to indulge against me, for this self-denying act of faithful service, I have determined to lay the matter before you, and to beg you to give up your company, to look into your accounts, and to attend more closely to your business." A servant that would do this, and in this *manner*, is fidelity imbodyed, and is a treasure beyond all price.

But faithfulness has a reference also to a master's *time*; for, in many instances, time is property, and servants may as effectually rob their masters by idleness as by stealing. This is always the case where they are hired by the day; and indeed, where, as in many branches of manufacture, they are paid by the piece, if, by their idleness, they prevent their employers from executing orders, and realizing profits, they can be scarcely called faithful. When you hire yourselves, there should be an explicit understanding, as I have already said, how much time you are to render for the stipulated wages; and when this is known, all that by indolence you keep back is just so much of your employer's property stolen from him.

Faithfulness has regard to the *reputation* of your master and mistress. You have their character in your hands, and, by calumny and falsehood, may, if such a malicious disposition were in your heart, do them considerable harm, either by stating what is absolutely false, misrepresenting what is true, magnifying what is little, or exaggerating what is insignificant. Remember, it is the utmost excess of base conduct, and the wickedest kind of dishonesty, to attempt to rob them of their good name.

Then there are also *secrets* which it would be a very unfaithful act in you to disclose. Workmen, clerks, and apprentices, are guilty of great impropriety, if

they communicate the private arts of their master's business, or lay open his connexions to any one. Such an act is, by common opinion, an instance of criminal treachery. Female servants ought not to tell to others what they see and hear in the families where they are placed. It is to be apprehended, that much of the gossip, and many of the reports, which circulate so much slander and detraction through society, are to be traced up to this source. You are not forbidden to form friendships with your fellow servants in other families, but to meet merely for the purpose of exchanging intelligence from the respective households in which you live, is highly censurable. You should maintain the strictest silence on these affairs, and not allow the most busy and inquisitive curiosity of others to draw any thing from you. Nor are you to tell these matters, as is often done, *to one particular friend*; for she may tell them to one more, till at length the affairs of the family are matter of public notoriety. Your admission into a family is attended with an implied condition, that you are to keep all its secrets.

5. DILIGENCE is another duty, but is so necessarily connected with honesty, and, indeed, so essentially a part of it, that much need not be said in addition to illustrate and enforce it. The slothful servant is a wicked one, for, in some instances, more mischief may be done by a day's idleness, than others may be able to undo by a year's exertion. The habits of a sluggard are very unfriendly to your own reputation, and to the comfort of the family by whom you are employed. *Early rising* is absolutely indispensable, if, in addition to the duties of your station, you would attend to the salvation of your soul. And will you not sacrifice half an hour's sleep for the purpose of seeking glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life? Diligence is opposed to sauntering, inactive, and gossiping habits; to a slow, reluctant, grudging way of doing your work. A disposition to stint your labour, to do as little as you possibly can, and to do that little in a careless, unneat, half-finished manner, is a great blemish in your character, and will be sure to militate against your interest.

6. GRATITUDE for kindnesses shown you is very incumbent.

You ought to be thankful for having your faults pointed out, and not resentful, as too many are, towards those who are kind enough to show them what is wrong. If you have received kind attentions in sickness, and have discovered a constant solicitude, on the part of your employers, to soften as much as possible your labour, and to render you comfortable in your situation, you should convince them that their attentions are not thrown away upon one who is insensible to their kindness. Especially if they have taken pains to promote your interests, by warning you against bad company, or by endeavouring to correct your bad practices, you should be grateful for their pains, and endeavour to comply with their advice.

7. In all such cases as those mentioned, where your masters and mistresses are your friends, and confer obligations by their kindness, you should be *truly and cordially* ATTACHED to them.

Where there is really nothing to produce attachment, you cannot be expected to feel any. You cannot be required to feel gratitude where you have received no favours, nor to cherish affection where you have met with no indulgence. But *all* masters and mistresses are not tyrants, as some of you know by experience; for you have found in them something, at least, of the kindness of a second father and mother. Here there are certainly strong claims upon your affection, and, as they have cared for *you* with the kindness of parents, you should serve *them* with the deep interest and devoted attachment of children. They have a right to expect, in such instances, that, as they have studied your comfort, you would study theirs; that when sickness invades their frame or their family, you will minister at the sick bed by night or by day, not grudging your ease or your sleep, so that you might do them good; that when losses diminish their property or comforts, you will most tenderly sympathize with them, mingling your tears with theirs, and be willing to share with them the reduction of their usual plenty and gratification; that, in short, in all their afflictions, you will be afflicted with them, and be the

sharers of all their joys. They did not, and they could not bargain with you for such a duty as this; affection cannot be made an article of a money contract; it must be given, or it is worth nothing; and, indeed, bought and sold it cannot be. Instances of a generous affection of this kind we have perhaps all known; instances of servants so attached to their masters and mistresses, as to follow them, and remain in their service through all the vicissitudes of fortune; as to descend with them from the lofty eminence and luxurious gratifications of prosperity, down into the lowly, and desolate, and barren vale of poverty, there to suffer want with them; as to leave their native land, and cross the seas, and dwell in a foreign country with them; as even to find in their love to their master and mistress, a principle and a feeling, that reconciled them to all the sufferings they endured on their account. I know a servant, who, when her master failed in business, brought down her little hoard of savings, amounting to nearly thirty pounds, and entreated him with tears to accept and apply it for the relief of his family. "Sir," said a lady to a minister who called upon her in sickness, "that girl," alluding to her servant, "who has just left the room, is a greater comfort to me than I can express. She watches me with the affection of a daughter and the care of a nurse. When my complaints make me peevish, she contrives something to soothe me. I often observe her taking pains to discover what would add to my comfort, and often am presented with the thing I wish for, before I express it in words. I live without suspicion, for I perceive her to be conscientious, even to scrupulosity: my chief complaint is, that she takes so much care of me, that I cannot make her take sufficient care of herself."

Servants, look at this character, admire it, imitate it.

THIRDLY. *There are duties which servants in the same family owe TO EACH OTHER.*

There ought to be no *tyranny nor oppression exercised by one over the other.* This is often the case in those families which employ a numerous retinue of domestics, and which admit the distinction of superior and inferior servants. There is sometimes, in such households, a system of great cruelty carried on altogether un-

known to the master. Some poor creatures are degraded into the condition of a slave to the other servants, and drag on a miserable existence under the heavy yoke which has been imposed upon them by an unfeeling minion who stands before the master's eye, and has always his ear at command.

Strive to agree with each other; for families are often disturbed by the quarrels of the servants, and the uproar in the kitchen is distinctly heard by the guests in the parlour. You should bear with one another's infirmities, and never take delight in thwarting each other. Instead of finding pleasure in converting the infirmities of any one into a means of annoyance, and a source of vexation to her, carefully avoid whatever, by appealing to these imperfections, or bringing them into notice, would render the subject of them irritable or sullen. Never tease one another, which is too often done, especially where an individual is known to be petulant. The worst consequences have sometimes arisen from this practice. A few days ago, I saw an individual put to the bar of his country, upon an indictment for manslaughter, under the following circumstances.—His fellow servants, aware of his petulant disposition, provoked him by some petty vexations, till, in his rage, he hurled a hammer at them, which struck one of them in the head, and inflicted a wound of which he died.

Never bear tales to your employers, for the purpose of exciting a prejudice against each other, and ingratiating yourselves in their favour. A supplanter is a most hateful character, at once despicable and despised.

At the same time, *you are not to connive at sin*: if your fellow servants do any thing wrong, either in the way of drunkenness, lewdness, or dishonesty, you owe it to your master to make him acquainted with the fact. You are dishonest, if you conceal the dishonesty of others, and you are a partaker of those vices which you allow to be perpetrated under your notice, without making it known.

Servants that make a profession of religion have great need to conduct themselves with singular propriety. Towards their masters and mistresses there

should be the deepest humility, and the very reverse of every thing that bears even a distant resemblance of spiritual pride. There must be no consciousness of superiority, no air of importance, no affected sanctity, but a meek, modest, unobtrusive exhibition of the influence of religion, in making them strictly conscientious and exemplary in the discharge of all the duties of their station. Their piety should be seen, not only in a constant anxiety to attend to the public means of grace, and in a regular performance of the private duties of religion, but also in making them more respectful and obedient; more meek and submissive; more honest and diligent, than all the rest. That servant does not adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things, who does not shine in her sphere *as a servant*. There are occasions when you may seek to do good to those who employ you, if they are yet living without the possession of piety. Instances have occurred, in which, such as you have been the instruments of converting their employers; and a visible, but unostentatious exhibition of eminent and consistent piety, supported by as eminent a discharge of the duties of your station, followed by a modest and judicious introduction of the subject, when a suitable occasion presents itself, may, by the grace of God, be blessed for the salvation of even *your* master and mistress.

If, on the other hand, your profession of religion be not supported by consistency; if it render you proud, conceited, and consequential; if it be accompanied by an unsubdued temper, or by habits of inattention to the duties of your place; if it makes you troublesome about your religious privileges, so that, in a time of emergency or sickness, you will not give up a single sermon without murmuring and sullenness,—you do not glorify God, but dishonour him; you excite a prejudice against religion, rather than produce a prepossession in its favour.

Towards your fellow servants you should be meek, obliging, and generous; assuming nothing on the ground of your piety, never disgusting them by any apparent consciousness of superior sanctity, but, at the same time, never scrupling to let them know and see that you fear God. Timidly to conceal your regards

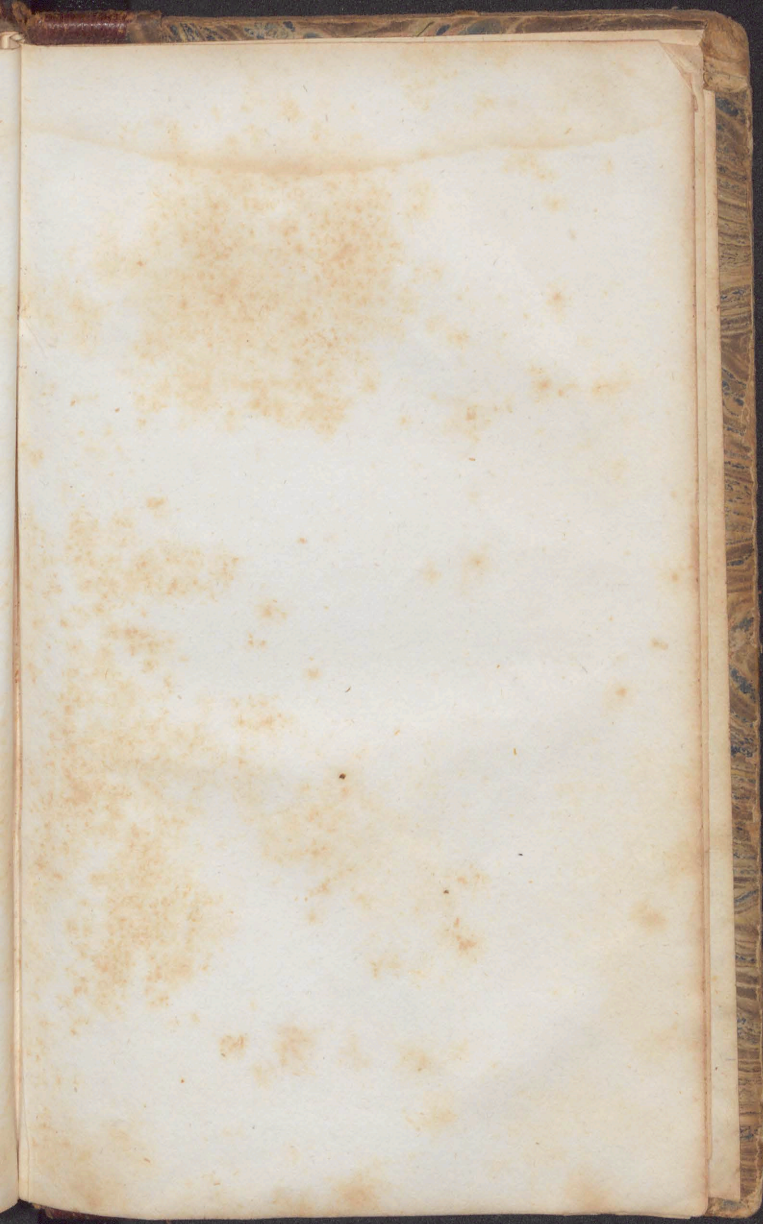
to the claims of religion, or vauntingly to acknowledge them, would equally excite a prejudice; but to yield to them with a firmness that ridicule and opposition cannot bend, a consistency that scrutiny cannot impeach, and a humility that the reproached conscience of those who are offended cannot misrepresent, will be sure to raise admiration, and, by the blessing of God, may produce imitation.

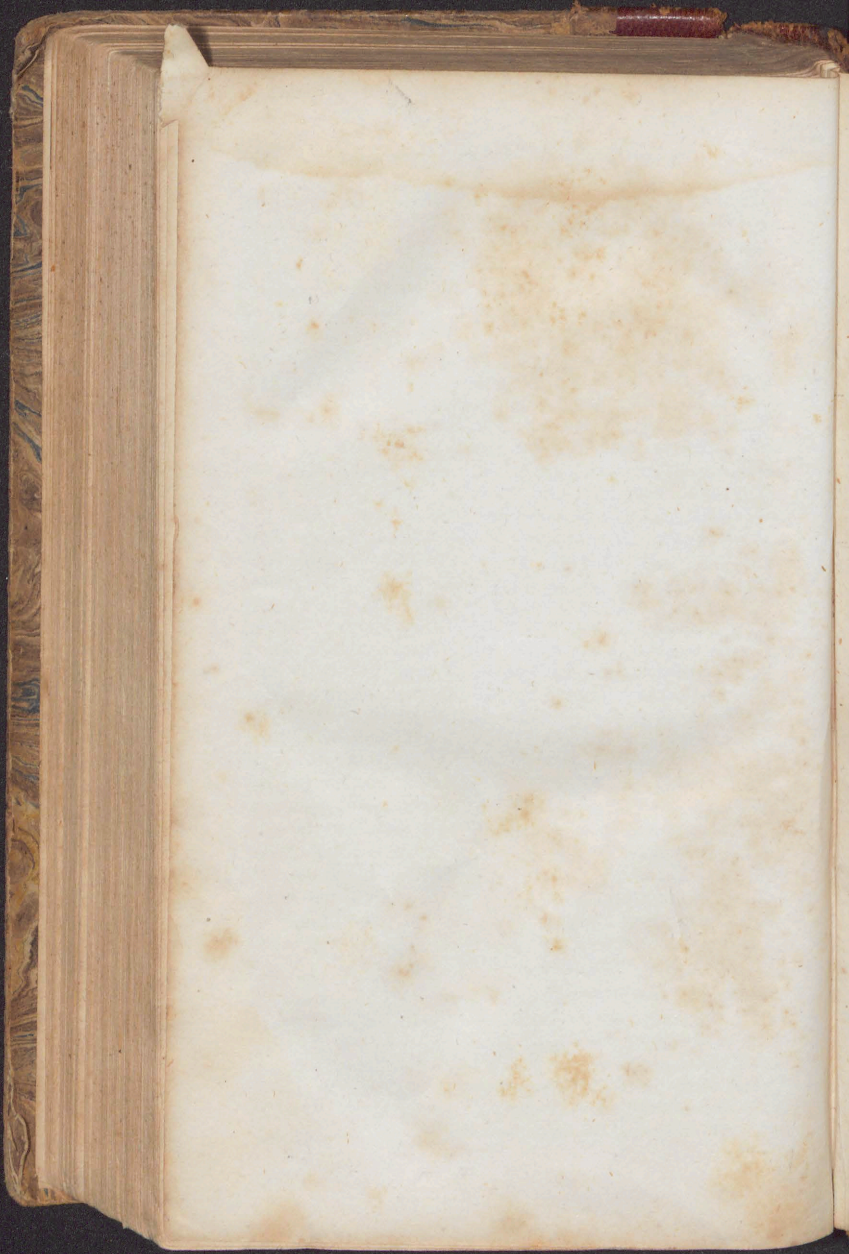
Are any of your fellow servants living in the neglect of religion? it is your duty, in a solemn and affectionate manner, to warn them. "I knew a religious servant," says Mr. Janeway, "that after other endeavours for the conversion of one of his fellows had proved ineffectual, spent some time at midnight to pray for him, and, being very importunate, his voice was heard in the next chamber, where the object of his pious solicitude lay; who, on hearing the voice of entreaty, arose from bed to listen, and was so struck with the affectionate concern that was breathed out for him, that he was converted by the prayer."

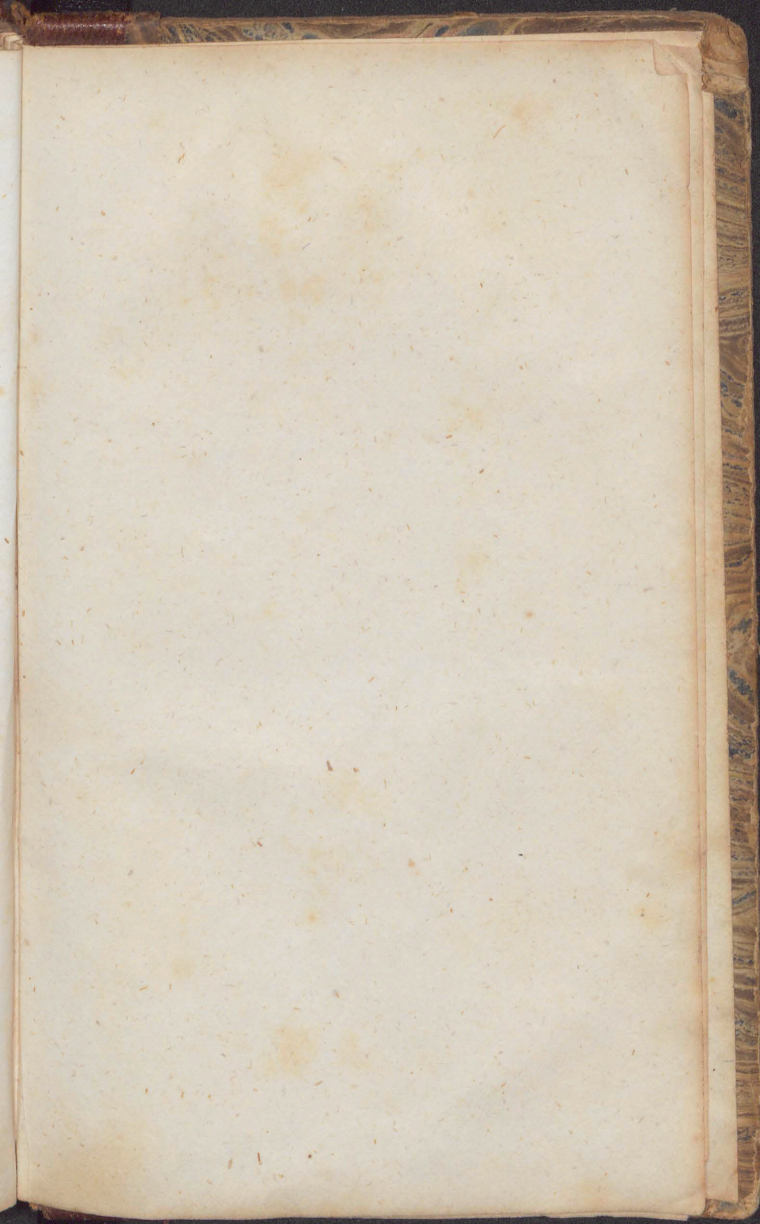
Let me now, in conclusion, exhort you to attend to the duties which have been set before you. It may be felt as a motive to this, to consider, that, though you are servants, you are not slaves, as was the case with those who are addressed by the apostles, in their inspired writings. Yes, *they* were *slaves*, and yet are they admonished to give honour and service to those who held them by a tie they could not break. You are *free*, and your labour is voluntary; you sell it for a stipulated price, and are not degraded by your situation; nothing *can* degrade you but bad conduct. Your interest lies in the faithful discharge of your duties. This will secure to you peace and serenity of mind, the respect and attachment of your employers, the esteem of the public, the testimony of conscience, and the approbation of God. You will thus help to diffuse happiness through the families in which you reside; for a good servant is one of the springs of domestic comfort, and daily refreshes, by its pure and pleasant stream, the members of the little community in the house, who, in return, will do what they can to promote your present comfort, and provide for your future support, when the days of sickness and the

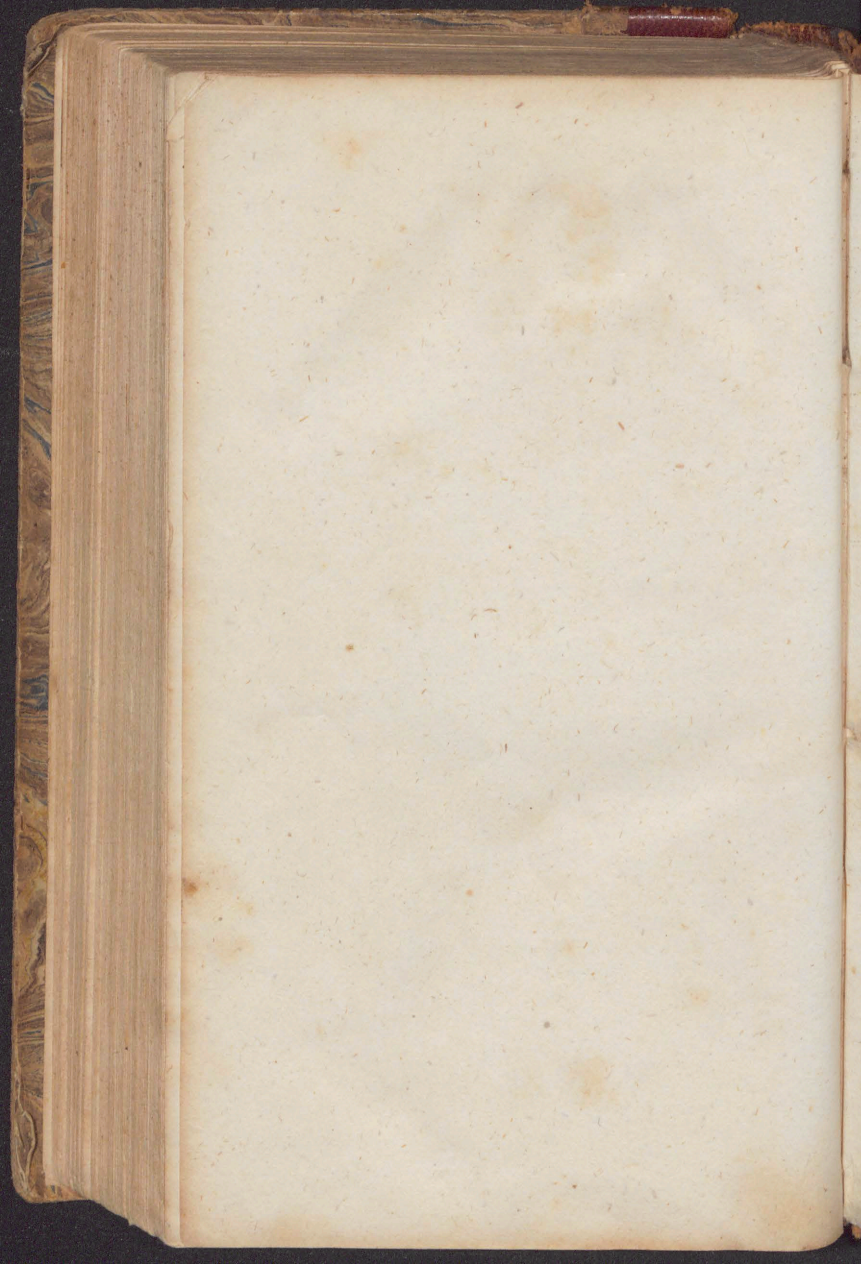
years of old age shall come upon you. And remember that God is every where, and his eye is always upon you. "He compasseth your path, and knoweth your down-sitting and up-rising, and there is not a word upon your tongue, but he knoweth it altogether." You may have an absent master, but you cannot have an absent God. And he cites your conscience to his side, to take a correct copy, and lodge it in your bosom, of the record of your actions, words and feelings, which he writes down in the book of his remembrance. Time is short, life is uncertain, death is at hand, and the judgment approaching, when it will be of no consequence who was master and who was servant, but only who was holy and faithful. God is now your Witness, and will be hereafter your Judge. Have the promises and threatenings of the Great Master little efficacy? Are heaven, glory, and eternal happiness worth nothing? If so, what think you of condemnation, wrath, and everlasting misery? If the former signify little, do the latter signify no more? Then, I must confess, I know not what further to say, for I have exhausted the differences of time, and the varieties of eternity; I have spread out the miseries which sin brings, and the pleasure which holiness produces upon earth; and have added to this the consideration of the eternal torment which iniquity draws upon itself in hell, and the everlasting felicity which religion conducts the soul to enjoy in heaven:—what more *can* I add—but simply to say, choose ye, whether to you it shall be said in the last day, by the Lord Jesus Christ, "THOU WICKED AND SLOTHFUL SERVANT, DEPART ACCURSED FROM ME INTO EVERLASTING FIRE, PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS;" or "WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD."

THE END.









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