while he listened. p. 111.

GOOD—BETTER—BEST;

OR,

THE THREE WAYS OF MAKING A HAPPY WORLD.

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PREFACE.

IT is supposed by some persons, not familiar with the publications of the American Sunday-school Union, that they are designed exclusively for children. That this is in a great measure the object of them, is undoubtedly true. But the committee have found themselves called, more and more every day, to furnish instruction to thousands of teachers and other intelligent adults. The volume here offered will not, it is hoped, be unwelcome to the latter class of readers, while there is nothing in it which need deter the inquiring pupil.

It will be immediately perceived, that no attempt has been made, to adapt the work to the capacity of feeble minds, or to exclude allusions to poetry and general literature. But that which has been constantly in view is the exaltation of Scriptural truths in regard to acts of beneficence.

In a world burdened, as is ours, with manifold sufferings, one of the first questions suggested to a renewed soul is, How may these sufferings be lessened or removed? To do good and to communicate, is the grand aim of every sincere believer in that blessed Redeemer, who left us his example, in regard to body as well as soul. It is to answer this inquiry, that the following pages are made public.

The fiction of the work is more apparent than real, and is used simply as the vehicle of truth. It falls more properly into the class of religious dialogues, than that of tales. It has no plot. If it possess any interest for the reader, it will be that which arises from the gradual unfolding of a great but neglected principle. Of the characters, many are copies from real life; and a large proportion of the incidents, with slight changes of name and locality, are actual occurrences. For what remains of fiction, the writer finds his apology in every fable and every parable of the old world, and in the immortal apologue of John Bunyan

GOOD—BETTER—BEST.

CHAPTER I.

Grateful that by Nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart
Is softened, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human kind.
Coleridge.

There was everything in the scenery around Elmham to make it an agreeable abode, even in winter. Much elevated above the country on every side, it commanded prospects which enchanted two such romantic creatures as Herbert and Edith Lee. The brother, as the elder one, and refined by a college education too, was perhaps more measured in his terms, but he enjoyed, as much as the gay and enthusiastic girl, the sights and sounds of the country, from which

they nad so long been shut out. For Herbert had been, during several years, immured in a college in one of our closely-built towns; and Edith had scarcely moved from her father's side, during his long decline in Baltimore.

Dr. Lee chose a fair morning to point out to his nephew and niece, the special attractions of the neighbourhood; and for this purpose, climbed up with them into the steeple of the old church.

A beautiful expanse of champaign lay before them. On the north, indeed, there was a barrier of iron hills, blocking up the view for a few degrees of the horizon; but these dwindled down almost to nothing in the north-west. In every other direction the prospect was unbroken, save by gently sloping grounds, little dells and bits of woodland, which were so scanty and so bare, as to be likened by Edith to a little shipping in a great harbour. Far to the east, the horizon was broken by a waving line of blue hills, just beyond which, as the Doctor told them, were the shores of the Atlantic.

Nearer to where they stood, a little stream

wound its way among birches, sycamores and swamp-willows, by means of which its course could be distinctly traced for seven or eight miles; and at two points of this circuit, the rays of the sun were reflected from slender spires, designating the villages of Nutbush and Cherburg.

As they walked home, at a brisk pace, over the hard frozen ground, Dr. Lee said to them, "My children, you must put off your city suits, and learn the ways of us country people."

"Why, uncle," replied Edith "do you not know that I love the country passionately? I may say I dote upon it; and it was always a wish of mine to leave the city, in order to enjoy the repose and the beauties of rural life."

"Ah! my dear," said the old gentleman, tapping her arm, "the country is not all that you city people suppose in your morning rides; it is not all flowers and verdure. You have a cold winter before you; our situation is bleak, our house is old, and you will shiver over our wood fires. Our farmers are rough, hard-handed fellows, and their daughters are sometimes as boisterous as their sons."

"That may be true, sir," said Herbert, "and I am prepared for it. But I trust we both have a wish to do good and get good, and in pursuit of this, are willing to exercise some self-denial."

"Your purpose is excellent, nephew, and I bid you God-speed. But you have much to learn, and the lesson will be painful. You are (pardon me) a raw college youth, full of romantic notions ——"

"O, by no means," exclaimed Herbert; "I trust we both have a strong desire to be useful as Christians, and to make people happy around us."

"That is the very thing in which I expect you to discover your impracticable notions."

"Surely, uncle," said Edith, "you would not quench our little desires of usefulness! There is no romance in this."

"Not for the world, my child, would I lay ven a straw in the way of your doing good. Only be sure you do it in the right way. It is the method you may take which I am anxious about."

"I had supposed," said Herbert, "that 'where there is a will, there will be a way'

according to the proverb; and that no one could set about doing good in earnest, without adding to the sum of human happiness."

"Partly true, no doubt. It is very probable that all well-meant efforts, however awkward, accomplish something. But then there are degrees in usefulness, and it is not every one who makes the best use of his talents. Charity itself sometimes blunders. It is no more true in things moral than in things natural, that the intention to be useful ensures that which is intended."

"I begin to take your meaning," said Herbert; "but pray explain a little further."

"Very little explanation is needed: the principle runs through all human affairs. The penny you give the beggar may be laid out in whiskey. The surgeon, in extirpating the cancer, may kill the patient. My classmate, Dr. Hand, crippled the arm of his own daughter, in bleeding her. You, Edith, destroyed your favorite cactus last spring by watering it too much. And as for Herbert, did he not ruin one of the finest horses in the county, by indiscreet fondness and pamper ing?"

"No more of that, uncle, if you please. But be good enough to teach us. We know very little of the world, and with our bookish fancies may injure those poor people whom we wish to improve, and err just as much as if we should chop blocks with a razor. Give us then some rules by which we may be guided in our little schemes of beneficence."

"Yes, dear uncle," cried Edith, "you can scarcely do us a greater favour."

"Rules, my children, can scarcely be laid down on such a subject. Wisdom must come from experience. I could recount to you many of the examples from which I have drawn instruction myself; and from time to time I will do so. But I think it best that you should be left to make your own trials. If you proceed cautiously, and always aim at the very highest good—mark my words—the *very highest good*, I think your little failures will not be productive of very serious evils; and a few months will set you in the right path. Before you have finished your experiment here, you will have learned that there are at least three methods of doing good, or making your fellow creatures happy

"O," exclaimed Edith, with eagerness, "do reveal to us the right way at once—or do you mean to say they are all right?"

"Not all equally right, my dear; but you must indulge an old man in his whim. You shall not know my meaning until you have found it out for yourselves. And then you will agree with me, that all the ways of doing good may be classed under three heads, namely:

"GOOD—BETTER—BEST."

CHAPTER II.

We men, who in our morn of youth defie
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour.
Wordsworth.

When Edith opened her window the next morning she was more gratified than ever with the situation of her uncle's house. A brilliant hoar-frost covered the whole face of the earth, and reflected, in millions of diamonds and emeralds, the beams of the newly-risen sun. It was winter indeed, but winter in its mildest guise. The mansion was very old, and could not be called elegant, having grown to its present extent by perpetual additions, of apartment to apartment. Some portions of it had two stories, but for the most part there was only one; and the gables faced so many different ways, that it would have been hard for a stranger to pronounce any one of them to be the front. The house was an irregular pile, built purely for convenience and comfort, and not unlike an over grown English cottage.

What was lacking, however, in the house was made up in the grounds. These were spacious and well improved. An extensive court-yard enclosed the buildings, and showed even at this unfavourable season that it must, in summer, be a delightful lawn. Four gigantic oaks, the relics of the forest, and an ancient pine tree still more lofty, gave promise of abundant shade. The misletoe upon the branches gave the oaks some freshness even in December, and the pine was heavy with verdure. Next to this enclosure and opening upon it, Edith saw a spacious garden, with arbours and green-houses. A great tree had been allowed to stand in the midst of an artificial mound, and here there were seats, overhung by aged vines.

The mansion was at least half a mile from the public road, with which it held communication by means of a lane, which was shaded by a double row of the luxuriant southern tree known as the Catalpa, and of which the clustering flowers are so remarkable an ornament in June and July.

"Here" thought Edith, "I might be happy, if outward things could make me so. And here my good old uncle *is* happy, in his green old age—but not from outward things, unless the fruits of his beneficence may be accounted such. His cautions ring in my ears—'GOOD—BETTER—BEST? I wish I could read his riddle."

But Herbert was under her window, with horses and servants for a morning ride, and her meditations were broken. Herbert had not been without the same thoughts, and felt the same anxiety.

Both these young persons had lately come out from the world, and were ardently desirous to be useful. Of a mother's care, they had no remembrance; and their father had died within a few months, after several years of helpless weakness and decay. Dr. Lee had promptly thrown open his doors to them, declaring that he should feel himself to be the favoured party, if they would consent to live with him and cheer his old age. They were under no necessity of doing so, but Elmham was not without particular attractions for them. It was their native spot,

having been the residence of their grandfather. It was in the midst of a population, which, though most uninviting as to manners and morals, offered to their youthful zeal the greatest opportunities for usefulness. And in the pursuit of their plans, they hoped for much aid from their good uncle, who was accounted a second 'Man of Ross' for his acts of beneficence which he had performed at Woolfall, a place fifteen miles further north, among the hills, where he had dwelt. They found many unexpected beauties in the course of their morning's exercise, and were filled with admiration of the skill and elegance with which everything was conducted on Dr. Lee's estate.

When they returned to breakfast, the good old gentleman was absent, having been suddenly called away upon an errand of mercy, to save a poor man from being turned out of his house by a hard landlord. They had a better opportunity to learn some things from Mrs. Huntly, the house-keeper, than they could otherwise have enjoyed. Like many of her class, this useful personage was fond of talking, and especially of lauding the family.

"I think," said Edith, "that my uncle lived twenty years at Woolfall."

"Yes, Miss Edith, and I lived there just as long; for while your poor aunt was living, there was nobody like me to care for her and see to the little household affairs, which her health did not allow her to manage. Woolfall was a much prettier place than this, Miss Edith; and before we left it, a much more moral place."

'You mean to say" said Herbert, "that while you were there you wrought a great change."

"Something like that Mr. Herbert, I must say. A wickeder place than Woolfall there was not on this side of the Alleghanies. At the village, half the houses were grog-shops, and most of the men were drunkards. And I do suppose there were many people there that did not know what the Bible was about, or when the Sabbath came. And thus in the whole country side, there was nothing but thieving, racing, cock-fighting, and every description of low sport. I have known a thousand people to be gathered on a court-day to see a wrestling-match. My poor

husband was very much given to those things. I shall never forget his being brought nome on a shutter one afternoon, with three of his ribs broken——"

"Was there any place of worship in the village?" asked Edith.

"Not at first. Now and then a pious Methodist exhorter used to come along and give a discourse, but there was nothing more. The children ran wild. The schoolmaster was the greatest sot in the place. I have known him to send my little boys to the tavern for rum, pretending that he wanted it to bathe his lame ankle——"

"You say, Mrs. Huntly" said Edith, interrupting her, "there was a great change."

"Change! Miss, you may well say so. Before we had been there twelve months, the doctor had made a beginning with schools and books and an old Methodist preacher, and what not—and before we had been there twelve years I may say the place was reformed through and through. Now, there is not a tippling-house in the whole neighbourhood, and but one tavern, and that does'nt sell strong drink. You might go there this

morning and see as clean children going to school as your heart could desire; a quiet orderly neighbourhood; a neat church with a bell in the steeple, and a set of real industrious thrifty farmers and mechanics. And al this comes of God's blessing upon the work of the good doctor 'and the Methodist preacher.'"

"Do let me know," exclaimed Edith, very eagerly, "how he brought this about, what means he used—what he began with." At that moment the door opened and Dr. Lee himself entered, having returned much sooner than was expected from his visit. He was fresh and ruddy, and though his thin hair was like silver, he neither tottered nor stooped, but showed the firm elastic health which results from temperance, equanimity, and active exertion. There was a lurking slyness about his eye which had perhaps betokened mischief, in his earlier years. His look always said more than his words; and he had that shrewd penetrating glance which makes any one on whom it is cast feel as though he is thoroughly looked into and fathomed. He was in the habit of spending several hours

daily in the saddle; a practice which, more than any other, tends to promote erectness of the person.

Dr. Lee was indeed a much older man than a hasty observer might have been ready to think. During the Revolutionary war, he became at a very early age an army-surgeon, and was somewhat noted for his professional skill. After this, he resided several years in Edinburgh and Paris, where he completed his medical education. On returning to his native country, he brought with him a store of rich information, derived from books and from his journeys in the most interesting parts of Europe, and also a valuable library, which he had collected in France. Unfortunately he had imbibed many of the infidel notions which were spreading in that country, and was consequently quite prepared to take a leading part in propagating the system which prevailed at that day among so many learned men in America, under the name of French philosophy, but which was, in plain English, the most abject Atheism. Of this, however, he lived to repent sincerely. For soon after his marriage, he was brought to acknowledge

the truth and efficacy of the Christian religion; and this not so much from reading or disputation, as from the meek example, the gentle instructions and the daily influence of a beloved wife. From this time the Bible became his principal study; and as his fortune was considerable, so that he was under no necessity of continuing to practice medicine, he began, long before middle age, to devote himself to acts of beneficence. Yet, as it was his opinion that every man, however wealthy, should have some regular occupation, he took the care of a large and valuable farm, upon which he passed twenty years of his life.

The character of Dr. Lee was peculiar, but its peculiarities commanded respect. He was affable and sometimes jocose, but never sneering or sarcastic. Without being thought a cunning man (for cunning is the wisdom of weakness) he was the terror of all deceitful persons, on account of his remarkable sagacity Few men had examined more closely the springs of human action. But this was mingled with the greatest frankness, simplicity and kindness, so that if he was shunned

by men of pride and pretension, he was almost worshipped by the poor.

The arrival of his young relatives filled him with more delight than he was willing to reveal. He loved them as the children of an only brother, and saw in them the marks of genuine Christian temper. True they were inexperienced, and in some things visionary, but they were lowly and teachable, and he hoped to train them up in those ways of usefulness in which he had found the greatest happiness himself.

"My children," said he, "your first business will be to find the points of the compass; I mean, to learn how the land lies. Take your observations, of the house and grounds, and make yourselves at home with all my property and my domestics. The next thing will be to gain some knowledge of the neighbourhood, in which it is your desire to do good. To help you in this, Furlong, the assistant surveyor of my friend Inman, is busy in making you a complete map of the hill and its surrounding valleys: so you will not work in the dark. In the west wing of my old house is the library, where you will always

find a fire: you may come to me when you please into the little cabinet adjoining. The old mahogany cases on one side of the room have not been opened for many years. They contain a collection of books which I brought with me from France, and which I now abhor as much as I once admired them. Now if you choose to read while I make my breakfast, Jerry will show you the way."

CHAPTER III.

How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery: sore pierced by wintry winds!
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of poverty.

Thomson.

The views of young Christians, with respect to doing good are commonly vague. If they are Christians at all, one of their first impulses will be to follow Him who "went about doing good;" but what particular benefit they shall try to confer, and how, and upon whom—they are often much at a loss to determine.

It was just this perplexity which filled the minds of Herbert and Edith, upon finding themselves at Elmham. A few days after the conversation last related, they were walking in an open gallery or piazza looking towards the east. The air though very cold, was bracing, and the sun broke forth upon an interminable waste of snow which had fallen

the night before. The branches of the old pine were studded with tufts of brilliant whiteness. The snow-wreaths about the eaves of the adjoining houses were curled into the likeness of some fantastic cornice. A downy veil was spread, far and wide over the slopes of hill and vale, hiding the colours but still indicating the shape of all beneath it. Edith could not but shudder to think of the suffering of the lower animals.

"Yet the snow is useful," said Herbert; "and farmers tell us it is even a warm protection for their winter grain."

"What an emblem of silent, gentle goodness!" said Edith. "All this incalculable amount of snow fell while we were asleep, covering thousands of square miles, yet how noiselessly. We knew nothing of it while it was coming down."

"Sister, you seem poetical. And do you know that you are now talking like Homer? 'Great wits jump,' says the proverb. Three thousand years ago the old blind poet used the same emblem to represent, not benevolence, but eloquence; yet the very quality was the point of the comparison."

"As I know no Greek," said Edith, "you must translate the passage."

"I can show it to you in Pope's Iliad, book the third; but meanwhile take my poor prose. Observe, it is where Antenor and Helena are on the ramparts of Troy, talking about the different Grecian heroes. Ulysses becomes the subject of their discourse, and Antenor gives an account of a visit to Troy, made many years before, by Ulysses and Menelaus; in the course of which he describes the eloquence of Ulysses somewhat in this manner: 'When Ulysses arose, his eyes were cast down. He used no motion with his staff, but held it motionless, after the manner of a clown. You might have taken him for a simple fellow. But no sooner had he begun to give vent to his sonorous voice, *uttering flakes of words, gently falling like the winter's snow,* than it became evident that in eloquence, no man could cope with Ulysses.'"

"I remember the words of another ancient poet," said Edith, "more directly connected with the utility of snow, and the fruitfulness produced by God's word. It is where Jeho-

vah says, 'As the rain cometh down, *and the snow from heaven*, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud—so shall my word be.'* But leaving our poetry, brother, ought we not to find a hint in this heavy fall of snow, as to the direction which our good-will should take? This cold season must be hard upon many of the poor on the hill at the north of us."

Here Dr. Lee came up from his lower fields, where he had been extricating several lambs from snow-banks, and Herbert told him what had been their last topic.

"You are right. In this sense charity should begin at home. The man within reach is the man you should help. 'Who is my neighbour?' 'The sufferer next to me,' is the answer of our Lord's parable of the good Samaritan. But be not hasty in estimating the miseries of life. It was only yesterday that Edith was grieving over the poor fellows who were getting ice out of the mill-pond to fill my ice-house; at the very moment when they were merrier than she ever

* Isaiah lv. 10

was in her life. The boys who are driving their little sledges down the side of yonder hill, without mittens or hats, are not suffering—though you and I should were we in their place—it is their choice. As physical sufferings are the most numerous, so they are the most tolerable. Misery is to be measured by sensibility. I have a wagoner who never wears gloves, and some of my men have their feet wet all day long. Many of my tenants are happier in log-houses, with only a window apiece, than we are in our close rooms. And even we, this moment, though walking in the open air, are not suffering, because mind and body are both in a state of activity. Be sure, therefore, that you lay out your strength for the relief of rea. misery."

"But you do not mean to maintain," said Herbert, "that the wants and sufferings of the poor are not very great and undeniable?"

"Certainly not; and it will be long, very long, before you will know as much as I know of the extent and variety of these sufferings. I only wish to discriminate among these evils, to overlook such as are trivial or imaginary, to seek out such as are

most malignant, as well as most accessible, and especially to strike at the root. I have made my own false steps, and you will take yours; but I doubt not for a moment that your views will at last coincide with mine."

"Do not any longer then withhold from us," said Edith, almost impatiently, "the fruit of your long experience. Tell us where you have erred; lay down some principles for our guidance."

"All in good time, my dear; I have no wish to keep you in the dark, for some of these days I will tell my story, and let you into my little plans. But first I would have you to see the field, and then you will be better able to value the method of cultivation."

Taking the hint from these remarks, Herbert resolved to lose no time in surveying the ground upon which, as it seemed, Providence had called him to labour. His horse was soon at the door, and he sallied forth with a fine feeling of youthful health and ardent zeal, in quest of objects upon which to expend his favours. His expectations were not indeed very well defined, but his heart was sincere, his sense of obligation was deep, and his purpose was fixed not to spare himself in becoming a benefactor of his race.

In the course of a long forenoon he made the tour of quite a range of the adjacent country, and with the help of Giles a young labourer, as his guide, penetrated some sequestered roads, which more than gratified his search for evils to be remedied. It would be tedious and uninteresting to give the journal of his little tour; a few sketches may suffice.

Herbert had ridden but a few miles, before he attained the summit of the ridge which stretched along the northern part of the township, and which was known by the name of Iron Hill. He could perceive that it was cut into many deep glens in a transverse direction, and into these there was an entrance by rugged and precipitous ways, of which the greater part were merely bridle-paths much obstructed by rocks and rapid, though narrow, torrents. Here and there among the snow-covered valleys, the columns of silvery smoke revealed the site of small habitations, among the clearings of the once extensive forest. Into one of these rude paths he turned, and soon fell into the track of a small and rudely-

made sledge, which was over-laden with a pile of brush and branches half-covered with snow. A squalid woodman, with an axe on his shoulder and pipe in mouth, conducted the wretched, untrimmed, starveling horse; and two ragged boys, shrinking with cold, clung about the runners of the vehicle. A lank and fierce-looking cur slunk along in the rear. The rustic cavalcade was already nearly approaching the house. It would be difficult to describe this dwelling. It was a cabin of logs, with earth crammed into the crannies; and was built so near the steep of the hill that one side was several feet higher than the other. A square aperture, with a shutter, served for a window, and where glass had once been, there were seen bits of old garments, with a blanket and the crown of a hat. Strings of fish were hanging about the door, and a rude shed, thatched with corn-stalks, formed a shelter for the cow, and also constituted one side of a pig-stye. The drift of snow reached almost to the eaves on one side of the house, and the door-way had the appearance of having been but lately relieved from a similar obstruction.

Several white-haired urchins rushed out, as the party approached, and the shrill voice of a woman was heard upbraiding a girl within.

"May I enter here?" Herbert asked the young man who accompanied him.

"O yes, sir; this is John Turnbull's. He is a tenant of Dr. Lee's. They will do you no harm. I dare say the worst they will do will be to beg for something. I see John has been caught without wood, for there is no smoke coming out of the chimney."

Such was the fact, and it is a very common form of improvidence, even among people who have abundance of wood at their doors. Foresight is not a virtue of the uneducated poor.

The outside of Turnbull's house did not belie its interior. A huge fire-place shewed only a glimmer of dying embers. The wife, an elderly woman of spare frame and dark complexion, was preparing some fish for frying; a daughter, who was much alarmed at the unwonted visit, was rolling out cakes of corn-meal upon a board; while a little child was crawling upon the floor in a scanty night-

dress of yellow flannel. One large bedstead took up an undue proportion of the room, and behind this, a half-opened door revealed the narrowness of the only additional apartment. Ceiling, there was none, unless the name be given to a few boards loosely laid upon the joists for about half the space over head. In the loft, between this and the broken roof, was a repository of sundries. Saddles and harness, sickles, saws, old clothes, pieces of spinning-wheels; and even hams of bacon, and hung-beef, diversified the scene. The shelf over the chimney-place had the usual array of broken earthen-ware, mouse-traps, iron-holders, candlesticks, spools of cotton, shaving implements and powder-horns, with a case-bottle, a greasy pack of cards and an almanac—the last being the whole literature of the house. Guns and fishing-rods were in the corners, and the only chair had a leathern seat, the place of others being supplied by two oaken chests and a like number of logs sawn off short and square.

A succession of coughs and groans from the inner room or closet, showed that there was sickness in the house. The sufferer was

the eldest son, who was labouring under an acute inflammation of the lungs.

Herbert had never before approached so nearly to the object of his search. Here was privation enough. He was received with a half-frightened air of sullen deference. "Poor creatures!" thought he, "how can they guess my errand! They are perhaps in doubt whether I have come to assess their taxes, or to levy upon their goods." But as the fire was replenished, and began to send up a cheerful blaze, the family gathered close around it, and it was not long before the visitor, by patting one child on the head and presenting another with a picture card, and by unaffected and friendly conversation, gained so much upon the circle, that they talked with him freely. Even Snarl, the dog, crept under his chair and acknowledged him as a friend, while the little ones, with eyes big with admiration, scanned his apparel and hung on his words. He found them in extreme want, without money and without work. Their clothing was insufficient, and the covering of the bed was scarcely more than a fringe of rags. Sickness and death

had been among them, but their only physician had been one of those infamous quacks who prey on the vitals of the poor. The wife was the only one who could read, and the principal use she made of the accomplishment was to spell out the signs in the Almanac. As one might have predicted, these people knew nothing of either church or school. The chief source of all their evils was intemperance. Turnbull had worked occasionally at a neighbouring 'still-house,' and both he and his eldest son had there spent most of their earnings in liquor.

The ignorance of Turnbull's household was not singular. It prevailed in most of the houses on Iron Hill. Herbert indeed selected the least promising specimens, but he was nevertheless astonished at the small number of persons who could read. In a row of low brick houses or hovels, which (to save expense) had been built in one row, near to the small mill on Ash Brook, he discovered among nine families, four books, or parts of books, namely, two imperfect New Testaments, a Farrier's Guide and a Dream Book. There were sights in this row which he

would gladly have escaped. Cold as the day was, there was a sick woman in one of them, without a spark of fire; her husband was at the mill. In another, the operation of washing was performed by three women, who seemed to be quarrelling over their tubs, smoking as they worked. The children were grovelling upon the earthen floor. The only house among the nine in which there was the slightest appearance of thrift, was that of a little shoemaker, a widower, who lived with a son and an apprentice. He had a small stove and a pile of seasoned billets which occupied one side of the room. It was he who had a New Testament.

The chief impression made on Herbert's mind by these sights, after the first emotion of pity, was despondency with respect to any good being done. How, thought he, can they be helped! They are exhausted and absorbed by misery, and can turn their minds to nothing but their own wretchedness. Books and schools would be thrown away on them: for such things they have neither time nor heart. These are scarcely civilized beings. Surely the very first — the indispensable

thing—is to relieve the outward miseries of the poor. We shall see hereafter what views Herbert entertained on this subject.

Striking off in a different direction, where the hill subsided into a somewhat extended plain, they found themselves in a more thickly settled neighbourhood, where there was a slight appearance of farming. There were signs of corn and rye, stacks of fodder, and mounds containing potatoes and turnips. But all this was scanty. Stopping at a low tavern, to water their horses, they took a glance at the appearances. The landlord had been killing his swine for the winter, and some of these were hanging in a ghastly row upon a pole stretched between two apple trees. A number of the neighbouring men, with bloody smock-frocks over their clothes, were cleaning the porkers amidst the steam of caldrons, which scarcely prevented the blood from congealing on the ground within a few feet of the fire. Ever and anon the shrieks of new victims were heard. Strange as it may seem to city ears, these 'killings' are among the prinicpal frolics in some parts of the country. As a number of hands are required, there is

a strong temptation to riot, and as the slaughter takes place in the very coldest weather, there is plenty of rum provided. The fire, smoke, and blood, reminded Herbert of pagan sacrifices, or the cannibal orgies of New Zealand. Several of the men were already drunk, and a number of quite small boys, learning at this early age to delight in blood, were striving to plunge the knife, and occasionally sipping the dregs of the tumblers.

"At night," said Herbert's guide, "the wives and daughters of these folks will be here, and they will have high times, as the sleighing is good."

"What will be done?" Herbert inquired.

"O, the common sports; first, a hot supper, then cards and dancing."

"And how long will this last?"

"Perhaps till near morning, as the moon is near the full. These things are very common, and I dare say they will lose as much by the frolic as they gain by the help of their neighbours."

"Strange," said Herbert, "that people who seem to be so poor, should be so wasteful of time and property!"

"Oh, sir," replied Giles, "it is always so; and I dare say the nearer every one of these men gets to the gaol, the more wasteful he will be."

During the ride homeward, Giles pointed out to him a number of houses in which there were scenes of misery fitted to wring a benevolent heart. Into some of these Herbert made a closer examination than could be effected by a mere survey: he dismounted and entered, not so much, (for the present,) to relieve, as to discover the evil; to learn the symptoms, in order to a cure. He found that benevolence has to approach many a disgusting object, and wrestle with many a powerful antagonist. He saw that the distant aspect of the suffering poor is coloured by associations which vanish upon a nearer scrutiny. And he was confirmed in his belief that the chief miseries of man spring from ignorance and vice.

In a hovel or shed, near the outskirts of a wood, he found a cripple who had lain for years, unable to leave his bed; the injury having been caused by a leap from a high window in a fit of madness from intoxication.

In another house, there was a large family of children, half-clothed, dirty, profane, quarrelsome, and ignorant; their mother had been forsaken by a treacherous husband, and had herself taken to drink. Giles pointed out a black-looking, tall, unpainted house of wood, as the dwelling of a thief. "He has been suspected," said Giles, "as a kidnapper, but he is convicted as a thief." The man was filing away the edge of a broken sickle, at the side of his front-door, probably with some professional designs. There were some houses where idleness alone seemed to be the fount and origin of ills. The thriftless and drowsy inhabitants had let every thing slip through their fingers. A few cases occurred where sickness, without preceding vice was weighing down a household; while neither religion nor intelligence was there to lighten the burden.

As Herbert rode towards Elmham, he was silent. The sun, now declining from the meridian, shed a blush of gentle carnation over hills and plains of snow, but caused no correspondent serenity in the soul of the young philanthropist. Like a student of medicine.

after his first attendance on the clinical lectures of an infirmary, he felt as if all the world were an hospital! Forgetting that he had purposely singled out the worst specimens, he sighed to think that the task of remedy was so Herculean. Before this, he was full of plans for the relief of the poor; and he had tracts and books already selected for their use: now he shuddered over the signs of physical distress. And as he drew up at the great gate of what was now his home, he said to himself—"The body is of more value than I had thought—and O, that I knew how to relieve it!"

CHAPTER IV.

But, with a soul that ever felt the sting
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing.
Cowper.

Winter has its charms, even in the coldest climates. Those who have resided at St. Petersburgh describe the brilliancy of the nights and the splendour of the entertainments, as more than compensating for the absence of the sun during many hours. And those who are familiar with the works of Jean Paul, as the Germans commonly call their favourite Richter, will remember his account of the Swedish country parson, who lights his lamp at three o'clock. Providence has indemnified us at the north for our loss of balmy airs and vines and out-of-door enjoyments, by giving us our winter evenings. It is in the northern nations that Home, (both word and thing) is best known and most valued; and the blessings of home cluster chiefly around the winter hearth.

These thoughts passed through the mind of Edith, as she sat in a luxurious arm-chair, before a baronial fireplace in the smaller parlour at Elmham. The blaze of a fully kindled pile of wood would have illuminated the room even if lamps had been wanting; and as the lights and shadows chased one another over the walls, they revealed by snatches, the ancestral pictures which there hung in memory of her race. There was her great grandfather, in the costume of the days of James the First. There was her grandmother, a shepherdess, on a green bank, with crook, and lambkin. Her mother and a twin sister appeared in the same frame, with nosegays in their hands. Edith almost forgot that there was any living being besides herself, though her good uncle was reading at the table, and her brother, with folded arms, was engaged in much the same sort of revery as her own.

"Come, come," cried the old gentleman, suddenly laying down his book, and starting to the floor, "this twilight musing is not the thing for young folks among their friends. Do you think I have brought you hither to act as mutes, or to dignify my apartments

with dumb show, like the portraits on the walls. Come with me to this window"—and laying aside the heavy curtains, he directed their attention to the full moon, just emerging above the horizon in uncommon glory, its silver for the moment being turned to gold, and the map-like surface displaying the seas and provinces of the astronomer with great distinctness. The whitened plain towards the east shone with the softest effulgence.

"There is something," said he, "that might almost make a hermit talk."

"Rather make him silent, dear uncle," said Edith. "For when I look on these grand appearances of nature, I am more than usually inclined to muse. It seems right to open one's soul to the impression, and to do this in silence; and nothing more disposes me to this than such a sight of the moon."

"That is very natural, my dear, for you know 'the lunatic, the lover and the poet,' ——"

"Hush, good uncle," said Edith, playfully laying her little hand over his mouth, "for I really have a very serious matter of fact con-

nected with this same moon, and I would gladly hear your advice."

"Well, my child, let us hear the case; but if we are to talk about matters of fact, let us not do it with the moon shining in our faces but by the blaze of this most practical fire. Now for the tale—I dare say it is of some fair maid of your boarding-school——"

"No, indeed—'tis about no fair maid at all; and you know, dear uncle, that I never was at any boarding-school in my life, and it is no tale, either, but a plain and rather melancholy account of one of your neighbours.

"This afternoon, as Mrs. Huntly was spinning some cotton thread for cords, under my direction, a poor woman came to the door to ask alms. She seemed a decent person, and was dressed quite well in dark clothes, with a comfortable black woollen shawl. But when she came to tell her story, I found that her situation was very deplorable. Her husband had been a wagoner to and from the sea, chiefly engaged as a carrier of fish and sometimes of charcoal from the pine forests. But he had been decoyed into the smuggling trade, and had lost almost all interest in his

family. One afflicted son was all that remained to the wife, but he was a sad charge, being a poor half-witted creature, and at certain seasons a maniac. 'It is now full-moon,' said the sorrowful woman, 'and I expect Isaac to be in his worst fits before to-morrow: and what is more, I have not a cent, nor a crumb of bread, nor even a cold potato.' The sight of the full-moon brought her afflicted son very painfully before my imagination: and I am now prompted to ask a question, which has occurred to me more than once before. It is this: What is it which supports such people when thus afflicted?"

"Why do you presume," interrupted her brother, "that they are supported at all?"

"Because they do not sink," answered Edith, fully prepared for his question. "Some support they must have, or they would be overwhelmed; and I wish my uncle to tell us what it can be. It is not religion; of this they have no portion. It is not philosophy, of which they never heard."

"There are more numerous varieties of misfortune," replied Dr. Lee, "than you seem

to allow for; but taking the class to which your instance belongs, I do not think the answer very difficult. There is first great insensibility. You are not to suppose that these people suffer as you would do. They bear trouble, as they do ice and snow, much better than finer folks. And this applies to all the sufferings of ignorant and degraded persons. Next, there is constant and intense occupation, which takes up their minds, and allows them no time for revery—the hot-bed of melancholy and overwhelming thoughts. Then there is the absence of the mental habit of turning the mind inward on itself—a habit produced by retirement and study. Besides, the multitude of petty but immediate cares really serves to withdraw attention from the great ones; as I have sometimes felt myself so annoyed with a swarm of gnats, that I was insensible of a severe contusion. To this, I am sorry to say, must in many cases be added, vicious indulgences, into which the deluded wretches plunge themselves. Hence, you will more and more perceive, from the joint influence of these causes, that the rea

physical sorrows of the poor are less intolerable than the inexperienced imagine."

"But this poor woman," said Edith, "appears to be really bowed down with genuine grief."

"Very likely," replied the Doctor, "and I would not undervalue her claims, for I am acquainted with the case. It is peculiar—exceedingly trying—but then how much less this poor creature suffers, than if she had been trained in the school of affluence. Suffer such a trial as her's to befall a family of wealth and refinement, and how almost annihilating the stroke!"

"It seems then," said Edith, "a kind arrangement of Providence, that those who have the greatest susceptibilities are liable to the fewest outward trials."

"Such is the general fact," said Dr. Lee, 'subject, however, to certain qualifications: and where such is the fact, the kindness and wisdom of God are signally manifested. The chief exceptions to the statement are in the case of those who, by introducing the vices of the lower into the higher walks of life, bring gross suffering upon delicate sensibility,

and thus ensure the most horrible misery. To this cause are owing disease, despair, insanity and suicide, in some of their most frightful shapes."

During these remarks, Herbert was pacing the floor, with an anxious air, now and then pausing for a moment, to fix his eyes on the person speaking. At this point he resumed his place near the hearth, and said, with some animation: "If you could convince me that the sensibilities of the poor and ignorant are so obtuse as to make their woes quite tolerable, you would greatly relieve me. I have been depressed by what I have seen this day. The evils are more numerous than I had thought. They are also greater—more poignant—more remediless than I once imagined. My feelings are benumbed by the amount of the evils to be remedied. And especially am I disheartened with respect to the application of my moral remedies, because the patients so loudly demand physical aid. They must suffer less in body, before they can have much done for the soul."

"We will talk of that point more fully hereafter," said the old gentleman. "But

what can you have seen to-day, Herbert, to produce such an impression? One would suppose that you had been in Ireland, in Russia, or in the East: you know, unquestionably, that there are fewer poor in America, than in any country in the world!"

"That knowledge," replied Herbert, with great earnestness, "only adds to my sadness and confusion. If I behold such evils *here* what must they be in other lands! How vast the aggregate of human misery! And how is it possible to reach it or to alleviate it!"

"Have a care, my nephew how you indulge in such trains of reflection. They soon become morbid, and degenerate into the mere sentimentality of benevolence. The benumbing effect which, as you own, they already have on you, should convince you that they are not sound views. Our wise Redeemer has bidden us take no anxious thought for the *morrow;* his reason is, 'sufficient unto the *day* is the evil thereof.' The reason of the rule applies to space, as well as time, to the next province as well as the next day"

"I am not sure," said Herbert, "that I

perceive the bearing of your last remark, Uncle."

"I think I do," said Edith, "he means that we are not to grow sick over wretchedness which is beyond our reach, and in other regions—any more than to be alarmed about misfortunes which have not yet come."

"Exactly," said Dr. Lee; "for as a man, by unwise and sickly forecast, might compress into one day all the expected evils of a lifetime; so he may vex his soul with the consideration of ten thousand ills 'that flesh is heir to' in all the continents and islands of the earth. Sin has indeed brought countless evils into our world, and it is our duty and privilege to seek means for relieving them—but all vexation of soul about cases which can never by possibility be within our sphere, is the mere romance and Quixotism of charity. In almost every case therefore, of real philanthropy, you will find the temper of the benefactor to be remote from this morbid and puling sympathy."

"Give us an instance, dear Uncle," said Edith.

"I could give you many, if it were necessary. I will however confine myself to those who have regarded chiefly the bodily sufferings of their fellow men. And I will name to you VINCENT DE PAUL."

"Surely, Uncle," said Herbert, "you are not about to hold up a Popish saint for our veneration!"

"Not as a Papist, nor as a saint—I mean a canonical saint—but true benevolence knows no sects, and much as I abhor the corruptions from which his light was not sufficient to extricate him, I will still reverence the sincerity, kindness and perseverance of his life. And especially I would commend to you the homespun and practical character of all his views."

"I know little of his history," said Edith with a look of inquiry.

"It is not my purpose to recount it at present," answered Dr. Lee. "Reach me that port-feuille, however; and I will shew you his likeness. There—was any visage ever more practical! Compare it with Leslie's incomparable Don Quixote, which lies here beside it: the difference is amazing. There is a capacious head under that scull-cap, but

the whole expression of those rugged features is that of benignant repose, firm good nature, and the very opposite of every thing visionary or lack-a-daisical."

"But perhaps, Uncle," said Edith, "we do not believe in physiognomy."

"I understand you—his life was what his features indicate. How could it be otherwise? He had endured too many of the substantial afflictions of life to be very susceptible of the mere accidents. You must know that Vincent de Paul was a Frenchman, born near the Pyrenees, in the year 1576. His parents were cottagers, and his youth was chiefly spent in keeping sheep and swine. Yet he struggled into an education, and about 1600, into the priesthood. When nearly thirty years of age, he was taken by corsairs in the Mediterranean, and sold as a slave at Tunis. On making his escape, a year or two afterwards, he found his way to Paris. Here he devoted himself to the sick of the hospitals. In 1613 he entered the family of Count de Joigni, general of the galleys, as a private tutor. He often visited the galleys, and observed the wretched condition of the slaves.

When the vessels were not ready for them, the wretched convicts were thrust into dungeons of the most confined and filthy sort They were ignorant, ferocious, and desperate, more like beasts than men. Vincent began his labours among them, and was soon known as a friend, and at later periods was enabled by the subscriptions of the wealthy to carry on his improvements on a large scale. During the reign of Louis XIII. a large portion of France was desolated by war, pestilence and famine. Vincent de Paul laboured, year after year, in collecting and distributing money for the relief of the sufferers. He even penetrated to the cabinet of Richelieu and besought 'peace for France' He died at the age of 84."

"You have said nothing," said Herbert, "of the religious orders which he founded, or of his being canonized by one of the popes."

"These things I purposely omit, because they please me not. But I ask your attention to the fact that his great achievements of mercy, were accomplished by an even, steady, un-romantic progress, such as any plain man, destitute of genius, might imitate."

"But there must have been great strength of character, to accomplish such works," said Herbert.

"Decision, undoubtedly, there was, but it was that calm and sustained purpose which is exemplified in that glory of England, I mean JOHN HOWARD. Edith, my dear, reach me that copy of Foster's essays, that I may refresh your memory with a passage in point. The author is speaking of the philanthropist.

"'The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being uninterrnitted, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of any thing like turbulence or agitation.'"

"What then," asked Herbert, "is the temper which you would recommend?"

"That certainly which can be kept up; that which is healthful, but not feverish; that which shall make you ready at every moment to lay out all your resources on the relief of the misery which is accessible and

curable, while it will not spend a tear over that which cannot be helped."

"Where am I to begin, then in benefaction?"

"The very question," answered Dr. Lee, "which was put to our Lord by the Jewish lawyer, '*And who is my neighbour?*' You remember the reply?"

"Yes," said Edith—"it gave occasion to the parable of the good Samaritan: and I am prepared to agree with you in whatever concerns this beautiful story—it is the best directory in the world for doing good."

"It shews," continued the Doctor, "where to begin, and in what manner. I am to love my neighbour; and my neighbour is the nearest sufferer in my way. The wounded and half-dead man was nearer in race and religion to the Levite and the priest, but he was neighbour to him 'that shewed mercy on him.' But suppose this Samaritan, as he journeyed, had allowed himself to be dissolved, in sympathetic tears over the thousand mishaps which had befallen and should yet befal the wayfaring man on that highway between Jericho and the metropolis; and sup-

pose, in despair of ever relieving all these sorrows, he had betaken himself to the neighbouring palm shade, and yielded to senti mental tenderness,—think you he would have been as likely——"

"I feel your satire," said Herbert, relaxing into a more open smile than he had indulged for some hours; "and I think I am instructed. But as I have seen some real suffering, I must at least be getting ready my 'two pence,' and looking out for 'the host,' who shall care for them. Figure aside—I wish your counsel in helping the poor on Iron Hill."

"Let us lay this matter upon the table for the present," said Dr. Lee, "and to-morrow I may gratify your wish to the utmost. For the remainder of the evening we need relaxation. Our neighbour Inman, who is a musician, will be here presently, and after tea I will bring out my old Cremona. With the piano and Herbert's violoncello, I think we may get a notion of Haydn's famous symphony in which he makes his notes imitate the fall of snow."

CHAPTER V.

But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?
Milton.

A DELIGHTFUL winter morning found Herbert mounted upon a spirited horse, sallying forth between his uncle, and Mr. Inman. This gentleman was a distant relative of Dr. Lee's wife, and was spending a few weeks in the neighbouring village, for the purpose of executing an important survey of land. The little party were in good spirits, to which nothing contributes more than horse-exercise upon a sunny, frosty morning. The most distant hills were distinctly pencilled on the sky. The blue smoke rose almost perpendicularly in pillars of cloud. Here and there, where wheat-stacks marked a little oasis in the snowy desert, the reluctant crows would heavily rise from their forage, and flocks of corpulent, white-crested snow-birds frolic

about the road. The two dogs, Triton and Mahound, though ill matched as to size, (one being of Newfoundland, the other an English terrier,) agreed in feeling the exhilaration of the wintry morning, and made immense circuits through the fields, rousing here a half-starved quail, and there a hare or rabbit from a nook.

Herbert fancied that the working people whom he met were brisker and happier than those whom he had seen on his ride in the opposite direction. "Is it," said he, "because we are going towards the sun?"

"Rather," said his uncle, drily, "because the sun is coming towards you. You are more cheerful. Nature takes its colour very much from the medium through which we view it; and even if there are colourless lenses for astronomers, there are no achromatic *media* for moral philosophers, such as you and Inman."

"I fancy," said Mr. Inman, "that there is not less poverty in these plains, than among the hills."

"There is doubtless *more*," said the Doctor. "The hills have some rich spots, with

plenty of fuel, nuts and game. But these swampy barrens are remarkable for a sterile soil, uncommon in our country. Observe this stream. The water is black from the infusion of a leaf which resembles the laurel, and grows on the poorest land. See the soil, how ashy in some spots, how sandy in others. You perceive no heavy timber. Scrubby cedars and persimmon trees, and forests of whortleberry bushes indicate the capacities of the earth. You will find some rare exceptions, but the inhabitants are not out of keeping with the natural scenery."

"You will find occasion to expend all your surplus revenue upon these people," said Mr. Inman.

"If that were my method, I should soon do so," replied Dr. Lee. "But I am more and more convinced, that it is the least part of true charity to relieve immediate want. If the case is urgent, no humane man will, of course, hesitate; but you must expect to do the same favour again and again. It is, however, much like putting drugs into a carious tooth. If the pain is intolerable, you must

needs do it; but extirpation is the true method —— "

"What, sir!" cried Inman, "extirpation of the poor!"

"No—you must not forget the adage, 'Proverbs do not go on all fours'—but extirpation of their evils. Instead of plucking the crabs, graft with a twig of sweet apples. Make the tree good. But you must find this out for yourselves." Then, turning to his nephew, he said, "Giles tells me you saw Turnbull's family in poor plight."

"Yes," said Herbert, "sickness, and poverty, and filth, and ignorance, all combined."

"Now, pray, nephew mine, how would you set about the relief of this family—though, to say truth, they are quite well off, compared with their neighbours—but where would you begin? Perhaps you have begun already."

Herbert here owned that he had slipped a piece of money into Turnbull's hand.

"Very well—that has gone by this time for drink. Do you propose to keep up this contribution? How much drinking-money do you think of allowing *per diem?* And

how many families are you to provide for? And now many thousands a year have you appropriated?"

Herbert laughed outright, and said, "Uncle you have an odd way of teaching, and it is not always very grateful to one's pride—but I begin to catch a glimpse of your meaning. I acknowledge that we cannot relieve the immediate wants of all the poor, especially their bodily wants, but there are some things which we may do. Dwelling on this instance, we might repair his house, glaze his windows, put him in the way of having his wood-pile in season——"

"Hold—hold!" cried the old gentleman, "you go much too fast; do you not perceive that you are now trenching on my ground. Let me pull to pieces what you have just said about the wood-pile, for it reaches much further than the supply of bodily wants. The true supposition (on your plan) would be that we should pile up his wood ourselves. To have his winter's wood collected in time, presupposes a habit of forecast and industry, which would at once free him from all his inconveniences."

"Yet I certainly saw many cases in which no mental change would give relief. No such alteration could cure Turnbull's son, or the sick woman in the house in Brick-Row, who was without fire.

"True, and here I would admit a question as to the wisdom of alms. But we must look at the operation of principles on a large scale. Proper states of mind (in a larger sense than is probably in your thoughts) would have prevented these evils, by preventing their cause; that is the drunkenness of Hal Turnbull, and of the sick woman's husband. Relieve the urgent symptom, but make it your chief aim to cure the disease."

"It strikes me," said Herbert, "that in your zeal against all my juvenile and romantic notions, you would take from me many excitements which are as powerful as they are pleasing, and reduce our whole system to something like those trees yonder, which bring to my mind the expressions of your favourite Foster, look at them—how leafless—admirable indeed for the distinct exhibition of their branches and minute ramifications, so clearly defined on the sky, but destitute of all

the green, soft luxury of foliage which is requisite to make a perfect tree."

"Well put, Herbert, and quite poetical, but your logic does not stand on nature. The leafless season is necessary even to the tree, to collect its vital forces for the spring."

"Why should we not be evergreens, in our beneficence? Free from the necessity of these cold delays? Why not like the laurel, &c., always in leaf?"

"And like the laurel, always fruitless"—quickly interposed Dr. Lee. "Fruit, my son, pre-supposes preparation. Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good."

"I cannot but think," said Mr. Inman, "that, for practical men, you deal rather too much in generalities. Yonder among the scanty grove I perceive a column of grey smoke—what if we should turn in, and see what is beneath it?"

"Agreed," said the Doctor, "though I know beforehand what you will find; for there is not a rood of this ground which I have not traversed."

Accordingly they struck off from the beaten road into a side-path, which, leading

through stumps and brambles, soon brought them to a little cleared space, in the midst of which stood the dwelling which they sought. It was a tall, narrow, crazy building of wood, in the rear of which a patch of ground, scarcely protected by a ruinous paling, shewed the remains of cabbages and peas. The bench of bee-hives was blackened by the weather, and decaying from neglect. A long pole or sweep pointed out the well, from about which the curb was falling away. An old cart was propped up against the wall; and near it an empty pig-stye declared that this source of sustenance had been exhausted. The few windows were decked with the usual protuberances of carpets and old clothes; and at the only entrance, a door off the hinges simply leaned up against the posts, so as to require an effort to lift it out of the way.

On entering, the darkness of the apartment rendered it impossible to see any thing distinctly. As their eyes adapted themselves to the twilight, the visiters could perceive that their entrance produced some confusion: the voice of Dr. Lee, however, soon removed this. A deep fire-place contained several

long logs of wood, amidst a hillock of ashes. A sallow and sad looking woman was knitting, and at the same time rocking a cradle of the rudest description. Besides the infant, two little girls in ragged linsey frocks were cowering over the fire, the elder one being engaged in stirring some preparation in a small iron vessel. But that which soon engrossed their attention, was the situation of the man of the house, who was confined to the bed, and made a faint effort to rise and speak to Dr. Lee, but fell back again in a fit of irrepressible coughing. The case of the invalid seemed the more forlorn, from the largeness of the square bedstead, and the extreme scantiness of the wretched covering.

The sick man was of a frame which might once have been called powerful, before it was reduced by a rapid consumption. It was with difficulty that he could utter anything, his voice being choked by the irritating cough. Herbert soon perceived that ignorance was added to his other evils. For neither he nor any of his family could read. Everything bore the marks of extreme neglect. Without being filthy, (for there was some at-

tempt at cleanliness,) the house was destitute of what are considered common necessaries in domestic arrangement. A few weeks before, Herbert could scarcely have believed that a state of existence so near the level of Esquimeaux or Patagonians could be found in America: he had now beheld it for himself in more than one habitation.

"This man," said the Doctor, as they were leaving the house," is the wreck of one of the most athletic fellows in our county. For many years, scarcely a week passed in which Gaunlett, or John of Gaunt, as he was familiarly called, was not seen drunk in the streets of Cherburg. His iron frame and wonderful agility made him a ringleader in sports and even in riots; and, though, as you heard him just now lament, he never knew a letter in the book, he had such a spring of mother-wit as to command a sort of respect in the tavern groups over which he used to preside. But he was a drunkard, and this is what is bringing him to an untimely grave. He is now, you perceive, terrified at the approach of death, but such is his ignorance, that it is doubtful whether he takes up even

the simplest truths of religion in an adequate degree."

"I was scarcely prepared," said Herbert, for such abject poverty and wretchedness in this pleasant district."

"All are not such," replied Dr Lee; "and if it were necessary, I could introduce you to some—to many houses, which are in strong contrast to this; in which neatness, intelligence and religion prevail amidst seeming poverty. But you wished to see the malady which you seek to cure, and there are few regions even in America, where you may not be gratified. I see you are affected with the greatness of physical suffering. The effect is natural and proper; but you must look at these things with reference to their causes. Such is the result of the curse which sin has introduced, that, taking one man with another, the simple bodily wants of our race can be supplied only by incessant toil, accompanied with frugality, temperance and prudence."

"The last season," said Mr. Inman, "was one of such abundance, that I am surprised to see so much want"

"Abundant seasons," said Dr. Lee, "do not reach those who are improvident, vicious, or indeed, from any cause, deplorably poor. Their difficulties do not arise from the small amount of food and clothing and fuel in the country, but from their having no share in the general stock, whether great or small. The frugal and industrious man is commonly better off in a season of some scarcity, than a dissolute spendthrift amidst plenty."

The next house they visited was a small dilapidated hut, upon the bank of the brook. The site was not undesirable, for it was near a clump of gigantic buttonwood trees, and the road which passed the door entered into a grove, which, in summer, offered the perfection of shade. But they who are near starvation have no heart for the beauties of nature. Susan Hubbs, the dweller in this house, was a widow, with three little children. Her appearance was wan and haggard, her hair flying about her face in such a way as to increase the care-worn aspect of her features. Dr. Lee remembered her when she was reckoned quite a comely girl. But she had married a rogue, and he had long since fled from

the country. The children, with scanty clothing, and the appearance of ill health, were nevertheless amusing themselves with an exceedingly lean dog, of a fox-like shape and colour, whom they were endeavouring to bury in a bank of snow. The woman was feebly trying to chop some knotty sticks of wood by the door. Upon inquiry, they found that she derived her support from occasional washing, and during the summer from the sale of berries and other wild fruits. The necessities of the wretched group were such, that the visiters promised to send her both food and clothing.

As they passed another house, where two young women were carding wool, Dr. Lee said that, often as he had passed that door, he had never seen the father of the family at home: his days being spent in taverns and tippling houses, and wherever he could hope to get a taste of liquor.

"How do such creatures," inquired Herbert, "get the money to buy liquor?"

"To say nothing," answered his uncle, "of begging and stealing, and extorting from their poo. families — such are the customs

of the country, and such the cheapness of whiskey, that there are few days in which such a fellow as this Grote cannot get drunk. For, though he has no trade and seldom does a fair day's work, he picks up a shilling here and there, by small jobs. For example, he will work an hour at cutting ice for an ice-house; or he will ride express for a doctor; or he will himself 'doctor' a sick cow. Then there are sundry pieces of work that require a number of hands, and liquor is the usual bait to catch these. A slaughter of hogs, or a house-raising, or a corn-husking, or a sudden housing of hay and grain, or any of the like performances, give the means of intoxication in large measure. Besides this, inn-keepers and other liquor-sellers find it for their interest to give away a good deal. And such is the maudlin politeness of drinking men, that they commonly dislike to take their glass alone; so that those who hang about the bar are sure to meet with an occasional treat. Moreover, a low wag, like Grote, is always welcome in a tap-room, serving as a decoy-duck to bring others into the net."

"Wretched victims!" exclaimed Herbert, "and are such dens numerous among you?"

"They are: and until very recently there were few districts where they were not so. I intend at some future time to put you more fully in the way of estimating this source of evil. At present however I wish to shew you another form of it."

Turning accordingly from the narrow lane, in which they had been riding for some time, they found themselves in a large and beaten road, following which they soon arrived at a village, that had grown up around an extensive paper-mill. Dr. Lee led the way towards a large wooden building, which, from the effects of the weather, on the unpainted boards, had all the appearance of extreme age: it was however a house not more than ten years old. It had three stories, and was occupied by six or seven families; two or three of these being, in some cases, within the same large apartment. Upon the first floor, the operations of cooking, ironing and shoe-making were going on together. As was to be expected, there was a fog of tobacco-smoke, in producing which a lad of

twelve years old was conspicuous. The larger of the two rooms was heated to a very high degree by an enormous old-fashioned "ten-plate" stove, upon which rows of sputtering apples were roasting. The number of women and girls was surprising, and most of them were unemployed. A sick man, with his leg bandaged and lying over a stool, was teaching a shock-headed boy to play cards: while a visiter, in iron spectacles, was laboriously spelling out, from a yellow looking newspaper, an account of a boxing-match which had come off at Brooklyn, between Irish Mullen and Deaf George.

Upon the second floor, there was a sick child, apparently labouring under the croup. The mother, with two assistants, was pouring down its throat some hot compound, belonging to one of the prevalent quack systems, which prevail among the more ignorant. It was in vain that Dr. Lee pointed out the ruinous consequences of the measure: the mother was fixed in her adherence to "the Vegetable Doctor, who had never lost a patient." Here was another striking instance of the immediate connexion between

gross ignorance and popular misery. But it was not the only one which occurred in the course of their excursion; and the mind of Herbert was perplexed with fresh doubts, as to the proper way of beginning. For which of the two great evils should he attack? The bodily distress was the most pressing, but the mental darkness the more permanently fruitful of evil. Should he, (neglecting the actual wretchedness of the poor), seek to reach the source of the evil, and remove its causes, or should he endeavour to mitigate such burdens as at the moment were seen to weigh down hundreds around him? Either of these now seemed a greater work than he had supposed.

In the evening, Dr. Lee asked his attention to a passage from Crabbe's "Borough," as strikingly parallel to one of the objects they had been contemplating. "I agree with Sir Francis Jeffrey," said the old gentleman, as he adjusted his spectacles," that the graphic powers of Crabbe are too often wasted on unworthy subjects. But I still more heartily agree with him when he says, 'there is not, perhaps, in all English poetry, a more complete and highly finished piece of painting.

than this description. No Dutch painter ever presented an interior more distinctly to the eye, or ever gave half such a group to the imagination.' "*

"You have given us the comment;" said Herbert, "now let us have the text."

"It is," continued Dr. Lee, "a description of a vast old boarded room, or warehouse, which was let out in the Borough, as a kind of undivided lodging, for vagrants and idlers. Take a paragraph or two:

"That window view! Oil'd paper and old glass
Stain the strong rays, which, though impeded, pass,
And give a dusty warmth to that huge room,
The conquered sunshine's melancholy gloom;
When all those western rays, without so bright,
Within become a ghastly glimmering light."

"Where'er the floor allows an even space,
Chalking and marks of various games have place;
Boys, without foresight, pleased in halters swing;
On a fix'd hook men cast a flying ring;
While gin and snuff their female neighbours share,
And the black beverage in the fractured ware.
On swinging shelf are things incongruous stored,—
Scraps of their food,—the cards and cribbage-board,—
With pipes and pouches: while on peg below,
Hang a lost member's fiddle and its bow:

* Edinburgh Review

That still reminds them how he'd dance and play,
Ere sent untimely to the convict's bay.
Here by a curtain, by a blanket there,
Are various beds concealed, but none with care,
Where some by day and some by night, as best
Suit their employment, seek uncertain rest;
The drowsy children at their pleasure creep
To the known crib, and there securely sleep."*

"This is a powerful description," said Herbert, "and much in my line of inquiry."

"Such," replied the doctor, "is almost every thing which Crabbe has written. Few men have better known the poor of his own country, and none have better described them."

* Crabbe's Borough, Letter 18.

CHAPTER VI.

Man is God's image; but a poor man is
Christ's stamp to boot.
Herbert.

WHATEVER might be the employments of the day, the Elmham family usually met in the evening. Then it was that in a spacious parlour, well warmed and brightly illuminated, they enjoyed several unbroken hours of social, literary and religious enjoyment. On one of these occasions, Edith could not refrain from reading aloud from the book which she held in her hand: it was her favourite Cowper, and the passage was descriptive of their own quiet pleasures—part of his address to Winter:

"Thou hold'st the sun
A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,

And gathering, at short notice, in one group
The family dispersed, and fixing thought,
Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares,
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed Retirement, and the hours
Of long, uninterrupted Evening know."

"What a blessing," said Edith, "as she laid down the volume, that so pure and heavenly a poet was raised up, just about the time when loose opinions in religion began to prevail!"

"Truly such it is, my dear, as I have felt in my own experience. And I must say that I have higher thoughts of Sir James Mackintosh when I read in his correspondence such a passage as this, which I marked yesterday in his Memoirs. It relates to a visit which he made in 1801 to the place of Cowper's residence. 'We saw his handwriting,' says Sir James, 'in a copy of his poems which he presented to the hair-dresser. I hope you will believe me when I say I could not look at the writing without tears. So pure in his life!—so meek!—so tender!—so pious!—he surely never had his rival in virtue and misfortune. He had few superiors in genius?'"

Edith's countenance glowed as she heard this eulogium. "Here we are," said she, "enjoying just the satisfactions which the poet describes—and enjoying them all the more *because* he has described them."

"How so, sister?"

"Because all the blessed associations of Christian poetry are thrown around our homely life. For do not you feel tenfold interest in any scene which has been so consecrated? Surely, brother, the plain of Troy would be more to you than a tract of so many acres in Anatolia."

"Edith is certainly right," said Dr. Lee, "and I doubt not that you, Herbert, agree with her fully. But let me call your attention to the fact, that Cowper, like Milton, drew his inspiration from the oracles of God. Urania was the muse of both. Often have I lamented that your favourite bards, nephew, as well as my own,—I mean of course Wordsworth and Crabbe, had not delighted more in 'Sion's Hill,'

> "'and Siloa s brook that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God.'"

"Cowper's description of low life," said Herbert, "are sometimes as exact as Crabbe's. Take, for example, his account of the Gipsies, in 'The Sofa:' it has been frequently brought to my mind within the last few days.

> "'I see a column of slow-rising smoke
> O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.
> A vagabond and useless tribe there eat
> Their miserable meal. A kettle slung
> Between two poles upon a stick transverse,
> Receives the morsel—flesh obscene of dog,
> Or vermin, or at best of cock purloined
> From his accustomed perch. Hard faring race!
> They pick their fuel out of every hedge,
> Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquenched
> The spark of life.'"

"We have no exact match for this in real life among ourselves," said the Doctor, "though I have met with settlements of free blacks which were not very unlike it; and some of the emigrant paupers from England and Ireland, who are cast upon our shores, present a spectacle litle less revolting. Never was I more completely drained of my pocket money, than when I once saw a teeming packet ship discharging her steerage passengers."

"You do then sometimes relieve temporal wants," said Herbert, "notwithstanding your doctrine."

"Certainly — nephew: do not misunderstand me: do not impute to me a doctrine which would contradict every book of the Scripture. You can scarcely open this volume," he continued, as he turned over the leaves of a large Bible which lay beside him, "without finding kindness to the poor, or *mercy*, as the Scripture calls it, enjoined in the strongest terms."

"Now, dear uncle," said Edith, "I should like to hear you more fully on this point; for we are undoubtedly somewhat at cross-purposes. And if you will allow us, we will follow your example by opening our Bibles also, and will mark any text which you may suggest as bearing on this subject."

"My children," said Dr. Lee, "the teaching of Scripture on the matter in hand is uniform — and as simple as it is benignant. It is, or was, the fashion to speak of the Levitical law as a harsh, if not a cruel code. There never was one so humane. In no other national legislation was benevolence or charity

ever made a substantive part. To prove this, it is sufficient to name the provisions respecting the poor — the debtor — the stranger — and the slave. I could multiply texts, but they are so much of the same tenor that it is useless. Turn to the earliest book in the Bible."

"Learned men differ," said Herbert, "as to which deserves that honour."

"Let us then," replied Dr. Lee, "suppose it to be the book of Job, which to my apprehension always carries associations of having antiquity. It will be the best introduction to our inquiry, as it has nothing Mosaic or Jewish in its language or allusions. One may fancy himself among the nomades of Arabia, at an age when patriarchal usages were not yet extinct."

"My eyes alight on this passage," said Edith, "in the twenty-second chapter and fifth verse, 'Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and *stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink*, and thou *hast withholden bread from the*

hungry.' And again, a little further down '*Thou hast sent widows away empty.*' "

"Thus you perceive," said Dr. Lee, "that so long ago perhaps, as thirty-three centuries, it was regarded as a sin which called down divine judgment to neglect the weary, the hungry, the naked and the widow. The same spirit descends through all the sacred history."

Here Herbert directed their attention to a part of Job's animated vindication of his integrity, in the twenty-ninth chapter. "It is true Eastern poetry," said he; "it describes the reception which he had when he appeared in public places, during the days of his prosperity—and he does not confine himself to the demeanour of princes and nobles, but says—'When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.' 'I was eyes to the blind and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor.' And in the next chapter he asks, 'Did not I

weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?' "

"You will find," said Dr. Lee, "a still more solemn protestation of the imprecatory kind in the sequel of the same address: 'If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or *have eaten my morsel alone*, and the fatherless hath not *eaten thereof;* if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;'—'then, let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone!' There are several other passages of like import, in this book, but here is enough to justify the assertion, that from the earliest patriarchal times it has been regarded as a principal duty of God's people to relieve temporal and bodily suffering. I hope now you are at ease with regard to my doctrine. But let us exchange the land of Uz for the wilderness of Sinai, and look at positive enactment.

"Why," asked Edith, "do you name the wilderness?"

"Because the law was there given; and long before the chosen people were placed in their own land, the minutest instructions were given as to every particular of their duty."

"Very well, uncle," said Edith, "I can furnish one passage at least—that which relates to the remains of the harvest; and I have always admired it. 'When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.'"*

"It is still more striking," said Herbert, "in a later passage—'When thou cuttest down thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it. It shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the works of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the

* Lev. xix. 9, 10.

fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard thou shalt not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.'"*

"The best comment on this," said Dr. Lee "is that charming oriental Idyl, which we call the book of Ruth. How beautiful is the picture of the young Moabitess in a strange land—consulting with her mother-in-law as to the place where she should gather—asking leave of the reapers to glean among the sheaves—sharing in the frugal meal—threshing out the ephah of barley—and bearing it home at night."

"The regulation of the Mosaic law," said Dr. Lee, "was not merely humane—it was exquisitely delicate—relieving the poor from the necessity of begging, and occupying the place of our poor-rates and almshouses. And what was wanting here, was in a good degree supplied by the arrangements respecting the seventh or Sabbatic year. Every seventh

* Deut. xxiv. 19, 20, 22.

year the whole land was to 'rest and lie still,' that is, keep a sabbath; and this was for the benefit of the 'poor of the people,' and even of the lower orders of creation: 'the beasts of the field shall eat.'* I need scarcely remind you of the provisions respecting those who were in debt, or otherwise weighed down by poverty.† All breathe the same spirit; all provide for the bountiful relief of temporal want."

"I think," said Edith, "there are several texts in the Proverbs which set forth the duty of doing good to the poor."

"Yes, and here is one of them," said Dr. Lee, "'He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.' And again, 'He that honoureth his Maker hath mercy on the poor.'‡ So in the Psalms, 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.'§ And of the godly man it is written, 'He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor.'‖ 'I know,' says David, 'that Jehovah will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor.' "¶

* Ex. xxiii. 10, 11.
† Deut. xv. 4, 7, 11.
‡ Prov. xiv. 21, 31.
§ Ps. xli. i.
‖ Ps. cxii. 9.
¶ Ps. cxl. 12.

"Do not forget the remarkable passage," said Edith, "where God makes their cause his own: 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.' "*

"We have found abundant support for our position," said Dr. Lee. "If more were needed, we have it in our blessed Lord's exposition of the ancient law, which he came not to destroy, but to fulfil. 'When thou makest a feast," said he, "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just?'† And at least five times our Saviour recognises or enjoins the giving of alms. I take it for granted that you remember the occasion of the new order of deacons in the church—the charge to Paul by James, John and Peter, that he should 'remember the poor'—and the importunate requests and long journeys of the same Paul to collect money for the poor saints at Jerusalem.‡

* Prov. xix. 17.
† Luke xiv. 13.
‡ Acts vi. 1; xi. 29, 30; xxiv. 17. Rom. xv. 25. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. viii. ix.

These principles apply to our own times, for, as our Lord once said, the poor we have always with us."

"No consideration," said Herbert, "so much affects my own mind, as the awful representation of Christ's second coming, in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew: 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' This puts a glory upon the smallest acts of kindness, to the poor, the sick and the prisoner. But are we not too fond of doing these favours by the hands of others? It seems as though most of the good that is accomplished in our day, is done through the medium of associations. In the Scripture, everything seems to be done personally."

"We may go too fast, here, Herbert," said the old gentleman. "Every direction of Scripture is inspired by infinite wisdom, and is as binding on our understanding as our heart; but we must be very careful to learn exactly what is revealed. The Bible does not condemn doing good on the largest scale, even to many thousands at once—and this

can be accomplished only by organization and united action. When Jesus fed the five thousand, he administered to them *through the hands* of others."

"Is not the practical influence of the prevailing method to discourage private alms?"

"In many single cases," replied the Doctor, "it doubtless has such a tendency; but in the aggregate, the amount of good is much greater, and as is always true of *systematic* effort, with less waste. In a less artificial state of society, no man wanted an almoner—he went himself. Not only so, he gave *in kind* of his sheaf, his cluster, or his meat. So our Lord speaks of inviting the poor to our table. Now I suppose no one will go so far as to contend that in order to fulfil these injunctions, one must literally bestow *in kind*, or actually keep open house for the poor. In the present state of society, it would often be the worst thing we could do for them, and certainly the least welcome to themselves. No: the spirit of the rule is fully complied with, when, either by money or any other medium, we furnish them the means of relief. In like manner, the duty of alms-giving may

be performed, and the demands of Christian benevolence answered, without going in person, and dropping our two mites into the poor man's hand. The great secret of energetic effort in modern times lies in a single word—*combination*. These things which were formerly done by many thousands, acting separately, irregularly, and therefore disadvantageously, are now accomplished by the same number of persons, in concert, and with the power of a massive phalanx."

"Still, my dear uncle," said Edith, "I should be sorry to have all acts of charity performed by this machinery of combination. Where would then be the kindly flow of sympathy, and the returning tide of thankfulness, which so bless the giver and the receiver."

"There again," said the Doctor, "I agree with you fully—and so would the Resentful Widow, in my friend Crabbe's Tales:

"'Decent her table was, and to her door
Came daily welcomed the neglected poor:
The absent sick were soothed by her relief,
As her free bounty sought the haunts of grief,
A plain and homely charity had she,
And loved the objects of her alms to see;

With her own hands she dressed the savoury meat,
With her own fingers wrote the choice receipt.'*

The *giver* is certainly a great loser, when he gives by proxy; so is the receiver, unless the almoner happens to be a wise and merciful man. It would be an immeasurable loss to the moral virtues of society if all charity were done 'by committee.'"

"Yes," said Edith, smiling, "the feeling is somewhat different, when in the one case I put my name on a subscription paper, or drop a shilling into a box or plate, and in the other give the same amount, or the worth of it, to some poor, trembling, weeping orphan, who overwhelms me with her gratitude."

"I hope," continued the Doctor, "the day is far off when there shall be no room for private, personal beneficence. Our world would be reduced to a dreadful level of apathy, a mere utilitarian desert, if the Robert Owens, the St. Simonians, and the infidel agrarians could have their will. But there is little danger from the increase of associa-

* Crabbe's Works, Vol. v., p. 171.

tions. Fully admitting, as I do, the superior claims of personal alms-giving, I am convinced that the evils, even of a physical kind, which grow with the growth of civilization and population, are too gigantic to be reached by individual and scattering efforts. There are great works which must be done in concert. Still, around our own doors, there will never cease to be abundant opportunity for the employment of all the time and means which we have to bestow by direct personal effort."

CHAPTER VII.

O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks are chief support of health,
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Milton.

In the neighbourhood of Elmham there were a number of small taverns, or what our fathers would have called ale-houses. These derived their support, not from the entertainment of travellers, for few such lodged in them, but from the sale of strong drink to the people of the vicinity.

As Dr. Lee was one day reckoning up the number of these houses, and making some calculations with regard to them, he turned to Herbert, who had just entered the study and said:

"If you would see the prime source of misery among us, go into our public houses. They are the plague-sores of our body-poli-

tic — contagious ulcers which shed poison all around them. They are purely evil. We cannot even say with Cowper,

> "'Th' excise is fattened with the rich resul'
> Of all this riot.'"

"Yet," said Herbert, "the wisdom of our legislators has determined otherwise, by legalizing them."

"Very true: perhaps you remember the passage from which I just quoted a line:

> "'Pass where we may, through city or through town,
> Village, or hamlet, of this merry land,
> Though lean and haggard, every twentieth pace
> Conducts the unguarded nose to such a whiff
> Of stale debauch, forth issuing from *the styes*
> *That law has licensed*, as makes temperance reel.
> There sit, involved and lost in curling clouds
> Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
> The lackey and the groom: the craftsman there
> Takes a Lethean lease of all his toil;
> Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
> And he that kneads the dough; all loud alike,
> All learned, and all drunk!'"

"The picture," said Herbert, is horrible—but has it any corresponding reality among ourselves?"

"I am surprised that you should ask the question. There are just such scenes every evening in a thousand bar-rooms. And here it is that, in a thousand instances, the unguarded youth takes his first step towards the abyss."

"Do you then condemn all inn-keepers, in the gross?" asked Herbert.

"No. There are great exceptions:—pleasing instances of sobriety and virtue, even in taverns. But taking things as we find them, in point of fact, the great majority of taverns are dens of iniquity. How can it be otherwise? People go there for the express purpose of drinking; and for this purpose the innkeeper obtains his license. Otherwise no license would be needed. It is drink which is the lure, on both sides. Men meet there to drink; and in the course of time a large proportion become drunkards. If there is one place, more than another which makes them so, it is the tavern. The spring which gushes here, flows at length to pauperism, disease, crime, insanity and suicide."

"You shock me!" said Herbert. "I cannot see any necessary connexion between the keeping of an inn and these dreadful evils."

"There is no such necessary connexion," said the old gentleman warmly, "and the grand aim of every philanthropist should be to dissolve the connexion which exists at present. Nothing can be more innocent or more praiseworthy in itself, than to open one's doors for the refreshment of the way-worn traveller. But this, which was the primary intention of the inn, has become a mere blind for the selling of intoxicating drinks. Remove the latter, and taverns would be as innocent as fruit-shops."

"Your opinion seems to be then, that it is the bar-room which should be removed."

"Exactly so," replied Dr. Lee, "and until this is done, we may preach frugality, and scatter money as we please; pauperism will still keep pace with our utmost exertions."

"What then is the great obstacle in the way of such a reform, and at the removal of which we should particularly aim?"

"It is," answered the Doctor, "the apathy and ignorance of the people, as to what may be called the Natural History of Intemperance. Once shew the inhabitants of any district that their heaviest tax is the poor tax;

that the majority of paupers are made such by drunkenness; and that the majority of drunkards are made by the bar-room; and they will sweep them out of the land. Sheer selfishness will drive them to this."

Here Herbert fell into an attitude which betokened musing, and Dr. Lee observing this, took up his pen again. At length his nephew arose and said,—"Every step I take brings me nearer and nearer to the conclusion that human misery is mainly owing to ignorance. Never before have I had such views of the mental degradation of the populace, and of its effects."

"I shall not contradict you, Herbert. You are, I think, upon the right path, but you may live to make several discoveries still, and I would not forestal them. I am glad to see that you cannot be contented with a mere removal of bodily suffering."

"I have come reluctantly to that point," said Herbert, "and yet I have reached it, and cannot recede from it. I see clearly that in many instances the outward ills of life are mere *symptoms*—plague-spots which indicate a disease within. These I would not

neglect. but I desire now to go deeper than these."

"When you began, said his uncle, with an arch smile, "you saw castles in every windmill, and distressed damsels in the persons of most contented country-lasses. I verily think you would have clothed all our paupers in fine linen, if I had not disallowed it."

"Perhaps so, uncle—though, as I now perceive, every one thus helped would have been as little benefitted as Christopher Sly in the bed of silk."

"You have been engaged," said Dr. Lee, "in a course of experiments; I am anxious to see what have been the results."

"Not altogether such as I had wished and expected," replied Herbert. "My pity was first excited by the physical wants and sufferings of the poor. I now see that these are not their greatest evils, and I more than half suspect that this was one of the points which you have been leaving me to discover. I have found these wants numerous indeed, and hard to be borne—want of food, of clothing, of shelter, of warmth and of health. But I begin to perceive that even if these were supplied, the good thus effected would be only temporary, and I fear it would be necessary to go on, in communicating the supply, in an infinite series. The fountain of ills would by no means be dried up. Where I have given money, the gift has sometimes been abused before my eyes. Where I have given food, I have had the same demand repeated the very next day."

"What then," enquired the doctor, "is the source of the evil—that to which the main effort should be directed?"

"The question," answered Herbert, "does not seem to me quite as difficult as I should have found it a month ago; but I am not quite settled in mind, even now, as to the answer. Not neglecting moral evils, I am nevertheless disposed to reply, it is *ignorance*. In almost every case, mental imbecility and darkness, meet me in close connexion with pauperism and suffering. What is wanted, I think is light. This would make the reckless spendthrift provident, the idle industrious, and the drunken temperate. The more I see of the brutality of manners in which whole families among us are living—the more am I dis-

posed to refer it to want of knowledge. Where I find books on the shelf, I find some neatness, industry and economy, and consequently, some comfort."

"You seem then to repent of your benefactions," said his uncle.

"Not in all cases," said Herbert. "The man whom we rescued from the hands of the sheriff, when he was on the point of being sold out, appears to be grateful, and is making a strong effort to right himself; and I certainly do not regret the pittance which we gave to the sick woman on the hill; but other cases are less encouraging. A young German came to me on one of the coldest days of last week, with no warmer clothing than a linen jacket. He had a good appearance, and offered to do any sort of work, so that I was led to furnish him with almost a complete suit of my cast-off clothing. But the very next day he disappeared, and carried with him several valuable articles from the house where he had lodged."

"Your sister," said the doctor, "makes the same complaint. Several of the children whom she arrayed in comfortable suits, have

never shown their faces in the school since they received her bounty. But after all, we must not lay too much stress on such instances, as they are by no means universal."

"I am aware," said Herbert, "of the tendency of inexperience to run from one extreme to the other. Still I am convinced that I have begun at the wrong end. Take the case of the Cades, in Cedar-Swamp, three miles to the east of us. I really pitied them. During a storm, which we felt severely even in this protected mansion, these poor people really suffered severely. The sleet dashed in at twenty crevices. The old woman assured me, that on the night of the storm, there was scarcely a dry spot large enough to contain their bed; and I myself saw a sheet of ice on the floor of their upper room. Their supply of wood was exhausted, and for several days they had lived upon turnips. I saw their wretched bed covered with remnants of carpet, such as you would scarcely admit as a foot-cloth at your door."

"How did you seek to relieve them?"

"I gave the man," said Herbert, "a few pieces of money,—enough to keep them in

some comfort for a week at least; and. to prevent mistake, I directed him how to lay it out. It was exhausted in two days, and the best account he could give of it was—'I have surely made some blunder,' said he, 'for I can't cypher any, and never could.' Yet he was sober, and, as he said, I really believe his wants arose from sheer ignorance."

"How far I agree with you in your conclusions," said Dr. Lee, "you will learn soon enough. Thus far you are certainly right—popular ignorance is a copious source of misery. When I was in the practice of medicine, I met with dozens of instances, in which the parents of large families obstinately resisted every attempt to vaccinate their children—even when the small-pox was in the neighbourhood, and though I went to them prepared to perform the little operation gratis. They did not choose, they said, to give 'bad humours' to their children. So in hundreds of cases, entire households are brought up in the belief that a little spirituous liquor is good for the health. If they are sick, the panacea is spirit. Even in incipient fevers or inflammatory catarrhs, they will not only 'feed a

cold,' as they call it, but give hot toddy to a man who has a chill upon him. It is fully proved by medical statistics that a much greater proportion of children die among the poor than the rich. I am prepared to assert, that in a majority of instances the disease and the mortality are owing to gross ignorance of the simplest laws of the animal economy. Hence, also, thousands are murdered by patent medicines, the advertisements of which crowd the columns of our newspapers, in city and country."

"In the practice of your profession," said Herbert, "you have no doubt seen much of the degradation produced by ignorance and vice."

"I have, indeed," said Dr. Lee, "and the sight of so much hopeless misery very much embittered to me the performance of my duties. I was especially pained to observe the wide spread ignorance, prejudice and error of the great mass, and for a time directed my efforts with some alacrity to the removal of these evils."

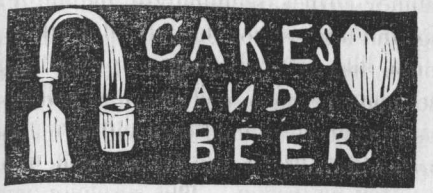
"Yet it is the relief of purely *bodily* evils," said Herbert, "which is the object of the

nealing art. And still, if I perceive your drift, you do not consider beneficence as rightly bestowed when it looks no further."

"I certainly consider it as falling short of the mark in this case. That is, it ought to do more; and until it does more, the cure is only half effected. But still we must not theorize away common humanity. When misery falls in our way we must relieve it, whatever may have been the cause. To remove this cause, however, is a better work. And if, with the bodily relief, you can do anything towards the extirpation of the radical evil, you are, I think, in the best path possible. But let me forewarn you against the danger of stopping at causes which are really far below the fountain-head."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Edith, who came to beg the advice and help of her uncle, in a case of suffering which had been made known to her by Mrs. Huntly, and in which she had been making benevolent experiments for some time. Near the outskirts of the forest which extended northward from Elmham, and over the hills, there stood a small, low house or

cottage, on the high bank of Ash-Brook. After going once to this house with Mrs. Huntly, Edith was led to visit there frequently alone, from the circumstance, that with the exception of two small boys, the family was made up of females. Two widows and their daughters, and even grandchildren occupied one small dwelling. A rude sign was raised up in front,



Edith was shocked at the want of cleanliness and order, and made some attempts to teach them better things. "I do not blame you so much," she would say to them, "for the broken fence and falling chimney—it might require men's work to mend them—but surely it would take but little time and pains to patch that ragged coverlet, or to paper those broken windows. Besides, I see your dishes and cups and spoons lying scattered everywhere, and there is the wash-tub filling up a chair almost in the bed."

"To all this," said Edith, "Mrs. Stagg had no reply, but that it was 'a way they had'—'they were not quality folks'—and 'Miss Edith must put up with poor people's fashions.'"

After a while, however, Edith perceived that there were other causes of evil at work. Mrs. Tomline, the elder of the two sisters, commonly sat in a straw-bottomed chair by the chimney-corner, seemingly in the act of knitting, and always rocking herself with a rapid motion, like one who puts a child to sleep. She seldom spoke, and when she did so, it was in a voice so loud and with a manner so abrupt, that Edith was frightened, thinking she might be insane. This suspicion was increased, when she saw that she was seldom more than half-dressed, and that in knitting, her needle was never out, and her stocking never waxing any larger. At last it came out, that Mrs. Tomline was an opium-eater—a class of wretched beings, too common among females of a certain rank, but of whose existence among us Edith had hitherto been altogether ignorant. An adult daughter of Mrs. Stagg was stimulated in another way. Even the little boys (Mrs. Huntly told her) used to take their sip of whiskey. Here were horrors upon horrors. She no longer wondered at the poverty, filth and wretchedness of the place.

With much sacrifice of feeling, Edith had visited the house almost daily, making it her main object, by every means within her power, to rescue these poor creatures from their destructive habits. To her own mind the motives to this were overpowering, but all her endeavours proved fruitless. Such were the prejudices, the absurd errors, the gross ignorance and the stupidity of these people, that it seemed as if nothing could persuade them that the opium and the alcohol were really injurious. Knowing that till she succeeded in this, all efforts to help them would be vain, she had now brought the case, as one of no small perplexity, to her uncle.

It was no more than might have been expected, for Herbert to catch at this, as a case very much in point. Here was misery caused by ignorance. Nothing more, he cried at once, was necessary, than to throw light upon these darkened minds, and shew them the ruinous tendency of their indulgences.

"I am very ready, my son." said Dr. Lee, "to grant much of what you say, and to aid you in your experiments. True philanthropy can never stop with the relief of bodily wants and sufferings. I agree with you, thus far How much further I go than this, you will learn in good time, and you are on the track."

"My dear uncle," exclaimed Edith, with great animation, "I think I know what you mean, and what you would teach us, namely that it is not enough to give alms, unless we give instruction. Is not that it?"

The old gentleman took her by both hands, and looked laughingly into her beaming eyes; then, after a pause, he said, "*Mercy to the body is* GOOD, but *mercy to the mind is* BETTER."

CHAPTER VIII.

Not these suffice, to sickness, pain and wo,
The Christian spirit loves, with aid, to go;
Will not be sought, waits not for want to plead,
But seeks the duty—nay, prevents the need.

Crabbe.

THE enthusiasm of a noble and youthful mind in a good cause, is a species of elevation second to none in its degree or its pleasures. Herbert Lee experienced this in regard to the new prospect which was opening before him. He panted to be useful, and that on the grandest scale. Having been sick at heart from the contemplation of abounding misery, he had at first desponded altogether. Most cheering therefore was the light which seemed to break upon his path. Now, thought he, I begin to apprehend the true value of knowledge; it is the key to all wisdom and virtue, the true philosopher's stone. Now I no longer regret my expensive and laborious education.

Full of these thoughts, he was impatient to sally forth and reconnoitre his field of operation. He resolved to survey the neighbourhood with this new inquiry in his mind. These were his thoughts as he arose on Christmas morning, and he could scarcely despatch his breakfast soon enough, so eager was he to mount his horse and pursue his inquiries. The ground was hardened by frost, and although the hills and plains were cheerless from the absence of verdure, it was nevertheless a fine winter morning, and the ride was one of extraordinary animation.

Now and then the report of a gun was heard, and the people whom he met were for the most part in their best apparel. At every house or hovel which he passed, Herbert saw something to confirm his recent conclusions "These houses," said he to himself, "are open and ruinous, not so much from the necessity of the case, as from the improvidence of the people. That improvidence would speedily give way before a few of the plainest maxims. Why are not these taught to the common mind? O cruel neglect of humanity in our lawgivers! A little knowledge

would teach frugality; thrift and management, would drive men from intemperance, and would lead directly to virtue."

As he pursued his way, he came in sight of the Cross-Keys, a noted tavern or tippling house, upon the borders of the Bear Swamp. It was a straggling row of houses and sheds, painted of that unsightly colour known by the name of Spanish-brown. Several horses and vehicles were fastened around the porch, and it was evident that a Christmas fire was roaring within. Even at this early hour, the noise of uproar and wassail resounded from the building. Herbert entered; every room was now a bar-room; and the smoke and the scent of liquor were barely supportable. Not merely the regular drunkards of the neighbourhood, but many of the hard-working mechanics and young farmers were there.

Herbert was too wise to adventure any instructions in the midst of these orgies; but making his way to the fire, he warmed himself, while he listened to the Babel of talk. It was loud, it was profane, it was even brutal He was not more shocked at its grossness than disgusted with its ignorance. Wha

was aughed at as wit, was not even rude humour, but mere horse-play, hackneyed slang, and arrant nonsense. The dialect was as low and barren as the sentiments were degraded. Here is the source of the evil, thought he—IT IS IGNORANCE. This is the monster with which I have to contend.

But Herbert had promised to meet his uncle at a neighbouring church, with the minister of which they were to dine; he therefore gave spurs to his horse, and meditated as he galloped along. But his musings were very often interrupted by the groups of persons whom he overtook or met. Some of these were keeping holiday; some were employed about their daily labour; and a few, like himself, were hastening to church. The service was not that to which Herbert had been accustomed, but it was evangelical, and was performed with simplicity and warmth. When it was over, Dr. Lee presented his nephew and niece to the Reverend Mr. Cole, a venerable clergyman, the uncle of their deceased mother. Mr. Cole had attained the age of three score and ten. and his silver hair hung in natura. curls about his neck;

but he shewed no signs of decrepitude. His two daughters, Mary and Anne, were of an age well suited to make them agreeable companions for Edith Lee.

While they awaited dinner, Herbert took the liberty of broaching the subject which was uppermost in his mind, by asking what was the state of education in the parish.

"We are a very plain people, Mr. Lee," said he; "our neighbours are, almost without exception, farmers or country mechanics. I know but three men among us who have received a liberal education."

"You have schools, I suppose," said Herbert.

"Yes, several; but these are common English schools, and they teach very little more than reading, writing and arithmetic."

"I thought I observed several distilleries as I rode along this morning," said Herbert.

"I am sorry to be obliged to say you were right," replied the old gentleman. "There are no less than six within six miles of my church; and this day the consumption of the noxious liquor, in all its forms, is exceedingly great. I have preached against it, and talked

against it; but self-interest is in these cases stronger than conscience."

"It is clear," said Herbert, "that what they need is light. Throw light, full and broad, upon their path and they must see it to be ruinous. How can they fail to do so? I am for taking the torch and carrying it into every nook and cranny of ignorance and vice. What paltry themes," exclaimed he, rising from his chair with animation, "are those which occupy our legislative assemblies, compared with the education of the people! What are imports, and tariffs, and pre-emption or bankrupt laws, or even war and peace, when put by the side of this—the instruction of every American mind!"

Mr. Cole and the Doctor exchanged a good-natured smile at the ardour of Herbert, but did not interrupt his remarks.

"Is it not as plain as day," he continued, "that ignorance is the source of vice? And how can we arrest the stream unless we stop the fountain? There is not one of these drunkards who might not be reclaimed, if the true state of the case were set before him"

"Hold!" said Mr. Cole, "you are going a little too fast, my dear young friend, for an old man to keep up with you. Don't say I am chilled and locked up by reason of years, when I declare that your zeal carries you too far."

"I shall hear your counsel, sir, with attention and reverence."

"When Melancthon was converted," said Mr. Cole, "the arguments for God's service seemed so plain to him, that he thought he could convert anybody by stating these arguments. He tried it. '*But*,' said he '*I found old Adam too strong for young Melancthon.*'"

"I see your drift," said Herbert, "but do you not believe, that if a full and fair statement could be made, and not made merely, but lodged in the understanding of the basest drunkard in this parish, he would find it impossible to resist the motives thus awfully presented?"

"I do *not* believe it," said Mr. Cole, with great solemnity of manner.

"What!" cried Herbert, with new warmth, "is there a human sou which could resist

the apparition of the consequences of intemperance—disgrace, poverty, disease, insanity, suicide!"

"There is: there are thousands of such. There are a score of such within a circuit of five miles, of whom there is not one who could not teach you a thousand fold as much of all these evils as you have ever read or heard. For consider, the drunkard often grows up in a family of drunkards; he habitually consorts with drunkards; he sees them in their daily orgies; he sees them in the hands of the justice; he helps to hold them in their phrenzies or in *delirium tremens*. On these points, his understanding is fully enlightened. Nay, his feelings are often reached. Never have I heard such moving descriptions of the miseries of the intemperate, as from drunkards themselves in their lucid intervals."

"Then," said Herbert, "you think it of no use to communicate truth on moral subjects, because it fails to reform the vicious?"

"By no means, my young friend. Let truth be disseminated broad-cast—the more widely the better. Some seeds will find soil and germinate. All I mean to assert is, that

mere illumination is not all-sufficient. I am ready to go all lengths with you in diffusing knowledge among an ignorant population, provided it be done on what I consider true Christian principles."

"In making the circuit of your congregation," said Herbert, "do you not find many instances of domestic ills arising from gross ignorance?"

"Undoubtedly. I could name a dozen families, in which a moderate degree even of common education would open a fund of safety and pleasure. There is my neighbour, Grimes, the wheelwright. What resource has he, these long winter evenings? He can scarcely read. He owns no books, but the Farrier's Guide, the Tutor's Assistant, and the Almanac. His talk with his wife is about nothing higher than the roads, the weather and the prices; whose horse is foundered, or how much Captain Jones gave for his pair of matches. His vacant face tells me in church, even during the half-hour he keeps awake, that not one idea has gained entrance to his soul. The picture, with slight variations, is that of hundreds among us."

"And you might add," said Dr. Lee, "that where this ignorance falls in with moral obliquity, a tendency to any vice or evil way, the evils of the junction are tremendous. You cannot reason with an obstinate, wrong-headed, impenetrable, vicious blockhead. I used to find such in my practice, and my heart grew sick within me. They were knotted and gnarled, like the oaks in your churchyard. I remember one case in particular. I was called in to visit a poor woman on Iron Hill; it is thirty years since, but it is fresh in my remembrance. She had six children in one room of a large log cabin, the youngest being a month old. There was no one to assist her, but her eldest girl, ten years of age, and she was unable to leave her bed. There was no appearance of any thing, either garment or vessel, having been washed for two months. She was plainly near her end. Will you believe me, that her husband, a stout raw-boned hunter, spent eight or ten hours of every day abroad? And that not at work, but lounging at the villages, or fishing along the streams. No persuasions of mine could get him to hire a nurse, or act the part of

one himself, or lay out a penny for any nice thing for his poor wife. I talked of the Bible —he could not read it. I talked of conscience—he seemed to have none. I talked of his character—he laughed in my face. His wife died; as really murdered by him, as if he had given her poison."

"It is evident," said Herbert, "that such evils as this are hopeless, unless the cause be removed. No mere almsgiving or personal aid can ensure relief where there is such an amount of gross ignorance. But in my zeal," said he, starting from his seat, "I have suffered the young ladies to depart without me."

Edith Lee and the two Misses Cole had quietly withdrawn for a walk. Not that her mind was uninterested in the question under discussion; for, indeed, it was with some reference to this very subject, that she and her cousins had gone out. Every village and country neighbourhood was now an object of attraction to her mind, as furnishing illustrations of her forming hypotheses. A Christmas visit to some of the poor neighbours was therefore very much to her mind.

Mary and Anne Cole were familiar, from their childhood, with every corner of their father's parish. They had been brought up to consider the work of charity as their proper occupation. From the earliest moment at which they were able, they had been engaged in Sunday-school instruction; and there were very few children within a mile or two of the parsonage, with whom they were not acquainted. They were accordingly able to introduce their cousin to several scenes which were entirely new to her. The first of these was a family of free blacks, in a ruinous house in a valley, on the stream which ran through their father's farm. Here they beheld poverty, disease, filth and ignorance. Dark and smoky and offensive, the main-room was less tidy than most stables. The scanty furniture was quite as disorderly as if it had been thrown carelessly out of a wagon. Here was no Christmas. The mother was half asleep in an old arm chair by the fire. The children were gnawing raw turnips from a basket on the floor. They had a wild look like that of savages, from whom indeed their manner of life did not much dif

fer. While they were there, the eldest girl, with dishevelled hair and bare feet returned from a foraging expedition among the drift wood along the stream—the common fuel of the poor. As she threw it on the earthen floor, a fowl disengaged itself from the faggots, and in its attempts to escape, gave great entertainment to the young fry.

"That fowl is stolen," said Anne Cole, without lowering her voice.

"Ah!" said the black woman, "rich folks may call it *stealing*. Rich folks don't need to steal. Poor folks may die in a ditch, for all that rich folks care. I can't read nor write; no more could my husband. He's dead and gone, and we must go over a neighbour's fence sometimes, or we shall die."

The young ladies gave the ignorant woman some money, on condition of her setting free the stolen fowl; and went away, mourning over this new instance of vice and misery arising from ignorance. In another house they found two old Bibles, but not an individual who could read. The old people, lately deceased, had been taught in their youth, but intemperance had ruined them,

and the downhill course of the next generation seemed to portend the speedy extinction of the family.

Mary Cole pointed out several cases of hard working people, of average honesty and thrifty habits, who nevertheless had vicious and unruly children. "Why so?" inquired Edith.

"Because," said Miss Cole, "they are in gross ignorance. The father and mother work hard all day, and sometimes a part of the night. The consequence is, that they have no time nor heart for reading. They can scarcely sit still in a chair ten minutes without going to sleep. Hence, the few books they once had are gone—used for wrapping paper, or to light their pipes. Sunday is the day for sleep and a good dinner and sauntering. The children grow up like young asses' colts. Having no intellectual pleasures, they become the prey of evil advisers. It is almost impossible to make such persons feel the evil of any moral offence. Their conscience seems scarcely to have opened its eyes"

"Then," said Edith, as they bent their steps homeward, "we shall meet my brother with great willingness, and adopt his new maxim, that 'Ignorance is the source of Vice.'"

CHAPTER IX

A pupil in the many-chambered school,
Where Superstition weaves her airy dreams.
Wordsworth.

In his search for the evils of ignorance, Herbert seemed to himself like one who had opened a mine, which was not only of immense extent, but everywhere near the surface. On every side the proofs of his favourite proposition rose before him like hideous phantoms. Even where the miseries of the degraded had not been caused by ignorance, they seemed nevertheless to demand the removal of that ignorance, before they could be cured. He therefore felt himself engaged in what one of our great statesmen used to call "a crusade against ignorance," and plied his aged friends with innumerable questions in regard to their gleanings in this field. But nothing short of personal observation could satisfy his inquiries, and he soon set about

canvassing the neighbourhood, with this new idea in his head.

In one of these visits he called at the house of a dying woman. He was shocked to find her without even the rudiments of Christian knowledge She had never learned to read, and now, in the prospect of death, her terrors were extreme. She even overrated the necessity of knowledge, and talked as if the real difficulty in her case was that the shortness of time did not allow her to learn all that she must know. When asked why she had never got any learning, she made the answer which is so common in similar cases, that when she was a child she had no idea of the value of knowledge, and chose rather to stay at home than go to school; in which her parents were very willing to indulge her, that they might enjoy the fruit of her labour. This led Herbert, for a time, to extol the Prussian school-law, according to which, every parent is compelled to send his children to school, or suffer a penalty.

"Let me shew you something in my line," said Dr. Lee to his nephew, one morning after breakfast. He conducted him to his

office, and shewed what appeared to be a dried and shrivelled toad. "Do you see anything medicinal in this?"

Herbert smiled, and proceeded to examine the mummied creature. "This," continued the Doctor, "is a toad, which has been killed by immersing it in melted lard. It is esteemed by many hereabouts, as a sovereign cure for the quinsy. It is worn in a small bag around the neck. You look surprised—but this is only one of a thousand such charms which one hears of in a long practice."

"Why this seems more like some fetish of the wild Africans, than the practice of a Christian land."

"True," replied Dr. Lee, "yet the fact is as I have represented it. These cures interfere very much with medical treatment. They have come down by long tradition, from grandmothers and great-grandmothers; and having found some of them to be the same with those related by ancient authors, I should not be slow to believe that among them were recipes handed down from the earliest days of heathenism. Thus, a 'blood-stone,' as they call it, is worn to prevent

bleeding at the nose. Warts and other excresences are removed by stealing a bit of meat and burying it. Eye-water is made by melting some of the last snow of the winter."

"I remember," said Herbert, "that Horace Walpole was advised, and that in the great metropolis of France, to preserve the parings of his nails in a bottle, as a cure for the gout."

"Stranger still," said Dr. Lee, "all the world believed for ages that the royal touch was a cure for scrofula, which was therefore called the 'king's evil.' Even Doctor Johnson was carried by his mother in 1712, to London, to be touched by Queen Anne."

"Here is a new trophy of the arch-fiend Ignorance," said Herbert; 'and I dare say the consequences here, as elsewnere, are often fatal."

"Not so often as you might imagine, for," added the old gentleman with a smile, "as I no longer practice, I might as well own, that fewer people are killed by doing too little, than by doing too much. It is not the *placebo*, but the *nostrum*, which destroys."

"I own," said Herbert, "I have been as

tonished at the portion of our newspapers which is allotted to quack medicines. In some papers, I am sure, half the advertising columns are thus employed."

'You would be still more astonished, if you knew of the fortunes which have been made. But you may judge of the sales, by the advertisements, the cost of which can be sustained only by immense patronage. The details of these advertisements are often such as to shew that they are penned for the most abandoned of our race; and they have slain their millions. Ignorance and vice gape after these infallible remedies, and indulgence feels secure, till the mortal blow is struck. Many of them are poisons, and most of them would be fatal in certain cases. The bills of mortality attribute the deaths which occur, to this and that disease; but they omit one of the direst and most active diseases—quackery. The same ignorance leads to the employment of itinerant charlatans, and real or pretended 'Indian doctors.'"

"With regard to the last of these," said Herbert, "I was assured by an excellent missionary, who was at the same time an intelligent physician, that there is not the slightest foundation for the vulgar fondness for Indian medicine. After some years' residence among the Cherokees, he declared his conviction, that on all such subjects, the wisest of their doctors are more ignorant than the common people among us, and that their 'medicine-man' relies chiefly on supernatural means, knowing little or nothing even of the indigenous herbs, except in their most obvious properties. Yet thousands are expended every year, upon the mere name of 'Indian remedies.'"

"This," replied the Doctor, "agrees well with my own observation. Something akin to superstition makes people apt to believe that an Indian or a seventh-son must have peculiar gifts of healing." And then turning to Edith, who had just entered, he continued, "I dare say, my dear, you have already found many instances of superstition among the poor neighbours whom you have visited."

"Quite enough to astonish me, I assure you, sir. Only last night my chamber-maid came in much frightened because a hen had crowed, and a loaf from the oven had burnt

in some ominous way. Last August all the servants at a house where I was visiting were in concern because of a whip-poor-will that had uttered his sorrowful notes on the eaves of the house."

"If you should talk to my house-keeper," said the doctor, "she would add considerably to your list. It is one of the things I never could expel from her mind. She firmly believes that a dying person will not expire while the tide is in, and that to ask what o'clock it is, or to pick at the bed clothes, is a sign of impending dissolution. She is always on the *qui vive* about the time of the new-moon, so as to see it over her left, and not her right shoulder. I do not think I ever gave her greater pain, than by setting out to make a long journey, on a Friday; and she has assured me that she once sat up all night, with a new head-dress on, to avoid making her beginning with it on one of the *dies nefasti*."

"What you have said about good Mrs. Huntley's persisting in these notions, agrees with what I have often observed myself," said Edith. "These superstitions descend, I imagine, through many generations. Thus,

the falling of a looking-glass portends death in the family: no one pretends to say why or wherefore, but the conviction is rooted in them, and will 'stick to their last sand.'"

"O how plainly," exclaimed Herbert, "does all this shew the need of popular illumination! These are shadows of the darkness: they would fly before the sun. There is a propagative power in error or falsehood which is horrid; I have never been more struck with this, than when in reading the ancient classics I have encountered the very superstitions which our ignorant people cherish. Thus, to spill salt, to meet a hare or an old woman, to hear the croak of a raven, were just as unlucky signs among the Greeks and Romans, as among ourselves. And the crowing of a hen, was equally ominous in ancient times.* So astonishingly tenacious is the human mind of error and misconception. I do not find the like tendency towards the propagation of good; and this strengthens my belief in the doctrine that we are a fallen race."

"When I first travelled on the continent of

* See Nuttall's Archæological Dict. p. 334.

Europe," said Dr. Lee, "I was much disconcerted by the notice which was taken of my *sneezing*. Whenever that accident befel me, I found myself addressed with a formal phrase of salutation. I afterwards found that this likewise was an old custom, brought down from heathenism. For some of the ancients made sneezings the object of divine worship; others thought them a disease, and therefore, when any one sneezed, said 'the gods bless you!' Among them the sight of a mouse, a snake, an empty oil-flask, or a strange cat, was very unlucky. I have no doubt that these individual things are bug-bears at this day, among the peasantry of some countries. These follies may possibly have descended from the antediluvian period; at any rate, they will be likely to endure until the latter-day-glory."

"It is dreadful to think of such diseases," said Herbert, "as of those which cannot be rooted out. The discovery of a thief by the sieve-and-shears is the same in substance with the old Greek trial by the axe. No one knows how many ages people have nailed horse-shoes up to keep off witches, or touched

corpses to avoid dreaming of them, or thrown an old shoe after a departing friend to procure him 'luck.' Will the world never be any better?"

"Never, my son, by mere philosophy or by its own efforts. Be comforted, however, in considering that these are not the worst of human errors, and that much goodness and happiness have co-existed with them in every age, They derive their chief strength from the religious awe with which they are surrounded; an awe which survives the original creeds and rituals in which it had a part."

"It shews," said Herbert, "how powerful the religious feeling is; and how great would be the influence of genuine religious knowledge, if it could be made to take the place of these fooleries."

"In all your talk," said Edith, "about the evils of ignorance and superstition, I have not heard you say a word about dreams."

"We might talk long on that fertile subject," said the Doctor, "but I have already had my fair share in talking about dreams. It was a favourite subject with my patients till at length I might have written a new

Dream Book from data picked up at bed sides. These incorporeal things have a power to inflict terror which is scarcely recognised out of their own dominions. Often have Shakespeare's expressions occurred to me, when I have seen a sturdy soldier agitated by his last-night's dream:

"'*Gloster.* O, Catesby, I have had such horrid dreams!
Catesby. Shadows, my lord!—below the soldier's heeding.
Gloster. Now, by my this day's hopes, *shadows*, to-night,
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers,
Arm'd all in proof.'

But we may dismiss this part of the subject; we need not examine it a moment longer, being so fully convinced of the direful effects of that ignorance which is connected with superstition. Much as I differ from you on some points, nephew, as you will some day learn, I do not differ from you on your main point, for I am at all times ready to declare that ignorance is the source of unnumbered vices and miseries."

"I am all impatience," said Edith, "to have that promised explanation, and to learn your plan of helping mankind out of the

slough; but I suppose, my good uncle, you will tell us all in the time you judge best."

"You must give me," said Dr. Lee, "an old man's privilege—that of not being hurried. As I said before, you are on the way to truth. In some respects you have found it. You must serve your time, as I did, for I have gone over every step of the same path before you. In the mean time, go on in your scrutiny. Search out the evils; inquire for their causes; and endeavour to relieve them. Go into the houses of the poor. You will sometimes mistake for abject ignorance what is only rudeness and clownishness. But with all allowance for such cases, you will find that in nine cases out of ten, poverty is accompanied with great want of information."

"I already find it so," said Edith, "in the cottages which I visit, even among tidy, industrious people. No books, no newspapers, no conversation beyond the circle of the daily food and clothing and work. And I sometimes wonder how such persons spend their time, and how it is possible for them to grow up with so contemptible a modicum of knowledge."

"You should take lodgings with one of these families, Edith," said the old gentleman archly; "your doubts would soon be resolved. Take, for instance, the case of our neighbour Pearson and his wife. I mention them because, as they have no children, they might be expected to have more time for learning than others. Pearson is a middle-aged man, a tin-plate-worker by trade; but here, in the country, he is glad to add to this, jobs in sheet-iron, stove-mending and general tinkering. He is an honest fellow, and, as the world goes, quite temperate. You may hear his hammer tinkle, tinkle, tinkle by sunrise on a summer morning and on winter evenings his lamp is never out in the shop before eight o'clock. His dress is as clean as his trade allows, which he owes to his wife, a trim little woman, who is a perfect Hollander for cleanliness. She used to have her floor scrubbed on the set day, even when for some weeks she was sick in bed. She has Dutch blood in her veins, as you might suppose. Before she was married she had spun and woven and made up with her own hands a score and more of garments. Her floors are

clean enough to eat one's dinner upon them Her blue cupboards are surmounted with a row of penny-bowls, a comical but by no means uncommon ornament in this part of the country. Through the door, which is always accidentally open, one discerns some comely vessels of Staffordshire ware. The front door I never saw opened, except at their house-warming. Their front room or parlour, like the inner shrine of temples, is seen only dimly, through a crevice. They eat, and I may say live, in the kitchen, which is quite as clean as your drawing-room. It is a favour to be admitted even there, and my servants, when sent on errands, have commonly been met at the door, either there to despatch their business, or to be made familiar with a house-cloth lying before the threshold. A basin of water is always standing there, for the purification of the husband, before he gains entrance."

"I am surprised and delighted!" said Edith, much awakened by her uncle's description. "Your picture is charming. You must certainly take me to see them. And how do they live?"

"As to fare, very wealthy and comfortable, and at the same time very frugally. Pearson keeps a cow, and Gertrude is dairy-woman. They buy neither milk nor butter indeed, they sometimes sell both. Out of little pinfold of a garden, they contrive to get all the vegetables they need for the year. A few hogs, which cost them nothing, give them pork and bacon and sausages for the winter, and this, with a few fowls, makes them almost independent of the butcher, from whom, however, they get a joint now and then, which lasts them an incredible time. I have looked in at their evening meal sometimes, and have been struck with the appearance of things; a snow-white cloth, a neat tea-service, white bread and transparent honey, with almost always one or two sorts of sweet cake, a saucer of preserves, and the never-failing pot of smoking coffee, which seems the grand restorative among this class of people."

"Now," said Herbert, who was not to be diverted from his main inquiry, "I should really like to be informed how they spend their leisure hours, and what their reading may be."

If you were to ask them, they would tell you they had neither reading nor leisure hours. I never saw either of them sitting with hands before them until after supper. They manage to keep themselves hard at work from sunrise till dark; and then the repose of evening is only a prelude to that unbroken, profound sleep, which is peculiar to infants and labourers. As to books, there are two or three on the shelf, but they are always in the same places, and the sprigs and dried flowers and cut paper which flutter out from between the leaves when they are handled, tell one plainly that to be read is the least of their offices. Indeed, one of them is a Dutch Testament, in which neither of them can read one word, and which bears marks of having been frequently used for the sharpening of a razor."

"But what can they do on Sundays?" Edith asked.

"Sunday is both a dull and an abused day with them. I have often thought that if they had been blessed with children, they would have been led to discover the charms of the Sunday-school, and so to taste the sweetness

of the Sabbath. They find abundance of work on Saturday night, and sit up an hour or two later than usual. This loan they pay themselves with interest on Sunday morning. Pearson is always at church; Gertrude never. She is cooking the Sunday dinner, which is the best in the week. This is the day on which her father and mother, and all the clan from Iron Hill, come in to see them; or on which they take a wagon and go out to see some of their numerous kinsfolk. I sometimes meet them on Sunday afternoon taking a walk, in their best clothes. But Pearson complains that the day is long, especially in bad weather, and that his hands swell for want of work. It has long been his habit, like many of our tradesmen, to look over his little accounts, and post his books on the Lord's day evening. So you see it is very possible for people, who are quite thriving and even laying up money, to steer clear of all mental improvement, to live as if printing had never been invented, and to grow old in an ignorance absolutely unbroken, except by the sermon which one of them hears, and scarcely hears on Sunday"

"Are they happy?" asked Edith.

"Just as happy, my dear, as two people can be who are ignorant, selfish and void of all religion. Nay, they are not happy; and every year less so. They are totally ignorant of the sweets of charity, of Christian friendship, of sacred knowledge, of devotion. As they advance in life and decay in strength, unless grace interpose, they will become morose and dissatisfied, more and more the prey of jealousies and superstitious fears. Such are the persons who fall into early dotage; or before that period become the victims of wily heretics. The old age of such persons is apt to be that of either the miser or the sot.

"I recall my wish," said Edith, "and have no desire to see them. I only wish they were wiser and better. But how long am I chatting, with my bonnet and gloves on? Good morning. I am for a walk.

CHAPTER X.

I'll not be tied to hours, nor 'pointed times,
But learn my lessons as I please myself.
Shakspeare.

NOTHING could be more natural than for Herbert Lee to enter into frequent conversations with people of the labouring class, while this matter was in his mind. He sought occasion to do so as extensively as possible. There was a turner in the neighbouring village, named Stock, who had done several neat jobs for him, and of whose ingenuity he had taken notice. Stock was a man of middle age, of good appearance, and a countenance which evinced both talent and good-nature. Nothing had prevented his rising in life, but an irresistible turn for projecting inventions. His shop and loft were full of half finished machines, and often when he might have been earning something by working at his trade. he was puzzling his brains over

some contrivance, which, even if successful, would never yield him any profit. Herbert found that Stock, though not a reading man, was shrewd and enquiring, and that he had examined the condition of affairs in their neighbourhood with a keen eye. He seemed to know what was wrong; he had some feeling for the misery which he saw; but he was very incredulous as to the remedies proposed; and he held some erroneous and even dangerous opinions.

"It is not so easy a matter, Mr. Lee, as you think, to give knowledge to people at large. They are not ready for it, sir; they don't care for it; they will not go out of their way for it, or thank you for bringing it to their doors. See there, sir, over the way, where those three Burkes are coming, all over blood, from their slaughter-house; what do they care, think ye, for your learning?"

"But, Mr. Stock," replied Herbert, who was not displeased with the turn of the conversation, "even these butchers might be tempted to read an entertaining book, or to hear a lecture."

"As to hearing a lecture, they had much

rather go to a country tavern and hear a fiddle; and as to the entertaining book, it is a chance if they can read; ay, now I remember, I have seen Barnabas sign his name. But it is one thing to know how to read, and another thing to read with any profit. I have seen my boys doze over a book, on long winter evenings, holding it sideways, and straining their eyes as if they were trying to get their brains in working-gear, and, perhaps, after all, fall asleep and drop the volume on the floor."

"But how do these Burkes employ themselves when they are not at work?"

"You must remember, sir, that working men come home at night in a different plight from that in which you return from your pleasure-rides. They are dirty, hungry and tired. When they have washed off the filth of the day (and not every one does this) they come to their supper with a keen appetite; and when this is over, they feel much disposed for quiet and sleep. Even this, however, young working men will often forego for the sake of a frolic; so you will find them rattling about the country for half a winter

night, especially in sleighing time or about the holidays. But as to books and learning—I don't mean to offend you Mr. Lee—but it is all moon-shine to such people."

The conversation ended in leaving each party as firm in his own opinion as before; but Herbert induced Stock to spend several evenings in going round with him among the families of the class concerning which he was inquiring, to whom, moreover, Stock's company was an effectual introduction.

It would be tedious to go through the detail of these visits; some traits, however, it would be scarcely fair to omit. Herbert was much struck with the fact, that where knowledge begins to be neglected in a family, such neglect increases with a fearful rapidity. He was not more pained than astonished to find mothers able to read, while their children were growing up in ignorance. "How is this?" he asked of Sally Bridge, the cabinet-maker's wife, as he found her darning stockings, with her three sons sleeping around the stove—"how is this, Mrs. Bridge? you tell me you were taught to read, in New Jersey. How is it that your children have never learned?"

"O dear, sir, I hardly know myself. You know one can't give a reason for everything. It was hard work, hard work, day in and day out,—work, work, work, morning, noon, and night; washing and cooking and mending for three children, husband and four apprentices. Then we had sickness and death in the family, then John got to hanging about the tavern, then to drinking; and—Mr. Stock, there, knows very well what he is now. No wonder the learning went out of my thoughts. It was not once in a month I laid hands on a book, and when I did it was a strange thing like. The truth is, I have been so bothered and worried, and have had to scuffle so to get along at all, that I never thought about giving my children any learning, one way nor another."

"But you had the Sabbath," said Herbert, "in which you might have read a little."

"The Sabbath! it was no Sabbath to me. John always wanted his best dinner on Sunday, and was dreadfully out of temper when he did not get it."

Herbert sighed as he looked at the young

Bridges, and said to himself. Surely ignorance is self-propagative.

In other families the proposal to increase their stock of knowledge was sneered at and scouted. The men thought they knew enough, and the children loved to play. "Leave learning for the parsons and doctors and lawyers," said one of the Burkes, "and we have got a plaguy sight more of such like cattle than is good for us. I can read and make my mark. It is more than my father could do, and yet he was the fattest butcher and the richest one in all our county." This argument is very cogent with a multitude of persons.

Herbert called upon the Simonses, two old bachelors, brothers and misers. They had a little capital of learning, but they had not turned it as they had their other stock. Stupor and prejudice had grown upon them year by year. Every thing was absorbed in the one passion for making money. For this they rose early, sat up late and worked harder than slaves. On a farm which produced the finest fruit, milk and butter of the country, they almost starved themselves They

were never known to give a cent in charity; and Job Simons, the elder, gave up his seat in church, pretending that he did not like the doctrine preached, but really, as was thought, because he was harassed by occasional calls for money. Though worth, at least, fifty thousand dollars, they had never taken a newspaper, nor bought any book but a Bible and Almanac, and two or three legal form-books; these, being necessary to Obadiah Simons, Esq. (for he held the office of a justice of the peace.) The *Docket* of this magistrate would be a curiosity to a collector of uncouth manuscripts: the spelling was perhaps as sound as the law. These men received one or two tracts on Education, with avidity, but drew up with great reserve upon the first mention of a school in the neighbourhood. With such magistrates, what must the body of the people become!

In several instances where Herbert had opportunity to watch the effect of books which he had given away, he was disheartened. He saw with pain, that the mere reception of a book, even by one who can read it, and has leisure to do so is not all. There must be

expertness in reading, some taste for it, and considerable previous training; and this must be obtained in youth, before the powers become rigid. Old Mrs. Merriweather received a file of the Penny Magazine, with many thanks. It was not perhaps the very best thing in the world for her, as Herbert thought when his sister took it; but the old lady had seen the pictures and asked for it. She returned it, after a month, very greasy and snuffy for some pages at the beginning: all the rest of the leaves were uncut. Herbert gave a tract entitled "Poor Joseph" to a black man who attended to his horse, and who, he found, could read. Upon examination, after he declared that he had read it, it was found that he could not state a single fact or thought of its contents. He further lent Krummacher's "Elijah the Tishbite," in the original, to a young German carpenter; but the fellow never found any suitable occasion to peruse it. It was otherwise with several volumes lent by Edith Lee, to the young milliners at the corner. They were read with eagerness, speedily returned and exchanged for others; but then it should be remarked

that these girls were from Massachusetts, and had there received not merely the art of reading, but a taste for it, and a good foundation of solid acquirements.

The result, thus far, was, that while the diffusion of knowledge is greatly needed, while it is indispensable and while it should be earnestly attempted, the obstacles to be surmounted are exceedingly great, particularly in cases where early education has been neglected. When he attempted to press on some of the men, the duty of caring for their families, or that of temperance, he was astonished to find how small was the weight of his arguments. Ignorance had become their citadel, and here they fortified themselves against every argument. However filthy and disorderly a house might be, the squalid inhabitant could not be made to see the evil of it. In a multitude of cases there was not knowledge enough to found an argument on, in behalf of knowledge.

In talking these things over with his sister, who was not less interested than himself, Herbert found that she had anticipated him in the conclusion, that mere education is an

instrument which cannot be applied with much effect to our adult population. Her mind was therefore turned with enthusiasm to the training of the young. "LET US TRY THE CHILDREN!" cried she, "these knotted, gnarled limbs can never be unbent."

These views were much encouraged, by the visit at Elmham, of Miss Devereux, a lady of very remarkable qualities. Her age could only be conjectured, but Dr. Lee had known her for forty years, "and it is amazing," said the old gentleman, "to see how little she is altered. I ascribe it to her perpetual animation, constant exposure to the air and incessant talking. She is a good creature, and shrewd, and charitable—but she is always mounted on a hobby—and her present nag is Popular Education." Such were the old gentleman's remarks, as they were awaiting the arrival of Miss Devereux, and they were fully verified by her subsequent display of herself. She came on horseback, attended by a young nephew. Her face, though long and thin, was full of health and animation; the eyes and teeth were those of youth, and the

play of expression on her animated features was really delightful."

"Dear doctor," she began, even without laying down her riding-whip, "I must get your help about my schools. Would you believe it, the fathers and mothers of some of my children can't be persuaded that there is any good to come of teaching them?"

"I can believe it implicitly," replied the Doctor.

"I have now three schools set up—I have collected funds to pay my teachers—I have rented rooms, and even got one school-house built,—and there is no reckoning up the visits I have paid, the harangues I have delivered, the douceurs I have distributed; yet after all, something goes wrong. Did I tell you the trick they have of coming and staying till I have rigged them up in new winter clothes, and then decamping for the season?" Edith and her brother smiled at this, but the lady continued: "I own I am troubled a little at the ingratitude they manifest in some cases; but this comes of their ignorance; and it is their ignorance that I am bent on curing;

and when we have driven it out of the world, ingratitude will follow in its train."

"What have you done with regard to the villagers at Cherburg?" asked Dr. Lee.

"Oh! I thought I had told you. After parting with you in the autumn, I visited my youngest brother, Frank Devereux, and succeeded pretty well in inoculating him with my zeal. He determined, in alliance with a young physician of the village, to set up a night-school. A room was hired, books were bought, the scheme made public, and at the outset they had a roomfull. It was all a novelty. Frank thought wonders were about to be wrought. But the numbers dwindled. The apprentices chose rather to play or go to bed. The faithful patrons used every means to keep up the interest, but it languished to such a degree, that when I last was there Frank was teaching one solitary boy! There is a want of *motive*, in the minds of these creatures, and what can one do without motive?"

"Very true," said Dr. Lee, with much animation, "you have hit on a true principle,

and one which, if followed out, will lead you to the true theory of popular illumination. It is in something *moral* that the only adequate motive can be found. All your experiments thus far have served to shew you the horrible evils produced by ignorance. Very well; so far is sure ground. You have further discovered that there is very little hope of making an impression on the adult population. And therefore you are for"——

"Beginning with the children," struck in Miss Devereux. "'Just as the twig is bent,' you know. Delightful employment! Oh I could spend my life in it! To see twenty or thirty sweet innocents, snatched from vice and ignominy and placed under instruction"—

"But you have yourself discovered some of the difficulties, which must be removed, before your plan can be considered entirely successful. Little can be done for children, upon the large scale, so long as their parents are opposed, or indifferent. You need motives to operate on *them*. Going to school loses its charm with children after awhile. They require some compulsion at times, and

that from their parents. But in many cases the profligate or idle parent sneers at the whole project."

"True enough, my dear good Doctor," said Miss Devereux. "I can give you an instance in point. I engaged all the Greggs, near the old mill for my Valley school, and gave each of them a book, and occasionally visited them. But what do you think? Not only their father, but their mother, insisted upon it that we must have some selfish end in view. They could not see why a lady and two or three gentlemen should spend the whole of their time in setting up schools, unless something was to come of it in the way of profit. All my discourses to Gregg about the advantages of temperance, and to his wife about cleanliness and order, were just so much water spilt upon the ground. 'They knew what did them good'—'they could get along as well as their fathers before them.' And so, instead of thanking us for teaching their children, they really threw every hindrance you could think of in the way."

"You will at length find," said Dr. Lee,

"that it is not enough to give people the means of education; for you must give them the *motive*."

"Oh, my excellent friend!" exclaimed Miss Devereux, "you have hit the nail on the head! But where is this motive to come from?"

CHAPTER XI

"Reading made Easy," so the titles tell;
But they who read must first begin to spell:
There may be profit in these arts, but still
Learning is labour, call it what you will.

Crabbe.

To one who draws up a plan of education at a parlour table, everything seems plain and beautiful. Mountains dwindle to molehills, and grovelling thousands are raised to intelligence in a trice. But when Herbert and Edith, accompanied by Miss Devereux, addressed themselves to the work, they found much to disgust and more to discourage them. A certain amount of education in parents seems to be necessary, before anything can be effectually done with children. Where the adult population feel no need of improvement, they will not lend the aid which is indispensable, in order to secure the attention of the young. Our zealous young philanthropists had but a cold reception in

the houses which they visited. Many of the fathers and mothers were absolutely stupid in regard to the whole matter. They had grown up without learning, and their children were no better than they. The families around the cotton-factory could find no time to give their children schooling, and many of them were entirely supported by the daily labour of their boys and girls in the mills.

In the schools which Miss Devereux set up, there was only a repetition of the mishaps of which she had complained. The parents shewed no gratitude and the children no thirst for truth. Scholar after scholar left the school. When the new book or the new garment had lost its charm, the little urchins decamped. The very fact that the schooling was given to them for nothing, appeared to make them value it at nothing.

"See here," said Edith, as they closed their labours one morning, "our academy is now reduced to that boy and girl, who are really too stupid to go away as the rest have done. I am persuaded that the *motive* of which my uncle talks so much, is wanting; I would I knew where to find it."

"We must expect," said Herbert, 'to be sneered at by many people, for our want of success. Yet I am not the less convinced than I was before, that popular ignorance is the grand source of public ills, and that our business is to remove it. How this shall be done, is the question, which seems to me more difficult than I thought it. Plainly, however, until this is done, nothing can be done. The people must be made to know better, before they can do better."

"I think, brother," said Edith, "that so far as this actually takes place, we see its good effects."

"Certainly," replied Herbert. "Where a boy can be kept at school, even for a quarter, he shews the effect of it. There is John Turnbull's son Ned; bad as he is, he has got something. He can read without much spelling, write his name, and foot up an account."

"Yes, and then he can make use of books and newspapers. I cannot help observing the effect of the latter. A family which takes in a newspaper, is very different from one that does not. They are altogether brighter and brisker; they have their curiosity quick-

ened. They wish to know what is going on. They find the world is larger than they thought. They have something to talk about."

"True, Edith, and if our journals were what they should be, their effect would be most beneficial, for they are scattered by tens of thousands. But what description of papers do our people take? It is not so bad in rural districts, but in our cities those are most popular which are the most vicious. They are read chiefly for their police-reports, accounts of murders and other felonies, idle tales and assaults on private character."

"But," said Edith, "does not this shew that mere increase of knowledge will not reform the world?"

Herbert looked very grave at this suggestion, but did not seem to be furnished with a ready answer. He changed the subject, by mentioning a piece of information received by him from Mr. Cole. Captain Devereux, partaking of the zeal of his sister, had set up a debating club in one of the school-houses of Nutbush. It did not aspire to the dignified name of a Lyceum, but its character was the

same, and it attempted improvement by similar means. For a few evenings, some interest was awakened: but this soon departed, for want of any real basis of knowledge in the people, and the Captain was glad to give it up.

On returning to Elmham, their anxiety led them directly to their uncle's study. The old gentleman was engaged in looking over some old pamphlets.

"These my children, said he, "are pamphlets on popular education"——

"The very topic which most interests us at present," said Herbert.

"You must know," said Dr. Lee, "that between thirty and forty years ago, I was as much interested as you now are, in this engaging subject, and had concluded, as you have, that all the ills of society arise from ignorance. I attempted, as you are attempting, the education of the poor"——

"And with what effect?" cried Edith, impatiently.

—"With the effect of shewing me that I was on the wrong track"——

"The wrong track!" exclaimed Herbert.

"Why do you mean to say that you found popular ignorance to be no evil?"

"By no means."

"Or," continued Herbert," that people ought not to be taught?"

"By no means."

"Wherein then were you wrong?" asked Edith.

"That," said the old gentleman smiling, "I found out for myself: and you shall find it out for yourselves. You are already upon the track. In the days I speak of, we were very much stirred up upon the subject of education. The systems of Dr. Bell and Lancaster were new, and in great vogue: we believed they would regenerate the world."

"Did you ever see these men?" enquired Edith.

"I never saw Dr. Bell, who was in Hindostan; but I frequently met with Joseph Lancaster. He was a plain Quaker, with a corrupt pronunciation of his native tongue. The system of mutual instruction had some great advantages, and may still be used where there are many scholars and few teachers

We were all bent, however, upon conducting education upon a grand scale. We had experienced the inconveniences of all private or individual attempts. We were full of the notion that education, to be effectual, must be carried on by the state and extended to every part of the population. We believed that in a few years all the pressing evils of society would flee before the illumination of state schools."

"And have you changed your opinion," said Herbert, "on this point."

"I still think," said Dr. Lee, "that popular education is indispensable; and that it should receive every encouragement from the State; but I see difficulties, which I never saw before. Some of these have been more fully developed within a few years than at any former period. Where, as in Prussia, there is an absolute government, with an established religion, it is easy to have a uniform system of schools over the whole country, and to make it compulsory."

"And why not as easy in America?" asked Herbert.

"I could give more than one reason,"

answered the doctor, "but there is one of which you must feel the force at once. It is the *religious* consideration. We must either teach scholars without any religion, or give offence by the sort of religion which we introduce. Schools without any religion are not once to be thought of. Religion is the chief thing to be taught. But how can we teach it?"

"Introduce the Bible and prayer," said Edith.

"Very good," replied Dr. Lee. "But introduce the Bible, and you will immediately have a revolt, from Papists on one side, and Jews and infidels on the other. And I could name to you a great city, in which prayer is deliberately excluded from the public high schools. Divided as we are into various sects, we never can agree as to the form in which religion shall be introduced. The consequence is, religion will be left out. A still further consequence is, that evangelical and zealous Christians will withhold their patronage from schools which professedly leave out the principal subject of instruction."

"Great as is my zeal for education," said

Herbert, "I acknowledge I could hold no terms with any system of public instruction which excludes the religion of Christ."

"Then," replied Dr. Lee, "you may as well bid adieu to government schemes of education in America. You must either receive the public school system, as good for this world, and look elsewhere for instruction as to the world to come, or you must reject it altogether. Good men are just now divided, as to which of these two courses is the proper one."

"May I then," Herbert asked, "look upon you as thinking that State education, however complete, is not an adequate instrument to elevate our population?"

"You may. Such is my definitive opinion. That is, so far as it excludes the Bible, so far I would renounce it. The Bible is the great elevator of our race. The Bible is the great corrector of moral evils. The Bible is the great preventer of false opinion. The Bible is the preserver of society, and renovator of the social state. What then can we teach, if we do not teach the Bible?"

"But suppose," said Herbert, "that we

cannot give the people everything: that is no reason why we should give them nothing. Half a loaf is better than no bread. Let us do for them what these schools can do, even if we do no more."

"Let us not," replied the Doctor, "give them the half-loaf, when we have the whole one. Let us not, when they ask for bread, give them a stone. The question, in this popular government, is what *we, the people*, shall give ourselves and our children. Shall we give them an education with the Bible, or without it?"

"But," said Herbert, "you surely do not deny the advantage of even worldly knowledge?"

"Not at all; only when it is palmed upon us for the whole of public education. Every item of knowledge obtained by a child, is so much gain. As a general rule, knowledge among the people tends to drive away the grosser sorts of vice. But a whole population systematically educated, with a studied exclusion of everything which may satisfy the soul's spiritual craving, must grow up to something monstrous. Mere science and letters do not change the heart, nor will they change society in the manner and degree which you and I desire.

"'Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
Upon the plains of vanished Syracuse,
And feelingly the sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is the philosophy, whose sway depends
On mere material instruments; how weak
Those arts and high inventions, if unpropped
By virtue.'"

"We are accustomed to say," said Herbert, "that the world is advancing very much in civilization."

"Yet so far as *this* advance goes," said Dr. Lee, "the individual happiness of man is not much increased. Human science and art assume too much glory to themselves. They are neither the sole, nor the chief reformers. The arts may rise very high in a country, while the people are very low. The commerce of England is immense, but of the tens of thousands of sailors who conduct it, what proportion are wiser, cleanlier, happier or better, than the agricultural serfs of the Heptarchy? Manufactures are vastly ex-

tended, but is individual happiness, is family comfort, augmented in the same degree? Every great manufactory cries, No."

Edith here begged leave to read a passage from Wordsworth's Excursion:

"Then, in full many a region, once like this
The assured domain of calm simplicity
And pensive quiet, an unnatural light
Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes,
Breaks from a many-windowed fabric huge;
And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,
Of harsher import than the Curfew-knell
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest—
A local summons to unceasing toil!
Disgorged are now the Ministers of day;
And, as they issue from the illumined Pile,
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door—
And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,
Mother and little children, boys and girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this temple, where is offered up
To gain—the master idol of the realm—
Perpetual sacrifice."

"The verses are touching," said Herbert, 'and they are true. But they do not reach my case. I never looked to *manufactories* to meliorate the condition of mankind but to

schools. And I still believe, that if all the inhabitants of a country were fully instructed in the rudiments of sound worldly knowledge, the country would be in a great measure free from disorder, squalid want, intemperance and crime."

Doctor Lee smiled and said, "why, nephew, though you are on the right track, you have not advanced quite as fast as I had thought. I tell you again, bare knowledge is not converting. So take one of your instances: you say Intemperance would necessarily flee before knowledge. Is this so?"

"Does not all Intemperance arise from not attending to plain undeniable principles of happiness—from neglect of maxims which may be taught to any one in an hour—from inconsideration—from neglect of organic laws? And will not education remedy all this?"

"No, it will not," replied the doctor. "This might be true, if all drunkards were fools. But we have had drunkards in the senate, on the bench and in the pulpit. Some of the most desperate drunkards I ever knew, have been of my own craft,—physicians,—well ac

quainted with the human frame—who had not merely seen pictures of the drunkard's stomach, but had dissected it; and, again and again, had stood by the bed-side of wretches shaking with the mortal horrors of *delirium tremens*. Depend upon it, something more than a supply of knowledge is needed, to drive away intemperance. And like instances may be brought, in regard to the other particulars. My children, you need something more; you must dig deeper—deeper—to lay the foundation of human happiness."

CHAPTER XII.

"The world's a Prison, with a wider bo· nd."
Crabbe.

On a fine starlight morning, towards the close of the winter, Herbert was summoned, long before the dawn, to accompany Mr. Inman upon a little expedition which had been projected, in connexion with a survey for an intended canal. He willingly consented to be one of the party, especially as his aged uncle found his limbs and his spirits firm enough to join them. The sunrise found them upon the summit of a neighbouring ridge, where, after some hours of exertion, they assembled in a log cabin, for their morning meal. The snugness of this shelter, and the charm of an enormous country-fire, kindled nd replenished by the c are of their assistants, tock and Furlong, ind ced them to protract their sojourn, and the conversation waxed more and more lively. Herbert found that

Mr. Inman, though not particularly engaged in schemes of philanthrophy, was intimately acquainted with the structure and management of prisons. Here a field was opened, on which Herbert was prepared to enter with great zeal; especially as he conceived that every step of the inquiry would conduct him nearer to the conclusion, that the removal of ignorance would be the removal of vice and misery. Addressing himself therefore to Mr. Inman, he said:

"You are the very man for my purpose; and with your superior knowledge, you will undoubtedly be able to give me substantial aid."

"I am ready to communicate," said Mr. Inman. "Though I have never been a convict, I have perhaps had a fairer view of gaol-discipline, than many who are."

"Let us then," said Herbert, "come directly to the point. Is it not true, that among our convicts in prison, the great majority are persons of no education?"

"It is an undeniable fact," replied Mr. Inman.

"Can you favour me," continued Herbert,

'by stating the result of your enquiries more particularly?"

"For exact information," said Mr. Inman, "I must refer you to the published reports of our prisons. It seems to be admitted, however, that defective education is one of the most fruitful sources of offences against the laws. In the great majority of convicts, school-instruction has been entirely wanting. It appears from a recent examination of the Sing-Sing state-prison, that out of eight hundred and forty-two prisoners, not more than fifty had received any thing which deserves the name of education; and that one hundred and seventy could not read nor write. In the state-prison at Wethersfield, the proportion of those who could read, write and cipher, was about eight in every hundred."

At these statements, Herbert turned to his uncle, with a countenance lighted up with a smile of some triumph. Dr. Lee also smiled and said: "These results are not new to me: nor do they contravene any opinion of mine."

"They clearly show," said Herbert, 'that

the dangerous classes of society, are those which are ignorant."

"I have never denied it," said Dr. Lee. "Most confidently do I expect, that every statistical survey will evince that gross ignorance and gross vice go together. But the question is, whether we shall remove the vice by a mere attempt to remove the ignorance. And especially is it to be inquired, whether that instruction which studiously excludes religion, will not rather put arms into the hands of vice."

"You cannot but observe," said Herbert, "the extraordinary and startling proportion revealed by these returns. Out of eight hundred and forty-two prisoners at Sing-Sing, one hundred and seventy could not read or write."

"This is painfully true," replied the Doctor: but has it ever occurred to you that we may be misled by confining our survey to the walls of a prison? Perhaps the proportion *without* those walls—in the country at large—may not greatly differ from this. It is a melancholy fact, that we have many thou-

sands, *out of prison*, who can neither read nor write."

"Surely," said Herbert, "you do not mean to retract your admission, that ignorance and vice go hand in hand!"

"By no means," replied the Doctor. "I only mean to say, that we generalize upon too narrow a basis of induction, when we restrict ourselves to the returns of prisons; we must extend our view to the whole phase of human society."

"Then," said Herbert, "let me have your pre-admission, that if we increase education—even that which is only secular—we shall in the same proportion diminish crime."

"*That*," replied Dr. Lee, "is more than I am able to assert, with my present light. The investigations of learned men and philanthropists have not ended in results which are perfectly uniform. Professor Lieber, in his letter to Bishop White, in 1835, says very justly: 'Knowledge in itself is neither good nor bad.'—'Arithmetic will assist a defaulter, as much as an industrious man who works for his family.' And Dr. Julius, of Hamburg, who has devoted his life to such inquiries,

admits that, in some countries, the decrease of public crime is not in proportion to the increase of knowledge. 'The Tyrolese,' says he, 'one of the noblest and bravest races of the world, sending nineteen twentieths of their children to school, give more occupation to Austrian judges than all the other provinces of the empire, except Dalmatia.' "

"And how," cried Herbert, "can Dr. Julius explain this anomaly?"

"Probably just as I do," replied the Doctor; "by admitting that no education can be effectually preventive of crime, but that which is moral and religious. For I perceive from this pamphlet, which you have handed to me, that he quotes with approval these remarks, in which I heartily concur: 'The happiness of men depends far more upon the proper control of their internal feelings, than their external circumstances; far more upon a mind void of offence, than upon the highest intellectual acquirements. Neither can there be a greater mistake than the supposition, that knowledge is always in itself beneficial. It is indeed a tremendous engine of good or evil. With him whose mind is directed

aright, it is an instrument of advantage to himself and to the world; but with him whose moral feelings are not decidedly virtuous, it is but an additional and terrible weapon of ill.' "*

"May we not argue," said Herbert, "from the constant concurrence of ignorance and crime, that the latter will be removed when we remove the former?"

"Not immediately. Not only ignorance, but *poverty*, is an almost constant companion of prison-crime. Let me ask you—Will crime be removed from society, by a universal diffusion of *money?*"

"No," replied Herbert; "because the giving of money does not reach the internal source—the moral character."

"Neither does the giving of knowledge," replied Dr. Lee, "if you give no more. And I am pleased to observe, in this pamphlet, that the education for which Dr. Julius pleads, as preventive of crime, includes something more. Among the three fundamental pillars, as he calls them, of the famous Prussian system he mentions 'the foundation of the whole

* Remarks on Education and Crime. Phil., 1835. p. 18.

system on a religious and moral basis, so that the first two hours of each day are devoted entirely to a regular course of religious instruction.'"

"I must make a tour through some of our prisons," said Herbert, "and see with my own eyes. For though I am somewhat shaken in my judgment, I cannot yield the position, that Ignorance is the trunk, of which Crimes are the branches."

Here Furlong, a plain, blunt man, shewed some signs of a wish to declare his opinion also. For some time, as the conversation had been in progress, his broad ruddy face had been relaxing into a very significant smile. At length, taking advantage of a slight pause he said:

"Well, gentlemen, if you will let a plain man put in his oar—I have a word to say. I have but little learning—none indeed, but what I got under the Connecticut school-law; but, if I may speak my mind, you are not going to work in the right way."

"And wherein are we wrong, Furlong?" asked Herbert.

"You are wrong just here," said Furlong:

'you seem to think all the rogues are *in gaol* It is no more true, than that all sick people are in the hospital. As the saying is, 'Many a felon goes unhanged,' and 'There are more fish in the sea than those that come out of it.'"

"You seem to have a bad opinion of the world," said Dr. Lee.

"No worse than my neighbours," replied Furlong, "but I have eyes, and I can't help what they see. There are a thousand villains, who never get caught in the net of the laws. What do you think of the thousands, up and down the country, who are in counterfeiting gangs, the men that alter bank-notes —the forgers? They can all read and write; yes, and do many things beside. Mr. Stock, here, knows that some of the grandest villains in our part of the state, have been learned folks."

Mr. Stock assented, and gave several anecdotes of scholarlike men, who had engaged in large schemes of swindling; and mentioned a number of fraudulent transactions, which required not merely cunning, but a considerable degree of refined education. "I agree with Furlong," said he, "all the vil-

lains are not in gaol; nor are they all block heads. Ignorance of the law may lead one man into crime, but it may also deter another, for fear of the unknown penalty."

"Thefts and burglaries," said Herbert, "are generally committed by ignorant people."

"Ay," said Stock; "very true; there are different ranks of wickedness, for different ranks of people. But loss of property is not all to be laid at the ignorant man's door. For what do I read, every day, in my newspaper, of dishonesty and fraud on the grand scale? The thief takes a few shillings: but how many thousands are taken by the dishonest bankrupt—the swindling cashier—the defaulting public servant? These men are all men of some breeding and education."

"What do you say of deeds of blood?" asked Herbert.

"I say just the same," said Stock. "I call a duel a murder; and who fight our duels? I do not suppose the men who have killed others with rifle, pistol or bowie-knife, in street-fights, and even public assemblies, did so for lack of common-schooling. No, no!

there is a bad heart at the bottom of these things; and, for all I can see, a man may have a bad heart, with a learned head."

"That is the very point," said Dr. Lee, "Mr. Stock has touched it with the point of a needle. Knowledge, in the service of depraved morals, is a sharp tool in the hands of a villain or a madman. Let a shrewd, educated young man fall into infidel company—and alas! he need not go far to find it—and his knowledge serves only to betray his conscience. He reads books, and hears lectures, and meets with clubs, and what is the upshot? He learns to argue that property is a monopoly—that all days are alike—that priests are deceivers—that there is no future punishment—and perhaps that there is no God."

Here Mr. Inman took occasion to relate, that, having recently been in the company of two eminent lawyers of New-Jersey, Senators of the United States, he had heard them both say that no crime was more fearfully on the increase in America, than that of *perjury*.

"And this plainly arises," said Dr. Lee. from the want of religious training. Where

there is any seriousness or fear of God, no man thinks without a shudder, of forswearing himself. We all know what a Custom-house-oath means. The persons who kiss the book to a falsehood, are by no means those, in all cases, who are without the elements of education. Yet I am sorry to say, that among all our good books and tracts, we have not one—so far as my reading has extended—against the awful sin of perjury."

"Let me understand you," said Herbert; "you admit that ignorance and vice go together: yet you deny that the removal of ignorance will secure the removal of vice."

"It will secure it," said the Doctor, "if the ignorance be removed in the right way. Take notice, I am so far from being an enemy of education, that I would have it to be universal. But you and I mean different things by education. I include in it, as indispensasable, the teachings of religion. And on some more suitable occasion, I will direct your attention to countries, in which general illumination has concurred with the most fearful relaxation of morals."

Interesting as the conversation had become, the little party could find no excuse for remaining any longer under shelter. Wrapping themselves up in their furs, they proceeded to brave the chills of a February morning. The Doctor, though less alert than in his younger years, proved by his exertions and his vivacity, that even in old age the fruits of equanimity and temperance are above all price.

CHAPTER XIII

Alas! what can they teach and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry.

Milton.

As Dr. Lee and Herbert were one evening in the study, the latter pointed to a range of closed book-cases, and said:

"I am suspecting, uncle, that those shelves contain some of the secrets which you will not reveal to us;—you keep them so sacredly closed."

"There are mysteries there indeed, nephew," answered the Doctor, "but mysteries of iniquity. They contain the works of the French philosophers, such as were in vogue when I was abroad: the famous Encylopedia, and the writings of Helvetius, Rousseau, Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, Volney and others. Should you ever open them, you will find

abundant reason to believe that knowledge is not regenerating—that there may be high civilization with debased morals—and that great philosophers may be bad men."

"I do not doubt it," said Herbert. "The study of the ancient classics has served to shew me this. The glorious temples of the Greeks, models of beauty, were prostituted to horrid vices, which were component parts of their worship. And the exquisite poetry of Catullus, Ovid and Martial is the vehicle of criminal passions, such as cannot be mentioned. Even the philosophers, who had learned everything that could then be known, had learned nothing of the future world. They knew not how to die."

"That is true," said Dr. Lee, "and it reminds me of a statement which I have read somewhere, concerning Germanicus, who was eminent for heathen virtues. At the approach of death, he summoned his friends, and, suspecting that Piso and Phancina had shortened his life by poison, he spent his dying moments in arranging plans of revenge. 'Had I died,' said he, 'by the decree of fate, I should have had just cause of resentment against the gods

for hurrying me away from my parents, my wife and my children, in the flower of my age, by an untimely death.'* Now mark, this was not far from the time when Stephen, the protomartyr, dying under the hands of murderers, exclaimed: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'"

"I have read," said Herbert, "in Bogue and other writers, similar accounts of modern infidels. When Gibbon was dying, he amused his friends by calculating that he might live twenty years. Hume, almost in his mortal agony, was joking about Charon's boat. Diderot uttered death-bed riddles. Voltaire is believed to have ended his days in unspeakable horror. Paine gave up his last years to beastly drunkenness."

"Was there," inquired Dr. Lee, "any want of intellectual culture in these men?"

"No," replied Herbert; "most of them were at the very acme of scientific or literary reputation."

"Would a whole generation of such men be happy or unhappy?"

* Tacitus, Book ii.

"It would be a generation of demons!" said Herbert.

"Did their intellectual accomplishments tend, think you, to diffuse comfort and relief among the lower and more ignorant classes of their day?"

"Not in the least degree," replied Herbert.

"One more question," said Dr. Lee; "may not the greatest attainments be made in human knowledge, without corresponding increase of human happiness?"

"Certainly, they may," said Herbert. "Happiness must be founded on a moral basis: there may be great worldly knowledge without virtue."

"Then," said the Doctor, "we have undoubtedly arrived at one fixed point in our survey: the education of the people, however extensive, in mere secular knowledge, is not the secret of happiness."

Herbert reflected a moment in silence, and then said: "I perceive that we must not stop short at conferring human cultivation. I would teach them secular science only as an introduction to that which is divine."

The old gentleman smiled, and said: "Ne-

phew, I perceive that you have still an important discovery to make. But I snall not forestall your inquiries."

"Perhaps," said Herbert, "you may aid me by communicating some results of your observations in France."

"The recollection," said Dr. Lee, "is painful, especially when I consider the gulf of unbelief into which I was well nigh plunged myself. It is a dream of mingled fire and blood!"

"But did you not," asked Herbert, "perceive even then the cruelty and impiety of the revolutionists?"

"I did," answered the Doctor, "but like too many zealous republicans of that day, I rejoiced so much in their acquisition of freedom, that I had no eyes for the price which they were paying for it. I have often recalled the lines of Coleridge, as expressing my sentiments at that time:

"'And what, I said, though blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove!
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The Sun was rising, though he hid his light!'

"I have," said Herbert, "always conceived of the learning and philosophy of France, as at their height just then."

"They were truly so," answered Dr. Lee; "never were refinement and elegant letters more in the ascendant. But religion was extinct, and the result was impiety, bloodshed, atheism and every thing but the dissolution of society."

"What was the state of public morals?" Dr. Lee replied by taking from his shelves a French work by Gregoire, and reading, in English, the following passage: "Multiplied cases of suicide; prisons crowded with innocent persons; permanent guillotines; perjuries of all classes; parental authority set at naught; debauchery encouraged by an allowance to those called unmarried mothers; nearly six thousand divorces within the single city of Paris within a little more than two years after the law authorized them:—in a word, whatever is most obscene in vice, and most dreadful in ferocity!"

"And do you attribute these dire calamities to the infidelity of the revolutionists?"

"*That*," replied Dr Lee, "is not the point

to be proved. I have cited these instances to shew how high human knowledge may go, without increasing popular happiness. In seeking to do good to our fellow-men, which is your great problem, we must not rely on an instrument which leaves such evils unremedied."

"I acknowledge," said Herbert, "worldly knowledge is not the instrument."

"Popular ignorance," said Dr. Lee, "is a hideous evil—mother of a countless progeny of ills—but there lies, deeper than this, another greater evil, complicated with it, and by an obvious re-action, bearing to it the relation, sometimes of cause and sometimes of effect."

"Since you have instructed me so far," said Herbert, "you must allow me to enquire how far you have seen instances of the same tendency of unsanctified education in our own land."

"We have to be thankful," said Dr. Lee, "that religion has so much to do, in the plantation of our colonies, and has been so far prevalent ever since, as to mingle largely in our schemes of education. It is one of my

maxims, that *Religion is the best promoter of Education.* Our religious men have been foremost in efforts to enlighten the masses. But latterly, in connexion with state schools, it has become necessary to teach less and less—to concede a little to the Papist and a little to the Socinian—till the creed which is left has nothing of Christianity but the name. Let this theory be carried out, and we shall have a race of educated infidels."

"Your allusion to the meagerness of the public school religion," said Herbert, "reminds me of an anecdote which I heard in Baltimore. The celebrated John Randolph, whose sarcasm was unparallelled, once took up a Socinian pamphlet in a bookstore in Baltimore. With an indescribable look of contempt, and that penetrating shrillness which none who ever heard it can forget, he exclaimed: 'What a *Christless* religion is this! Christianity without a divine Saviour! It is like the famous play-bill in England, in which some strollers announced *the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out.*'"

"If all men," said Dr. Lee, "can be induced to go to the Bible for their learning

their reading will prove an inestimable good. But the art of reading is a golden key which may unlock the case of poison, as well as the repository of food. Reading, like money, may purchase death as well as life. It is not every one who is willing to 'buy wisdom.' '*Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*' "

"Shall we then," exclaimed Herbert, "leave the present generation to grow up without learning to read?"

"No," said the Doctor; "I maintain no such absurdity. Give them the *key*, but give them also the *casket*. Teach them to read—and teach them to read the *word of God*. When I lived in the village of Woolfall, the most enlightened operatives in our factories were a company of Scotchmen, who read abundantly, but they were infidel radicals. They had copies of Paine's Age of Reason, Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary in English, and other the like pestilent works. Their debating-club was a school of impiety."

"I can readily believe that even so great a blessing as the art of reading, may be perverted," said Herbert: "but I have never observed any great zeal among infidels, for the propagation of their opinions."

"Your observation, then," said Dr. Lee, has been very incomplete. Go to New-York, Boston and Philadelphia, and you will find rooms opened every Sunday for the purpose of what is called free inquiry. You will see them thronged with disciples of Paine, Kneeland, Fanny Wright and Owen. Most of these are working men, of some reading. Go into some of the lowest book-shops, and you will find copies of every infidel publication, in the very cheapest forms. Our missionaries meet with these books and tracts, scattered far and wide, among our watermen, sailors, and especially our factory people. Not content with this, large editions of Paine and Volney have been printed in Philadelphia, in Spanish, for circulation in South America. And, that even the poor heathen might not lack this illumination, the same books have been widely scattered in the native languages of Hindostan."

"These facts," said Herbert, "are new to me; they are of fearful import, as shewing

the propagative power of error, where it is not counteracted by religion. But I have always flattered myself, as religion was consistent with the highest reason, and as truth is great and will prevail, that if we give men the means of general knowledge, they will arrive at the knowledge of religion."

"Religion is indeed the highest knowledge," said Dr. Lee. "By divine grace, it will, in the end, prevail. But man's tendency is downwards. We must give it another direction. We must aid it. We must sanctify it. Such is man's depravity, that he becomes proud of that 'little knowledge' which 'is a dangerous thing,' and ventures to erect his own system in place of God's. Hence, all infidelity, idolatry and atheism. Nothing but the gospel can prevent this downward tendency."

"Why at this rate?" said Herbert, "you would have all schools to be Sunday-schools."

"*Bible* schools, at least, I would have them," replied the Doctor. "And as to Sunday-schools, when you know them better, you will prize them more. Irreligious education reaches only the lower powers; and these.

left to themselves, wander into certain error What says the Scripture of the accomplished Gentiles? 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.' 'They changed the truth of God into a lie.' 'The world by wisdom knew not God.'"

"The opinion is general," said Herbert, "that the common people, at least in Great Britain and America, are rising in the scale of intelligence."

"But," asked Dr. Lee, "are they, in the same proportion rising in virtue and happiness? Look at the English Chartists and Socialists! They read, they write, they have their orators, their journals and tracts, their lectures and even their poets. With what result? The Bible is exploded. The Sabbath is stricken out of the calendar. Marriage is declared a monopoly. Property is threatened with agrarian violence. Increase of knowledge, without any tincture of religion, is, to speak plainly, a universal curse."

"You will at least grant," said Herbert, "that when a rude, uncultivated person is educated; when he tastes the delights of litera-

ture and poetry, even without religion, he rises in the scale of humanity. To say no more, his *sensibilities* become a thousand fold greater."

And what are those sensibilities," cried Dr. Lee, "without moral culture, but so many new inlets to misery! It is but creating a wider sensitive surface. The ills of life are felt with new poignancy. The man is less fit than ever for endurance. This I saw in Paris, where suicides occur daily. Poor wretches are driven to self-murder, by a morbid sensibility, which, unaided by religion, is swallowed up in utter disgust of life. There is, on the left bank of the Seine, a house called the *Morgue*, where the bodies of such persons as are found dead, are exposed to be recognised by their friends. The naked, ghastly spectacle may be viewed every morning. Talk not, nephew, of increase of bare sensibility, as a blessing!"

"Perhaps," said Herbert, "it would scarcely be candid for me to contend any longer; for I am driven from all my defensive positions, and for some time past have made

feeble battle. Let me acknowledge, that education, to accomplish its ends, must include the inculcation of divine truth."

"Be not discouraged in your search," said Dr. Lee. "You are in the way. I mean to give you more fully my views of the true method of enlightening mankind. Meanwhile, do not lose sight of your high object. To do good and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased"

CHAPTER XIV.

And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,
And prove it in the infallible result
So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
If this be learning, most of all deceived.

Cowper

Amidst the last struggles of expiring winter with the coming season, our climate has some days in which we gladly seek the fireside. On one of these, when Dr. Lee had been driven from his surveys of farming operations, Herbert from his rides, and Edith from her flower-beds, the family found themselves gathered for the day in the great parlour. All was cheerless without, but the driving sleet made those within cling only more closely to the enjoyments of domestic life. After the ordinary resources of books and music, they lapsed, without effort, into a conversation on the subject which had recently engaged so much of their attention, and for which Dr. Lee seemed always to be ready.

"Let me tell you a little story," said the old gentleman.

"Nothing could be more agreeable," said Edith; and both nephew and niece drew their chairs nearer to the fire.

"There was once a man," said the doctor, "—and he was an acquaintance of my boyhood,—whose name was Nathaniel Fellowes, or Clever Nat, as we used to call him, on account of his quickness. He was a watchmaker by trade, but he dabbled in several other employments. He could not only mend locks and hang bells, but he played on the piano-forte, and could tune his own instrument. He knew how to tinker with a broken flute; he took profiles; engraved names on door-plates, and carved wonderfully expressive heads on walking-sticks. He was also a rhymer, and furnished new-year-addresses to the carrier of the newspaper, and scraps of verse for weddings.

"Nat was a reader, and had a good stock o books. In his travels in Canada he had

picked up a little French. I am sorry to say it did him no good. The French books which we used to get in those days, were generally of an infidel cast. It was observed that, although Nat said little on these points, he often looked sneeringly at church, and at length discontinued his attendance on public worship. In process of time, he spent his Sabbaths in fishing and strolling through the woods. His chief companion was an English gunsmith of the village, who was suspected as one of a counterfeiting company. I never heard any one say that Nat was concerned in this; but the alliance was unhappy. The watchmaker began to neglect his business. His head was turning grey, but he had laid up nothing. Most of his customers forsook him, on account of his dilatory ways, and frequent breaches of engagement. His very sports became distasteful to him. Being a bachelor, he had no household cares to employ him. He grew every day more wrinkled, and his temper was soured. There was no more playing on his instrument: there were no more children at his shop, watching the progress of snares and windmills and

bird-cages. If he took up a watch-movement, he no longer whistled over his work. Still he read on, even more assiduously than ever. People used to wonder whether it was the fruit of much reading, to make a man pettish and discontented.

"After some years' absence, I fell into discourse with my old friend Nat. He was slow to satisfy me in regard to my inquiries, but I was resolved to be answered. The truth came out—his knowledge was spurious—his learning was godless—he had learned his disease, but not his remedy—he had cultivated his understanding, while his heart had lain unmoved. In this fallow state, it had thrown up a rank crop of noisome weeds—doubts—misanthropic distrust of his fellows—discontent with his lot—sickly apprehensions of the future—a thousand imaginary evils. He shewed me an essay he had written, in justification of suicide. I suspected that it was an attempt to steel himself for this supposed escape from sorrow. 'O!' cried he, 'would to heaven I had never seen a book, or learned to read and write!'"

"Here," said Edith, "is a case which

seems to shew that knowledge produces misery."

"Not so," said Dr. Lee; "though it shews that mere worldly knowledge cannot ensure happiness. But let me go on with my tale.—I took him by the hand, and said, 'Fellowes, let me be plain with you—you would see through any disguise—what you lack is the religion of Jesus Christ.'"

"That was plain-dealing, indeed," said Edith; "but how did he take it?"

"He rose to his feet, in a great rage. I shall not repeat his expressions: they were both violent and blasphemous. Their very heat convinced me that I had touched the inflamed fibre, and that he knew it. I took no notice of his vehemence and disrespect, but, going a little about, I adverted to our boyhood, recalled one or two incidents of a somewhat tender kind, and by cautious approaches endeavoured to bring strongly before his mind the image of his mother, to whom he had been devotedly attached. His feelings were much affected, and he sat musing, with his arms folded, and looking in the direction of the cottage where she had l'ved.

After allowing this current of thought to run freely in silence for a few moments, I said:

"'Well do I remember your mother. You resemble her, Nat;—and more than ever since you have begun to wear glasses. But she was gayer than you. A sprightlier, happier woman I never saw. Her old age was peaceful, and her decline like that of a beautiful sunset. Her death was like what Milton calls

"'"A gentle wafting to eternal life."'

"This was too much for poor Nat. He burst into tears. 'Now,' said I, 'tell me truly—do you think that good woman was sincere in her religion?' 'Sincere!' cried he, kindling in a moment, 'I could cleave the man down who should charge her with hypocrisy!' 'And do you think,' I added, 'that she was less happy by reason of her Christian belief?' Nat was silent. 'And do you not believe that that same Christian belief is exactly the thing which her prodigal son needs, to make him equally happy? And can you, my dear old friend, abandon all hope of ever meeting her sainted spirit in a

better world?' I did not wait for a reply but left him to indulge his meditations."

"I am prepared for the result," said Edith "and hope to hear that he relinquished his infidelity."

'He did so," replied Dr. Lee; "but by slow degrees. After a time he opened the Bible. It was a new book to him—though the copy he used was a little, worn pocket-volume, which his mother had carried for many years, and in which many passages were marked with her own hand."

"Did you go over with him all the series of his infidel objections?" asked Herbert.

"I did not," answered the Doctor, with a smile. "Converted infidels will tell you that the method of grace is more summary. I had but a small share in the work. Divine truth entered by the door of the affections. It was in the *heart* that infidelity had found its settlement; it was in the heart that he felt the wretched vacuity; it was to the heart that Christ revealed himself as an all-satisfying Saviour. But that which I chiefly wish to tell you is, that religion now turned all his acquisitions into gold. His knowledge became

invaluable—a source of inexhaustible pleasure and a fund of usefulness. He was from that time to the day of his death an industrious, cheerful workman, a beneficent neighbour, an aid to all Christian teachers, and the very happiest old man I ever saw. Religion precisely filled the void, which, if let alone, would have become insupportable."

"Then, after all," said Edith, "his knowledge did him no harm."

"Who said it did?" replied Dr. Lee, smiling. "Sanctified knowledge does no man any harm. Give the individual—give the community, all the knowledge you can bestow; only give them the fear and love of God with it. This is the balance-wheel, or 'governor,' without which the machine will drive on to self-destruction."

"I begin," said Edith, "to catch a glimpse of your meaning. You do not then consider the gospel as opposed to universal instruction."

"How could you think so?" said Dr. Lee. "The Gospel was introduced with the injunction, *Go teach all nations.* Every step of Christianity has been a progress in civilization. If, with her right hand, she has dealt

out grace and pardon, with her left hand she has scattered knowledge and refinement But then her chief teachings are of things above, and the philosophy which would neglect these, snatches at the shell and throws away the kernel.—But you shall not be always the questioners. I will turn upon you, and put some queries: Pray what is your notion of the education which it would not be extravagant to prescribe for a *whole people*?"

"I would have every child taught," replied Herbert, "reading, writing and a little arithmetic and geography. This might be the basis for a further superstructure in individual cases."

"Very well," said Dr. Lee, "now let us suppose the twenty thousand schools, and one hundred thousand scholars, all successfully engaged in learning to read, write and cipher. Can you not conceive that a whole population should be thus taught, without the intermixture of any religion?"

"Certainly," said Herbert, "it is the favourite scheme of some able political philanthropists."

"Now I have to ask," said the Doctor,

"what will be the effect of training up a whole population, with the studious exclusion, during all the forming period, of every idea connected with the highest concern of each individual? Such an education is misshapen and hideous. Its products must be monsters. Many branches of knowledge are too high for common minds, but religious truth is the very food of the soul. *This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* But you must not breathe it, in a model school. Every scholar is to live, for ever, in heaven or hell: but whether there be a heaven and a hell—is not to be whispered in a model-school. To know the way of salvation is the capital point: but this knowledge is contraband in a model-school. The very best rule of life is the Bible: but the Bible is on the *index expurgatorius* of the model school!"

"Really, my dear uncle," said Edith, "I believe you would, if you had your will, introduce the Bible as the sole study in every country school-house."

"And, pray Miss, suppose I should—wherein would be the absurdity? Is it not the best

and wisest of books? Is it not the only inspired volume in the world? Does it not teach the way to pardon? Are not its fruits eternal? Would it not be better to know the Bible and nothing else, than to know every thing else, and not the Bible? But I will not go so far as you imagine. I would pay due and reverent attention to reading, writing and arithmetic, and several additional branches; I would even devote the larger portion of time to these; but, mark me, I would have the Bible read and explained in every school, and that every day of the year. And though I fear you do not feel the respect you should for Sunday-schools, yet I can tell you, that our public reformers of education have an important lesson yet to learn from the methods adopted in these charitable institutions.

"But I asked you one question only: I have another. You will, I am sure, acknowledge the paramount importance of religious knowledge. How is it to be conveyed to the mass of mankind?"

"Why," said Herbert, "leaving out of view the preaching of the gospel, I should reply, we may hope to sow the seed of religious

knowledge most successfully in ground which has been prepared by the general culture of the understanding."

"And how many years," asked Dr. Lee, "will you allow the ground to be ploughed and cross-ploughed before this seed begins to be sown? How many years, in other words, may a boy or a girl be learning one branch after another of human knowledge, before we are authorized to confide to them the secret that they have souls—that they are accountable—that they belong to a depraved race—that the son of God has died for them—and that it is only by faith in his name that they can be saved?"

Herbert found some reason to pause, before he ventured on any reply. At length he said: "I think, sir, you misapprehend me, in supposing that I would not have young people taught religion. You must also do me the justice to believe, that I consider the want of religion as the principal want of our depraved race; and I am ready to maintain, that our disorderly and dangerous classes would be most certainly reformed, if they could become religious. But here is my dif-

ficulty. I am puzzled beyond expression to find out how religious principles can be infused into the corrupt mass, until we have, in the first instance, removed their brutal ignorance."

"All I shall say in reply to that," said Dr. Lee, "is that you seem to forget that divine revelation is itself a communication of truth. Religion makes its way by means of knowledge. But it is self-sufficient. It asks no forerunners to smooth its way. Look at the history of civilization in once savage nations. Were they civilized by Christianity, or Christianized by civilization?"

CHAPTER XV.

Not the wisdom of the wise
Can inform me where it lies;
Not the grandeur of the great
Can the bliss I seek create.

Toplady.

As it is no part of our design to give an unbroken narrative of events, we must request our readers to imagine a lapse of several months. During this period Herbert and Edith had not relaxed in their zealous endeavors to do good and to communicate. They were perhaps still more anxious to find out that better way, which had been obscurely indicated to them by their revered uncle. Both were convinced that all endeavours which stop short at the relief of bodily suffering must be ineffectual. Both were as fully persuaded, that mere secular education can carry the matter only a single step further not reaching the source of the evil

And the suspicion had come over their minds, that, after all, religion was the great remedy for human ills. But while they did not hesitate for a moment to declare their belief, that true piety is better than physical comfort and better than knowledge, they were still in doubt as to the *proper order* in which the philanthropist should seek to confer these benefits. Herbert would often say: "Men must be snatched out of their misery, before they can be taught. They must be taught before they can be converted. Christianity is the great gift of God to man: but man must be civilized before he is Christianized." And with these views, they could not, for an instant, think that the method which their uncle proposed was, to carry the gospel at once to the miserable.

On a certain afternoon, as Dr. Lee and his niece were standing at the window, engaged in lively conversation, they saw Herbert riding up the avenue, in unusual haste. The rapidity with which he dismounted and ascended the stairs, and the animation of his countenance on entering, shewed that he had something extraordinary to communicate.

Throwing himself into a chair beside the fire, he exclaimed:

"Well! I have seen strange things to-day."

"And what things? tell us quickly," said his sister, with some solicitude.

"I have seen," said he, "evidences of a sudden and remarkable change—in one whom I had laboured with in vain, and had given up for lost—a change so sudden and remarkable as to explode all my favourite theories in a moment."

"And by whom," inquired Dr. Lee, "has this change been wrought?"

"By Almighty God," said Herbert, with much solemnity, as he rose from his seat; "for I am sure nothing short of Omnipotent Grace could have done it—and to this, I trust, I shall hereafter look, with new faith and expectation. But I must not keep you in the dark—you perhaps have heard me speak of a shoemaker on Iron Hill, named Blount?"

"Yes," replied Edith; "you described him as a profane wretch, a bully, a tyrant in his family."

"For months I endeavoured to do that man some good. I offered him work—I offered

him instruction—I threatened him—I pleaded with him. Scarcely a week passed in which I did not call at his house, or hovel. To this I was led by pity for his poor wife and children. But all was in vain. He seemed to be the slave of every vice except drunkenness. He was idle and profligate, a brawler, a gambler, and almost a fiend. In his dwelling, every thing was in disorder, betokening extreme poverty. And yet, now and then, he was flush of money, which shewed that he had some dishonest connexions. At races and cock-fights he was a leading character, and he has been suspected of having something to do with a gang of counterfeiters."

"How long since you parted from him?" said Edith.

"It must be as much as ten months ago that I gave him up as an incurable case: and I have not seen him since, until this morning——"

"Then you have met with him?" said Edith, eagerly.

"Yes, I am just from his house; and a changed house it is, indeed. As I rode by, the thought struck me that I would call in.

Before I entered, I perceived such a change, that I thought there must be a new tenant. There were good fences about the yard and a little arbour with a running vine over the porch. The windows were sound and the house painted. When I entered the door of the only room below stairs—what an alteration! Instead of filth, confusion and noise, all was clean, warm and tidy. And you will judge of my surprise, when I tell you that the first object which engaged my attention, was John Blount, sitting by a table, where a neighbour was giving him a writing-lesson in a boy's copy-book. He knew me in an instant, and seizing my hand in both of his, he said, as the tears ran down his cheeks, 'O, Mr. Lee, how glad I am to see you! Your prayers and those of my Christian friends, have, I trust, been answered. Here I stand, a sinner saved by grace!"

"Blessed news," said Dr. Lee; "but such instances have honoured the gospel in every age."

"And what led to this wonderful revolution?" enquired Edith.

"Oh I wish," said Herbert, "I could give

you the narrative in his own words, and those of his wife! But even this would be inadequate, unless you could have his looks, his gestures, his tears and the tears of his wife, and of the children, who cried too, they knew not why. Both talked together, and praised God together. She also is a subject of the same grace; and I could not help saying to myself, that their very *faces* were converted."

"But you do not tell us how it happened, brother."

"It is one of those cases," said Herbert, "in which God has remarkably chosen to take the work into his own hands. But a few days after I abandoned all labours in his behalf, Blount passed a week at the races, and came home very sulky and out of temper. The truth is, he had been led by some accomplices, to project a crime more heinous than any which he had ever committed. What remained to him of conscience yet unseared, was a little agitated. In his restlessness, going from place to place, he wandered into the neighbourhood of our good uncle Cole's church. He strolled through the churchyard, and lounged about the door, waiting to see

some one by whom to send a message, to his accomplices, saying that he should break his engagement with them. There was a solemn stillness in the house, for it was the time of communion. Blount listened, and heard the minister read these words, "*Hear also what St. Paul saith: This is a true saying and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* The words went like an arrow to his heart. The wound was never healed until he was humbled at the feet of divine mercy. I cannot go into the particulars which he gave me in much detail. The result is that for a number of months he has lived the life of a Christian."

"And his wife?" said Edith.

"Poor Sarah Blount, though ignorant, had not been altogether thoughtless. Any thing which made her husband stay at home and be less savage, was like cold water to a thirsty soul. She soon learned the nature of his anxiety and sympathized in his contrition. She could read, and in this respect had the advantage over John. She read to him a large part of the Scriptures; for your cousins

Mary and Anne soon found her out and gave them a Bible. They were both confirmed last week by the Bishop,"

"I do not wonder," said Dr. Lee, "that your feelings are much interested. But let us see what lessons you have learned. You knew these people before their supposed conversion, and you have seen them after some months passed in a religious way. Now what difference do you observe?"

"Difference!" cried Herbert, "I had almost said, all the difference in the world. Their very mien and countenance changed. The lion has become a lamb. Sobriety, sincerity, gentleness and affection beam in the countenance which but lately spoke wrath and proud defiance."

"And what change do you perceive in regard to intellectual things?"

"It is too soon, perhaps," said Herbert, "for me to judge on that point: but I can't help thinking religion is doing something even for their understandings. They have plainly a thirst for knowledge. John has been busily engaged in learning to read. The children are sent to school."

"What change," said Dr. Lee "do you perceive in regard to their temporal comfort?"

"A most striking change. Every thing is quiet and comfortable. John is evidently working hard at his trade. The children are well clad. Sarah, instead of the haggard wo-begone appearance of former days, has assumed a look of quiet happiness. No man could enter their house without being struck with a hundred little changes for the better, such as I cannot particularize."

"What," said Dr. Lee, "do you think would be the effect on a whole neighbourhood, if all the families were brought under the same influence?"

"Ah, my good uncle,' said Edith—her eyes beaming with sudden joy—"I understand your question—I think you have begun to betray your secret. I can answer it myself. The prevalence of religion over a whole neighbourhood, would tend to do away ignorance and drive away wretchedness."

The old gentleman here took from his pocket a letter, which he had recently received from a clerical friend in Philadelphia and read aloud the following little narrative

"In the summer of 1829," says this clergyman, "I was asked, by a Tract Distributor, to go with him to see a poor woman. He informed me that she had been seriously impressed by means of the tracts given to her in the monthly distribution; and that now for a few weeks she had been attending upon my ministry, and was desirous of seeing me for the purpose of conversation in regard to her spiritual interests. On accompanying my friend to the house, I found her keeping a little grog-shop, and supporting her family by selling liquor by the glass. She had two little children with her in the shop, ragged and dirty; nor was her own appearance much better. The tears trickled down her cheeks while she spoke of her sinfulness before God. Her husband, I found upon enquiry, was intemperate and without a regular occupation. She said he looked after the family so far as to rent a little room for them, and required her to attend the shop, which supported them. She desired to become a professing Christian; though of her fitness she had distressing doubts. But it was her desire to be united with the people of God, and to enjoy the privilege of celebrating the love of Christ, by taking the emblems of his body and blood at the Communion.

"On subsequent inquiry, we found that her husband was an infidel and a scoffer, and that he made it a part of her dutiful submission to him, to persevere in liquor-selling. Her own impression was, that it was her duty to obey her husband. The case was peculiar; and, while it was contrary to our usage to admit persons so employed to the ordinances, we complied with her wish; praying for her and with her, that she might in some way be set free from her bondage.

"I left my pastoral charge. Five years after this, I was called to another church. About the time of my connexion with this new charge, I was introduced to one of the deacons, whom I immediately recognised as the husband of this poor woman. The religion of Christ had come into her family; but not merely to bless with spiritual mercies a heart-broken woman. It had also made a scoffer teachable, an infidel a believer, and a drunkard sunk in poverty, an industrious, upright man. It had transferred a family from a

miserable grog-shop to a respectable, well-furnished dwelling. Their children were well clad, and enjoying good advantages for an education. The mother was happy in the care of her household; and the father was a partner in a respectable and prosperous business, and an acceptable and useful officer in the church of Christ." *

"O," cried Dr. Lee, "would to God every family around us could witness such a change!"

"This leads me to add," said Herbert, "that I have still better news to tell you. The blessing has not confined itself to the house of Blount. A number of the neighbours have had their attention turned to the things of God, and are serious enquirers. The labours of Mr. Van Pelt, pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church, have been indefatigable, and I was this morning told that there is scarcely a house on Iron Hill in which there is not some instance of recent seriousness."

"Good news! blessed news!" said Dr. Lee,

* For this incident, which is strictly according to fact, the writer is indebted to the distinguished clergyman in whose parochial charge it took place.

but only reminding me of what I once witnessed in another place. And as this will shew you how my own mind was led to my present views of the true way of relieving human misery, I will give you a little narrative."

Herbert and Edith joined in expressing their gratification at this proposal, and the old gentleman proceeded as follows:

"You need perhaps to be informed, that I spent twenty years of my life at a village, north of this, beyond the range of the hills. It is called Woolfall."

"Yes," said Edith; "Mrs. Huntly has told us of the reformation which you wrought there——"

"Which *God* wrought, let us rather say—for my part in it was rather that of a spectator. It was after I had been baffled in every attempt, that divine grace took the work out of my hands and accomplished it. I began by human means, to relieve misery, to civilize, to reform, to educate—but all my means proved futile. It was, however, a good school for me; and I am apt to think, that in the case of communities as well as of individuals, we

always begin wrong, and attempt, very preposterously, to make reformation go before conversion.

"Woolfall was a manufacturing village seated on a small river, which afforded water power for a number of mills. It contained many foreigners, many stragglers, some, no doubt, absconding felons. We had abundance of taverns and beer-houses, and abundance of misery, ignorance and vice. We had all sorts of wicked work and play, horse-racing, cock-fighting, thieving, fighting, tavern-dances, wrestling matches, shooting matches, and the like. There was no Sabbath, and the place did not contain more than a dozen praying people.

"I began my measures of reform, as all people begin who have not been taught the way of grace. My success was as small as that which you, my children, have had about Elmham. They laughed at my schools, and burned up my books. After several months of very zealous labour, I had not made a single convert, or wrought a single reformation.

"About this time, notice was sent to Woolfall, that Mr. Gay, a Methodist preacher,

would preach on a certain evening in the village. I am no Methodist, and you know I was brought up with some prejudices against that people. I confess my feelings were not altogether those of satisfaction, in anticipating the arrival of Mr. Gay. Yet, as we had no place of worship, I was willing to receive a minister of religion, even though a Methodist. Some of our boisterous fellows were for treating the preacher with indignity. This I determined should not be, and as proprietor of some of the works, I felt my influence sufficiently strong to prevent it. Even the swaggerers themselves were disarmed when they saw the preacher. He was a venerable, grey-haired man, of good sense, good education, and plain but courteous manners. He had seen a good deal of the world, having travelled with Mr. Wesley in Ireland.

"I had made arrangements for entertaining Mr. Gay at my house. I frankly told him wherein I thought we should disagree in doctrine. He waved all controversy, but said enough to convince me, that on the great points connected with a sinner's return to God, we should have no difference. This

conviction was confirmed by his preaching. The blessing of heaven attended his labours. A great awakening took place among our operatives. A total change was wrought in the whole structure of society. What I had laboured at for months, was accomplished in a few weeks—sometimes in a few days. Our vices were frowned down. Our taverns were deserted. Our pauperism decreased. Schools were established. Other churches, of different names, were erected, and Woolfall is now eminently a religious and a happy place."

CHAPTER XVI.

Here stay thy foot: how copious, and how clear,
The o'erflowing well of charity springs here.

Cowper

THE experience of Dr. Lee in regard to Woolfall could not be all given in a single conversation. But he resumed the subject at breakfast the next morning.

"In the great changes," continued he, "which took place at Woolfall, one thing surprised me not a little. When I had heretofore dreamed of a general reformation as a possible event, I had thought of it as progressive, by slow degrees. The sober and intelligent and orderly, thought I, will first be brought to religion: then those who are somewhat lax in morals: and last of all stupid, obstinate and notorious sinners, if indeed these last be ever reached. But how differently did God work! The very first convert was one of the greatest prodigals in the town.

In the course of this work of grace, a number of loose and even outrageous characters had become true penitents, as we trust, without any preparatory work whatever, except the preaching of the Word."

"Did this good influence extend to a large number?" inquired Herbert.

"To almost every household, in some measure. In this respect the gospel is above all other means. Its power of expansion is amazing. It still answers its old description: it is like light, like leaven and like fire. Its very nature is to spread. I could not but compare it to the catching of flame from tree to tree in a dry forest."

"Was there no opposition?" asked Herbert.

"There was much. The seed of the serpent will always oppose the seed of the woman. The frequent visits of good Mr. Gay exasperated such as remained in the enemy's camp. I never found that this did us any harm. They accused us of making bad men worse, and sensible people crazy: and Mr. Gay used to quote an amusing remark of Mr. Wesley's, uttered when he was

debarred from seeing a young woman in a hospital: 'So we are forbid to go to Newgate, for fear of making them wicked; and to Bedlam, for fear of driving them mad.'"*

"The grand instrument was the preaching of the gospel. God was pleased to bless his own word. Multitudes attended divine worship, and in time became the members of several Christian churches. Bibles became common, and abundance of good books were distributed. These operated as a sacred leaven. Baxter's Call, Alleine's Alarm, The Pilgrim's Progress, The Holy War, Fletcher's Appeal and Doddridge's Rise and Progress, were our chief works. There was no one of these which was not blessed to the awakening of the unconverted."

"You will oblige and instruct us," said Edith, "if you will explain to us the manner in which this religious awakening operated on society at large."

"My dear, it is impossible for me to make you understand the power of the operation. It was like the sun of spring, after a long winter. Under the genial ray, a thousand

* Journals, vol. I. p. 475.

plants seemed to spring up simultaneously A new principle of life was infused into the mass. A new motive was afforded to every good work. Ten thousand sources of temptation were staunched at once. Every house felt the influence. Domestic changes of the most remarkable kind took place. Bad husbands, fathers and sons were reformed. Peace was restored to discordant families. People who had been in a state of feud for twenty years were reconciled at once. Prodigal sons were brought back with joy. And perhaps the most striking fact of all was, that a new race of children grew up, under new influences."

"I am ready to acknowledge," said Herbert, "that in looking at the inveterate character of popular vices, I have been accustomed to think that the process of abating them must be by gradual approaches—awakening attention—communicating knowledge—shewing the evils of sin and the beauties of virtue."

"My son," replied Dr. Lee, "Grace works in a more summary way. Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good. Religion

cuts up all vices at once. Even among the ignorant, what is wanting is not so much the knowledge of right and wrong, as an INWARD MOTIVE. Divine grace supplies this at once I had a servant, who had served me faithfully many years, but at length fell into habits of drunkenness. Year after year I laboured with him, but he grew worse and worse. One evening he came from church very serious. He became a religious man. His drinking habits were laid aside, without a word spoken on the subject. He died two years ago, a respected Christian. Again, I had a neighbour, whose boys were famous for disobedience and profligacy. He was converted, and order was, by rapid degrees, introduced into his family. The change was, under God, wrought chiefly by the blessed institution of family worship."

"You have not said much," said Edith, "of the effect produced on the temporal comfort of the people."

"I do not undervalue these matters, my child, though we all reckon them as the least in comparison. And I can tell you, the very house-keeping was improved by religion

External and internal order are allied. Filth and uproar, the progeny and companions of vice, flee before religion. Mr. Gay used to say 'Cleanliness is the next thing to godliness.' And I have seldom seen a household into which converting grace had entered, in which there was not a conformable change in outward neatness. Indeed all the changes which I had been endeavouring to effect, now seemed to take place of themselves. I often compared myself to one who had, with great labour, constructed a machine, which after all, would not work, for want of a motive power. This power was supplied by religion; and wheel began to play into wheel, to my delight and astonishment."

"My eyes," said Edith, "are opening a little to your long concealed mystery. The very statement carries its own evidence. I wonder how I could so long stop that of God's appointed method of restoring peace to man."

"You may make your own comments, Edith," replied the old gentleman; "but you would feel all this more deeply, if it were possible for me to bring before your eyes the

individual instances, as I beheld them. There was scarcely a house in Woolfall, with which I was not intimately acquainted. Sometimes as a proprietor or landlord, sometimes as a physician, and always as a Christian friend, I visited some of them every day. I remember one little alley, which in former days I never entered without a shudder, where now a strange alteration presented itself. The corner house was called a confectionary; it was really a dram-shop. Warren, the tenant, was a hard-handed, covetous man, and his wife was a termagant. They were among the last to be brought under this good influence; but, at length, after the conversion of all their children, their stubborn hearts gave way, and they enrolled themselves among the people of God. The next house, occupied by one Lyon, a tailor, was one of the few in which not one inmate acknowledged any religious influence. For some years it had been a den for the resort of low gamblers; but even this was broken up, under the general opposition to vice which came to prevail. Next to this was a row of very poor houses,

inhabited by spinners and dyers, belonging to the factories. Of these, the great majority were foreigners, and almost all came under the power of renewing grace. I ought to add, that they were Protestants, and had always been sober and industrious. But how shall I describe the straggling houses on the other side! They were known as Rotten Row, and I dare not go into particulars. It was hard to find an hour by day or night, in which the sounds of drunken mirth or drunken violence might not be heard in them. For a long time none of the residents of the Row came to any of our meetings. When the serious feeling of the community began to frown on them more visibly, a number of them decamped, and went elsewhere, to seek their fortune in darker places. But some of the vilest of these persons, abandoned wretches and hoary-headed malefactors, were made to hear the voice of God. One of them stood out to the last, sneering and blaspheming; he was a man not devoid of education, but an avowed Universalist. The general character of this whole district was thoroughly changed, by the conversion of many, and by their influence in overawing the vices of such as were still hardened."

"These times," said Edith, "must have been joyful indeed. My heart longs to see such among ourselves."

"As the work of grace went on," continued Dr. Lee, "the changes were still more evident. My zealous friend, Mr. Gay, and the Presbyterian minister who followed him, agreed in saying that the whole village seemed full of the love of God. Call it enthusiasm or not, there was undeniable joy. There was joy in many a house, over salvation brought into them; parents rejoicing over children, husbands over wives, and wives over husbands. Young people, who formerly met for sinful mirth, now came together to talk of the glorious realities of the spiritual world, and to sing the praises of God."

"Allow me to inquire," said Herbert, "whether, in the midst of all this, there was not much which even you would acknowledge to be extravagance and enthusiasm?"

"Something of this sort," replied Dr. Lee,

"I will not deny: but it was the exception, not the rule. I never expect to see any great religious awakening, without some human mixtures. Where God sows good seed, Satan will still be sowing tares. Some things I condemned, even then; some things, which I then approved, I have, on retrospection, been disposed to censure. But, nevertheless, if any great change is to be judged by the instruments used to produce it, by the course of events in its progress, and especially by its lasting effects; then was this a work of divine grace. And I say again, all those changes, which we have been vainly trying to effect by inferior means, now followed as a silent but natural result of religious principle."

"According to this," said Herbert, "all we have to do for men, is to make them religious."

"Perhaps," replied the Doctor, "I might except to the terms of the proposition, as you state it; but something very like this, is the doctrine which I hold. Religion *alone* is better than all things beside. All things beside, are eternally worthless without religion

What is this but to repeat our Lord's cogent question, 'What shall it profit a man?' &c. But I prefer to state my opinions in another form. You cannot give men religion *alone*. You cannot give men religion, without giving them a multitude of lesser benefits. These benefits are those on which mere worldly philanthropists expend all their strength; benefits, moreover, which, after all their labours, they utterly fail to give, without religion. Knowledge and personal comfort—the great boon which deluded, suffering man craves—do not include religion: but religion includes them, or infers them."

"But may I not," said Herbert, "aim at that which is good, even though it be not the highest good? May I not seek to make a man cleanly, industrious, frugal and well informed, even though he be not religious?"

Dr. Lee smiled, and said: "Since you force an old man and a book-worm to answer you, I must proceed in form, and count my answers on my fingers. First, then: When the problem is to remove a certain evil, it is the dictate of wisdom to strike at the principle.

A stream of water breaks in and runs over my garden-beds. On your plan, I should lade out all the water within my garden walls: on my principle, I should go to the spring-head on yonder eminence, and turn away the head of the stream. Secondly: Having a given amount of time and strength to lay out, it is wise to lay it out on that which is most momentous. I will not stop to shew, that the salvation of the soul is infinitely so. And though *we* cannot convert the soul, we can apply means which, in point of fact, God is seen most signally to bless. And, thirdly: When men are once converted, we can still go to work, with tenfold hope, in aiming at all those subordinate benefits, with which you would make your beginning. Men do not pass beyond our reach by becoming true Christians: on the contrary, they are brought greatly more within our influence. And, fourthly: It is the direct tendency of religion to lead to all those good results which you wish to accomplish. Now tell me candidly, are you not fairly answered?"

As Herbert appeared to have sunk into

a brown study and made no reply, his sister took up the thread of discourse, by observing:

"Well, my best of uncles, confess at last that your secret is found out. In these four particulars, you have surely told us all."

"Who told you that I have a secret?" rejoined the old gentleman playfully. "If I have one, it is this—whether we speak of the individual or of society, '*seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU.' But, as to the application of this divine maxim, you have much yet to learn, and much that can be learned only by practice."

"But," said Herbert, arousing himself, "where shall one begin? To change men's hearts is not our work—it is God's. And we are not even ministers, commissioned to preach the gospel."

"I have much to suggest on this head," replied the Doctor, "and I shall not keep you long in suspense. But as every breakfast must have a limit, I must content myself with saying, God has condemned none of us to

make bricks without straw; nor has he left any without an appropriate work, within his proper sphere. And our chief business in life, whether we are clergymen or laymen, men or women, old or young, is to convey the gospel, the blessed means of salvation, to the minds of our fellow-creatures."

CHAPTER XVII.

Then burn thy epicycles, foolish men;
Break all thy spheres, and save thy head,
Faith needs no staff of flesh, but stoutly can
To heaven alone both go and lead.
Herbert.

THE first fine morning which occurred, was employed by the Lees, as a fit occasion for a drive through the neighbouring country. The beauties of the opening spring furnished matter for agreeable conversation; but the current of their discourse flowed chiefly in the channel which had been marked out by their previous employments and interests. After slowly ascending the little northern range of hills, Dr. Lee directed their attention to the fertile valley which spread itself to the north. "Yonder," said he, "is the road which leads to Woolfall; but—not to mention our engagement—the distance is too great for us to attempt a visit to-day. From the

midst of that grove, on our right, you see the top of a little steeple among the trees. That is the church of our friend Mr. Van Pelt. As his name imports, he is descended from Hollanders; so are most of the farmers in this valley. Wherever you find the Low Dutch in America, you are sure to meet with people of intelligence and industry, and of the Reformed faith. At present, I am informed, there is among them a more general interest than common in the things of Christ's kingdom. I venture to say, there is not an adult in this valley who is unable to read—I mean of those who have been bred here."

"Do you attribute this," asked Edith, "to their religion?"

"Undoubtedly. You know my doctrine is, that religion never enters any neighbourhood, without elevating the population in regard to knowledge."

"But then," said Herbert, "a certain amount of knowledge must be pre-supposed, in order to prepare one to receive Christianity."

"A certain amount, no doubt · but less perhaps than you have been accustomed to think.

And I have long since abandoned the notion, that we must first carry people through a regular process of education, before we can bring the gospel to them. It is the glory of the gospel, that it comes with its balm to the very lowest conditions of humanity."

"I have heard you say something very like this before," said Herbert, "and it is mysterious to me. For are not the truths of religion among the most obscure and sublime that the intellect can contemplate?"

"The most sublime, certainly," replied Dr. Lee, "but by no means the most obscure. And especially those truths which come into view in the great work of conversion, are so simple that even a child may understand them. Indeed we must all become as little children, to see them aright."

"Then you do not suppose," said Herbert, "that a man's piety is always in proportion to his knowledge."

"No. There is a wide difference between knowledge and wisdom. God hath hidden these things from the wise and prudent. He destroys the wisdom of the wise, and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent

And it is not by high learning, but by the foolishness of preaching, that it pleases God to save them that believe. I have seen men of science, who knew nothing of the best things; and I have seen a poor negro woman who was wise unto salvation. Perhaps Edith remembers some lines of her favourite poet, on this point—those I mean in which he contrasts a poor lace-weaver with Voltaire."

"Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
Just earns her scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit,
Receives no praise; but though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent,) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew."

"I admit all this," said Herbert, "but would you then put religion in the place of education? Are we to relinquish the plan of enlightening mankind?"

"Not by any means, nephew. Let me once more tell you—it is one of my prime maxims—*Religion is itself an education.*

It includes or involves a certain amount of mental training, and it affords inducement and means for far more."

"Then you believe," said Herbert, "that no man becomes a true Christian, without being improved in his understanding?"

"Most religiously do I believe it. I have seen it in a thousand instances; and I think I discern good reasons why it should be so. And it is for this cause that I would seek to promote human illumination, by promoting religion."

"Now you must favour us," said Herbert, "by going on, and shewing us how this effect takes place."

"Go to any of these newly awakened people," replied the Doctor, "and you will soon see. Before this, they were scarcely thinking beings. The regulation of their thoughts never formed any part of their care. Thought, feeling and appetite seemed mixed up in a confused tangle. But now that the gospel has entered, what a change takes place! Every thought is called to account. This itself is a sort of mental discipline. Every act of self-examination is an exercise, which

if often repeated, must furnish a training equal to that of hard study. And what is prayer? Is it not the stated and frequent turning of the mind, in a highly awakened and susceptible state, to the greatest and the most varied truths? How can any man go on in doing this, even for a month, without acquiring new powers of attention, discrimination and judgment?"

"Really," said Herbert, "you surprise and yet convince me! A new track is opened for my thoughts. I see it! It never before occurred to me,—though it is undeniable—that the whole train of religious exercises involves a proper mental discipline. It accords with all philosophy—it is delightfully encouraging —it solves a hundred of my problems!"

"I expected your assent," said Dr. Lee, "and I further hope to make you admit, that the easiest, cheapest and most thorough education is in Christ's school. Just think of the Bible! It is God's inspired truth, without mixture of error, devised and adapted to the human soul, by Him who made the soul. It is thirsted for by the young believer, as newborn babes desire their proper aliment. It is

in the hands of all Protestant Christians. All are taught to study it daily and perpetually. The intellectual effects of such a study for years cannot be over-rated."

"I have observed," said Edith, "in reading history, that the peasantry of those countries where Bible-reading prevails, are far above all others in mental improvement."

"That reminds me," said Herbert, "of a remark of our American poet and traveller, Willis. On his first visit to Scotland, he says in regard to the steamer which carried him to Leith: 'Half the passengers at least took their Bibles after breakfast, and devoted an hour or two evidently to grave religious reading and reflection. With this exception, I have not seen a person with the Bible in his hand, in travelling over half the world.'"*

"And we all know," said Dr. Lee, "what is the character of the Scotch people and peasantry, as it regards intelligence. I ascribe it mainly to their pocket Bibles. Many a man among them might say, as did the dying poet Collins,—'I have only one book, but that is the best.'"

* Pencillings by the Way, vol. II. p. 209.

"Which reminds me again,' said Herbert, "of a favourite Latin proverb of our good President at college: *Cave ab homine unius libri;* 'Beware of a man of one book.'"

"And why of him?" asked Edith.

"Because," answered her brother, "such a man will be a formidable adversary, as having his intellect whetted by constant concentration on one subject."

"It may be new to you," said Dr. Lee, "that this very maxim affords the principle of what is called the 'Jacotot-system' of education in France. Jacotot, a whimsical but able man, adopted as his grand advice to pupils, '*Sachez un livre, et rapportez-y tous les autres:*' 'Know one book, and refer all others to it.' And in a review of this famous system, in a British journal, I find the following remarks, which I have brought along, for your use, in my pocket-book. 'In our own history, and, indeed, in the experience of some religious sects at present existing, we may perceive the effects of confining the attention for a series of years to one book; but then that book is the *Bible.* In the Covenanters of Scotland, and the various sects

preceding and during the Commonwealth, * * * we may detect the influence of a single book. It supplants all other habits of language and phrase, it colours the ideas, it supplies perpetual motives to action, and by stirring the memory with a never-failing spring of eloquence. Examples of individuals who have made themselves perfect walking concordances, will occur to the minds of most men who have lived in parts of the country where sectarianism prevails.'"*

"Since you have been speaking," said Edith, "it has occurred to me that the Sabbath must have a great intellectual influence."

"Yes, my dear, and in so saying, you have anticipated the remark I was about to make. One *seventh part* of our whole lives given to religious exercises, which are at the same time intellectual exercises, cannot but produce mighty effects. And the preached word on this holy day is an additional agency which must not be overlooked. Every man who hears a good sermon, hears a discourse addressed as much to his understanding as his

* Foreign Quarterly Review, Article *Jacotot System.*

heart. Compare in your own minds, a family which has, once a week, for twenty years, heard the scriptures expounded in the house of God, with another family, which has been altogether destitute of any such instruction. The nature of the operation on mental training—even if all other agencies be left out of view—cannot be mistaken. But this, and all the other means which I have named, are inseparably connected with the entrance of religion into a place or neighbourhood. Am I not justified, then, in saying that religion is itself a method of education?"

"Yes, I acknowledge," replied Herbert, "that I am convinced; and though the truths you have brought to my view are not often presented, they carry their own evidence with them."

"Another point to which I would direct your minds," said the Doctor, "is the influence of social intercourse among religious people. The less intelligent of irreligious people seldom talk with one another about anything which can improve their minds. Your own recollections will confirm this. Their talk is about common news, outward occurrences,

or matters of pressing business. But religious people always talk about religion. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'—See yonder, before us,—I perceive two very decent-looking men engaged in earnest conversation—they are meeting us. Anywhere else, I should expect to find them talking about crops or stock; but perhaps we may hear something better from Mr. Van Pelt's parishioners. Ah,—I know one of them—Thomas, draw up your horses. Good morning, Ten Eyck—I am glad to see you once more. I believe I have not met with you since you finished my granary."

Ten Eyck. "Good morning, Doctor Lee. I am as glad to see you. My respects to the young lady and gentleman. It does me good to see you so fresh and hale in your old days Doctor, this is my son-in-law, Demarest—and we are going to raise a barn for Captain Nafy."

Dr. Lee. "Now, Ten Eyck, if you will not think me impertinent—I should like to know what you and your friend have been talking about so earnestly."

Ten Eyck. "Nothing that you can say can

be impertinent, Doctor. And we were talking about nothing that we are ashamed of. The truth is, we were in a little argument about a place in Scripture, and were trying to settle the point, whether the seven, mentioned in the sixth of Acts, were *deacons* or not. Demarest says they are not so called in the book."

Dr. Lee. "A question, my friends, which has vexed more learned heads than yours or mine. I am pleased to find your conversation turning on the Word of God."

Ten Eyck. "Why, as to that, sir, people will talk most of what they care for most. And then you know what is said, '*Thou shalt talk of them as thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way.*' It is improving both to head and heart."

Dr. Lee. "Then you find religion does good to the head also?"

Ten Eyck. "Surely, sir. Ask my son-in-law here, what a change it has wrought in his family. Once, they had not a book in the house. Now, all his children go to school; and the Dominie thinks Gerardus may learn Latin, and perhaps be a minister yet."

Dr. Lee. "Do you find that people care more for schools, as religion advances?"

Ten Eyck. "That I do, sir. When a man finds out that he has a soul, he begins to give it some nourishment. If every body was religious, every body would get some education. All our pious people are reading people. We have in our house the old Dutch books which our great grandfather brought over, from Rotterdam. The only children in our neighbourhood, that go to no school, are found in families that go to no church."

The horses were impatient, and the Doctor took leave of his honest friends. "There," said he, "in that worthy carpenter's remarks, we have a volume of instruction. What process, but that of religion, ever brings people, in any large numbers, to make the improvement of their minds and the acquisition of knowledge an object of attention? What else would furnish the MOTIVE?"

After a circuit of some miles, the little party reached the parsonage of Mr. Cole, where they were expected at dinner. Here they found congenial minds, and pursuing their

subject, with additional light from Christian discourse, found new illustrations of the truth, that the entrance of God's word giveth light —giveth understanding to the simple; that, even in this sense, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; in other words, that *Religion is itself an Education.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile
Goldsmith.

On a bracing morning in May, Edith Lee found herself, long before sunrise, seated at the open window of her chamber. Her sleep had been broken, and she had risen to watch the dawn. It was that most delicious time of the day, when all the springing herbage is bathed in dew, and when "the breath of morn" is sweetest. There were streaks of red in the east; the cockcrowing was heard in responsive notes from farm to farm, and the early twitter of birds announced the approach of the sun. Edith stood gazing, rapt in devout admiration and silent prayer. It was the holy Sabbath, and her inmost soul

was penetrated with the sanctity of the scene. Her lips could not refrain from moving in a gentle whisper, as, with hands serenely folded, she repeated:

"Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,
Or meet the thirsty earth, with falling showers,
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
Join voices, all ye living souls, ye birds,
That singing up to heaven's gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise,
Witness if I be silent, morn or even."

Edith expected to remain for a few days at the house of her venerated kinsman, Mr. Cole. After an hour or two, spent in exercises suited to holy time, she was summoned to family-worship. Most deeply did she feel the blessedness of this sacred privilege. The father, the children, visiters and servants, joined in hearing God's word, in singing praises, and in kneeling before the Lord their Maker. She perceived more than ever the hallowing influence of the Sabbath, and the tendency of religion to produce domestic and

social happiness. These thoughts she was constrained to express to her cousins, while they were preparing to go to church.

"Being the daughters of a clergyman," said Mary Cole," it would be strange if we did not agree with you in these sentiments. But the half cannot be told you. One must live long among these influences, to measure their silent and gradual operation. We are going to church—and it is the place, above all others, where I think I see concentrated most of these kindly workings of religion. You belong to a different Christian denomination, cousin; but I trust we are both members of that spiritual body which Christ will own as his, though wearing various colours of distinction here on earth."

"My sister," said Anne, in a playful tone, "is abundantly Catholic. I wish you could see the terms of fraternity she is on with our Baptist neighbours."

"Yes," replied Mary, "why should I not be? Do I not perceive the power of grace in them too. Though they adopt some views different from those in which we have been educated, I see among them the blessed effects

of Christian association. The happiness produced by religion is owing in a large measure to the sweet ties of church connexion."

"Perhaps," said Anne, "you would go so far as to include the Quakers."

"Why," said Mary, "if they go so far as to acknowledge the truths maintained by *Joseph John Gurney*, I think the Friends, (as they are more properly called,) closely associated as they are in a religious capacity, enjoy unspeakable advantages from being so knit together."

"You will see our country-folks," said Anne, "in their best apparel and gayest looks, to-day."

"It will be a pleasant sight," said Edith; "I never go to church without a fellow-feeling with the happy people who gather there under such good influences."

But the carriage was at the door, and the family hastened towards the house of God. It was a small but venerable structure, surrounded by great oaks, which had been reserved from the original forest, and around the massy trunks of which a verdant lawn spread, on three sides of the building. The

fourth was occupied by a large burial-ground, which fell, in a slope, down the declivity of a gentle hill, at the base of which flowed a small river. Among the tombs and the trees, many well dressed and serious-looking country people were sitting or strolling.

"Observe," said Dr. Lee, "the looks of content upon the faces of these people. They are of more account in their own esteem, by reason of their Sunday dress. See with what conscious dignity those matrons lead up their little bevies of rosy girls. Look with what a cordiality the greetings take place. The whole neighbourhood is knit together by this weekly assemblage."

"These," said Mr. Cole, "are some of the worldly advantages of the Sabbath; and they are not to be despised. But, O, how small they are when compared with the spiritual benefits which many of these people and their forefathers have enjoyed in that house! Among these groups are bereaved and otherwise afflicted persons, who have come to lay their burdens before the Lord. Among them, I trust, are inquirers, who are waiting to learn

the way of life; and many who never come hither without desiring, like new-born babes, the sincere milk of the word."

"I have heard," said Edith, "that there is an unusual seriousness pervading all this neighbourhood."

"Yes, my child," said Mr. Cole; "God has been pleased to bless my poor labours, and those of my good neighbour, Mr. Van Pelt. A new face is put upon our church-assembly. The goings of God are seen in his sanctuary. The Lord's day is a delight: his tabernacles are amiable. The public assembly is beautiful. Our people are alive in God's service. Every one seems intent on the worship, eager to drink in the words of grace, and often receiving it with tears. Some weep for sorrow, and some for joy; and, I own, my old eyes have been fain to weep with them. But I must speak with my good parishioners—all expect some greeting from me."

It was an interesting sight to behold this aged servant of Christ, moving among the little companies, taking each one by the hand,

and here and there stopping to pat the head of a chubby boy, or the cherry-cheek of a little girl.

Meanwhile, Herbert, seated on a stone bench under an ancient tree, was lost in pleasing revery, and in danger of forgetting his errand. The sacred source of popular happiness seemed to be opened to him. He allowed the house to be filled before he entered. The words of the poet were floating in his mind:

"Fast the church-yard fills;—anon
Look again, and they all are gone;
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the preclusive hymn is heard:—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near." *

But he remembered his duty, and hastened into the church. The service engaged his devotional feelings, and the sermon instructed

* Wordsworth.

him. Yet he could not keep his mind from a hundred busy thoughts, as to the influence of such causes upon the happiness of society Surely, thought he, the establishment of a religious community is the greatest blessing which can be conferred on any neighbourhood. It is so pure, and so permanent: its operation going down to children and children's children.

As they were on their return to the parsonage, Mr. Cole resumed his observations. "I would have you notice," said he, "how religion knits people together. Mr. Van Pelt and I have often talked this matter over. It is the cement of society. Look at these people, as they scatter to their respective homes, in hill and valley. Many of them come from a distance of six miles. Of course, many of these would seldom meet, but for the occurrence of the Sabbath-assembly. Here, as you perceive, they come together under circumstances the most favourable for Christian friendship."

"But," replied Herbert, "I have observed, when I lived in the city, that families sat together for years in the same place of wor

ship, who did not even know one another's names."

"This," replied Mr. Cole, "is often the case in large cities. Even there, however, the uniting influence of religion is felt; and in cases innumerable, the fact of going to the same church forms the basis of acquaintance and lasting friendship. But in a rural district, like ours, the state of things is very different. Here the whole country population may be said to commingle and run together; and there is scarcely a family in my parish which is not in some degree familiar with every other."

"It is common," said Herbert, "to hear worldly people declare, that differences and feuds are as numerous among professing Christians, as among themselves."

"It is untrue," answered Mr. Cole. "The observation of half a century authorizes me to pronounce it untrue. Christian profession is not always sincere. There are still many who have the form of godliness without the power. Even in some sincere believers, there are many remains of the old leaven. But, nevertheless religion does shew its proper

fruits. Many a heart-burning is assuaged, many a strife is prevented, and many a difference is settled, by the operation of gospel principles, and by communion at the Lord's table. And in times of revival, I have seen many touching reconciliations take place; so that I could repeat the ancient saying: 'See how these Christians love one another.' There is no conceivable means of harmonizing a divided people, comparable to Christianity. In this sense, therefore, to make people religious, is to make them happy."

"You will allow me to ask," said Herbert, "what those papers were, which you were distributing so largely, after service."

"They were copies of a small printed sheet, conveying intelligence respecting our Foreign Missions. For you must know, that our good people are learning to look beyond their own narrow bounds. Their organization, as a Christian society, gives facility for varied associate action in works of benevolence. We have a Missionary Society, which divides its little annual purse between foreign and domestic objects. We have a Bible and a Tract Society. And our pious women

have an association for supporting a religious youth at college."

"Then I dare say," said Herbert, "the poor are cared for."

"Why, as to that," answered Mr. Cole, "the prevalence of Christianity operates in a two-fold way against pauperism. The poor, we may always expect to have among us: but of abject pauperism, we know nothing. In the first place, religious principles and example, by promoting intelligence, temperance, industry and honesty, prevent the extremes of poverty. And, in the second place, where providential dispensations bring families or individuals to penury, our poor's-box is always abundantly sufficient to supply the necessitous."

"Are your contributions in any way connected with alms-houses, or with the state relief of the poor?"

"Not at all," said Mr. Cole. "We have indeed the usual state-arrangements, and a nominal poor-house in the township. But we have found it best to look to the free-will-offerings of Christians."

"Your experience," said Herbert, "agrees

with that of Dr. Chalmers, whose works on this subject I have lately been reading. He says the English poor-law (which we have partly copied in America) has created more misery than it can by any possibility relieve, and has tended to shut up the springs of humane charity. And he adds: 'All which the rich give to the poor in private beneficence, is but a mite and a trifle when compared with what the poor give to one another.'"

"I regard the scriptural principle as plain," said Mr. Cole, "that the poor of each Christian society should be supported by its voluntary offerings. And universal Christianity in America would preclude the necessity of an enormous poor-rate."

"One caustic sentence of Chalmers," said Herbert, "has imprinted itself on my memory. 'If England,' says he, 'will so idolize her own institutions, as to be unwilling to part even with their worst vices, she must be let alone since she will have it so. But let her not inoculate with the vices of her own moral gangrene, those countries which have the misfortune to border on her territory, and be subject to her sway: and, more especially,

let not the simple and venerated parochial system of our own land lie open to the crudities, or be placed at the disposal of a few cockney legislators.'"

"I have never," Mr. Cole archly replied "heard any doctrine from a Presbyterian, to which I could more fully assent. But see—we are even at our journey's end; let me renew my welcome of you all to my house."

If Edith had found the morning a season of delightful private meditation, she experienced not less satisfaction in the social exercises of the evening. After their light repast, the family, now increased by guests, came together in the parlour. After some time spent in hearing one of the young ladies read a religious work, they joined in a number of choice hymns, which were sung with skill and devotion. The flow of profitable discourse was renewed, and at length they bowed in an act of religious worship, and separated for the night.

As Edith looked once more from the window where she had watched the opening day, the scene was changed, but was scarcely less impressive. There was a gentle rustle among

the trees, harmonizing with the mellowed cry of frogs in the distant fens, and the monotonous wailing of the whip-poor-will. In the absence of the moon, the sky was studded with a thousand stars. The lofty cope of heaven invited to contemplation. Edith thought of the creative word which called these suns and systems into being. She thought of the solemn hour when the Almighty pointed them out to Abraham, "his friend," saying, "So shall thy seed be!" She rehearsed the sublime language of the royal psalmist in the eighth Psalm. She called to mind the glories of redeemed souls, all happy, yet differing as one star differeth from another star in glory. And her mind insensibly wandered to the consideration of her sainted parents, now, she doubted not, in full fruition far beyond those visible heavens. Tears flowed profusely down her cheek, and with hands clasped and upraised eyes, she then knelt, in the silence of midnight, and praised God for his greatness and his grace; while she renewed the dedication of herself to his service.

If youth and beauty are ever encircled

with peculiar grace, it is when they are thus hallowed by the sacred exercises of retired piety; and when communings with heaven too sublime to be revealed by maidenly reserve to human ears, are read by Him who searcheth the hearts, and who dwells with the humble and the contrite soul.

CHAPTER XIX.

His heart, now passive, yields to thy command;
Secure it thine; its key is in thy hand.
Cowper

During the visit of Herbert Lee at the parsonage, he had the opportunity of making himself acquainted with one mode of religious influence, of which, in its details, he had been absolutely ignorant. This was the Sunday-school institution. He had heard of this scheme, and knew something of Robert Raikes: but he had associated the enterprise entirely with the most degraded of the poor. He was, therefore, filled with astonishment, when he heard how widely extended the system of operation had become in our country; and when he found the value which was ascribed to it by men of comprehensive and philosophic minds, he was prepared to embrace with avidity the invitation of the Rev. Mr. Van Pelt, to visit the Sunday-schools of his congregation.

On his return, he was accosted by Dr. Lee, who met him under the elms which formed the avenue to the parsonage. "Well, nephew, what news? What think you of the Dominie's schools?"

"I can scarcely answer you," replied he, without betraying the enthusiasm of a new convert. You must not be surprised, if you find me henceforward mounted on a new hobby."

Dr. Lee smiled, and said, "But you must dismount long enough to go into some particulars. You have seen the school—now tell me what chiefly struck you."

"On entering the large room which is connected with Mr. Van Pelt's Church, I found myself in the midst of an animating scene. What most struck me at first, was the multitude of happy faces. I had never seen so many little creatures assembled with such an appearance of contentment. All countenances were radiant with interest—some beaming with intelligent curiosity, and some with infantine joy. They were more than a hundred in number—all clean—all awake and sprightly—all fully employed, from first to last."

"This," said the Doctor, "I have also felt to be a principal charm of the Sunday-school, and one of the chief sources of its efficacy. When things are well managed, there is no uneasiness, and there is no compulsion. And under such influences, children, as well as adults, will do as much in an hour as elsewhere in a week."

"Another thing," continued Herbert, "gave me much agreeable surprise. I saw, at a glance, that I was admitted to the working of a matured system. Wise heads had been at work, and the engine was not going at random. There were uniformity and classification and well-considered methods. The order, the mode of instruction and the very registers and class-books, shewed that this was only one battalion of a well-disciplined army."

"You perceived signs then that the labour was not thrown away?"

"Manifestly," said Herbert. "I may truly say, there was not an idler in the room. And this may be attributed, in part, to the admirable system of classification. Each class consisted of about six children, occupying a seat

very ingeniously insulated, in regard to the other groups."

"The smallness of the classes," said Dr Lee, "and the consequent number of the teachers, is another capital advantage of the system. Every scholar is thus made an object of particular care, and concentrated attraction. But could you form any judgment as to the character of the teachers?"

"They were all persons whose looks evinced seriousness and intelligence. Most of them were below middle age, but several were elderly persons; and one was pointed out to me, who was a grey-haired man, of at least three-score. Mr. Van Pelt assured me that they were in every respect the choice members of his flock, both for piety and education. The Superintendent is a young lawyer of European education and of active business in his profession, who, nevertheless, finds this a delightful way of spending his Sabbaths."

"It is a happy consequence of Sabbath-schools," said Dr. Lee, "that they thus bring to light and mature and set to work the best talent in a church. They educe latent power,

which, out for this, would lie dormant. And there is scarcely a young person, of any gifts and graces, who may not find his appropriate niche in a Sunday-school.

"But, after all," said Herbert, "that which most deeply affected me was the sacredness of the subject. As Mr. Van Pelt observed, in a little closing address, the great business of all Sunday-school instruction, *is to teach the Bible for the salvation of the soul.* Accordingly, I saw the Scriptures in the hands of every individual. And I could perceive that the exertions of teachers and scholars were quickened by the sanctity of the day, the preciousness of the book, and the eternal moment of the object and end."

"You speak in general," said Dr. Lee, "but what have you observed, as to the particular method of instruction?"

"I sat by one of the older teachers, for half an hour, and was interested and edified. Contrary to my previous notion, the hour's work on the Sabbath, is but the summing up of the domestic study of the foregoing week. There must have been much labour of fathers.

mothers, aunts and elder brothers and sisters, to secure the amount of knowledge which these little creatures brought with them."

"And this single fact," said Dr. Lee, "affords an answer to the objection of those who would represent Sunday-schools as usurping the place of family-instruction. Parents who send children to Sunday-schools teach them in consequence more, rather than less. They are aided and greatly stimulated in communicating their fireside lessons."

"I perceived," said Herbert, "that the teachers near me spent most of their time in ascertaining and correcting what their pupils had learned at home—in impressing it more deeply—and in giving it a practical direction to the heart and conscience of each individual. What a blessed arrangement is that, which puts it in the power of every Sunday-school teacher, on every Sabbath of the year to explain to each individual child the way of salvation, and to turn its soul towards heaven!"

"You had your attention drawn, I doubt not," said the Doctor, "to their lesson-books."

"Yes," replied Herbert, "and with great

satisfaction. Of that large portion of the school who were advanced beyond the elements, all the classes seemed to have the same lesson. It was one of our Lord's parables. The questions were judicious and thorough, and constantly appealing to the heart. Nothing more surprised me, than the extent of knowledge which was brought into play on the teacher's part;—knowledge not merely of the text and of parallel passages, but of the most approved comments, of history, of sacred geography and of biblical antiquities. And when the superintendent, in his general examination at the close, gave a more full exposition of the parable, in its various applications, I could perceive that his words fell with tenfold force on minds which had been prepared by this preliminary drilling."

"Here," said Dr. Lee, "you discern how truly the Sunday-school is the handmaid of gospel-preaching. How different will be the capacity of these youth to apprehend and feel a pulpit discourse on this parable, from that of the untutored mass!"

"And then," added Herbert, "I could not but engage in a little calculation. If such are

the fruits of a day—what must a scholar gain in the fifty-two Sabbath-days of a year—and in the six or seven or ten years of a Sabbath-school life! If such is the effect on one child—what is the effect on a class—a school—on all the schools of a congregation! And how glorious the result if all the millions of our juvenile population were from this day brought under so hallowed an agency!"

"Your reflections, nephew, are as just as they are delightful. And that which cheers me is, that this simple but mighty agency is fully adapted to be at once applied in all the extent you have imagined. The machine is ready: its powers are unlimited: all we want is money and workers. In this respect the Sunday-school partakes of the excellency of the gospel which it subserves;—it is equally fit for all places, all people and all stages of society. But I venture to say you have more to tell me."

"I think," said Herbert, "it is now my turn to become querist. First impressions constitute my whole stock of knowledge in regard to Sunday-schools: but Mr. Van Pelt tells me that you are a veteran in the service, and

that you were the first to introduce this mode of instruction into our neighbourhood."

"On all occasions," said the Doctor, "among friends and foes, I am willing to avow myself a Sunday-school man. That I am not now a teacher, is not because my interest has decreased, or even because I am old—for, like a certain London teacher, I was willing to *enlist for the whole war*—but because I was unwilling to keep out even one younger person from the enjoyment of so high a privilege. I have studied the working of the system from its humble beginnings, through various stages, up to its present improved state: and my confidence and hope are still on the increase. There are capabilities, powers of adaptation and expansion, and reserves of strength, in the method, which are too little understood; but which, I believe, will one day be brought out with immense effect upon the happiness of our country."

"You allude," said Herbert, "to improvements in the plan of conducting Sunday-schools. From this I gather that considerable changes have taken place."

"Changes," said the Doctor, "much greater than strike the eye. Your conjecture was just, that the improved methods which you witnessed, were the result of long consideration. While half the church has lain supine, and while censorious judges have found fault with this and found fault with that, the friends of Sunday-schools, constantly labouring, observing and experimenting, have gone on, adding, amending and methodizing, until we have a system, from which even our vaunting high-schools might borrow light. Labour-saving methods have been introduced. The spark struck out by one obscure teacher, has been communicated to thousands, and made part of a great system. Books, for the aid of teacher and scholar, have been devised and published. Uniform methods have been widely adopted. The whole mass has been tending to organization; and hindrances of the most formidable kind have been happily removed."

"I am prepared to hear," said Herbert, that these efforts have been blessed to the onversion of some pupils."

"Only in the other world," replied Dr. Lee, "can we estimate these results. Yet we

know of thousands of instances in which children and youth have been brought to the knowledge of Christ, under the immediate influence of Sabbath-school instruction. Religion has thus been carried into a multitude of profane and ungodly families, which no other means could reach. In some remarkable instances of revival, a great majority of the youth in some schools have been brought, as we hope, to the Redeemer. Just think of this, Herbert, and then compare the Sunday-school with the common school!"

"My dear sir," said Herbert warmly, "I confess my former ignorance and prepossession. I need no longer compare the two institutions. The one is as truly a nursery for heaven, as the other for earth!"

"Think, nephew, of the great number of religious books issued in connexion with the Sunday-school institution."

"Aye—that reminds me," said Herbert, "of the scene which I witnessed, when, just before the conclusion of the services, the library was opened, and books were distributed to the pupils. It was done without bustle or confusion, and so that the teachers only left

their seats. The cases appeared to contain as many as five hundred volumes. The reception of a book seemed to be the crowning reward of the little urchins. How their rosy faces shone, and how their eyes sparkled, when they grasped the week's treasure!"

"And I venture to guess," said the Doctor, "that each of these books, thus carried home, will, by the end of this week, have been perused, taking one family with another, by two adults. Thus the influence of the library extends, in some sort, to the whole population!"

"Which makes it important," said Herbert, "that these collections should contain a number of works, superior in their cast, to mere children's books."

"True: and this principle is constantly acted upon by the Publishing Committee of the American Sunday-school Union. Not only milk for babes, but strong meat for men, is furnished by such works as Bunyan's Holy War, Hodge's Way of Life, Alexander's Evidences, the Great Change, the Great Aim the Life of Möwes, &c. I will place at your disposal a collection of these works for your deliberate examination. You will per

ceive that it presents the foundation for a Christian literature which is to bless our rising population."

"I cannot release you," said Herbert, "till I express the delight I felt in joining with a hundred youthful voices in their closing hymn. All seemed to sing, and with a melody, a harmony and a joyful enthusiasm, which to my taste made better music than the hired orchestras of the city. They had evidently been well instructed: the hymn was familiar to them: here it is—for I begged a copy of their book—

"When shall the voice of singing
Flow joyfully along?
When hill and valley, ringing
With one triumphant song,
Proclaim the contest ended,
And Him who once was slain
Again to earth descended,
In righteousness to reign!

Then from the craggy mountains
The sacred shout shall fly;
And shady vales and fountains
Shall echo the reply;
High tower and lowly dwelling
Shall send the chorus round,
All hallelujah swelling,
In one eternal sound!"

"Well, nephew, I rejoice to find your conclusions so much the same as my own, and to be assured that you will no longer reckon the Sunday-school among little things."

"Little things!" exclaimed Herbert: "I place it next to the preaching of the gospel, —that greatest of human agencies."

"Of which," said Dr. Lee, "it is after all a modification.

"Even in regard to its intellectual influence on the population subjected to it, one could hardly, I think, overrate the power of such an institution."

"But this very influence," said the Doctor, "it owes to religion. It is religion which is the central spring and motive power of the Sunday-school. It is by communicating religion, that it stimulates the faculties and improves the mind. And the longer you contemplate its workings, the more clearly will you discern, that it is by means of religion, that it adds to the sum of human happiness."

"The Sunday-school," added Herbert, "has gone far to reveal to me your secret as to the way of relieving human misery."

CHAPTER XX.

The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race.

Pope.

THE scene must now be changed to the mansion of Elmham. But a scene may be changed without much change of persons; and the reader will find himself in the same circle. Mr. Cole and his daughters had consented to pass a few days with Dr. Lee; and the company was increased by the arrival of Miss Devereux and Mr. Tenbroeck, the Sunday-school superintendent of whom Herbert had made mention. The assemblage of friends were gathered for the evening in the well-lighted parlour. The two venerable gentlemen were seated in their arm-chairs. The ladies were clustered around a table, on which were spread the most recent productions of

the press, which had come to the good Doctor's hands.

The conversation had become general and animated before the arrival of Herbert with his friend Mr. Tenbroeck. After the usual exchange of courtesies, Herbert begged that they would proceed with their subject. It proved to be the very one which was uppermost in his own mind.

"We have been talking of Sunday-schools,' said Edith; "and a delightful topic it is. For since my visits to the schools of my cousins, I am little less engaged upon the enterprise than yourself."

"You must be informed, Mr. Lee," said Mary Cole, "that we have spent an hour in talking of the direct and immediate effects of Sunday-schools; and just as you entered we were listening to some observations of your uncle, upon those effects which may be called indirect or collateral."

"And which," said Dr. Lee, "though less obvious, are not less important than the others. But it is not my purpose to turn lecturer; for I am in the midst of experienced practitioners in this art. These ladies, if

mistake not, have been several years employed in the work."

Anne Cole smiled and said: "As it is long since my sister and I passed from the number of very young ladies, we may as well confess, that we have been Sunday-school teachers for more than eighteen years. During this time, I have been led almost every week to visit some of our scholars; and most fully can I confirm the remark of Dr. Lee, that the Sunday-school produces its effects not only on the child but on the parent. But here is Mr. Tenbroeck, who knows more than any of us."

"I waive the compliment," said Mr. Tenbroeck, "in order to confirm what you say. I daily observe, when children come regularly to our schools, that their parents are more or less influenced. Where they are serious, church-going people, they take a natural interest in the proficiency of their little ones, and aid them in preparing the Sabbath-lesson. Where they are irreligious people, they are insensibly led to think of good things. They also pay some attention to the lessons. They read quite extensively in the library-books which are taken home every week. Not a

few instances of conversion and reformation have come to my knowledge, from this cause."

"At least a dozen families," said Mr. Cole "have been introduced to my church by this means. In beating up for recruits, our teachers visited their houses, and induced the children to attend the schools: they were of course taken to church. The interest which the little creatures manifested, was caught by the parents, who now and then looked in at the school. As the next thing in course, they came to participate in public worship. At length they became regular attendants on divine service."

"Instances are not wanting," said Mr. Tenbroeck, "in which the setting up of a Sunday-school in a destitute neighbourhood, has led in a few months to the regular preaching of the gospel, the gathering of a congregation and the erection of a church. By which I am led to think that Sunday-schools may be used with the happiest effects to do a pioneer-work in waste regions of the West, where no churches yet exist. If they be multiplied, they will prove harbingers of the gospel."

Miss Devereux here broke in with her characteristic animation, in order to give the particulars of a recent visit to Philadelphia. She told how great was her surprise, on going to the Depository and Book-store of the American Sunday-school Union, in Chestnut Street, to find the immense number of books which were stored in their ware-rooms, and daily despatched to every part of the country. She said that she spent two mornings in looking over their various books, maps and pictures. And at the conclusion, she felt constrained to pronounce the institution a FOUNTAIN OF TRUTH AND PIETY FOR THE WHOLE LAND.

Dr. Lee was not much behind Miss Devereux in his estimate of this publishing enterprise. "Connected as it now is," said he, "with the work of instruction, this branch of the effort reaches to every district of our country. The association is really a Book and Tract Society. The books they issue are judicious, sound, cheap and beautiful. They are continually adding to the number; and both the value of the publications and the beauty of their execution have been on the

increase, year by year. Suppose a good book to be published—I know of no agency by which it can be brought to bear upon the whole community so directly and effectually, as that of Sunday-schools."

Anne Cole here said that for several years she had been the librarian of their school, and that her attention had been necessarily called to the subject. "We receive," said she, "it may be a parcel of twenty new books from Philadelphia. You can scarcely imagine the avidity with which our little people await the distribution of these. In a few years they will have been read by every one of our scholars, and by at least as many adults, in their respective families. The expense of this has been but little more than two dollars."

"And observe," said Mr. Tenbroeck, "that at the very same moment, the same operation substantially, may be going on in a thousand schools. The same books which go to you, go to them. Supposing an average of fifty scholars, we have a hundred thousand persons reading twenty good books."

"Observe again," said Mr. Cole—"what is not the least important item in the calculation

—that this religious literature is conveyed to the mind of the people at the very moment when it is most effective—in childhood and youth—at the forming period. If it is easier to bend the twig than the oak, it is wise to diffuse our books and our tracts among the young. And I do not believe an easier or simpler mode of diffusion can be devised, than that which is furnished, ready to our hand, by the Sunday-school."

Here, in answer to a question of Herbert, Miss Anne Cole explained, that in the larger schools there was a smaller department, called the "Teacher's Library," and consisting of large and more valuable works, for the aid of instructors in their study of the Scriptures. And she bore witness to the remarkable effects produced on the minds of teachers by this simple arrangement.

"The whole system," said Mr. Tenbroeck, with great animation, "is one of blessed influence upon teachers. Nothing strikes my mind more, or more encourages me in my humble labours from week to week. On Saturday evening we always spend an hour or more together in conversation and prayer

Once a month we have a special prayer meeting for our schools. Once a month, again, we compare notes about the proficiency of our scholars, reading over the whole catalogue, and marking the names of such as have left us, such as have newly come, such as are in any distress, such as are especially proficient, and such as manifest a spirit of religious inquiry. The number of our teachers is twenty-two: and there is scarcely one among them, who does not shew a perpetual advancement under this discipline."

"To be a Sabbath-school teacher," said Mary Cole, "I can say, from experience, tends to make one very sensible of ignorance and incapacity. No little study is required to prepare for the instruction of a class. I can remember weeks in which every available hour has been spent on the lesson."

"Not only so," said Mr. Cole, "but the whole employment leads to serious consideration. In my own charge, I have never discouraged intelligent and serious young persons from being teachers, because they were not communicants. But whenever a general seriousness has pervaded my congregation, I

have seen our Sunday-school teachers among the first subjects of divine grace."

"We have all remarked," said Miss Cole, "the elevating influence of the work on persons engaged in it. I can name half a dozen young women, from houses in which literature was a thing unknown, who have acquired a taste for reading, gathered a little shelf of books, and risen to a respectable degree of general as well as sacred information: and all this in consequence of their connexion with the Sunday-school."

"And then reflect," said Dr. Lee, "that this is a process, to which are subjected not fewer certainly than one hundred thousand Sunday-school teachers in the United States!"

"I am resolved," said Miss Devereux, "to be a Sunday-school teacher myself! I long to fall into just such a circle. Why, for very company's sake with people of this sort, I should crave admittance to your corps."

"The company is certainly good," said Miss Cole; "and, since you are on that point, the social influence of union in the work of teaching, is not to be despised. We learn to know one another. Distinctions of rank and

wealth are forgotten. The acquisitions of the more accomplished are shared by those of humble minds. We come together under a religious influence. In a word, it is one of the most pleasing of those ties, which my father is so fond of talking about, as "knitting Christian hearts together."

"The greatness of the object," said Mr. Tenbroeck, "has an elevating power. Sunday-school teachers have constantly set before them as an end, nothing less than the everlasting salvation of souls. It is impossible to contemplate such an object, from day to day, without its reflecting a solemn and purifying awe upon the heart."

"To all these collateral advantages of Sunday-schools," said Mr. Cole, "you may add one, which none can appreciate so well as a pastor: the system is a direct auxiliary to every other method of doing good. You have already shown how it aids the preaching of the gospel: it equally aids all other forms of charity. If a poor family among the hills is visited by sickness, I am sure to hear of it through my Sunday-school teachers, who are going their rounds among the

scholars. If I wish to give wide diffusion to a tract on any important subject, I have only to place a copy in the hands of every scholar in the several schools."

"Our teachers," said Mr. Tenbroeck, "are perhaps as much engaged in relieving the temporal wants of the sick poor, as are any portion of the Christian society. They are the first to learn these wants, and they have ready admittance to every house."

"Do not forget to say," said Miss Cole, "that both teachers and pupils are growing up in affectionate acquaintance with the great work of evangelizing the world. Our smallest and poorest child is taught, that he is not to live for himself, but to do good. Knowing something about the Bible, they are prompt to give the blessed book to the destitute. And I entertain good hopes, that the next generation will be far before ourselves, in enlarged sympathy for the spiritual necessities of the world."

Dr. Lee here rose and took a book from the table. "Perhaps," said he, "this very small volume has not attracted the notice of any present. It is however worthy of repeated perusal: and you must allow me to read you a paragraph; it is on the very subject which Miss Mary has touched:

"'Are pioneers needed (by the church) to bear the burden and heat of the day—to take up their abode, at home or abroad, amidst privations, labours, dangers, contempts and sufferings without number or end; to plant and sustain the institutions of the gospel; and to chasten the insolence and subdue the power of ungodly men, by the overcoming and controlling influence of vital piety? Let her come into our Sunday-schools, select her bands from our forms, and prepare them for her service, in those enlarged and elevated views of Christian duty, which her service in such a day as this requires. Does the church want missionaries and ministers, and do we not see, in the history of Sunday-schools, that God has chosen them as one grand instrument by which he will provide for her wants in that behalf? Does she not know that her first interest lies n possessing the minds of children, at the earliest period, with just views of the moral condition of the *world*—in teaching them that the provision of the gospel is for *a world*

—that the means of salvation must be furnished to the *world*—that all the *world* is to be traversed by the messengers of mercy—that the gospel is to be preached to every creature under heaven—and that Sunday-schools have come into being at this juncture for this very purpose and end?"*

"There," continued the Doctor, "there is my view of the subject. In my thoughts Sunday-schools connect themselves intimately with the world's conversion to God. They *prepare the way of the Lord.* Just suppose the whole *nation* of children to be awakened and renewed! Those who are to rule the destinies of the world, are now in their mother's arms. Many of these, by God's blessing on Sabbath-schools, will become ministers of the gospel and missionaries to the heathen. We live in an age of preparation, and I am persuaded, my friends, you feel with me, that we have all done too little, and that we cannot do too much in putting forward this enterprise."

"For one," said Herbert, "I confess my

* The Great Aim of the Sunday-school Teacher, published by the Am. S. S. Union.

former ignorance and neglect. The honour of feeding Christ's lambs has assumed a greatness in my view, which it never had before. And I shall count it a privilege to be admitted into your ranks, looking on these as happy days, in which, providentially, I have been cast into the midst of a Sunday-school society.

Upon this, Edith begged that she might not be left out in their plans; declaring that her feelings had been affected in the same manner, and that she had it in her heart to "enlist for the whole war." By slow degrees the company separated, as the hour of midnight approached, and Herbert and Edith were left in the parlour

"How much have we had to learn, my sister," said Herbert, laying his hands affectionately on his sister's arm, "how much have we had to learn, since we came to this house!"

"And how much," replied Edith, "we have yet to learn!"

"How little did we understand, Edith, of the sweets of Christian society! Compare with this long but delightful evening of ra-

tional enjoyment, those which, against the will of our beloved father, we used to spend in the gaieties of Baltimore."

"Spare me the thought, brother." This night has shown me how much I have undervalued the power of religion to produce happiness. What a genial glow of unmingled satisfaction beamed from the intelligent countenances of our dear counsins, when they were conversing upon subjects pertaining to Christ's kingdom!"

"And how memorable a sight," said Herbert, "to behold such patriarchs as our two old kinsmen, serene and joyful at a season of life when it is natural to be suspicious, peevish and discontented. IT IS GRACE WHICH IS THE ANTAGONIST PRINCIPLE TO EVIL, IN THE INDIVIDUAL AND IN SOCIETY Grace, wherever it enters, brings peace in its train."

"This makes it doubly pleasant to hear," said Edith, "that so many of the Iron-Hill people are turning their thoughts toward religion."

"Let us be thankful, sister; let us lend our poor aid. To-morrow, with the leave of Providence, I am to make a little tour of visitation in that neighbourhood with my friend Mr. Tenbroeck. But we must not forget that the day is almost gone.—Good night!"

Solitary and thoughtful Edith paced the floor of her chamber for some time. And even when she laid her head on the pillow, sleep came but slowly to her eyes; for her mind was visited by a thousand thoughts, solicitous but not distressing, upon the experience of the day.

CHAPTER XXI.

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice—
The Cross once seen is death to every vice.
Cowper.

THE visit which Herbert had projected, to the house of the Rev. Mr. Van Pelt, was happily accomplished, in company with Mr. Tenbroeck. The parsonage, like that of most country ministers, was surrounded by a little farm. This, however, received but occasional attention from its owner, who had consigned all agricultural matters to his eldest son, in order more entirely to devote himself to the work of his ministry. Mr. Van Pelt was given to hospitality, and his house was the resort of good people of every name, Herbert was prepossessed with his first appearance. He was a man somewhat beyond middle life, robust and ruddy, with a vivacity of countenance and heartiness of manner which spoke a welcome to the visiter.

"You come to us," said Mr. Van Pelt, "at a good time. It is a season of joy—even the joy of harvest. After sowing the good seed for many years, it is my privilege to see it springing up to an extent far beyond my expectations."

"You must not let us interrupt your important labours," said Herbert; "and I see your horse is at the door."

"Why, to tell the truth," said Mr. Van Pelt, "I was about to make a little tour of inspection; and if you and Mr. Tenbroeck will accompany me, we may look in at a few houses, and then return to dinner."

The proposal was exactly what Herbert desired, and in a few minutes the three gentlemen, all well mounted, were proceeding at a brisk pace, through the devious roads which traverse the forests of Iron-Hill and its adjacent valleys. Near the side of a steep hill, they came to a house which Herbert recognised as that of John Turnbull. But a great change was visible in the exterior. The sides had been boarded and the windows glazed. There was a new chimney, and a good fence surrounded the premises. A stable and wood-

house, rude but ample, bounded one side of the enclosure. The dog Snarl barked at their entrance, but all the other inmates gave them a hearty welcome. Mr. Van Pelt opened the way by introducing his companions as Christian friends, who were making some visits with him.

"I am glad to see them," said John. "The day has been when I would not have loved them any better for being religious. But I trust that day will never return."

Here Herbert took the liberty of reminding Turnbull of his former visit, and noticed the great alteration he perceived in external comfort. Upon which Mrs. Turnbull said, with tears in her eyes—

"O, yes, sir, religion is good for every thing, and especially for us poor women. Since John has forsaken the 'still-house' and taken to church, we are a different sort of people. Our wood-pile is never out, and though we are poor, we are not starving. Our boys are at trades, and our girls know how to read. John is a good provider."

"I acknowledge my sins this day," said John. "In bygone days, that woman led a

brute's life. This blessed book has taught me better."

"'If any,'" said Mr. Van Pelt, "'provide not for his own, and specially for his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.'" *

"I do not see you at the court-house very often now," said Mr. Tenbroeck

"Turnbull smiled, and said: "As a party, I hope you will never see me, and seldom as a witness. And as to going security for rogues again, the wise man hath taught me, 'He that hateth suretyship is sure.'"

"Oh," cried Mr. Van Pelt, "I can interpret the change in your housekeeping, as soon as I hear you quoting the book of Proverbs. I know a man who reads a chapter of it every day, and there is one for each day in the month. It is a system of wisdom for the state—wisdom for the city—wisdom for the church—and wisdom for the household. People may praise 'Poor Richard,' but give me Solomon for a teacher."

"We have found time," said Turnbull "to have a little prayer-meeting here once a

* 1 Tim. v, 8.

week; as Mr. Tenbroeck can tell you; he has been with us once or twice."

"Do any of the Ash-Brook people come?" inquired Herbert. "I once visited them, and was grieved at their ignorance and wretchedness."

"O, yes," replied Turnbull, "the mill-folks, as we call them, have shared in this blessed revival."

"Let me say," said Mr. Van Pelt, "that I have received twenty of them into my church, and my Baptist neighbour, Ryland, has baptized as many as forty. The whole face of things in that vale is changed."

"A little shoemaker named Linn," said Turnbull, "was, under God, the occasion of this good. He was like a bit of leaven in the lump: it kept working and working, till it turned all the dough. He used to read and sing, year after year, when he was the only religious person at the mills. They kept on laughing and Linn kept on praying."

"And his prayers were answered," said Mr. Van Pelt.

"You shall hear. A cousin of his, from New-Hampshire, a brave young fellow, full

of courage and zeal, came to pay Linn a visit. This young man was studying to be a Baptist minister. He set up a little Sabbath school. He read to them. He talked to them. He prayed with them. He got them tracts and Bibles. Then he began to do a little preaching among them. All of a sudden, Linn's son and apprentice became anxious about their souls. Before we knew it, the concern had spread to several families. Linn's house was too small for the meetings, and they began to hold them in the mill. But Mr. Van Pelt can tell you better what followed."

"It would be only," said Mr. Van Pelt, "to describe what takes place in every general revival. This awakening was at the same time when the work of grace in my congregation began, which, I rejoice to say, is still in progress. And I am ready to testify that the most remarkable effects have followed, in regard even to the temporal comfort of the people, and still more in regard to their intellectual improvement."

After singing a hymn and engaging in prayer with this poor family, the visiters de

parted, and pursued their way to the Mills, where Herbert saw with his own eyes the most manifest tokens of change. The once brawling children were at school. Idle parents were learning habits of industry. And the dram-shop, that fountain of innumerable ills, was entirely closed.

As they were dismounting at the door of a house which the minister pointed out to them, he took occasion to remark, in connexion with a subject which Herbert had introduced:

"You say truly, Mr. Lee: there are many evils which even religion does not entirely remove in this life. But then consider, even under these, what supports and solaces are derived from grace. The blind, the deaf, the crippled, the incurably diseased, and those who have idiocy or insanity in their houses, may not indeed have these evils removed; but they are enabled to bear them, and to profit by them. Grace brings with it patience and contentment. And I will show you in this house what our merciful God does for one of his suffering children, under a hopeless complaint."

They entered a slightly darkened chamber

where they saw extended upon a bed, the attenuated frame of a woman, whose body and limbs seemed shrunk to the very smallest limit compatible with life. It was an aggravated case of what is called 'white-swelling;' the malady having begun in one of the limbs, and extended itself to almost every joint of the body. Mrs. Bowers, the sufferer, was scarcely able to move. The hollow eye and sunken cheek and livid complexion would have betokened death to an ordinary observer. Her voice was little more than an infantine whisper. Yet, amidst all these ghastly symptoms, the countenance was irradiated with a smile, which, as Herbert could not refrain from saying to himself, was angelic. She stretched out a withered hand to her pastor, and gave a look of welcome to his companions.

"For twenty years," said Mr. Van Pelt, "has Mrs. Bowers been afflicted with this disease. For sixteen years she has been confined to her house, and most of these years to her bed. Yet she testifies that the Lord hath done all things well."

"O yes," said she in a feeble, but expressive voice, "O yes! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right! Here I have learned to know Him who is the chief among ten thousands. Before I was afflicted, I went astray. I trust my adorable Saviour has taught me to glory even in tribulation."

"Your weakness," said Herbert, "seems to be great."

"Thank God," said she, "I always have had the use of my reason, and the use of my voice, notwithstanding my weakness. What a precious word is that—'My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness!'"

"You must pray daily to be delivered," said Herbert.

"For years I did so; but now I pray that God's will may be done. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, but my Redeemer knows best. I wait, till I accomplish, as a hireling, my day."

"I am afraid, my dear friend," said Mr. Van Pelt, "your pain is not diminished since I saw you."

"I am seldom without severe pain," said the poor woman. "Wearisome nights are appointed unto me. Yet, in the multitude of my thoughts within me, God's comforts delight my soul! And let me humbly declare, to the glory of divine grace, that on this bed of pain, God has so revealed himself to a poor worm, as to make her forget her bodily anguish in the joys of his presence, and to give her more delight in one hour, than in years of former gay enjoyment."

"Worldly men could hardly be made to believe this," said Herbert.

"No indeed," said she. "Last week John Johns, a very dear kinsman of mine, but an ungodly man, stood looking at my poor wasted frame, while the tears ran over his face. At length he burst out and said, 'Oh cousin Jane, I would gladly help you, but I would rather die on the spot, than be in your place!'"

"And what did you reply to him?" inquired the minister."

"Cousin John," said I, "I would not be in *your* place, exposed to God's wrath and curse, for ten thousand worlds! And I have a happiness here, in the sense of God's love

greater than you have ever enjoyed in your highest pleasures."*

Omitting the record of other visits and conversations, we must re-conduct the reader to the house of Mr. Van Pelt. After the refreshments of his hospitable board, the friends fell once more into discourse upon what had become with Herbert, the favourite topic. Mr. Tenbroeck, as being most concerned in the education of the poor, was allowed to bear a principal part in the conversation.

"My profession in life," said he, "brings me much into contact with the ignorant and the vicious. And my Sunday-school engagements have taught me the reforming influences of true religion. In answer to Mr. Lee's inquiries, I cheerfully bear witness, that I have never known a family visited by converting grace, without a proportional increase of desire for knowledge. Religion gives a taste for reading—the lack of which is the cause of enduring ignorance in many who are well versed in the mere art of reading."

* It is proper to observe, that this is an exact account of facts known to the writer: a remark which applies to a large number of the incidents before related.

"Our philanthropists," said Herbert, "leave out religion, in stating the grand means of reforming society."

"Yes," replied Mr. Tenbroeck; "yet if they would but open their eyes, they might see for themselves. I was in England in 1837, and a Wesleyan of London invited me to accompany him to the Isle of Portland, on the Dorsetshire coast. It is from the quarries of this isle that the famous Portland stone is brought. The whole island contains about twenty-six hundred inhabitants. There are about a hundred quarries, and of course a great many persons are employed. It was to the condition of these, that my attention was directed. There are about five hundred quarrymen, nobly formed, ruddy and athletic fellows. Such a Sunday as I passed among them, I may truly say, I did not see elsewhere in England. The service was opened by about forty girls, from the Sunday-school. All joined in the services with decorous ardour. The people were all well clad, and the women even elegantly Every thing showed temperance, intelligence and comfort. And

I was informed that all this was owing to the prevalence of religion in this little isle, and the consequent instruction of the youth. There are two large chapels at Chiswell and Fortune's Well, and many little classes for religious instruction in different parts of the island. I observed no noise, no profaneness, and of course no drinking houses."

"I have been pastor of this flock," said Mr Van Pelt, "for twenty-four years. When I came here, it was a vicious and ignorant neighbourhood; and so it remained for many years. But whatever amendments have taken place on Iron Hill, are due to religion alone. So far as the gospel had free course, people were made better—but not a step further. Attempts at reformation, by myself and others, upon inferior and merely human principles, all fell short of the mark. For example, I regarded the state of society at Ashbrook-mills as a public nuisance, and for a dozen years together we tried to abate it. Proprietors and magistrates and school-committees tried. All was in vain. The gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, accomplished all we had wished for in one winter. Give men religion and

you give them every thing. Seek first the kingdom of God—you know what follows."

"Then our duty," said Herbert, "is plain enough; it is simply to pray and labour for the conversion of the people."

"For their conversion," said Mr. Van Pelt, "and their *edification*. There are degrees in Christianity: we should seek for the highest. But I agree with your excellent uncle, that religion is the best thing we can give mankind; for this, if for no other reason, because it includes and brings along with it all other good things. And, after years of seemingly fruitless toil, when at length the grace of the Spirit visited us in large measure, we had only to sit still and see the salvation of God. We are doing so now. Not a day passes in which I have not tidings of some new case of awakening. A multitude of hopeless subjects, as I deemed them, have been reformed. Truly I may say, how rapidly God works! How he puts to shame our tardy endeavours! A great revival, I account a crowning blessing: and my prayer is, that it may continue and extend itself to all the region round about."

CHAPTER XXII.

And waking cried, This is the gate of heav'n.
Par. Lost.

It would be difficult to imagine a more delightful morning in spring, than that in which Herbert and Edith met at Elmham, after a few days' separation. As they sat upon a rustic bench under one of the oaks in the lawn, all nature seemed to them to be rejoicing. The ancient trees were in the delicate beauty of their earliest foliage, and the half-clad twigs were projected, in minute lines, against the crystal sky. The brown and grizzled hare limped out of the grass into the copse. Looking across into the garden, their eyes rested on ample beds of gorgeous tulips. Scarcely a breeze was stirring, but the air was vocal with birds, which here, on a large estate, were seldom alarmed by the report of a gun. The gay red-bird uttered his shrill, scolding note. The mocking-bird, that prime

charmer of the grove, was all in ecstasies, carolling, trilling, repeating, mimicking, and outvying all his rivals, from his post upon the topmost bough of the garden holly. A recent shower had clothed the meadows and wheat-fields with a soft sunny green. The lately sombre woods were embellished with the opening foliage; and the snowy whiteness of the great dogwood blossoms, among the deep green of the pines, added an indescribable brilliancy to the scene.

As the brother and sister thus sat in silence, their venerable uncle approached them, and read aloud, from a book in his hand, the hundred and fourth Psalm. As he closed with the words, *Bless thou the Lord, O my soul; Praise ye the Lord!* Edith said:

"If every one who this day surveys such scenes as this, could contemplate them in the spirit of this Psalm—what a happy world ours would be!"

"That is, in other words," said Dr. Lee, "if all were true Christians."

"Yes," said Herbert, "my mind has fully settled upon this conclusion. Make men religious, and you make them happy. The re

ligion of Christ is God's great gift to suffering man. If he would but receive it, his ills would be diminished, or would disappear."

"You have concluded then," said the Doctor, "that religion is the best preventive of physical suffering."

"I have."

"And that religion is the best promoter of popular illumination?"

"I am fully persuaded of it," answered Herbert. "To publish the gospel to mankind, appears to me to be the grand enterprise of true philanthropy."

"Yes, my children," said Dr. Lee, "God's ways are the best: his methods are the wisest. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge'—'the beginning of wisdom.'* 'Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."'

"I never doubted," said Edith, "that religion was infinitely the best of all gifts to men. But I confess, I had some hesitation as to the *order* in which we should seek to bestow it. I dreamed of preparing the way for the

*Ps. iii. 10. Prov. i 7.

greater, by means of the less. That doubt is now dissipated; and dissipated by the principle of the text you just cited."

"You remember my children," said Dr. Lee, affectionately taking the hand of each, "that when you came to favour me with your presence, you were burning with a desire to do good."

"Our zeal was blind," said Edith.

"And you asked me for rules to direct you. Perhaps you thought strangely of my delay and my reserve. But I wished you to learn from experience. And the only rule I was willing to give you, was this, *to aim at the very highest good.*"

"We remember it well, sir," replied Edith; "but it is only now that we begin to understand it."

"We are both fully convinced," said Herbert, "that the very best thing we can do for our fellow-creatures, is to carry to them the gospel. Our observations have not been extensive, nor our reflections profound, but they have taught us this."

"It is a good lesson, my children; but one which I was many years in learning. It is

well to borrow experience, and I will very gladly lend you mine, for so much as it is worth. The years which I spent in futile, though well-intended endeavors, were not passed in circumstances so favourable as yours have been. Many a path did I open, with no result except the discovery that it was impassable, or led to nothing."

"Most heartily do we thank you for your lessons," said Herbert. "They have opened new prospects respecting our race. And here, amidst these beauties of nature, looking at that blessed volume in your hands, I cannot but indulge a glowing anticipation of the day, when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

"Far be it from me," said the Doctor, "to repress your ardour. Prophecy is full of these very hopes and promises: and they are to be accomplished by the gospel."

"May we hope then," said Edith, "for a day when human sorrows shall come to an end, even in this world?"

"I think we may. Certainly for a day when religion shall universally prevail: and

what this implies, I need not tell you. The Sabbatism of the world is approaching—a time of universal justice and universal peace. If the volume which Edith has lying beside her is, as I suspect, Cowper's, let her turn to the conclusion of the 'Winter Walk at Noon.'"

Edith readily found the place, and read as follows, while her countenance was radiant with the sacred enthusiasm of the subject:

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! Which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance; and the land, once lean,
Or fertile only to its own disgrace,
Exults to see its thistly curse repealed;
The various seasons woven into one,
And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion, and the libbard, and the bear
Graze with the fearless flocks; all bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now: the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand

Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
All creatures worship man, and all mankind
One Lord, one Father. Error has no place;
The creeping pestilence is driven away;
The breath of heav'n has chased it. In the heart
No passion touches a discordant string,
But all is harmony and love. Disease
Is not; the pure and uncontaminated blood
Holds its due course, nor fears the frosts of age.
One song employs all nations; and all cry,
Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!"

"Stop there, my dear," said Dr. Lee "though there is much more, equally inspiring. I have always considered Cowper as having, in that concluding passage of his sixth book, caught the very spirit of Milton, both as to sublimity of thought, and exquisite choice of diction. In my own humble person, I should scarce dare to utter such hopes: but Cowper's poem, and that passage in particular, have received their *imprimatur* from Christians of every creed."

"And all these blessings," said Edith, "are to grow out of the gospel!"

"Even so," replied Dr. Lee: "they are its proper fruits. Shall we not then strive to give this boon to our race?"

At these words, Herbert, whose countenance expressed both animation and embarrassment, said, with a voice much broken by emotion:

"If such is the power of the gospel, then to communicate it to mankind is the most honourable of all employments. And I feel it to be my duty to tell you, my dear uncle, that in consideration of this, it is my solemn purpose, with God's blessing, to prepare myself for the work of the holy ministry."

"Praised be God!" said Dr. Lee. "My son, may He assure you of your call, and fit you for his service! And now, my children, you have discovered my secret. All the ways of doing good may be reduced to three: relieving the *body*, relieving the *mind*, and relieving the *soul;* and this is what I meant by

"*Good* — BETTER — BEST."

THE END.