

<https://OneMoreLibrary.com>

WHO ARE HAPPIEST?

AND

OTHER STORIES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY CROOME.

PHILADELPHIA
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO & CO.
1852.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1852, by
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO & CO.
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of
Pennsylvania.

STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON & CO.
PHILADELPHIA.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
WHO ARE HAPPIEST?	9
DICK LAWSON, AND THE YOUNG MOCKING-BIRD.	21
THE MEANS OF ENJOYMENT.	60
MAN'S JUDGMENT.	72
WHAT FIVE DOLLARS PAID.	89
LOOK AT T'OTHER SIDE.	97
THIN SHOES.	115
THE UNRULY MEMBER.	131
THE RICH AND THE POOR.	149

INTRODUCTION.

In this volume, the stories are not illustrative of childish experiences. Most of the actors

are men and women,—and the trials and temptations to which they are subjected, such as are experienced in mature life. Their object is to fix in the young mind, by familiar illustrations, principles of action for the future. While several of the volumes in this series will be addressed to children as children, others, like this one, will be addressed to them as our future men and women, toward which estate they are rapidly progressing, and in which they will need for their guidance all things good and true that can be stored up in their memories.

WHO ARE HAPPIEST?

“

WHAT troubles you, William?” said Mrs. Aiken, speaking in a tone of kind concern to her husband, who sat silent and moody, with his eyes now fixed upon the floor, and now following the forms of his plainly-clad children as they sported, full of health and spirits, about the room.

It was evening, and Mr. Aiken, a man who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow, had, a little while before, returned from his daily labour.

No answer was made to the wife’s question. A few minutes went by, and then she spoke again:

“Is any thing wrong with you, William?”

“Nothing more than usual,” was replied. “There’s always something wrong. The fact is, I’m out of heart.”

“William!”

Mrs. Aiken came and stood beside her husband, and laid her hand gently upon his shoulder.

The evil spirit of envy and discontent was in the poor man’s heart,—this his wife understood right well. She had often before seen him in this frame of mind.

“I’m as good as Freeman; am I not?”

“Yes, and a great deal better, I hope,” replied Mrs. Aiken.

“And yet he is rolling in wealth, while I, though compelled to toil early and late, can scarcely keep soul and body together.”

“Hush, William! Don’t talk so. It does you no good. We have a comfortable home, with food and raiment,—let us therewith be contented and thankful.”

“Thankful for this mean hut! Thankful for hard labour, poor fare, and coarse clothing!”

“None are so happy as those who labour; none enjoy better health than they who have only the plainest food. Do you ever go hungry to bed, William?”

“No, of course not.”

“Do you or your children shiver in the cold of winter for lack of warm clothing?”

“No; but”——

“William! Do not look past your real comforts in envy of the blessings God has given to others. Depend upon it, we receive all of this world’s goods the kind Father above sees best for us to have. With more, we might not be so happy as we are.”

“I’ll take all that risk,” said Mr. Aiken. “Give me plenty of money, and I’ll find a way to largely increase the bounds of enjoyment.”

“The largest amount of happiness, I believe, is ever to be found in that condition wherein God had placed us.”

“Then every poor man should willingly remain poor!”

“I did not say that, William: I think every man should seek earnestly to improve his worldly affairs—yet, be contented with his lot at all times; for, only in contentment is there happiness, and this is a blessing the poor may share equally with the rich. Indeed, I believe the poor have this blessing in larger store. You, for instance, are a happier man than Mr. Freeman.”

“I’m not so sure of that.”

“I am, then. Look at his face. Doesn’t that tell the story? Would you exchange with him in every respect?”

“No, not in every respect. I would like to have his money.”

“Ah, William! William!” Mrs. Aiken shook her head. “You are giving place in your heart for the entrance of bad spirits. Try to enjoy, fully, what you have, and you will be a far happier man than Mr. Freeman. Your sleep is sound at night.”

“I know. A man who labours as hard as I do, can’t help sleeping soundly.”

“Then labour is a blessing, if for nothing else. I took home, to-day, a couple of aprons made for Mrs. Freeman. She looked pale and troubled, and I asked her if she were not well.”

“‘Not very,’ she replied. ‘I’ve lost so much rest of late, that I’m almost worn out.’

“I did not ask why this was; but, after remaining silent for a few moments, she said—

“‘Mr. Freeman has got himself so excited about business, that he sleeps scarcely three hours in the twenty-four. He cares neither for eating nor drinking; and, if I did not watch him, would scarcely appear abroad in decent apparel. Hardly a day passes that something does not go wrong. Workmen fail in their contracts, prices fall below what he expected them to be, and agents prove unfaithful; in fact, a hundred things occur to interfere with his expectations, and to cloud his mind with disappointment. We were far happier when we were poor, Mrs. Aiken. There was a time when we enjoyed this life. Bright days!—how well are they remembered! Mr. Freeman’s income was twelve dollars a week; we lived in two rooms, and I did all our own work. I had fewer wants than I have ever had since, and was far happier than I ever expect to be again on this side of the grave.’”

Just then a cry was heard in the street.

“Hark!” exclaimed Mr. Aiken.

“Fire! Fire! Fire!” The startling sound rose clear and shrill upon the air.

Mr. Aiken sprang to the window and threw it open.

“Mr. Freeman’s new building, as I live!”

Mr. Aiken dropped the window, and catching up his hat, hurriedly left the house.



MR. AIKEN'S RETURN FROM THE FIRE.

It was an hour ere he returned. Meanwhile the fire raged furiously, and from her window, where she was safe from harm, Mrs. Aiken saw the large new factory, which the rich man had just erected, entirely consumed by the fierce, devouring element. All in vain was it that the intrepid firemen wrought almost miracles of daring, in their efforts to save the building. Story after story were successively wrapped in flames, until, at length, over fifty thousand dollars worth of property lay a heap of black and smouldering ruins.

Wet to the skin, and covered with cinders, was Mr. Aiken when he returned to his humble abode, after having worked manfully, in his unselfish efforts to rescue a portion of his neighbour's property from destruction.

"Poor Freeman! I pity him from my very heart!" was his generous, sympathising exclamation, as soon as he met his wife.

"He is insured, is he not?" inquired Mrs. Aiken.

"Partially. But even a full insurance would be a poor compensation for such a loss. In less than two weeks, this new factory, with all its perfect and beautiful machinery, would have been in operation. The price of goods is now high, and Mr. Freeman would have cleared a handsome sum of money on the first season's product of his mill. It is a terrible disappointment for him. I never saw a man so much disturbed."

"Poor man! His sleep will not be so sound as yours, to-night, William."

"Indeed it will not."

"Nor, rich as he is, will he be as happy as you, to-morrow."

"If I were as rich as he is," said Mr. Aiken, "I would not fret myself to death for this loss. I would, rather, be thankful for the wealth still left in my possession."

Mrs. Aiken shook her head.

“No, William, the same spirit that makes you restless and discontented now, would be with you, no matter how greatly improved might be your external condition. Mr. Freeman was once as poor as you are. Do you think him happier for his riches? Does he enjoy life more? Has wealth brought a greater freedom from care? Has it made his sleep sweeter? Far, very far from it. Riches have but increased the sources of discontent.”

“This is not a necessary consequence. If Mr. Freeman turn a blessing into a curse, that is a defect in his particular case.”

“And few, in this fallen and evil world, are free from this same defect, William. If wealth were sought for unselfish ends, then it would make its possessor happy. But how few so seek riches! It is here, believe me, that the evil lies.”

Mrs. Aiken spoke earnestly, and something of the truth that was in her mind, shed its beams upon the mind of her husband.

“You remember,” said she smiling, “the anecdote of the rich man of New York, who asked a person who gave utterance to words of envy towards himself—‘Would you,’ said he, ‘take all the care and anxiety attendant upon the management of my large estates and extensive business operations, merely for your victuals and clothes?’ ‘No, indeed, I would not,’ was the quick answer. ‘*I get no more,*’ said the rich man, gravely. And it was the truth, William. They who get rich in this world, pass up through incessant toil and anxiety; and, while they *seem* to enjoy all the good things of life, in reality enjoy but little. They get only their victuals and clothes. I have worked for many rich ladies, and I do not remember one who appeared to be happier than I am. And I am mistaken if your experience is not very much like my own.”

One evening, a few days after this time, Aiken came home from his work. As he entered the room where his wife and children sat, the former looked up to him with a cheerful smile of welcome, and the latter gathered around him, filling his ears with the music of their happy voices. The father drew an arm around one and another, and, as he sat in their midst, his heart swelled in his bosom, and warmed with a glow of happiness.

Soon the evening meal was served—served by the hands of his wife—the good angel of his humble home. William Aiken, as he looked around upon his smiling children, and their true-hearted, even-tempered, cheerful mother, felt that he had many blessings for which he should be thankful.

“I saw something, a little while ago, that I shall not soon forget,” said he, when alone with his wife.

“What was that, William?”

“I had occasion to call at the house of Mr. Elder, on some business, as I came home this evening. Mr. Elder is rich, and I have often envied him; but I shall do so no more. I found him in his sitting-room, alone, walking the floor with a troubled look on his face. He glanced at me with an impatient expression as I entered. I mentioned my business, when he said abruptly and rudely—

“‘I’ve no time to think of that now.’”

“As I was turning away, a door of the room opened, and Mrs. Elder and two children entered.

“‘I wish you would send those children up to the nursery,’ he exclaimed, in a fretful half-angry voice. ‘I’m in no humour to be troubled with them now.’

“The look cast upon their father by those two innocent little children, as their mother pushed them from the room, I shall not soon forget. I remembered, as I left the house, that there had been a large failure in Market street, and that Mr. Elder was said to be the loser by some ten thousand dollars—less than a twentieth part of what he is worth. I am happier than he is to-night, Mary.”

“And happier you may ever be, William,” returned his wife, “if you but stoop to the humble flowers that spring up along your pathway, and, like the bee, take the honey they contain. God knows what, in external things, is best for us; and he will make either poverty or riches, whichever comes, a blessing, if we are humble, patient and contented.”

DICK LAWSON, AND THE YOUNG MOCKING-BIRD.

“DICK!”

“Sir.”

“I want a young mocking-bird. Can’t you get me one?”

“I d’no, sir.”

“Don’t you think you could try?”

“I d’no, sir. P’r’aps I might.”

“Well, see if you can’t. I’ll give you half a dollar for one.”

“Will you? Then I’ll try.”

And off Dick started for the woods, without stopping for any further words on the subject.

The two individuals introduced are a good-natured farmer in easy circumstances, and a bright boy, the son of a poor woman in the neighbourhood.

As Dick Lawson was hurrying away for the woods, his mind all intent upon finding a nest of young mocking-birds, and despoiling it, he met a juvenile companion, named Henry Jones.

“Come, Harry,” said he, in an animated voice, “I want you to go with me.”

“Where are you going?” asked the friend.

“I am going to look for a mocking-bird’s nest.”

“What for?”

“To get a young one. Mr. Acres said he would give me half a dollar for a young mocking-bird.”

“He did?”

“Yes, he did so!” was the animated reply.

“But don’t he know that it’s wrong to rob bird’s nests!”

“If it had been wrong, Harry, Mr. Acres wouldn’t have asked me to get him a bird. He knows what is right and wrong, as well as anybody about here.”

“And so does Mr. Milman, our Sunday-school teacher; and he says that it is wicked to rob bird’s nests. You know he has told us that a good many times.”

“But Mr. Acres knows what is right as well as Mr. Milman, and if it had been wrong, he’d never have asked me to get him a bird. And then, you know, he says he will give me half a dollar for a single one.”

“I wouldn’t touch a bird’s nest for ten dollars,” rejoined Henry Jones, warmly.

“I would then,” replied Dick, from whose mind the promised reward had, for the time, completely dispelled every tender impression received both from his mother, who had been very careful of her child, and his teacher at the Sunday-school. “But come,” he added, “you’ll go with me, anyhow.”

“Not, if you are going to rob a bird’s nest,” firmly responded Henry. “It is wicked to do so.”

“Wicked! I don’t see any thing so very wicked about it. Mr. Acres is a good man, so everybody says, and I know he wouldn’t tell me to do a wicked thing.”

“I’m sure it is wicked,” persevered Henry Jones, “for isn’t it taking the poor little birds from their mother? Don’t you think it would be wicked for some great giant to come and carry your little sister away off where you could never find her, and shut her up in a cage, and keep her there all her life?”

“No, but birds are not little children. It’s a very different thing. But you needn’t talk, Harry; for it’s no use. If you’ll go along, you shall have half the money I get for the bird—if not, why, I’ll go myself and keep the whole of it.”

“I wouldn’t go with you for a hundred dollars,” said Harry half-indignantly, turning away.

“Then I’ll go myself,” was Dick Lawson’s sneering reply, as he sprang forward and hurried off to the woods.

He did not, however, feel very easy in mind, although he attempted first to whistle gayly, and then to sing. The remonstrance of Henry Jones had its effect in calling back previous better feelings, awakened by the precepts of a good mother and the instructions of a judicious Sabbath-school teacher. To oppose these, however, were the direct sanction of Mr. Acres, towards whom he had always been taught to look with respect, and the stimulating hope of a liberal reward. These were powerful incentives—but they could not hush the inward voice of disapprobation, that seemed to speak in a louder and sterner tone with every advancing step. Still, this voice, loud as it was, could not make him pause or hesitate. Onward he pursued his way, and soon entered the woods and old fields he had fixed in his mind as the scene of his operations.

An hour’s diligent search ended in the discovery of a nest, in which were two young ones, with the mother bird feeding them. This sight softened Dick’s heart for a moment, but the strong desire, instantly awakened, to possess the prize for which he had been seeking, caused him to drive off the old bird, who commenced fluttering about the spot, uttering cries and showing signs of deep distress. These, although he could not help feeling them, did not cause him to desist. In a few moments he had one of the birds safely in his possession, with which he bounded off in great delight.

“Well, Dick, have you got my bird?” said Mr. Acres, as Dick came puffing and blowing into his presence.

“Yes, indeed!” returned Dick with a broad smile of pleasure, presenting the bird he had abstracted from its warm, soft nest.

“You are a fine smart boy, Dick, and will make a man one of these days!” said Mr. Acres, patting Dick on the head encouragingly. Then, taking the bird, he toyed with it for a while

fondly—fed it, and finally placed it in a cage. The promised half-dollar, which was promptly paid to the lad, made him feel rich. As he was about leaving the house of Mr. Acres, the latter called to him:

“Look here, Dick, my fine fellow, don’t you want a dog? Here’s Rover, the very chap for you.”

“May I have Rover?” eagerly asked Dick, his eyes glistening with delight.

“Yes. I’ve more dogs now than I want.”

“He fights well!” ejaculated Dick, surveying the dog proudly. As he did so, the animal, seeing himself noticed, walked up to Dick, and rubbed himself against the lad familiarly.

“He’ll whip any dog in the neighbourhood,” said Mr. Acres.

“And you’ll give him to me?”

“Oh, yes. I’ve got too many dogs now.”

“Here, Rover! Here, Rover! Here! Here! Here!” cried Dick in an animated tone, starting off. The dog followed quickly, and in a few moments both were out of sight.

“A smart chap that,” remarked Mr. Acres to himself, as Dick bounded away. “He’ll make something before he dies, I’ll warrant.”

The possession of the dog and half-dollar, especially the latter, were strongly objected to by Dick’s mother.

“How could you, my son, think of robbing a poor bird of her little young ones?” said she seriously and reprovingly.

“But, mother, Mr. Acres wanted me to get him a bird, and of course I could not say ‘no.’ What would he have thought of me?”

“You never should do wrong for any one.”

“But if it had been so very wrong, Mr. Acres never would have asked me to do it, I know,” urged Dick.

Mrs. Lawson would have compelled her son to take back the money he had received, if almost any other person in the village but Mr. Acres had been concerned. But he was well off, and influential; and, moreover, was her landlord; and, though she was behindhand with her rent, he never took the trouble to ask for it. The dog, too, would have been sent back if any one but Mr. Acres had given it to her son. As it was, she contented herself with merely reprimanding Dick for robbing the bird’s nest, and enjoining on him not to be guilty of so cruel an act again.

About three days after this event, Dick, accompanied by Rover—now his inseparable companion—met his young friend, Henry Jones, who had with him his father’s large house-dog, Bose.

“Whose dog is that?” asked Henry.

“He’s mine,” replied Dick.

“Yours!”

“Be sure he is.”

“Why that is Mr. Acres’s Rover.”

“Not now he isn’t. Mr. Acres gave him to me.”

“What did he give him to you for?”

“For getting him a young mocking-bird.”

“I thought he promised you half-a-dollar?”

“So he did; and what is more, gave it to me, and Rover into the bargain.”

“Well, I wouldn’t have robbed a bird’s nest for a dozen Rovers,” said Henry Jones, warmly.

“Wouldn’t you, indeed?” returned Dick, with a sneer.

“No, I would not. It’s wicked.”

“Oh, you’re very pious! But Rover can whip your Bose, anyhow.”

“No, he can’t, though,” replied Henry quickly, who could not bear to hear his father’s faithful and favourite old dog’s courage called in question.

“Yes, but he can, ten times a day. There, Rover! There, *sck!—sck!—sketch him!*” At the same time pushing Rover against Bose.

Both dogs growled low, and showed their teeth, but that was all.

“Rover’s afraid to touch him!” said Henry, a good deal excited.

“No, he is not, though!” returned Dick, his face glowing with interest; and, lifting up the forefeet of Rover, he threw him full against old Bose, who received the onset with a deep growl and a strong impression of his teeth on Rover.

This brought on the battle. Bose was nine or ten years old, and somewhat worn down by age and hard service, while Rover had numbered but two years, and was full of fire and vigor. Still the victory was not soon decided. During the fight, each of the boys entered into the spirit of the contest almost as much as the dogs. First one would interfere to secure for his favourite the victory, and then the other, until, at last, Dick struck Henry; and then they went at it likewise, and fought nearly as long, and certainly with as much desire to injure each other, as did the dogs themselves. The result was that both Henry and Bose had to yield, and then the parties separated, indulging against each other bitter and angry feelings. But with Dick there was an emotion of cruel delight at having triumphed over his friend. As he was crossing a field, on his way home, he met Mr. Acres.

“Why, what’s the matter with you and Rover?” the farmer asked.

“Rover’s had a fight,” replied Dick.

“Ah! Who with?”

“Mr. Jones’s Bose.”

“Well, which whipped?”

“Rover, of course,” replied Dick, with a smile of triumph; “and I can make him whip any

thing.”

“You’re a keen chap, Dick,” said Mr. Acres, patting the boy on the head, “and are going to make a man one of these days, I see plainly enough. So Rover whipped. I knew there was prime stuff in him.”

“There isn’t another such a fellow in these ‘ere parts,” was Dick’s proud answer.

“But *you* look a little the worse for wear, as well as Rover. Have you been fighting, too?”

Dick held down his head for a moment, and then looking up into Mr. Acres’s face, said—

“Yes, sir,” in rather a sheepish way.

“Ah! well, who have you been fighting with?”

“With Harry Jones. He didn’t want to give Rover fair play; and once, when he had Bose down, he kicked him.”

“And then you kicked him for kicking your dog?”

“Yes, sir.”

“That was right. Never permit a friend to be imposed upon. And after that you had a regular fight?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Which whipped?”

“I gave him a bloody nose; and shouldn’t wonder if he had a black eye into the bargain. And what is more, made him cry ‘enough.’”

“That was right. Never fight but in a good cause, and then be sure to whip your man.”

“It’ll take a smarter boy than Harry Jones to whip me,” said Dick proudly.

“And you think Rover can whip any thing about here?”

“Yes, indeed. And I’m going to make him do it, too.”

“You’d better not try him against Markland’s old Nero.”

“He’ll whip him in ten minutes.”

“I’m not so sure of that. Nero is a great deal bigger and stronger.”

“I don’t care if he is. I’m learning Rover a trick that’ll make him whip a dog twice his size.”

“What is that?”

Dick called Rover, and the dog came up to him wagging his tail.

“Give us your paw,” said the boy, in a tone of authority.

The dog instantly lifted one of his forefeet, which Dick took in his hand, and began to squeeze gently at first, and then, by degrees, harder and harder, ejaculating all the while, in a quick distinct tone—“Leg him! leg him! leg him!” until the dog, from first indicating signs of pain, began to whine, and then to yell out as if in agony. At this, Dick dropped the

foot, and looked up into the farmer's face.

"Well, Dick, what does all that mean?" asked Mr. Acres.

"I'm learning him to catch hold of the foot," replied the boy.

"The mischief you are!"

"Yes, sir. And when he's fairly up to it, he can whip any dog, if he's as big as an elephant."

"But can you learn him?"

"I made him catch Jones's Bose by the foot this morning, and it would have done your heart good to have heard him yell. If he isn't lame for a month, then I don't know any thing about it."

"There's no fear of you, I see," was Mr. Acres's encouraging reply to this, again patting Dick on the head.

In about two weeks from that time it was pretty well known through the neighbourhood that Dick Lawson had given out that he could make his Rover whip Markland's Nero, a noble animal that had never been matched by any dog around. Markland's son felt his pride in his dog touched at this, and challenged Dick to a battle. The time was set, and the place, a neighbouring field, chosen. Old and young seemed to take an interest in the matter, and when the time arrived, and Dick appeared on the ground with his dog, there were assembled, men and boys, at least one hundred persons, and among the rest, Mr. Acres, who began to feel somewhat drawn towards his protégé Dick.



CRUEL SPORT.

The two dogs were brought forward by the two lads, whose parents knew nothing of the affair, and by pushing them against, and throwing them upon each other, irritated and

angered them until they finally went to work in real earnest, greatly to the delight of the lookers-on. Rover fought bravely, but he was evidently no match for his larger and stronger antagonist, who tore him savagely, while he seemed unable to penetrate Nero's thick yielding skin. The shouts that arose from the group around were all in favour of Nero, who was a general favourite—as he was one of those large, peaceable, benevolent fellows, belieing his name, whom all liked, while there was something of the churl and savage about Rover, that caused him to have but few friends.

The contest had waged about ten minutes, fiercely, and Rover was evidently getting “worsted,” when Dick, who had been constantly encouraging his dog, stooped close to his ear, and spoke something in a low, quick, energetic tone.

Instantly Rover crouched down, and darting forward, seized the forepaw of Nero in his mouth, and commenced gnawing it eagerly. The noble animal, thus unexpectedly and basely assailed, found the pain to which he was suddenly subjected so great as to take away all power of resistance. He would not utter a cry, but sat down, and permitted the other dog to gnaw away at his tender foot without a single sign of suffering. As the cry of pain, the dog's “enough,” was to terminate the battle, the fine fellow was permitted thus to suffer for several minutes, before the bystanders came forward and pulled Dick Lawson's dog off. Nero would have died before a sound could have been extorted from him.

As Nero had not cried “enough,” Bob Markland contended afterwards that his dog had not been whipped, to settle which difference of opinion he and Dick had several hard battles, in which the latter, like his dog, always came off the victor. The upshot of all these contests was, the expulsion of Dick from the Sabbath-school, into which he carried the bickerings engendered through the week. Another reason for his expulsion was the frequency with which he played truant, and of his having, in several instances, enticed other boys away from the school for the same purpose.

Except Mr. Acres, nearly every man, woman and child in the neighbourhood sincerely disliked, and some actually hated Dick Lawson, for there was hardly a family some member of which had not been annoyed by him in one form or another. But Mr. Acres liked the spirit of the lad, as well as his thorough independence in regard to the opinion of others.

This man, who had first thrown temptation into the lad's way, and encouraged him to persevere in a conduct which nearly all condemned, was not a wilfully bad man. By most people he was called a good-hearted, benevolent person. The truth was, he was not a wise man. When young, he had indulged in such amusements as catching young birds, fighting dogs and cocks, and attending horse-races, and all the exciting scenes to which he could get access. But none of these things corrupted him so far as to make him a decidedly bad man in the community. As he grew up, he gradually laid aside his boyish follies; saved up his money; bought himself a small farm, and, in time, became quite a substantial man, so far as worldly goods were concerned.

Contrasted with himself were several lads whose parents had been exceedingly strict with them, and who had, as they grew up, shaken off the trammels of childhood and youth, run into wild extravagances of conduct, and some into wicked and vicious habits, from which they were never reclaimed. Comparing his own case with theirs, his short-sighted

conclusion was that boys ought to be allowed as much freedom as possible, and this was why he encouraged Dick, who was an exceedingly bright lad, in the course he had been so willing to pursue. He knew nothing at all of the different hereditary tendencies to evil that exist in the mind. His observation had never led him to see how two persons, raised in precisely the same manner, would turn out very differently—the one proving a good, and the other a bad citizen. His knowledge of human nature, therefore, never for a moment caused him to suspect, that in encouraging a feeling of cruelty in Dick Lawson, he might be only putting blood upon the tongue of a young lion—that there might be in his mind hereditary tendencies to evil, which encouragement to rob a bird's nest, or to set two dogs to fighting, by one occupying his position and influence, might cause to become so active as to ultimately make him a curse to society.

And such, in a year or two, Dick seemed becoming. He had in that time, although but fourteen years of age, got almost beyond his mother's control. His dog and himself were the terror of nearly all the dogs and boys in the neighbourhood, for both were surly, quarrelsome, and tyrannical. Even Mr. Acres had found it necessary to forbid him to appear on his premises. Rover having temporarily lamed, time after time, every one of his dogs, and Dick having twice beaten two of his black boys, farm-hands, because of some slight offence. To be revenged on him for this, he robbed a fine apricot-tree of all its fruit, both green and ripe, on the very night before Mr. Acres had promised to send a basket full, the first produced in the neighbourhood that spring, to a friend who was very much esteemed by him.

Though he strongly suspected Dick, yet he had no proof of the fact, and so made no attempt to have him punished.

Shortly after, the boy was apprenticed to a tanner and currier, a severe man, chosen as his master in the hope that his rigid discipline might do something towards reclaiming him. As the tanner had as many dogs as he wanted, he objected to the reception into his yard of Dick's ill-natured cur. But Dick told his mother that, unless Rover were allowed to go with him, he would not go to the trade selected for him. He was resolute in this, and at last Mrs. Lawson persuaded Mr. Skivers, the tanner, to take him, dog and all.

In his new place he did not get along, except for a very short time, without trouble. At the end of the third month, for neglect of work, bad language, and insolence, but particularly for cruelties practised upon a dog that had gotten the mastery over Rover, Mr. Skivers gave him a most tremendous beating. Dick resisted, and fought with might and main, but he was but a boy, and in the hands of a strong and determined man. For a time this cowed Dick, but in the same ratio that his courage fell when he thought of resisting his master single-handed, rose his bitter hate against him. Skivers was a man who, if he had reason to dislike any one about him, could not let his feelings remain quiescent. He must be doing something all the while to let the victim of his displeasure feel that he was no favourite. Towards Dick, he therefore maintained the most offensive demeanour, and was constantly saying or doing something to chafe the boy's feelings. This was borne as patiently as possible, for he did not again wish to enter into a contention in which he must inevitably get severely beaten. Skivers was not long in perceiving that the way to punish Dick the most severely was to abuse his dog; and he, therefore, commenced a systematic process of worrying Rover. This Dick could illy bear. Every time his master would drive Rover from

the yard, or throw sticks or stones at him, the boy would make a new and more bitter vow of retaliation in some form.

One day, Rover and a large dog belonging to Skivers got into a fight about something. Dick's interest in his dog brought him at once to the scene of action. His master, seeing this, ordered him, in a harsh, angry tone, to clear out and mind his own business. As he did so, he took a large club, and commenced beating Rover in a most cruel manner. Dick could not stand this. His blood was up to fever heat in an instant. Seizing a long, heavy pole, used for turning and adjusting hides in the vats, he sprang towards Skivers, and giving it a rapid sweep, brought it with tremendous force against his head, knocking him into a vat half-full of a strong infusion of astringent bark, to the bottom of which he instantly sank.

So incensed did the lad feel, that he made not the slightest attempt to extricate his master from a situation in which death must have inevitably ensued in a few minutes, but walked away to another part of the yard. Two or three journeymen, however, who witnessed the whole affair, were on the spot in a moment, and took out the body of Skivers. He was completely insensible. There was the bloody mark of a large wound on his head. A physician was immediately called, who bled him profusely. This brought him back to consciousness. In a day or two he was out again, and apparently as well as ever. In the mean time, both Dick and his inseparable companion, Rover, had disappeared, and gone no one knew whither. No effort was made to discover the place to which the boy had fled, as every one was too much rejoiced that he had left the village, to care about getting him back. About twelve months after, his mother died—her gray hairs brought down to the grave in sorrow. Year after year then passed away, and the memory of the lad was gradually effaced from the minds of all, or retained only among the dim recollections of the past.

Mr. Acres, who had first placed temptation in the way of Dick Lawson, continued to prosper in all external things, and to hold his position of influence and respectability in the neighbourhood. He, perhaps, more than others, thought about the lad in whom he had once felt a good deal of pride and interest, as exhibiting a fair promise for the future. But he never felt exactly easy in mind when he did think of him. Something whispered that, perhaps, he had been to blame in encouraging his wild habits. But, then, how could he have dreamed, he would argue, that the boy had in him so strong a tendency to evil as the result had proved. He had once been just as fond as Dick had shown himself to be of bird's-nesting, dog-fighting, &c., but then, as soon as he had sown a few wild oats, he sobered down into a steady and thrifty farmer of regular habits. And he of course expected to see Dick Lawson do the same.

“And who knows but that he has?” he would sometimes say, in an effort at self-consolation.

It was some five or six years from the time Dick left the village, that Mr. Acres was awakened one night from sleep by a dream that some one had opened the door of the chamber where he slept. So distinct was the impression on his mind that some one had entered, that he lay perfectly still, with his eyes peering into the darkness around, in order to detect the presence of any one, should the impression on his mind really be true. He had lain thus, with every sense acutely active, for only a moment or two, when a sound, as of a

stealthy footstep, came distinctly upon his ear, and at the same moment, a dark body seemed to move before his eyes, as if crossing the room towards that part of it where stood a large secretary, in which was usually contained considerable sums of money.

Mr. Acres was a brave man, but thus suddenly awakened from sleep to find himself placed in such an emergency, made him tremble. He continued to lie very still, straining his eyes upon the dark moving object intently, until the figure of a man became perfectly distinct. The robber, for such the intruder evidently was, had now reached the secretary, where he stood for a few moments, quietly endeavouring to open it. Finding it locked, he moved off, and passed around the room, feeling every chair and table that came in his way. This Mr. Acres could now distinctly perceive, as his eyes had become used to the feeble light reflected from the starry sky without. At last his hands came in contact with a chair upon which the farmer had laid his clothes on disrobing himself for bed. These seemed to be the objects of his search, for he paused with a quick eager movement, and commenced searching the ample pockets of a large waistcoat. The slight jingle of the farmer's bunch of keys soon explained the movement. Before the robber had fairly gotten back to the secretary, Mr. Acres's courage had returned, and with it no small share of indignation. He rose up silently, but, unfortunately, as his foot touched the floor, it came in contact with a chair, which was thrown over with a loud noise. Before he could reach a large cane, for which he was making, a heavy blow from the robber laid him senseless.

When again conscious, Mr. Acres found himself still in total darkness. On attempting to move, there was an instant, almost intolerable pain in his head, as if from a violent blow. On lifting his hand and placing it upon the spot where the pain seemed most severe, it came in contact with a cold, slimy mass of what he at once knew to be blood. His first effort to rise was accompanied by a feeling of faintness, that caused him to stretch himself again upon the floor, where he lay for some time endeavouring to collect his scattered senses. After he had fully comprehended the meaning of his alarming situation, he made another and more successful effort to rise. Sitting up in the middle of the room, and straining his eyes into the darkness, he began to see more and more distinctly each moment. He was soon satisfied that he was alone. It did not take long after this to arouse the whole house. An examination resulted in ascertaining the fact that his secretary had been robbed of five hundred dollars in gold.

By daylight, the whole neighbourhood was aroused, and some twenty or thirty men were in hot pursuit of the robber, who was arrested about twenty miles away from the village and brought back. The money taken from the secretary of Mr. Acres, was found upon his person, and fully identified. The man proved to be quite young, seeming to have passed but recently beyond the limit of minority. But even young as he was, there was a look of cruel and hardened villany about him, and an expression of settled defiance of all consequences. He gave his name as Frederick Hildich. A brief examination resulted in his committal to await the result of a trial for burglary at the next court.

The day of trial at length came. The action of the court was brief, as no defence was set up, and the proof of the crime clear and to the point. During the progress of the trial, the prisoner seemed to take little interest in what was going on around him, but sat in the bar, with his head down, seemingly lost in deep abstraction of mind. At the conclusion of the proceedings, when the court asked what he had to say why the sentence of the law should

not be pronounced upon him, the prisoner slowly arose to his feet, lifted his head, glanced calmly around for a few moments, until his eyes rested upon Mr. Acres, whom he regarded for some time with a fixed, penetrating, and meaning look. Then, turning to the Bench, he said in a firm, distinct voice:

“YOUR HONOUR—Although I have nothing to urge against the execution of the laws by which I am condemned, I would yet crave the privilege of making a few remarks, which may, perhaps, be useful. The principal witness against me is Mr. Acres,—and upon his testimony, mainly, so far as positive proof goes, I am convicted of a crime, the commission of which I have no particular reason for wishing to deny. But, if I have wronged him, how far more deeply has he wronged me. If I have robbed him of a few paltry dollars, he has robbed me of that which he can never restore, either here or hereafter. In a word, your honour, I stand here, in the presence of this court, and the people of this town, and charge upon that man (pointing to Acres) the cause of my present condition. My real name is Richard Lawson!”

As he said this, the prisoner’s voice failed him, and he paused for a few moments, overcome with emotion. A universal exclamation of surprise passed through the courtroom, and there was scarcely an individual present who did not wonder why he had not discovered this fact for himself long before. For, sure enough, it was Dick Lawson, and no one else, who stood there humbled under the iron hand of the law. As for Mr. Acres, he became instantly pale and agitated—and when the prisoner again looked up and fixed his eyes upon him, his own fell to the floor, as if he were conscience-stricken.

“To that man,” resumed the individual, at the bar, pointing steadily toward the farmer, “as I just said, am I indebted for my ruin. A wild, but innocent boy, he first led me into conscious wrong, by tempting me with money to rob a bird’s nest. The young mocking-bird was procured for him, but at the expense of a violated conscience; for a voice within me spoke loudly against the act of cruelty about to be practised upon the mother-bird and her young. But I stifled that inward monitor, and stilled the voice that urged me to depart not from the path of innocence. I saw that the act was a cruel one, and felt that it was a cruel one—but to be asked to do even a wrong act by a man to whom I looked up, as I then did to Mr. Acres, was to rob the wrong act of more than half of its apparent evil—and so I performed the cruel deed, small as it was, deliberately. From the moment I took the young bird in my hand, all my scruples were gone, and after that it was one of my greatest pleasures to rob birds’ nests, and to kill the older birds with stones. My dog Rover, who is no doubt as well remembered as myself, was given me by Mr. Acres, and I was, moreover, encouraged by that individual to make Rover fight, and to fight myself, whenever it came in the way. Had he discouraged this in me; had he told me that fighting was wrong, his precept for good would have been as powerful as his precept for evil. He was kind to me, and had gained my entire confidence, and could have made almost any thing of me. My cruel, tyrannizing temper, thus encouraged, grew rapidly, until at last I took no delight in any good. Finally expelled from the Sabbath-school, and persecuted for my ill-behaviour and annoyance of almost every one, I became reckless, and finally left this neighbourhood. Five or six years of evil brought me at last into a strait. I could not gain even a common livelihood. I must starve or beg. In this state I thought of my corrupter—of the man who had been the cause of my wretchedness, and I resolved that he should, at least, pay some small penalty for what he had done. In a word, I resolved to rob him—and

did so. And now I stand here to await the sentence of the law for this crime.”

The prisoner then suffered his head to fall upon his bosom, and sank slowly into the seat from which he had arisen. A profound and oppressive silence reigned through the courtroom, broken at last by the judge, who said—

“Richard Lawson, *alias* Frederick Hildich, stand up, and receive the sentence of the law.”

The prisoner arose, and looked the judge steadily in the face, while a sentence of imprisonment in the penitentiary for three years was pronounced upon him in a voice of assumed sternness.

When the unfortunate man was removed by an officer, the crowd slowly withdrew, conversing in low, subdued voices, and Mr. Acres turned his step homeward, the unhappiest man of all who had stood that day in the presence of offended justice.

And here we must leave the parties most concerned in the events of our brief story—Richard Lawson to fill up the term of his imprisonment in the penitentiary; and Mr. Acres to muse, in painful abstraction, over the ruin his thoughtlessness had wrought—the ruin of an immortal soul—the corruption of a fellow creature, born to become an angel of heaven, but changed by his agency into a fit subject for the abodes of evil spirits in hell.

THE MEANS OF ENJOYMENT.

ONE of the most successful merchants of his day was Mr. Alexander. In trade he had amassed a large fortune, and now, in the sixtieth year of his age, he concluded that it was time to cease getting and begin the work of enjoying. Wealth had always been regarded by him as a means of happiness; but, so fully had his mind been occupied in business, that, until the present time, he had never felt himself at leisure to make a right use of the means in his hands.

So Mr. Alexander retired from business in favour of his son and son-in-law. And now was to come the reward of his long years of labour. Now were to come repose, enjoyment, and the calm delights of which he had so often dreamed. But it so happened, that the current of thought and affection which had flowed on so long and steadily, was little disposed to widen into a placid lake. The retired merchant must yet have some occupation. His had been a life of purposes, and plans for their accomplishment: and he could not change the nature of this life. His heart was still the seat of desire, and his thought obeyed, instinctively, the heart's affection.

So Mr. Alexander used a portion of his wealth in various ways, in order to satisfy the ever-active desire of his heart for something beyond what he had in possession. But, it so happened, that the moment an end was gained—the moment the bright ideal became a fixed and present fact, its power to delight the mind was gone.

Mr. Alexander had some taste for the arts. Many fine pictures already hung upon his walls. Knowing this, a certain picture-broker threw himself in his way, and, by adroit management and skilful flattery, succeeded in turning the pent-up and struggling current of the old gentleman's feelings and thoughts in this direction. The picture-dealer soon found that he had opened a new and profitable mine. Mr. Alexander had only to see a fine work of art to desire its possession; and to desire was to have. It was not long before his house was a gallery of pictures.

Was he any happier? Did these pictures afford him a pure and perennial source of enjoyment? No; for, in reality, Mr. Alexander's taste for the arts was not a passion of his mind. He did not love the beautiful for its own sake. The delight he experienced when he looked upon a fine painting was mainly the desire of possession; and satiety soon followed possession.

One morning Mr. Alexander repaired alone to his library, where, on the day before, had been placed a new painting, recently imported by his friend the picture-dealer. It was exquisite as a work of art, and the biddings for it had been high. But he succeeded in securing it for the sum of two thousand dollars. Before he was certain of getting this picture, Mr. Alexander would linger before it, and study out its beauties with a delighted appreciation. Nothing in his collection was deemed comparable therewith. Strangely enough, after it was hung upon the walls of his library, he did not stand before it for as long a space as five minutes; and then his thoughts were not upon its beauties. During the evening that followed, the mind of Mr. Alexander was less in repose than usual. After

having completed his purchase of the picture, he had overheard two persons, who were considered good judges of art, speaking of its defects, which were minutely indicated. They likewise gave it as their opinion that the painting was not worth a thousand dollars. This was throwing cold water on his enthusiasm. It seemed as if a veil had suddenly been drawn from before his eyes. Now, with a clearer vision, he could see faults, where before every defect was thrown into shadow by an all-obscuring beauty.

On the next morning, as we have said, Mr. Alexander entered his library, to take another look at his purchase. He did not feel very happy. Many thousands of dollars had he spent in order to secure the means of self-gratification; but the end was not yet gained.

A glance at the new picture sufficed, and then Mr. Alexander turned from it with an involuntary sigh. Was it to look at other pictures? No. He crossed his hands behind him, bent his eyes upon the floor, and, for the period of half an hour, walked slowly backwards and forwards in his library. There was a pressure on his feelings—he knew not why; a sense of disappointment and dissatisfaction.

No purpose was in the mind of Mr. Alexander when he turned from his library, and, drawing on his overcoat, passed forth to the street. It was a bleak winter morning, and the muffled passengers hurried shivering on their way.



“OH! I WISH I HAD A DOLLAR.”

“Oh! I wish I had a dollar.”

These words, in the voice of a child, and spoken with impressive earnestness, fell suddenly upon the ears of Mr. Alexander, as he moved along the pavement. Something in the tone reached the old man’s feelings, and he partly turned himself to look at the speaker. She was a little girl, not over eleven years of age, and in company with a lad some year or two older. Both were coarsely clad.

“What would you do with a dollar, sis?” replied the boy.

“I’d buy brother William a pair of nice gloves, and a comforter, and a pair of rubber shoes. That’s what I’d do with it. He has to go away so early, in the cold, every morning; and he’s ‘most perished, I know, sometimes. Last night his feet were soaking with wet. His shoes are not good; and mother says she hasn’t money to buy him a new pair just now. Oh, I wish I had a dollar!”

Instinctively Mr. Alexander’s hand was in his pocket, and a moment after, a round, bright silver dollar glittered in that of the girl.

But little farther did Mr. Alexander extend his walk. As if by magic, the hue of his feelings had changed. The pressure on his heart was gone, and its fuller pulses sent the blood bounding and frolicking along every expanding artery. He thought not of pictures nor possessions. All else was obscured by the bright face of the child, as she lifted to his her innocent eyes, brimming with grateful tears.

One dollar spent unselfishly brought more real pleasure than thousands parted with in the pursuit of merely selfish gratification. And the pleasure did not fade with the hour, nor the day. That one truly benevolent act, impulsive as it had been, touched a sealed spring of

enjoyment, and the waters that gushed instantly forth continued to flow unceasingly.

Homeward the old man returned, and again he entered his library. Choice works of art were all around him, purchased as a means of enjoyment. They had cost thousands,—yet did not afford him a tithe of the pleasure he had secured by the expenditure of a single dollar. He could turn from them with a feeling of satiety; not so from the image of the happy child whose earnestly expressed wish he had gratified.

And not alone on the pleasure of the child did the thoughts of Mr. Alexander linger. There came before his imagination another picture. He saw a poorly furnished room, in which were an humble, toiling widow, and her children. It is keen and frosty without; and her eldest boy has just come home from his work, shivering with cold. While he is warming himself by the fire, his little sister presents him with the comforter, the thick gloves, and the overshoes, which his benevolence had enabled her to buy. What surprise and pleasure beam in the lad's face! How happy looks the sister! How full of a subdued and thankful pleasure is the mother's countenance!

And for weeks and months did Mr. Alexander gaze, at times, upon this picture, and always with a warmth and lightness of heart unfelt when other images arose in his mind and obscured it.

And for a single dollar was all this obtained, while thousands and thousands were spent in the fruitless effort to buy happiness.

Strange as it may seem, Mr. Alexander did not profit by this lesson—grew no wiser by this experience. The love of self was too strong for him to seek the good of others—to bless both himself and his fellows by a wise and generous use of the ample means which Providence had given into his hands. He still buys pictures and works of art, but the picture in his imagination, which cost but a single dollar, is gazed at with a far purer and higher pleasure than he receives from his entire gallery of paintings and statues.

If Mr. Alexander will not drink from the sweet spring of true delight that has gushed forth at his feet, and in whose clear waters the sun of heavenly love is mirrored, we hoped that others, wiser than he, will bend to its overflowing brim, and take of its treasures freely. Some one has beautifully said—“We only possess what we have bestowed.” Something of the meaning of this will be understood by such of our young readers as have perused this story thoughtfully. Benevolent actions ever bring their own reward. Far more happiness is gained in seeking to bless others, than ever comes from efforts to secure merely our own good. God, who is infinitely good and wise, and from whom comes all true happiness, is ever seeking to bless others. If we would truly enjoy life, we must be like Him.

MAN'S JUDGMENT.

“

I WOULDN'T give much for his chance of heaven!" was the remark of a man, whose coarse, well-worn garments contrasted strongly with the dark, rich broadcloth of the person to whom he referred. In the tones of the individual who uttered this sentence was a clearly apparent satisfaction at the thought of his rich neighbour's doubtful chance of admission into heaven. It was on the Sabbath, and both had just passed forth from the sacred edifice, to which each had that morning gone up for the avowed object of worship.

"Why do you say that?" asked the friend to whom the remark was addressed.

"You know the Scriptures," was the confident answer. "How hardly shall they who have riches enter the kingdom of heaven."

"You believe, then, that the mere fact of possessing riches will keep a man out of heaven?"

"No; I wouldn't just like to say that. But, riches harden the heart, and make men unfit for heaven."

"I doubt if riches harden the heart more than poverty," was replied.

"How can you say so?" was warmly objected. "Isn't the promise everywhere to the poor? To whom was the gospel sent?"

"The rich and poor spoken of in the word of God," said the friend, "do not, it is plain, mean simply those in the world who possess natural riches, or who are in natural poverty. Remember, that the Bible is a revelation of heavenly truth, for man's eternal salvation; and that its teachings must have primary regard to what is spiritual, and refer to man's internal state rather than to his mere worldly condition. Remember, that the Lord, while on earth, said, *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, (not the poor in this world's goods,) *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. And we may, without violence to even the letter of the word, conclude that when He speaks of its being hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven, that only the proud in spirit, those who rested self-confident on the riches of their worldly and natural wisdom, were meant. That it would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for such rich men to enter heaven, is plain from our Lord's words when he set a child in the midst of his disciples, and told them that, unless they became as that little child, they could not enter the kingdom of heaven. Not externally and naturally as that child, for that was impossible; but poor in spirit, teachable, and innocent as a child."

The first speaker, whose name was Maxwell, tossed his head, and slightly curled his lip as he replied—

"I believe just what the Bible says. As for your forced meanings, I never go to them. A plain matter-of-fact man, I understand what is written in a plain, matter-of-fact way. The Bible says that they who have riches shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. And I can see how true the saying is. As for Clinton, of whom I spoke just now, I repeat that I wouldn't give much for his chance. It is well that there is a just God in heaven, and that there will come a day of retribution. The Diveses have their good things in this life; but

our turn will come afterwards. We sha'n't be always poor. Lazarus went, a beggar, from the rich man's door, and was received into Abraham's bosom."

"What has made you so bitter against Clinton, just now?" inquired the friend.

"I'm not bitter against him in particular—I speak of rich men as a class. They are all selfish, unfeeling, and oppressive. Look at the good Clinton might do, as a steward of God's bounty, if he chose. He might make our wilderness blossom as the rose. But settlement-day will come, ere long, and then a sorry account of his stewardship will he have to render."

"How do you know that the account will not be approved in heaven?" was asked in a quiet voice.

"Approved? How do I know?" ejaculated Maxwell, impatiently. "Any man can see that he is an unfaithful, hard-hearted, and oppressive steward."

"Has he oppressed you?"

"Yes."

"Ah! I was not aware of that. I didn't know that you had any claims upon him as an almoner of heaven."

"My claims are those of common humanity. But you shall know all, and judge for yourself. I am a poor man"——

"Well"——

"With a wife and four children, whom I love as tenderly as Clinton, or any other purse-proud oppressor of the poor can possibly love his wife and children. They are dependent for daily bread upon my daily labour. With the sweat of my brow, I keep hunger from my door, and cold from entering therein."

"An independent man," said the other.

"Yes, an independent man; as independent as any nabob in the land."

"Do let the nabobs alone," was smilingly answered to this. "If you are independent, why care for them? Why permit yourself to be fretted because others are blessed by Providence with a greater abundance of worldly goods? There is danger, in this thing, of going beyond the nabobs, and arraigning the wisdom of Him who setteth up whom he will, and whose bounty feeds even the young ravens. So go on with your story. What is the crime that Mr. Clinton has committed against you and humanity?"

"I am a poor man, as I said."

"I know you are; a hard-working, industrious, but poor man."

"And as such, entitled to some consideration."

"Entitled to a fair return for your labour, in all cases."

"Of course I am; and to some favour, in the distribution of employment, when I present equal capacity with those who are less needy than myself."

"What do you mean by that?"

“A plain story makes all plain. Well: you are aware that Mr. Clinton is about building a new dam for his mills?”

“I am.”

“And that he asked for proposals?”

“Yes.”

“I tried to get the contract.”

“You!” There was more surprise in this ejaculation than the friend had meant to convey.

“Certainly! Why not?” was petulantly remarked.

“Of course you had a perfect right to do so?”

“Of course I had; and of course my bid, though the lowest, was thrown out, and the bid of Jackson, who manages to monopolize every thing in the village, taken. He and Clinton are leagued together, and the offer for proposals was only a sham.”

“That’s assuming a good deal, friend Maxwell.”

“No, it isn’t. It’s the truth, and nothing else but the truth. He’s the jackal, and Clinton’s the lion.”

“You speak without reflection,” said the friend, mildly.

“I’m not blind. I see how things are worked.”

“You say your bid was lower than Jackson’s? How do you know this? I thought his bid was not publicly known.”

“I knew it; and, in fact, knew what it was to be before I sent in my proposals, and was, therefore, able to go below it. The truth is, I managed, between you and I, to find out just what every man was going to bid, and then struck a mark below them all, to make sure of the job. I wanted a chance, and was determined to have it at all hazards.”

“I hardly think your mode of procedure was fair,” said the friend; “but waiving that, could you have made any thing by the job, at your bidding?”

“Oh, yes, I’d have made something—more, a good deal, than I can make by day’s work. The fact is, I set my heart on that job as a stepping stone to contract work; and am bitterly disappointed at its loss. Much good may it do both Jackson and Clinton. I shouldn’t be much sorry to see the new dam swept away by the next freshet.”

“Why, Maxwell! This is not the spirit of a Christian man. Envy, malice—these are what the Bible condemns in the plainest terms; and for these sins, the poor have quite as much to answer for as the rich—and perhaps more. If you go from church on the Sabbath with no better thoughts than these, I fear you are quite as far from the Kingdom of Heaven as you have supposed Mr. Clinton to be.”

“Good day,” said Maxwell, turning off abruptly from his friend, and taking a path that led by a nearer course than the one in which they were walking, to his home.

A few weeks later, the person with whom Maxwell thus conversed, had occasion to transact some business with Mr. Clinton. He had rendered him a bill for work done, and

called to receive payment.

“You’ve made a mistake in your bill, Mr. Lee,” said Clinton.

“Ah? Are you certain?”

“You can examine for yourself. I find an error of twenty dollars in the additions.”

“Then you only owe me sixty dollars?” said Lee, with a disappointment in his tones that he could not conceal.

“Rather say that I owe you a hundred, for the mistake is in your favour. The first column in the bill adds up fifty, instead of thirty dollars.”

“Let me examine it.” Lee took the bill, and added up the column three times before he felt entirely satisfied. Then he said,

“So it does! Well, I should never have been the wiser if you had only paid me the eighty dollars called for by the bill. You might have retained your advantage with perfect safety.”

Lee said this on the impulse of the moment. He instantly saw a change in Mr. Clinton’s countenance, as if he were slightly offended.

“Oh, no; not with safety,” was gravely replied.

“I never should have found it out.”

“But there is coming a day, with every man, when the secrets of his heart will stand revealed. If not now, it would then appear that I had wronged you out of twenty dollars.”

“True! true! But all men don’t think of this.”

“No one is more fully aware of that than I am. It is for me, however, to live in the present so as not to burden my future with shame and repentance. Knowingly, Mr. Lee, I would not wrong any man out of a single dollar. I may err, and do err, like other men; for, to err is human.”

After the expression of such sentiments, Lee felt curious to know what Mr. Clinton thought of, and how he felt towards Maxwell. So he said, after referring to the new mill-dam in the process of erection—

“You didn’t take the lowest bid for its construction.”

“I took the lowest competent bid.”

“Then you do not think Maxwell competent to do the work?”

“I do not think him a man to be trusted, and, therefore, would not have given him the contract for such a piece of work at any price. You are aware that the giving way of that dam would almost inevitably involve a serious loss of life and property among the poor people who live along the course of the stream below. I must regard their safety before any pecuniary advantage to myself; and have given Mr. Jackson, who has the contract, positive instructions to exceed his estimates, if necessary, in order to put the question of safety beyond a doubt. I know him to be a man whom I can trust. But I have no confidence in Maxwell.”

“A good reason why you declined giving him the job.”

“I think so.”

“Maxwell was greatly disappointed.”

“I know he has spoken very hard against me. But that avails nothing. My principle of action is to do right, and let others think and say what they please. No man is my judge. Maxwell is not, probably, aware that I know him thoroughly, and that I have thrown as much in his way as I could safely do. He is not, of course, aware, that one of my sons overheard him, in reference to this very mill-dam, say—‘I’m bound to have that contract whether or no. I have learned the lowest bid, and have put in a bid still lower.’ ‘How did you learn this?’ was asked of him. ‘No matter,’ he answered, ‘I have learned it.’ ‘You can’t go lower and build the dam safely,’ was said. To which he replied—‘I can build the dam, and make a good profit. As to the safety, I’ll leave that in the hands of Providence. He’ll take care of the poor people below.’ Mr. Lee! I felt an inward shudder when this was repeated to me. I could not have believed the man so void of common honesty and common humanity. Was I not right to withhold from him such a contract?”

“You would have been no better than Maxwell, if you had given it to him,” was answered. “And yet, this same man speaks against the rich, and thinks their chance of heaven a poor one.”

“Simply because they are rich.”

“Or, it might with more truth be said, because they will not yield to his covetous and envious spirit. He is not content with the equivalent society renders back to him for the benefit he confers, but wants to share what of right belongs to others.”

“That spirit I have often seen him manifest,” was replied. “Well, if simple riches are a bar to man’s entrance into heaven, how much more so are discontent, envy, malice, hatred, and a selfish disregard for the rights and well-being of others. The rich have their temptations, and so have the poor, and neither will enter heaven, unless they overcome in temptation, and receive a purified love of their neighbour. This at least is my doctrine.”

“Of the two, I would rather take Clinton’s chance of heaven,” said Lee to himself, as he went musing away, “even if he is a rich man.”

WHAT FIVE DOLLARS PAID.

MR. HERRIOT was sitting in his office, one day, when a lad entered, and handed him a small slip of paper. It was a bill for five dollars, due to his shoemaker, a poor man who lived in the next square.

“Tell Mr. Grant that I will settle this soon. It isn’t just convenient to-day.”

The boy retired.

Now, Mr. Herriot had a five-dollar bill in his pocket; but, he felt as if he couldn’t part with it. He didn’t like to be entirely out of money. So, acting from this impulse, he had sent the boy away. Very still sat Mr. Herriot for the next five minutes; yet his thoughts were busy. He was not altogether satisfied with himself. The shoemaker was a poor man, and needed his money as soon as earned—he was not unadvised of this fact.

“I wish I had sent him the five dollars,” said Mr. Herriot, at length, half-audibly. “He wants it worse than I do.”

He mused still further.

“The fact is,” he at length exclaimed, starting up, “it is Grant’s money, and not mine; and what is more, he shall have it.”

So saying, Herriot took up his hat and left his office.

“Did you get the money, Charles,” said Grant, as his boy entered the shop. There was a good deal of earnestness in the shoemaker’s tones.

“No, sir,” replied the lad.

“Didn’t get the money!”

“No, sir.”

“Wasn’t Mr. Herriot in?”

“Yes, sir; but he said it wasn’t convenient to-day.”

“Oh, dear! I’m sorry!” came from the shoemaker, in a depressed voice.

A woman was sitting in Grant’s shop when the boy came in; she had now risen, and was leaning on the counter; a look of disappointment was in her face.

“It can’t be helped, Mrs. Lee,” said Grant. “I was sure of getting the money from him. He never disappointed me before. Call in to-morrow, and I will try and have it for you.”

The woman looked troubled as well as disappointed. Slowly she turned away and left the shop. A few minutes after her departure, Herriot came in, and, after some words of apology, paid the bill.

“Run and get this note changed into silver for me,” said the shoemaker to his boy, the moment his customer had departed.

“Now,” said he, so soon as the silver was placed in his hands, “take two dollars to Mrs. Lee, and three to Mr. Weaver across the street. Tell Mr. Weaver that I am obliged to him for having loaned me the money this morning, and sorry that I hadn’t as much in the house when he sent for it an hour ago.”

“I wish I had it, Mrs. Elder. But, I assure you that I have not,” said Mr. Weaver, the tailor. “I paid out the last dollar just before you came in. But call in to-morrow, and you shall have the money to a certainty.”

“But what I am to do to-day? I haven’t a cent to bless myself with; and I owe so much at the grocer’s, where I deal, that he won’t trust me for any thing more.”

The tailor looked troubled, and the woman lingered. Just at this moment the shoemaker’s boy entered.

“Here are the three dollars Mr. Grant borrowed of you this morning,” said the lad. “He says he’s sorry he hadn’t the money when you sent for it awhile ago.”

How the faces of the tailor and his needlewoman brightened instantly, as if a gleam of sunshine had penetrated the room.

“Here is just the money I owe you,” said the former, in a cheerful voice, and he handed the woman the three dollars he had received. A moment after and he was alone, but with the glad face of the poor woman, whose need he had been able to supply, distinct before him.

Of the three dollars received by the needlewoman two went to the grocer, on account of her debt to him, half a dollar was paid to an old and needy coloured woman who had earned it by scrubbing, and who was waiting for Mrs. Weaver’s return from the tailor’s to get her due, and thus be able to provide an evening’s and a morning’s meal for herself and children. The other half-dollar was paid to the baker when he called towards evening to leave the accustomed loaf. Thus the poor needlewoman had been able to discharge four debts, and, at the same time re-establish her credit with the grocer and baker, from whom came the largest portion of the food consumed in her little family.



ANOTHER DEBT PAID.

And now let us follow Mrs. Lee. On her arrival at home empty-handed, from her visit to the shoemaker, who owed her two dollars for work, she found a young girl, in whose pale face were many marks of suffering and care, awaiting her return.

The girl's countenance brightened as she came in; but there was no answering brightness in the countenance of Mrs. Lee, who immediately said—

“I'm very sorry, Harriet, but Mr. Grant put me off until to-morrow. He said he hadn't a dollar in the house.”

The girl's disappointment was very great, for the smile she had forced into life instantly faded, and was succeeded by a look of deep distress.

“Do you want the money very badly?” asked Mrs. Lee, in a low, half-choked voice, for the sudden change in the girl's manner had affected her.

“Oh, yes, ma'am, very badly. I left Mary wrapped up in my thick shawl, and a blanket wound all around her feet to keep them warm; but she was coughing dreadfully from the cold air of the room.”

“Haven't you a fire?” asked Mrs. Lee, in a quick, surprised tone.

“We have no coal. It was to buy coal that I wanted the money.”

Mrs. Lee struck her hands together, and an expression of pain was about passing her lips, when the door of the room opened, and the shoemaker's boy came in.

“Here are two dollars. Mr. Grant sent them.”

“God bless Mr. Grant!” The exclamation from Mrs. Lee was involuntary.

On the part of Harriet, to whom one dollar was due, a gush of silent tears marked the

effect this timely supply of money produced. She received her portion, and, without trusting her voice with words, hurried away to supply the pressing want at home.

A few doors from the residence of Mrs. Lee lived a man who, some months before, had become involved in trouble with an evil-disposed person, and been forced to defend himself by means of the law. He had employed Mr. Herriot to do what was requisite in the case, for which service the charge was five dollars. The bill had been rendered a few days before, and the man, who was poor, felt very anxious to pay it. He had the money all made up to within a dollar. That dollar Mrs. Lee owed him, and she had promised to give it to him during this day. For hours he had waited, expecting her to come in; but now had nearly given her up. There was another little bill of three dollars which had been sent in to him, and he had just concluded to go and pay that, when Mrs. Lee called with the balance of the money, one dollar, which she had received from the shoemaker, Grant.

Half an hour later, and the pocket-book of Mr. Herriot was no longer empty. His client had called and paid his bill. The five dollars had come back to him.

LOOK AT T'OTHER SIDE.

“

I DON'T like Mr. Monto at all,” said Mr. Jones.

“Nor I,” replied Mrs. Mayberry.

“Take him for better or worse,” added Mr. Lee, “and I think he is the strangest and most inconsistent man I ever saw.”

“Inconsistent!” resumed Mr. Jones. “He is worse than inconsistent. Inconsistencies may be pardoned, as constitutional defects and peculiarities of character. But he is worse than inconsistent, as I said.”

“Yes, that he is,” chimed in Mrs. Mayberry. “What do you think I heard of him last week?”

“What?” said Mr. Jones.

“Yes, what did you hear?” asked Mrs. Lee.

“You know Mr. Barker?”

“Yes.”

“There isn't a more gentlemanly man living than Mr. Barker.”

“Well, what of him?”

“He was in Mr. Monto's store one day last week, and happened to say something the little man did not like, when he fired up and insulted him most grossly.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes. Mr. Barker told me himself. He said he was never more hurt in his life.”

“He left the store, of course.”

“Oh, yes. He turned on his heel and walked out, and says he will never darken the door of Monto's store again.”

“It is too bad, this habit of insulting people which Monto has. I know several persons who are hot as fire against him.”

“If there were nothing worse about him than that,” said Mr. Jones, “I would be glad. His conduct towards the young man he raised was unpardonable.”

“What was that? I never heard about it,” remarked Mr. Lee.

“He had a young man whom he had raised from a lad, and who, it is said, was always faithful to his interests. Toward the last he became wild, having fallen into bad company. If Monto had been patient and forbearing toward him, the young man might have been reclaimed from his error; but his irascibility and impatience with every thing that did not go by square and rule, caused him to deal harshly with faults that needed a milder corrective. The young man, of course, grew worse. At last he got himself into a difficulty,

and was arrested. Bail was demanded for his appearance to stand a trial for misconduct and breach of law. Monto was sent for to go his bail; but he heartlessly refused, and the poor fellow was thrown into prison, where he lay four months, and was then, after a trial, dismissed with a reprimand from the court. Feeling himself disgraced by confinement in a jail, he enlisted in the army as soon as he got free, and has gone off to the Indian country in the West. Isn't it melancholy? The ruin of that young man lies at Monto's door. His blood is on the skirts of his garments!"

"Dreadful to think of! Isn't it?" said Mrs. Mayberry. "Just imagine my son or your son thus cruelly dealt by! A fiend in human shape couldn't have done more!"

"It'll come back upon him one of these days. I believe in retribution. No man can do such things with impunity," added Mr. Lee. "Mark my words for it—Monto will repent of this, as well as a good many other acts of his life, before he dies."

"He's the meanest man I ever saw," said Mr. Jones. "I don't believe he ever gave a dollar for charitable purposes in his life."

"You may possibly err, there," remarked a fourth in the company, who had not before spoken.

"I should like to see the man, Mr. Berry, who can point to a benevolent act of Monto's," returned Mr. Jones in a decided voice.

"Perhaps," said Mr. Berry, "if we were as willing to look at the other side of men's characters, we should not entertain the poor opinion of them we do. If we were to look as closely at the good as we do at the bad, we might find, perhaps, as much to praise as we do to blame. When I was a boy, I had a penny given to me, and was about buying a large, seemingly fine apple, when my brother said in a warning voice, 'Look at t'other side.' I did look, and found it rotten. When I became a man, I remembered the lesson, and determined that I would not be deceived by fair appearances of character, but would be careful to look at t'other side for blemishes. I saw enough of these, even in the best, to sicken me with mankind. A few years passed, and I was glad to change my habit of observation. I began to look at the other and brighter side. The result surprised and pleased me. I found more good in men than I had supposed. Even in the worst there were some redeeming qualities."

"You will find few in Monto," said Mr. Lee.

"Do you see that man on the other side of the street?" asked Mr. Berry.

"Who? Miller?"

"Yes; that's the one I mean. I'll call him over, if you have no objection, and ask him a question or two. I think he can say something bearing on the subject of our present discourse."

The man was called, and he came over and entered the store of Mr. Jones, where the conversation happened to occur.

"Good morning, Miller! How are you to-day?" said Mr. Berry.

"Good morning! You've quite a party here. All friends, I see."

“We seem to have met by one of those happy accidents that sometimes occur. How are you getting along now, Miller? You’ve been through some pretty tight places, I believe.”

“Yes; and, thanks to a good Providence! I am through them with a whole skin.”

“Cause for congratulation, certainly. We meet with some hard rubs in our journey through life.”

“Indeed we do. Adverse circumstances try us severely, and try our friends also. It has been so in my case. I thought I had a good many friends, until trouble came; but, as you know, there were few to stand by me when I most needed support.”

“But you met with friends?”

“Yes, friends in need, who are friends indeed.”

“And they were among those who had made no professions, and upon whom you did not feel that you had any claims?”

“Exactly so. This was particularly the case in one instance. Through losses, mistakes, and from errors on account of which I do not attempt to excuse myself, my business became embarrassed. What little real estate I had was thrown into market and sacrificed, but this did not meet my necessities. In the hope of weathering the storm, I removed from the handsome store I occupied into one at half the rent, reduced all expenses both in my business and family, but still I was not able, without the most untiring exertions, to meet my payments. More than half my time I was on the street, engaged in temporary expedients to raise money. I was harassed to death, and in daily dread of failure. In this unhappy posture of my affairs, I tried to get some permanent assistance from friends who were able enough to afford it, and who knew me well. But they were all afraid to risk any thing.

“One day I had been out from nine o’clock until two, using my best efforts to obtain sufficient money to meet my notes. I had a thousand dollars to pay, and could only thus far raise five hundred. Everywhere that I could think of going I went, but no one would help me through my difficulty. Dispirited and alarmed at the perilous position of my affairs, I returned to my store, in order to sit down and reflect for a few minutes. I thought over all my business acquaintance, but there were none upon whom I had not already called, that I felt free to ask for the loan of money. Things seemed desperate. Something must be done, or I would be ruined. Already the finger of time was past the mark of two. In less than an hour my paper would be dishonoured, unless I could in some way command the sum of five hundred dollars. I thought, and thought, until I felt stupid. At last a man whom I had never liked much came up before my mind. I had some little acquaintance with him, and knew, or supposed, that he had money. The idea of going to him I would not at first entertain. But things were desperate. At last I started up, determined to see this man.

“‘He can but refuse me,’ I murmured to myself.

“‘It is past two o’clock,’ said I abruptly, as I met him standing at his counter, ‘and I am still five hundred dollars short. Can you lend me that sum for a few days?’

“I expected him to say ‘no.’ What was my surprise then to hear him reply—

“‘I can, and with pleasure.’

“I could hardly believe my ears. But by the assistance of my eyes, when he put a check for the amount I had asked for into my hands, I was fully assured that he was in earnest. I don’t know that I ever stopped to thank him, so overjoyed was I at such unexpected and cheerfully tendered relief. Three or four days afterward I took him the money he had loaned me.

“‘Keep it longer, if you desire to do so. I have no present use for it,’ said he.

“I hardly knew whether to take him at his word or not. But necessity is an eloquent pleader.

“‘If you can spare it as well as not, it will be an accommodation. My payments are heavy in the next ten days,’ I replied.

“‘Retain the use of it and welcome,’ said he kindly. After a pause, he inquired how I was getting along, and did it with so much sincerity that I was tempted to state frankly the position of my affairs, and did so. He listened with a good deal of interest, and afterward asked many questions as to the nature and profits of my business. I concealed nothing from him in favour or against myself as a business-man.

“‘You must be sustained, Mr. Miller,’ said he. ‘I have a few thousand dollars uninvested, that I will keep free for six months or so. As far as you need assistance in meeting your payments, I will afford it. Pay no more exorbitant interests; waste no more time in running about after money; but put all your thoughts and energies down to your business, and twelve months from to-day will see you freed from embarrassment.’

“And he was right.”

“He was certainly a noble fellow,” said Mr. Jones. “Pity there were not more like him!”

“That it is,” remarked Mrs. Mayberry.

“He belongs to another grade of beings than your Montos.”

“Who?” Miller spoke quickly.

“We were talking of Monto when I called you,” said Mr. Berry. “Our friends have a very poor opinion of him.”

“Of Mr. Monto? Why, it is of him that I just now spoke.”

“Of Monto!” ejaculated Lee.

“Certainly. He it was who so generously befriended me.”

“Impossible!” ejaculated Mrs. Mayberry.

“Not at all, for it is true. I never was more mistaken in any one in my life than in Mr. Monto. He has his faults and defects of character, as all men have. He is irascible and impatient, and makes in consequence a great many enemies.”

“He was certainly kind to you, Mr. Miller,” said Mrs. Mayberry. “But still, I don’t believe in him. Look at the way he treated that poor young man whom he raised from a boy. That stamps his character. That shows him to be cruel and vindictive.”

“There is another side to that story, without doubt,” remarked Mr. Berry.

“That there is,” said Miller; “and suppose we look at it. Monto knew that young man much better than you or I, or any of us. He had borne with his irregular habits and evil conduct for years, as well as a man of his peculiar temperament could bear with them.”

“A precious kind of forbearance it was, no doubt. It isn’t in him to bear with any one,” broke in Mr. Jones.

“Will you censure a man for what he can’t help?” asked Mr. Miller.

“I don’t know that we should,” was replied.

“It is clear that we ought not; for to do so would be for us to ask of him an impossibility, and censure him for not performing it. Mr. Monto is a man, as we all know, of exceedingly impatient temper. Keep that in view. He takes this boy when quite young, and educates him as well as teaches him his business. Before he is of age he abuses the confidence reposed in him by his benefactor, neglects his business, associates with vicious companions, and purloins his money. Still Monto bears with him, in the hope that he will change. But he grows worse and worse; and at length, after a long series of peculations at home, gets into a difficulty, and is sent to jail to await the judgment of the law in his case. I happened to be in Mr. Monto’s store when he was sent for to bail the young man out.

“‘No,’ he said firmly to the messenger, ‘he is much better in prison than out.’

“The man went away, and Monto, turning to me, said—

“‘That, Mr. Miller, is the most painful thing I have done in my whole life. But to have acted otherwise would have been wrong. Kind admonition, stern reproof, angry expostulation, all have failed with this young man, in whom I cannot help feeling a strong interest. I will now leave him to the consequences of his own acts, and to the, I hope, salutary results of his own reflections. If these fail to reform him, there is no hope.’ This was the spirit in which it was done. He did not attend court when the trial came on, but he had a messenger there, who kept him constantly advised of the proceedings. The acquittal gave him great pleasure, and he expected the young man would return to him, changed and penitent. He was, alas! grievously mistaken. The enlistment hurt him exceedingly. I could perceive that his voice was unsteady when he spoke of it. If he erred in his conduct, it was an error of judgment. He meant to do good. But I do not believe he erred. In my opinion, the young man is fit only for the grade he now occupies, and he is better off where he is.”

“There is good in every one,” said Mr. Berry, when Miller ceased speaking; “and we will find it, if we look at the other side.”

“No truer word than that was ever spoken,” returned Mr. Miller. “Yes, there is good in every one; and more good than evil in Monto, you may all be assured.”

The censurers of Monto approved the words by a marked and half-mortified silence.

Yes, there is good in every one; there is another side. Let us look for this good rather than for what is evil, and we will think better of mankind than we are now disposed to do.



THIN SHOES.

THIN SHOES.

“

WHY, Lizzy, dear!” exclaimed Uncle Thomas, to his pretty niece, Miss Walton, as she stepped upon the pavement from her mother’s dwelling, one morning in midwinter—“You are not going in this trim?”

“In what trim?” said Lizzy, glancing first at her gloves, then upon her dress, and then placing her hand upon her neck and bosom to feel if all was right there. “Is any thing wrong with my dress, uncle?”

“Just look at your feet.”

“At my feet!” And Lizzy’s eyes fell to the ground. “I don’t see any thing the matter with them.”

“Why, child, you have nothing on your feet but paper-soled French lasting boots.”

“They have thick soles, uncle.”

“Thick! If you call them thick, you will have to find a new term for thinness. Go right back, and put on your leather boots.”

“Leather boots!” Lizzy’s voice and countenance showed an undisguised amazement.

“Yes, leather boots. You certainly wouldn’t think of going out on a day like this without having your feet well protected with leather boots.”

“Leather boots! Why, Uncle Thomas!”—and the musical laugh of Miss Walton echoed on the air—“who ever heard of such a thing?”

Uncle Thomas glanced involuntarily down at his own thick, double-soled, calfskin understandings.

“Boots like them!” exclaimed the merry girl, laughing again.

“But come along, my good uncle,” she added more seriously, drawing her arm within his, and attempting to move away. “We’ll have all the neighbourhood staring at us. You can’t be in earnest, I’m sure, about my wearing clumsy leather boots. Nancy, the Irish cook, has a pair; but I”——

“And pray, Lizzy,” returned the old gentleman, as he yielded to the impulse given him by his niece, and moved down the street beside her—“are you so much heartier than Nancy, so much stouter and stronger, that you can bear exposure to damp and even wet pavements, in thin shoes, while she will not venture out unless with feet well protected by leather boots?”

“My shoes are not thin, uncle,” persisted Lizzy. “They have thick soles.”

“Not thin! Thick soles! Look at mine.”

Lizzy laughed aloud, as she glanced down at her uncle’s heavy boots, at the thought of having her delicate feet encased in leather.

“Look at mine!” repeated Uncle Thomas. “And am I so much more delicate than you are?”

But Miss Walton replied to all this serious remonstrance of her uncle (who was on a visit from a neighbouring town) with laughing evasion.

A week of very severe weather had filled the gutters and blocked the crossings with ice. To this had succeeded rain, but not of long enough continuance to free the streets from their icy encumbrance. A clear, warm day for the season followed; and it was on this day that Miss Walton and her uncle went out for the purpose of calling on a friend or two, and then visiting the Art-Union Gallery.

Uncle Thomas Walton was the brother of Lizzy’s father. The latter died some few years before, of pulmonary consumption. Lizzy, both in appearance and bodily constitution, resembled her father. She was now in her nineteenth year, her veins full of young life, and her spirits as buoyant as the opening spring. It was just four years since the last visit of Uncle Thomas to the city—four years since he had looked upon the fair face of his beautiful niece. Greatly had she changed in that time. When last he kissed her blushing cheek, she was a half-grown school-girl—now she burst upon him a lovely and accomplished young woman.

But Uncle Thomas did not fail to observe in his niece certain signs, that he understood too well as indications of a frail and susceptible constitution. Two lovely sisters, who had grown up by his side, their charms expanding like summer’s sweetest flowers, had, all at once, drooped, faded, withered, and died. Long years had they been at rest; but their memory was still green in his heart. When he looked upon the pure face of his niece, it seemed to Uncle Thomas as if a long-lost sister were restored to him in the freshness and beauty of her young and happy life ere the breath of the destroyer was upon her. No wonder that he felt concern when he thought of the past. No wonder that he made remonstrance against her exposure, in thin shoes, to cold and damp pavements. But Lizzy had no fear. She understood not how fatal a predisposition lurked in her bosom.

The calls were made; the Art-Union Gallery visited, and then Uncle Thomas and his niece returned home. But the enjoyment of the former had only been partial; for he could think of little else, and see little else, besides Lizzy’s thin shoes and the damp pavements.

The difficulty of crossing the streets, without stepping into the water, was very great; and, in spite of every precaution, Lizzy’s feet dipped several times into little pools of ice-water, that instantly penetrated the light materials of which her shoes were made. In consequence, she had a slight hoarseness by the time she reached home, and Uncle Thomas noticed that the colour on her cheeks was very much heightened.

“Now go and change your shoes and stockings, immediately,” said he, as soon as they entered the house. “Your feet must be thoroughly saturated.”

“Oh no, indeed they are not,” replied Lizzy. “At the most, they are only a little damp.”

“A little damp!” said the old gentleman, seriously. “The grass waves over many a fair young girl, who, but for damp feet, would now be a source of joy to her friends.”

“Why, uncle, how strangely you talk!” exclaimed Lizzy, becoming a little serious in turn. Just then Mrs. Walton came in.

“Do, sister,” said the old gentleman, “see that this thoughtless girl of yours changes her wet stockings and shoes immediately. She smiles at my concern.”

“Why, Lizzy dear,” interposed Mrs. Walton, “how can you be so imprudent! Go and put on dry stockings at once.”

Lizzy obeyed, and as she left the room, her uncle said—

“How can you permit that girl to go upon the street, in midwinter, with shoes almost as thin as paper.”

“Her shoes have thick soles,” replied Mrs. Walton. “You certainly don’t think that I would let her wear thin shoes on a day like this.”

Uncle Thomas was confounded. Thick shoes! French lasting, and soles of the thickness of half-a-dollar!

“She ought to have leather boots, sister,” said the old gentleman earnestly. “Stout leather boots. Nothing less can be called a protection for the feet in damp, wintry weather.”

“Leather boots!”

Mrs. Walton seemed little less surprised than her daughter had been at the same suggestion.

“It is a damp, cold day,” said Uncle Thomas.

“True, but Lizzy was warmly clad. I am very particular on this point, knowing the delicacy of her constitution. She never goes out in winter-time without her furs.”

“Furs for the neck and hands, and lasting shoes and thin cotton stockings for the feet!”

“Thick-soled boots,” said Mrs. Walton, quickly.

“There are thick-soled boots.”

And the old gentleman thrust out both of his feet, well clad in heavy calfskin.

Mrs. Walton could not keep from laughing, as the image of her daughter’s feet, thus encased, presented itself to her mind.

“Perhaps,” said Uncle Thomas, just a little captiously, “Lizzy has a stronger constitution than I have, and can bear a great deal more. For my part, I would almost as lief take a small dose of poison as go out, on a day like this, with nothing on my feet but thin cotton stockings and lasting shoes.”

“Boots,” interposed Mrs. Walton.

“I call them boots,” said the old gentleman, glancing down again at his stout double-soled calfskins.

But it was of no avail that Uncle Thomas entered his protest against thin shoes, when, in the estimation of city ladies, they were “thick.” And so, in due time, he saw his error and gave up the argument.

When Lizzy came down from her room, her colour was still high—much higher than usual, and her voice, as she spoke, was a very little veiled. But she was in fine spirits, and

talked away merrily. Uncle Thomas did not, however, fail to observe that every little while she cleared her throat with a low *h-h-em*; and he knew that this was occasioned by an increased secretion of mucus by the lining membrane of the throat, consequent upon slight inflammation. The cause he attributed to thin shoes and wet feet; and he was not far wrong. The warm boa and muff were not sufficient safeguards for the throat when the feet were exposed to cold and wet.

That evening, at tea-time, Mr. Walton observed that Lizzy eat scarcely any thing, and that her face was a little pale. He also noted an expression that indicated either mental or bodily suffering—not severe, but enough to make itself visible.

“Are you not well?” he asked.

“Oh yes, very well,” was the quick reply.

“You are fatigued, then?”

“A little.”

“Go early to bed. A night’s sleep will restore all.”

Mr. Walton said this, rather because he hoped than believed that it would be so.

“Oh yes. A night’s rest is all I want,” replied Lizzy.

But she erred in this.

“Where is Lizzy?” asked Mr. Walton, on meeting his sister-in-law at the breakfast-table on the next morning. The face of the latter wore a sober expression.

“Not very well, I am sorry to say,” was the answer.

“What ails her?”

“She has taken a bad cold; I hardly know how—perhaps from getting her feet wet yesterday; and is so hoarse this morning that she can scarcely speak above a whisper.”

“I feared as much,” was the old gentleman’s reply. “Have you sent for your doctor?”

“Not yet.”

“Then do so immediately. A constitution like her’s will not bear the shock of a bad cold, unless it is met instantly by appropriate remedies.”

In due time the family physician came. He looked serious when he saw the condition of his patient.

“To what are you indebted for this?” he asked.

“To thin shoes,” was the prompt reply of the uncle, who was present.

“I have warned you against this more than once,” said the doctor, in a tone of gentle reproof.

“Oh, no; brother is mistaken,” spoke up Mrs. Walton. “She wore thick-soled shoes. But the streets, as you know, were very wet yesterday, and it was impossible to keep the feet dry.”

“If she had worn good, stout, sensible leather boots, as she ought to have done, the water

would never have touched her feet,” said Mr. Walton.

“You had on your gums?” remarked the physician, turning to Lizzy.

“They are so clumsy and unsightly—I never like to wear them,” answered the patient, in a husky whisper, and then she coughed hoarsely.

The doctor made no reply to this, but looked more serious.

Medicine was prescribed and taken; and, for two weeks, the physician was in daily attendance. The inflammation first attacked Lizzy’s throat—descended and lingered along the bronchial tubes, and finally fixed itself upon her lungs. From this dangerous place it was not dislodged, as an acute disease, until certain constitutional predispositions had been aroused into activity. In fact, the latent seeds of that fatal disease, known as consumption, were at this time vivified. Dormant they might have lain for years—perhaps through life—if all exciting causes had been shunned. Alas! the principle of vitality was now awakened.

Slowly, very slowly, did strength return to the body of Miss Walton. Not until the spring opened was she permitted to go forth into the open air. Then her pale cheek, and slow, feeble steps, showed too plainly the fearful shock her system had received.

A week or two after his remonstrance with his niece about her thin shoes, Mr. Walton returned home. Several letters received by him during the winter advised him of the state of Lizzy’s health. In the spring her mother wrote to him—

“Lizzy is much better. The warm weather, I trust, will completely restore her.”

But the old gentleman knew better. He had been a deeply interested party in a case like her’s before. He *knew* that summer, with its warm and fragrant airs, would not bring back the bloom to her cheeks. In July came another epistle.

“The hot weather is so debilitating for Lizzy, that I am about taking her to the sea-shore.”

Uncle Thomas sighed as he read this, permitted the letter to droop from before his eyes, and sat for some time gazing upon vacancy. Far back his thoughts had wandered, and before the eyes of his mind was the frail, fading form of a beloved sister, who had, years before, left her place and her mission upon the earth, and passed up higher.

“The doctor says that I must go South with Lizzy,” wrote Mrs. Walton early in December, “and spend the winter. We leave for Charleston next Tuesday, and may pass over to Havana.”

Uncle Thomas sighed as before, and then became lost in a sad reverie. He had been to Havana with both of his sisters. The warm South had been of use to them. It prolonged, but did not save their lives.

And so the months passed on—the seasons came and went—but health, alas! returned not to the veins of the lovely girl.

It was an autumn day, nearly two years after that fatal cold, taken in consequence of wearing thin shoes, that Mr. Walton received a letter sealed with a black seal.

“As I feared,” he murmured, in a low, sad voice, gazing half-abstractedly upon the missive. He knew too well its contents. “Dear child! I saw this from the beginning.”

And the old man's eyes became dim with moisture.

He had not erred in his conjecture. Lizzy Walton was dead.

THE UNRULY MEMBER.

“

IN TROUBLE again, I find! Ah, Flora! That restless little tongue of yours is a sad transgressor. Why will you not learn to be more careful? Why do you not place a guard upon your lips, as well as upon your actions?”

“So I do, aunt, when I think myself in the company of tattlers and mischief-makers.”

“I do not think Mary Lee either a tattler or a mischief-maker,” replied the aunt gravely.

“Then why did she run off to Ellen Gray, and tell her what I had said?”

“She might have done so from far different motives than those you are inclined to attribute to her,” said Mrs. Marion, the aunt of Flora Mere. “And from my knowledge of her character, I feel very sure that her conduct in this has been governed by a strict regard to right principles.”

“But what possible end could she have had in view in repeating to Ellen my thoughtlessly spoken words? It could do her no good.”

“There she is at the door now,” Mrs. Marion replied, glancing out of the window. “We will ask the question direct, as soon as Betty has admitted her.”

The blood mounted to Flora’s cheeks as her aunt said this, and her own eyes caught a glimpse of the young lady whose conduct she had been so strongly condemning. The aunt and her niece sat silent until Mary Lee entered.

Here we will take the opportunity to mention the cause of the unpleasant state of affairs between Flora and her young friend. On the day before, while in company with Mary Lee, and one or two other of her acquaintances, she very thoughtlessly and not exactly in the right spirit, repeated some remarks she had heard about Ellen Gray that reflected upon her rather unfavourably. Mary Lee at once attempted to vindicate her friend, but Flora maintained that the allegations were certainly true, for she had them from an undoubted source. Mary asked that source, but she declined mentioning it, on the ground that she did not wish to violate the confidence reposed in her by the individual who related the facts she had repeated.

“It would, perhaps, be better not to mention any thing of this kind,” said Mary Lee, “unless the author be given, and full liberty, at the same time, to make the most free inquiries as to the truth of what is alleged.”

“And get up to your ears in hot water,” returned Flora, tossing her head.

“Even that would be better than to let any one suffer from an untrue statement.”

“Ah! But suppose it should be true?”

“Let the guilt rest upon the right head—where it ought to rest. But save the innocent from unjust allegations. That is my doctrine.”

“A very good doctrine, no doubt,” Flora returned; “if you can act it out.”

Here the subject was dropped. On the next morning, Mary Lee called in to see her young friend Ellen Gray. After conversing for a short time she said—

“I heard, yesterday, Ellen, that at Mrs. Harvey’s party, you acted towards Mr. Evelyn with much discourtesy of manner, besides actually telling an untruth.”

“I am unconscious of having done either the one or the other of these,” Ellen replied, in a quiet tone.

“I believed you innocent,” said Mary, with a brightening countenance. “But what ground is there for the idle, ill-natured gossip that has got on the wind?”

“Not much, if any. I declined dancing with Evelyn, as I had a perfect right to do.”

“Did you tell him you were engaged for the next cotillion?”

“No, certainly not, for I had no engagement then.”

“It is said that when he asked you to dance, you excused yourself on the plea that you were already engaged.”

“Who says this?”

“Flora Mere.”

“How does she know?”

“That I cannot tell. She declined giving her authority.”

“Then, of course, I must believe her the author of the fabrication.”

“No—that does not certainly follow. I do not believe Flora would be guilty of such a thing. But, like too many, she is ready to believe another capable of doing almost any thing that may happen to be alleged. And like the same class of persons, too ready to repeat what she has heard, no matter how injuriously it may affect the subject of the allegation—while a false principle of honour prevents the open declaration of the source from which the information has been derived.”

“Be that as it may, I shall see Flora Mere at once, and ask her for the authority upon which the statement rests.”

“It was to give you an opportunity of doing this, that I have come and freely told what I heard.”

“Thank you, Mary. I wish all the world were as frank and as conscientious as you are. I shall, of course, mention from whom I derived my information.”

“You are at perfect liberty to do so. I try never to say or do any thing that requires concealment.”

It was, perhaps, an hour afterward, that Flora Mere was surprised by a visit from Ellen Gray. She had an instinctive consciousness of the cause of this visit, which made the blood mount to her face, as she took the hand of her friend. She was not long in doubt.

“Flora,” said Ellen, a few minutes after she had entered. “Mary Lee came in to see me this morning, and mentioned that you had made statements about me which are not true—as that I refused to dance with Mr. Evelyn under the plea of a prior engagement, when, in

fact, no such engagement existed.”

“I think Mary Lee had very little to do!” Flora returned petulantly, the colour deepening on her face and brow, “to tattle about what she hears in company.”

“But reflect,” said Ellen, mildly, “that the charge against me was one of falsehood—no light charge—and that Mary had every reason to believe me incapable of uttering what was not true. And further, remember, that you declined giving your informant, so as to place it in her power to ascertain upon what basis the statement rested. Reverse the case. Suppose I had heard that you had done some wrong act; and, instead of carefully satisfying myself whether it were really so or not, were to begin circulating the story wherever I went. Would you not deem her a true friend, who, instead of joining in the general condemnation, were to come to you and put into your power to vindicate your character? Certainly you would. Just in the relation which that true friend would, under the imagined circumstances, stand to you, now stands Mary Lee to me. She has put into my power to arrest a report which I find is circulating to my injury. It is true that I declined dancing with Mr. Evelyn. But it is not true that I stated to him that I was engaged. I was not engaged, and to have said that I was, would have been to have told a deliberate falsehood. May I, then, ask you from what source you derived your information?”

Flora cast her eyes upon the floor, and sat silent for some time. Her pride struggled hard with her sense of justice. At length she said, looking up, and breathing heavily—

“I would rather not mention my informant, Ellen. It will only make difficulty. You will go to her, and then there will be trouble. I think you had better let the matter rest where it is. I do not, now, believe what I heard. The person who told me, was, no doubt, mistaken.”

“But, Flora, that would not be right. You have already repeated what you heard so publicly, that it is possible at least fifty persons now believe me guilty of having spoken an untruth. You should have reflected beforehand. Now it is too late to let the matter drop. My character is at stake, and I am bound to vindicate it. This I shall have to do in such a manner as to fully clear myself from the charge. The consequence will be, as you may at once perceive, that upon you will rest the burden of having originated a false charge against me. Then, if not now, you will feel it your duty to give the name of your friend. This, you had much better do at once. No doubt she has been led into a mistake by a too hasty judgment of my acts, but half understood. She may have observed Mr. Evelyn ask me to dance, and have naturally inferred that I declined on the ground of a previous engagement. This being in her mind, she may have too hastily concluded, when she soon afterwards saw me accept another offer, that I had not spoken the truth at the time I refused to dance with Evelyn. All this can easily be explained, and the matter put to rest.”

Flora hesitated for a short time, and then said—

“It was Araminta Thomas who told me.”

“Thank you for this information. Will you now go with me to see Araminta?”

“I would rather not,” Flora returned.

“I think it would be better for you to do so, Flora,” urged Ellen. But she could not be persuaded.

“I must then go alone,” said Ellen, rising and bidding Flora good morning.

In a little while she was at the house of Araminta Thomas. Ellen entered at once upon the business of her visit, by stating what she had heard. Araminta looked confused, but denied saying that Ellen had actually told Evelyn she was engaged for the next cotillion.

“Then what did you say?” mildly asked Ellen.

“I said,” replied Araminta, “that I saw you decline Evelyn’s offer for your hand.”

“But did not say that I told him I was engaged?”

“*Not positively*; I only *inferred*, as was natural, that you declined on that ground.”

“Was your communication to Flora mere inferential?”

“It was.”

“But she says you told her that you heard me say I was engaged.”

“In that she is mistaken. I inferred that your refusal to dance was for the reason stated. But I did not *know* that it was, and, therefore only gave my own impression.”

“Which Flora has taken for the truth, and so repeated.”

“On my authority?”

“Yes. After having been pressed by me very closely.”

“In that she was wrong. But I suppose I was as wrong in giving an impression which might not be a true one, as she has been in giving my impressions as actual facts, and making me responsible for them. But will you, as matters have taken this serious and unexpected turn, give me the exact truth. I will then, so far as in my power lies, endeavour to correct what I have done.”

“Most cheerfully. You know as well as I do, that Evelyn has not acted in some things with that honour and integrity that becomes a gentleman?”

“I do.”

“It was on this ground that I declined. He asked me if I was engaged in the next set? I said no. He then proffered his hand, which I declined. In a little while after, and while sitting beside you, a gentleman wished to have me as a partner. I accepted his invitation. This is the simple truth.”

“And so it seems,” said Araminta with a sober face, “that while you were rebuking vice, and standing up with dignified, virtuous firmness in the cause of our sex, I was misjudging you. And not only that, was so far influenced by an improper spirit as to impart to others my wrong impressions to your injury. Alas! poor, weak human nature! I feel rebuked and humbled. More for what I thought than for what I said, for out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts. If I had not had something wrong here, I would not have been so ready to misjudge you. But all that I can do to repair the wrong, I am ready to do.”

“All I ask is, that you correct Flora, and take some little care, that, where she has imparted a wrong impression, the true one is given in its place.”

“That I will do with all my heart,” Araminta replied. “I will see Flora this very hour.”

“Do so, and you shall have not only my thanks, but my esteem and love. We are all liable to do wrong. But to confess and repair the wrong we have done, as far as we can, is noble. In so doing, power is given us to conquer in all the temptations that may assail us.”

As soon as Ellen had retired, Araminta went out and called upon Flora. She found her troubled and mortified at the turn matters had taken. She tried to excuse herself for what she had done, and insisted, at first, that Araminta had actually stated all she had said of Ellen Gray’s conduct. But this point she soon had to give up. Araminta was too positive, and her own memory a little too clear on the subject. In fact, when the whole truth came fully to the light, it was very apparent, that if there were any falsehood in the matter, she was the most guilty. Certain it was, that Ellen Gray was innocent, in every particular, of the charge that had been made against her.

Mrs. Marion knew nothing of all this, until the day after Ellen Gray had called upon Flora. Then her niece, whose troubled looks had not escaped her notice, gave a relation of what had occurred. It was in reply to this that the opening remarks of our story were made. When Mary Lee came in, as the reader has seen, Flora received her coldly. Mrs. Marion, on the contrary, welcomed her with genuine cordiality.

“I am glad to see you, Mary,” she said—“and particularly at this time. It seems there has been a misunderstanding among you young ladies, and that Flora is not altogether pleased with the part you have taken.”

“It is to see her in regard to that very matter that I am here this morning,” Mary said. “I know she blames me for having told Ellen Lee what I did. But in that I acted conscientiously. I did to another as I would have another do to me. I acted towards Ellen as I would act towards Flora, were I to hear any one making statements that were calculated to injure her. The result, I think, should satisfy Flora that I was right in doing what I have done. Ellen, it now appears, was entirely innocent of the charge made against her—as I knew she must be. Araminta Thomas, to whom the report has been traced, regrets extremely, that upon her hasty inferences, so serious a matter has grown up. She acknowledged that she only *inferred* that Ellen told an untruth. Flora took this inference for a direct assertion, and thence came the charge of falsehood against Ellen Gray. Has not, then, the result proved that the course I took was the only right one? Does it not show that I would have been guilty of a great wrong, if, to save the feelings of any one, I had left an innocent person to bear the imputation of wrong?”

“It certainly does, Mary. And Flora cannot but see it in the same light.”

“And she will, surely, forgive me the pain I have occasioned her,” resumed Mary, “seeing that I had no selfish end to gain in what I did, but was moved only by the desire to vindicate injured innocence.”

This appeal softened Flora’s feelings toward Mary Lee. She saw that she was wrong, and that Mary was right. Mary had been governed by a high-minded regard for right. Pride soon yielded.

“Mary,” said she, taking her hand, while the tears came into her eyes, “I confess that I have been wrong, and you right. I shall not soon forget this lesson. Forgive the unkind thought I have had of you, and say to Ellen, from me, that I do most sincerely regret the part I have taken in this matter.”

“Will I ever learn to be guarded in my remarks!” Flora said, to her aunt, after Mary had left them. “This is the third time I have been called to account for speaking of others, within the last few months.”

“Never, I suppose,” Mrs. Marion replied, “until you learn to guard your thoughts as well as your words. If, like Mary Lee, you were less disposed to give credence to every disparaging report circulated about others, you would need no guard placed over your tongue. It is from the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh. *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.* Try and keep this in mind. If you are more ready to believe an evil than a good report of others, be sure that all is not right with you, and more especially, if you feel an inward pleasure in convicting them of wrong. A truly good mind is always grieved at improper conduct in others, and ever seeks to palliate, rather than to judge with severity. It gives but slow credence to evil reports. Truly regard the good of all around you, and there will be no need of placing a bridle on your tongue.”

THE RICH AND THE POOR.

A HOT and sultry summer had passed away, and autumn was verging on toward its cooler months, with their long and quiet evenings. Occasionally a colder day than usual made a fire in the grate necessary and drew closer together the happy family of Mr. Barton in their evening circle. It was pleasant to all, thus to feel the warm fire again, and to see its deep glow reflected from loving faces.

“How good the fire feels!” said James, holding up his small hands to receive its heat, and smiling as he looked upon it.

“I think I love the winter best after all,” remarked William. “It is so pleasant to sit round the fire, and feel its warmth upon our hands and face. Home feels more like home. Don’t you think so, father?”

“The change of season is always pleasant,” replied Mr. Barton. “Have you never noticed that, my son?”

“Oh yes! I always say, when spring comes, ‘I am glad that it is spring.’ And in summertime, when fruit and flowers are so plenty, I say, ‘I am glad it is summer.’ And then I am glad again when the doors and windows can be closed, and we can all gather around the fire as we do now in autumn. In winter, when the snow begins to fall, I feel that it is pleasant to see the light flakes flying about gayly in the air.”

“But I always think then,” said Mary, the gentle, loving-hearted Mary, “of the poor children who have no warm clothing, nor good fires, as we have. I wish, sometimes, that it were always warm, for their sakes.”

“And yet, my dear, the Lord knows what is best,” remarked Mr. Barton, looking into Mary’s sympathizing face. “The Bible says He is good to all, and kind even to the unthankful.”

“I know it does; and it also says, that He pitieth us even as a father pitieth his children. But, I can’t help thinking, sometimes, that there is a great deal of suffering in the world.”

“And so there is, Mary, a great deal of dreadful suffering, the reason for which we sometimes find it very hard to understand. But one thing we know, and this is, that it is all from man, and not from God; and that God permits it for some good purpose—not to punish people; for the Lord never punishes any one merely for the sake of punishment, but suffers evil and sin to punish for the sake of reformation. You remember what I read to you about the Divine Providence on last Sunday evening?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What did I say the Divine Providence regarded?”

“Eternal ends,” replied Mary.

“Do you remember what I then told you was meant by eternal ends?”

“Whatsoever had reference to man’s salvation in heaven.”

“Yes, that is what I said. A great many people believe that the Lord’s Providence, which is over us all, even to the smallest things, has reference to our worldly well-doing. I remember when a boy, hearing a man pray, regularly, in his family, every day, and a part of his prayer always was, that the Lord would increase his basket and his store.”

“What did he mean by that?” asked James, who was listening very attentively to his father, and trying to understand all he said.

“Why, that the Lord would make him rich.”

“Did the Lord make him rich?” asked Mary.

“No, my daughter, the Lord knew that to make him rich would be the worst thing for him, for it might be the means of destroying his soul.”

“Then it is best for some to be rich and some poor?” said William.

“Undoubtedly it is, or all would be rich in this world’s goods, and have every comfort and luxury that earth could afford them. For the goodness of the Lord would seek to bless every one in good things for the body as well as good things for the mind, if the former blessings could be given without injury to the latter. But where they cannot, they are always withheld.”

“But all rich people are not good people,” remarked William. “I think they are, generally, more unfeeling and selfish than poor people. I have often heard it said so; and that there was very little chance of rich people’s going to heaven.”

“I know this is said, but it is a great mistake. Poor people are, as a general thing, just as unfeeling and selfish as rich people, and stand no better chance of heaven. So far as poverty or riches are concerned, there is an overruling Providence regarding each, and this, as I before remarked, looks to the salvation of souls in heaven.”

“Then it isn’t because one man is better than another, that he is permitted to get rich, or has money left to him?”

“Not by any means, William,” replied the father. “No man’s state can be judged of by his external condition: for the external condition that is good for one, may be very bad for another. Ever bear this in mind, as you pass through life, and learn, no matter in what external condition the Lord places you, therewith to be content.”

Transcriber’s note for *Means of Enjoyment*: The word “vail” was replaced with “veil” in the sentence [“It seemed as if a veil had suddenly been drawn from before his eyes.”](#)