

ELECTION TIMES:

OR,

SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC INFLUENCE.

BY

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CINCINNATI:

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STEREOTYPED AT THE FRANKLIN TYPE FOUNDRY, CINCINNATI, O.

TO MY VENERABLE FATHER,

This little volume was originally dedicated ; but, ere its completion,
he passed from earth to Heaven.

IT IS NOW

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

TO THE

MEMORY OF HIS

EMINENTLY PRACTICAL VIRTUES.

PREFACE.

WITHIN the last thirty years, the various topics of social, moral and political reform, have been ably and patiently discussed, and the peculiar claims of each have been impressively and effectively enforced upon the intellect and heart, by their especial advocates. Great and important results have thus been gained to the cause of truth and righteousness, and the claims of humanity have gained a readier admission. But the immediate and inevitable effect upon moral character, of the prevalent political customs, has failed, thus far, to awaken the attention and interest, which a subject, so vitally important to the well-being of society, demands. During a season of very great political excitement, many years since, the attention of the writer was drawn to this subject, while silently listening to the conversation of different individuals, many of whom were gentlemen of great intelligence and undoubted piety. She noted the frequent remark: "Well, I have decided to have nothing to do with any of the parties, or their preliminary arrangements—their proceedings are so revolting to common sense and common decency, that I wash my hands of the whole affair. If they nominate any candidates whom I can conscientiously support, I shall vote for them, otherwise, I shall withhold my vote altogether." These and similar expressions immediately suggested the inquiry, was Pilate

freed from all responsibility when he had washed his hands and said, "*I will have nothing to do with this just man, see ye to it?*" Did he incur no *personal guilt* in thus deliberately yielding the victim into the hands of the malicious Jews, who were thirsting for his blood? And are American citizens justified in the sight of God and their country, while disclaiming all responsibility in the election of civil officers? Is it wise or safe, to commit the highest and dearest interests of the state and nation to the disposal of men whose moral defection is so manifest as to forbid the co-operation of intelligent, religious men? These inquiries could not fail to lead the mind to anticipate the results which have too surely followed. Nor is it deemed presumption to say, that, when good and true men saw the *FIRST indications* that political control was passing into the hands of those "who fear not God," nor regard the sublime moral truths which inspired the founders of our republic, if they had then come up promptly, unitedly and firmly to the rescue, our present position would be vastly different. The fact is most cheerfully conceded, that there are many, very many, in our beloved country, "who fear God and work righteousness," and thus, honor the nation—nevertheless, it is also a sad and humiliating truth, that partisan politicians do base their expectations of success upon the degree of wild and reckless enthusiasm with which the masses of men may be inspired, rather than upon the everlasting principles of truth and right, which form the only permanent and reliable basis of success. This same mad enthusiasm, this unnatural excitement, which, like a sea of flame, rolls over this nation at least once in four years, does, with every successive wave, leave the smell of fire upon the garments of individual and public morality. And even now, the charred and blackened ex-

terior presents little claim to our belief, that it is the same pure and lustrous garment, bequeathed to us by our venerable ancestors. In consequence of our own natural defection, together with the free admixture of moral and political elements having no affinity or correspondence with true republican patriotism, we are fast losing our distinctive national character, and rapidly approximating the character and condition of infidel, unstable, vacillating France—now reaching forth her hands and struggling to grasp the soaring pinions of republican liberty, and, anon, madly leaping into the cheerless abyss of despotism. Those dark and portentous clouds, which are seen looming upward in quick succession, and spreading their ominous blackness over the political sky—those low, yet distinctly audible mutterings of the thunders of retribution—are but intimations of the coming certainty that God will judge the people or nation that honors Him not. There is, therefore, no escape from deserved retribution, but in a prompt and speedy submission to the statutes and ordinances of Him, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords—by speaking the *truth*, every man to his neighbor—by dealing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God.

Having sons just entered and soon to enter upon the high and sacred responsibilities of American citizenship, the writer was induced to commence this little volume, with the hope that the counsels of maternal experience, might serve to deter them from entering upon the perilous course, in which so many have been lost to themselves and their country. The work was not, originally, intended for the public eye; but with the hope that the sketches of character, drawn from real life, and the incidents therein narrated, most of which have fallen under the personal observation of the

writer, may lead the young citizen to examine and ponder well his political path—that it may lead parents to a more just appreciation of the necessity of a very early commencement in the moral culture of their children—and that it may lead to a more persevering and efficient effort to imbue the young mind with a practical regard for those sublime principles which form the only sure and permanent foundation of individual or national greatness, the writer has yielded to the repeated solicitations of friends, and now, with much solicitude, offers it to the public. If it shall accomplish the design, the effort will not have been made in vain.

THE AUTHOR.

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ELECTION TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

FRED AND HIS SISTER AT JUDGE KINGSLEY'S.

"How brightly here the various virtues shine,
And nothing said or done is seen amiss;
While sweet affections every heart entwine,
And differing tastes and talents all unite,—
Like hues prismatic blending into white—
In charity to man, and love divine.
Thou little kingdom of serene delight,
Heaven's nursery and foretaste! O, what bliss
Where earth to wearied men can give a home like this!"

"Come now, dear Fred, don't go to the club-room to-night."

"Oh, I will be gone but a little while; and see, I have brought you a most captivating book to read—one that will charm away all feeling of loneliness, and leave not a thought of my absence. But, really, what a somber looking phiz! I must inquire into this matter a little. What magic-power has been conjured up, that could throw such a shadow over my little sister's smiling face? *Tears,*
(11)

too! Ah, I fear I shall have to surrender—I never could fortify myself against the special pleading of tears: I always capitulate at once. Come, sit down here a moment, and tell me what potent reasons you can urge, why your highly respected brother should not avail himself of the benefit of meeting with the Woolsey club to-night.”

“If you will consent to spend the evening with me, Fred, I will tell you all that is in my heart. I do not wish to interfere with your pursuits, or dictate to you the method of disposing of your time; but I think, in this instance, at least, you will not regret yielding to my wishes.”

“My dear sister, I do most cheerfully consent to remain with you. I know your good sense will not permit your attempting to influence my conduct without just cause. I respect your motives, and fully appreciate the tender solicitude and sisterly affection with which you watch for my future welfare. But, indeed, I am quite unable to conjecture the cause of your present anxiety, and as you have promised to relieve my apprehensions, I am at your service for the evening.”

The preceding conversation took place in the back parlor of the family mansion of Judge Kingsley—a favorite room, to which

the family were accustomed to retire immediately after tea. The venerable head of the household was there that evening, comfortably seated in his capacious arm-chair, and leisurely perusing his daily papers. His countenance was open, frank, and exceedingly pleasant, yet indicative of deep thought. Upon his large and finely-formed head, time had been quietly weaving the silver threads into the “crown of honor,” beneath which his massive brow towered in intellectual strength over a pair of mildly-beaming eyes, and the whole form and expression of his face bore the unmistakable impress of true nobility. At a little distance sat his excellent wife, busily engaged in her favorite employment—knitting. By her side was a little table, on which lay several select volumes of her favorite authors. Mrs. Kingsley was well worthy the companionship of a high-minded, honorable man. Discreet, amiable and intelligent, she was competent to preside, with equal grace and dignity, either at her own quiet fireside, or in the more extended social circle, where her presence was always greeted with enthusiasm. She labored to make herself familiar with all those subjects which involve the interests or happiness of our race. She sought the highest good of all, and was be-

loved by all. On the opposite side of the room, on the sofa, were seated Fred Kingsley and his sister Kate. Their mother had died some three years before, of a prevailing epidemic, and their father survived his excellent wife but two weeks. At his death he committed his orphan children to the care of his only brother, Judge Kingsley. Fred had been two years in college at the time of his father's death, and his uncle made immediate arrangements for the thorough completion of his collegiate course, with as little interruption as possible. Fred was an indefatigable student, and soon acquired an enviable position in his class, which he maintained to the close, and was rewarded with the highest collegiate honors. Having expressed a long-cherished preference for the legal profession, he was immediately, on his return from college, installed in the office of Judge Kingsley, as student at law. Here, also, he distanced all competitors, in his singular devotion to study, and in the triumphant success which attended his laborious researches after legal lore. He had been employed in the office about a year when one of those seasons returned which are so deeply interesting to every American—the season which, once every four years, brings with it a change in

the administration of the general government. This event is always preceded by more or less excitement and enthusiasm. In the present case, one of the competitors for the highest office in the gift of the American people was a statesman of pre-eminent ability, and one whose almost superhuman power of intellect seemed to mark him as the man predestined to occupy that most fearfully responsible position. Fred Kingsley was an enthusiastic admirer of the Hon. Mr. Woolsey. He had listened to many of his public addresses with an intensity of admiration never called forth by any other living speaker. He had seen the countless multitude swaying under the resistless power of his eloquence, and had felt his own entire mental being vibrating under its magic influence. He had seen him, now soaring into the loftiest heights of imagination, now impetuously plunging into the profoundest depths of mystery—now serenely floating along upon the unruffled surface, like a summer dream, and anon leaping down the frightful cataract with the stunning roar of a Niagara. Fred could not resist the appeal to his enthusiasm, which the nomination of his favorite had called forth, and he yielded the more readily from the fact that the candidate had been nominated by

the party which had always numbered among its devoted adherents his lamented father and excellent uncle.

As is usual at such seasons, political clubs were formed in many of the cities and villages, for the purpose of awakening and increasing the enthusiasm of the masses of the people, and insuring the success of the party. Such an association had been formed in the village of Bellville, and Fred, having been induced to join them, entered with his accustomed energy into their plans and purposes. His friends watched with increasing anxiety the frequent manifestations of partisan prejudice which he exhibited, and feared it was gaining, quite too much, the ascendancy over his better judgment. His uncle had several times gently admonished him, and had resolved to embrace the first opportunity for a free and frank conversation with him, and to remind him of the danger of yielding to those unamiable influences which so fearfully abound in seasons of high political excitement.

When Kate unexpectedly expressed her wish to detain her brother from the meeting of the club, Judge Kingsley was somewhat surprised, and waited with some degree of solicitude the result of her effort, and was

exceedingly gratified with her success. Kate, though young, was a close observer, careful and discriminating. Her constant intercourse with the intelligent and refined society which the position of Judge Kingsley's family drew around them, afforded her a rare opportunity for the cultivation of the nobler faculties of her mind, which she did not fail to improve. But the crowning excellence of her character was the ardent and devoted affection, which, with its gentle and unobtrusive light, illumined all the social atmosphere around her. Fred had been the only playmate of her childhood, and the favorite companion of her riper years. When the shadow of death had fallen across their pathway, and suddenly extinguished the light of parental affection, and they were left alone in the "wide, wide world," they bound their bleeding hearts together upon the altar of a pure and undivided affection. As Kate beheld the promise of a glorious fulfillment of her highest hopes, in the person and character of her idolized brother, her heart was filled with devout gratitude; yet thoughts of *danger* would sometimes intrude, and, as busy memory pointed to the wreck of hopes and expectations that are left, as beacon lights, all along the pathway of life, she trembled. She knew that the gilded bait,

the honeyed words, the enticing ways of pleasure and sin, brilliantly bedecked with rare and gorgeous flowers, were temptations in the way of the young aspirant after fame, before which many had fallen. The mistake or folly of an unguarded moment, has veiled many a lifetime with sorrow. Fred's frequent attendance of late upon the meetings of the "Woolsey club," and their manifest influence over his mind, had aroused in Kate a vague apprehension lest her noble brother should be added to the number of the lost victims of popular excitement; and she sought opportunity to express her fears in the manner described. His evasive reply led her to fear the failure of her object; and her eloquent eyes were instantly suffused with tears. Perceiving her evident anxiety, Fred resorted to a little pleasantry, with the hope of restoring her wonted cheerfulness. Assuming a serio-comic attitude, he said:

"Miss Kingsley, are you fully aware of the immense responsibility of your position? Do you know that you have volunteered to make yourself so agreeable, and to entertain me so pleasantly, as to compensate for the loss of all the wit and wisdom that may emanate from the Woolsey club to-night?"

"Oh no, dear Fred, I made no promise to

entertain you, or even to make myself agreeable. I said I thought you would *not* regret staying; nor do I now think you will. Fred, I am going to give you a lesson in politics!"

"In politics!" exclaimed Fred; "in *politics!* ha-ha-ha! Well now, that is rich, most decidedly so! Our little 'fun-budget' giving lessons in politics, eh? Why, sis, what can you do? You don't know *politics* from a *pin-cushion!*"

Kate smiled and blushed, and springing from her seat, replied, "You shall see what I can do." Then drawing up her little body to its full height, she, with mock gravity, thus addressed him:

"'Most potent, grave, and reverend seignior,' where, in the far distant chronicles of olden time, may be supposed to be the epoch when you emerged from your teens? Where, in the great muster-roll of the dreamy past, do you find your name recorded as having attained your majority? When, and where, were you clothed with the prerogatives of manhood? Ah! brother mine, descend from your lofty heights, and remember that you are but three years my senior, and that your manhood is only two years old. So, now, a truce to jesting, and let us talk in good sober earnest."

"Thank you, Kate," replied Fred; "I have folded my wings, with the best grace possible, and descended from the clouds to a quiet seat by your side, where I frankly confess to being a tyro in political science; indeed, a knowledge of that fact, my dear sister, constitutes my only apology for attendance upon the meetings of the Woolsey club. I wish to avail myself of every reasonable opportunity to gain the information I need to make myself a useful and intelligent citizen. When I look abroad upon the masses, who, in fact, wield the destinies of this mighty republic, and see how profoundly ignorant multitudes are of the very nature, design, and purposes of our political institutions, and know, also, that this very ignorance makes them the sport of selfish and designing demagogues, I am filled with amazement and alarm. Hence my determination to study, investigate, and understand, to the full extent of my ability, this most important subject, and when I have *learned the way*, to take my position upon the glorious platform laid by the founders of our republic, and then to devote the best energies of my life to the highest good of my country."

"A most noble resolution," said Kate,

"and I hope you may be able to maintain it to the end. It is with reference to this very subject that I wish to converse with you—but let us retire a little, lest we disturb dear uncle in his reading."

CHAPTER II.

KATE'S TALK ABOUT POLITICS.

" 'T was strange
To hear so young a creature speak so well
And eloquent, of nations and their rights,
Their equal balance and their policies,
Which we, in our republic, think that none
Can comprehend, but grave and bearded men."
SIGOURNEY.

HAVING fairly introduced the subject which had long burdened her thoughts, Kate drew her hand within her brother's arm, and led him to the bow-window, overlooking the garden. Parting the rich crimson drapery, they seated themselves in its quiet recess, while the rays of the pale, silvery moon fell, like the soothing influence of maternal blessings, on their heads.

"This," said Kate, "is the sweet retreat where I have devoted many hours of earnest thought to my absent brother, and now, under the inspiration of the place added to your presence, I shall presume to think aloud, and inquire if an attendance upon the meetings of the club will secure to you the information you need? From what I can learn
(22)

of the efforts—the public and private labors of most professed politicians, they are rather designed to awaken impulsive action and blind enthusiasm, than to impart that correct knowledge of truth and facts which forms the only basis of efficient action. In short, their object is rather to sustain the peculiarities of party distinctions, than those great and fundamental principles which underlie all useful and permanent institutions. And now, you are ready to repeat the trite inquiry, 'What can a woman know about politics?' and, 'Why should she affect to be interested about that with which she can have nothing to do?' I reply, we know much—very much—of the *effects* of political arrangements, and we have much to do with the *consequences* of political misconduct. We have neither the power nor the desire to engage in *personal* political conflicts, and claim neither the ability nor the wish to enter the intricate and ever-varying labyrinths of political, commercial, and financial arrangements; but we may be the humble torch-bearers, and we may so direct the brightly beaming rays, as most effectually to aid the weary laborers in their arduous and imperative duties. We have, indeed, a very safe method of obtaining the knowledge neces-

sary to enable us to hold forth the true light, which I will explain to you. Our eminent men, who have devoted a lifetime to severe study, and who have patiently and successfully explored the profound depths of political science, have given the *result* of their investigations to the press, and the printed page, freighted with their immortal thoughts, is wafted upon the wings of every wind, and scattered through every hamlet—thus leaving the precious lore accessible to all. While our brother man is laboriously toiling amid the busy din and whirl of excitement and conflicting claims, we are permitted to retire, and in our quiet retreat, to ‘feast the mental appetite.’ With miserly care we may extract the pure coin, and deposit it in our intellectual storehouse for future use. We have many hours in which, if rightly improved, we may hold unrestrained communion with the wise, and good, and great of the present and past ages, until we become assimilated to their nature and spirit. From such teachers, we have learned that our political institutions were based upon the imperishable principles of righteousness and truth—were reared by men of pre-eminent ability to plan and execute—men who were inspired with a lofty, self-sacrificing devotion to the

great work of perfecting a political structure which should deserve the admiration of a world. The *result* of their labors they have bequeathed to their descendants as a legacy of priceless value, and within this sacred structure are contained our highest social, moral, and religious interests. We would have our brother man guard, with most jealous care and sleepless vigilance, this magnificent depository of our hopes and expectations. Especially would we have him keep guard against those wily enemies, who, under the specious pretext of making *more commodious* the imposing structure, are too fatally *undermining* the broad foundations by stealthily removing, here and there, a block of granite, and substituting a crumbling sandstone. We have long been standing in our watch-tower and looking from out the loop-holes of retreat upon the gathering forces, who were marshaling themselves in hostile array, and eagerly panting for the conflict, upon the issue of which was to be suspended the destiny of a good or an evil administration of government during the subsequent four years. When the hour of action was past, when the din and smoke had rolled away, we have looked over the vast moral battle-field for our loved ones—for our fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers—

and have, haply, found some unscathed, but others fearfully maimed, many wounded, some slain and forever lost, some, reeking in the filth of mud and mire, insanely rejoicing in their fancied success, and rushing recklessly onward to an immortality of infamy. My brother, were we indifferent in a cause like this, we should blush to own the proud distinction of WOMEN OF AMERICA—and well might we fear to claim a birthright of those noble sires, whose hands were strengthened, whose hearts were encouraged, whose despondings were cheered by the smiles, the judicious counsels, and earnest prayers of the mothers of the Revolution, whose noble character it is our highest ambition to imitate. We instinctively shrink from the perils and dangers of the field of political conflict, but, like our illustrious exemplars, we may and must use all our endeavors to induce our *warriors* to clothe themselves in the right kind of armor; for in the success of the right we rejoice, and in the triumph of the wicked we mourn. If your attention has been at all directed to the subject, you can not have failed to observe that the usual methods of conducting our popular elections, more especially in the preliminary arrangements, are greatly prolific of evil influences.

“The very fact, that two or more large classes of men are formidably arrayed in an attitude of open hostility, forms, of itself, a basis, whence naturally, and almost inevitably, rises a hot-bed growth of evil passions, nurtured and stimulated into a fearfully rapid development, by the spirit of rivalry and detraction, the loss of confidence, and mutual retaliations and recriminations; and *these*, with the power of the dread sirocco, sweep over the human heart, leaving a moral desert in their train. To this result, I am sorry to say, a portion of the newspaper press has largely contributed. That mighty power, which should be employed in the dissemination of truth, and the inculcation of a pure morality, and lofty, soul-inspiring sentiment, is debased to the degrading purpose of catering for the depraved appetite of poor, fallen human nature. It is made the impure receptacle of falsehood and deceit, of misrepresentation and perversion, which, in its periodical overflowings, spreads all abroad moral disease and death. The evil passions, thus awakened and stimulated into active exercise, often produce the most unhappy results upon the minds of many, who are not at all aware that they are themselves the victims of unhallowed influences. The man who has been distin-

guished for consistency, probity and truth, by yielding himself to the absorbing excitements of political strife, soon degenerates into the noisy demagogue. I think even the careless observer must have noted the increasing want of reverence for the long-established principles of righteousness and truth, and the consequent desire for entire emancipation from the restraints which such principles impose. My dear brother, do not think me censorious or unjustly severe in saying that this irreverent spirit is one of the legitimate results of that loose morality which inculcates the pernicious sentiment that 'all is fair in politics,' and which does not hesitate to stoop to the use of any means to secure a desired result. A morality which may be assumed, or laid aside at pleasure, has become quite a favorite idea. Under the protracted influence of this fatal delusion the force of moral obligation ceases, men become restive under restraint, and evade or reject altogether whatever interposes to hinder the accomplishment of their desires. When this point is established, the climax is soon reached, and with bold effrontery they cast off the fear of God, and reject his counsel, following their own desires, and walking in the light of their own eyes; and the enthronement of infidelity,

with all its dark and portentous issues, is the inevitable result. If honesty of purpose, if virtue and morality are wanting in the administration of our civil affairs, and political power is prostituted to subserve the selfish purposes of base and designing men, just in the same proportion do our moral and religious interests wither and droop."

"But surely," said Fred, "my sister would not advocate a union of civil and religious interests, or, to use a familiar phrase, a union of church and state!"

"By no means," replied Kate. "I would have the administration of civil and religious affairs entirely and for ever separate; and yet, the nature and design of both are so intimately blended with the happiness and prosperity of any people, that neither can be exalted or depressed, without a corresponding effect upon the other—a fact abundantly proved both by sacred and profane history."

"Well, my sister," said Fred, "I must give you credit for a better understanding of the subject than I had supposed you possessed. I perceive that you, at least, have not been the drone in our little domestic hive; but, while I have been deciphering the languages which gave expression to the thoughts of men three thousand years ago, exercising

my wearied brain in measuring 'unknown quantities,' and solving geometrical problems, you have been flitting around in the merry sunlight, culling sweets and gathering honey from the opening flowers which scatter their rich fragrance upon the moral landscape, and like the busy little bee, hoarding it up for future use. You have opened up before my mind quite an interesting field for thought, and I shall endeavor more fully to explore it. I appreciate your views of the necessity of practical virtue, and the exercise of high moral principle, to a just and wise administration of official duties, in any of the departments of our government, and also that all our preliminary arrangements should be made conducive to the same end. And now, with such an object in view, and such labor to be accomplished, let me ask, what think you of the consistency of that very considerable proportion of our best men, who have held themselves entirely aloof from any connection with the prominent political parties into which our nation is divided, and refuse to recognize any political responsibility, beyond quietly and silently depositing their vote in the ballot-box?"

"You have proposed a question," replied Kate, "of very great importance—one that

has awakened intense feelings of surprise and grief in my own mind. I would not presume to question the sincerity of such, many of whom I know to be unexceptionably good men, yet I can not but feel that they have pursued a mistaken policy, and that they have not fulfilled the high trust reposed in them. Every man in America, possessing the requisite legal qualifications, is under a most sacred obligation to use all his influence to preserve and perpetuate our glorious institutions, according to the obvious design and intent of the illustrious founders. But, as I have quite recently conversed with our dear uncle upon the subject, and as he is so much more competent than myself to answer your inquiry, I take great pleasure in referring you to him."

With this last remark, Kate turned an inquiring look upon Judge Kingsley, who nodded his assent, and laying aside his paper, removed his spectacles and laid them upon his paper. Then turning full upon them his great lustrous eyes, which were dancing with delight, and his lips wreathed with smiles, he said:

"Permit me to express the very great pleasure your brief but interesting colloquy has afforded me. And now, Fred, although

an unintentional listener, I have heard, with gratified surprise, the expression of your sister's views—surprised that she has given so much thought to a subject of such vast importance, and gratified that the good seed sown in her young mind, with so much fidelity, by her excellent parents, gives promise of so early and bountiful a harvest; and, let me add as the climax of my delight, that like an honorable man and affectionate brother, you have so respectfully listened to her suggestions. Now, that the evening is somewhat advanced, I choose to postpone the answer to your inquiry until another evening, when we may hope to do ample justice to the subject."

To this proposition the party cheerfully conceded, and after a little familiar chit-chat upon a variety of topics, in which all participated, and the "evening blessing" had been sought, they quietly dispersed to their respective rooms, mutually pleased with the evening entertainment. As Fred bestowed the usual "good-night kiss," he whispered in his sister's ear, "Well, I think, on the whole, I do not regret staying;" and, ere she could reply, he bounded from the room—but the fervent "God bless you, my brother," lingered upon her lips, until her eyes were closed in slumber.

CHAPTER III.

OUGHT GOOD MEN TO VOTE?

"In most kind excuse of all your ill,
My heart is warm, and patient for your good:
Oh that my power were measured by my will;
Then would I bless you, as I love you still."

TUPPER.

ONE evening, a short time subsequent to that referred to in the preceding chapter, Fred announced himself at leisure and anxiously waiting the answer to his inquiry, "Why have so many good and true men so persistently refused to identify themselves with the political parties, thus failing to aid in the choice of our civil rulers?"

Judge Kingsley replied: "I frankly admit the *fault* which your question implies; although, in so doing, I condemn my own past course. I shall answer your inquiry by giving you a little sketch of the *causes* which have combined to produce the result. Then we can, perhaps, best decide upon our duty under present circumstances.

"The early history of our country presents a period when a severe morality maintained

a controlling influence in the nursery, in the family arrangements, and in the social circle, extending its benign influence through all the ramifications of social, civil, and religious society. The morality of this period was based upon that perfect code which Infinite Wisdom has bequeathed to man, and which is so admirably adapted to the security of his highest attainable good, at all times and under all possible circumstances—a morality which restrained the baser passions, and imposed a judicious and healthful discipline upon the whole mental, moral, and physical being. To it, as the prime arbiter, were submitted all questions of duty, and its decisions were unhesitatingly adopted. Men matured under such circumstances, could scarcely fail to possess a beautiful symmetry of character, of an order elevated and refined, and which represents, in the highest degree, the true nobility of manhood. In a choice of rulers, such men would naturally feel that the great and growing interests, the future destiny of this dearly-bought and far-famed republic, could be safely intrusted to the guidance of such men only as their adopted code prescribed. Hence they chose 'just men, ruling in the fear of God,' to rule over them—men of large and comprehensive views, sound dis-

crimination, deliberate in counsel, and just in their decisions. Under the administration of such rulers our country was prosperous and happy; and, like 'a city set upon a hill, which can not be hid,' it exhibited to the nations of the earth a fulfillment of the sublime idea of self-government; but prosperity, and a consciousness of security, together with the claims of personal pecuniary interests, soon diverted the attention, and other objects gained the ascendancy over their minds. Their successors preferred a morality which was less exacting, and that jealous care and sleepless vigilance which had so successfully watched over the perilous infancy of the republic, gradually and imperceptibly subsided. In the same ratio, selfish ambition and an insane love of power and dominion, have gained supremacy, and now three-fourths of a century finds us in quite a divergent path. The noble, self-sacrificing patriotism which was the glory of our early days, has been superseded by a restless spirit of adventure, which, roving in new and untried paths, or proudly bidding defiance to wholesome restraints, submits only to the guidance of the depraved passions of our nature. Political aspirants, who are the offspring of such a spirit, have respect only to the *emoluments*

of office, while they artfully conceal their sinister designs under the sacred garb of philanthropy, and hypocritically prate about the illustrious deeds and glorious principles of our fathers, and *themselves* as the only consistent representatives and advocates of those principles, with an assurance only equaled by that of the apostate Jews, who vainly sought to sanctify their own defection by an appeal to their lineal descent from Abraham, while, by all their works, they denied their affinity to him. I think, Fred, that the sum and substance of the whole matter may be briefly comprehended in this: our predecessors have fallen under the influence of that reaction which usually follows upon severe and protracted effort, whether it be physical or mental. They were undoubtedly quite unconscious of the existence or consequences of that careless indifference, which, to us who witness the appalling results, appears so amazing. A sort of moral stupor seems to have fallen upon the minds of good men, and while they have slept the enemy has entered the goodly field, and assumed the direction and control of the laborers. They are, however, beginning to awake to the alarming fact that they have been unfaithful sleeping sentinels, and have found them-

selves indeed the servants of him to whom they have yielded themselves servants to obey.

"With this brief review of our past and present political condition, together with the causes which have led to our present degeneracy, I am now prepared to answer your inquiry, viz.: 'Why have so many wise and good men refused to act in concert with the great political parties into which our nation is divided?'

"When moral and intelligent men are fully awakened to a discovery of the true state of affairs, they are at once overwhelmed with surprise, and as they anxiously survey the extent and complicated nature of the difficulties with which they are surrounded, they are entirely disheartened and discouraged from any attempt to recover the position from which they have so carelessly and criminally fallen. They no longer dare sustain political parties which have so obviously slid off from the only true and safe foundation; and they are appalled at the magnitude and hopelessness of the effort to restore them to their original basis; hence they have concluded to remain '*in statu quo*.' I think we have acted wisely in refusing to identify ourselves with either of our great political

organizations, while occupying their present false position of recreancy to the cardinal principles of national virtue and morality. But *our* course has been scarcely less reprehensible, in that we have *refused to act at all*. I am satisfied that we can not innocently occupy a neutral position, and that it is our first duty, as individuals, to recover our foothold upon the rock upon which our political institutions were originally based. Then, with the clear light of pure, intelligent, moral principle shining within us, we may safely bid defiance to the roaring winds and surging billows, as they wildly leap and foam, and exhaust their impotent rage in vain efforts to destroy. We remain secure, because founded upon a rock. Of all the pitiable conditions into which poor human nature has ever fallen, I do think that of an unprincipled politician is the most to be dreaded. Afloat upon a stormy sea, he is ceaselessly toiling to drift around upon the right side of some luminous object, that he may catch and reflect a borrowed light, which like the '*ignis fatuus*,' is now here, now there, and never permanent anywhere; and he wearies out his tedious days of disappointed effort to obtain the empty bubble of political distinction. But I thank God that we may

turn from the cheerless view we have been contemplating to the glimmering dawn of a brighter day. Already another spirit is beginning to prevail. Here and there the Calebs and the Joshuas are to be heard sounding the alarm, and summoning the good and true to the rescue. I think it will yet appear that there are many more who have not bowed the knee to Baal, than we, in our fear and trembling, had supposed. But if our leaders are indeed fallen asleep, the God of our fathers, in whom we trust, will raise up others, when and where we looked not for them, who will lead on his people to certain and triumphant victory."

The conversation was here interrupted by sounds of revelry and shouts, which, after a little interval, were repeated, nearly in front of the house, in a loud and prolonged hurra—"Hurra for Woolsey!" This demonstration might have passed without having elicited any remark, had it not been succeeded by other rude and indecorous expressions, and uttered by a voice which they instantly recognized.

"Poor James Tanner!" exclaimed Judge Kingsley, "what a sad commentary upon the dangerous influence of partisan excitement!"

"Were you acquainted with the circum-

stances through which he became reduced to his present condition?" inquired Kate.

"Certainly," replied the Judge, "and as his history furnishes a very apt illustration of the subject upon which we have been conversing, I will briefly narrate it."

CHAPTER IV.

JAMES TANNER.

"Thy features do not bear the light
They wore in happier days;
Though still there may be much to love,
There's little left to praise.
The rose has faded from thy cheek—
There's scarce a blush left now;
And there's a dark and weary sign
Upon thine altered brow."

LONDON.

"IN his childhood, James Tanner was distinguished among his companions by his cheerfulness, his kind and amiable demeanor, and his superior natural ability, which was much improved by a good common-school education. His parents being in rather indigent circumstances, at a suitable age he was apprenticed to a highly respectable mechanic. During his apprenticeship he won the entire confidence of his employer, and gained an honorable position in society. About two years after his term of service had closed, he was married to an intelligent, industrious, and amiable girl, and, by their united industry and frugality, they soon acquired means sufficient to purchase the little cottage in the

eastern part of the village, the romantic situation of which we have so often admired. It seemed, indeed, that nothing was wanting to insure the future prosperity and happiness of a married life so auspiciously commenced. While they retained possession of their beautiful home, their hearts were cheered by the addition to their household treasures of three little daughters, or, as James used to call them, 'three little twinkling stars.'

"And oh," exclaimed Kate, "what dear little girls they are. They are members of my class in the Sabbath school, and I have been delighted with their respectful attention to my instructions, and their modest and intelligent replies, evincing a maturity of thought, and a studious acquaintance with the subject, which might be very profitably imitated by many much older than themselves. Their attire is very plain indeed, but scrupulously neat and appropriate."

"What a lesson," said Mrs. Kingsley, "is presented to our consideration in the neat and tidy garments of these children of misfortune—how impressively they speak of meek and patient toil, of submission to reverses, and that true refinement of taste, which maintains its supremacy over the depressing influences of pecuniary disappoint-

ments, imbittered by cold and cruel neglect. Oh, how strong and unyielding is maternal affection, and when purified and refined by Divine truth, how fathomless are its depths! How in weariness, and loneliness, and want, the neglected mother struggles with the infirmities of the flesh, and, with a triumphant faith, bears her loved ones before the mercy-seat, and claims for them *there* the protection of that paternal love which is denied them *here*."

"Ah," said the Judge, "those little girls have been nurtured at the fountain of sorrows, and the faithful and judicious instructions they have received are manifest in their intelligence and correct deportment. They are that mother's epistle, known and read of all, to her commendation. Alone, and almost forgotten by the world, that smiled so benignantly on her more prosperous youth, coldly neglected by him who has sworn to be her aid and copartner in all life's conflicts, she pursues her ceaseless toil to provide for the physical necessities of her little ones, and then, by the softly-gleaming light of undying affection, guides their infant footsteps in the paths of virtue and true wisdom. I do think, Kate, there is more to claim our admiration—more exalted heroism exhibited in the life of

one such wife and mother, than in the exploits of the war-clad conquerors of kingdoms. But, to resume our story.

"James Tanner, as I have said, was respected as a citizen and as a mechanic. The season preceding the Presidential election, eight years ago, found him industriously employed, and, with each day's labor, adding to his pecuniary independence. It found him a happy man, and the respected head of a happy family. He did not long, however, escape the notice of our partisan leaders. His native energy and determination, the self-devotion and zeal with which he entered upon any employment, marked him as one whose services it was necessary to secure. After many ineffectual efforts he was at length persuaded to attend the meetings of the club. Here his enthusiasm became thoroughly aroused, and he soon distinguished himself by his earnest defense of the peculiar claims of the party of his adoption. To a man possessed of his ardent temperament, the subject was absorbingly interesting. It engrossed much of his time and thoughts, and he soon came to look upon the daily claims of his mechanical employments as an irksome restraint, and was finally induced to abandon altogether an honorable and lucra-

tive trade, and traverse the State in the more congenial avocation of 'stump orator.' In this capacity he frequently visited the presidential candidate of his party, and received from him repeated assurances of promotion to some lucrative political office, as the reward of his fidelity and devotion to the interests of the party. In process of time, Tanner became quite a distinguished advocate, and wherever he went his anticipated approach was heralded by newspaper puffs and handbills posted in conspicuous places about the streets, exhibiting his peculiar claims to the popular favor. His eyes were everywhere greeted with these complimentary notices, and his ears constantly saluted with the fulsome flatteries of his associates. As might have been expected, he became vain and ambitious of distinction, and thirsted for the empty honors and glittering emoluments of office, which, he fancied, were just within his reach. But his hopes and expectations were destined to a bitter and overwhelming defeat. The day of the general election left the party for whom he had so laboriously toiled, completely prostrated. The candidate, whose triumphant success he had never doubted, and for whose elevation to office he had sacrificed

his time, talents, money, and domestic happiness, had fallen; and in his fall! oh what fearful wreck was there of the hopes and expectations of the many deluded victims, who, like poor James, had periled all, and lost all, in this one desperate and ill-fated enterprise! Well had it been for Mr. Tanner—well for his too long neglected family—well for his country—had he been disposed to learn wisdom by this lesson of sad and humiliating experience, and to return to his former quiet, honorable, and lucrative employment. But to every suggestion from his friends of that sort, he lent an unwilling ear. The baneful habits of idleness and dissipation, so long indulged, maintained their supremacy over him. He turned with disgust from the dull monotony of daily labor to the more exciting scenes of the bar-room, and to those detested haunts where idlers congregate, and recommenced his efforts to obtain political office. During these eight long years he has been recklessly pursuing the floating bubble, which as constantly eludes his grasp—always in view, but never attainable. Stung by the fancied ingratitude of those for whom he has sacrificed so much, he now publicly ignores the party of his early

adoption, and has transferred his allegiance to the opposite party, in whose service he yet hopes to obtain the coveted prize, and in the present campaign he has again renewed his efforts, only to witness a renewal of defeat.”

CHAPTER V.

"ALL IS FAIR IN POLITICS."

"We derive benefit, sometimes, from comparing the different springs of action—impulse and principle—which govern mankind."

ONE morning Fred Kingsley had been a long time busily employed in copying some reports for his uncle. At length he grew weary of this employment, and, leaning back in his chair, yielded himself to his reflections. He recalled, with unwonted interest, the conversation to which he had listened on that evening when he had been detained from the meeting of the club; he thought of the look of tearful anxiety with which his sister had proffered her request for him to remain with her; he thought of her kind and judicious advice, and of the many useful suggestions she had presented for his consideration, followed by the wise counsels of his venerable uncle; and the fervent desire arose in his mind that no misconduct of his might ever grieve the heart of his gentle sister, or bring reproach upon the gray hairs of his beloved benefactor. A new phase of existence was presented to his view—a loftier, holier aim

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seemed to beckon him onward in the great struggle of life. In that hour of self-examination, of deep heart-communing, were formed those high resolves, those sublime purposes which distinguished his whole subsequent life.

His pleasing reflections were brought to a speedy close by the abrupt entrance of two men, the first of whom was none other than the veritable James Tanner. He was accompanied by Charles Sherman, a clerk in a neighboring store, whom Fred had often seen, but with whom he was very slightly acquainted. Sherman's external appearance was pleasing, but he habitually wore an air of quiet reserve, which seemed to repel any effort to make his acquaintance; and a shade of sadness seemed ever to linger upon his finely-wrought features; yet his mild, blue eye, his lofty brow and classic head, indicated the nature that dwelt within, and gave assurance that he had been designed for nobler purposes than following in the wake of the deluded and degraded Tanner. These thoughts passed rapidly through Fred's mind, as he motioned Charles to a seat, and fixed upon him such a sad and earnest gaze that his eyelids drooped, and blushes mantled his

pale cheek. Mr. Tanner tumbled himself into the first vacant seat, exclaiming:

"How now, Kingsley, where were *you* the other night? I believe I did not see you at the meeting of the club."

"At home, sir," was the quiet, but brief reply.

"Ah! at home, eh! Company, I presume? **and so**, I suppose you was tripping the light fantastic toe, to the music of sweet sounds, in concert with rustling silks and nodding plumes, and flashing eyes, and rosy cheeks, and—and—heigh ho! and—fuss and feathers—while your compeers were gravely discussing matters of state. This rather argues against your enthusiasm, my boy."

Fred could not repress a smile at the vision Mr. Tanner had so suddenly conjured up, as he replied, "I fear I shall be compelled to clip the wings of your imagination, by assuring you that I spent a quiet evening with my uncle, aunt, and sister, only."

"Is that so?" said Tanner; "well, I am a little surprised that you will allow any *trivial* circumstance to detain you from the meetings of the club."

So saying, Tanner leaned slightly forward, and, inclining his head a little to one side,

while a ludicrous expression stole over his features, added, in a sort of inquiring tone, "The old man wouldn't let you go, eh? Wasn't that the reason?"

Fred felt the hot blood mounting to his very temples, and indignant thoughts crowding for utterance; but he succeeded in preserving silence. His evident confusion did not escape the notice of Tanner, who construed it into a tacit admission of the justice of the charge, and, encouraged by his continued silence, added:

"I have been a long while suspicious of the old man; I consider him a regular old foggy. The fact is, he is so mighty conscientious he does more injury to our party than a dozen such fellows as you and I could; and if we fail of Woolsey's election, he may thank himself for having contributed his full share toward placing that contemptible Carlton in the White House. I told the boys, the other night, that I thought the Judge was pulling the wool a little too thick over your eyes, and that was the reason we cheered when we went by there. I told them to give a good hearty shout, and let the old foggy know that some of us, at least, were out of leading strings. Fact is, I rather think I *steamed* a little too high that night; a fellow has got

to look out for himself, in these exciting times; but then, you know, there's nothing to keep the spirits *up*, like pouring spirits *down*."

While listening to Tanner's remarks, Fred had regained his composure, and replied: "You do Judge Kingsley great injustice in supposing he has, at any time, prevented my attendance upon the meetings of the club. He has never imposed the slightest restraint upon my actions, except by his own honorable and consistent example, and judicious counsel, and even that has seldom been given unsought. I am indebted, wholly, to my sister Kate, for an entertainment, on the evening to which you refer, which I regard as the pleasantest and most profitable I ever enjoyed."

He then gave a brief sketch of the conversation of that evening, to which Mr. Tanner listened with profound attention, for during the rehearsal, faithful memory had brought back bright visions of the past, when he, too, was numbered among the happy inmates of the little cottage, where was his home, and where the very spirit of content seemed to rest. These glimpses of quiet home-life were in painful contrast with his present fallen, cheerless condition, and he strove to banish from his mind the unwel-

come vision, by referring, again, to the club.

"Well, well," said he, "at all events, I'm sorry you were not there *last* night; we had a rich time of it, I'll assure you. Our secretary read an article from the last number of the '*Political Canvasser*,' that will take the starch out of our opponents. I tell you it will gain Woolsey a good many votes in this town."

"What," inquired Fred, "is the subject of the article to which you refer?"

"Well, you see," replied Tanner, "in some secret political conclave, at headquarters, where they manufacture characters to order, the rumor has been set afloat that General Carlton is in favor of the *class* system. He thinks labor has a degrading influence upon the mind, and, consequently, that no laborer should be eligible to civil office. He also derides the idea of the social equality of the laboring classes, and publicly defends the sentiment that wealth and its refinements should be made the criterion of social position.

"Now you know that such a sentiment would not be tolerated at all, in our town of Belleville. They would regard the author of such an idea with the most sovereign con-

tempt; and if we can succeed in *fixing the stigma upon the old General*, the people will drop him as they would hot corn, and go over to the support of Woolsey. Don't you see?—it will work like a charm, sir."

"Were your reports *true*," said Fred, "I should think the people justified in withholding their support; but what evidence have you that General Carlton entertains such anti-republican sentiments?"

"Have I not already told you," replied Tanner, "that my authority is the '*Political Canvasser*,' and that *paper* is indebted to the statement of Alderman Tattler, who says, over his own signature, that he first gained a knowledge of the fact from Gen. Carlton himself, in a private conversation with him in his own house, and that he has since often heard him repeat it in different places and on many occasions. Now you know as much about it as I do."

"Well, then," said Fred, "I think it very questionable authority, to say the least. Do you, yourself, regard the evidence as sufficiently reliable to sustain so grave a charge?"

"Oh," said Tanner, "I care nothing about *evidence*; in such a case as this I leave that matter to those who are disposed to take the trouble to look after it. It is quite sufficient

for me that it answers a good purpose for our party, and we shall make a good use of it too, I'll assure you."

"But," replied Fred, "if it is untrue, which I am very much disposed to believe, you are doing Gen. Carlton great injustice, and yourselves a far greater wrong, by cultivating a spirit of detraction and a disregard of truth. I frankly confess that I have a most decided preference for Woolsey, and shall do all in my power, honorably, to promote his election. But I would never stoop so low as to belie the character of an honorable man—and such I believe Carlton to be—to promote my own election, or that of my best friend. In so doing, I should despise myself, and I can not forfeit my own self-respect so cheaply. I think any person, or any cause, that can not be sustained by the *truth* is unworthy of my support. Beside, the deception must be, sooner or later, discovered, and the consequences can not fail to be disastrous to the stability and permanence of the party; for when the people find they have been made the unconscious dupes of designing men, and their confidence has been so basely betrayed, they will abandon the party in disgust."

"I can not think," said Tanner, "that a man would make any very great speculation

in transferring himself to the other party, for I have figured long enough in *both* to know that there is not much difference in their political morality. They are as like as twin brothers, albeit, they disown any relationship."

"If," replied Fred, "you are just in your estimate of the morality of the two rival parties, I do not apprehend that a secession to the opposite party would be the result; but, truthful, intelligent, and honorable men, as soon as they are aware of the humiliating fact, if they can not succeed in renovating, must, of necessity, abandon *both*, and leave them to perish from their own inherent corruption."

"Ah, well," said Tanner, "you lay these things too much to heart—you must take men as they *are*, not as they *should* be; and you will see the necessity of all these things. Why, I had once as musty and puritanical notions as you have; but I was soon cured of *that*. 'All is fair in politics,' is my motto, and if we only gain our point, I don't see as it matters much how it is brought about. It is a notorious fact that a large majority of the laboring classes read nothing but the local political paper, and they think and investigate still less than they read. They

trust their party leaders to do their thinking for them, and any thing, however absurd, that comes to them duly authenticated by 'our party paper,' is, to their minds, as fully confirmed as 'proof of Holy Writ.' Now, what can you do with such men? Why, *I can make more votes, by managing their prejudices*, than any ten of the wisest men in our nation can do with a plain, common-sense argument. Work up any sort of a ridiculous story, and set it afloat in the party papers, and it works like new yeast through the whole mass; and even if it is corrected in other papers, that fact is of no service in counteracting the effect, because few will ever read the correction. Thus, it is left to accomplish its full effect, and that, you know, is all we want. I am sometimes surprised at the gullibility of the people with regard to the character of our political candidates, but they think it's all right, and I'm sure I am satisfied. Now, for instance, take this story about Carlton—and between you and me, I don't believe it any more than you do—mold it up in the right shape, sprinkle it over with indignant remarks, get up a wonderful sympathy for the laboring classes, and it will all go down easy, like sugar-coated pills—they call it *all sugar*—ha! ha! ha! This

story will do the work for *that* class. Then, for another class, we must put him into the *sectarian* scales, and we can make him out a most devout adherent of any kind of *ism*, to suit the locality; and then, you know, we must manage the '*hobbies*.' We can make him appear to be the advocate, or opponent, of internal improvements, free-trade, tariff, railroad extension, and what not, just to suit the times. Only fire up the prejudices of men, and I'll risk them; we can take them just where we please. Why, Kingsley, you are so perfectly unsophisticated, that I fear you will not be worth much for this campaign, but you'll learn; it takes the '*old heads*' to manage these matters. But we'll have the net spread and these matters all fixed right before long—then—hurra for Woolsey! Well, I must go—I want to be at the office as soon as the paper is ready for delivery. They are going to print an extra number for gratuitous distribution, and they must be circulated far and wide—and I must help to scatter the good seed, you know. Good morning."

While giving utterance to these last remarks, Tanner had slowly advanced toward the door, and simply adding, "Come on, Charlie," without looking around, passed

out, and had nearly crossed the street, when, turning to speak to Charlie, he found, to his surprise, that he had not left the office. Tanner, however, carelessly sauntered along, looking back occasionally, until he had reached the post-office. Here he entered and seated himself, with others of like caliber, to await the arrival of the weekly sheet which had been made the vehicle for spreading through the entire community a base and unfounded calumny, and for no other reason than to make the innocent object a stepping-stone to place and power. The last hour or two had wrought a great change in the mind of Tanner. He had been entirely foiled in his efforts, and in quite an unexpected manner. He had entered the office very much elated with the hope of infusing into the minds of two unsuspecting young men the same latent poison which had wrought such a fearful change in his own moral character. So it is ever: when men lend themselves to work iniquity, they strive to fortify their position by an increase of numbers. Tanner had rightly judged that Fred and Charley were novices in the arts of partisan politics, and thought they would be an easy prey; but when Fred stood before him in the honest simplicity and dignity of truth, and repelled all his efforts to lead him

to a connivance with his base purposes, he became satisfied that he had "reckoned without his host." He felt exceedingly chagrined that he had so foolishly betrayed the designs of the party; and then, to endure defeat at the moment of anticipated victory, was "the drop too much." The only mode of relief that suggested itself was the usual resort of weak and debased minds—ridicule. He found it as easy to asperse the character and motives of his young friend, when it suited his convenience, as to defame a presidential candidate who chanced to be in the way of his political aspirations. While waiting at the post-office, Tanner greatly entertained and amused his auditors by a repetition of his conversation with Fred, bountifully interspersed with such caricatures and misrepresentations as his taste suggested, and concluded with the remark, that he "was now perfectly satisfied of what he had long suspected, that Fred was in leading-strings, and his sister Kate held the lines." So, whenever Fred was in sight, he took occasion to shout, "Hurra for good Queen Bess!"

After Tanner had left the office, Fred sat some moments in silence, then said, in a sort of soliloquizing tone, "Is it possible that man—intelligent, God-like man—can become

so debased, so selfish, so contemptibly mean? If, on the open page which Tanner has exposed to view are indeed written the ethics of our political parties, then I wash my hands of any participation in their *party* affairs from this time henceforth and forever. But it can not, it must not remain so. Our glorious, blood-bought country must be redeemed. Another party must arise, and, having another spirit, restore the administration of the government to the care of men, who, like 'them of the olden time,' shall diligently seek the purity, peace, and consequent prosperity of the republic."

Fred was greatly moved by the unblushing meanness which Tanner's conversation had revealed, and the more so, as it served to explain many other things which had fallen under his observation, no less objectionable, and which he had not at all comprehended. The movements of the two rival and contending parties revealed one vast system of plotting and counterplotting, intrigue and deception—a lofty game, in which aspiring demagogues and abandoned desperadoes were adroitly shuffling their political cards, each resolved to make the one desperate throw which should secure the prize.

CHAPTER VI.

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN."

"Speak to that youth, thy timely warning
May save him many years of pain;
Though he appears all counsel scorning,
One gentle word may him restrain."

WHEN Charles Sherman entered the office he took the seat indicated by Fred, and, reclining his chair against the wall of the room, assumed a position of easy indifference, from which he had not removed, neither had he spoken since his entrance; yet he was by no means an inattentive listener. So absorbed was Fred in the contemplation of the fearful vision which opened up before him, that he had temporarily forgotten Charlie's presence, but, on changing his position, he was startled at seeing him sitting with closed eyes, pale and motionless. He immediately approached him, saying:

"Sherman, are you ill?"

To which he replied, "No and yes," and added, while a mournful smile stole over his features, "I am physically well, but mentally ill."

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Fred was greatly moved by the peculiarly sad and desponding tone in which his reply was offered, and said, "I hope you will not hesitate to command my services in any way you may need—although I fear I may not be very successful in 'ministering to a mind diseased.'"

"Thank you," said Sherman; and, encouraged by the ready sympathy of Fred, he continued, "I will no longer conceal the desire I have felt for making your acquaintance; and yet, strange as it may seem to you, I have shunned every opportunity of doing so, until now. This morning found me out of employment, and feeling unusually dispirited: after a little, Mr. Tanner came along, and soon introduced his favorite theme of party politics, to which I felt, just then, peculiarly disinclined, and I presume he thought I was not a very flattering listener, as he very soon proposed calling on you. To this I readily assented, hardly caring whither I went, and have been most happily disappointed at the result. Your remarks have awakened sensations to which I have long been a stranger."

This was the prelude to a desultory conversation of considerable length, which was continued, from time to time, as opportunity

offered, and resulted in a warm and devoted attachment. From his first acquaintance, Fred had felt exceedingly interested in his young friend, and every succeeding interview, served to convince him more fully that Charles was not what he had appeared. He had been made the sport of fortuitous circumstances, and they had stamped an unfavorable impression upon his external character. Thus, he had become despondent, unsocial, and, at times, indifferent to the duties of his station. But he was not wholly perverted. Down in the great deep of a generous heart, dwelt the kindly sensibilities of a better nature, which, ever and anon, arose and threw their glimmering rays over the darkened surface. That mysterious sympathy which enabled Fred to discover the amiable qualities of his friend, also led to the determination to save him, if possible, from that fate, toward which adverse circumstances seemed to urge him. Fred was very anxious that his friend might be benefited by the rich instructions and happy influences with which he was himself so signally favored; and, for that reason, often repeated to him such portions of the conversation to which he had listened at home, as might aid him in his efforts to reform. Fred often alluded, with

grateful emotions, to the dear friends who had given him so choice a place in their affections, and said that although at a tender age deprived of maternal care and counsels, yet a bright halo of happy influences had constantly surrounded his pathway; nor did he hesitate to acknowledge the fact, that, for much of his present and prospective happiness, he was greatly indebted to the tender solicitude and judicious watchfulness of his gentle sister. He referred to her timely cautions and admonitions, repeatedly expressed by letter when he was in college, and affectionately reiterated since his return—and acknowledged that to her kind suggestions he owed his escape from many a snare. On one occasion, he referred to the time when Kate had so earnestly requested him to spend the evening at home, in place of attending the meeting of the Woolsey club.

"I must confess," said he, "to a feeling of disappointment; but, so simple a request, and so affectionately urged, I certainly could not refuse, and therefore yielded with the best grace I could; but, let me tell you, Charlie, I believe that I owe my temporal salvation, in a great measure, to the influences of that evening. On a bright page of memory, carefully folded from the view of

all save dear friends, is pictured my guardian angel—my beautiful sister—laying both her hands in mine—the tears in her eyes holding parley with the smiles on her lips—as she whispered, ‘Come, Fred, don’t go to the club room to-night.’ Could I refuse? And when seated, with her hand still clasped in mine, she told me of the mental intoxication lurking in the cup of political excitement—when she tearfully told me that my moral nature was already suffering—that the stormy passions which now swept by in fitful gusts, would, ere-long, assume the strength of the resistless tornado, leaving a fearful desolation in its train—and when she pointed me to the many who have been irrecoverably lost under the same influences, I was compelled to admit, that, to one of my ardent temperament, there was indeed danger. When Tanner, who is a living example of the danger to which I have referred, came with you into the office, not sufficiently recovered from his cups to observe his customary prudence, and revealed those diabolical plans which had been adopted at the instigation of party zeal, all my remaining enthusiasm for the promotion of party politics, at the expense of truth and justice, took its everlasting flight. My interest in all efforts for the promotion of the

great and ennobling principles of purity and integrity, as applied to the administration of government, has suffered no abatement; but, as the occasional glimpses of the secret operations of partisan zeal, has revealed the necessity of entire reform, that interest has greatly increased, and I long for the ability and opportunity to render effective service in so good a cause.”

Charlie listened in silence. The heaving bosom and quivering lip, alone indicated the painful interest with which he contrasted his own cheerless condition with that of his friend; and when Fred ceased speaking, he exclaimed with deep emotion:

“Oh! would to God I too had had a sister Kate! Then I should never have come to this. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude for your kindness, and for the confidence you have reposed in me; and I hope to receive all the benefit from it that my heart tells me you desire to bestow.”

CHAPTER VII.

CHARLES SHERMAN'S STORY.

"Come, memory, come!
I'd muse with thee awhile;
I'd wander with thee down the long, long aisle
Of by-gone years.
Retired to where the world's deep hum
Sounds faintly in unwilling ears,
Let us converse of buried hopes and fears—
Of smiles and tears.
The smile—the tear;
Not happy smile alone—
Ah! no; but tears—those blossoms fully blown,
Dropt from the flower
Of feeling—every passing year—
Of times each passing day, each hour—
Has seen these blossoms, stirred by sorrow's power,
Fall in a shower."

ONE day Fred and Charlie took a stroll into a neighboring grove, where, seated upon the trunk of a fallen tree, they engaged, for some length of time, in cheerful conversation upon a variety of topics. At length, after a little interval of silence, Charlie said:

"You will recollect that I promised to give you, at some convenient opportunity, a little sketch of my family history. I think our acquaintance is sufficiently matured to justify

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me in opening to your view a page of memory, upon which no other friend has yet been permitted to look, and in allowing you to read therefrom some incidents of my early life, which have exerted an important influence in reducing me to my present unhappy condition.

"Of my parents I would speak with deference and true filial affection; yet I regard my early training as one great mistake; and to the influences which surrounded my childhood, I must attribute, in a great measure, the sorrow which has so deeply shadowed my subsequent life. My history is that of hundreds of others, whose morning sun has been shrouded in impenetrable gloom long ere it had reached its meridian. My father was emphatically a man of the world, was bred to the mercantile profession, and prosecuted it successfully until he had amassed a comfortable independence. He was ambitious of the distinctions which wealth confers; and the desire for its possession became the ruling passion of his life. His duties and obligations as an immortal being were all forgotten in the absorbing desire for the accumulation of wealth. My mother was inordinately fond of display, not only in her personal adornment, but also in the arrangements of her

house and table Her exquisite taste in these respects no one questioned, and the means for its indulgence my father never limited. He regarded it as an expression of the amplitude of his own resources: his pride was gratified, and he was content. I was their youngest, and, unfortunately, their only living child. I say, unfortunately, for had their two sons and daughters all lived, I think I could not have been made the spoiled and petted child of indulgence that I was. My mother exhausted all her little arts to decorate my person, and improve my external accomplishments, while my moral nature remained wholly uncultivated. I was allowed unrestrained indulgence in whatever passion or folly demanded. I was passionately fond of reading, but the few elegantly bound volumes that adorned the center-table were proscribed articles, and I was only allowed to admire their beautiful exterior, while my love of excitement sought indulgence in the indiscriminate perusal of such works of fiction as I was able to procure among my acquaintances. I made very respectable proficiency in school, where I was strictly kept; though my mother esteemed knowledge more as a passport to popular favor than from any just appreciation of its real value. I received the

benefit of a thorough, well-disciplined school, in which I remained until about fifteen years of age.

“At about this period, it became painfully manifest to my father, that his power of accumulation was not adequate to the family expenditures. His ambition had overleaped his discretion, and dark and portentous clouds were looming up in the future. He made great and unceasing, yet ineffectual efforts, to extricate himself from the embarrassments which were too surely approaching, and which were greatly accelerated by some rash speculations, upon which he had entered in the vain hope of averting the doom which awaited him. Of all this foreboding of evil, my mother remained in profound ignorance; an error which can scarcely be too severely reprobated. My father, harassed and perplexed with the care and anxiety which he studiously concealed, became peevish and irritable, exacting in his demands, and unreasonable in his requirements; and this state of things resulted, as might have been expected, in mutual recriminations and distrust. Meanwhile his financial affairs became hopelessly involved, and finally terminated in utter and irretrievable bankruptcy; and then concealment was no longer possible.

"With this sudden and unexpected calamity—this entire prostration of all her ambitious aims—my poor mother was overwhelmed, and after the first severe paroxysms of sorrow had passed, the blight of disappointment settled down upon her mind, and she gradually sank into a state of hopeless imbecility, in which she remained nearly two years, when she fell into that sleep that knows no waking, and we buried her and her griefs together. My mother's death was the finishing period of all the happy enjoyments, the pleasant associations, the cherished affections, which cling together and live only around 'the old hearthstone;' and, oh! my friend, you have never felt how desolate is the heart that knows no home!

"Just as my poor father had reached the meridian of life, he was rudely awakened from his dream of prosperity, to find himself bereft of all. His riches, in which he had trusted, had taken to themselves wings, and were not. All his loved ones, with a single exception, for whose sake he had toiled early and late, had passed to the spirit-land; and he stood, desolate and alone, like the strong oak denuded of foliage, through whose broken and decaying branches the wintry winds are forever sighing of departed glory.

The home of my childhood passed to the inheritance of strangers. My father took up his abode at a public house, and I found employment as clerk in a store. My father's former acquaintances were profuse in their attentions, and in various ways expressed their deep sympathy with him under his severe reverses. They repeatedly urged him to engage in some active employment, as the best mode of dissipating the excessive grief which was fast undermining his health.

"As the season was approaching when a new election of county officers was to be made, he was, at length, induced to accept a nomination as candidate for the office of sheriff of the county. Having secured his acceptance, all the usual electioneering maneuvers were put in requisition to secure his success. His political views being in harmony with those of the dominant party, and many of those who differed from him politically lending a cordial support, through sympathy with his misfortunes, his election was secured by a very large majority. This public expression of confidence and respect, together with the flattering congratulations of his friends, served as a stimulus to his drooping energies, and he entered upon his new duties with such evident pleasure, and for

some months exhibited such an increasing interest in his official labors, as to re-awaken the hope that a happier future was dawning upon him.

"In the prosecution of his official duties my father found himself surrounded with a new class of associates, each pressing his peculiar claim to consideration. Some had, by personal effort, largely contributed to his election, with the expectation that he, in turn, would aid them in some favorite scheme of self-promotion. Many others were mere obsequious hangers-on, with no definite object in view, save the hope of being able to snatch some of the falling crumbs of political favor, content simply to follow in the wake of some successful aspirant. With all such associates, the 'sparkling cup of villainous compounds,' was an indispensable accompaniment, and at all their social gatherings it was ostentatiously presented as the token of respect and a high appreciation of my father's official character and personal merits. The same vaulting ambition which had sustained him in his unwearied efforts for the accumulation of wealth, now stimulated his re-awakened energies in the prosecution of his political schemes. 'Our party, right or wrong,' was his motto; and he justified himself in the

adoption of any available means to secure the desired result. In short, he had fully adopted the creed of the modern school of politicians, which is briefly expressed by their favorite maxim, 'The end sanctifies the means.' He yielded himself to the full influence of political excitement, and ere the close of his official term he had thoroughly imbibed the political mania. His duties had become extremely irksome: he was eager to cast off all incumbrances and launch out upon the great deep, without restriction or restraint.

"At length, the prospect of a new presidential campaign opened up before him, inviting him to enter the field, and promising the full gratification of his most ambitious desires. The political contest of that season was most disastrous in its effect upon the public morals, characterized, as it was, by an intense excitement and reckless enthusiasm, unsurpassed in American history. Oh, I have often thought, if, after one such campaign, a list of the morally dead and wounded could be placed before us, we should stand appalled at the fearful result. In vain were the remonstrances of the few friends of my father who saw his danger, and kindly sought to direct his steps into the path of safety. The

lying lips and flattering tongue were more congenial to his perverted sensibilities: he listened to the siren song, loosened his little bark from her moorings, and set it afloat upon the madly-heaving billows. Without chart or rudder he was driven about, entirely at the mercy of the winds and waves; and can you doubt the result? Oh, when I saw my poor father about to make the fatal plunge into that eddying whirl, I felt that I must make one more effort. Nerved with the energy of despair, I sought him just as he was leaving his home for an absence of several months. I suppose my countenance betrayed the anxiety of my heart; for, on perceiving my approach, he turned to avoid me, but I caught his hand, and strove to unburden my painful thoughts. I stood full before his face, with my eyes gazing into his, but my tongue refused all utterance—I could not speak; yet his cheek blanched, and his lips quivered under that mute appeal—I felt the nervous tremor of his hand, which he violently snatched away—dashed from my sight, and—I never saw him more. He has never written to me. I heard of him occasionally, for a while, then all intelligence ceased. The last information I had of him was communicated by one of his political comrades, to the effect

that, according to his intention when he left home, he entered upon a course of electioneering efforts, which he pursued for some three months, traversing his own and a neighboring State, when he made the acquaintance of two disaffected politicians, who, with himself, having lingered long at the wine, rashly resolved upon a southern excursion—and finally, that after a time, the want of sufficient funds to meet his constant expenses, the continued mental excitement, and his increasing habits of inebriation, combined to lead him to the commission of a crime which will forever prevent him from returning to his native home.

“Oh, that I might be permitted to draw the dark pall of oblivion over these last years of his life, and hide his crime and his sorrows from human eye. But even this poor privilege is denied me, and the sad reflection is ever before me, that my poor father, if he still lives, is, at this moment, wandering up and down, a fugitive in the earth.

“Do you wonder that I shrink from these *political excitements*? And when I perceive the same baneful influences, which made me an orphan, and my father a degraded outcast, slowly gathering their folds around me, and feel myself irresistibly borne along over

the dark and turbid waters, and know that ere-long I must be dashed upon the rocks that lift their frowning heads just before me, do you yet wonder that the world seems clouded with sorrow, and even existence almost a calamity? I have, many times, resolved to break away from all former associations, and enter, at once, upon a new course of life, and then I have looked, in vain, for some friendly hand to guide, some beacon light to direct my steps to the haven of rest—and I seem bound, by the iron fetters of adverse fate, to my present almost hopeless condition. Few know, or would care to know, the trials, the temptations, the perils which frown upon the young man, who, bereft of kindred and home, is left to contend *alone* with the swelling tide of adverse circumstances. It is common to look upon sorrow in the *aggregate*; and he who is *suddenly* overwhelmed with calamity, may expect to meet the spontaneous greetings of sympathy on every hand, but the same sympathy grows weary of following, day by day, and hour by hour, the helpless sufferer, while passing under the darkly lengthening shadows of evil—and he gropes in vain for the helping hand—listens in vain for the word of cheer. Perhaps I may have been moody

and taciturn, when a more attractive manner might have won for me the sympathy for which my soul hungers; but if so, it is not always thus. I have many times seen the faint glimmerings of light in the distance, and with elated hopes have followed hard after it; but it has ever receded from my approach, and left me more disheartened than before. Thus, I have been constantly changing my place and position, without having attained my object. I entered Mr. Smith's employ with anticipations to which I had long been a stranger. He has the reputation of being a kind and honorable man, skillful and successful in educating young men to correct business habits, and is, withal, a consistent professor of religion; and I cheerfully admit his claim to such honorable distinction. But I think Mr. Smith, in common with most business men, is culpably negligent of the *moral* welfare of the young men in his employ. Very few, I believe, would be disposed lightly to receive, much less to repel, the voluntary greetings of that generous sympathy which prompts to a kind and paternal supervision of their highest and best interests. Especially does the gentle tone or affectionate word, which comes laden with the fragrance of home, appeal to the

heart of the stranger. Many, oh, how many, young men, have been wholly lost to society through cold and chilling neglect. Kind words and gentle deeds cost nothing, yet their genial influences will awaken fertility in the desolate heart, and myriads of delicate and fragrant flowers will spring into being, to beautify existence, and offer, in expressive silence, their humble thanksgiving for the sympathy which warmed them into life. In the detail of business transactions, Mr. Smith is unexceptionable; but I found not the prize I sought, and was about to abandon any further effort, when, guided by an influence, at that time unseen and unacknowledged, I entered your office, and listened to your conversation with Mr. Tanner. You know the sequel. From that period I date my return to life. I have no words to express my gratitude to you, my more than friend; but permit me to give this little memento a conspicuous place, that it may suggest, to all who chance to look upon it, a grand panacea for very many of the grievous ills that poor human nature is heir to."

When they had returned to the office, Charlie suspended upon the wall of the room a small, but very elegant frame, inclosing the following beautifully written inscription: "A

word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Fred gracefully acknowledged the delicate compliment, and retired to his seat. In the recital of the short, but eventful, history of Charles and his family, Fred discovered many interesting traits of character, which justly claimed his admiration; and he was agreeably surprised to find that one who had suffered so many rude and unnatural repulses, had still retained so many estimable qualities.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FATHER'S RETURN.

"Who knows, but, from above,
The angels may be looking on
With smiles of happy love."

FRED saw that his friend needed but the opportunity, to develop a most lovely character—and he had been revolving in his mind a method by which to correct some misapprehensions which darkened the mind of his friend, and also to aid him in maturing some future plans and purposes. His benevolent intentions were, however, for the present, brought to a termination by the sudden appearance of Judge Kingsley at the door. His face was always the index of good nature, but at this time, the sparkling brilliance that flashed from his keen gray eyes, and played over his benevolent features, indicated some very unusual occurrence. He thrust his head within the door, threw a hasty glance around the room, and perceiving no one present, save our young friends, exclaimed:

"Ha—ha—boys—good news! good news for you, Charlie! As I was coming to the

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office I met a stranger, who inquired for one Charles Sherman. I told him I would assist him in finding the gentleman. I went with him to the store, and not finding you there, I concluded I should of course find you here; and so I brought him along." Then, turning from the door, which he still held in his hand, he said, "Walk in, sir." After which, he immediately retired to the opposite side of the room, to await the result.

The stranger, tall, pale, and thin, slowly entered, and immediately fixing his earnest gaze upon Charlie, who had arisen upon his entrance, advanced to meet him, and throwing his arms around him, folded him to his heart. The tremulous exclamations, "My father!" "My son, my son!" were the only audible sounds which echoed this new comingling of filial and paternal affection.

On being released from the convulsive embrace of his father, Charlie stood, mute and transfixed with astonishment, until Mr. Sherman, on turning to a seat, observed Judge Kingsley, and with a smile and a wave of the hand, directed Charlie's attention to him, and thus aroused him from his bewilderment. An involuntary smile gathered upon the face of each, as they observed the Judge shaking with laughter, while the

great pearly drops were chasing each other down his cheeks. On perceiving that the attention of his friends was directed to himself, the Judge said:

"Ah, you smile, but I can't help it, and I don't wish to. The fact is, anybody can get up a laugh, but it takes your great-hearted men, your men of sensibility, to laugh and cry at the same time. And here is Fred too, who has fairly surrendered himself to the feminine propensity. Well, I like to see it. Let the full fountain overflow; it fertilizes and invigorates the growth of the social affections. I regard the involuntary tear as an index of character: it defines our proximity to him who created us in his own image, and who gave expression to the intensity of his own affection, through the silently falling tear. I have no patience with your men of stubborn dignity, who have such an instinctive dread of this amiable weakness—your hard-featured men, who have restrained and subdued the spontaneous gushings of human sympathy, until tears have forgotten the way to their eyes."

Having regained his composure, the Judge soon succeeded in restoring tranquillity to the minds of his companions, and all engaged, for a short time, in cheerful conversation.

As soon, however, as Charlie had recovered from the surprise of meeting the warm and affectionate embrace of one whom he had supposed lost to him forever, he arose and drew his arm within that of his father, and conducted him to his own room, where, in quiet retirement, they might recount the strange vicissitudes of the last few years.

After they had retired from the office, Judge Kingsley and Fred remained some little time, wholly absorbed in silent thought. Various emotions were awakened by the unexpected occurrences of the last hour. They scarcely knew whether to regard Mr. Sherman's arrival as the occasion of rejoicing or regret. That a *change* had been wrought in his character was manifest; but of what nature, or to what extent, or by what means accomplished, was not yet apparent. At length the Judge interrupted the silence by quoting the familiar maxim:

"'Truth is stranger than fiction!' I can not but hope that Mr. Sherman has been restored to his right mind. If such is the fact, he is capable of accomplishing great good, and our dear Charlie will be blessed indeed. Poor fellow! I hope the dark and stormy past of his young life may all be for-

gotten in the cheerful illumination of the future."

Mr. Smith was soon informed of the arrival of Mr. Sherman, and hastened to the office to mingle his congratulations with those of his friends the Kingsleys. He frankly expressed his regret that he had not sooner discovered the excellencies of Charlie's character, and justly attributed his failure to do so to the formidable barrier which his own chilling reserve had interposed. "I am indebted to you, my dear friend," said he, addressing himself to Judge Kingsley, "greatly indebted to you, for the timely hint, which, in directing my *thoughts* to the subject, has preserved me from committing an act of great injustice toward Charles, and also, I doubt not, preserved him from ruin. I now regard this case as a simple illustration of most others of like character. We sit as both judge and jury upon the conduct of those in our employ, and often summarily discharge them because they are not sufficiently devoted to our interests, when, if their efforts to serve us were promptly reciprocated, in a kind consideration for their happiness and permanent good, the result would be widely different. True, some minds seem impervious to kindly impressions; yet such is generally the sad

result of early erroneous instruction, together with other unhappy circumstances which have combined to rob their manhood of its brightest ornament. I think I have at last learned the fact that a man is far more than compensated for every expression of kindness and sympathy toward those in his employ, in the bountiful returns which flow into his own bosom. I did think Charles was stupidly negligent and indifferent to my interest, and in a moment of petulant ill-humor I discharged him. After your allusion to the peculiarly painful circumstances in which he was placed, and at your request, and his own promise of amendment, I had restored him to his place, I adopted an entirely different mode of treatment; and I very soon became satisfied that he was more sinned against than sinning. In fact, the poor fellow had been literally starving for the 'aliment that love feeds on.' As soon as he discovered that he had secured my confidence and sympathy, you can scarcely imagine what a change came over him. The star of hope was again in the ascendant, there was an object to be accomplished, an end to be secured, and life was not all a desert blank. Charles is grateful: warm and generous emotions leap up to greet me at every turn, and

gratitude sparkles in the eye, and lingers on the tongue continually. Oh, sir, how happy is that man who, in ministering to the mental and moral necessities of others, strews his own pathway with flowers. This simple lesson of experience has been of more value to me than a lifetime of service. Since my thoughts were first directed to this subject, it has occupied my mind almost entirely; and I am amazed at the magnitude and almost universal extent of an evil so fraught with disastrous results. I am ashamed that selfishness has been permitted so to dam up the well-springs of humanity in our hearts."

"I think, sir," replied Judge Kingsley, "we have been quite too unmindful of the fact that all our social duties are reciprocal. We can never receive a favor without placing ourselves under a corresponding obligation to the donor, and we must remain delinquent debtors until the claim be fully acknowledged. In our business arrangements this is readily admitted; and the man who should refuse assent to a principle so manifestly just, would be at once proscribed, as unworthy of confidence. The same principle is equally imperative in social life; and the man who deliberately closes up all the avenues of generous social impulses, allowing them to flow

only through the narrow channel of a reserved, calculating self-interest, does violence to the nature God has given him, and most effectually shuts himself out from the sunshine of human existence. But a kind spirit is easily compensated; sometimes a *look* only is sufficient to reveal a wealth of gratitude, which words or deeds might labor in vain to express.

CHAPTER IX.

"OUR PARTY"—THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY.

"A man that can render a reason is a man worthy of an answer;
But he that argueth for victory deserveth not the tenderness of
truth."

THE little side-room in the office of Judge Kingsley was the favorite resort of a few select friends, where many an hour had passed in pleasant and profitable intercourse. The unusual interest which an approaching election had awakened, made many new and somewhat incongruous accessions to the little group. On one occasion some seven or eight individuals had assembled in the office, and the conversation was very naturally directed to the various political topics which at that time agitated the public mind. In the defense of their peculiar views each was tenacious of his own opinions, because it expressed the "doctrine" of *his party*; and each condemned the radically defective opinion of his antagonist, because *his party* organ had declared hostility against it. The debate was continued for some time by two or three

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of the younger members of the party, the older men thinking it best to wait until the excessive zeal of the former had in some degree evaporated, when their wiser counsels might perhaps be heeded.

George Benson was especially vehement in the defense of a favorite dogma of his party, and hurled the most bitter invectives against all who had dared to express their dissent from him, sparing neither age nor station. He was permitted to indulge himself in the delivery of a frothy harangue of some length, during which all present observed the most profound silence. George at once construed their silence into a tacit admission of his profound wisdom and sublime attainments in political science; and under the impression that he had really annihilated all opposition, his vanity became painfully inflated. His flushed countenance and heaving chest, and profuse perspiration, indicated that even his exhausted vocabulary had failed to furnish words of sufficient power to throw off the ponderous weight of enthusiasm with which he was oppressed, as he sank exhausted to his seat.

After the thunder had ceased, Mr. Smith, assuming a very quiet, deferential manner, ventured to propose the inquiry: "Mr. Ben-

son, what, think you, will be the practical influence of the theory you advocate with so much assurance? and how is it to operate in order to accomplish the result you anticipate?"

"Oh," he replied, "I don't know anything about that, but I know the 'long heads' say that it will be the salvation of the country, and that we can not prosper without it; and *they* know, and that is *enough* for me."

"A-hem," said Mr. Smith, "I supposed of course that you had a perfect understanding of the subject you are defending with so much enthusiasm, and I hoped to be able to gain some information upon a point which I frankly confess I do not fully understand."

A suppressed smile flitted across the countenances of all present, save that of our hero of polemics, who sat with his head erect, in sublime unconsciousness of the rebuke. Mr. Smith continued:

"There are long heads, as you term them, in the opposite party, who are quite as confident that the adoption of this theory by the government, although it may confer a limited benefit, will, in its general results, prove exceedingly disastrous to the country. Now, without a thorough personal acquaintance with the subject, how shall we be able to

decide which is right, 'when doctors disagree?'"

"Oh, pshaw!" petulantly returned Benson, "they don't believe any such thing—they *know* it can not fail to be a great benefit, and they only oppose it because it is known as the pet watchword of our party. I know most of you are opposed to us, but I can't help that. 'If the coat fits you must put it on.' The fact is, gentlemen, the opposition would rather see everything go to destruction than to adopt any measure that originated with our party."

"Did you obtain a knowledge of *that* fact from the long heads in your party?" inquired Judge Kingsley.

"It makes no difference where I got it," replied Benson, "it's a *fact*, as you and your party very well know."

"Well," said the Judge, "I am the oracle of *no* party, neither am I so blind an adherent to party organizations as to defend a wrong, or reject a right principle, come from what source they may. I honor right principles and right conduct, and their intelligent defenders, but I hold in the highest esteem the man who uniformly and fearlessly governs his own conduct by the ennobling principles which he advocates; and, let me kindly

add, it is highly important that we thoroughly *understand* the principles we undertake to defend."

Benson was evidently quite exasperated, and replied somewhat tartly, "I know that you and some others that I might name are of the doubtful order, and belong nowhere in particular—vote sometimes with one party and sometimes with the other, and then, again, with neither, just as your fancy dictates. Now what are such men good for? Nobody can depend upon them—I despise the whole herd of them! If it is worth while to have any party at all, I say *stick to it*, through thick and thin—sink or swim, live or die, stick to the party—that's *my* principle."

The conceited ignorance and arrogant assumption of the newly-fledged politician were so manifest that even those who sympathized with his views, of whom one or two were present, were disgusted with his impudent manners. One or two others retorted somewhat severely, and the discussion was fast assuming a belligerent aspect, when Benson consulted his own safety by beating a hasty retreat, muttering, meanwhile, certain significant expletives, which it is unnecessary to repeat.

CHAPTER X.

THE "HELP-MEET."

"He whose soul
Ponders this true equality, may walk
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope."

WHEN Benson left the office of Judge Kingsley, he had advanced but a few steps before meeting Mr. Tanner, who instantly shouted, "Hurra for our good Queen Bess!" and after repeating it, entered the office. With a silly smirk upon his countenance he peered around to see what impression had been made. He was somewhat taken aback on seeing so many present, and meeting no response to his effort at ridicule; but on perceiving some members of his own party present, he was emboldened to advance and seat himself. After a moment of silence, in which all sorts of emotions were represented on the various countenances present—some indicating blank surprise, some amusement, and some indignation—Fred came to their relief, saying:

"I think, Mr. Tanner, you seem to be shouting for a new candidate."

To which Mr. Tanner replied: "Knowing you to be a very *modest* young man, I was shouting for your benefit."

"Ah, indeed!" said Fred. "Well, it is not to be denied that good Queen Bess possessed some excellent traits of character, for which she is entitled to my admiration; but I do not understand the significance of your allusion to her just now."

Mr. Storms, who was present, had often heard Tanner repeat the expression, and knew its import, and perceiving an opportunity for vexing the Kingsleys, whose consistent character was a constant rebuke to his own, and moreover observing Tanner's hesitation, promptly answered:

"I can tell you. He thinks you and the Judge, there, have a great partiality for *female sovereigns*, inasmuch as you seem to have gauged your political course by the direction of the wife and sister—especially the latter."

"I perceive," said Judge Kingsley, smiling, "that I am implicated in the charge; and, if you mean by a preference for female sovereigns, that, next to the Supreme Being, I assign the highest place in human affections to woman, in the varied relations of mother, wife, sister, and daughter, I unhesitatingly

and proudly admit the charge. If you mean that, in all which relates to my secular interests, in all that pertains to my mental, moral or spiritual concerns, I admit the propriety of unrestricted confidence, and listen with gratitude and respect to the suggestions and counsels of my wife, again I admit the charge; and, allow me to add, that in all the course of my life, up to the time of gray hairs, I have never had occasion to suspect the wisdom of my course—nay, more—I have never persisted in the prosecution of any enterprise, against the remonstrances of my wife, with successful results."

"Ah, well," said Tanner, "there may be exceptions; but, as a general thing, I don't think that women know anything about business, and much less about politics, and their meddling only bothers a fellow, and don't do any good. You just give up to them once, and you may always do so. Woman's influence, indeed! I tell you, if a man has got any spunk in him, he'll shake it all off, and show his independence. For my part, I do as I please—I submit to no woman's influence—I'm not the fellow to be nosed round by them, anyhow."

"I think," said Mr. Smith, "that no one would ever suspect you of having fallen

under the gentle and refining influence you so much deprecate."

Tanner sprang from his seat, exclaiming, "Do you mean to insult me, sir?"

"Oh no," replied Mr. Smith, "not at all, Mr. Tanner, not at all, sir; a mere coincidence of opinion, nothing more; certainly, no harm intended."

Tanner had the sagacity to perceive, by the universal laughter which followed, that he had, unwittingly, turned the tables upon himself, and without further remark, seated himself, to brood in sullen silence over his defeat.

Among other auditors present was one Colonel Lloyd. He was a man of very large physical dimensions, and austere and taciturn habits, which, together with the customary frown that cast its ominous shadow over his entire physiognomy, rendered his appearance altogether uninviting. But, then, poor man! he had his own trials; he was compelled always to bear about within himself the troublesome consciousness that Col. Lloyd was *not properly appreciated*. In making the estimate of himself, he frequently found his own self-conceit quite at variance with the opinions of others, and was often compelled to submit to the humiliation of seeing men

of far less pretensions preferred before himself. He found his greatest consolation under such circumstances in repeating his favorite remark: "*Strange!* folks don't *know* anything!" That he was born to command was an unquestionable fact, but the absolute dictatorship which he had assumed in his own family was too limited in extent, and of a nature too private, to satisfy his ambitious desires. Beside, why should a man who was competent to preside over the destinies of nations, to guide and govern armies, be content with a simple household dominion? The nearest approach to his proper position was, when having donned his military cap and shining epaulets, he found himself with sword in hand, seated upon his spirited charger, and giving the word of command to the well-drilled military companies who were so fortunate as to own Col. Lloyd for their commanding officer. Hence, he was passionately fond of military displays, and only regretted that they did not oftener occur. He was enabled, however, to effect a partial remedy of the evil by indulging in sundry romantic visions of sanguinary battles fought, and brilliant victories achieved under the command of the illustrious Col. Lloyd. The lofty spirit of this hero of a hundred (imaginary) battles

was sadly chafed and fretted under the remarks to which he had just listened—he regarded the whole subject with the most unmitigated contempt. That a man occupying Judge Kingsley's eminent position in society should admit the capability of his wife to sit as his associate in matters of deliberation or investigation, was ridiculously absurd, and, in his estimation, quite derogatory to the dignity of his manhood. He would not, however, compromise his own dignity by engaging in the debate as the coadjutor of James Tanner, and, by dint of extraordinary effort, succeeded in maintaining his silence until the former had retired from the conflict. That it was an uncomfortable silence was manifest from his frequent change of position—nervously running his fingers through his hair—the scornful and defiant expression of his countenance, and the energy with which he frequently struck the end of his silver-headed cane upon the floor. During this constrained silence what stupendous thoughts had birth, or what sublime theories were evolved, what brilliant coruscations of intellect were flashing athwart the dull chambers of the brain—and there was plenty of room there—so to agitate his whole corporeal system, must forever remain

a profound mystery. When he discovered that Mr. Tanner had really been chagrined into silence, Col. Lloyd availed himself of the temporary suspension of the conversation to administer a rebuke, which he thought would prevent any recurrence of the disagreeable subject. After again setting down his cane, with an emphasis that awakened the instant attention of all present, with a prolonged, "ahem," he commenced:

"Gentle-men, this subject is, in my opinion, *quite too small* to engage the attention of any *man* of common intelligence. It is every man's business to manage his own affairs, in his own way. In *my* opinion, it is his duty to maintain the position which the Bible assigns him, as the head or governor of his household—a term which, in my estimation, embraces *all* that belongs to him. But," he added, with a glance at Judge Kingsley, meant to be annihilating, "if any man chooses voluntarily to divest himself of the dignity of his station, and descend to a level with his wife and children, and *all govern one another*, why, it is his right so to do—it is his own business, and a good time he must have of it, I think."

Judge Kingsley replied, with his usual complaisance and cheerfulness: "I perceive, by

the remarks of some of the gentlemen present, that my position, with reference to the subject under discussion, is quite misunderstood, and that I am suspected of entertaining very absurd notions. Will gentlemen allow me, in few words, to express my view of the whole subject? It is so simple—so self-evident—that I think it must commend itself to every man's conscience. In the family arrangement, which is the first social organization of which we have any knowledge, it is manifestly true that *man* was placed at the head, and that it was his peculiar province to guide, direct, control, and exercise a general supervision over all the amazing interests resulting from that arrangement. Let us glance, for a moment, at the nature and extent of those interests which, by a Divine appointment, claim the superintendence of man. A world was to be peopled with intelligent, immortal beings, and these beings were to commence their existence in a state of entire mental, moral and physical dependence. They were to be taught to provide for their own physical necessities by a system of well-directed, efficient labor. At the same time, as the dawning intellect unfolded its capacities, they were to be taught a knowledge of the laws which govern and

sustain their own complicated and mysterious being. They were to be taught their relation to God, as their creator and preserver, their kind and ever-watchful heavenly Father;—their relations and duties to each other, as one universal brotherhood—children of that Father;—their entire dependence each on the other, and all on God. To aid us in the better accomplishment of this mighty work, it was minutely subdivided, and the *family* relation was instituted; but even then was man able *alone* to perform a task so endlessly diversified, so bewildering in its complications, so stupendous in its results? His Creator thought not so, and in his great kindness he provided a help, *meet* or *suitable*, for man, who was to be his cherished companion and co-laborer in the performance of the noble and glorious work He had given him to do."

"Allow me," said Col. Lloyd, "to interrupt you a moment—your remarks seem to imply the *intellectual equality of the sexes*. I can not believe that you entertain an idea so absurd. Am I correct, sir?"

"I decline expressing any opinion upon that point," replied the Judge. "I do not think it possible, under existing circumstances, to form any just comparative esti-

mate; neither, were we able, do I think any possible benefit could result from the decision. On the contrary, it would prove an endless source of contention and discontent. I think the decision of the Almighty the wisest and safest; and with that we should be content. He has given to man a 'helper,' whom he considered competent to aid him in the perfect accomplishment of the great object of life. We shall give the best proof of our own wisdom by diligently and earnestly striving, as dutiful children, to accomplish the great designs of our Father. Be it His to direct, and ours to obey. In the marriage relation God has pronounced the parties one, and designed them to exhibit the most perfect unity of interest, anticipations, tastes and desires, all beautifully and harmoniously working out the glorious result. But how can this perfect unity of design and effort be preserved, if one party is kept in profound ignorance of the plans and purposes of the other? Or, how can an intelligent and efficient co-operation be preserved, without unrestricted mutual confidence? If either party to this sacred compact becomes delinquent in duty, or refuses to act as a co-laborer, the whole social machinery is thrown into disorder. The *one* wheel, upon which the whole burden

rests, moves heavily forward, or ceases its revolutions altogether. If the wife and mother selfishly devotes her thoughts and energies to the capricious indulgences and insatiable demands of fashionable follies, she is guilty of treason to God and man—recreant to the high trust to which her Creator has appointed her, and darkens her own pathway with clouds of sorrow. On the other hand, the husband and father who, willing to hold his appropriate place as head of the household, yet forgets the primary object of the family arrangement, and regards those under his care as having no higher object to accomplish than to serve as mere tributaries to his self-enjoyment—who retires from the perplexities of business to the hallowed precincts of home with a frown upon his brow and chilling words of unkindness upon his lips—whose arbitrary selfishness blinds his eyes to the thousand little nameless attentions which make home attractive and the family circle a holy retreat—such a man utterly destroys his own happiness, and with his own hand poisons the fountain of domestic felicity. Like the sun, the great head and center of the solar system, he must make his light to shine, and his warm and cheerful beams to fall upon the dependent lesser orbs, and they

will not fail to return the same influences which they receive. Woman may not be, is not, required to perform the same particular kind of labor, yet her peculiar duties are none the less imperative, or of any the less importance. Their very nature necessarily calls into vigorous exercise the most refining and ennobling qualities of our being, and while man is brought into more direct contact with the rougher and sterner duties of life, and often unconsciously suffers from the connection, none is so prompt to discover any little aberration of mind or manner, and none so faithful to admonish, as the ever-watchful wife and mother. Like the skillful artist, she seeks to remove our defects; or, if the attempt is unsuccessful, still seeks to hide them from observation by throwing over them the delicate drapery of her own gentleness and refinement. Men have yet to learn that the great object of life can never be secured by the accumulation of wealth *alone*, nor by obtaining positions of eminence in place or power, nor yet in self-enjoyment and sensual indulgence, but only in making all our family arrangements to combine in a harmonious prelude to that more perfect organization of the great family of Heaven, where our universal Father, God, will for-

ever shed the full radiance of his infinite love upon the adoring hearts of his children, whose purest, most exalted happiness, must forever consist in reflecting the same infinite love."

The remarks of the Judge were listened to with most respectful attention by all present. His fine countenance glowed with the animation which his intense interest in the subject had excited, yet it was expressive of quiet serenity and perfect self-possession—the majesty of truth in calm repose. In his childlike simplicity, he but uttered the breathings of his own heart; yet every word carried with it the irresistible conviction of its truthfulness, and fell with scorching emphasis upon Col. Lloyd, who silently cursed his own folly in having referred to the subject at all. He dared not attempt to destroy the force of an argument so clearly true, and he would never acknowledge a defeat, so he simply replied, "Well, all I have to say, is, every man must suit himself, if he can—it is a subject I never like to talk about."

CHAPTER XI.

COL. LLOYD AND JUDGE KINGSLEY ON THE WAR QUESTION.

THOSE moral natures which love darkness rather than light, have an instinctive dread of contact with those of an opposite character; and Col. Lloyd sought refuge in an abrupt change of the subject. Addressing himself to Mr. Smith, he inquired:

"By the way, sir, have you heard that there is a strong probability of a war with Mexico?"

"I noted," replied Mr. Smith, "that the morning papers so represent the case; but I sincerely hope the reports may be exaggerated, and that we may be preserved from the calamities, the horrors, and the guilt, incident to a war with any nation, and especially with a weak and defenseless neighbor."

"Well," replied the Colonel, "*I* hope they will crowd the matter right along—and teach those half-civilized upstarts not to interfere with their betters—little, weak, divided, distracted Mexico undertaking to contend with the United States! Such presumption ought

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to be—and it will be—signally rebuked. I hope our government will at once make a formal declaration of war; and then all *I* should ask would be, the control of the militia of our own State, and I would soon teach the rebels what submission is."

"Perhaps," said Fred, "the question can be more easily and comfortably settled here than in the tented field."

"It can be accomplished anywhere without difficulty," replied the Colonel with some spirit; "they can be very easily and speedily subjugated, and *then*, what a fine acquisition to our territory—eh? I think our government has been plodding quite too long already—there is nothing like the stimulus of war to polish the wheels of her machinery, which have grown rusty in their long repose."

"I must beg leave to dissent," said Judge Kingsley, "from the views expressed by Col. Lloyd. With the exception of strictly defensive war, and that only in the failure of all pacific measures, I regard all war as not only unjustifiable, but in open rebellion against both the precept and example of Him who came to proclaim 'peace and good-will to men.'"

"But, sir," said Tanner, with a look of triumph, "you are particularly fond of quoting

the Bible, which, you say, should be our guide on all subjects, and that not only justifies war, but it informs us that God even commanded his chosen people to engage in wars of aggression and extermination. Now, how can you reconcile your pacific theory with your model guide?"

"In the wars to which you have alluded," replied the Judge, "the Israelites were acting under the direct and positive command of God, who, in most instances, condescended to inform them of his reasons for making them the instruments through whom he visited his severe displeasure upon the incorrigibly sinful nations. When his own beloved and chosen people disregarded his authority, and adopted the sinful customs and practices of the surrounding heathen nations, the same sore judgments were visited upon themselves. In both cases, you will observe, war was the chosen medium for the infliction of God's severest judgments, the fearful execution of his 'strange work.' Whenever you can produce the direct command of God, as your authority for engaging in war, then, of course, I shall offer no objections; but let us bear in mind, my friends, that God's command is a much safer guide than cupidity, avarice, or revenge."

Mr. Storms remarked, "For my part, I have not so much confidence in the authority of the Bible, as some men profess to have; some of it is well enough, very good; but I do not believe that the Old Testament is any more inspired than the spelling-book is. It is a curious document for holy men, inspired by the Holy Ghost, to write. Why, it justifies some things that *I* would not be guilty of, and I do not profess to be *very good* any how."

Mr. Smith said he had many times heard the same doubt of the Divine inspiration of the Old Testament expressed; and even sometimes by professors of religion; and fearing that the mistake was more prevalent than might be supposed, he would like to listen to Judge Kingsley's views upon that point.

The Judge replied, "I think such doubts arise wholly from a misapprehension of the object for which the sacred Scriptures were written. Our Savior has sufficiently confirmed the authenticity of the Scriptures, in his direction to the unbelieving Jews, to 'search the Scriptures' for proof of his divine mission. This direction must have referred to the Old Testament, for the New was not then written. Again, the writers of the New Testament, together with many others whose

names are introduced into the sacred narrative, including our Savior, have quoted, as from unquestioned authority, from the Old Testament, at least twenty-five times; and, as they have expressed no open dissent from any portion of it, we are left to infer that they gave it their unlimited sanction. The primary object of the Scriptural writings is concisely and beautifully expressed in St. Paul's letter to his dear young friend Timothy, in the following words: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable'—for what? 'for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God,' or the man who would lead a godly life, 'may be thoroughly furnished' with all necessary helps to the performance of good works. A part of the Old Testament is a simple historical narrative of the rise and fall of nations, of wars and conquests, interspersed with the most vivid delineations of individual character, together with the invariable and inevitable results of good or bad conduct, whether manifested in an individual or national capacity. What an important lesson of correction, reproof, and instruction in righteousness, do these historical pages afford! and yet I think it is this portion of the Bible that has fallen into dis-

repute among careless readers. I say *careless* readers, for who, that reads attentively with the object of Biblical instruction in view, could presume to question the Divine inspiration of a work, upon every page of which are so vividly impressed the finger-marks of Deity. It is like a broad painting spread out before us, representing at a glance, the whole lifetime of nations and individuals in political and ecclesiastical office, in public and private life, in wealth and in want, in prosperity and adversity, and in all the varied relations and conditions of human life. It represents the true and only way to prosperity and happiness in this life, with instructions so ample and so simple, that even a child need not err; and then all along is presented, in fearful contrast, the fatal consequences of trusting to human understanding. I wish to suggest another important idea, which some of our friends seem to have overlooked, namely, the fact that a person is employed to write an authentic history of an individual or nation, does by no means make him an *indorser* of all the acts which compose that history. Hence, 'holy men' are not responsible for the wickedness which they have faithfully chronicled. As the all-absorbing theme of thought and discussion now is

politics, suffer me to add, that these same Scriptures of the Old Testament furnish the most safe and perfect guide, not only in the choice of civil rulers, but also in the equitable and prosperous administration of government. Its sublime moral truths form a safe and permanent basis of government, which is wisely adapted to all nations, in all ages, and for all time. All reliable profane history confirms the truthful delineations of the Scriptures, and points, with startling fidelity, to the same significant fact, that wrong-doing in high places, however plausibly it may be concealed or excused, always saps and undermines the foundations of the governmental structure, and inevitably causes it to crumble into decay and ruin. If any gentleman present has never read the Old Testament with the object of its instructions in view, permit me now to make the request that he will do so. Observe the character and operations of mind therein delineated, and how perfectly they correspond with the character and conduct of men under your own observation. Notice how the various good and evil passions are represented as performing their part in the drama of life, and see if you are not fully convinced that, *He* only, who knew the hearts of men, could

have directed the minds of those who wrote."

"Well, Colonel," said Mr. Tanner, "what do you think *now*, about driving us all off to Mexico—eh? Think you've got the right commission?"

Col. Lloyd sprang from his seat with as much animation as was necessary to raise his ponderous body, and at each step setting his cane upon the floor with an impressive emphasis, proceeded to the door. It was supposed that, in passing, he muttered his indignant reply to Mr. Tanner, but the phrase, "set of pusillanimous puppies," was all that met the ear. This was a favorite expression with the Colonel, and often answered as a very convenient substitute for argument. After he had made his exit, every one involuntarily drew a long breath, and glanced around upon his fellows. At length Tanner, raising his eyebrows, and assuming a well-feigned look of surprise, exclaimed,

"P-h-e-w! don't you smell powder?"

"Oh," said Mr. Smith, "the danger is all over now, the Colonel has only collapsed again. When he gets as far as 'pusillanimous,' I always know the catastrophe is at hand. He must have a wonderful power of endurance, for such occasions are of frequent

occurrence, while, as yet, none have seemed to prove fatal."

These little social gatherings at the office of Judge Kingsley, furnished a rare opportunity for witnessing the varied operations of the human mind. They were miniature representations of the great panorama of life—revealing the unwelcome truth that most men are "of the earth, earthy"—content to live and die the veriest slaves of their own selfish passions—while here and there appears one, who is ever struggling upward, and, by his uniformly consistent and self-denying conduct, convincing all beholders of his heavenly origin and destiny.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SOCIAL GATHERING.

"Naught was done from ostentation,
Or for praise of men."

A FEW, who sympathized with Judge Kingsley in his benevolent aspirations, found their highest social enjoyment in listening to the lessons of pure and exalted patriotism, with which his conversation abounded; and it was suggested that they might be somewhat selfishly monopolizing this pleasure. Accordingly they cheerfully acceded to a proposition to continue these social interviews at their private residences, and to enlarge their circle by the addition of their wives and daughters, and such other friends as would be interested in this mode of rational and profitable employment. At each meeting some individual was invited to entertain the company at the next with a sketch of some interesting portion of his own life, or that of some friend in whom he was personally interested, which should illustrate or enforce some moral or religious principle.

This was to be followed by a general discussion of the principle evolved, in which all were expected to participate, and contribute to the general entertainment. The association was formed on the principle of social affinity, without any prescribed formula of sentiment, or terms of admission. The one desire of mutual advancement in all that pertains to the highest good of man, as a social, moral, and intelligent being, was a sufficient passport to a welcome reception.

After two or three evenings passed in the quiet enjoyment of this *true* "feast of reason and flow of soul," one was seldom found who was willing to waive the privilege of remaining in the connection. No bacchanalian orgies, no low, sensual indulgences, no unkind allusions to those present or absent, were allowed to intrude their dark and repulsive shadows, "where heart met heart, reciprocally kind." Pure, refining, and elevating sentiments of a practical character formed the basis of familiar conversation. Each mind was drawn onward and upward, bathing its wings in the pure, invigorating atmosphere, and reveling in its exuberant freedom, it soared still upward, each lofty attainment awakening yet higher aspirations, until the soul felt its affinity with the Infinite One.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. SHERMAN'S NARRATIVE.

"Who beheld
The struggling hope, by shame, by doubt repelled—
The agony of prayer—the bursting tears—
The dark remembrances of guilty years,
Crowding upon the spirit in their might?"

"Perchance the prayer
Learned at her knee, came back on his despair,
The blessing from her voice, the very tone
Of her 'good-night.'"

A FEW weeks after Mr. Sherman's return, he was invited to pass an evening at the residence of Mr. Smith, that he might narrate to his friends some incidents in his personal experience. The company assembled at an early hour, and having interchanged the ordinary civilities, quietly sat down to listen.

"My friends," said Mr. Sherman, "under other circumstances delicacy would forbid the attempt to entertain you with a view of my checkered life; but, when I regard the *object* of this association, and, above all, when I remember the mercy that has preserved me, a homeless wanderer, and restored me to the

warm embraces of filial affection and confiding friendship, I feel no hesitancy in sacrificing my personal preferences, if by so doing I may benefit others.

"With the leading incidents of my life, up to the time of my final departure from home, most of you are familiar. But of that hour—that dark and dreadful hour—when I shook off the grasp of Charlie's hand, and madly rushed from his presence, you can never know. My condition at that time must be endured to be understood; and I hope none of you may be compelled to learn how much the human heart is capable of enduring. I have often wondered since, that my tottering reason did not entirely abdicate her throne, and leave her earthly temple tenantless. Of the causes of all this, it is sufficient for me to say that I had so long lost all self-control, and had so long granted unlimited indulgence to my passions, that they had gained the entire supremacy. I seemed borne along to inevitable destruction, without power to make an effort for my own preservation. I *felt* the galling truth, 'his servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, whether of righteousness unto holiness, or of sin unto death.' When I left Charlie, I went, by previous arrangement, upon an

electioneering tour, which employed me a few months. My restless spirit tired of that employment, and I readily joined two boon companions in a strolling excursion, with no definite object in view, save to 'get away from trouble.' We went southward, and for several days our progress was marked by no unusual incident. With that carelessness which is characteristic of infatuation, we had failed to furnish ourselves with necessary funds, each being sustained by the hope that his neighbor was better off than himself, yet fearing to make the inquiry, lest his fears should be confirmed. At length we reached the little town of Laurens, in Kentucky, with empty pockets and empty stomachs—the last shilling having been deposited upon the counter of a little groggery, by George Dana, for a gin-sling, in which we all shared. This was about ten o'clock in the morning, and as we had tasted nothing since then, our hunger began to be clamorous. I was suffering from severe headache, the consequence of fasting, fatigue and anxiety, and as we were approaching a thrifty-looking farm-house, I proposed asking permission to remain through the night and obtain refreshment, which I very much needed. To this proposition Sam Joice instantly demurred, saying, 'So many

together, under such circumstances, will excite suspicion.' He told us to pass on to a small grove a little distance beyond and rest, while he should return and secure some relief, at least, for our hunger. My wearied frame and aching limbs seemed to refuse to bear me any further, and I very willingly yielded to his request. The shadows of night had gathered around us, but, guided by the star-light, we penetrated the little grove about a quarter of a mile from the house, and upon the bosom of mother earth I laid a throbbing head and a heavy heart. But sleep at length interposed, and my headache and heartache were alike forgotten. I fell into a profound slumber, from which I did not awake until three o'clock in the morning, when I was aroused by Joice, with an invitation to partake of the banquet he had prepared. I immediately arose, faint from my protracted fasting, yet somewhat refreshed with my night's rest, and was greatly surprised at seeing before me a bountiful supply of bread, butter, doughnuts, and pieces of cold chicken. To all my inquiries respecting their mode of obtaining these supplies, I could obtain no direct answer. Dana said, if my wants were so abundantly supplied without any efforts of my own, I ought certainly to be satisfied. Joice

said *he* was responsible, and if I could not trust *him*, I might look out for myself in future. I was too much exhausted to spend much time in making inquiries, and silently partook of the refreshment before me. The circumstances with which I was surrounded, together with the amplitude of the repast, awakened some painful suspicions, which were greatly strengthened by the unnoticed observance of their sly interchange of significant looks. I thought it prudent, however, for the present, to give no expression to my suspicions, and proceeded to dispose of my breakfast. The remains were then carefully collected, and pocketed for future use, and we recommenced our pilgrimage. Very little conversation passed between us until we had advanced some miles from our encampment; but, as the early hours wore away, the scenery was enlivened by the bustling activity of a newly-awakened world. At length we reached a quiet retreat upon the border of an extended grove. Oh how beautifully it lay sleeping in undisturbed retirement! The smooth green grass was spread like a mossy carpet beneath our feet, and the exuberant summer foliage hung fluttering in the breath of the pure morning breeze. No habitation was in sight—no object met the eye in all

the broad expanse before us but the handiwork of the Almighty—no sound broke upon the ear save the choral harmony of myriads of birds, and as it came floating upon the air, my *heart* answered, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest!' This simple view of nature in her calm, quiet repose, contrasted with the turbulent and discordant feelings which held their reign of terror in my own bosom, awakened sensations to which I had long been a stranger. I saw that our Creator had made all things good—that sweet peace and harmony reigned over all the works of His hands—I saw that I was my own worst enemy; but, with all my perverseness, I had an appreciative sense of the beautiful. I longed to throw myself upon the grassy couch and yield up my whole being to the refreshing, inspiring influence. I was about to propose a halt, when Dana called out,

"'Halloo, there, let's stop here awhile and rest, and take a lunch—the world is all before us, and we may as well take it easy, and enjoy it as we pass along.'

"'Agreed,' said Joice, and turning upon me a very significant look, added, 'I think, by this time, we are safe enough from pursuit.'

"Much as my suspicions had been excited, I was not prepared for this bold, though indirect avowal of crime, and I stood some moments in speechless amazement. My companions seemed to enjoy my discomfiture, and Dana jocosely remarked:

"'Why, man! don't be looking so dubious, if you have not been dodging around short corners long enough to get your spunk up steeper than that, you are not the man I thought you was.'

"Joice here held up a pocket flask containing brandy, and shaking it up before us, said, 'Here's to our better acquaintance,' and passing it around, each of us partook of its contents. 'Now,' continued Joice, 'if you have been calculating to live on the benevolence of the world at large, you have more faith in mankind than I have—I think we have all earned our living, and I, for one, am bound to have it. If I can't have it, voluntarily, from those I have served, I shall do the *other* thing.'

"Beginning, as I thought, to comprehend their plan of operations, I replied, 'If you are going to lay claim for services rendered, we must return to the community for whom we have labored—it is hardly the fair thing to tax strangers for benefits we may have

conferred upon our friends, in a distant part of the country.'

"Well," said Joice, 'let us examine our accounts a little. We have sacrificed our time and talents, neglected our personal obligations, and exhausted our pecuniary means, and are literally destitute of all things. And what compensation have we received in return? Just precisely nothing, but words of promise meant to be broken. And, mark you, we have not been laboring for a few pet friends, but for our common country. Who has labored harder, or more perseveringly, in this last presidential campaign, and who has rendered more effective service than we have? And if we had been rewarded, according to the voluntary promises of those we served, with some remunerative office, we should have been content still to serve them. Our labors are as richly deserving of reward and as beneficial to the country, as are the labors of those who have used us for a "cat's paw" to foist themselves into an honorable and lucrative position. But "Uncle Sam is rich enough" to provide for all his children, and if we are neglected, or our claims set aside, why then, we must make up our minds to "face the music," and each one march up to the crib and help himself. That is *my*

logic, and that is the course I am resolved to pursue. Now let us have a general consultation, that we may devise means and measures—that we may act understandingly and in concert—and decide upon some plan of operations for supplying at least the pressing wants of the inner man. Come, free your minds, brethren.'

"Well," said I, 'before proceeding any farther in that direction, I must know precisely how and where you obtained the supplies for last night; and, by the way, we may as well be jogging along, and make the most of our time.'

"We then took up our line of march—and Joice said, 'I had my eye on that farm-house some time before we reached it. I saw every indication of thrift and plenty, and resolved to supply my wants, in some way, from their abundance. I waited a long time after all was dark and still, and then entered the wood-house, from which a door opened into a sort of back kitchen or workroom. Much to my convenience, this door had been left unfastened, and I just walked in, and found a long table on one side of the room, on which, for our especial benefit, was deposited a bountiful supply of bread, cakes, pies, etc., which the good housewife had evidently

just been baking, as some of the articles were scarcely yet cold. I selected such as I could most conveniently carry, and then, stepping into the pantry, the door of which stood open, I made some little addition to the materials for our breakfast, and was about to withdraw, quite well satisfied with my success, when I espied this little bottle standing upon the shelf, and thinking it might conceal an old acquaintance, I slipped it into my pocket, gathered up my booty, and wishing the good landlady better success with her next baking, took my leave, and returned to the grove. When I arrived, I found you sleeping so soundly that I thought it best to let you sleep on and enjoy your rest. Dana and I made a hearty supper, held some private consultations with our old friend in the bottle, and on the whole, passed quite an agreeable night. So now, you have a complete and authentic history of the whole affair; and I suppose when next we need supplies, you will like to take *your* turn, and let Dana and I do the sleeping.'

"I was not slow in convincing my companions that I had no sympathy, whatever, in that mode of procedure. My whole soul rose in rebellion. I had too much pride and self-respect to descend to such a humiliating

mode of obtaining my daily bread; beside, I felt that the work of retribution had been commenced upon me, and I had no disposition to *add* to the overwhelming load of self-reproaches, which, in every moment of silence, weighed down my spirits. I said to them:

"I feel, most keenly, my present painful position, but, thank God, I have never yet harbored the thought of crime. I sincerely lament the folly of leaving home with such a limited amount of funds, but I hoped, ere my resources were quite exhausted, to have reached some favored spot, where, unknowing and unknown, I might engage in some employment that would supply my daily wants for a little while; and I hope it may be but a little while, for I am tired of life.'

"Oh, ho!" said Dana, "you've got the blues; come, cheer up, man, "it will never do to give it up so." The fact is, we've got into a close corner; but I am not disposed to blame myself, or any one else—when we have done the best we can, we are not responsible for what follows. There is no use, either, in drumming up regrets: they won't help us any. Now all there is about it is just simply this: we are here, and we are destitute of means, and we've got to steal, starve, or beg—that's the plain English of

the matter. Now, I tell you, I'm not the fellow to lie down and starve, while so many all along here are groaning under the burden of useless wealth. It will do them good to bleed them a little; and as for begging! Pshaw! catch me—George Dana—sneaking in at somebody's back door, and humbly asking for something to eat! Humph! not I, by a long shot! hanged if I'll do it! I have too much independence for that business. I prefer walking right up to the crib, like a man who "knows his rights, and knowing, dares maintain them." Ha! ha! ha! that's the plan, sir!"

"‘I think, Sherman,’ said Joice, ‘that you are quite too sensitive on this point; now, I reason on this wise: We have served our political party faithfully, year after year, and, as I have before remarked, it is this same service that has reduced us to our present condition. If we had selfishly served our own interests, we, too, might have been clothed in our fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day; but others have profited by our labors, while we are all uncared for; and I have no qualms of conscience, at all, in supplying my necessary wants just whenever and wherever I can find the means. I tell you, *plunder* is the game now-a-days, from the

“White House” in Washington, to the outlawed bandit's cave. Different organizations have instituted different means, but they all tend to the same result. How do you suppose our congressmen, legislators, and public officers in general, live, but by plundering the people? They work upon a small scale, in using up their dupes, as they did us, until their office is secured; then they work at wholesale plunder. They may prate of their disinterested patriotism, benevolence, self-sacrificing labors for the public good, and all that; but will they ever consent to any measure, proposed by the people, whose interests they profess to serve, until they first ascertain whether they can thus liberally feather their own nest? Say what you will, it's all a contemptible farce. To be sure, there is more method in their meanness, but aside from that, all the difference between them and ourselves is in our favor. They fleece the rich, and rob the poor of their hard-earned money, under the specious disguise of “equal taxation,” for the necessary support of the government; while it is, in fact, that these vampires may riot in luxurious idleness; and, in the meantime, they are dubbed *Honorable!* while we, who are satisfied with taking simply our daily bread from the rich,

who have enough and to spare, are regarded with fear and contempt. Were it known that we had thus assumed the right to judge of our own wants and the best method for their relief, we should be hunted as outlaws, from Maine to Georgia, and if caught, should be compelled to wear the dark mantle of dishonor through all coming time. A truce to that popular sovereignty which is meted out to the State, but denied to the individual.'

"'I hope,' said I, 'that truth will hardly justify your wholesale condemnation of our public men; although I am sorry that too many seem to be entirely destitute of even political morality. Be that as it may, their sins, however great, can never justify us in wrong doing.'

"'Oh, dear me,' said Dana, 'I'd like to know what all this talk will amount to? It won't furnish us with office or dinners. I don't care a groat who is governor, or who is constable. Politicians must manage their own affairs to suit themselves hereafter; and I shall take good care of number one, I assure you. If I can't feed at the public crib, I shall find my way into the *private stalls*. Ha! ha! ha! Let alone George Dana for that; he knows a thing or two yet. Now,

you see, we are quite too respectable a set of men to starve! Why, here is James Sherman, Esq., ex-sheriff, Samuel Joice, Esq., ex-postmaster, and your humble servant, George Dana, ex-did-n't-get-it, constable. Now, it is no fault of mine that I did not get the office; but suppose I *had* got it, I should have served your interests to the best of my ability. And now, as it seems to be conceded that some of "Uncle Sam's" children are indebted to us, I propose to do the honors of the office by collecting your just debts, wherever I can get anything; and, as it is all in the family, I don't see as it can make any difference where we get it. There may not be quite as much dignity in the operation, but I think I shall act quite as promptly and efficiently as I should were I in the *public* service.'

"After some further discussion of the subject, with no prospect of reconciliation, I proposed, as the only alternative, that we should then and there part company. To this they readily consented, with the mutual agreement that neither party should interfere with the purposes or pursuits of the other. The afternoon had far advanced when we gave the parting hand, and entered upon our separate routes. I have never seen them since, but learned, from the public prints, that, a few

weeks after I left them, elated by their petty predatory successes, they were emboldened to make a daring attempt at burglary, in which they were detected, and, after the usual trial, were convicted, and sent to the prisoners' home.

"Little as I sympathized with the principles or practice of my companions, I felt keenly the loss of their company. Joice was gifted by nature with a high order of mind, with warm and generous impulses, quick perception, energetic and prompt to execute his designs, and acutely sensitive to injustice. He possessed the elements of a character fitted to adorn a position of distinguished usefulness in society; but 'injured love to venom turns,' and continued defeats, disappointments, political and pecuniary reverses, had worked with fatal effect upon his sensitive nature. His confidence had been betrayed, and made the instrument of evil to himself. He lost all faith in his fellow-man, and yielded his fine powers to the demon of revenge, and now moves in the blackness of darkness, a wandering star, just sufficiently luminous to serve as a beacon-light to others. Poor fellow! I never think of him but with a sigh of regret. Dana possessed an entirely different temperament—one of your jovial,

care-for-naught fellows, who would be cheerful anyhow and anywhere. He used to say, 'trouble never hurts me; it falls like rain upon the back of a goose—it won't stick, but rolls right off.' Reared from his earliest youth amid the jocular convivialities of a country bar-room, he seemed to have no aim save the one ever-present one of self-indulgence and personal enjoyment.

"After leaving my companions, I took a direct course for the Mississippi river, and in a few days succeeded in reaching one of the landing places. Fortunately one of the river boats was at the landing, just ready to depart for New Orleans. I soon effected an arrangement with the captain, which secured me the privilege of working my passage to that port. After a short detention there, I again embarked, and soon found myself quietly floating on the broad bosom of the Gulf of Mexico. A few days more, and I was plodding my weary way over the vast prairies and through the magnificent forests of fair, fertile, and beautiful Texas. And now I began more fully to realize my condition. For many months previous, my mental vision seemed to have been blinded to every consideration, save that of my own wretchedness from which I sought to escape by reck-

lessly rushing to the far-off land of strangers. But, alas! for my efforts, that I had taken *myself along*—that I was bearing my greatest enemy in my own bosom. Sometimes traveling mile after mile, without meeting a single human being, I was, much of my time, alone with my thoughts. Remorse followed in my footsteps, and hissed in my ears, that my own suicidal hand had severed me from friends, and child, and sacred home. Then faithful memory opened before me her ponderous volume, and, slowly unfolding its pages, bade me read. Oh, how the unnumbered privileges and blessings of my life rose up before me, like accusing spirits, to taunt me with negligence and abuse. I saw my family in ruins, my house deserted, and my name cast out. The unfolding pages revealed to me the time when, a young man, I had turned from the counsels of the wise, and made gold my idol, and my heart the altar on which I had sacrificed my happiness. In the forgotten records of the years long, long ago, my relentless monitor pointed to the little inner room, where, ere sin had blighted my sensibilities, I had knelt by my mother's side, and repeated the evening prayer—had listened to her tearful pleadings, her earnest intercessions, with her heavenly Father, that

her little son might be preserved from the temptations, the follies, and vices of the world. With the vivid recollection of those blissful hours I could endure no more. Finding my strength rapidly failing, I retreated to a little grassy knoll, a few feet from the road, and under the dense shadow of a wide-spreading, venerable tree, threw myself upon the earth. I knew no more. In this condition I was found, toward evening, by a 'good Samaritan,' who, with his wife, in company with a neighboring gentleman and his wife, were returning from a distant town, whither they had been to obtain supplies for their families. Finding that my unconsciousness was not the result of intoxication, as they had at first supposed, their fears were excited, and their sympathies strongly enlisted. By their united efforts, I was borne to the carriage, and carefully conveyed a distance of three miles to the residence of a Mr. Winstead. A physician was hastily summoned, and every means that human skill and kindness could suggest, were put in requisition to restore me to consciousness, but with only partial success. My disease was a brain fever, greatly aggravated by the mental conflicts and excitement, which, for some months, had been my constant attend-

ants. During occasional paroxysms of insanity, my incoherent mutterings had revealed to my kind attendants something of my past history. They were able to glean the facts that I was very far from home, that I had been the victim of disappointed ambition, and that remorse had imbittered the fountain of thought; and these presented a sufficient claim to their sympathy, and to their utmost efforts for my relief. For several days I remained almost unconscious. At about three o'clock on the morning of the ninth day, the low sound of a gentle voice broke upon my ear. The first sensation awakened no distinct thought, save the consciousness of sound. Soon, however, I came to distinguish words; then, fully to recognize the low, earnest pleadings of prayer—and for me! What could it mean? Had I indeed been conveyed into the presence of my sainted mother? I dared not move, lest the blissful illusion should vanish. Soon I opened my eyes. My bed was surrounded with hangings of pure white muslin, through which fell the faint rays of a night-lamp. No—I was not with my mother, for I was surrounded with earthly objects; but still those gentle, fervid intercessions were continued, unmixed with any other earthly sound.

My weak and exhausted nature could restrain itself no longer. I uttered an involuntary groan, when the sound instantly ceased. A delicate hand parted the drapery of my bed, and a pale, sweetly serene face bent over me, with the inquiry,

“‘Are you in great distress?’

“‘O, tell me,’ I exclaimed, ‘was that my mother’s voice? and, is she still praying for her wretched son?’

“‘No, dear sir,’ said my attendant, ‘not your mother, but your friend. Do not suffer yourself to be agitated, for you are very feeble; compose yourself to rest, and, as your returning strength will permit, you shall be made acquainted with all the circumstances connected with your stay among us. In the meantime, let me assure you that you are safe, and in the care of friends.’

“How strangely melodious were those sounds, as they fell upon the ear so long unused to words of sympathy—yet all too gentle to quiet the wild commotion which was already being rekindled in my bosom. If I had ever entertained doubts of the certain and fearful retribution in reserve for those who forget God, the experience of the last few months had swept them away. My own consciousness outweighed all my former

sophistry. I stood utterly defenseless under the pitiless goadings of an accusing conscience. As nature lifted the heavy hand of disease, which for so many days had excluded me from all communication with the external world, and I was quietly floating back into life, one solitary ray of heaven's own light flitted athwart my pathway, and was gone. One blissful vision glimmered for a moment above the darkened horizon, then sank forever. A horror of great darkness gathered around me, and I felt that all was lost. I clasped my hands with convulsive energy, and wept aloud, exclaiming, 'Lost! lost! forever lost!' Mrs. Winstead fled, in alarm, to another room, where her husband, who had been my watcher during the early part of the night, had retired to rest. In a moment he was by my side, and having administered a quieting draught, took my trembling hands in his own, and in a few simple, appropriate words, sought to direct my thoughts away from myself, to Him who came to save the lost. Having succeeded in partially soothing my excessive agitation, he gently dropped upon his knees, still retaining my hand in his own, and—shall I say he *prayed*? Oh! it was an earnest intercession before the Infinite One, for *life—life—eternal life*. It was

the little child, lying at his father's feet, and pleading, as only a child can plead, for an erring brother. My fainting spirit seemed borne aloft upon the wings of his faith, until, inhaling the same celestial atmosphere, I, too, was gently wafted to heaven's gate, and, in adoring wonder, listened to the paternal benediction, 'Son, thy sins which are many, are forgiven thee; go and sin no more.'

"Here I must draw the vail, for none but an angel's tongue could express the emotions of that hour. Of that mysterious transition from darkness to light, from bondage to freedom, from death to life, I can not now speak. It is a theme which angels can not grasp, nor eternity exhaust. For the present, it is sufficient for me to say, that to me, 'all things were indeed new.' Even life itself possessed a charm unknown before. Under this new order of things, aided by the continued kindness of my new friends, my convalescence was greatly promoted. My previous habits, with my late distressing illness, had made fearful inroads upon the strength of a bodily frame by nature compactly built and strongly fortified; and, during the subsequent year, I was only able to make some small remuneration for the kindness I had received. Another year passed ere I had accumulated

enough to replenish my wardrobe, and to justify the attempt to return to that distant home, and that dear deserted son, toward whom my anxious thoughts were almost constantly directed. I wrote several times to Charles, but received no reply, as he had gone from the place where I had left him, and no one of my former officious friends cared to look after the son of the fallen, degraded man. I found, upon my return, that a rumor of the crime and imprisonment of my two companions soon reached the ears of our friends, who inferred that, as I had left home with them, I had also shared in their calamity. I was exceedingly anxious lest Charlie should be found treading the same thorny path from which I had been rescued, but I had no power to reach him.

"And now, here we both are, living witnesses that God hears and bears in remembrance the intercessions of his children. Though the mother's prayer was offered long years ago, yet, in due time, the answer has come, and brings with it an affecting proof of the wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness of 'Him who doeth all things well.' The erratic course of a man of the world, exposes to view many prominent points, from which we may study the character of that most myste-

rious of all created things—the human heart, and from which the most important practical truths may be deduced. My own history furnishes many such interesting stand-points of observation, to which I should like to direct your attention; but, for the present, I pass them all, and fix my eye upon that darkly-frowning and fatal rock upon which my little bark was wrecked. I allude to that bitter, reckless spirit of partisan zeal which has gained such a fearful ascendancy over the morality of our country. We have just now passed through a most exciting political conflict, and whatever may be our opinion of the dominant party, however much or little we may sympathize with the principles of the successful candidates, *our duty*, as private citizens, remains the same. A surprising degree of listless indifference usually follows the closing up of a political contest. Public speakers retire from the field, and the newspaper presses coolly announce the fact that the contest is ended, and we turn our attention to other subjects; and the 'rest of mankind' bless themselves that they have nothing more to do; and fold their arms to wait, in dull supineness, until the rattling drum and the cannon's roar shall summon them to a new conflict."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

"How great their charge who feed the mind,
And, with a high and heaven-taught spirit, strive
To neutralize the poison that corrodes
Its health, and, with an appetite for truth,
Replace the gilded trifles that impair
Its nerve and firmness."

THE narrative of Mr. Sherman, while it deeply moved the sympathies of his auditors, also awakened a most interesting and important train of thought. Especially did his allusion to the negligence of our citizens in failing to improve the interim of political excitements, meet with a fervent response in many hearts. It was a subject of peculiar interest to Mrs. Smith, and she immediately said:

"I am glad that other and more intelligent minds are being directed to the existence of an error, which I can not but regard with most serious apprehensions. It does seem to me, that if my countrymen sleep in seed-time, they must expect to reap briers, and thorns, and weeds, in harvest. The little 'olive plants' which we housewives labor to

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cultivate into beautiful and symmetrical proportions, will wither and droop, will become unsightly and deformed, if they are neglected and forgotten, after being transferred to the outer garden. They require the constant and utmost skill of the experienced gardener, to prune, protect, cultivate, and guide them up to fruitful maturity. Pure philanthropy and enlightened patriotism are not of spontaneous growth; and what time can be more propitious for the successful culture and healthful development of these and kindred elements of national virtue, than a season of quiet and repose? At that time the mind, free from any unnatural excitement, is in a condition favorable to receive and digest healthful mental aliment. This food, thus received, becomes a component part of a firm, compact, healthful, and vigorous moral system, which, in its maturity, offers effectual resistance to unfavorable influences. Rude winds may tear off the delicate summer foliage, but they leave the body unmoved in its native soil, more firmly upright, more majestic in its strength, than before."

"I, too, am glad," said Judge Kingsley, "that woman is disposed to adorn her proper position, by generously offering her aid, as an intelligent coadjutor in the great work

of reform. As a faithful sentinel, to guard the avenues of the inner sanctuary of our government, where morality and virtue should hold their throne, her aid is indispensable. It is woman's peculiar province to educate the moral sentiment, and just in proportion as she devotes attention to her appropriate duties, is she prepared to detect and expose those malignant influences which would undermine our national virtue. Man requires a high degree of moral stamina to successfully withstand the constant and clamorous appeals to selfish ambition, personal prejudice, low party zeal, disregard of truth, and the merits and claims of opponents, and the host of evil passions which are generated and brought into active service during a season of high political excitement. Very few, indeed, I fear, can pass through the ordeal unscathed. Then, let those whom the God of nature has stationed at the watch-towers, sound the alarm. Let them point out the approaching danger, and, while we admit that we are quite too exclusively employed in labor to perpetuate the *external* character of our free institutions, in its unsullied purity, let us urge our trusty sentinels to increased diligence in guarding the citadel of our hopes—our political morality."

"I fear," said Mrs. Kingsley, "that your 'sentinels' are quite in fault; they have not been careful to occupy their position in season. The foundation of all correct moral sentiment must be laid in the nursery. To be permanent and effective, to insure the perfect man, the three-fold being, the mental, moral, and physical nature must all be cultivated in their due proportion. The trite maxim—'the child is father of the man'—points to a most significant truth, of which history and personal observation have furnished many sad illustrations. Had the mother of Byron improved the years of his childhood, by carefully infusing into his young mind the principles of true wisdom, the world would not have wept over the prostitution of his mighty genius—the utter and hopeless wreck of his moral nature. Had the mother of the 'mighty Corsican' held in abeyance his overshadowing ambition, so prominent in early childhood, at the same time assiduously cultivating his dormant moral powers—had she trained into a vigorous growth the soul-inspiring principles of an enlightened philanthropy, while firmly and judiciously restraining his indomitable physical energy, his insane love of power and dominion would never have led him over prostrate kingdoms, and

through seas of blood, to obtain the unenviable appellation of 'the scourge of his race.' It is a relief to turn from these saddening illustrations of the effect of a mistaken or neglected education, to that beautiful model of correct maternal influence bequeathed to us, in the person of our own beloved Washington. With filial gratitude he confessed to the world his obligation to a judicious mother's care, for laying aright the foundation of his success—for inculcating, in his young mind, a supreme regard for strict integrity and correct moral principle. Other statesmen have surpassed him in mental attainments, yet few have approached him in the happy combination of intellectual greatness and moral goodness. His unselfish love and fearless defense of right, his inflexible adherence and prompt response to the claims of justice, mercy, and truth—all clothed with the beautiful drapery of unassuming gentleness, meekness, and benevolence, most happily combined to qualify him for any emergency, or to adorn any position to which God or his country might call him. He was the true diamond, which emits the same quiet and uniform light, whether nestling in a bed of pebbles, or perched upon the summit of a royal diadem. In the chosen

sanctuary of a happy home, in the council chamber, or in the tented field—while leading on his countrymen to the successful resistance of oppressive injustice, or in the more congenial employment of cultivating the arts of peace—wherever duty called him, the 'Star of Bethlehem' was his guide, and pure moral principle his anchor."

"And I," said Mrs. Smith, "am a devoted admirer of the illustrious Washington. There is scarcely any part of his public or private life, with which we have been made acquainted, but may furnish abundant material to excite our admiration, yet I have thought his historians and eulogists have scarcely given sufficient prominence to the fact, that, for his pre-eminent success, he was indebted to the influence of that deep-toned morality to which he made all else subordinate. He assiduously cultivated those moral powers, whose germ was so skillfully unfolded in the nursery; and when he stood revealed to the world, in all the excellence and moral grandeur of matured greatness, it was his especial delight to turn from the empty pageantries of state, and bring the rich, ripe fruits of success, and lay them at his mother's feet as a just tribute of respect for that judicious care which had directed his youthful feet into the path

of true wisdom. But the grand culminating point in his character, and that which sheds a hallowed radiance over all his conduct, was his deep and abiding reverence for the authority of the supreme Lawgiver. He did not anticipate success in any enterprise which would necessarily bring him in conflict with the Divine requirements of Him who 'seeth the end from the beginning,' and in whose disposal are all the nations of the earth. Hence, at night, when the weary soldiers were asleep, and all was quiet, he, upon whose movements was suspended the unwritten future of the embryo nation, bore his deep devotion and anxious desire for the good of his country, into the deep solitude, and under the 'vaulted canopy of heaven' took counsel of the 'King of kings.' Having yielded himself to the guidance of Him who is infinite in wisdom, he was prepared to lead on the sons of freedom to triumphant success. But it was not my intention to eulogize a character, to which the heart of every lover of God and our country yields a spontaneous tribute of affection. I wished only to refer to those two distinguishing traits of character, namely, an abiding reverence for moral principle, and a filial regard for the authority of God; because, I fear that my

brothers, American citizens, have forgotten how indispensably requisite those traits of character are to a prosperous and successful administration of government."

"Well, really," said Mrs. Kingsley, "I fear the ladies are monopolizing an undue share of the conversation. The gentlemen have, with commendable patience, allowed us to express our enthusiastic admiration of our model statesmen, and to direct their attention to the leaks in our 'goodly ship of state.' And now we will endeavor to keep the peace, at least for a little while, and enact the part of very attentive listeners."

Mr. Sherman said: "No apology is due from the ladies. I have been very much interested, and I trust profited, by their important suggestions. I can scarcely express the gratification I feel in the assurance that those who are destined to exert a very great influence in forming the character of our future statesmen, are selecting such unexceptionable models. I plainly discover, in that fact, a most favorable promise for the future prosperity of my beloved country." Then addressing himself to Major Grey, he said: "I think, sir, we can hardly permit you to remain longer a silent listener. As this is the first time we have been favored with your com-

pany, will you not also bear a part in the conversation?"

"Ah, well," replied the Major, I—indeed, I—I hardly know what to say, sir. I have been very agreeably surprised and delighted, sir, delighted. I certainly did not anticipate so pleasant an entertainment. These ladies have hit the case, sir, exactly. The fact is, the planks in our political platforms are all loose, sir, *loose*, and we have been running here and there, we have adjusted and re-adjusted, we have displaced and replaced, and exhausted our skill in so arranging our planks as to make a permanent platform, upon which all can stand firmly and securely, and the more we do, the more the thing won't go; and now these ladies, sir, have just shown us that the reason is we have all along forgotten the cement—that's the thing, sir, the *cement*! Ha! ha!—singular, sir; that none of us had suspected the real difficulty—strange, sir—*very* strange."

"Indeed," said Judge Kingsley, "that is precisely our condition;—and now, will it not be a good idea to use all our efforts, during the coming four years, to aid in securing the right material for our planks—to have them thoroughly seasoned, and then firmly united, with a generous supply of the good old-fash-

ioned cement, compounded of equal parts of *refined morality* and *tried patriotism*. But, to drop the figure, is it not a duty we owe to our common country to make a diligent use of all the means in our power to counteract the baneful influences which are generated, or whose growth is greatly promoted, by the unwonted excitement attending a popular election, and the advent of a new administration."

"Pray, excuse me, sir," said Major Grey, "but much as we may deprecate the evil, we can not hope to avoid excitement in a matter of so much importance as a choice of civil rulers, sir, *civil rulers*."

"Let me be distinctly understood," replied Judge Kingsley. "I would preserve a just discrimination between the enthusiasm of true patriotism and that false disguise which is assumed by its base counterfeit, the more effectually to conceal its own unmitigated selfishness. True patriotism is a living, active principle, and has its altar in the heart, on which is offered, continually, a pure unselfish devotion to the highest good and permanent prosperity of our beloved country. With that sentiment my whole heart is in sympathy. But the other—its base counterfeit—is deceptive in its origin, treacherous in its designs,

and ruinous in its results—it has its altar in the depraved passions of the mind, on which our public morality and national virtue are remorselessly offered as a propitiatory sacrifice to the clamorous demands of a selfish ambition. That disguised substitute for patriotism my whole soul repudiates. It is the most insidious and dangerous enemy to our national prosperity—slowly, but most effectually paralyzing the vital energies of the body-politic—and, without timely intervention, must terminate in death. Political galvanism, by exciting spasmodic contortions, may for awhile delude us with the idea that life remains; but the deception must soon be discovered; for, when the soul has departed, the untenanted body rapidly falls to decay. In this condition it yields to no influence but that of brute force; and the final usurpation of a soulless despotism closes the fearful drama. Now is not this a correct epitome of the historical decline of every enlightened nation since Adam? Can the true patriot devise any better method by which to prevent or retard so disastrous a consummation, than to devote his influence and earnest intelligent effort to the general dissemination of truth and to the education of the public mind in the great principles of individual and

national morality and virtue, and in labors to induce the pulpit, the press, and individual effort, so to combine their influences as to disperse the darkness, and cause the *true light* o shine?"

"You are right, sir, right," said Major Grey. "I am pleased with the idea—indeed, I think it would work admirably, sir, *admirably*."

While Major Grey was expressing his hearty concurrence in the views which had been expressed, his daughter, Emma, had quietly drawn her chair to his side, and sat gazing earnestly into his face, while her own countenance was irradiated with the mischievous desire to expose her father's reluctance to attend her to the evening entertainment. She had frequently importuned him to accompany her; but he as uniformly declined, assuring her that he "had no confidence whatever in the arrangement." Hence his agreeable surprise on finding that so much "good could come out of Nazareth." As soon as he ceased speaking, Emma assumed a very demure expression of countenance, and laying her hand upon his arm, said:

"Papa, do you *really* find yourself *agreeably* entertained?"

The Major started with evident embarrassment, and placing his hand upon her mouth, whispered,

"Tut, tut, child, we will not say anything about that now!"

But all Emma's efforts to restrain her mirthfulness proved unavailing, and her ringing, silvery laugh echoed through the room, and for a little season the party all yielded to its contagious influence.

"Only to think," said she, "that papa had intrenched himself within such an impregnable fortress of prejudice, and then, on finding it all so quietly demolished by a few ladies, that he should have the magnanimity to acknowledge a defeat, and surrender so peacefully! Oh, *that* is accomplishing more, with one effort, than I had even anticipated." And again her exuberant spirits found relief in her echoing laugh.

"I think, my dear," said Mr. Smith, "that you should draw encouragement from your unexpected success in the present instance, and that it should stimulate you to increased effort. When diligently following the path of duty, we are often surprised at the ease with which obstructions are removed."

CHAPTER XV.

PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE.—THE MODEL STATES-MAN.

"Better is an obstinate disputant that yieldeth inch by inch,
Than the shallow traitor to himself, who surrendereth to half an
argument."

MAJOR GREY was endowed with a very considerable share of good, plain, common sense, and was much respected for the substantial qualities of his mind. He was a shrewd manager in his business arrangements, frank and hospitable to his friends, generous and forbearing toward those who differed from him; and withal, a vein of harmless eccentricity pervaded his manners, which was rather agreeable than otherwise. He was deliberate in forming his opinions, but when they were once established, he considered the matter settled, and seldom troubled himself with a re-examination. This latter feature of his character distinguished him as the representative of a large class of men, who although at present occupying a somewhat ambiguous position in the political world, are yet destined to exert an overwhelming

influence in restoring to our political system its original simplicity and moral purity. He had been so long associated with the party with which he connected himself upon his entrance into political life, and whose principles, tenets, and maxims he had adopted as the established standard of political orthodoxy, that the very idea of a change was revolting. As the heart clings to the "old homestead," cherishes its memory, and lingers at the "old hearth-stone," even while the moaning winds whisper through the gaping crevices that all is falling to hopeless decay, so this class of politicians tenaciously adhere to the old and cherished associations of early life, and although sadly conscious of the accumulating evidence that the vitality of their party organization is gone, they yet linger around the lifeless body, with the vain hope that by some means a resuscitation may be effected. They discard, as sacrilege, the idea that the vital principle of their cherished party can have entered, with its animating power, any other organization, and persistently refuse to search for any evidence to that effect. But, occasionally, some little incident, as in the case of Major Grey, brings them, unexpectedly, in direct contact with the principles they so devoutly love and ven-

erate, and although robed in a new garment, the old friend is instantly recognized and embraced, with all the ardor of youthful affection.

After the little playful diversion, in which Emma had borne so conspicuous a part, had ceased, and order was restored, Charles Sherman said:

"I have enjoyed very great pleasure in listening to the conversation this evening, and think the varied illustrations aptly chosen, and suggestive of very important considerations. It seems to be of the first importance that young men, who are novices in the knowledge of political duties, should embrace every opportunity to gain the information we need; but we are sometimes sadly perplexed to determine which of two guides to follow, both of whom profess to be governed in their decisions by strictly conscientious motives, yet proposing to act in diametrical opposition to each other. As an instance, you will recollect, sir," addressing himself to Judge Kingsley, "those two gentlemen you saw in the store the other day. They had been earnestly engaged in the discussion of a moral subject of great importance, and which involved the necessity of political action. Their views of the merits

and importance of the subject harmonized very pleasantly; but when political action was deduced, they instantly assumed a position of antagonism; yet each defended his position as being the result of conscientious deliberation on the question of duty. Now, it is plain that both can not be right, and, as it is a question of great interest to me, I am perplexed to know how to decide."

The Judge replied, "That is a question, Charlie, which has perplexed older heads than yours, and has often been made the occasion of very severe, and, I think, unjust censure; yet I am sure a satisfactory explanation may be given. On the abstract merits of a grave moral question, candid and intelligent men are seldom found to differ. They reason from the same premises, and arrive at similar conclusions. But when they proceed to deduce therefrom their individual duty, their views are often at variance. The one has regard only to the abstract principle of right, leaving the consequences to Him, who, with full knowledge of the results, requires implicit obedience to the right. That point being settled, his duty is a simple inference, which he unhesitatingly adopts. The other takes a more extended view. He readily admits the correctness of the principle, and

its legitimate claims upon his ready obedience, but 'all things being considered,' and 'under existing circumstances,' he thinks it the wiser and safer course to 'incline a little to both sides,' to compromise the matter. He really intends to reach the same result with his more prompt and obedient brother; but it is to be gained by a more circuitous route. Now, do you not see that the former conscientiously yields obedience to the principle, while the latter quite as conscientiously yields obedience to the claims of expediency, and without suspecting the difference. This judging our duty from the circumstances with which we are surrounded, sometimes leads us into strange predicaments."

"It does indeed, sir," said Major Grey; "allow me to give a little illustration of that point, sir. When I was a little lad, my father bade me, one day, take a letter to Dr. Chapin, who lived about a mile from us. He went to the door with me, and pointed out, very distinctly, the way for me to go; and he had good and sufficient reasons for his explicit directions. I took the letter and departed, with the full purpose of obeying instructions. I had passed through the orchard, and was proceeding leisurely along, when, on looking off to the right, at a distance of about

a half mile, I observed the residence of two of my school-fellows, and then I thought I might quite as well have their company as to go alone. I immediately took the direction of the house, and upon inquiring for my young friends, learned that they had gone some little distance farther to look after some traps they had set the day previous. I followed and soon overtook them, and after loitering awhile, succeeded in persuading them to accompany me. I felt uncomfortably guilty for having disobeyed my father's directions; but I endeavored to console myself with the reflection that, by so doing, I had secured to myself an additional pleasure, and finally concluded that, on the whole, my way was decidedly better than his. In making this circuitous route, I found myself upon the opposite side of the hill from my father's, and had proceeded about one-third of the way, when we came upon a boggy marsh extending some distance, and lying directly in our way. The prospect certainly was not very inviting, but I had on a new pair of boots, and assured my companions that I was not the boy to be afraid of water or mud. I was very much elated with the idea of taking the lead in surmounting obstacles, and kept myself considerably in advance of the

others. I had nearly reached the middle of the marsh, when I found my steps sinking rather too deep in the mud for safety, and I endeavored, by long and hasty strides, to reach a more substantial footing. I made a few successive leaps and found myself *stuck fast in the mud!* I looked around for my companions, and saw them running toward home. They gave no heed to my calls for assistance. I made several ineffectual efforts to extricate myself, but finally arrived at the sage conclusion that I was 'in for it,' and no mistake. I might have remained there until this time, for aught I know, had not my cries attracted the attention of some laborers, who were crossing the field at a little distance, and who immediately came to my relief. They approached as near me as they could with safety, and reached a long pole, which I seized with both hands, and they drew me out. I then proceeded on my way very much crest-fallen, bearing upon my person the consequences of my disobedience, and convinced that the direct way of obedience is the easiest, safest, and best, after all. Now, Charlie, whenever I see a man dodging around his duty, or taking the long circuit around the direct claims of moral obligation,

I expect to see him get stuck in the mud, sir, in the *mud*. Ah, yes, yes, *in the mud*."

"It is to be greatly lamented," said Mr. Sherman, "that so many good men are willing to be guided, in their estimate of duty, by surrounding circumstances. The same malicious foe who seduced the parents of our race to waive the duty of a strictly literal obedience, and substitute their own views of expediency as the guide of their conduct, has been triumphantly successful in luring, with the same bait, their too yielding posterity. In referring, again, to a preceding topic of conversation, permit me to say, that, much as I revere the character of our first illustrious chief magistrate, we have yet one other example of model statesmanship, which, in many respects, transcends even that of Washington. I allude to the great Jewish law-giver, Moses."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Sherman, thank you," said Emma, "for so kindly introducing my favorite."

Mr. Sherman, smiling at her enthusiasm, replied: "There are many prominent points, which can not fail to elicit the warm admiration of all who carefully study the character of that eminently great and good man.

May I ask what portion of his history claims your particular regard?"

"Oh!" said Emma, "I admire most his dying charge to the people. I always imagine I can see the dear old man, as he stands before the assembled hosts of Israel, with his venerable form bending under the weight of weary years, the long silvery hair floating over his shoulders, and his trembling hands extended toward them, while he said: 'I am this day an hundred and twenty years old, I can no more go out and come in.' Then, as he cast his anxious eye over the thronging multitude, and thought how soon they would be bereft of his guidance, and how easily they were seduced from the path of safety, the deep fountains of paternal love were moved within him; and with the most inimitable pathos he rehearsed in their ears the many wonderful events which had transpired during his administration of forty years,—showing them, all along, with what prompt and undeviating certainty the blessing or the curse had been visited upon them, according to their obedience or disobedience to the requirements of God. With what meekness and unassuming modesty, in this, his farewell address, are all personal claims to their consideration forgotten, or left in the back-

ground, while the noblest feelings of his soul are all concentrated, as, indeed, they had ever been, in the single desire of promoting the highest good of the dear people for whom he had so long labored, and whom he was about to leave forever! Here is an example of true patriotism—my ideal of a civil ruler. As if to leave no possible means untried to insure their prosperity, he reminds them of the many altars, heaps of stones, and other memorials, which had been established for the express purpose of frequently directing their attention to, and preserving a lively recollection of, the many signal deliverances which had been wrought for them, and because of their obedience. Then, as if 'to make assurance doubly sure,' he wrote in a book a copy of the laws, the statutes and ordinances, and commanded that it should be preserved in the ark of the covenant, where it could not be overlooked or forgotten, and that once in seven years it should be read in the hearing of all the people, men, women and children, and even the stranger who should chance to be among them. Could they forget? As music, in its most imposing forms, entered largely into their festivals and public ceremonies, the last public effort of their venerable leader was to compose and

teach to the people a national historic song, which they could never forget, and which, in the dark hour of their sorrow, should, by its affecting detail of their past prosperity, bring to remembrance the cause of present calamity. I have read that farewell address, which occupies almost the entire book of Deuteronomy, again and again, and always with increasing admiration of that good old man."

"I am very glad," said Mr. Sherman, "that the noble example of the Jewish lawgiver has found such an earnest advocate."

"Allow me," said Judge Kingsley, "to add one or two suggestions. Moses exhibited, in that 'farewell address,' not only the spirit of true patriotism and sound philosophy, but also a more than paternal regard for the future welfare of those committed to his care, which parents, as well as civil rulers, would do well to imitate. An intimate personal acquaintance of forty years was sufficient to enable him to anticipate, with a degree of certainty, the time when, having gained a quiet possession of the goodly land of Canaan, they should become selfish and ambitious, and forget that their continued prosperity must depend entirely on their remembrance and practical obedience to the laws and instructions he had given them. His absorbing

anxiety is most pathetically expressed in the fact that, within the limits of that address, the caution to 'beware,' to 'remember,' to 'take good heed to yourselves,' is impressively repeated more than thirty times. Then again the injunction is several times repeated, to 'teach diligently the children,' that they too might early know and understand the true secret of national prosperity. There are more benefits to be derived from a practical regard for these two simple precepts, 'take good heed to thyself,' and 'teach these things diligently to thy children,' than are dreamed of by modern political philosophers. In all that combines to constitute true greatness and goodness in the character of a civil ruler, the administration of Moses presents an unrivaled example. Another instance of such entire self-abnegation, such supreme devotion to the attainment of the highest good and permanent prosperity of the people of his care is not to be found in all the annals of human legislation."

"It is often remarked," said Mrs. Grey, "that when God designs to accomplish great events, he raises up great men, and endows them with that peculiar fitness which is essential to the fulfillment of his purposes. Now, without questioning in the least degree

the agency of God in this respect, it does seem to me that, in carelessly leaving it *all* to his agency, and neglecting *our own* efforts, we are permitting a sort of fatalism to govern our conduct. The mothers of Moses and Washington, and others of kindred excellence, whose judicious culture of the immortal mind has contributed so essentially to the welfare of our race, performed their maternal duties with no knowledge of the fact that God intended to accomplish such mighty results through the instrumentality of their sons. They acted upon the principle just repeated by Judge Kingsley, 'Thou shalt teach these things diligently to thy children,' and, as a necessary consequence, those great moral principles, thus early cultivated, acquired strength and maturity, and these favored sons were thus prepared to occupy their respective positions in life with usefulness and honor. But, if Moses and Washington are to be viewed as model statesmen, the example of their mothers may with equal propriety be adopted as a safe maternal guide. And surely American mothers, who are to give right direction to the unfolding germ of immortality, and successfully cultivate the moral sentiment of a nation of independent sovereigns, should secure to them-

selves all possible aid from the precept and example of successful predecessors—should strive to make themselves competent to fulfill the mighty trust; for, disguise it as we will, or deny it as we may, it still remains an indisputable fact, that the character of the human mind is formed in the nursery and the domestic circle. Oh! that those who are entering upon active life understood this—that they would consider the immense, the overwhelming results, of a perverted social and domestic influence—and methinks they would no longer heedlessly rush upon responsibilities which angels might fear to assume!”

“Where,” inquired Fred, “are we to look for the history of the mother of Moses?”

“It is only to be found,” replied Mrs. Kingsley, “in the character of her son. The sacred historian has given us only her *name* and lineal descent. I have often thought it was, perhaps, that the beautiful Christian simplicity of her maternal character might *alone* be impressed upon our minds, and incite us to emulation. In the full assurance of faith in Him who alone was able to preserve and protect, she took the infant babe, whose bosom heaved with the gentle pulsations of her own life-blood, and placed it among the rushes of the threatening Nile, a *heart-sacri-*

fice to the Lord God of her fathers. When he was restored to her, attended with the direction of the royal princess: ‘Take this child and nurse it for *me*, and *I* will give thee thy wages,’ she received the commission as from God, and educated him, not in the pride of her heart for an Egyptian prince, but in a knowledge of the Christian faith and practice. With what careful diligence, with what signal success, her humble efforts were directed to the inculcation of correct moral sentiment, is apparent in the fact that when, at a suitable age, he assumed the prerogatives of manhood, he voluntarily turned aside from the seductive attractions and gilded pagantry of the court of Pharaoh, together with the flattering title of ‘son of the royal princess,’ and identified himself with the humblest of the people of God. This wise decision secured to him a blessing of far greater magnitude—‘they that honor me I will honor’—and also explains the true secret of his subsequent eminence. Although the ‘significant brevity’ and ‘eloquent silence’ of the sacred historian has permitted us to see the mother’s skill and wisdom, only as they are reflected in the character of her son, yet even that has reared a historic monument to her praise of more imperishable worth

than a titled possession of the throne of Pharaoh."

After devoting some little time to the more ordinary topics of conversation, the friends quietly dispersed, each bearing within him a more vivid impression of the sacredness of the domestic sanctuary, and the imperative-ness of its claims upon individual effort, to increase the happiness, virtue, and intelligence of the home circle. The little social gatherings of our friends, originating as they did in an intelligent desire to promote a more healthful social influence, became exceedingly interesting. Frequent accessions were made to their numbers, and their example was imitated in many and remote neighborhoods with most gratifying results.

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. HARRIS.—THE VICTIM.

"Where'er I move,
The shadow of this broken-hearted love
Is on me, and around : too well they know
Whose life is all *within*—too soon and well,
When there the blight hath settled."

A FEW weeks after their visit at Mrs. Smith's, the friends again assembled at the residence of Judge Kingsley. Friendly greetings were interchanged, as one after another of the members appeared, and several newcomers were welcomed. As the cheerful, eccentric Major Grey presented himself, leading his daughter Emma, Mrs. Smith exclaimed:

"Is it possible, Major, that you have ventured among us again?"

"Ah, ha—yes, yes, indeed," replied the Major; "I have fully surrendered, madam, surrendered. Oh! the special pleadings of these eloquent black eyes are strong arguments, and the father's heart is not always invulnerable, Mrs. Smith,—not always. My pet here has helped me to conquer my prejudices, and I had positively nothing else to fall back

upon, and I *had* to come, you see, *had* to come."

The friends having generally arrived, they were now invited to listen to a communication from Mrs. Kingsley, who had prepared herself to entertain the company with the narrative of a portion of her own family history. No one, however, with the exception of her husband, knew that she was in any way personally interested.

"I propose," said Mrs. Kingsley, "to narrate a brief history of Mr. Harris, an early acquaintance of mine, with the hope that my young friends here, especially, may derive a salutary lesson from his sad experience. Of his history, prior to his marriage, I have been able to obtain but little information, save that he was universally respected for his sobriety, industry, and unexceptionable moral character. His personal appearance was prepossessing, his manners bland and agreeable; and when, at the age of twenty-five, he led his beautiful young bride to the altar, and in God's earthly temple, in the presence of a large congregation, pledged his vows of constancy, love and protection, every heart beat a warm response—and when the venerable pastor affectingly interceded for the Divine blessing upon the new and holy union, a

silent tear bedewed many an eye, and a hearty benediction trembled upon many a lip, and they thought, 'Surely, the "world is bright before thee."' Mr. Harris sought and won his young wife, not for her wealth, for her patrimony was just sufficient to enable her to supply the necessaries for house-keeping, but, as he said, 'for her own sterling worth.' She was intelligent, modest, and gentle, and lavished her wealth of love upon him whom she had chosen as her companion and guide through the journey of life. During nine years immediately subsequent to their marriage, their domestic happiness was uninterrupted. Not a shadow obscured their clear blue sky, and Mrs. Harris felt a happy assurance that she had attained her highest aspirations in the entire love and confidence of her husband. A little son and daughter relieved, by their childish prattle, the tedium of her husband's absence—for he was a mechanic—and greeted his return with a joyous welcome. As a man of rare moral worth, he was justly esteemed, and his correct deportment had secured the favorable notice of the community in which he dwelt. But this domestic Eden had been marked by the tempter, and in the deep darkness, when the guardian angels were watching over sleeping

innocence, the serpent stealthily entered, and coiled his slimy folds around his victim, and probed his heart with his poisonous fangs. Then the sluggish blood coursed wearily through the languid veins—the eye of the father no longer glowed with love-light at the approach of his little ones, and the affectionate caresses of his gentle wife were rudely repulsed, or permitted with a stolid indifference. The excitement of an approaching important election had been made the occasion of frequent nightly assemblages of the citizens at the little village inn. Mr. Harris had never felt very much interest in the maneuverings of the political parties until that season. The merits of the rival candidates had been so frequently and zealously discussed by his brother mechanics, that he gradually became interested, and was finally induced to attend their meetings for the ostensible purpose of acquiring a greater knowledge of the comparative merits of the conflicting parties and their rival candidates, but really to gratify a newly-awakened curiosity. He soon became thoroughly infected with the political mania, and anticipated, with growing impatience, each successive meeting of the club. These meetings continued to increase in numbers and enthu-

siasm, and, as the time drew near which was to decide the contest, the excitement became absorbingly intense.

“As their enthusiasm increased, the wine-cup was more freely circulated, and many were for the first time made acquainted with its exhilarating influence. For a time Mr. Harris steadfastly adhered to his determination that no persuasion should induce him to taste the drunkard's cup; the effect of which, in all its disgusting details, was exhibited before him at every meeting. At the meetings of the club, the exercises were usually interspersed with short addresses and characteristic songs. If ‘music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,’ so, if perverted to an improper use, it may serve to call up from the fathomless depths of the human heart, and give perpetual vitality to the vilest and basest passions; and these, having been summoned from their secret lurking places, take forcible possession, and hold their tumultuous revelries in many a heart that had been swept and garnished. If ‘songs are the index of national character,’ what must be the complexion of that American patriotism which finds expression in such ridiculous compounds of ribaldry, low detraction, and significant vulgarisms, as are presented in

many that are called patriotic songs, and which are most freely used to create and stimulate political fervor. Of similar character with the songs, and generally associated with them, are many that with propriety might be termed impertinent addresses, being simply exciting appeals to the baser passions, to the exclusion of every noble sentiment. That there are very many honorable and most happy exceptions, I am proud to admit; but that such is the ordinary character of electioneering songs and addresses, I think will scarcely be denied. In the case of which I have been speaking, the occasional announcement that some 'distinguished speaker from abroad' would address the citizens of the place, seemed to impart a new and powerful impulse to the already overwrought partisan excitement.

"On one occasion, the citizens were aroused to an unusual degree, by the information that Judge Winters would be present at the next meeting of the club, and address them on subjects intimately connected with the approaching election; and great efforts were made to secure a large attendance. Judge Winters was a man of commanding personal appearance, ready and pleasing address, and, withal, possessed the dangerous ability to

make the *worse* appear the *better* side, whenever it suited his purpose so to do. With these qualifications, he had obtained a good degree of local celebrity, and was regarded as a very efficient leader of the party with which he was connected. He had occupied, successively, several political offices in his native county, and had, some time previous, at the close of his official term, retired from the office of county judge with the political honors of his party. He was now looking forward to a seat in the State Senate, as the *ne plus ultra* of his ambitious desires. Having early in the season expressed his wish to one or two confidential friends, they immediately 'set the ball in motion,' and, through the nominating convention, he had been formally announced as the candidate of his party for that important office. He was enthusiastically devoted to the success of his party, for *in its success* he expected to reach the station he had so long coveted. Hence, he had been laboriously employed in canvassing and lecturing in his own and a neighboring county, which together composed his senatorial district. The important hour at length arrived in which Judge Winters was expected to bless benighted minds with a luminous exposition of the sacred rights, duties, and

responsibilities of American citizens in the approaching crisis. A large and respectable audience was convened, representing all the different political and ecclesiastical divisions, who listened in commendable silence to an overwhelming tide of *words*. He expatiated largely upon the beauty and necessity of *moral principle*, which, he assured his hearers, had always been a constituent element in his own party—a party, he was proud to say, that had numbered among its devoted adherents a host of illustrious names, which are the honor and glory of America—an *incorruptible* party, which no especial pressure of ‘side issues’ had ever been able to swerve from her proud pre-eminence. In the present contest, he assured his hearers, the most vital principles were at stake, and they could only be successfully maintained in the triumph of the party he had the honor to represent. This feature, so artfully presented, secured the confidence of many, who, although good men, yet, being superficial thinkers, could not understand how a man could ‘talk so well,’ unless he were worthy of confidence. In fact, Judge Winters did really think that it was a very convenient mode of electioneering, to *talk moral principle*, because it secured to his party the very class of men who were needed

to insure its respectability; and, that accomplished, it was to be laid aside as worthless. The very idea of permitting moral principle to exercise a controlling influence over his social or political conduct, was, in his estimation, simply preposterous—a most ridiculous, puritanical absurdity. Notwithstanding his frequent allusions to his party as the embodiment of pure morality, his address was bountifully garnished with sly inuendoes, profane allusions, and vulgar epithets, all applied, with a munificent liberality, to those who had presumed to question the political orthodoxy of his party in its present position. To very many of his hearers, however, the objectionable features of his address were but the harmless effervescence of his ardent patriotism; and, failing to discover, beneath the frothy surface, the sinister designs of the artful and treacherous demagogue, they went away quite well convinced that, after all, Judge Winters was ‘just the man for the times.’ On that memorable evening many were fatally bound and led away to the sacrifice. Among the victims was Mr. Harris. He had sought and obtained a favorable introduction to Judge Winters prior to the commencement of the public exercises, and had a short but very pleasant interview with

him in his own room, to which they again retired immediately after the meeting was adjourned. Mr. Harris was very much flattered with the marked attentions of his new friend, pleased with his frank cordiality and suavity of manner, which was much more apparent in familiar conversation than in his public efforts; and more than all else, he admired his apparent reverence for moral principle, as the only true basis of political prosperity. Mr. Harris was a novice in the arts of political chicanery; he had not yet learned that Winters was a political angler, and that moral sentiment was the *bait* in which the barbed hook was concealed; and, with unconcealed admiration, he yielded his whole being to the seductive influence of the tempter. Judge Winters well understood the benefit that would accrue to his party, and *through that* to himself, by securing the aid and influence of Mr. Harris, and that large class of orderly, industrious mechanics whom he represented. He had played the part of the wily politician long enough to be perfectly familiar with the intricacies which bewilder the newly initiated, and was prepared successfully to assume whatever phase of character was most expedient to enable him to lead his victim whithersoever he wished. A

very short time was sufficient to reveal to him the simplicity, artlessness, and truthfulness of the character of Mr. Harris, and with a fiendish ingenuity, he sought to 'crush out' what he called the lingering remains of 'puritanical notions,' that he might make him an *available politician*. He accordingly expressed great admiration of the firm adherence to correct principles which had induced Harris to identify himself with 'our party;' regretted that others were not equally conscientious—briefly reviewed the proceedings of the party in its hitherto ineffectual efforts to gain the ascendancy—and indulged in glowing anticipations of the benign influences which would descend, like the dews of heaven, to bless and fertilize our dearly beloved country, in the event of their success in the present campaign. With a practical eye, Judge Winters watched the kindling enthusiasm, as it gleamed in the eye, and glowed upon the cheek, until it blazed in the full intensity of excitement, and he saw that the propitious moment had arrived, and his victim was secure. Then he adroitly directed attention to his own severe and protracted labors, and almost superhuman exertions in behalf of the party in its present critical position; and finally referred to the great

prostration of his physical energies, consequent upon his excessive labors, creating the necessity for artificial stimulants, to the *ordinary* use of which he expressed his very great aversion. Having thus succeeded in effectually blinding the eyes of his victim to his own perfidy, he brought forward a bottle of champagne, and pouring out a couple of glasses of the sparkling liquor, extended one to his new friend with such an insinuating grace, that he shrank from the incivility of refusing, and stammering out an apology for once so far departing from his usual habits, applied the first, the *fatal* glass to his lips. And there, in that chamber, under the potent influence of that gifted man, he fell!

"The Rubicon was passed, and George Harris was a ruined man! From that time forward his descent was fearfully rapid. In an unguarded moment he had yielded to the destroyer, and every effort to extricate himself was futile. He thought of his gentle, uncomplaining Isabel, who, night after night, during the long, lonely hours, was keeping her solitary vigils, and patiently awaiting his return; he thought of her smiling face, and the kiss of welcome with which he was always greeted upon his arrival at home; he thought of her child-like trust and confi-

dence, and of his own base betrayal, and was filled with remorse; he felt degraded, and despised himself. These and similar reflections tortured his mind, yet they availed not to burst his bonds. The demon had skillfully spread his snares around him, and kindled within him a consuming thirst. He felt powerless to act, and after many solemn resolutions, and ineffectual efforts, he yielded, an unresisting victim. During this hopeless descent, this irrecoverable decline, were no dark suspicions awakened in the mind of Isabel? By no means. With indignant scorn she would have spurned from her heart the thought that her noble husband could stoop to any base or dishonorable act. Her ready sympathy had been strongly enlisted in his apparent self-sacrificing devotion to the good cause in which he was engaged, and with trembling solicitude she noted his languid step, his drooping energies, his increasing negligence of his business; but her fears were somewhat quieted with his repeated assurances that it was the inevitable result of the nightly demands upon his time, thoughts, and strength—that the crisis would soon be passed, and with that would pass the necessity for his present extraordinary efforts. And Isabel, in her artless simplicity, gazed

upon him with admiration, as a noble sacrifice in a noble cause. She venerated that heroic enthusiasm, which could induce him, night after night, to turn away from the attractions of his own quiet, happy fireside, to join his confederates in their efforts for the complete emancipation of his beloved country from the reckless extravagance and misrule of the dominant party. Isabel greatly feared for his *health*, but strove to encourage him, and to comfort herself with the hope that all would yet be well. She never once suspected that another and more powerful influence than her own pure love was stealing away the heart she had regarded as *all her own*. Mr. Harris dreaded the hour which should reveal the truth to his gentle wife, and he taxed his ingenuity to the uttermost to perpetuate the delusion, which had been so successful in concealing from Isabel his own baseness and degradation. He thought that when the election was over, and the peculiar temptations attending it were removed, he should return to his business and his family, and be restored to his own self-respect. The important day at length arrived, in which the contest between the two great opposing parties was to be decided; and, when the announcement was made that the

party in power had been routed by an overwhelming majority, the excitement knew no bounds. The booming cannon roared; frantic yells and loud hurras arose from the excited multitude. Then followed bonfires, illuminations, and all the usual demonstrations of a 'patriotic victory.' The country was saved again, and the newspaper presses groaned with the burden of *great promises* of retrenchment and reform, of abuses corrected, right principles restored, and a new and glorious impetus given to commercial and financial prosperity. How far these specious promises were fulfilled—these expectations realized—it is not my present purpose to inquire. But *at what cost* was the victory obtained? is a question often asked; and, although it can never be fully answered, until that great day when the secrets of all hearts are made manifest, yet some few items may be enumerated. It cost Mrs. Harris the loss of her kindest and dearest earthly friend; it cost her little children the loss of an indulgent, affectionate father; it cost the community in which he lived the loss of an industrious, intelligent, and honorable citizen; it cost heaven the loss of an immortal soul. And *this* was but an isolated case, among the thousands of victims who have fallen before

the desolating whirlwind of a reckless political excitement.

"One night, shortly before the day of the general election, the club of which Mr. Harris was a member, was visited by a very large delegation from two neighboring clubs, who had previously engaged to be with them, that they might insure concert of action, and arrange and concentrate their subordinate forces, preparatory to their anticipated triumph. On that night—that long remembered night—Isabel kept her weary vigils, alone, until long after twelve o'clock, the usual hour for her husband's return, and yet he came not. She replenished the fire, re-adjusted his cushioned rocking-chair, placing it in the most inviting position—again looked over the little table, with its snow-white spread and tempting repast, to assure herself that nothing had been forgotten which could add to the comfort of her care-weary husband—then renewed her anxious watch, and listened for his return. The clock struck the hour of two, and yet he came not. Trembling with apprehension, she counted the slow moments of another weary hour—the clock struck three! Ere-long she heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and springing from her chair, she had nearly

reached the hall door, when she was startled by the sound of voices, and laughter, and the footsteps of more than one person. She listened a moment, when it occurred to her that Mr. Harris had probably brought with him some of his friends, and, ashamed of her hesitancy, she immediately proceeded to open the door. What consternation seized her, as she saw four men bearing a litter, and her husband—her own dear George—extended upon it! Uttering a frantic scream, she exclaimed, 'What is the matter? Oh, is he dead?' 'No,' replied the man nearest her, as they passed into the room, and placed the litter upon the floor. 'No, but he might as well be.' 'Dead drunk!' exclaimed a voice behind her; 'let him snooze it out; it's the best thing ye can do; he'll be well enough to-morrow, I'll bet; can't stand these here 'lection times.' 'Never you mind, Miss Harris,' echoed another voice, 'twon't hurt him any; he'll be jest as good as new, to-morrow—may be a little *head-achy* and *cross*, but that's nothin', you know.' Isabel stood and gazed in mute astonishment—then casting an imploring look upon the hardened men around her, she sank down by the side of her insensible husband, repeating, in the most moving tones, her inquiry, 'Oh, what is the matter?' 'Why, I tell ye

he's *drunk*,' said one of the attendants, 'and nothin' else ails him; and there's no use o' makin' such a fuss about it, nuther; it's nothin' so terrible *strange* in these 'ere times to get a little boozy now and then; and you see we had a grand finishin' up, to-night—we're *bound to beat* this time, and then, sir, we'll have a reg'lar jollification. I'll bet half on 'em went away to-night with a "brick in their hats;" but George, ye see, he got *one too many*. Ha! ha! ha! han't got used to it yet.' This speech was intended as a sort of comfort to poor Isabel; for, hardened as were the men by whom she was surrounded, they could not remain wholly unmoved by her unaffected anguish. She made no reply, but took her husband's hand in hers, and imprinted a kiss upon his cheek. In so doing, she inhaled his breath, freighted with the fumes of the accursed poison. The terrible truth was now fully revealed. She called upon him in her frenzy, imploring him to tell her *why* and *how* he had fallen; but the only response to her moving entreaties, was the heavy, laborious breath, laden with the noxious effluvia from which weary nature was striving to free herself. After having him carefully removed to the bed, Isabel dismissed the attendants, and then

seated herself by his side, to await the dawn of her first day of sorrow. The curtain of the future had been partially drawn aside, and she had given one shuddering look into the approaching darkness; her fainting spirit recoiled from a view so cheerless, so desolate. The star of hope, whose steadily-shining light had so brightly gilded every object connected with her quiet home, had suddenly gone down in everlasting night, and all the horizon of her coming life was darkened with the lengthening shadow of her first great sorrow. After some time of silent thought and weary watchfulness, she was aroused by a groan from her husband. Instantly arising and leaning over the bed, she strove to assume a look of composure, while awaiting further indications of returning consciousness. For a little time he seemed very restless, occasionally moaning and tossing his arms, then pressing his hands upon his head, and exhibiting various indications of awaking from a disturbed and oppressive slumber. At length he opened his eyes, and gave one scrutinizing look into the face of his injured, innocent wife. For a moment he seemed bewildered and astonished; but soon the truth began to dawn upon his mind, and to arouse his benumbed faculties. He remembered

with remorse, the scenes of the previous night. As he continued to gaze upon the statue-like figure before him, which seemed, indeed, 'stamped with the signet seal of death,' he slowly, but fully, comprehended his condition, and felt that all his guilty degradation was revealed to his faithful, confiding wife. With a groan of irrepressible anguish, he again closed his eyes. He *dared* not look upon the ruin his own hands had wrought; he *could* not look upon those features, so expressive of mute despair. As a thrifty young tree, clothed in the full verdure of summer beauty, is suddenly smitten by the lightning's fiery bolt, so stood poor Isabel, in the midst of the wreck and ruin of all her earthly hopes—a stricken, scathed, and blighted thing. With tearless eye and pallid cheek, she stood motionless, or moved mechanically about the room, and it seemed, for a time, that her reason, which had been so rudely assaulted, would fully abdicate her throne, and thus complete, at once, the ruin so fearfully begun. At length, the loud and repeated calls of little George and his sister, restored, in some degree, her wandering thoughts. The powerful pleadings of maternal love interposed, and partially crowded aside the consuming vision which, for the

last few hours, had held an entire dominion over her mind. As she entered their room, they were frightened by her altered appearance, and their eager expressions of alarm and endearment awakened the fervid response of her maternal sympathy. The fountain was opened, and her heavy heart found a temporary relief in tears. Isabel never alluded to her husband's fall—no word of reproach ever fell from her lips. She strove to make herself and everything else associated with his home, cheerful and attractive, in the hope of *winning back* the erring one—and none of the numberless delicate assiduities of conjugal life, which the most devoted affection could suggest, were neglected or forgotten; but the object of her extraordinary efforts was not attained—she could not recover the victim from the power of the spoiler. Mr. Harris was not blind or insensible to the devotion of his wife; he saw beneath her assumed cheerfulness, and knew that the 'iron had entered her soul,' and was rankling there, while, drop by drop, her life-blood was oozing away. While she carefully drew the vail of cheerfulness over her own consuming grief, and was promptly and kindly ministering to his necessities, and anticipating his slightest wish, his silent

thoughts were continually contrasting her moral heroism with his own monstrous defection, and the torturing conviction of self-imposed infamy, pierced, like the barbed arrow, his naturally sensitive spirit, until, in the madness of desperation, he leaped into the fearful chasm of hopeless intemperance.

"It is vain to attempt to paint the shadows of the 'second death,' as they gather around the path of the drunkard, or to describe the 'pitiless pelting of the storm' of unmitigated sorrow upon the defenseless heads of those who are 'bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,' and whose hearts are bound to him in bonds stronger than death. To those who have drank the cup, no words can express the bitterness of its contents: to those who have never tasted, description fails to communicate any adequate conception. I would not open the page on which is recorded the history of that long, dark night of seven years. At the close of this period, poor Harris was brought home one day as he had often been before, in a state of total insensibility. In two days he died of apoplexy—and the drama of his life was ended. His remains were borne, with inexpressible grief, to the lonely grave, over which hangs the dark pall of *everlasting night*. No star of hope lights

up the solitary gloom, or points the stricken one to a happy reunion in the better land, for 'no drunkard hath eternal life.' Aside from the most unremitting attention to the wants of her husband, Mrs. Harris devoted her entire efforts to the careful and judicious culture of the minds of her children, and strove to prepare them for a successful conflict with the sorrows, the temptations, and trials of orphanage, which she knew they must soon be compelled to experience.

"Three more years of fearful grappling with adverse circumstances—three years of patient intercession and filial communings with the widow's God—three years of diligent instruction in morality and religion, as well as in all the minor duties of life, and Mrs. Harris committed her orphan children to the 'God of the fatherless and the widow,' and laid down to die. In a very short time the feeble current of life was still,—the withered heart ceased its warm pulsations, the languid eye was closed, and the 'weary was at rest.' When George and his sister learned that all was over, and that the dreaded cloud of early orphanage had indeed rested upon them, they wept sore and long. George took in his own, the cold hand which had so often ministered to his necessities, and had so often

been laid with fervent blessings on his head, then reverently kissed it, and pressed it to his throbbing heart. He scarcely left his place by the side of her who had given him life, until she was removed to the grave. Every one noted his absorbing grief, his deep devotion; but none knew the magnanimous decisions, the lofty purposes, the mighty resolves, which were formed in that young, boyish heart, while kneeling there in that chamber of death. At length the hour arrived when his mother must be borne away from mortal view. He led his sister to her side; then clasping the inanimate form in a long, convulsive embrace, exclaimed, 'Farewell, sweet mother! Thy kind counsels shall be remembered, thy pure and consistent example shall guide my youthful footsteps. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."' The sad, sweet smile, which not even the chill of death could remove, yet lingered on her pale face, until hidden from view by the clods of the valley. In the severe conflicts of after-life the remembrance of that maternal smile was sufficient to inspire George with renewed zeal in the accomplishment of the work to which he had devoted his life.

"Immediately after the funeral services

were closed, George called on his well-trying friend, the venerable clergyman, who officiated at the marriage of his mother, who had been her invaluable friend and counselor through all her years of trial, and who had often cheered and sustained her, as she descended into the dark valley of the shadow of death. George told him of the plans and purposes which he had long been revolving in his mind, and which had been matured and confirmed while kneeling beside his mother's lifeless remains. 'There,' said he, 'in that chamber of death, I solemnly consecrated myself to the service of the living God, and in his name I am resolved to meet the foe that robbed my father of his heavenly inheritance, that robbed me of a priceless mother, and that has shed a blight upon my early life. I am young; but, like the Jewish stripling, I go armed with my simple sling and stone, to challenge the proud and insolent foe, which has so long defied the armies of the living God. With a Divine commission and my humble weapons, I hope to do good service. I mean no disrespect when I say my purpose is fixed, and I ask not if you sanction my determination, for I feel assured that I have been impelled to the course I have adopted by an influence more than

human; but, my dear sir, I do ask your blessing and your assistance in a season of preparation, ere I commence the great business of my life.' The good old man was deeply moved by this unexpected avowal, and, clasping him in his trembling arms, he stood a moment in silence ere he could check the rushing tide of emotion which agitated his feeble frame. Then, with streaming eyes, he said, 'Ah, my son, I see it all now! The *mother's prayer* has prevailed. I doubt not the authority of your commission, nor the wisdom of Him who has called you to this interesting and important field. Then go, my dear child,—go, clad with the simplicity of truth, and, in the name of your mother's God, labor for the redemption of your race from the devouring scourge; and may He who dwelt in the bush, guide you in the right way, strengthen and sustain you in every emergency, and crown your labors with abundant success.' During their long and interesting interview, an arrangement was perfected, by which George and his sister were both received into the family of the good Mr. Germaine. Such disposition was immediately made of the household effects which remained after the decease of Mrs. Harris, as enabled her friends to defray the

expenses attendant upon her sickness and death, after which nothing remained save some little keepsakes, which her children were permitted to retain. At their new home their expectations were more than realized. Their health and comfort, their usefulness and happiness, were all judiciously cared for; and nothing was wanting to complete their enjoyment, save the presence of their own dear mother. Even that desire was partially gratified; for in the still darkness of night—that hour of quiet heart-communing—the beautiful image so faithfully daguerreotyped upon their memory was constantly before them; and again they seemed to listen to the gentle pleadings of the evening prayer, the 'good-night kiss' again warmed upon their lips, and the mother's smile, like a living presence, soothed their sorrow and lightened their heavy hearts of half their load. George remained in that interesting family two years. Mr. Germaine and his excellent wife entered into all his plans of preparation, with a prompt and generous sympathy and assistance, which could scarcely be exceeded by parental love and care. They secured to him every possible aid, and at the early age of nineteen he entered the field as one of the pioneer soldiers in the glorious work of

reform. And if the most unprecedented success, which has invariably attended his efforts, may be regarded as an indication of the righteousness of the cause and the propriety of his course, then, assuredly, George Harris did not mistake the high authority of his commission."

"Permit me," said Judge Kingsley, "to add, that the youth, to whose interesting history you have just been listening, is the dear, and only brother of Mrs. Kingsley."

"Ah, ha!" said Major Grey, "I suspected it, sir, suspected it."

Fred and Kate both leaped from their seats, and falling upon their knees, seized each a hand, and literally covered them with their kisses and their tears.

"And you," exclaimed Kate, "*oh, are you, indeed, the poor little Helen?*"

"Why, Aunt Helen," said Fred, "*why* have you not told us this before?"

"Because, my dear child," said Mrs. Kingsley, "I have no desire, needlessly to expose the incurable wounds of domestic happiness, and *the best time had not come*. I have watched, with most intense anxiety, your entrance upon the duties and privileges of citizenship, and have perceived, with devout gratitude, your readiness to yield to mature

counsels and correct influences; and I have chosen to *defer* this sad lesson until now, when you have arrived at that critical era in life in which your moral nature is brought in direct contact with the duties and responsibilities, the perils and temptations, the intrigues and stratagems, the rocks and shoals, and the *decoy lights of political life*, to which my poor father fell an unsuspecting victim."

"And," replied Fred, "thanks to my guardian sister, and the genial influences of this blessed home, that I, too, have not been added to the number of the hopelessly lost."

"Allow me," said Charlie, "to mingle my thanksgivings with those of my friend, for to him, and the venerable head of this household, I owe all I am, and hope to be."

This spontaneous tribute of affection and respect to the eminent moral worth of Judge Kingsley and his excellent wife, was not lost upon the other members of the social circle; and while all felt that it was justly due, they also felt how infinitely superior is the voluntary offering of the heart, to the studied words of praise which fall from the lips only.

The company then adjourned, to meet in one week at the house of Major Grey.

CHAPTER XVII.

MUTUAL HOME INFLUENCE.

"Oh, the blessings of a home, where old and young mix kindly,
The young unawed, the old unchilled, in unreserved communion."

ANOTHER week found our friends convened at the house of Major Grey. After the usual preliminaries, the subject of the previous meeting was resumed by Mr. Sherman, who, in a few words, gave expression to the deep interest which had been awakened in his own heart by the sad and affecting history of Mr. Harris. With great fervor and earnestness he admonished his hearers of the danger, the fearful, and oftentimes fatal, consequences to individual and public morality, of thus yielding correct principles to the control of undue excitement.

"And," he continued, "while we stand trembling upon the brink over which the father has fallen, may we be inspired with the same noble sentiments which have animated the son, and which have enabled him, under the most trying circumstances, to maintain his integrity. There is one feature in

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the history of the younger Mr. Harris which is worthy of particular notice. I refer to his inflexible adherence to the great principles of truth and right, in the prosecution of the work to which he has consecrated himself. His little sling and stone have done, and are still doing, great execution in our world. The same directness of aim and perseverance of effort, are indispensable to success in any enterprise. In all the varied arrangements of our secular affairs, this principle is readily admitted, and no intelligent man expects success in the pursuit of any business, without persevering devotion of thought, time, and effort for its accomplishment. So in moral enterprises. A man may give general instruction, as it is his duty to do, in all that pertains to the moral well-being of those within his influence; but, if he would succeed in convincing a man, or a community, of the right or wrong of a principle or practice, he must concentrate his thoughts and efforts upon that one point. The idea, to be made convincing and effective, must stand out alone, entirely divested of all extraneous connection."

"That," said Major Gray, "is a very important suggestion, sir, very important. The fact is, men are so self-indulgent in canvass-

ing the operations of their own minds, that they are exceedingly slow to admit, even to themselves, that they are in error; and the effort is much more formidable, which requires them to abandon a favorite principle, and establish themselves upon its opposite. Hence, paradoxical as it may seem, the more suspicious a man is that his position is untenable, the more anxiously he strives to fortify himself against the convictions of truth, and the more content is he to remain in error, if he can but succeed in deluding others into the belief that he is right. Now, generalities make no more impression upon such minds, than the whispering zephyr does upon the towering rock; and there is no other way to induce men to abandon a position which is morally wrong, but to bring the truth to a focus, and hold it so near as to burn them out. My advice is, to let every man *drive his own team*, but let him see to it that he makes straight furrows, and plows deep, sir, plows deep."

"I think," said Judge Kingsley, "that those who have carefully watched the signs of the times can not have failed to discern the increasing necessity for immediate, persevering, and systematic effort for the resuscitation of that pure morality and severe

simplicity upon which was based the policy of our early rulers and statesmen. While thus watching, it is encouraging to note the indications that serious thoughtfulness is quietly occupying the hearts of good men, and, in some degree, displacing that criminal apathy which has so long blinded them to our dangers and true condition. And, simultaneously with this, we must note the impressive indications of Divine Providence in calling from their long years of undisturbed repose the written sentiments and principles which controlled the policy of our early rulers. These long-forgotten memorials have strangely appeared before the American people, like the accusing spirits of the departed revolutionary heroes, to rebuke the narrow policy and selfish ambition which at present so fearfully prevail;—a policy which would recklessly sacrifice the priceless treasure, which was secured to us by the blood and toil of our noble sires, to the insatiable lust of power, place and possessions. We can no longer disguise the fact that the enervating influence of luxurious habits of self-indulgence, together with our national pride, and a conceited sense of immunity from all possible danger, have begotten within us an indolent feeling of self-security, and

have thus presented an opportunity to reckless aspirants and unprincipled political enthusiasts, which they have sagaciously improved to the futherance of their own selfish purposes. With sacrilegious hands they have rudely seized upon the helm of our 'goodly ship of state,' and under the agitating influence of the disturbed waters, the angry, heaving billows, and the obscuring fogs of political party excitement, are heedlessly heading us toward the towering rocks, which in frowning silence mark the end. The varying phases of political organizations, which have coterminously or successively performed their parts in the history of civil government during a period of nearly six thousand years, have always drifted in the same channel, and while flattering themselves that, by their superior nautical skill they would be able to escape the fate of their predecessors, have been dashed, hopeless wrecks, upon the same rocks. While we are visibly approaching the same fate, it becomes every true patriot calmly and intelligently to survey the danger, and then to inquire what are his individual and social obligations, and how, as an American citizen, he can most effectively aid in shunning the rocks, by guiding the ship into that channel in which alone we may be able

to accomplish our high destiny. Our form of government is the most sublime conception of the human mind—that of a nation of free, independent and intelligent sovereigns governing themselves by their own inherent love of moral excellence. Oh, if we may but carry out, to its glorious consummation, the magnificent design, then will our redeemed country be indeed as a 'city set upon a hill,' an object of attraction to the whole earth."

"Allow me," said Mr. Wilton, "to express the exceeding gratification with which I have listened to the conversation of this and the preceding evening. I had been informed that the great object of this social arrangement was to effect political reform through the only effective medium—that of a correct public sentiment, and this result to be gained through a corrected social and domestic influence. Am I right?"

"Certainly," replied Judge Kingsley, "we can never hope to have the stream pure except we purify the fountain."

"And of course you believe," continued Mr. Wilton, "that intelligent female influence is essential to the attainment of this object?"

"It is *indispensable*," replied Judge Kingsley; "any attempt to attain the object with-

out the prompt and harmonious aid of direct female influence, is quite as absurd as would be the attempt to row a boat against wind and tide, *with but one oar*. It is only by united effort in a commendable cause, and when *both oars are plied in concert*, that the highest degree of human progress is effected."

"I apprehend," said Mrs. Smith, "that the want of concerted action of the sexes in the various social and domestic arrangements, is one of the most immediate causes of our present moral declension. It is extremely difficult to trace the analogy of cause and effect, through a long succession of social changes, many of which are of such apparently trifling significance as to escape observation, but which, in their final result, are overwhelming. That both sexes are occupying a false position—that they are not exercising that combined moral influence designed by their Creator, is manifest, and the consequences humiliating. When the education of woman is restricted to external accomplishments, to graces of manner and person, and when the sacred responsibilities of married life are assumed with no higher aim than to be regarded as the mere ornamental accompaniment of her companion, she is in a false position—false to her Creator, false

to her own moral nature, and false to all with whom she stands connected."

"And then," said Major Grey, "the boat must be rowed with one oar, eh! *one oar*."

"If," continued Mrs. Smith, "the husband, satisfied with this arrangement, devotes his entire time and thought to the duties of the office or counting-room, that he may 'keep up appearances,' and maintain his assumed position in society, the *other oar* is dropped."

"And," exclaimed Major Grey, with sudden energy, "the boat is swamped, sir, *swamped*!"

"If she is the representative of still another and larger class, and has been taught from childhood that the cultivation of her intellectual powers would unfit her for the more severe duties of practical life, that her highest aim should be to increase her pecuniary independence, and, if elected to the sacred office of wife and mother, it is that she may occupy the position of an available assistant in the accumulation of wealth, what must be the necessary result?"

"Ah, me!" said Major Grey, "swamped again, all swamped! Why, Judge, with such perverted views of the great object of life, it is not strange, sir, not strange, that our eyes are everywhere greeted with such a constant succession of moral wrecks, tossed about. in

every conceivable shape, on the floating billows of life's ocean. The view sometimes excites a temporary emotion of regret and pity, but how few, by earnest thought and patient investigation, ascertain the cause, sir, the true cause!"

"I have often thought," said Mrs. Grey, "that if we could, for a moment, see as we are seen, and know as we are known by the omniscient One, we might soon be convinced that we are a nation of idolaters. We have practically said of wealth, and the social position attained by the possession of wealth, 'these be thy gods, oh, Americans!' A startling proposition, truly; yet I fear a close and unbiased scrutiny of the common operations of our own minds, as well as the outward indications of the minds of others, would strongly confirm it. After admitting many noble exceptions, let me ask, do we not, as a people, cherish an inordinate desire for the indulgence of pride, vanity, and an ostentatious display of apparent wealth? Has not this spirit invaded the hearty simplicity which, in earlier days, marked the sincerity of our religious worship, and at least divided our affections between God and mammon? Have not these selfish passions received undue indulgence, and been cher-

ished as the necessary concomitants of our increasing national influence, power, and greatness? And has not this indulgence fully prepared the way for the successful introduction of that contagious mania for reckless speculation, both in property and political offices, which, like an untimely frost, is blighting and withering the tender and delicate plants of morality and virtue? If any one questions the ill effects of this state of things upon our public morality, let him watch the influences which prevail in the sanctuary of home, where characters are formed. The various methods of procuring *wealth* with ease and rapidity, are the all-absorbing themes of thought and conversation, which not even the holy Sabbath, as it bears to our world-weary and fainting spirits the soothing breezes of the heavenly rest, is permitted materially to interrupt. Corroding care, anxious thought, ceaseless effort, mark the devotee of mammon. Remonstrance is of no avail. He meets it with the curling lip of scorn, and passes on to his devotions, expecting, by-and-by, the reward of his fidelity in the abundance of wealth. In such an atmosphere a vast multitude, and, I fear, a vast majority of the future sovereigns of our model republic, are being reared—an

atmosphere which wonderfully accelerates the growth of selfishness, avarice, 'covetousness which is idolatry,' and all the baser passions of our depraved nature. These are of easy growth, and, being in their native atmosphere, are rapidly developed. But the moral nature—that noble feature of the triple compound, man—that impress of the image of the Almighty—remains unprotected, uncultivated. And why? Because the father, who is the divinely appointed head, guide, and counselor of the little plants of immortality, which have been confided to his care, has no time to attend personally to their cultivation, and thoughtlessly leaves this work of infinite magnitude to be divided between the mother, the school, and the Sabbath-school. But the mother often worships at the same shrine with the father, or if not, her solitary efforts are unavailing. The classics and sciences furnish healthful mental food, with but little moral aliment. The Sabbath-school scatters bountifully the choicest seeds, but the soil has not been suitably prepared and cultivated at home, and of the good seed benevolently furnished and sown, some is devoured by the fowls, some falls in stony places, and much falls among thorns and is lost—worse than lost. Only that seed

which is sown upon prepared ground, yields an abundant and desirable harvest. I am aware that I have presented you a revolting picture, and my soul sickens at the thought that it is true; and amazing as it seems, we really have no just comprehension of the magnitude or extent of the evils arising from the neglect of early and correct moral training. Is it not indeed so? Else, why are so many moral and religious parents surprised at seeing their sons, even in early life, taking a position of open disregard of all moral and divine law? often indulging in those excessively vulgar and degrading practices which belie the dignity and true nobility of manhood, and sadly mar, if they do not wholly obliterate, the impress of the divine original. Why, I repeat, are these things so, unless parents have slept in seed-time? And is it strange that they are now bowed down with surprise and remorseful sorrow, while reaping the harvest of thorns?"

"I think," said Mrs. Kingsley, "if we compare the ordinary operations of our minds with the letter and spirit of the first command of the Decalogue, we must stand convicted of the propriety of the remarks of Mrs. Grey. The surprising excesses, to which she and others have alluded during the con-

versation of the evening, are but the legitimate results of a misdirection, or neglect of education in the first principles of morality. I will not say there are no exceptions to this remark; but, if any, they are only exceptions, and of rare occurrence. I cheerfully concede the incalculable importance of correct maternal influence in giving right direction to the unfolding mind. It is an importance which can scarcely be overrated, or too perseveringly impressed upon our attention. Yet our Creator never imposed such a responsibility upon woman alone; and, allow me respectfully to suggest, that, for the present laxity of morals in the social and political arrangements of society, we are largely indebted to the negligence and false position of our brother, man. I am not unmindful of the fact that, from a combination of circumstances, men have been *unconsciously* led into a tacit rejection of the claims, which the wisdom of the Creator and the necessities of our moral being have imposed upon them. The primary design of man, in his entrance upon the practical duties of business life, is, undoubtedly, to provide for the necessities of 'the dear ones at home.' This design has its birth in a spirit of kind consideration, and benevolent desire for the happiness of others.

Under the promptings of devoted affection he meets with cheerfulness the exacting demands upon his mental and physical strength, that he may consecrate the trophies of his success to the well-being of those who are dependent upon his efforts. But in course of time his business becomes engrossing, and temporarily excludes thoughts of home; while a spirit of competition, rivalry, avarice, and pride, insidiously infuse their poisonous influence—and success, which in the commencement was simply desired as the means to accomplish an honorable and desirable end, becomes itself the end, which sanctifies all possible means for its accomplishment. The kind and generous spirit has been superseded by a spirit of avarice and covetousness. Now he does not greet the hour which calls him homeward with gratitude for the privilege of reciprocating the generous efforts which have made his home attractive. No pleasurable anticipations chase away dull care, and light up the visage with cheerful smiles, as he enters the sacred retreat, where he may for awhile shut the door upon the outer world, and, with his chosen co-laborer, engage in the pleasant work of sowing the seeds of intelligence and virtue in the immortal minds of those under their care. But with wearied

frame and clouded brow he seeks his home, as the asylum where he may obtain a temporary respite from oppressive care—where he may give full license to the petulance and ill-humor which a decent regard for the opinions of his fellows has compelled him to restrain. He acknowledges no higher aim than his own personal ease and convenience, and to that object, wife, children and all else are made subservient. If he is possessed of a more vivacious temperament, his visits at home are the signal for the temporary suspension of all care and sober thought, and a general abandonment to ease and amusement."

With Mrs. Kingsley this was no sudden ebullition of thought, called forth by the occasion: it was a subject of deep and patient reflection. She, in common with her friends, deplored the existence of those evils which are preying upon the life of our body-politic, destroying its vitality, and leaving it a gorgeous body without a soul—and, like the skillful physician, she sought to ascertain the nature and true causes of the diseased action before applying the remedy. The intense interest which her investigations had awakened in her own mind, caused her to fear that others who had given little attention to the

subject might regard her as too presuming, or unjustly censorious, and with tearful earnestness she exclaimed:—

"Tell me, my dear friends, are not these things so?"

"Most assuredly," said Mr. Sherman, "you are correct. I think no man of business, unless he has wholly stifled his conscience, will dissent from the view you have taken, or deny the engrossing, the all-absorbing nature of business cares; although very few, I fear, are aware of the effect upon their own minds. I hope you will proceed with your remarks."

"I most sincerely join in that request," said Mrs. Smith. "You have opened to my mind quite a new source of thought."

"I trust," said Charles Sherman, "that these remarks may lead those of us who are just entering upon the business of life, to guard more effectually the broad avenues of evil, and to profit by the riper experience of others."

Encouraged by these prompt commendations, Mrs. Kingsley proceeded to say:

"I have regarded this entire consecration of man to the absorbing claims of mere business arrangements as a source of great evil. This evil does not consist in a diligent

attention to business, for that is justly required of every man, but in permitting that duty to usurp the place of other, and even greater duties. I think every man who permits himself to be encumbered with so great an amount of business, as necessarily to prevent him from devoting a reasonable portion of time to the personal supervision and moral instruction of those dependent upon him, is occupying a wrong and dangerous position: he has as essentially departed from the designs and instructions of his Creator as has he who trespasses upon the sanctity of that portion of time which the Almighty claims as all his own. Have you never observed that almost all the directions found in the Scriptures for the moral and religious training of the household are addressed to *fathers*, and to secure their attention to this all-important duty? And have you never observed how much wisdom is manifested in the direction to the Jews to establish monumental records of particular events? Some were commemorative of signal deliverances and distinguishing blessings, others were the sad memorials of Divine displeasure and severe judgments. The ultimate design of these memorials was, unquestionably, to incite to greater diligence in teaching the statutes and

ordinances, the strict observance of which was so indispensable to permanent prosperity. '*In time to come*, when your children shall inquire, what meaneth this? ye shall answer,' etc.—thus compelling the fathers, not only to preserve in their own remembrance the precepts and instructions of their Heavenly Father, but, in replying to the interrogatories of the children, they were also compelled to communicate the same instruction to them. In the prosecution of this great design, the utmost constancy and diligence were required: 'Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up;'—thus maintaining the pre-eminence of moral and religious principle over the mere acquisition of property. A late eminent American statesman has left on record the following just rebuke to those who regard the proper training of the human mind as a trivial affair, and make it subservient to their ambitious schemes:

“‘If we work upon marble it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we erect temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds,

if we imbue them with high principles, with the just fear of God, and of their fellow-men, we engrave upon those tables something which no time can efface, but which will brighten to all eternity.'

"I am aware of my utter incompetency to do justice even to my own feelings, while discussing a subject of such infinite magnitude; but if, by any suggestions of mine, my brother man may be induced to give it that thoughtful consideration which its own intrinsic merits demand, I shall feel grateful, and I am sure my brother will be amazed at the result of his own investigations."

"I can not believe," said Mrs. Smith, "that any person who has calmly and dispassionately surveyed the bearings upon our future destiny, of the social and political evils which we have been discussing, can fail to be fully convinced of the necessity of a prompt and thorough reform. It is comparatively easy to convince people of the existence of evil; but to convince them of the utility of reform, and persuade them to adopt it, is another and quite different affair. Hence the multiplied attempts to remedy the effects of evil, without a removal of the cause; for there are quacks in morals as well as elsewhere.

"Allow me to refer to one or two such remedies, which have obtained some notoriety, and which many have adopted as the grand panacea for all social evils, but which, nevertheless, are calculated, in their very nature, to magnify beyond control the evils they propose to remedy. I refer to the efforts of those who, in the excess of their insane ambition, would induce woman to leave her heaven-appointed mission, and enter the lists as a competitor for all those positions of honor, trust, profit, and responsibility, which have hitherto been appropriated exclusively to the opposite sex. We would not arrogate to ourselves any greater amount of virtue and morality than we accord to man; and while it is generally conceded, that the moral qualities predominate in the mind of woman, this is to be regarded as the result of her different station. A very wise man has said, 'All our faculties are strengthened by reason of use.' Now, the author of our being has imposed a necessity upon woman, and especially upon mothers, for the constant exercise of the strongest feelings of unselfish kindness of which human nature is capable. This benevolent spirit must, instinctively, seek the highest good and happiness of those who are dearer than life, and that object can.

only be secured by the constant and judicious cultivation of the moral nature. With sorrow we admit that woman's influence was first to lead astray, and, with grateful humility, we rejoice that our heavenly Father has placed her in a position which protects her from those unhappy influences with which man is brought into more immediate contact; and thus, if true to her position, she may be first in her efforts to restore others to morality, purity, and virtue. Do you not see the wonderful simplicity and beauty of the arrangement? Do you not see that the very necessities of her moral nature create those connecting influences, so admirably linked one with another by the divine hand, that not one can be displaced without doing violence to the whole?

"Another remedy has been urged with some degree of importunity, as a relief for the supposed inequality of privilege and condition, namely, that woman shall be permitted to enter without restriction upon the practical duties of the learned professions, and that she shall be permitted to test her mental and physical ability to compete with her brother man in the varied combinations of the mechanic arts and commerce. Now, I have no possible patience with this war of

the sexes for the supremacy. In my estimation, such a course entirely thwarts the original design of our Creator, and opens an impassable gulf, into which are remorselessly hurled all those refining influences and affinities which bless and beautify human existence. It leaves the sexes in formidable antagonism, withering under the dismal clouds of a cold, selfish ambition. It is not to be questioned that those who are united in the family relation, whether occupying the position of father or mother, of husband or wife, of son or daughter, of brother or sister, should all be animated with an earnest desire to combine their individual influence and effort, for the promotion of the highest good and happiness of the whole family. This point is to be gained only by the effort of each to perform faithfully and efficiently the peculiar duties incident to his *appropriate place*, and under the guidance of that prompt and ready sympathy, which, in seeking the happiness of others, best promotes his own. The same effort, prompted by the same benevolent desire, must also characterize our labors to provide for the improvement of our *moral* nature, with this exception: in the cultivation of the moral being, the same claims upon personal effort

are alike imperative upon both the father and the mother of the household, and these demands can neither be evaded or transferred from one to the other with impunity. The father may not plead the pressure of pecuniary obligations, to justify his neglect of the patient, faithful and systematic culture of the moral vineyard of his household. He may not plead, in extenuation of his negligence, the want of time, or the superior capacity of the mother for the moral culture of childhood. And the reason is obvious. The proper performance of this duty is quite as essential to the moral well-being of the father, as of the child. 'It blesses him who gives, and him who receives.' Wonderful in wisdom is He who has based our duty upon our own necessities. As our physical nature demands daily food to insure its healthful development and vigor, so our moral nature languishes if bereft of daily sustenance. Oh, if we could be induced to place a proper estimate upon the benefits which so bountifully react upon ourselves, arising from a diligent training of the moral natures that are committed to our care, we should no longer regard the duty as a disagreeable annoyance, but rather as a delightful recreation."

"I have listened with renewed interest," said Judge Kingsley, "to the various suggestions which the subject under discussion has called forth. The more cautiously and carefully we examine the bearings of social and domestic influence upon our present and future destiny, the more is its importance magnified; and, as the wide-spreading and far-reaching effects loom up before my mental vision, I am surprised at the folly which has permitted other, and comparatively trivial objects, to usurp the control of our minds, to the exclusion of this, the first, the greatest, and most imperative duty we owe to ourselves and to those under our care. I am especially glad that reference has been made, in this connection, to paternal duties. We have been accustomed to transfer the entire care of the physical, mental, and moral training of childhood to the mother, and those under her immediate direction, well satisfied if we receive the filial respect and obedience which is due to the acknowledged head of the household, and glad to be relieved from the ceaseless vigilance, physical toil, and anxious mental effort, which are necessary to check the growth of, and eventually to eradicate, the noxious weeds which are constantly springing into active existence, in the prolific

soil of a depraved human heart; and at the same time to plant the seeds of virtuous thought and conduct, to watch their feeble development, and encourage and aid their growth to maturity. Oh, how thoughtlessly have we left this overwhelming responsibility, this constant demand upon superhuman effort, to rest wholly upon woman! Yes, thousands of men would feel a painful sense of humiliation under the idea of deferring to the judgment of a wife or mother, in a matter of business involving a few dollars, more or less, who, nevertheless, consign to their exclusive guidance the formation of character and mind, which, in a brief period, is expected to wield, in part, the destinies of these millions of people, and to become an integral part of national character. Even if woman were endowed with the highest qualifications of which human nature is capable, still the obligation upon her co-partner, man, remains in its full force; because, as has been suggested, *he* requires the self-discipline which family instruction imposes, in order to preserve in his own mind the purity and vigor of moral principle. A moment's reflection will confirm the truth of this proposition. We all know how absorbingly interesting were the studies which occupied our minds in our school-days. We

remember how the abstruse sciences opened up to our searching gaze their hidden beauties, as we perseveringly penetrated deeper and yet deeper into their mysterious lurking-places, and having found the long-sought treasures, how we folded them to our young hearts in wild delight, as an invaluable acquisition. And oh! we remember, too, when, in the dawn of manhood, we entered upon the duties of a business life, how soon our books were deposited upon the shelf, and their enticing allurements forgotten. How speedily the enthusiasm they had inspired, which made sleep a transient guest, and the midnight lamp our most familiar friend, was transferred to the acquisition of wealth, to the attainment of professional eminence, or to a secure position upon the wave of political popularity, with the hope of being, ere-long, floated into the haven which ambitious desires had gorgeously fitted up for our reception. The quiet, green paths, which science had decorated with her innumerable beauties, were all forgotten in the toilsome ascent of the dusty, beaten road, where excited throngs are ever crowding and rudely jostling each other, in their eager race for success. Just so our moral obligations are forgotten in the pressing claims of business cares which we have

gathered about us. We carelessly consign the performance of our own duty to those who have more leisure, or else wholly neglect it, and our unfaithfulness is visited upon ourselves in our very manifest delinquencies. How very opportune, then, is the command—how impressive the admonition, as it falls upon the ear, from the lips of our Father—‘Thou shalt teach these things, *diligently*, to *thy* children.’ ”

“I am surprised,” said Mr. Smith, “to observe the importance with which even our cursory examination has clothed this subject. I had supposed that one evening was quite sufficient to exhaust the theme. But it is like passing through a grand gallery of paintings. A man may observe only the pleasing effect produced by the delicate blending of light and shade, the interesting attitude of the figures, or the varied charms of the landscape, as they are depicted on the canvas—and these all combine to please the eye and gratify the taste. He is fully satisfied, and retires with many blessings upon the art. Now let him immediately return with a skillful artist, and his attention may be directed to many serious defects, which had wholly escaped his observation; and a close examination may suggest many improvements,

which, under other circumstances, might never have occurred to his mind.”

“Ah, my dear sir,” said the Major, “too many of us pass through the grand period of human existence after that sort. We wish to be pleased, sir, *pleased*. We do not like to be annoyed with the vices or defects which exist around us and within us, and we persistently close our eyes upon them, and fancy they are not, because, forsooth, we do not see them.”

“There is no prospect of reaching the end of this subject,” said Mr. Sherman, smilingly, “as we are much farther from it now than when we commenced. I should never weary of it, but for the present I propose that its discussion be suspended, to be resumed at some future time; and, as reference has been made to some very objectionable features of our social and domestic habits, I propose that Judge Kingsley be invited to present us, at our next meeting, with a *remedy*.”

With this proposition the friends were all exceedingly pleased, and having signified their favorable acceptance, very soon after retired to their homes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REMEDY FOR SOCIAL EVILS.

"For character groweth day by day, and all things aid it in unfolding."

"And the bent unto good or evil may be given in the hours of infancy."

"For disposition is builded up by the fashioning of first impressions."

"For example is a constant monitor, and good seed will die among tares."

"Character is mainly molded by the cast of minds that surround it."

"Beware, then, that he heareth what is good, that he feedeth not on evil maxims ;

For the seeds of first instructions are dropped into the deepest furrows."

A LARGE and interesting company assembled in the capacious drawing-room of Judge Kingsley's residence, to listen to his proposed remedy for the ills which infest society. His long-established reputation as a gentleman of intelligence, truthfulness, and candor—his uniformly mild and even temperament, and pleasing affability of manners, had inspired confidence in the minds of all who were favored with his acquaintance. The present occasion had drawn together quite an unusual

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number, and this silent expression of confidence and respect was noted with gratitude. Judge Kingsley arose, and in a brief introduction, very happily expressed his appreciation of their kind regard. He then proceeded to say :

"With the object of these little social meetings, most of you are familiar; but to those who have not been with us before, permit me to say, that by means of free and familiar conversation during several preceding evenings, we have carefully reviewed the existing state of society, as it is presented in the different domestic, social, and political organizations, and the examination has exhibited some very serious defects, which threaten the purity, prosperity, and permanency of our institutions.

"As peaceful conservators of the public good, in which all our dearest interests are involved, we surely do not assume any undue responsibility, when we endeavor, in a quiet, social manner, to aid in the rescue of those interests from impending calamity. Nay, we feel impelled by the most sacred obligations, which we can not evade with impunity, to exert our utmost influence in correcting the evil, and encouraging the good which we may find to be entering into the composition

of society. We know that the mighty tide of popular opinion, in the full consciousness of its own strength, is ever moving majestically onward, proudly overleaping all obstacles, and bearing individuals and nations upon its heaving bosom; and we also know that this overwhelming tide owes its entire existence to the innumerable little rills which are ever silently wending their way through all the ramifications of social life. Secure in their insignificance, they industriously gather up all the healthful or pernicious influences which lie in their way—slowly but constantly acquiring strength and volume, until, ere we are aware of their existence, they assume the dignity of public opinion, and present a formidable barrier to our progress. The *remedy* which is proposed to relieve society of its most oppressive diseases, is very simple and easily expressed; but to secure its adoption and proper application will, I imagine, be attended with more difficulty. As almost all the defects we have noticed, may be traced directly to ignorance, or culpable negligence on the part of those whose peculiar province it is to guide and instruct the forming mind, so the remedy must be found in a correct mental, moral, and physical education.

“But what is a correct education? I answer briefly, it is the careful and judicious training of all the powers and faculties of man, through all the successive gradations of capacity, from the early dawn to the full maturity of mortal existence. Man exists in two distinct natures united in one person—the mental and the physical. And although these two natures are entirely dissimilar, yet there is a most beautiful analogy in the proper means and method of their cultivation. The infant, in a condition of entire helplessness and dependence, is committed, in trust, to his keepers. He is possessed of a complete intellectual and physical organization, each of which is governed by fixed and unalterable laws. It is in conformity with one of these laws, that the administration of food, of proper quality and quantity, is made to effect the nourishment and healthful growth of the body. But food, in its crude, undigested state, is wholly ineffectual for good; and it is only after having been received into the stomach, digested, assimilated, and absorbed, that it is made capable of imparting strength and vitality to the physical system. The infant, being utterly incompetent to exercise choice, either in reference to taste or utility, receives, *passively*,

whatever is administered to him, whether good or bad. If, through the carelessness or ignorance of his attendants, improper or pernicious food be given, it is soon made manifest by the prompt and certain infliction of the penalty of the violated laws of his physical nature—a penalty which many a hapless child is compelled to pay in a diseased and suffering life, or premature death. And who is responsible? Who? The progress of the intellectual nature is governed in precisely a similar manner. The very first perception of a truth or fact, conveyed to the mind by surrounding circumstances, is secured by the attention; it is then digested, assimilated and absorbed through the action of thought, and becomes a portion of our being. Thus the education of the intellect commences. As in the other case, the child is entirely at the mercy of surrounding influences, and passively receives whatever impressions are communicated. We strangely overlook the fact that early influences make the most lasting impression, and are seldom or never effaced. Hence the incalculable importance of the character of those influences is obvious. This has been made a prominent idea by all writers on morals, since Solomon in his wisdom uttered the comprehensive maxim,

‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.’ The little twig which starts into being in a goodly soil, which is carefully protected, properly nourished, tenderly and judiciously pruned and trained up into the comely proportions of maturity, returns a rich reward for all its care, as it unfolds the character of the stately oak. Calm, self-reliant, and majestic in its own inherent strength, it surveys the changes and convulsions which agitate and destroy the feeble, deformed, and disproportioned tree by its side, and is even made stronger by the very influences which destroyed its inefficient fellow. The comely tree not only delights the eye, and blesses with its cool and refreshing shade, but it is just the kind of tree which is indispensable for many great and important purposes. This figure aptly suggests the object of education. Would we rear moral and intellectual oaks, who can stand upright upon their own roots against the warring elements of social and moral depravity, and the rough winds of political conflicts—who can successfully resist the yet more dangerous foes, who, by their treacherous sophistry, ‘would lead to bewilder, and dazzle to blind,’ our efforts, to be successful, should all be judiciously

directed to the accomplishment of the object we have in view. But those who have no definite object in view, are nevertheless, by their conduct and conversation, unconsciously, yet effectually, cultivating the dawning intellects around them, and the result must be in exact correspondence with the means employed. If the love of admiration, pride of social position, or the inordinate love of self-indulgence, with an entire disregard of the responsible duties of domestic and social life, are permitted to exercise a controlling influence over the mind of the mother, she need not be surprised to find her daughter, like a mirror, reflecting her own image in a vain, self-conceited, frivolous character of mind. The father, whose whole conduct silently but impressively teaches the lesson that gold is the object of idolatrous regard and personal ambition—the goal toward which his highest aspirations tend, and for the attainment of which he is disposed to sacrifice all other considerations, surely need not be disappointed to find the undesirable qualities of avarice, covetousness, and unmitigated meanness amply developed in the character of his son. If, in his conduct and conversation, he acknowledges no reverence for the authority of the supreme Law-giver, no filial regard

for his laws, statutes, and commands—does not permit the counsels of infinite wisdom to govern his own conduct in his domestic, social, and political relations, he has most effectually removed from the mind of his child all sense of obligation to filial obedience and regard. The deluded father awakes, all too late, to a full recognition of the truthfulness of the divine precept, ‘whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.’ Pained and disgusted with the ripening fruits of his own example, and forgetting his own culpability in the utter neglect of the early training of his child to correct habits, he often seeks to make amends by undue severity—and the tardy discipline is inflicted in the undisguised indulgence of an unkind, arbitrary, and revengeful manner, while he remains quite unconscious of the fact, that the very resistance which his child offers to his unjust mode of discipline, is but the echo of the voice of nature, as she instantly rises in rebellion against the infraction of her own eternal law of right. Perfect order marks all the operations of nature’s laws. In all her administration an undisturbed serenity prevails, and unless some foreign element is introduced to interrupt that order, there is no jarring in all her complicated and mighty

machinery. Now man, in his intellectual and physical nature, is the subject of those uniform and inviolable laws; hence, the only object of discipline should be to remove any foreign element which may have been introduced to disturb the harmonious operation of those laws. If the child, through ignorance or presumption, has in any manner violated the law of right, it is the legitimate design of discipline to enlighten that ignorance, or rebuke that presumption, by convincing him, through experience, that such violation must inevitably be followed, in some way, by the infliction of the penalty. If, therefore, the parent fails to lead his child to a just comprehension of the design of discipline—if he himself indulges in petulance, ill-temper, an undue severity, opprobrious epithets, or false and unjustifiable accusations—he has not only defeated the great and essential object of discipline, but has committed an irreparable wrong; and in his manner of inflicting the penalty—which is, perhaps, in itself just—he has himself violated an essential law of right, and is the greater culprit of the two. In thus impressing upon the mind of his child a keen sense of the injustice of the punishment, he most effectually secures his own retribution, in the

loss of that filial respect and veneration which every child spontaneously yields to the discipline which is prompted by love and an affectionate regard for his highest good. If, now and then, a stray sunbeam falls upon the mind of a child thus situated, revealing just sufficient light to make visible the darkness with which he is surrounded: and if, sometimes, he is induced to follow the glimmering ray into the clear sunlight, he then makes a man of himself, despite the pernicious influences which darkened his earlier days. Such occasional exceptions do not at all militate against our theory, but are, indeed, a most luminous confirmation of its truthfulness. Teachers, schools, and books, with the formal lessons of domestic counsel, advice, and reproof, are all efficient, nay, indispensable aids, but the leading influences of our own minds, as exhibited in the manners, tone of voice, temper, and personal habits, form the atmosphere in which our children constantly live and move, and give form to the character of their minds. This is education in its broadest, most comprehensive sense; and every one, to whose care is committed the training of an immortal mind, is responsible to society, to his *country*, and

to his God, for the impression he makes upon the character of that mind."

The very pertinent remarks of Judge Kingsley upon the amazing power with which our social and domestic habits enter into the training of the minds under our care, awakened a deep interest among his auditors at the time, and were carefully treasured up in the memory. Many, whose attention had never before been thus directed to the subject, were surprised at their own stupidity, and with bitter regret perceived that they had been all their lives unconsciously sowing tares, and ceased to wonder that they had been compelled to reap a harvest of thorns. Some politicians were there also—men who had not quite forgotten the semblance of truth—who were now fully awakened to the fact that, like wayward children, they had rejected their Father's precepts, and "leaned to their own understanding;" and that, in their own shortsighted wisdom, and to accomplish their own ambitious projects, they had "sown the wind," and must "reap the whirlwind." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The interesting truths presented on that memorable evening were borne away in

many hearts, and exerted an important influence upon the future lives of many present; and long years after the good old man had been gathered to his fathers in peace were those truths repeated to listening groups around many a fireside which had never been cheered by the living presence of the beloved and venerable author.

Great and most happy results emanated from this little social combination of the true friends of man—but we may never know the full results of that one benevolent effort to redeem our beloved country from the baneful effects of a mistaken or perverted social and domestic influence, until the rich, ripe sheaves have all been gathered, and angels have shouted the harvest-home.

CHAPTER XIX.

A RETROSPECT OF TWENTY YEARS.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time:
Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again."

WE will now pass over a period of twenty years—a period how rapidly passed! Yet great changes have been effected within that time—some of which we will note. The little quiet village of Bellville has been transformed into a busy, bustling town. Being pleasantly and eligibly situated, the telegraph and railway have guided public attention to its attractive features, and speculators, capitalists, and the floating tide of seekers after gain, throng its streets. Where hitherto the broad fields of grain bowed their heavy heads in blessings to the reaper, and flocks and herds rioted in the rich perfume of honeyed clover, the traveler now beholds the broadly paved streets and dusty avenues. Long blocks

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of buildings rear their proud forms, and the hurried ingress of successive groups indicates the thrift of business. The rail-car daily disgorges its crowd of eager traders, each anxious to make his mark upon some successful scheme of speculation in town-lots. The little office of Judge Kingsley, which for many years nestled in quiet security beneath the shade of a beautiful group of maples, has been compelled to give place to an imposing edifice, where the crowds of weary travelers are invited to the enjoyment of the sumptuous feasts provided for them by mine host of the National Hotel. Such are a few of the physical changes which have transformed the rural village into the populous town, where pampered luxury riots in self-indulgence, where hard-featured avarice gloats over his rapidly-accumulating treasures, where opulence groans under the burden of useless wealth, and where, in close proximity, gaunt poverty is stretching his bony arms around his children, and crushing them in his hard embrace, while meager want stands sentinel at the door, or, with glaring eyes, is peering in at the windows. And there, just around that corner, where opulence has reared a massive pile of stone, brick and mortar into architectural beauty, is a low range of semi-sub-

terranean tenements, in which vice holds sway, where schemes of wickedness are devised, and deeds of darkness without a name; and whence issues that pestiferous miasma, which infests the moral atmosphere, and taints the young life-blood of unsuspecting youth, spreading all-abroad the contagious influences of moral disease and death. The thronged streets present to the view a strange commingling of virtue and vice, of pride and poverty, of mirth and misery, of wealth and want—while here and there appears one, who, true to the great object of life's mission, is quietly and unobtrusively casting the leaven of pure morality into the social mass—the salt of true philanthropy into the seething, surging waters.

Of the friends who have been introduced in the preceding pages some yet remain, and some are not.

Poor James Tanner, whom we left in the service of his political party, still pursued his fruitless search for his place upon the political chess-board, through two successive administrations, and, with every failure, he sought to drown his harrowing disappointment in deeper potations of the maddening bowl. On returning to his home one night, after an unusual bacchanalian debauch, he

ascended the stairs upon the outside of the house—the only way of ingress to the miserable rooms he occupied—and with much difficulty reached the landing at the top. On turning to enter the door, he made a misstep, and was precipitated across the slight balustrade to the earth. The noise instantly drew together his family and the other inmates of the house, who bore him in, a corpse. Thus perished another of the victims of a perverted political enthusiasm.

Col. Lloyd still fondly cherishes the idea that he was predestined to occupy some post of eminence, which he has not yet been able to reach. The war with Mexico, which he anticipated with so much enthusiasm, failed to meet his expectations, as it yielded more labor and perplexity than glory, although he is confident that the result would have been more favorable had he been placed in his proper position in the army. He is now awaiting the future developments of his "manifest destiny," which he thinks may be realized in the coming conquest of Cuba, or some Central American province of semi-barbarians, in which he may shine commander-in-chief.

When Judge Kingsley's office fell before the triumphant march of onward progress,

he retired, in a good old age, from the active duties of public life, to the quiet enjoyment of domestic felicity. While yet a youth he launched his little bark upon the great ocean of life, and with his *Father's chart* in his hand, he has made a prosperous voyage. The sorrowful wrecks of those who "leaned to their own understanding" have been constantly drifting past him; and he has witnessed the terrific storms which have engulfed many who commenced with him the voyage of life, but who ventured upon the pathless sea without pilot or chart, and perished in the pride of their own folly, while he, learning wisdom from the shipwreck of others, grasped with a firmer hand his Divine chart, and studied with new zeal and interest its ample instructions. Thus have "all things worked together for his good." The breezes of more than fourscore years have gently wafted him to the very verge of human existence, and he is now calmly and patiently awaiting the paternal summons, "World-weary child, come home." His beloved co-partner in the labors and duties of the voyage is by his side, listening for the summons; and they, who have together so faithfully labored, will, after a transient separation, be re-united in

the enjoyment of a rich reward in their Father's house.

Mr. Sherman, after diligently laboring some seven years to retrieve the errors of his early life, was gathered to his rest, leaving a sweet memorial in the hearts of many who were profited by the instructive lessons of his bitter experience.

Charley was promoted to a partnership with Mr. Smith, and the firm has become one of the first commercial houses in the country. Their names are known throughout their greatly extended acquaintance as synonymous with uprightness and strict integrity. In looking about for a domestic partner, Charley did not long deliberate. Ever since he had learned the inestimable value of Kate Kingsley as a sister, he had been striving to render himself worthy of the highest regard of an honorable woman, and then to secure her to himself, rightly judging that of one who had exerted such an intelligent and happy influence upon her brother's mind, it might with truth be said, in that more endearing relation, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." In all their advancing prosperity, they have never forgotten the young strangers who are constantly seeking employment in their thriving

and populous town; and many a man cherishes with grateful recollections the memory of the *junior partner* of the firm, as one who knew the heart of the stranger.

Fred Kingsley pursued the honorable course marked out for himself in early life. He soon rose to distinguished eminence at the bar; and his success might have convinced his legal associates that sympathy with the right, and the free and unrestricted exercise of the noblest attributes of manhood, are not at all incompatible with eminence in the legal profession. Much, however, as he adorned his profession, he was not permitted to remain in its service. His stern, uncompromising integrity, his calm and fearless defense of the principles which God and nature have stamped upon every honest man's heart, claimed involuntary homage. Men whose hearts were not wholly corrupted by political duplicity, did reverence to the thoroughly-tried and honest man, while they spurned with undisguised contempt the fawning sycophant, who was ready to barter his professed principles for official patronage and favor. After having honorably performed the duties of several minor offices, Fred Kingsley was triumphantly elected to a seat in the United States Senate. Here he was no less conspic-

uous in his intelligent and earnest defense of right principles, and for that very reason, no less successful in winning favor. The hands of the few kindred spirits were strengthened, the timid encouraged, the wandering confirmed, and even those who gnashed upon him with their teeth, did in their hearts give him reverence. Those ever-living truths, glowing in the might of intellectual strength, which echoed through the halls of Congress as they fell from his lips, have again been gathered up and sent in the lightning's track to every part of the Union. And who that loves his country, has not felt the thrilling, thronging emotions of gratitude to that noble young man, as the whole heart has throbbed a response to the sentiments to which he has given utterance?

Previous to the entrance of Fred Kingsley upon his more public career, he had led to the matrimonial altar the sparkling, intelligent, and accomplished Emma Grey. The selection of a companion for life was distinguished by the same intelligent considerations which marked all his conduct, and the future of both Mrs. Kingsley and Mrs. Sherman gave evidence that they were not unwisely chosen. These ladies were scarcely less distinguished in their appropriate sphere, than

were their husbands in more public life; and they proved most efficient coadjutors in all efforts to reform the domestic, social, and political influences, which form the basis of society.

Oh, that woman better understood wherein her great strength lies—that she would appropriately use the intelligent nature given her by her Creator, for wise and beneficent purposes! Oh, that by “patient continuance in well-doing,” she would seek to purify the social and domestic fountains—that, by precept and example, she would cultivate the higher nature, and make her home a sacred retreat from contaminating influences. True, these duties are arduous—the claims well-nigh overwhelming; but she who has “been faithful in these few things,” shall be made, even in this life, “ruler over many things.” Under her refining, intelligent, and soothing influence, she shall behold the stormy passions hushed into repose, the angry waves become calm, and awaken in the heart of man the fervid responses of his better nature, which, under the perilous and unnatural excitements of public life, might otherwise sleep the sleep that knows no waking. With the proper and general cultivation of the social and domestic virtues, together

with a deep-seated reverence and love for the principles of philanthropy and true patriotism, would disappear that reckless immorality, which too frequently disgraces the aspirants for political honors, and stigmatizes the preliminaries of our popular elections with deserved contempt.

THE END.

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