



THE
FIVE APPRENTICES.

BY REV. ELIHU W. BALDWIN. h



REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION OF THE
AMERICAN S. S. UNION.



AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.
PHILADELPHIA:
No. 146 CHESNUT STREET.
1828.

EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, to wit:



BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the ninth day of December, in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1828, PAUL BECK, Junior, Treasurer in trust for the American Sunday School Union, of the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:—

“The Five Apprentices. By the Rev. Elihu W. Baldwin. Revised by the Committee of Publication of the American S. S. Union.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States' entitled, “An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” And also to the act, entitled, “An act supplementary to an act, entitled, “An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the Arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

THE FIVE APPRENTICES.



CHAPTER I.

THE UNEXPECTED MEETING.

Sabbath morning—Charles and Edward.

Charles. Halloo! Ned—bright and early. I am glad to see you once more.

Edward. I am glad to see *you*, Charles.— But not so loud——

Ch. Not so loud!—You are not afraid of a little noise, I hope. Perhaps you are ashamed to be so publickly saluted by your old friend?

Ed. Not at all. But it is Sabbath morning, you will recollect——

Ch. Yes, I recollect that, and am going to improve it too. What say you to an excursion? You have not forgotten our former rambles. And there are Tom and Peter ready to join us.—We shall have rare sport.

Ed. I shall not soon *forget* our Sabbath-day's employments, I assure you. I have other engagements to-day; besides——

Ch. Other engagements!—Ah, I remember now what was told me yesterday, about your being a great christian of late. It was Peter who gave me the news. He added, that he had done calling on you for Sabbath-day excursions.

Ed. I am much obliged to Peter Jenkins for his good opinion of me. To tell the truth, Charles, I don't think myself a *great* christian, if I am in *reality* a christian. It seems to me, that much religion is not required, to cure one of this love for rambles on the day of God.

Ch. But what have you found to do that is better? You are equipped for something; I

perceive. What have you here under your arm?

Ed. A Testament and Class-book. I am teacher in a Sabbath-school near this.

Ch. O ho! You have got into business indeed.—Teaching Sabbath-scholars! Going to church with a Testament under your arm? You are really getting into a serious way of living. I expect to see you a priest next.

Ed. I only hope for myself, Charles, that you will see me more engaged and useful in this good work. It is *better*, you will allow, than profaning the day of God by useless sports. And I think I can add, from experience, it is more pleasant.

Ch. Pleasant! pray what is there in being confined all day to a Sabbath-school, and to church, that is pleasant? Prove to me that there is any real *pleasure* there, and I will follow your example.

Ed. Well then, come along and see for yourself. I will show you my class, and find you a seat in church, where you may hear the gospel and be directed in the way of true happiness.

Ch. I am not quite ready for that; it would not answer to break my engagements with Tom and Peter.

Ed. Bring your friends along with you. I shall easily find seats for them, and be glad to see them besides.

Ch. I doubt whether I should succeed with them this morning, the day is so pleasant.

Ed. Then make your apology, and leave them.

Ch. I wish I were as good as you, Ned, but——

Ed. Wishes, friend Charles, will effect nothing in this case, or I should wish you delivered from such courses. I speak, you know, from experience; and I am satisfied that the way of transgressors is hard, and leads to destruction. Why should you and I walk in it any longer? especially, since God has told us, that “Wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness: and all her paths, are peace.” For myself, my mind is made up to try this new way, and I do begin to find a pleasure in it which I have never before experienced.

Come, friend Charles, listen to the advice of your former companion, and go with me.

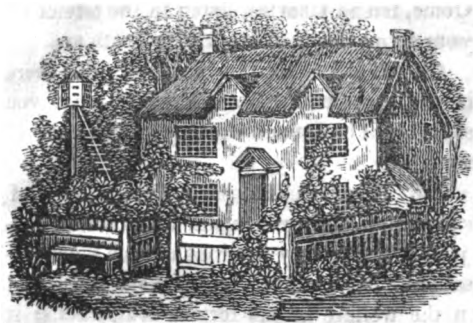
Ch. That I can't, this morning. But there is really something interesting in what you say. I will have more words with you another time.

Ed. When shall I have the pleasure of conversing with you again about these subjects? I am very desirous of such a conversation. My heart was never more interested in the welfare of my former companions; it bleeds at the remembrance of our follies. Do call upon me.

Ch. Never doubt but I will; for though I like my way best, I am curious to know how you got so turned about. Good bye.

Ed. Remember who sees you——

Ch. I shall not forget that.



CHAPTER II.

THE RAMBLE WHICH DOES NOT END PLEASANTLY.

Edward. Charles! Here.

Charles. Ah, Edward, How are you?

Ed. I thought you were about to pass, without giving me a call.

Ch. And what then?

Ed. Nothing very serious, to be sure; only you were not formerly accustomed to keep yourself at so great a distance.

Ch. We were then more alike, I suppose.

Ed. Perhaps so.—But I was never more a

friend to you than now. And it is three weeks since you promised to call upon me.

Ch. Well, honest Ned—(Edward, I suppose I must call you hereafter, you have become so precise in your notions,) I don't care if I step into your office a few minutes. I see you are at leisure, and I have nothing special to do.

Ed. I am not over anxious for ceremony, friend Charles. *Honest Ned* is as good an appellation as any other, if it really belonged to me.

Ch. Yes, I see you are all for honesty of late; but I like some pleasant sport, as we pass on through life——

Ed. *Honest* sports, I suppose.—But do you find it quite so easy to keep them within the bounds of honesty? And to make them end pleasantly?

Ch. I understand you, Edward. It was to have a conversation about the Sunday excursion, that you called me in.

Ed. Upon my word, Charles, I had no design upon you of any kind, which is not perfectly friendly.

Ch. That may be; but you would think it altogether friendly to say something on the subject of Tom's bad luck.

Ed. Tom's bad luck! You surprise me; I have heard nothing about the matter.

Ch. Is it possible! I thought you would be the first to hear of the affair. I may then as well inform you, that our ramble did not end so pleasantly as it began.

Ed. In what respects, pray?

Ch. Why, as our excursion extended several miles, and we had left the city at an early hour, without much refreshment, we became hungry, not to say faint, with so long a fast.

Ed. Naturally enough, indeed.

Ch. Very fortunately, as we thought, we came upon a little fruit garden, in front of an old house which was shut up. We concluded the family were either gone to church or fast asleep. So Peter was set to watch the doors and windows, while Tom and I got within the enclosure. We effected our purpose; and Tom had just climbed the largest pear-tree, when out bolted a stern-looking

man and a furious bull dog. Peter gave the alarm, and I ran to clear the fence. But poor Tom was so frightened that he made a slip in descending, and fell headlong.

Ed. What next?

Ch. He roared out, "I'm a dead man." This brought Peter and me to him immediately.

Ed. You had a scuffle then?

Ch. No; resistance was impossible. We were surrounded in a moment, by the whole family. Besides, we had no reason to complain of our treatment, after the first alarm was over. The dog was immediately driven off from Tom, and we were marched into the house, where Tom was examined and found to have broken a rib.

Ed. Then came the chastisement.

Ch. We expected it; but chastisement we had none, except in words. Nobody reproached us; only the old man gave us such a serious lecture, that I wished a dozen times he had plied the rattan instead of it. Thinks I to myself, this is something worse than going to church with Ned—I ask your pardon, I

meant to say, Edward. Tom cried out aloud, and we were all led to make very serious promises.

Ed. The old gentleman seems to have been a very respectable person.

Ch. He was a christian, I suspect; for I saw a large bible upon the table, and several small ones around it. He was very mild, too, considering what we had done. He gave us a deal of good advice, and then made us kneel down, while he prayed that we might be forgiven our sin of Sabbath breaking, and enabled to keep our promises of amendment. The rest of the family were equally kind and forgiving.

Ed. A merciful family truly! But did he suffer you to depart, without entering a complaint.

Ch. He did indeed, Tom excepted; whom he proposed to bring, on Monday morning, into the city in a carriage. In the mean time, medical assistance was to be obtained.

Ed. A very serious occurrence, I must say; and should think, somewhat instructive. Pray, did it not occasion some reflection?

Ch. With my companion, I think it did. For a long time after leaving the place, he uttered not a word; at last he said, "I believe we have hit upon a real christian, for once. I am sure, I never got so much good advice in all my life.—Were my master like him, I don't think I would be making such excursions. But he never seems to care what I do on the Sabbath, if I keep out of the constables' hands, and work well the rest of the week. He never gave me a Bible or a Testament, nor asked me to go to church, during the three years I have been with him. In fact, he don't go himself.—He swears dreadfully.—I think it very probable, he is now in the nine-pin alley, with the other mechanics who go there.

Ed. Poor Peter; from my heart I pity him. I am sorry there are so many in the same situation. To my certain knowledge, very many youth, in this city, are ruined by being apprenticed to such masters.—But you have said nothing about your own reflections.

Ch. For myself, I was entirely silent. But

I could not help thinking of what you said, when I left you in the morning.

Ed. What was it that I said?

Ch. "Remember, there is One that sees;" and I thought how it is said, as I believe in the Bible, 'that our sins will find us out.' I wished that I had gone with you instead of spending the day as I did.

Ed. I intended to tell you what I think about such excursions, but had not sufficient time then, nor have I now. They appear to me very differently from what they formerly did.—There is, indeed, One that sees, and who is angry with the wicked every day.—Would that you, and the companions you mentioned, could be made to feel this truth as I have felt it.

Ch. I almost begin to suspect you may be in the right.—We are certainly too thoughtless. I would be willing to go to church with you another time.

Ed. Well said, Charles; come and go with me the next Lord's day.

Ch. If nothing unexpected prevents.—



CHAPTER III.

THE COWARDLY EXCUSE.

Sabbath evening.

Edward. Friend Charles, I am glad to see you. But are you not behind your engagement.

Charles. I am, I confess. My *purpose* was to come and go with you to church.

Ed. And you *promised* to, if I understood you.

Ch. Well, I acknowledge the truth. But there are many things, you know, to prevent our doing as we should.

Ed. Yes, when we have once got into the wrong path, it is hard getting out of it.

B 2

Ch. I have begun to find it so already. No sooner had I left you, after making the engagement to attend church, than I began to feel as if the old Nick was in me.

Ed. How did you feel, pray?

Ch. I thought with myself, how should I look at church—people will think I intend becoming a christian—and then all my companions will have the laugh upon me.

Ed. I suspect, Charles, that such thoughts can be accounted for without laying them upon Satan; though he is ready enough to lead us into transgressions.

Ch. But I supposed all our wicked thoughts and doings came from Satan. George Wise says, they are all to be charged to him, and we have nothing to fear; for God will never punish us for what Satan does.

Ed. George Wise is not altogether like his name, if he talks after this manner. The Bible tells us, that we have wicked hearts, out of which “proceed evil thoughts.” Satan has no power to lead us into sin against our inclinations; and the apostle declares, that if we “resist the devil he will flee from

us." If you gave into the thoughts you mention, and have done wrong, it will doubtless remain with you to answer for them.

Ch. I did not yield entirely to them. But the more I thought of going with you, the more uneasy I felt. I wished I had only promised to slip into church by myself. But I resolved to come.

Ed. And what prevented?

Ch. Just as I was coming off, George Wise and Peter Jenkins called for me to go a sailing with them.

Ed. So you were persuaded to spend the day upon the water.

Ch. No, I told them I could not so soon forget what had happened to Tom the other Sabbath. But I did not mention my engagement with you.

Ed. Why not? You might very properly have said, you expected to call on me and go to church.

Ch. True, I might have done it.

Ed. But you were afraid of being laughed at for being inclined to what is good. Was it not so?

Ch. It was, I confess, and I am now ashamed of my fear.

Ed. You ought, no doubt, to be sorry for it. There is nothing in doing well and keeping the commandments, which merits reproach. But how did you entertain Peter and George?

Ch. I showed them my New Testament which I had purchased the past week, and asked them if they ever read that?

Ed. What answer did they give?

Ch. Peter said he never read any thing; but if he should find time to read, he thought plays would be more lively. George observed he had formerly looked into it, but not much of late. His master said it was quite unnecessary to study the Bible.

Ed. So George Wise is content to believe that all his sins belong to Satan, without consulting his Bible. Did you make any reply?

Ch. Not much. I only said, it may be we shall all wish hereafter that we had read it; upon which they laughed very heartily—declared they were not afraid of any thing be-

yond this life—and after urging me still more to go with them, left me to myself.

Ed. I am glad to hear you were not persuaded to make one of their company. You however did wrong in being so backward to let them know your engagement. You might have left them properly enough, as their object in calling upon you was far from being commendable.

Ch. But would you have me expose myself to their ill will and ridicule?

Ed. Certainly I would, if necessary, in order to avoid their evil ways. We must not be ashamed of doing right; nor afraid of having any one know that we are so inclined.

Ch. But I am no christian yet.

Ed. Very true. Nor are you likely to become one except you break with such companions, so far as to renounce their ways and their society, whenever it may interfere with keeping the commandments. You must make up your mind, not to be moved by their ridicule and contempt. They are, indeed, too ignorant and thoughtless to be competent judges in the case. If they will laugh at you,

let them laugh. It will not break your bones, nor do you any other material injury. They will find, in the end, that they themselves were acting the more foolish part.

Ch. But every thing seems to be against my becoming good. (Weeps.) It was with the greatest difficulty I could persuade myself to call upon you this evening.

Ed. So much greater is the necessity of taking your stand. Consult your Testament on this subject.

Ch. That I have begun to do already, and I find many passages which warn me against evil.

Ed. Have you also begun to pray, as well as to read the Testament?

Ch. That I have not as yet attempted to do. I fear it would be very wrong for me to pray.

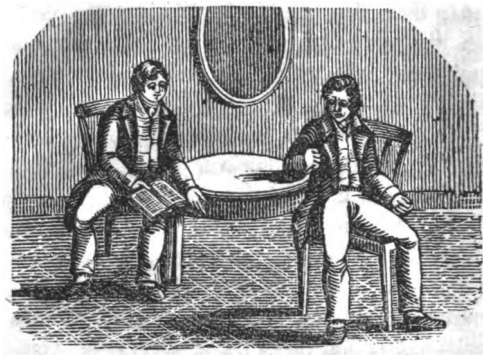
Ed. To pray carelessly, and in hypocrisy, would be very wrong. But does not the Saviour say, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you?" Does he not inform us, that God is willing to give his Holy Spirit

unto them that ask him? Did not the thief on the cross pray to Christ? Did not the publican pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner?"

Ch. I have not read the whole of these passages. It may however be as you say. I will think more of the subject.

Ed. In the mean time, friend Charles, don't be again persuaded into the way of folly, nor be ashamed of doing right. Remember that the Saviour says, if we are ashamed of him, that is, of obeying his commandments, he also will be ashamed of us in the day of judgment,

Ch. Well, I think my resolution is now made up, to come and go to church with you the next Sabbath.



CHAPTER IV.

THE GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

Walk from Church.

Charles. Now, Edward, I think you were too bad.

Edward. How?

Ch. I know I have been wicked, but I dislike to be told of it before every body.

Ed. I don't understand you. Who has told you, so publicly, that you were wicked?

Ch. Why, don't you recollect the text, nor the sermon neither?

Ed. Yes, I was too much interested in both, not to remember them. I thought they were very timely for you and me.

Ch. But it was not quite handsome for you to tell the minister beforehand, that I should be there. If I am wicked, I do not wish to be exposed in church.

Ed. I tell the minister! what has led you to think that I gave him such information?

Ch. His text and sermon. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Now was not that text for me? Did not the minister understand how George Wise and Peter Jenkins had kept me from going to church? Besides, he went on to say, that this scripture contained good advice for young persons; and that the consequence of neglecting it would be disgrace and ruin, even in the present life. He also spoke of some who abuse the Sabbath, by turning it into a day of sport and dissipation; and said that God brought many unexpected calamities upon people for such wickedness. Did not the whole of this apply to me, and to Tom, who fell from the pear-tree the other Sabbath?

Ed. I must say, friend Charles, that the discourse was very appropriate to the circumstances of young people, who live in this city. I was happy to find that our minister had chosen a subject so applicable to you; but I know you will believe me, when I say, that I have never given him any information respecting you or your companions.

Ch. Is it possible! Did he not then understand that I was to be there.

Ed. Certainly not. It was impossible that he should have learned it from any source.

Ch. You astonish me—but I acknowledge you always tell the truth. Don't you, however, think that the people understood what I had been doing, and how wicked I am?

Ed. I cannot say, Charles, what acquaintance they have with your conduct; but I have communicated nothing respecting you.

Ch. I am glad enough to hear you say this. They did not look at me, as I was expecting they would.

Ed. But there was one present who did know all.

Ch. What! one beside yourself?

Ed. Yes, one beside me, who is acquainted with your whole life, and sees all your heart.

Ch. You mean God, I suppose.

Ed. I do. It is he who gave us the Scriptures, and that enables his servants to explain them in a manner applicable to the characters of us all.

Ch. Then I can understand why the text applied to me. God, who gave us the Bible, understood what instructions would suit the conduct of men, and so he had them put down in it.

Ed. Undoubtedly. It is this circumstance which renders the Bible so useful and necessary for us. It is not only true, but contains the very directions we need.

Ch. Well, this is what I did not understand before now. I think I shall read it more.

Ed. That is right, Charles. I am pleased to see that you are willing to know more about yourself; and propose to gain this knowledge from the Bible. But I am astonished at one thing.

Ch. And what is that?

Ed. Your unwillingness to have men know your ways, while the eyes of God, which are always turned upon you, give you so little concern.

Ch. Do you suppose he minds our little concerns? George Wise says, he “imagines that the infinite God, is not particular in his observations.”

Ed. George Wise, you will recollect, is not over fond of reading his Bible. The Bible tells us that “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,” that “the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice.”

Ch. Does God concern himself much about our conduct?

Ed. The Bible will inform you, that he abhors sin, and is angry with the wicked every day. “He has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness.” We shall then be called to “give account to him of all the deeds done in the body.”

Ch. You tell me fearful things indeed.

Must all our rambles, and angry words, be exposed in the day of judgment ?

Ed. " I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." This is Christ's testimony, and must therefore be true.

Ch. What you say is very serious. It is not then of so much consequence what men know about us, as it is to do well in the sight of God: I shall not be troubled any more about the thoughts of men, if I can please him who sees my heart.

Ed. We ought to value the approbation of the wise and good, so much as to do nothing by which it may be justly forfeited; but the great point is, to have our hearts right with God.

Ch. So I perceive, for he looks upon the heart. But that, I suppose, is not so hard a matter.

Ed. There, Charles, you mistake. You don't as yet know yourself. " The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Ch. And *my* heart too ?

Ed. Yes, friend Charles, all our hearts are alike, until they are made holy by the Spirit of God.

Ch. But all those with whom I am acquainted, say our hearts are *naturally* good. And I am sure that though I have done wrong, my heart is not so much in the fault.

Ed. I am sure it must be wholly in the fault, and that all the sin you have committed has come from it. I have learned this of myself, by sad experience.

Ch. I will think more of this subject, and visit you again shortly.



CHAPTER V.

THE NARROW ESCAPE.

Monday morning.

Charles. I have called, Edward, to have some conversation with you about religion.

Edward. I am glad to see you, Charles—but it is more than I had expected, after our last conversation, and particularly after hearing of your employment yesterday.

Ch. No wonder you should have given me up; I see now that I was ignorant of myself, and that my heart has been very hard.

Ed. But where have you learned that lesson? I thought your sailing with George Wise and Peter Jenkins, would be very little calculated to lead your mind to serious thoughts.

Ch. You thought rightly enough; for they only laugh at my endeavours to be good. It was in this way they persuaded me to go sailing along with them. But I got a lesson in the end.

Ed. I have understood that the boat was upset, and *you* came near *being drowned*.

Ch. I did indeed; and it was then that I first began to know something about my sinful state.

Ed. How did that happen?

Ch. The boat was capsized at some distance from the land; and I, being unable to swim much, was obliged to hold on to it, till George and Peter should get ashore and return to my relief.

Ed. And what then?

Ch. The water was very still, and I had no difficulty in keeping hold of the boat. But I did not know, you will understand, how long the boys would be gone, nor when the

waves might rise. The tide was likely to ebb soon, and then, thought I, it will be all over with me.

Ed. You had, it appears, some serious thoughts while in the water.

Ch. I had truly. "God has observed," thought I, "all my evil deeds. He has been teaching me lessons of late—as when Tom fell from the pear-tree, and the good old man gave us such kind advice; and when I heard such preaching last Sabbath; but I have refused to learn. I have even been ashamed to be thought religious. And what the minister said will come to pass, sure enough; for I shall very likely be drowned." (Weeps.)

Ed. It was a solemn moment.

Ch. O Edward, I then considered, "how thoughtless have I been, to spend all my days in such follies! and now I must die. I must go to God with my account, and he will certainly condemn me. I am not fit to die and appear before God."

Ed. But did you not think of praying to him for his mercy to save you?

Ch. Yes, I began immediately to cry, "God

be merciful to me a sinner! God be merciful to me a sinner!" I remembered what you had said about prayer, and tried to be sincere and in earnest. But then my heart looked so bad, that I could not pray. (Weeps.)

Ed. It was by this means, that you came to know the evil of your heart.

Ch. It was indeed. I had before supposed, that my heart would be penitent and good, just when I should wish. George Wise says, he "can repent at any time, and it is quite unnecessary to do any thing about religion, till death shall be at the door." But I found all this to be very false; for the more I tried to repent, the worse I seemed to be.

Ed. Did you make any promises, in the mean time?

Ch. I confess I did; and what most troubles me now, is, that my heart will not let me keep them.

Ed. But you have not told me of your deliverance.

Ch. George and Peter came at last, with a boat, and took me off.—"Never mind," said they, "the old Nick has not got you,

after all. You will live to have many a ramble of a sabbath." "That is more than I intend," said I; "as things have turned out, I have had a plenty of sailing and rambling too, on the sabbath. My mind is made up, never to be guilty of such wickedness again." We had now reached the shore, and I immediately returned home.

Ed. You have had a narrow escape, friend Charles, and one which ought to affect you with grateful contrition. But do you think your mind is wholly made up, to attend to religion now?

Ch. I scarcely dare say how it is with me, I find myself so wicked. I find too, that when my heart says one thing, it means another; and that other thing it will do, in spite of me.

Ed. You begin now, I would hope, to understand what the Bible means, when it declares, "the heart is deceitful above all things." But you must not forget, that your heart is yourself. The wickedness of it belongs to you and no one else.

Ch. I became convinced of that, when I

was in the water. My sins all stuck fast to me. "George Wise was wrong," something appeared to say to me, "Satan will not help any one's sins off from him. He gets people into sin, but never gets them out of it."

Ed. You are right, Charles, very many are drawn into the snare of the devil, and are destroyed. But you have been sufficiently warned. Do you "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Let no time be lost; begin this very day.—I have no more leisure for conversation now, but come to-morrow evening, and I will try to converse with you further on this subject.

Ch. So do. I will be sure to come.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PIOUS MOTHER'S REWARD.

Charles. I have been up to my promise this time.

Edward. So I perceive. I should hope you have not, in the mean time, become indifferent to the subject of our last conversation.

Ch. I think not, Edward ; but I have many fears, lest I shall be drawn off from my resolutions.

Ed. Doubtless the danger is great, and may well excite your anxiety. The world, as well as our sinful hearts, is opposed to religion. The Adversary, too, will do his best to retain his servants, and effect their ruin. But after all, the greatest obstacle is in ourselves.

Ch. It seems to me, Edward, that I have two hearts; one that wishes me to become good, and a friend to God, and one that does not.

Ed. In other words, your conscience is on

the side of religion, but your inclinations are against it. I have had some painful experience of this state of mind.

Ch. Have you indeed! I did not suspect that any other person ever experienced such difficulties. Will you not give me some account of the means by which you became so much interested in what is good? It was not so with you formerly.

Ed. It was formerly bad enough with me; and I sometimes fear, that I have scarcely become any better. My thoughts on the subject of religion, are, however, very much changed. I am daily more strengthened in my resolutions to seek first the kingdom of God.

Ch. And what first directed your thoughts that way.

Ed. Good advice was the means, which God saw fit to bless to my spiritual welfare. I was apprenticed to a man, who, you will recollect, was once very indifferent to religion. My poor mother was unwilling to expose me to such temptation; but Providence afforded her, after the death of my father, no other



way of providing for her children. She was obliged to give me up, which she did with many tears, and, I doubt not, with earnest prayers to God on my behalf.

Ch. I do not wonder at her anxiety.

Ed. My situation became perilous indeed; for my master, though an honest man, and respectable with the world, wholly neglected church, and paid little regard to the sabbath. His apprentices were, on this day, turned loose, to ramble, and pass the time as they liked. He himself often spent the day in visiting, and sometimes in looking over his accounts.

Ch. With all this, the boys were sufficiently pleased, I suppose.

Ed. I don't know how others felt, but I could never enjoy such liberties as I would, because of the admonitions of my mother. As often as I visited home, I was called to a kind but serious account of the manner in which my time was spent. And then it was, that the entreaties of my best friend, together with the accusations of conscience, made me unhappy, and led me into many re-

solutions to reform. But I gradually lost, in a great measure, these early impressions in favour of religion; and began, at last, to sin as fearlessly as most of my companions.

Ch. This, I suppose, was about the time we first became acquainted with each other.

Ed. It was; and you know how foolishly and wickedly I lived. I shall never forget our Sunday excursions, and rogueries, nor with what care I concealed them from my anxious mother. O! how much cause have I to be thankful for that kindest of all earthly friends.

Ch. Was it her advice then, that prevailed with you to relinquish these Sunday sports?

Ed. Not entirely hers. The advice to which I referred, came from a most unexpected quarter. My master himself, was led to change his course of life. Through the persuasion of a friend, he commenced attending upon public worship, and very soon appeared to take a decided interest in being there regularly on the sabbath. The longer he went, the more serious and exemplary he appeared, until, at last, he gave up all busi-

ness on the sabbath. He also began to drop, now and then, a hint, that it might be better for us apprentices to go to some place of worship, than spend the day in idleness. He did not say much, however, until he made a full disclosure of the new feelings which he had experienced on religious subjects. It was one sabbath evening, after attending church as usual, that he called the boys, whom he had retained at home, together by ourselves. I shall never forget the scene. We entered the parlour, where we saw several Bibles and Hymn books upon the table. He was sitting in a serious mood, and I thought appeared as if he had been weeping. When we were seated, he began conversing with us in a totally new strain. "I have called you together," said he, "to discharge a duty which has been too long neglected. You have probably regarded me as an indulgent master ; and I can truly say, that I have intended to act the part of kindness to you ; but in one great point I have been entirely deficient. I have done nothing to promote, but much to hinder, your spiritual welfare.

My conscience tells me, that I should confess my unfaithfulness in this particular, and also inform you, that my views respecting religion have entirely changed. I wish formally to take back all I have said against the worship of God, and the observance of the sabbath. I see that I have been wrong and inexcusably wicked, and my heart is pained while I think of the pernicious example I have set before you. My resolution is now made up to begin, with the help of God, a new life; and I wish to engage all of you in the same course." Having said this, and much more to the same purpose, he distributed to each of us a Bible and a Hymn book, which he exhorted us to read with attention and prayer to God for his blessing. The rest of the family were called in, when he announced, "that his house was hereafter to be a house of prayer." A chapter was then selected, which all united in reading, after which, we knelt down, and my master led our devotions with extraordinary fervour. It was a time of weeping. I felt my heart deeply affected, as I remembered that my mother had often prayed, in

my hearing, with my little brothers and sisters, that the Lord would change the heart of my master to penitence, and his dwelling to a house of prayer.

Ch. That was very extraordinary. But did you become good without delay or difficulty?

Ed. Alas! Charles, I soon found that the more I thought of renouncing my evil ways, the more I was tempted to do evil. My heart appeared to become worse, rather than better, and my sins to be constantly increasing. But my master, seeing the impression that was made upon my mind, did not cease instructing me. Through the grace of God, I think I was enabled at last, to trust in Christ for pardon and acceptance with him. I now see things in a new light, and have a desire, which I hope is increasing, to be the servant of God for ever.

Ch. That, Edward, is what I now wish for myself. Can you tell me how I shall get into this good way of life?

Ed. It is not, friend Charles, by trying to excuse or forget your sins, but by confessing

them to God, that you will find mercy. You must go to him in all your poverty and wretchedness, and hope only in the merits of his dear Son. You must be willing to be saved, as a poor sinner, in Christ's own way, and to devote yourself, without reserve to his service and glory. In Him you may find peace, and be for ever blest.—But I perceive, my hour is up, and I must be otherwise engaged.—Come again soon.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAY TO BE SAVED.

Charles. Edward, as our last conversation ended abruptly, I have had a desire to renew it, when there should be opportunity for further inquiry.

Edward. It is well, Charles, I shall be happy to afford you any assistance in finding the good way.

Ch. My mind is made up, as it appears to me, to walk in that way; but alas, I don't see how to get at it.

Ed. I am fearful, my friend, that I may not prove a judicious adviser in so serious a case. Had you not better call upon some older christian for direction? Our minister, I am sure, would be pleased to talk with you on this subject.

Ch. That I should be willing to do some other time, but not at present.

Ed. If then you ask my assistance, I will, in the first place, inquire what views you have obtained of yourself.

Ch. O, Edward, nothing pleasant—I see nothing good in me.

Ed. Do you then entirely renounce the opinion that your heart is good, while your conduct has been bad?

Ch. I do, ever since I had my narrow escape in the water. I agreed with George Wise before; but I now think my heart is the worst part of me.

Ed. I am glad to see that your mind is changed in this particular. It is an evidence that the light of truth is breathing in upon you; and I trust that this sense of the corruption of your nature will lead you to true repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ch. But do you really think that any one, so wicked as I am, can be saved?

Ed. I should not dare to say any thing to you on this subject, which the scriptures do not. But they seem to encourage every poor sinner to come to Jesus Christ.

Ch. That is good. But what if my wicked heart will not let me come?

Ed. My minister used to say to me, “your heart is yourself.” Now if we don’t

go to the Saviour, I see not how we can be saved.

Ch. Do you mean, Edward, that I should go to any particular place to find Jesus Christ? I am very ignorant about these things.

Ed. No; going to Christ is not some movement of the body. Christ is every where, so that it is not necessary for us to seek him in any one place. It is however right and very important to meet with his people for worship.

Ch. It is then my *heart* that must go to Christ?

Ed. Yes, you must be willing to give up those evil courses of every sort, which are displeasing to God. You must consider how Jesus Christ, being the Son of God, loved poor sinners, and came into this world that he might suffer and die for our salvation. You must be willing to be saved by his precious blood, and to be his servant for ever.

Ch. But how can I be his servant?

Ed. You must read the Bible, as his book, and be willing to do all that he has commanded you in it. You must not only be

sorry before him for all your sins, but willing to be indebted to him for all your salvation. You must trust him for it all.

Ch. What you say does seem very like the directions I have lately read in my Testament. I now recollect how the Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." But when should I go to Christ?

Ed. The command is to repent and believe in him *now*. "God *now* commandeth all men every where to repent." "Behold *now* is the accepted time; Behold *now* is the day of salvation."

Ch. Well, Edward, I see a little more into this subject now.—Good bye.—

E

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EASY SERVICE.

Charles. I am sure that my mind is made up now to be a christian.

Edward. Ah, how is that?

Ch. I cannot tell you how it came, but only that I now see that I should love the Lord Jesus Christ, and obey God in all things.

Ed. It is well; we should all do so.

Ch. But there is one painful doubt that I have on my mind, I say to myself, "How can this be the right way, which is so very easy?"

Ed. But do you, indeed, find it easy to love the Lord Jesus Christ?

Ch. Yes, I desire nothing else so much. My thoughts go after him of their own accord. He appears to me infinitely good and beautiful now.

Ed. But won't you find it hard to love your fellow men?

Ch. O no, I feel altogether kind to them.

It would give me a great pleasure to make them all happy.

Ed. Is it this circumstance that makes you doubtful?

Ch. Yes; I do not see how the way of salvation can be so easy.

Ed. But the Saviour says, his yoke is easy, and his burden light.

Ch. He does so indeed, but I did not understand it before now. There is real happiness, then, in serving Christ. What a fool I was to be wicked so long. I shall tell every body I can, how much better it is to be religious.

Ed. Yes, Charles, it is a great mistake which we had fallen into, that we could not be pious and useful without being gloomy and miserable.

Ch. So I perceive; and I shall persuade George, and Peter, and Tom, to become christians immediately.

Ed. I wish you might persuade them to attend to religion now; but I fear that you will not find them much disposed to hear you.

However, go to them; you may at least succeed in persuading them to attend church, or God may bless your endeavours to engage their attention to this subject.

Ch. But do you think I may feel certain that I am in the right way?

Ed. My minister told me, I recollect, when I was beginning to hope in Christ, to ask God to keep me from being deceived, and to study to find out the very way which the Bible teaches. He said that our hearts, being deceitful, might lead us into a mistake. He also said that some who had once thought themselves good christians turned out badly.

Ch. Yes, I recollect one such person; Simon, whom Philip baptized in Samaria? Was not he such a character?

Ed. It would seem so. You must, therefore, ask God to give you wisdom and keep you in the right way.

Ch. But do you think I shall ever again wish to go in my foolish courses?

Ed. I should hope, friend Charles, that you have given them up for ever. But I suspect

you will soon find, that there are many things which would turn you away from keeping the commandments.

Ch. It may be so; but I never felt so cheerful in all my life. I would rather be a christian, than to have the whole world to enjoy.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILLING MIND.

An Early Call.

Edward. Good morning, Charles: you are a man of business, I should judge, from your early rising.

Charles. I thank you, I have begun of late, to be more industrious and saving of my time. I think more than formerly of doing my duty to my master, and being faithful in all things.

Ed. That is right. Religion will not make us neglectful of our business. My master says he is quite certain that it makes both masters and apprentices better.

Ch. Oh, if my master would think so too! but he may yet be persuaded of it.

Ed. Yes, he may: the grace of God can convince him. And though your station is inferior to his, he may learn from your good conduct, that it is well to be pious.

Ch. So I have thought, and I pray God to make me wise and keep me in the right way. But I had a particular reason for calling upon you this morning.

Ed. What is it, pray?

Ch. I have been thinking how I might do some good in the world.

Ed. How came you to think of doing good? Has any one conversed with you on that subject?

Ch. No; but your minister preached about it last sabbath, and I was present in the gallery to hear. Something appeared to whisper that it was all for me; and I have been thinking ever since what I might do.

Ed. Our minister says, that young persons should first learn to do good by their wise conduct.

Ch. I understand that; but is there no other way of being useful?

Ed. Yes, we may advise our youthful companions, and discourage their foolish courses.

Ch. I understand that too, for it was in this way that you led me to think of living a new life.

Ed. We may also distribute, as well as read, interesting tracts and books. They are very cheap, and often lead persons to serious thoughts.



Ch. That is well, I had not thought of doing good by such means. I shall know what to do with the money I used to spend in my Sunday excursions.

Ed. I might possibly get you a place in the sabbath school; especially as your opportunities for learning have been so good. I shall go to the superintendant, and present your case to him.

Ch. So do, Edward; it is my desire to get into some such good way. I shall then hear your minister, whom I love dearly, because he is so plain in his preaching, and tells me all my heart.

Ed. You will also become acquainted with some pious friends, who neither curse and swear, nor love sabbath breaking. You will find them pleasant and safe companions. We have many pleasant meetings, and the longer we are engaged in our work, the more we love one another.

Ch. Oh, that is just what I want. I shall then be delivered from the solicitations of George Wise, who is none the better for all I can say to him.

Ed. Alas, poor George Wise! But you feel no disposition, I hope, to follow his counsels.

Ch. None at all. I am quite sick of my evil ways, and hope I shall never return to them. They never gave me any happiness, though they brought many mishaps upon me.

Ed. Are you unhappy then?

Ch. Not now. My heart is light and full of joy; especially when the sabbath comes, and I can go to the house of God. Then too, I am reading my Testament with great pleasure. All is new to me; the world is new, and God is new, and heaven also, as the words of Christ and the apostles describe it.

Ed. It is well, my friend; God is a better master than sin is; let us be faithful to him. I will speak for you to our superintendent, and you shall be informed of the result.

Ch. I thank you, Edward, you will do me the greatest favour. But how happy I am! My heart burns within me, when I think of doing good for Christ's sake.



CHAPTER X.

THE FRIENDLY MIND.

Charles. My friend, I am glad to find you alone. Having an hour to spare, I have come to hold some further conversation with you, about the good way.

Edward. Your call is pleasant indeed. It does me great satisfaction to see you so intent on this subject. There is nothing else so worthy to employ our conversation.

Ch. But I am quite ignorant of many things which I have need to understand. I begin to see that it is a very different thing to be religious from what I had imagined.

Ed. In what respects do you find it so different?

Ch. Why, I had always supposed that it must be very painful to give up my evil courses, and employ myself in christian duties.

Ed. Well, how do you find it?

Ch. At times, altogether pleasant. I never knew what happiness is, before now. The more I read the word of God, and pray, and converse with good christians, the more delight I experience. I wonder that every body cannot be made to see how much better it is to keep the commandments, than to go in the ways of sin.

Ed. It is a wonder, indeed; and yet you will find it hard to persuade careless people to believe what you say. But have you con-

versed with Tom and George, as you proposed? I had forgot to inquire.

Ch. Yes, and with Peter Jenkins too; but I fear to no purpose. Tom did look a little serious, and said nothing in derision of me. But George laughed outright, and said, "he was quite good enough already; that it was nobody's business what became of him, and he was not afraid of any thing after death."

Ed. How did Peter treat you?

Ch. He was rather more sensible than George; for he acknowledged it would be well to attend to religion. But he said he had lectures enough at home, and did not care to have me instruct him.

Ed. Perhaps you did not converse with them so kindly and wisely as you ought.

Ch. I am certain that what I said to them was from love; but I confess there is not much wisdom in me.

Ed. You must not be discouraged, however, in doing good, as you have opportunity, to these companions. They may think better of being religious, if they see that it makes you kind and more friendly than ever.

Ch. I am sure that I am more friendly to every one than I was before. It would be the joy of my heart to be doing good; and yet I am not myself good as I should wish to be.

Ed. Have you any difficulty on this account?

Ch. Yes, very much. I had expected, if I became a christian, to find myself altogether good and pious.

Ed. Most persons have that notion, I believe. I recollect now, that I mentioned the same thing to my minister, when I told him of my hope of salvation. He said that religion did not make persons think themselves very good, but led them to hate and avoid transgression with great care, and to confess their sins to God.

Ch. I do confess all my sins to God, and have hope in his son, Jesus Christ, for salvation. That is a beautiful passage, where he says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Ed. It is, indeed, with many more like it, in the Bible. Do you not recollect the parable of the prodigal son?

Ch. I do; I came to it to-day, as I am reading my Testament in course. No doubt, said I to myself, that wicked young man means me, for God has received me back to his love. So I stopt, and wept to think of his mercy. O it is great, very great to poor sinners!

Ed. There is no doubt of that, and we ought to love him for all his kindness.

Ch. Is there no way, then, of being good enough at once? I long to be quite free from wickedness.

Ed. I do not know how good we might be, if we continually strove, as we ought, to avoid evil, and do what is right.—The only way to be better, I understand, is to labour to be faithful, and look to God for his grace to help us.

Ch. That I will endeavour to do, all the days of my life; and my hope is, that all my companions will be brought to the same mind.



CHAPTER XI.

THE CHEERFUL DOER.

Walk from the Sabbath School.

Ed. Friend Charles, I am glad to see you so regularly and punctually at your post. You like your situation I presume.

Ch. Our superintendent, you know, is always urging us to be in time, and I am sure he has the good of the school at heart. If I could excuse myself from being punctual, I would not; but to tell the truth, I have no disposition to do it.

Ed. I am pleased to hear you say so. We ought to perform this service cheerfully, and to be an example to all who are engaged in it.

Ch. I can say that I do it cheerfully enough. It does not cost me half the toil and expense which my wicked courses have. It is easier walking in the right way, than in the wrong way.

Ed. Ah, how do you make that out?

Ch. By my experience. I used to be perpetually harassed by companions, who were always proposing some excursion, or getting up some other amusement. When the sabbath came, it brought me no rest. Now I say to myself, can I not better rise early and be diligent in doing good in the sabbath school, than be such a slave to useless sports?

Ed. Very true.

Ch. But I also love this way best. It

makes me quite happy to see my class out bright and early, and so anxious to learn. I hope they will learn the folly of such conduct as I have practised. And then our companions are so pleasant—no profaneness—no quarrels—such sweet hymns and pleasant meetings—it seems like heaven on earth. I am sometimes more happy than I could tell you.

Ed. It would seem, then, that you begin to think it better to obey God even for this life.

Ch. Yes, if I know any thing by experience. My thoughts are wonderfully changed. I now see that I am a servant of God, and must obey him in all things—particularly in doing good as he gives me opportunity.

Ed. Do you then find much pleasure in doing good?

Ch. Indeed, it is not much that I can do; but I have read that “a man is accepted according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not.” So I take courage to attempt something—a little I may do.

Ed. Yes, we may all do something, and be the happier for it.

Ch. So I think, now that my eyes have been opened. I now perceive how low my thoughts were when I made all my calculations for myself, and sought only my own pleasure.

Ed. Low indeed, and yet many persons would think it almost disgraceful to do good in any way.

Ch. Yes, George Wise and Peter Jenkins have been laughing at my employment and resolutions; but I was not much moved by it. I only said, we will see which course of life turns out best; for I am looking to the end.

Ed. What answer did they give you?

Ch. "Why," said George, "as to that, I have no concern. It will be time enough to prepare for the end when we see it coming. Let us be happy while we can." Peter was not disposed to reply.

Ed. We must not expect to get forward in the good way without some kind of opposition. Let us look to the end of these things; as you have suggested, the course which is best in the *end*, is the most worthy to be pursued.

Ch. O that all young persons could be made to think so. It would save multitudes from the worst crimes. I often weep when I reflect on my lightness and folly, and how deceived I was in thinking there is true happiness in following my wicked inclinations.

Ed. You thought just as I had done, and as all do before they seek to be wise in keeping the commandments. Such is the folly of young people and old ones too; and we are highly favoured, if God has enabled us to escape from it.

Ch. Your conversation is very pleasant; but I must leave you here, as this way is the most direct to my home.



CHAPTER XII.

THE HARD WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS.

Charles. It is true enough that “the way of transgressors is hard.”

Edward. So the Bible teaches. But you speak as if you had some illustration of this truth in mind. Pray, who has got into difficulty by his transgressions?

Ch. Is it possible you have not heard the news!

Ed. News! what news?

Ch. That George Wise has been thieving, and got into prison by the means.

Ed. I had heard nothing of the matter; but I don't much wonder at it.

Ch. How is it you do not wonder? Nobody that I have heard, ever doubted his being honest. You know it was what he boasted of, that he could be honest as the best, without being a christian.

Ed. I recollect that he made many professions in a careless way. There was, however, one special deficiency, and that was his neglect of good advice. I have been expecting that his visits to the gardens and the theatre, to say nothing of his sabbath-day rambles, would be his undoing.

Ch. The very thing which has proved so.

Ed. Have you then learned the particulars?

Ch. Yes, I have conversed with him more than once. He confesses all, though he don't appear very penitent for his crimes.

Ed. But how did he get in the way of thieving?

Ch. Not all at once. He was led on by degrees, from his love of amusement and good cheer, as he calls it.

Ed. By what particular course?

Ch. By neglecting church, he got into wild company. His company caused him expense. They led him to the public gardens very frequently, next to the circus, and then to the theatre. He soon found that his spending-money was not sufficient for this pleasure; so he set about supplying himself with what he needed.

Ed. But I have heard it said his friends gave him too much money from the first.

Ch. Perhaps they did; the more we have the more we want. So George Wise found it, and accordingly began to help himself from the counter of his master.

Ed. Is it so!

Ch. But he did it sparingly at first, and not often. It was only when he found his pocket too empty for the circus or the theatre, that he made up the deficiency by pilfering.

Ed. But why did he not cease going to both, when he found he had not the means of doing it honestly?

Ch. He says he intended to stop; and he resolved, every time he went, that it should

be the last; but the papers and theatre handbills, were constantly awakening his curiosity, until he could make no resistance.

Ed. A good lesson, I should think, for those who allow such handbills to be in their stores.

Ch. And for circus and theatre men too.

Ed. O, they mostly do not regard consequences, if they can but get their reward of money. Men who keep such places for destroying young persons, and befooling poor people out of their bread, have no fear of God before their eyes.

Ch. Well, but I am astonished that honest persons will go there.

Ed. It is not often that good persons do go there. Those that are of another character go, for the same reason that you and I formerly had our sabbath-day rambles. They wish to be amused, and cannot contrive how to pass away their time. But how came George to be detected?

Ch. When the love of going to the circus and theatre had got such hold of him that he found it impossible to keep away from them,

he began to lose all conscience about honesty: and having one day an opportunity of taking a large sum from his master, he did not hesitate. In this he was detected, and the money found in his trunk; for which he is now in prison.

Ed. O, foolish George! How much better it had been to have left off his sabbath-day rambles, before he got into such company, and gone regularly to the house of God, where he would have been instructed in his duty, and warned against such crimes.

Ch. I am astonished at the goodness of God to me. I can never be thankful enough to him for sending you to advise me.

Ed. The praise belongs to Him, if we are kept from the very worst crimes. And nothing, I am sure, will so effectually keep us, as the cultivation of piety in ourselves, and faithful endeavours to recommend it to others.

Ch. So I believe; but I am in haste.

G

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PROGRESS OF EVIL.

Edward. Have you a little leisure, Charles?

Charles. I have nothing more to do till my master returns, which will likely be soon; but in the mean time I am right glad to see you.

Ed. I have been thinking about George Wise since our last interview, and wish to know whether any thing can be done for him.

Ch. Nothing, I am sure, to save him from the state's prison. It comes out that he has been thieving a long time, and taken large sums. More than one person has lost by him.

Ed. Indeed! But that is worse than he acknowledged at first.

Ch. It is so; but it seems that he makes no conscience of telling falsehoods.

Ed. That is as might be expected. I know from experience that one sin draws another after it. When I began to love rambling on the sabbath day, I took to swearing like my companions. When I had learned to swear,

I next began to take a glass, and then to tell great stories—I might have said, to falsify.

Ch. Is it possible! I thought you had kept yourself free from the wickedness, which most, in such circumstances, practise.

Ed. Perhaps I did as free as most people of the same character: but the truth is, such company, and neglect of instruction, and violations of the holy sabbath, lead young persons on to a thousand crimes, of which their parents and guardians are not aware.

Ch. I believe you, for there was almost no wickedness which I was not prepared to engage in, had the opportunity offered. Had not Providence kept me back, I might now have been in confinement with George, if not in a worse place. But do you know what is thought of Peter Jenkins?

Ed. I have heard nothing.

Ch. Some think that he has received a part of the stolen money. His master doubts whether Peter has not robbed him.

Ed. I hope not; but the Bible says, "evil communications corrupt good manners." Have you seen Peter?

Ch. I have seen him to-day, but he did not enter into much conversation with me. I however asked him which he now thought the best way of life—"to go on in his wicked courses, or to come with us to the house of God, and seek the salvation of his soul?"

Ed. I am glad you said that to Peter. What did he reply?

Ch. "I confess," said he, "I like the *end* of your way best, if I could bring myself to be happy in it."

Ed. Well, had you nothing to say about the happiness to be found in the right way?

Ch. I don't know whether I answered him wisely; I said, "I doubt whether you will ever get into the good way, if you seek it first only for the sake of being happy. You must be sorry for all your sins, and go to God to have mercy on you. But should you ever become a christian, you will find it more happy, in this life, than to be what you now are."

Ed. Well said.

Ch. "How," said he, "do you know how nappy I am?"—I answered, "by my own experience; for I once sought for pleasure in

your courses, and found none." Here the conversation ended.

Ed. Who can tell but Peter may take warning, and betake himself to better company and a new life. I think you should see him again, and persuade him to visit our sabbath school, if it is but to look at it and hear for once the instructions which are given. But I have something to relate to you which pleases me much.

Ch. What is it, pray?

Ed. Mr. Greedy, with whom George lives, has had a long conversation with my master. It was most of it in my hearing, and quite to the point, I should judge,

Ch. Let us hear it then.

Ed. I cannot repeat the whole; but the day before yesterday they came into the office, talking very earnestly. "I cannot understand," said Mr. Greedy, "why my apprentices should treat me so shamefully. I give them all the liberty they want, and let them go just where they please of a Sunday. I have lavished my cash upon this dog of a

George Wise from the first, and now he has robbed me for my kindness."

"Perhaps," said my master, "your indulgence and generosity have not been of exactly the right character."

"What!" asked Mr. Greedy, "would you have me depend more upon the cowskin, and less upon the kind treatment of my boys?"

"By no means," replied my master, (and he said it truly,) "I make very little use of coercive measures. But I avoid cherishing the evil propensities and vices of my apprentices, by giving them permission to do what is in itself wrong. They are not allowed to ramble abroad on the sabbath, nor to work neither."

"Do you think it wrong, then," said Mr. Greedy, "to let them have one day of rest and sport out of seven? Do you expect to make saints of them by the wholesale?"

"I think it our duty," rejoined my master, "to grant them every reasonable indulgence, and above all, to let them rest on the sab-

bath. But this is something different from allowing them to ramble abroad and associate with the worst and most seductive companions on the day appointed of God for very different purposes. If they become saints, which I hope they may, it will afford me unspeakable satisfaction to have contributed, in any way, to so happy a result. But I do not stop with mere restriction—I encourage their going to the sabbath school, and the house of God. I supply them, as far as I can, with useful books, and endeavour to render their situation pleasant to them.”

“But,” said Mr. Greedy, “the church I attend has none of these things. And then too the preaching is not so well calculated to keep men strait in this world. I don’t know whether my apprentices would be much improved by attending it.

My master replied, with great seriousness: “As to that, neighbour Greedy, it may be well for you to consider whether the true gospel is preached where you attend meeting I acknowledge that I once thought with you,

on these subjects, and went occasionally to your church; but I began at last to find that I could not trust the morals of my family with those who would take away from them all fear of a future judgment, and the punishment of the wicked. This led me to doubt the correctness of my belief. I searched the Bible for myself, and I am now convinced, that I was deluded."

"Well," said Mr. Greedy, "I must confess that this change has improved your apprentices at least, for there are not more steady and industrious young men in the city; and I don't know but I shall yet be of your opinion."

Ch. Good! Would that all masters might become like yours.

Ed. A truly kind wish; but I must be going.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE COMPANION OF FOOLS.

Charles. Edward—excuse my calling you in. I have heard more of Peter.

Edward. And I too, more than I had wished to hear.

Ch. You refer, I suppose, to his flight.

Ed. I do; but what do you know of the circumstances?

Ch. Not much—only they say he was likely to be found an accomplice with George. His master was so well persuaded of it, that he was only waiting to obtain more disclosures from him, and to secure himself, when he gave them the slip.

Ed. He is gone then.

Ch. Yes, and without leaving any trace behind; but it is thought he has got on board some vessel for the south, and will go to the pirates.

Ed. Poor Peter! He must have been driven to desperation. All this comes of bad company and sabbath breaking.

Ch. It is believed that George Wise has put Peter up to this for fear of being brought out in more of his villanies.

Ed. Very likely. Those who keep bad company have to bear the sins of others, as well as their own.

Ch. How thankful should I be to God, who has enabled me to escape the snare. I am persuaded now, that it was the intention of George to lead me into their plans. I recollect that Peter and he used to have conversations between themselves; and I once overheard him ask Peter, if they had not best to let me go snacks with them.

Ed. "A companion of fools," it is said, "shall be destroyed." And so it turns out; but for the love of rambling on the sabbath,

and such companions as George Wise, Peter Jenkins might have done well. Now he is likely to be all that is bad—perhaps even a pirate, and be hung at the yard-arm. Poor Mrs. Jenkins! Peter's mother.

Ch. Have you seen her?

Ed. Yes, she has been at our house, to disclose her troubles to my master; for since he has become pious, every one considers him their friend. And a sad story it was.

Ch. I should expect so.

Ed. It was enough to make one weep to hear her tell how Peter was her principal hope—that she brought him up with the greatest care, and was expecting to see him become a useful man.

Ch. But why then did she put him an apprentice to such a man as Mr. Goodless, and suffer him to rove with such companions as George?

Ed. Ah, that was what she most lamented; but she said her husband ordered the affair in his own way: He was not concerned, she said, for the things of another world, and so

thought of nothing but giving Peter a good business.

Ch. Oh, foolish Mr. Jenkins!

Ed. True enough. But most people don't consider with whom they put their children, if only the business is good; and so it comes to pass, that they forget all their good instructions at home, and become thoughtless and wild. I do believe, if my anxious mother had not prayed hard for me all the time my master was neglectful of religion, I should have been ruined.

Ch. Unless God had sent some one to warn you, as he did you to me.

Ed. Some who live with irreligious masters and guardians, are saved from the way of transgression. But so it has not been with George and Peter. It brought tears from my eyes, to hear Mrs. Jenkins relate her trials. She says, she shall die of sorrow for her dear Peter.

Ch. You bring to my mind how it is said that king David mourned over his wicked son Absalom. I read it last sabbath till I got it by heart. "And the king was much moved,

and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Ed. It is an affecting passage, indeed. I never felt it so before now. Very likely Mrs. Jenkins will have her heart broken of grief; and then Peter will have destroyed his mother.

Ch. Don't you also think Mr. Goodless will come in for some portion of the blame? I sometimes think that good and pious masters, like yours, could do almost what they please with their apprentices.

Ed. Not with all of them. But I know from experience, how great an advantage it is to have a master who encourages me in good things; whilst I also see that most young men follow the example of their masters, in their profaneness and neglecting church. I wonder that all parents do not hesitate to put their children in the way of such temptation.

Ch. It seems then that Peter is gone be-

H

yond our influence. We may never have more opportunities to do him good; but there is Tom, who had the ramble with us, when I was caught stealing fruit in the old man's garden: perhaps something may be done for him.

Ed. A good thought. Let us not be weary in well doing. I hope you will look him up immediately.

Ch. If God permit I will, and warn him by the examples of George and Peter.

Ed. So do. Farewell.

CHAPTER XV.

THE APPRENTICE WHO WOULD NOT BE TAUGHT BY AFFLICTION.

Edward. Charles, I am happy to find you in. You are at leisure, I hope?

Charles. I am at present, and have pleasure at seeing you here. I have wished an opportunity of informing you what has come of my search after my Tom.

Ed. The very thing which brought me hither. Have you succeeded then in finding him?

Ch. Not Tom himself. He is gone; but his character is unhappily left behind. I found enough of that to discourage my pursuit of him.

Ed. But has he been guilty of any crime which is not common to other young persons?

Ch. I fear that he has. They inform me that when he got better of the injury he experienced by falling from the fruit tree in the old man's garden, he was more wild than ever. He betook himself again to rambling on Sunday, and soon got into bad company.

Ed. Sad! sad indeed!

Ch. Yes; and the event proved it so; for his company led him to bad places, where Satan found plenty of work for him.

Ed. That is what might have been expected. Did his master, in the mean time, approve of his conduct?

Ch. No; Mr. Loveless, though he had no great regard for the sabbath, or for religion, was watchful over his own interests. He soon learned that the companions of Tom made him unsteady and idle; that he was far less trusty than before, and getting into an entirely bad way. He forbid his going abroad, on the sabbath, without his permission.

Ed. Did he also encourage him to go to church? I have thought that many young persons fall into bad courses, from not knowing how to spend their time comfortably, especially on the sabbath.

Ch. That is just what my experience teaches me. Had any one encouraged me, from the first, to go to the house of God, I might have been saved from many grievous

sins. Mr. Loveless, I believe, is himself a careless man, and thinks very little of church-going people. But not to say how that is, Tom had become too resolute in wickedness, to be easily restrained. It soon came to an open quarrel with his master, and he was turned off.

Ed. And what next?

Ch. Tom went and connected himself with the circus, where he found plenty of idle companions, and became more wicked and idle than before. He there learned to take a cup too much, and to be quarrelsome, and finally turned out a mere vagabond; yes, a drunken vagabond.

Ed. Alas! you have told the worst, I hope.

Ch. Not all. He was next taken to the House of Refuge; but he contrived to make his escape. He might perhaps have been caught, but so small is the hope of his reformation, that no one thinks it of much consequence to pursue after him.

Ed. I would not have expected so great a change of conduct in him within so short a time.

Ch. I should say so too; but when I think of myself, and remember what was my course, when Providence first sent you to advise me, I do not wonder at it.

Ed. It is true, that the temptations laid before us are many and great; I am certain that masters and parents are not sufficiently aware of them. But must Tom be given up? Is there no way to save him from the wicked one? O, why should so many of our companions go the downward course? It seems to me I would do any thing—make any sacrifice—

Ch. You weep, Edward; and I could weep with you. But what to do, I know not.

Ed. There is at least one thing which it is our privilege to do. We can supplicate mercy for them from Him who saved us from such deadly snares.

Ch. Yes, I thank God, it is more pleasant to me now to pray, than it ever was to do wickedly.

Ed. We will have another meeting soon. Adieu.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WAY THAT ENDS BEST.

Charles. I have called this evening to return your visit.

Edward. You have come, I hope, with favourable news.

Ch. What, of Tom?

Ed. Yes, I have thought much of him since our last interview. If any thing can be done for him, let us attempt it soon.

Ch. Alas! it is all over with poor Tom.

Ed. What do you mean, Charles? You speak as if some evil had befallen him.

Ch. It is even so. His friends have received the intelligence that he is drowned.

Ed. You shock me! Where and how did that happen?

Ch. I do not understand *where* it occurred, but have the impression that it was somewhere at the south. He was missing, you will recollect, when I saw you last. It seems that he was afraid of being again placed in confinement, and accordingly left the city;

but he did not leave off sabbath breaking. He was out with a sailing party of loose young people, on the sabbath, when the boat was upset near the shore, and he was drowned.

Ed. But how came he to be drowned, if the accident occurred near the shore?

Ch. The report is, that he was intoxicated; which prevented his reaching land as the others did.

Ed. O how miserable! So the wickedness of Tom proved doubly fatal to him.

Ch. Yes; it led him into bad company, got him in trouble, and then prevented his getting out of it. Had he regarded the commandment, he would never have spent the sabbath day in sailing for pleasure.

Ed. "The wicked," it is said, "shall not live out half their days;" and this saying is proved to be true. Tom might have lived many years, and been respectable and happy; but he would be wicked, and all this evil has come of it.

Ch. The worst of it is, that he should have died without repentance, and in the midst of his folly. I tremble when I think of it, and

how nearly I was overtaken by the same calamity. But the merciful God was pleased to spare my life, and, I trust, to save my guilty soul. I have no longer any relish for those sinful gratifications which were once all my study and delight.

Ed. It is wise to gain instruction from such events; especially when they remind us of our own follies. The fate of our companions may well convince us of the mistake of expecting enjoyment and prosperity in the ways of transgression. George Wise, they say, is likely to serve out his apprenticeship in the state's prison. Peter Jenkins is gone, no one knows where. And now poor Tom is lost, through his love of evil companions and sabbath breaking.

Ch. Well, I am resolved that I will be more careful than ever to guard against all wickedness, even the beginning of it. I can never forget what has happened to my companions: and with the help of God, I intend to avoid walking in their steps.

Ed. May we both have wisdom given us from above; and then our way will be plea-

sant as well as safe. I have been thinking how we can make the most useful improvement of all this.

Ch. Why, by avoiding the evil courses which have led to it. Is it not very plain that we should do so?

Ed. Plain enough, to be sure; but is there not some way in which we can render them instructive and useful to others?

Ch. O yes; we can relate the story of Tom and the rest, to our Sunday scholars, and warn them against such evil deeds.

Ed. But should we stop even here?

Ch. No; for we can tell them, from happy experience, how much pleasanter it is to love God and keep his commandments. I would not give up the pleasures of religion for all the wealth of India. I had rather go to my sabbath school, than to any place of amusement, which I have ever visited. There are no companions half so interesting to me, as those pious young persons with whom we meet weekly, to pray and praise. My heart flows out in love to Jesus, and all his disciples. I count them all my friends, and heaven my

home, and eternal life my portion. I am poor in the wealth of this world, but I feel that the favour of God and the love of Christ, make me rich. Yes, I am contented, I am happy now.

Ed. You are right, Charles; he is the happiest person, and will soon have the best portion, who lives nearest to Christ. We shall never repent of any sacrifices which we make for him. I am certain we shall not. Let us be his servants for ever, and we may be certain that he will own us for his friends in the heavenly world.

Ch. My mind is made up on this subject. And 'O, to grace how great a debtor!' Would that all the world could know what great things God has done for me, a poor sinful youth. I can never repay him; but whatever I can, I intend to do. I intend to serve him, and hope to enjoy him for ever.

PROCRASTINATION;

OR THE

HISTORY OF EDWARD CRAWFORD.

Most persons, however ignorant and careless, fill themselves up with the belief that some time will come when they shall repent and turn to God; and though this hour is often put off from day to day, and from month to month, yet there are very few who are not persuaded that it will come at last. There are a great many excuses which persons make to themselves for not devoting the present time to God; one says, "I am too young;" another says "I will wait till some sickness or affliction comes upon me;" another says, "I am too busy;" and another says, "Let me alone to-day, and to-morrow I will certainly repent." Now all these hopes, with which men lift themselves up, arise from the deceitfulness of their wicked hearts, and will only end in ruin.

I am now about to lay before my reader a short history; from which, if duly considered,

he may be enabled to judge of the frequent dreadful effects of procrastination in religious matters.—

A few years ago, a poor man of the name of Edward Crawford, lying under sentence of death in one of our country goals, was visited by one of those pious persons who make it their business to console the afflicted and instruct the ignorant. Through his means we have obtained the narrative which we are now about to communicate to our reader.

“I was born,” said Edward Crawford, “in a little village; and my parents being poor, and having many children, I was left much to myself during the younger parts of my life, and cannot call to mind ever having been employed in any other business than in driving the crows from the farmer’s fields, or in working with my mother in harvest time, till I was as much as eight or nine years of age.

“During this time, I never recollect being taken to church; and, indeed, I suppose that my clothes were such, that my mother would have been ashamed to have had me seen by the congregation. I had, however, a custom, with certain other idle boys in the village, of playing about the grave-yard during service time, and running off to hide myself behind

the tomb-stones whenever the congregation began to move out of the church, of which I was generally apprized in time by a kind of buz or bustle within, which followed the sermon.

“It happened, however, as I was playing one summer evening, according to my usual custom, in the grave-yard during service, the doors of the church being open, and the weather exceedingly hot, that I took it into my head to go into the porch, in order to enjoy the shade; and having seated myself where I could see the clergyman, my attention was, as it were unknown to myself, drawn to his discourse; and though I remember no more of this discourse, yet one expression which he used seemed to go to my heart, and has stuck by me in some degree ever since. This sentence was a passage from scripture, ‘Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.’ I do not mean to say that I was any the better for hearing this sentence at the time; but, as I before said, these words, at the moment, seemed to take strong hold of my mind; and the comments of the minister upon them, gave me the first notion I ever had of religion: and I can recollect thinking, as I sat on the step of the porch, What, and shall I go to the place of everlasting torments, if I do not seek the fa-

your of God, and if I do not get an interest in the Saviour, and if I spend my time in playing about all day as I have done, and allow myself in foolish talking and story-telling, and such things as I have practised till now ?

“I remember then thinking that I would be a good boy in future, and go to church regularly, and attend the Sunday school; for there was a Sunday school as far back as the time I speak of in the town. Being full of these thoughts, I remained in the porch till the sermon was over, and walked quietly out of the grave-yard with the congregation, and was actually turning my steps towards the house of the clergyman, thinking to give my name in as a Sunday scholar, (for it was to the clergyman the names were to be given,) when it came into my mind that he was still in the church: this thought brought me to a stand in the middle of the street; and I was considering whether I should not go back to the gate of the church-yard, when a boy of my acquaintance, who was much bigger than myself, appeared before me, having his hat dressed with wild roses and cowslips.

“The boy no sooner saw me than he called to me across the street, asked me where I had been, adding, that he had been seeking me at my father’s house.

“‘What for?’ said I.

“‘What for?’ returned he. ‘Why, I want you to come into the woods to look for strawberries; they are as thick as leaves on the bank, yonder on the back of the town.’

“I remember the boy’s words as if they had been spoken but yesterday, and also my answer, which was to tell him I could not bear him company, because I had other business in hand; and then whispering in his ear, for by this time I had crossed over the street to him, I told him where I had been, what I had heard, and whither I was going.

“‘Very good, very good, indeed!’ he answered, at the same time laughing heartily; very good, indeed! you can’t do better: but I’ll tell you what, Ned, it’s altogether too soon for you to be thinking of these matters; it will be time enough for a little bit of a lad like you to think about religion twenty years to come:’ so saying, he took me by the arm, twirled me round, and led me out with him into the woods, where I soon forgot my good thoughts among the wild strawberries and dog-blossoms.

“I do not recollect having any return of serious thoughts from that time till a year and a half afterwards, when meeting our minister one evening, he addressed me in a very serious manner, and invited me to his school;

pointing out to me the danger of being in ignorance and a stranger to Christ. He spoke to me to such purpose, that I promised him to come the next Sunday, and actually on the sabbath morning washed my face and combed my hair with more care than usual, and set out for the school; but when I got into the village, I met a parcel of lads going to slide on a brook above the pool, which is at the back of the clergyman's house, and I was so weak and sinful as again to be persuaded by them that it was time enough for such a little lad as I to think of religion. Thus my better thoughts were again driven away; and I continued to reject the means of improvement offered, and to smother the better feelings which from time to time rose in my mind.

“I do not remember, from that time, having any more serious thoughts during my childhood, excepting on occasion of the death of a little brother, whom I dearly loved: and I remember, that for some weeks after his death, I used often to think of him, and to consider in what state his soul then was. I recollect that I did not doubt of his happiness, and even believed that it was gone to his Saviour. At that period, I had again almost resolved to attend the Sunday school, which was the only means I had of learning

to read; but Sunday after Sunday I put off the execution of this happy project, and so the thought wore away; and after a while the time came when I was to leave home and go as an apprentice, which happened when I was about fifteen years of age.

“ My first and only service was with a farmer who lived near by, where I was employed to attend the horses and cattle, and follow the plough. My master was not a religious man, and made it none of his business to see that his people went to church; I therefore seldom set my foot in a place of worship. However, it happened, that on Sunday, some singers coming to our church, I was tempted to attend in the evening, and there I heard a sermon which has stuck by me a long time; furnishing subjects of thought many times when I would most gladly have forgotten it if I could. The text was from St. Luke, xiv. 18, ‘ They all, with one consent, began to make excuse.’

“ The clergyman having delivered his text, he went on to make this remark:—‘ It is a common error for thoughtless people to believe, that it will be time enough for them to think about religion at some future period.’ And then he went on much to this purpose; for, as I said before, I never could put the words of this sermon out of my

head. 'This spirit of procrastination is one of the most common errors of sinners, and one of the most successful temptations of Satan. If your conscience,' said he, 'be in some measure awakened, and you feel anxious in any degree for the salvation of your soul, Satan and your own hearts will suggest delay. As Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.' Acts, xxiv. 25. 'This convenient season most probably never arrived to Felix: but,' continued the minister, 'although God has given this solemn warning against delay, and has repeated the important lesson in many parts of his word, yet many thousands are continually making the same excuse, and thus exposing themselves to everlasting destruction.'

“‘Tell me, oh man!’ proceeded the preacher, ‘can you insure your life for a day, or even for one moment? Let us call to mind the rich man, who, when gazing with delight on his store-houses and barns, said to his soul, ‘Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.’ But God said unto him, ‘Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.’ Luke xii. 19, 20. God the Lord may

even now be passing the same sentence on some sinner in this congregation, who dares, against his most solemn command, and the warnings of his word, to put off the concerns of his soul to another day; the Holy Ghost saith, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;' (Heb. iii. 7, 8.) if you wait till to-morrow, you will then feel less from this discourse than you have done to-day. Serious thoughts may wear off, and you may be, and most likely will be, 'hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' Heb. iii. 13.

"Much more, which I do not recollect, did this excellent minister say to this purpose: but I remember well the verse with which he concluded, 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' Isaiah lv. 6, 7.

"I was to have gone afterwards down to the village, but so touched was I by the sermon, that when I came out of church, I quitted the throng as soon as possible, and took my way into a solitary lane, where I spent as much as an hour and a half alone, thinking of the sermon, and making resolu-

tions of immediate reformation; and these resolutions held me all the evening, and I determined, as I lay on my bed, to make a great change in my conduct and behaviour the next day.

“I had no notion, however, of seeking help where it might be found; so I yielded to temptation, and went down to the tavern the next evening: and as I walked along, I remember that I quieted my conscience with these arguments, Well, it is but putting off my repentance one day longer: I am a young man, in the very prime of life, and it will be time enough for me to begin my good course to-morrow.—To-morrow! Sir, I repeat; but when that morrow came, it found me as a blighted oak; my strength was withered, and my hope gone.

“When I got to the tavern and had drunk a glass of spirits, I engaged in their wicked sports, though I had before been shocked at their oaths and blasphemies. The landlord plied us with liquor; and, as we grew warm, we proceeded to use hard words, which words led to blows, and in the madness and fury of passion, I took up a knife, and struck a young man of the company with it, never stopping to consider what might be the consequence of so desperate an action. This young man had been my fellow

servant, and we were known to have borne no good will towards each other; nevertheless, when I saw him fall, and beheld the blood gushing from his wound, I was filled with horror and amazement, such as I had never before experienced, and would have gladly changed place at that moment with the vilest reptile which crawls on the face of the earth. The poor young man survived the wound I had given him only a very short time. Before the doctor, who was instantly sent for, arrived, he expired, and left me to all the dreadful consequences of my crime. It is true that I had no idea of being guilty of that action a minute before I committed it; indeed, few in the company suspected me of any design of committing murder; nevertheless, the ill-will which had been known to exist between me and the unfortunate man whose death I had occasioned, turned against me on my trial, and I was condemned.

“I can give you no idea of what I suffered when I first found myself under confinement and in danger of capital punishment. It was then that all my folly in putting off my repentance appeared to me in its strongest point of view, and a kind of despair seized my mind, with such horror and perplexity as I am not able to describe.

“At this period, I used often to exclaim,

Oh, that I had attended a place of worship, or the Sunday school, or learned to read my Bible when I was a child; I should not now have been in such a dreadful situation as I am. Oh, that I had not put off the day of repentance; that I had sought the Lord whilst he was to be found, that I had called upon him when he was near. In this manner I lamented myself continually; and yet I could see no way in which I might escape from eternal death. Thus the end of my life was fast approaching; my sand was running out; and I knew not where to look for help, terrified and dismayed as I was; yet I seemed to have no power left to repent and turn to my God, and felt rather inclined to murmur against my heavenly Father than to take blame to myself, and to charge myself with the consequences of my sins.

“I then would have given all the world, had I possessed it, for those opportunities of improvement which I had despised in my early days; and I frequently said to myself, Could I but once escape the walls of this dungeon, how differently would I spend my life, and how devoted would I be to my God. Then again, the thought would arise—But now it is too late! I have put off my repentance till the time is past, and till hope is gone!”