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RELIGION

IN 170

RELATION TO THE PRESENT LIFE.

IN A SERIES OF LECTURES,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION
OF UTICA,

BY A. B. JOHNSON,

AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.



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A. B. JOHNSON, Esq.

SIR,

I am instructed, by the Executive Board of the Young Men's Association of the City of Utica, to present you their thanks for the valuable and instructive Lectures on Religion in its Relation to the Present Life, delivered by you before the Association, and to request that a copy of them may be furnished for publication.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

C. TRACY, Cor. Sec.

Utica, June 2, 1840.

To the Young Men's Association of the City of Utica.

I thank you for the polite notice which you have taken of my Lectures on Religion in its Relation to the Present Life. The title is intended to discriminate my subject from what is discussed in churches, and which is, perhaps too exclusively, Religion in its Relation to a Future Life. Our divines, looking at the unimportance of temporal evils when contrasted with eternal evils, advert too rarely, as dissuasives against misconduct, to its temporal consequences. The Bible, however, details its temporal punishment, even miraculously, as by the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Deluge, the Expulsion from Paradise.

Of the natural temporal punishments of misconduct, the Bible furnishes almost innumerable specifications: as, "Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house:" "The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags:" "Whoso diggeth a pit (for another) shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone (at another), it will return upon him:" "He that hath a perverse tongue falleth into

mischief:" "He that saith unto the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse:" "A false witness shall not be unpunished:" "He that speaketh lies shall not escape:" "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked."

Churches occupy the same relation to morality as common schools occupy to literature; hence they should present morality under all its aspects. With unimportant exceptions, they are our only schools of morals; the science which regulates health, peace, and prosperity. This accounts for the experimental fact, that men who abstain from churches are, as a class, unsuccessful in business, unhappy in their families, and liable to sudden casualties.

To the source of so much practical benefit, I therefore intend no captious or ungrateful remark; and in the hope that my brief discourses, to which you listened kindly, may not lose all their supposed interest when exhibited in print, I cheerfully present them to you, agreeably to the request of your executive committee.

A. B. JOHNSON

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RELIGION

IN ITS

RELATION TO THE PRESENT LIFE.

LECTURE I.

EVERY DEPARTMENT OF NATURE OBEYS DETERMINATE LAWS.

SHOULD this room be filled with persons congregated to relieve the sick and to disseminate the gospel, the floor would fall, and hurl the congregation into ruin, if the floor's physical strength should be exceeded by the weight of only a child, who, in gayety and innocence, should run into the assemblage. Inanimate bodies are all subjected, like the floor, to laws which are inflexible and immutable. A knowledge of these laws constitutes our mechanical sciences and arts.

Animate nature, also, is obedient to determinate laws. Should one of us, while sitting here, feel

a current of air, he might be pleased as it rushed over his heated neck; yet he will remove from the exposure, for he knows that his body will become disordered by the cooling, in this manner, of its surface. Of the laws which govern vitality, we have formed the sciences of surgery, materia medica, with their subordinate branches.

Even our thoughts are governed by determinate laws. The thoughts that I shall utter to-night I recollect by means of this paper, which is covered by only certain marks. I am able also, by means of the words that I shall utter, to excite in you any thoughts which I wish. The arts of reading, writing, and speaking owe their origin to a knowledge of the laws which govern thoughts.

Our passions, emotions, appetites, and desires (all which I will, for brevity, call our feelings), are subject to determinate laws. We know how to excite curiosity, arouse anger, soothe grief. Shakspeare causes us to laugh and weep, as he chooses to direct. And our feelings are not only governed by determinate laws, but the laws are wonderfully adapted to our good. Unlike our knowledge of physical bodies, that we acquire

by experience only, and unlike our thoughts, which are but recollections of acquired knowledge, our feelings are innate. They differ in intensity in different men, and in the same man at different stages of life ; but all men, of all nations, possess the same feelings, and hence sympathize with each other's hopes, fears, joys, and sorrows ; yield to like motives, and pursue the same ends.

The intuitiveness of our feelings prevents their change, and thereby secures, by a process remarkably simple, the eternal sameness of the human character ; enabling us to comprehend the actions and motives of preceding generations, to profit by their experience, and to proceed onward with their improvements, to the limits, whatever they may be, of physical knowledge, imaginative creations, and verbal disquisition.

To understand further the beneficence of the laws which regulate our feelings, see how admirably every feeling that is excited in us accords with the exciting event. Often, in our streets, you will see a boy run, in a threatening manner, towards a smaller boy. How is the small boy to act ? He may be educated to act in various

ways; but, if he submits to the dictates of nature, he will run from the danger, in obedience to the feeling of fear, which thus prompts to the action best adapted to his safety.

The aggressor may not, however, be thus foiled. He will overtake the fugitive. The new emergency excites a new feeling. Fear has performed its office, and has failed to preserve him. The danger is inevitable, and, to encounter it successfully, requires courage, which is forthwith excited in him. Under its influence, he stands at bay, snatches up a stick or stone; while his excited voice, flashing eyes, and rigid features (all unpremeditatedly produced, and without his agency) give notice that he is not to be injured with impunity.

The pursuer also is not unchanged. The feeling which meditated violence is more than half subdued by what he hears and sees. He will shrink from the contest if he can; but if consistency, and pride, and shame demand a blow, he will strike it, but as propitiatingly as is compatible with the outrage. The blow, however, excites new feelings in both belligerents. In the assailant it exhausts his remaining courage. In

the assailed, it exhausts his remaining fear. He raises his arm for vengeance, he no longer hesitates; but his antagonist is gone. He is fleeing with his utmost speed. Providence has terminated the contest by its own benevolent provisions, and without much injury to either party.

The laws which regulate our feelings exercise their conservative powers with a strength which increases as the end to be obtained augments in its importance. The perpetuity, by succession of man, is ensured by impulses which no artificial obstacles can contravene, nor prudential motive, nor the infinite eccentricities of fashion or opinion. The life, also, of every individual is fenced around with numerous guards. A man, how weak soever or simple, who is in danger of assassination, is endued by the danger with a vividness of apprehension, a strength of resistance, and a sagacity for escape, of which previously no person possessed a conception.

Nor are these his only security. The assassin enters on his crime with fear, which increases as the space diminishes between him and his victim. His eyes imagine sights, his ears sounds. His very breathing becomes loud, and terrifies

him. His heart strikes forcibly his breast to alarm him. An infant's voice would drive him from his purpose. And let the deed be consummated, despite obstacles which, like the flaming sword, turn every way to guard the tree of life, the next intent of Providence is punishment. With what hardihood soever the murderer may have meditated on his crime ; with what ingenuity he may have provided for its execution ; with what plans for its concealment, or shrewdness for his escape, his victim, dead at his feet, frustrates them all. He experiences feelings which make him a stranger to himself, and strange to other men in all his words and actions. Not content, like an innocent man, with being unsuspected of the murder, he desires to be deemed affirmatively innocent. To gain this unnecessary affirmance, which guilt alone desires, and which guilt of every grade is compelled, by accusing feelings, to desire, he asserts so many falsehoods, so busies himself with the murder, that he excites the suspicion which he is striving to avert. He is a man with only one idea—his crime. By it he interprets all he hears and sees ; with it he mingles all he utters and performs. He is monomaniac, and either by confession proclaims his guilt, or proclaims it by his conduct.

The laws which regulate our feelings exhibit further beneficence, where we seldom look for mercy. If you pass a dwelling-house at midnight, the inmates all asleep, would you not arouse them if the building were on fire? The more imminent the danger, the louder would be your outcry. Even thus pain arouses us from sleep. The more urgent our danger, the more violent is pain. It is the cry for assistance of our perishing organization. If an internal inflammation could exist without pain, it would kill before we are aware of danger. And note a further benevolence. When inflammation has consumed the part on which it was raging, the danger can no longer be arrested, and pain, now useless as a warning, ceases.

Even death is beneficent. Full of vivacity and vigour, we leap and halloo to gratify our love of action. When weary, rest is pleasant. When faint, we desire to lie prostrate. When drowsy, nothing is welcome but sleep; and when diseased beyond cure, and exhausted beyond resuscitation, nothing is desirable but death. Chameleons assume the colour of the substance on which they stand, so a man's desires assimilate to the condition of his animal organization.

As activity is to the vigorous, as rest is to the weary, as sleep to the drowsy, so is death to the dying. When life can no longer be sustained, death becomes an animal want, and dying an animal gratification. No benevolence can accomplish more.

Equally beneficent are the laws which our thoughts obey. Innumerable as are our thoughts, we can contemplate only one at a time. What thought shall I contemplate on any given occasion? It ought to be the one which is most important to the occasion. And such is the law. I may place poison in a bottle. The action may not be thought of again for months or years; but, the moment I see the bottle, and thus become in danger from its contents, thought will inform me of the poison. Thus is remedied the limitation of thought. But the limitation is itself a blessing. In this world of death, pecuniary reverses, unredressed injuries, evils in prospect, opportunities neglected—who possesses not a thought, whose presence clouds his gayety, and checks his activity? Shall it be always present? The wounded heart may desire to brood over it for ever; but, the moment it arises, the moving mass of thoughts behind jostle it from view, and

force us, in spite of sorrows, to contemplate, in turn, what is cheerful.

And note how benevolently thoughts contrast with actions. With safety we handle loaded pistols, because our actions obey our will. For a like reason, we walk securely on the brink of a precipice. But our will cannot control our thoughts; hence, while I am walking near a precipice, willing to proceed onward, thought may suggest that my will should not be indulged; that the attempt is foolhardy and destructive. All the productions of art proceed from the subjection of our actions to our will; from the unsubjecting of our thoughts proceeds all the monitions of conscience and all the suggestions of genius.

And note, further, how benevolently inanimate nature differs from both thoughts and actions. They take cognizance of moral consequences; but a ship founders at sea, and the ocean ingulfs it as readily when freighted with missionaries as when loaded with convicts. If winds and waves were not inflexible in their obedience to unchangeable laws, navigation could not be a science; and if timber and iron were not re-

gardless of moral consequences, they would be unsuitable for the construction of ships. When a steamboat explodes, the destruction of life is often dreadful ; but if water regarded moral consequences, instead of expanding inflexibly under the operation of fixed laws, we could not employ steam-power ; and if iron and copper would not soften, break, and melt, we could not convert it into machinery.

Observe, also, how beneficially some parts of our own organization differ from other parts. If our heart moved only by an effort, like our hands, it would be as ill-adapted to the vital purposes it subserves, as self-moving hands would be ill-adapted to the purposes which they subserve. For us to know the action of our vital organs is not necessary, and tends often to hypochondria ; hence the blood within us continued to circulate for several thousand years without our knowing it ; but to know the action of our external organs is useful, and tends often to our safety ; hence our feet cannot move without our cognizance, nor can they so noiselessly steal upon the privacy of our neighbour as to escape his detection.

Having now shown that all the material world is governed by determinate laws, that the animal and intellectual worlds obey determinate laws, and that all the laws are benevolent, I have but stated truths known to the experience of every person. I have adverted to them briefly, and merely for the purpose of introducing a kindred truth, which, though known, like the former, to experience, has been, less generally than the former, subjected to popular investigation. I want to show that the moral world also is governed by determinate natural laws, and that they all promote the temporal good of man.

You must not, however, understand me as maintaining the doctrine of the Optimists, that every event, how adverse soever, which happens to a man, is better for him than any other event that could happen. That the strength of timber should be governed by laws which will not vary to save us from being precipitated into the room below, I have shown to be a beneficent provision of Providence; but I am yet to learn that our disregard of the laws of matter, and our consequent precipitation into the room below, is the best event that can happen. That steam should be indefinitely expansible by heat, and

that iron and copper should be capable of being broken and melted, I have shown to be highly beneficent laws of nature ; but I am yet to learn that a disregard of these laws, and the consequent explosion of a boiler, with the destruction of a multitude of human beings, is the best event that can happen. To admit such a conclusion, even in deference to the Author of nature, lest we might seem to deny his universal wisdom or benevolence, involves the incongruity that Providence has created laws which may, with equal benefit, be either observed or violated.

I can believe that highly beneficent purposes are subserved by such a structure of our bodies as renders them liable to destruction by frost, fire, and fever ; but I am yet to learn that an exposure of my body to these agents, and its consequent destruction, is the best event that can happen. I can believe that when a man's heart, lungs, or brain are so disorganized that they can no longer perform their essential functions, that death is as benevolent as it is inevitable ; but I am yet to learn that such a disorganization of his heart, lungs, or brain is the best event that can occur to him. I can see benevolence in the requisition, " that he who sheddeth man's blood,

by man shall his blood be shed ;” but I cannot see that thus to bring upon one’s self an ignominious death is the best event that can happen.

The world seems to have been constructed on a system of dilemma. If men are to enjoy the benefit of steam-power, water must be expansible, and therefore explosive. If men are to enjoy the benefit of copper and iron in the construction of steam-boilers, copper and iron must be malleable, fusible, and frangible, and therefore liable to collapse and burst. To enjoy the benefit without the evil involves a contradiction, and is therefore impossible. The evil is produced by the qualities which produce the benefits.

Whether Omnipotence could not have constructed a world in which every event would have been an unalloyed good, is a question too profound to be discussed understandingly, and too idle to deserve discussion. But such is not the organization of the present world, nor is such an organization compatible with the materials of which the present world is composed. No evil exists that is not an inevitable consequence of some more than counterbalancing benefit ; hence as little evil exists as is compatible

with the benefits that we enjoy. The combustibility of our dwelling-houses, how dreadful soever may occasionally be its consequences, is an inevitable result of a property in wood, that contributes daily to the essential comforts of mankind. Our flesh must be pervious to steel and liable to wounds, or a crushed and gangrened limb would be incapable of amputation, and the whole body would perish with it. Darkness and cold must be endured everywhere for a period, or a portion of the earth must suffer perpetual night and winter.

Even death could not have been averted without depriving man of the social benefits which result from the relation of husband and wife, parent and child, infancy and maturity ; for, if man were not mortal, the earth would long since have attained the extent of its habitable capacity, and with the termination of increase would have terminated the relations which increase originates. The present inhabitants of the earth owe certainly their existence to death, which, on a principle of rotation, has made room for us, as we, in turn, shall be required to depart, after having seen out life's splendid show, and make room for others. This necessary rotation must

ever thwart the utmost perfection of medical skill; hence, when physicians are able, as by the introduction of vaccination, to shut some avenue through which death is accustomed to enter, some new disease, or the increased virulence of some old one, will, we are told, make a new avenue for the destroyer.

The evils of life seem to me rather unavoidable consequences than immediate creations of Providence. Fire is an immediate creation, and of the most beneficial character; but the conflagration of a dwelling-house, with all its inmates, is an attendant evil, that Providence may well be supposed to deplore rather than to have designed. Storms which wreck fleets, and tempests that inundate countries, may in like manner be only incidental evils of the fluidity of the air, its contraction by cold, and expansion by heat; qualities which we know are essential to the beneficial purposes subserved by air.

Incidental evils, as of a conflagration, may result in some good. A lad, in leaping from the window of a burning house, received an injury, which, while it incapacitated him for manual labour, excited the benevolence of a nobleman, by

whose aid he became distinguished and extensively useful. We need not, however, believe that the conflagration was designed for the end which thus occurred. Every event is, perhaps, susceptible of some improvement, as the most steril soil is susceptible of some melioration; but morality enjoins that we shall not seek good by the commission of evil; and I see nothing to induce a belief that Providence is excepted from the exigency of the prohibition.

About eighty years ago, the city of Lisbon was nearly destroyed by an earthquake, and forty thousand persons were ingulfed and killed. Whether earthquakes are immediate creations, like fire, sea, and air, or secondary creations, like steam, I possess not information enough to decide; but, if earthquakes are immediate creations, and if storms, tempests, and hurricanes are, I feel faith enough in the benevolence of Deity to believe that they would not be created did they not subserve a purpose (though I know it not) sufficiently beneficial to more than counterbalance their injuriousness. But, in that case, the concentration of forty thousand persons on the site of an earthquake, with their consequent destruction, is not necessarily included within the

intention of earthquakes, but is an unavoidable and undesirable incident of man's happy inability to look into futurity, and of his privilege to move over the earth, and establish his habitation where he pleases.

The Judge of all the earth will doubtless ever do right ; but if my brother mistakes arsenic for Epsom salts, and thereby dies, I need not suppose that the event is not lamentable. No such event could happen if arsenic was stricken from existence, or if the human constitution was so modified as to make arsenic innoxious, or if human action was made controllable by instinct instead of experience ; but I possess faith enough in Providence to believe that these changes would be a greater evil than the occasional deaths from arsenic that the changes would obviate.

The personal sacrifices and self-denials which our organization imposes on us seem the result of a like dilemma. If one man could pleurably consume all the provisions of a ship, what would become of his fellow-passengers ? and if a man could profitably indulge unlimited selfishness, what would become of the young, the sick, the feeble, and the stranger ? Nor could Provi-

dence make us free agents, as to the extent of our sensual enjoyments, without causing our excesses to inflict on us sufficient evils to restrain our excesses.

A like principle is discoverable in our passions. Anger, which gives vehemence to our thoughts, energy to our actions, vivacity to our imagination, resolution to our judgment, and which flies to our assistance at the moment of need, could not be given to every human being without subjecting each to restraints on its employment, and to evils when the restraints are disregarded. The vehemence which gives to anger its power of mischief, is the very quality that constitutes its usefulness.

Vanity compensates for the personal insignificance which results unavoidably to each from the equality of favours bestowed by Providence on all. How few books can be read with pleasure, how many cannot be read without disgust; but, with such feelings towards them, who could have endured the labour by which alone each was slowly elaborated, painfully corrected, copied, recopied, and recorrected. Vanity was the patronising friend who alone never tired, to

whose ear every word was wisdom, and to whose hopes the volume was destined to instruct, delight, and surprise a grateful world.

When the London footman married the London chambermaid, and inquired the next day what the world thought of his match, how insupportable would have been his servitude had he contemplated himself, and bride, and marriage with the contempt which has immortalized the anecdote. But not the lowly only need the ministrations of vanity. To all of us existence would be deprived of more than half of its enjoyments, were our words, thoughts, and actions as unimportant in the estimation of the actor, as they must be in the estimation of the rest of mankind. But Providence, in giving us this assuasive principle, could not avoid subjecting us to the danger of occasionally being misled by its flatteries, and rendered ridiculous by its manifestations.

Fear is a benevolent accompaniment of the natural defencelessness of man. With his comparative slowness of motion, dulness of vision, hearing, and scent, he would, without fear, disregard the countless precautions which are es-

sential to his condition, and become the victim of creation instead of the master. But Providence, in giving us fear, could not avoid imposing on us both the duty of resisting its suggestions, and the evils of cowardice when we neglect such resistance. To fight valiantly is accordingly made our most effectual protection in every battle, while flight is almost certain destruction. If the indulgence of fear conduced to safety, the world would be controlled by violence instead of justice. Now every yielding to wrong is an invitation to further aggression. To maintain his rights is not a man's duty only, but on it is made to depend his safety ; hence fear becomes the essence of moral courage, which, without much paradox, may be resolved into nothing but a fear of the consequences of yielding to fear.

This view, though brief, of the offices performed by our passions, may teach us that human nature cannot be improved, as some persons suppose (and as some have attempted), by eradicating from it any passion, appetite, or feeling. The imbecility of age results more from the decay of our passions, appetites, and feelings, than from decay of our physical and intellectual or-

ganization. These seem but instruments of our passions, appetites, and feelings, and decay when those become extinct by age ; just as the leaves of a plant wither and fall as soon as the fruit is gathered ; the leaves seeming to be only subsidiary agents to the fruit.

The operations of men exhibit a dilemma similar to that which is apparent in the productions of nature. If you would enjoy rest, you must submit to fatigue. If you would excel other men in learning, you must excel them in study. If you would surpass them in any science, art, or profession, you must surpass them in laborious application. If you desire the pleasure of accumulated wealth, you must forego the gratification of expenditure. If you would live long, you must not live fast. If you desire the conspicuousness of elevation, you must lose the concealment of obscurity. Nay, more, and worse, if you would not follow to the tomb your wife, parents, friends, and children, you must die, and let them follow you. If you desire long life, you must suffer decrepitude, imbecility, and all the other infirmities of extreme age. In all these cases, and similar without limit can be accumulated, the dilemma is not more apparent

than the blamelessness of Providence in the evils that we suffer. No avertable evil can be imputed to Providence; and, what is still more remarkable, no sacrifice, not required by his organization, and not useful to himself or fellow-men, that man can make of his time, life, property, or pleasures, is productive of anything but injury to him. The celibacy of our shaking Quakers, the mutilations which occurred in the early periods of Christianity, the painful penances and seclusions which have been submitted to by men, all verify the truth of the above benevolent provision. To cast a handful of money into the ocean, or to bestow it in clothing the destitute, is equally a sacrifice of your property; but only one of these actions is useful, and that is the only one which is productive of a resulting benefit to you. Contrast the temperance which is required by our organization with a fasting and abstinence that our organization requires not. The first recompenses you with health and vigour for your useful self-denial; the other punishes you with pain and debility for your useless privations. Contrast the industry which is necessary to our comfortable sustenance with the interminable restlessness of avarice and ambition; the first recompenses you with cheerful-

ness, the other punishes you with solicitude. These examples are but the type of a principle which you will find to be general. The comforts and enjoyments which are consistent with our organization, physical, social, mental, and moral, we can no more neglect with impunity, than we can infringe on the comforts of another man. A man is under the care of Providence even when he may be disposed to take no care of himself.

But, while I am endeavouring to show that the world is constituted on a system which produces the greatest possible good, with the least possible evil, you must not class me with another sect of philosophers, who maintain the above doctrines, and infer from them that rewards and punishments in a future life are not to be expected. The political government of nations is conducive of temporal benefits to persons who faithfully obey the laws, and of temporal injuries to persons who disobey them; still, even human governments superadd often what in principle is analogous to future rewards and punishments, if we may presume to compare human rewards with divine, and finitude with infinity. When Nelson was commencing the battle of

Cape St. Vincent, he exclaimed, "Westminster Abbey or victory." The after-life immortality of Westminster Abbey is a reward which Great Britain sagaciously superadds to the regular temporal benefits that, during life, compensate adequately the performance of military duties.

With human governments, however, posthumous rewards are merely a means to influence our conduct; but the posthumous rewards of Deity may be a retribution for the evils which are inseparable from the dilemma on which the world is constructed, or the rewards may possess some higher and even inscrutable object. To man the question is practically unimportant, whether future rewards and punishments are a means to induce him to act well, or an end to be obtained by acting well. In both alternatives he possesses the same hopes from good conduct and the same fears from bad. But if temporal good conduct, with its consequent temporal happiness, be the object for which eternal rewards and punishments are designed, we cannot fail from seeing in the plan infinite disinterestedness, nor can we fail from seeing in it a great incongruity; for, while it makes man's happiness the sole object of God's government, it subordinates

man's eternal happiness to his temporal happiness ; the greater good to the less. This cannot well be conceived. Man's eternal happiness is probably the object of God's government, though events are so benevolently constituted that the conduct which will ensure us eternal happiness is more conducive than any other conduct to our temporal happiness also.

The doctrine to which I have just adverted derives its chief interest from an impression that, if the temporal happiness of man be the object of God's government, nothing that conflicts with man's temporal happiness can be obligatory in either morals or religion. With human legislators the temporal interest of man constitutes, we know, the only justifiable principle of legislation ; and when this principle is violated, rebellion may become the duty of the oppressed. But when an individual deems the principle violated, he ought to reflect that he may be mistaken, and that the contrary opinion of the legislators (as evinced by their enactment of the law) is more likely to be correct than the opinion of any single individual. Now, by the same reasoning, if we even admit that man's temporal good is a correct test of either the truth or expediency of

any tenet of revealed morality or religion, and, by virtue of the admission, reject any such tenet, we commit an arrogance as regards the law-maker equal at least to the man who denounces a human law ; with the additional arrogance of deciding positively that the whole object of revelation is fathomed by our conjectures.

I am, however, wandering into theology, to discuss which I am not prepared by education ; nor is the discussion appropriate to the place, or necessary to my subject. My design is limited to an investigation of the natural laws by which the moral world is governed. We occasionally find men who suffer such successions of evil as to strikingly designate them unfortunate. If a person absconds, he is among the debtors of these unfortunate men. They are more liable than others to suffer losses by fire, which happen when a policy of insurance is unrenewed. They are lamed by fractious horses, and generally the produce of their farms happens to be of the kind which is least in request. They seem fated to be the dupes of knaves and the victims of treacherous friends. Their children will be poisoned with arsenic that was prepared for rats ; their families with wild parsnip, that was mistaken

for horseradish. If, however, we could trace the evils to their sources of any one of these men, we should discover that the laws of neither matter nor Providence were varied to afflict him peculiarly. His physical misfortunes arise from a disregard of the laws which govern physical events; his moral misfortunes from a disregard (as I may be able to show) of the laws which govern moral events. He may perform enough of everything to seem to have performed his duty, but not in a manner or degree that ensures success. He may detail a hundred reasons why his misfortunes should not have occurred; but his deficiencies, if known, would show a hundred reasons why his misfortunes were inevitable.

In like manner, you will occasionally find men who enjoy such successions of advantages as to strikingly designate them fortunate. Their debtors all happen to prove solvent, their policies of insurance happen to have been duly renewed, and at solvent offices; their horses happen to be gentle, their produce happens to be of the kind which is in repute, and harvested in good condition. They are neither the dupes of knaves, nor are their friends treacherous. They pass through life without litigation or insult. Their

wives happen to be affectionate, their children dutiful, their firesides the resort of cheerfulness and contentment. If, also, we could trace these blessings to their sources, we should discover that they are dispensed from no special partiality of Providence, but result naturally from a due regard to the laws which regulate moral events, and which laws I propose to investigate and exhibit. The investigation will, I hope, be useful. It certainly shall be brief; but, as I have already occupied as much of your attention as can be borne without weariness, I shall postpone the farther prosecution of my task to some future evening.

LECTURE II.

THE CONDUCT WHICH RESULTS INJURIOUSLY.

WHEN some outbreak of ferocity consigns a man to the scaffold, we are accustomed to estimate the perpetrator as an exception from human nature, while we ought to estimate him as a demonstrator of the malignancy and excitability of human passions; just as ice is no exception from the nature of water, but one of the states which belongs to water.

By a like mistake, the extent of human selfishness we fail to learn from the career of Napoleon; hence we see, not so clearly as we ought, that some conservative aid of Providence must exist, or beings with a selfishness as dilatable as Napoleon's, and a ferocity as excitable as the murderer's, could not live in peaceful communion, and exhibit such disinterestedness, meekness, and benevolence as society everywhere exhibits. We are like children, who, when habituated to sobriety, estimate a drunken man as a prodigy instead of an epitome of human frailty.

If the elements which compose society are thus discordant, the position alone seems to prove that moral events obey determinate laws, and that the laws promote the temporal good of man. Indeed, in a menagerie, when we pass through an assemblage of lions, tigers, wolves, and leopards, our security is but little more obviously the result of physical restraints on the animals, than our security in society is the result of moral restraints on men.

But, without claiming this proof, our language is full of proverbs, such as "Honesty is the best policy," "Liars should possess good memories," which are founded on a known subjection of moral events to determinate laws; and, practically, men acknowledge continually some such subjection. When, however, without toil, a man can obtain the fruits of another man's labours, honesty is not obviously his best policy. Our prisons are full of experimenters on this very point. Such persons, and those who perish by the executioner, subserve thereby a highly useful purpose; for self-interest, which now keeps the world honest, would make it dishonest were dishonesty seen to be advantageous; society would be like a stranded ship on an inhospitable shore, where

every man is snatching from the wreck whatever he can bear away.

We are apt to attribute the prejudicialness of dishonesty to human legislation ; but Providence has not confided so conservative a result to the contingency of human means. Every act which is prejudicial to society is a violation of the intentions of Nature ; and by a precision with which Deity alone adapts his means to his ends, the more prejudicial the offence is to society, the more severe is the evil which attends its perpetration. In homicide, detection is almost inevitable, and by means furnished by Providence alone. A few years ago a man committed a murder, that, for the singularity of its perpetration and the trivialness of its inducements, is become a new crime, which bears the name of its bad inventor, Burke. His victim was a mendicant idiot, who apparently would be neither missed nor regretted ; but Nature has so arranged the dependences, on each other, of mankind, that no individual is so solitary but his disappearance must be remarked by many, and deplored by some. Burke's victim was accordingly missed. Some recollected that he had been last seen at the house of Burke. There he was nat-

urally inquired for. The inquiry elicited the natural trepidations of guilt, and these, as naturally, lead to the detection of the crime.

“Dead men tell no tales” is said to be a murderer’s consolation ; but a dead body will, in a few days, reveal itself to a sense that is as wakeful as hearing. If sunk in a river, Nature will soon release it from its weights, and drift it into notice. The earth will not cover it without exhibiting that something lies beneath ; nor will fire consume it without leaving a sufficiency to fulfil the detecting purposes of Providence. And Providence detects not the crime only, but the criminal. He cannot separate himself from the incidents which pertain to his crime, and the smallest incident that is discovered reveals the whole, by processes of association which our thoughts reveal intuitively ; just as we discover the presence of a rat by the slightest rasping of his teeth.

Whoever commits a crime for the first time, commits it against greater moral obstacles than he will encounter in any repetition of the crime ; hence the crime will be repeated. Increased boldness and diminished repugnance augment

by every repetition of crime ; and, from these premises, ultimate detection is as demonstrable as the eventual contact of two interminable lines that converge ; nor can increased boldness and diminished repugnance be prevented by the perpetrator of crime, any more than a sexton can avoid the heartlessness with which he eventually digs graves. The above process is seldom necessary to the detection of a homicide, for he is usually detected in his first offence ; but as you recede in the degree of offences, the process becomes proportionably active. The detection of a thief for his first theft may be rare, from the great caution with which he will perpetrate it ; but for him to desist from depredation, and thereby escape ultimate detection, happens seldom.

The restraining agency of Providence ends not with detection. An intuitive impulse makes every man pursue a fugitive criminal, and accuse him when captured ; and though we usually portray only the jail and scaffold when we display the consequence of crime, they are not its only punishment, nor its severest. Every sailor is nearly as much a prisoner for life as a penitentiary convict, and subject to greater privations and perils ; while every patriot who dies

in battle, nay, every man who dies in his bed, suffers usually more physical agony than a felon, who struggles only momentarily on a scaffold. The chief poignancy of jails and scaffolds results from a providential consciousness of ill desert ; hence, if we give to men the merit of jails and scaffolds, we must give to Providence nearly all their restraining efficacy. We may behold in this a beautiful provision also against tyranny, which may unjustly imprison, and even kill ; but the victim, divested of the consciousness of ill desert, will rejoice, rather than lament, that he is thought worthy to suffer in a cause that he deems virtuous.

But legal punishments are themselves referrible to Providence. They result from feelings which induce every individual to resist injury when offered to himself, and to dislike it when offered to another. We assume, however, for legal punishments a restraining efficacy proportioned to the severity of the punishment ; a mistake which often adds unnecessary severity to penal codes, and originates in a misapprehension of the mode in which punishments are effective. Men will commit suicide on detection of offences whose legal punishment is only a short imprison-

ment, showing conclusively that detection alone is a severe punishment. Nearly all imprisonments of a day or a week must derive their principal poignancy from detection, of which imprisonment is the authoritative verification, and mainly efficacious, in the above cases, as a verification. I admit that some criminals are regardless of detection, except as it leads to legal punishment; which, also, they will regard but lightly. Yet a time existed when even to them legal punishment was a less evil than detection. Its force on them has been exhausted. They stand in relation to it, as a naked corpse stands in relation to the decencies which used to crimson its now regardless cheeks. Nay, Nature exercises a punitive process which precedes detection, and is superior to both it and legal punishment; for not unfrequently great criminals have voluntarily surrendered themselves to justice, as a less evil than the eternal apprehension of such a catastrophe.

In England, the law endeavours to reach the offence of suicide through the posterity of the offender, by debarring them from his property; and through his imagination, by refusing to his burial the solemnities of religion, mutilating his

body, and interring it in a highway. Providence acts on the offence with an efficacy that strongly exhibits the comparative impotence of legal restraints; for we cannot be driven to suicide by all the inflictions, even while alive, that the law threatens us with after death, as a deterrent against suicide.

But the law takes cognizance of only a portion of the actions which are injurious to society, while Nature takes cognizance of all, and applies efficient restraints to all. In New-York, when yellow fever prevails, the city authorities fence up the infected streets, that all persons may be warned against passing through them. In like manner, when experience has discovered that any practice is injurious, the practice is stigmatized as a vice. When any conduct will engender vices, it is stigmatized as an immorality. We thus endeavour to fence up such practices and conduct, that unwary persons may be admonished not to use them; for usually the practices themselves give as little warning of danger to an inexperienced observer as the infected streets of a city. From this absence of apparent danger, many persons believe that vice and immorality are terms established by austere reli-

gionists from mere prejudice or caprice; while other persons admit the injuriousness of vice and immorality, but attribute it to special interferences of Providence or conventional interferences of men. The injuriousness is, however, as much the established order of Nature, as the injuriousness of theft, the infectiousness of smallpox, or the deleteriousness of arsenic. Hurtfulness is the essence of vice and immorality. A harmless vice or immorality would be as much a solecism as a healthful disease, a pleasurable pain, or a beneficial crime. The science of morality is nothing but a knowledge of the natural consequences which certain actions produce, just as the science of medicine is a knowledge of the natural effects which certain drugs produce.

A man may say that he will acquiesce in the interdict of any practice as vicious or immoral when its hurtfulness shall be proved by his own experience. But such a determination is as unwise as to require personal experience previously to a belief in the contagiousness of smallpox or the deleteriousness of arsenic. The concurrent testimony of public opinion is on all subjects so authoritative, that, instead of doubting its testimony, a man should rather doubt the cor-

rectness of his own experience when it conflicts with public opinion. Sir Walter Scott says that no man is so great a fool as he who thinks himself wiser than other men. Besides, by attending to what is passing around us, we shall discover so many examples of evil from the violation of the accredited code of morals, as to make a disregard of any article of the code madly presumptuous.

In one of the monasteries of Spain, a foundling had been educated, who exhibited so much piety, learning, and eloquence, that, while yet young, he was elevated to be head of the establishment. The chapel in which he officiated was thronged with the population of Madrid. Amid his constant attendants was a female, who, led too far by what she deemed religious zeal, adopted the habiliments of a man to obtain a personal conference with the monk, whose austerity precluded her admission as a female. Deceived by her stratagem, the recluse became pleased with her piety, till, continued intercourse relaxing the precautions with which she concealed her sex, an unguarded moment revealed it. All the prejudices of his education were indignant at her imposition, and all his piety was

outraged. She had incurred the severest penalties of the Inquisition, and he resolved to subject her to its rigours. Pity plead for her; youth plead for her; perhaps Nature plead for her, since eventually she proved to be his sister. Her crime, also, was only an excess of zeal, and, possibly, of too much admiration of his talents. He commuted the punishment into banishment from the walls which she had desecrated, and perpetual exclusion from his presence.

The sentence was better, probably, than the rigours of monastic law. It was at least merciful, and thus far the monk was pursuing the safe road of duty. We occasionally meet in our streets some blind man, who, by the aid of a stick, is groping his onward way. He may not know definitely where his steps will lead him; but, while he keeps in a regular thoroughfare, he is in no danger of falling over a precipice, because the path in which he is walking was designed for travel. In all matters which relate to futurity, every person is like the blind man. We know not what the next moment may bring forth; but, while we are acting virtuously, we are in a path which was designed for travel, and we may be sure it will lead us into no pitfall.

If we desert the path of virtue, we are like a blind man who deserts the highway. He is moving over ground which was not designed for travel, and he has no guarantee that the next step will not plunge him into an abyss; and thus eventually fared the monk. The detected intruder was contrite, and thankful for the lenity with which she had been treated. She forthwith prepared to depart, but still she lingered. He resolved to enforce her departure, but still he delayed. The delay was a desertion of the safe road of duty; a wandering therefrom into a pathless forest. Still his feet passed onward, with purity in his ultimate intentions; but so naturally dangerous is an immoral position, that he, the boast of his order, the self-sufficient recluse, the pride of Madrid, the hope of the church, fell from indiscretion to immorality, from immorality to vice, from vice to crime, from crime, through all its rapid gradations, to murder, and died upon the rack.

Whether this narrative be true or fictitious is immaterial, for we discover in it an order in which events seem naturally catenated. We have all seen a skein of thread while under the process of being unwound. While you unwind

in the order of the thread's involutions, the process is easy and the result safe ; but if you desert in the slightest degree the order of the thread's involvement, you produce a tangle which becomes inextricable and destructive if you proceed in your error. The events of life also are catenated in a regular order, from which every vice and immorality is a deviation ; and no sagacity can foresee the tangle and destruction that you may produce in your affairs by the slightest vice or immorality. In this aspect of the nature of vice and immorality, the term slight is inappropriate to them ; for surely nothing should be deemed slight whose result may be destructive.

I lately accompanied a party of pleasure to Trenton Falls. We overtook another party who were proceeding to the same destination. As both parties intended to lodge at the falls over night, we desired to arrive first, that we might obtain the choice of bedrooms. This was neither loving our neighbour as ourselves, nor doing as we should wish to be done by. We deemed, however, a circumvention of our rivals but a slight immorality, and our coachman promised to accomplish it. Accordingly, at the next resting-place, he exerted himself to start suddenly

in advance of the adverse carriage; and, for this purpose, neglected to tie his horses while he went to draw water for them from the well. The other coachman saw the hurry and its object; and, resolving to frustrate both, sprang upon his box, and, snapping his whip, moved onward. At the sound of the whip our horses started also. Had they ran forward, we must have been dashed to pieces, for a very steep descent was in front of us; but, fortunately, they turned towards home, and, making a very short curve, gently overturned the carriage, only inflicting on us some scratches, slight contusions, and about an hour's delay.

To leave horses without tying them is connected with so direct an evil, that experience enables us to apprehend the precise danger which we hazard by the negligence; but when, in the above adventure, we acted selfishly towards our neighbours, the precise danger which we hazarded no experience could enable us to apprehend. This distinction is characteristic of every act that is vicious or immoral. The gigantic defalcations which our government experienced lately in some of its pecuniary trusts were unforeseen results by even the defaulters

themselves. They premeditated no more than the unauthorized employment, for a short period, of some small amount of the government funds. To extricate from danger the funds that had been thus venially abstracted, the parties were, in a manner, compelled to take more, and speculate more desperately. To conceal what unexpectedly became lost, they were forced to falsify accounts and commit perjuries; and, when an exposure became inevitable, they were compelled to the last step in their career of guilt, to abscond, and carry with them, for their support, all the remaining funds in their possession.

The Monument in London is a slender stone pillar, 200 feet high, and I once saw a female on the top of it. The sight astonished me, for I saw no means by which the ascent could be gained. Investigation, however, showed me an internal staircase of 345 steps. An analogous astonishment is experienced when we hear of some great crime. The criminal seems to have nothing in common with ordinary men, for we see not the 345 preliminary steps by which he attained his bad eminence in guilt. Could we trace his guilt from the petty immoralities in which it probably originated, we should learn

that he differs from other men less than we expected ; and that, if we would avoid the possibility of his fate, we must avoid, not his crimes, of which we are at present in no danger, but the commission of every immorality ; for the slightest deviation from rectitude may terminate in a catastrophe as bad as his.

As we are unable to foresee the precise evil which will result to us from an immoral or vicious act, and as, occasionally, no direct evil does result, most men are less vigilant in obeying the laws of morality than in obeying the rules of physical caution in tying their horses. The deference thus practically accorded to physical laws, beyond what we accord to moral laws, may be due to the superior definiteness of physical results ; but, on the other hand, the very impossibility of foreseeing the precise evils we may entail on ourselves by a vicious or immoral act, may cause us to doubt whether committing an immorality is not a greater danger than merely omitting some precaution, by which we only may bring on ourselves a definite physical evil.

To revel complacently on vice in our thoughts is denounced as an immorality ; but certainly, if

vice can be innoxious in any shape, this would seem to be the instance ; yet a celebrated French author, who well knew the tendency of our nature in this particular, prefaced a pernicious book which he was publishing with the precautionary prescription, " Any female who reads this book is ruined." I will not affirm that the prophecy would be confirmed, for a person may read to condemn as well as to approve ; but a female who should read the book, and receive delight in the contemplation of it, would, I doubt not, reap in some way the bad fruits of her immoral contemplations. Such results are a part of our nature, and they enable us to see the profound knowledge which lies at the foundation of our code of morals, and the presumption of disregarding the injunctions of morality when we happen to be unable to discover a sufficient reason for the injunction. Our feelings influence our actions as powerfully as waves influence a ship ; and our thoughts excite our feelings as the winds excite the waves. We read in Kenilworth of the undeserved afflictions of the Countess of Leicester. We know the whole is a fiction, and yet the thoughts which we read will excite in us sorrow, hope, and fear in the most painful degree.

Morality forbids even the semblance of evil actions. This also seems an unnecessary austerity ; yet, like the former, it is founded in nature, and recognised by men in various observances. Were a sentinel on duty to be discovered at an important military position with his eyes closed and his head reclined, he would be deemed guilty of a great military offence. Nor could he exculpate himself by proving that he was neither asleep nor intending to sleep ; for we are so constituted that to shut the eyes and recline the head will usually produce sleep, despite our best determinations to continue awake. Nay, if the sentinel could resist sleep, his conduct would be culpable, because his example might induce other sentinels to commit the same actions, and they might not possess the same ability to resist sleep.

A boy who is amusing himself by impaling a butterfly (no uncommon amusement) may naturally exclaim, on being told that his amusement is immoral, that he can see no harm in it, and that the morality spoken of is a very captious limitation of juvenile sports. Still, so well does experience justify the canon of morality against cruelty, that, by our laws and the laws of Eng-

land, cruelty is punishable by indictment when the propensity shows itself in any unnecessary infliction on even the brute creation; and this not in mercy to the brute (though that would seem a good motive), but to prevent the formation of habits of cruelty towards man. Possibly Providence, in its larger benevolence, reverses the rule, and, for the mere happiness and protection of inferior beings, has so organized man that he cannot be cruel to the meanest insect without so endangering other men as to compel them to repress the cruelty.

And note here a beautiful discrimination of both morality and Providence. If for scientific information I impale a butterfly, I infringe no canon of morality, nor is a habit of cruelty consequent on such an action. The motive constitutes the moral quality of an action, and the motive alone operates on the disposition of the actor. A surgeon exercised daily in amputations will be less timid of blood than other men, but he may possess as little cruelty as the tenderest mother who ministers to the wounds.

I have spoken of impaling a butterfly, because Hogarth, in his delineation of the progress of

cruelty, commences with a picture which represents a boy thus employed. In a succeeding picture, the boy, advanced in stature, is burning with a heated knitting-needle the eye of a dove. At a further age he is extinguishing the candle and overturning the wheelbarrow of a poor woman who is selling apples. After various pictures, which exhibit advances in cruelty with advances in age, he is, in manhood, seen on a gallows, where he is to perish for the perpetration of murder. Like a young lion, petty cruelty may be used as a plaything; but, ere we become aware of the change, the plaything acquires the mortal energies of its maturity.

Immorality and vice are additionally dangerous, by reason of the apparent security with which they may be practised. In gambling, the chance of winning must be equal to the chance of losing; hence, in a course of play, a man's winnings will ostensibly equal his losses. In intemperance, the purchase-money of drinks is trifling; and during ebriety, a man may ostensibly abstain from negotiations that can impair his property, and from personal exposures that will impair his reputation. These positions argument may find difficulty in controverting; but experi-

ence, the last argument of wisdom, proves that the results of gambling and ebriety are pecuniary ruin, loss of reputation, remorse, rage, and suicide.

Even after we attain a sufficient acquaintance with the world to learn the inevitable destructiveness of vice and immorality on individuals generally, nothing seems more easy than to avoid such results by our own greater prudence. Why may not a man play while he finds himself a winner, and cease when he finds fortune deserting him? Why may not he drink till he is on the verge of intoxication, and retreat with his judgment and reputation unimpaired? The positions are impracticable, by reason of the subjection of our actions to our feelings. The full stomach rejects the honeycomb, but hunger compels us to eat; so, while we are neither thirsty nor stimulated, we can desist from drink or dice; but, when thirst and excitement are present, we are unable to desist.

The prohibitions of morality are founded on human nature; and as the poison that kills one man will kill another, how much soever he may, in the pride of health, deem himself privileged

against disease, so the vicious practices which lead one man to ruin will ruin another, how much soever vanity may induce him to deem himself secure against folly and imprudence.

As a general rule, the tendency of every vice is to defeat the good which it seemingly ensures. Gambling leads to ruin, while it promises wealth; intemperance to pain, while it promises pleasure; laziness to trouble, while it promises ease. A merchant may obtain a customer by misrepresenting his merchandise; a lawyer a client by exciting false hopes; a niggard save expenses by inhospitality; a miser money by withholding contributions to society; but such practices are like a false move in the game of chess: it may capture a castle or a queen, but, by the constitution of the game, it must result in defeat.

Providence deters us from injurious conduct by provisions which operate on us like the bars that a careful parent will place before the windows of a nursery or an open fireplace. Among these provisions is a disapprobation, which arises in us spontaneously when we see vice and immorality practised by other persons, and after reflection when we have practised them ourselves. To ren-

der effectual the disapprobation of our fellow-men, we are endued with a love of approbation, which may be seen in even the poor wretch on the scaffold, who suppresses his agonies that he may propitiate by his bravery and decorum the crowd whom he knows not, and who, in another moment, are no longer to know him. A conscious loss of the regard of our fellow-men is intolerable, and sends, prematurely, many to the grave by what is figuratively termed a broken heart.

That this powerful preventive may not be counteracted, events are so catenated, and the human understanding is so constituted, that no vice or immorality can escape detection. We are enabled, from merely meeting a man at midnight in an obscure street, to ascertain much in relation to him beyond what we actually see; just as naturalists, by looking at a bone, can ascertain the nature of the animal to which it belonged. Nor can we frame any falsehood by which our bad actions can be beneficially coloured. The pupils of Jussieu fabricated a vegetable, by combining the stem of a flower with the leaves and buds of other flowers. They presented it to him as a newly-discovered plant; but he immediately discovered the imposition, for it

exhibited combinations of a kind which Nature never produces. Who can counterfeit even a bank-note that will escape the scrutiny of a practised observer? A lie is therefore usually known as soon as uttered, but is sure of subsequent detection by the absence of congruous accompaniments; for every action bears a relation to a whole series of other actions. To supply these, we must lie again; hence "one lie occasions many." But, if one can rarely be concealed, the more we utter (and more must be uttered to support the first), the more inevitable is detection. And not our flagrant actions only are thus discoverable to our fellow-men, but all our actions, and the general tenour of even our thoughts.

And, after providing thus for the detection of our secrets, Providence has provided for their publication. Men are so nearly equal in their knowledge, that to be acquainted with an occurrence which is unknown to others occasions a momentary superiority. But, to manifest this superiority, we must impart our knowledge, and, accordingly, we are anxious to impart it, lest some more active relator shall anticipate us. The secrecy of a matter ensures, therefore, its diffusion, by a process which is designed for such a pur-

pose as evidently as the down which wings the seed of a thistle is designed to diffuse thistles.

And Providence deserts not the seed after it is scattered, nor a man's vices after they are published. By a species of animal magnetism, we soon become conscious when our character is impaired, and our love of approbation afflicts us accordingly. Nor is the injury to our character limited to the offence that has been disclosed. If you discover in a field an animal eating grass and another eating flesh, you know, without further information, that the animals differ in the shape of their teeth, that their stomachs differ, their digestive organization, their passions, and their habits generally. So, when you ascertain that a man has committed any vice or immorality, you immediately attribute to him all the concomitant vices and immoralities that are usually associated with the one of which he is convicted. When you see a man in a bar-room with a tumbler in his hand, and another man in an office with a pen in his hand, you estimate the difference between them by the two entirely different sets of habits which are indicated by the actions which you see.

This mode of judging is an operation of nature, and it makes all our actions important, especially at the commencement of manhood. A young man who saunters through our streets, because he possesses at the moment no occupation, is gaining a character which is to prevent his ever obtaining any occupation. All who see his idleness will estimate him by the vices and evils which are usually associated with idleness. A young man, also, who discharges negligently his small employments, by reason, perhaps, of his deeming them small, will never be made lord over many employments. No person who sees his negligence will risk large trusts with him who demonstrates that he is unworthy of small ones. We seldom know many facts concerning any man, and necessarily fewer of a young man than an old ; still each of us can give the character of our most casual acquaintances. We decide that one equivocates, another is treacherous, another quarrelsome, another studious ; and these assertions, on which the destiny of a whole life may hinge, will be founded on only one or more incidents, which the actor himself deemed probably very unimportant.

You must not attribute to me the doctrine

that a single act of crime, vice, or immorality will destroy a man's character, property, health, or happiness. We, however, shrink from the first step in vice as intuitively as the domestic hen from the first sight of a hawk. After this barrier is passed, the progress in vice is so easy, that a proverb designates the first step as the only one which costs a struggle. Nor is a repetition, should it even degenerate into a habit, the only evil which may result from a single act of vice. If a man will gamble, he must take with it several other vices which are naturally associated with gambling. If he will be idle, he must take with it the concomitants which have gained for idleness the title of *mother of all vices*. If he will lie, he must take with it cowardice, meanness, and treachery. A man can no more form a character that shall deviate from the ordinary associations of moral qualities, than he can form an animal that shall possess the horns and legs of an ox, without the head, body, and tail of an ox.

The above principle is recognised by our jurisprudence. If a single act of gross profligacy can be alleged against a female witness, it will nullify her testimony, though her vice may pos-

sess no direct relation to falsehood and perjury. When a man is accused of theft, and he can produce a recommendation for industry, sobriety, and quietness, the qualities are so seldom associated with theft, that he cannot be convicted by any ordinary proof of guilt.

When a painter places before him a clean piece of canvass, he may paint thereon a lion, an eagle, or an ox ; but, the moment he has portrayed the horns of an ox, he can no longer make a lion or an eagle ; he must continue to represent the head and body of an ox. Just thus a man, at the commencement of life, may acquire such moral habits as he pleases ; but, when he begins to indulge in any vice, he must take with it all the concomitant vices with which it is naturally associated. To estimate any vice, crime, or immorality, apart from these its natural consequences, is to estimate it fallaciously.

We usually represent vice as resulting in poverty and disease, for these seem easy illustrations of its perniciousness. Still vice, and even crime, will sometimes (though rarely) procure wealth, reputation, and power, accompanied, too, by undisturbed health ; but we may safely deny that

vice and crime can, in any case, procure happiness. Providence makes happiness to be independent of reputation, public honour, and every other fortuitous possession, lest man, by grasping these, might be happy despite of misconduct ; as our first parents, had they eaten fruit of the tree of life, might have been immortal despite of transgression.

I must, however, warn you against a very prevalent fallacy. A vicious man may be rich, healthy, powerful, and enjoy much happiness, while a virtuous man may be poor, sick, powerless, and suffer much unhappiness ; but, before we estimate thereby (as is the manner of some persons) the retributive justice of Providence, we must ascertain whether the vice of the vicious man is the cause of his riches, health, and happiness, and whether the virtue of the virtuous man is the cause of his poverty, sickness, and unhappiness. In probably every case, we shall find that the rich man's vice has made him less rich than he otherwise would have been, and less healthy, powerful, and happy ; while the poor man's virtue has greatly alleviated his poverty, sickness, and misery.

I have attempted, however, to illustrate, in this discourse, not the evil consequences of a life engrossed by vice and immorality (for on this point no diversity of opinion exists), but to illustrate that every act of viciousness is injurious to the actor, and may be fatal to his reputation, property, health, and general happiness. If I have succeeded, you will admit that the world would be benefited if all actions which are thus hurtful could be distinctly designated, so that we might know the actions without waiting to learn them by our own observation when practised by other men, or by our own experience when practised by ourselves.

Fortunately, the task has been accomplished, and amply, with precautionary interdicts against every injurious thought and word, as well as action. The whole is to be found in a small book that is neither scarce nor dear. It is not a strictly methodical treatise on ethics; hence many persons read it without acquiring from it the moral knowledge which it is better able to yield than all the systematic treatises extant. The book to which I allude is the Bible. Its merits, as a moral guide, are become obscured by the diffusion of its own light; for its morality is be-

come so incorporated with our language, that it is known to persons who never read the Bible; just as Latin and Greek words are so mingled with the English tongue as to be known to men who never heard of Greece and Rome.

This assimilation of our notions with the moral doctrines of the Bible has been gradually accruing for many centuries; hence we need not be surprised at the harmony which exists between the morality of the Bible and our notions of right and wrong. But if we shall find, what experience will prove, that the practices which the Bible prohibits are all naturally prejudicial to society, we must admit the existence of a remarkable coincidence between the propriety of the prohibitions and the nature of society; especially as the prohibitions extend over the whole compass of human actions, and include, either specifically or generally, every practice which is injurious to society, in every grade of civilization, in every period of time, and in all diversities of manners and climates, without including among the prohibitions one practice that is beneficial to society.

If, however, we shall find further (and this I

have shown), that the prohibited practices are so injurious to the practiser also as not only to prevent him from benefiting himself at the expense of society, but also to punish him severely if he shall make the attempt, our surprise must be excited at the accumulated beneficial coincidences. And further, if we shall find (as we all know) that the prohibited practices are generally inviting, and seem capable of yielding both pleasure and profit; that, previously to experience, no man would anticipate evil from them; and that the evil is generally produced circuitously, by the complicated machinery of man's organization, mental, physical, social, and moral, combined with the natural catenation of events, we shall be compelled to believe that inspiration alone could have revealed the prohibitions, and benevolence alone dictated the revelation.

Man needed no revelation to teach him that his heart must pulsate, his lungs heave, and his thoughts wander; for all his vital and intellectual powers perform their offices without his volition. He needed no revelation to teach him that he must eat, drink, and sleep; for all his appetites, passions, and animal necessities apprise him intuitively of their existence. He needed

no revelation to inform him that fire will burn him, water drown, and iron bruise. To discover such facts was to constitute his occupation and his glory. His danger from them was also soon learned, and no temptation existed to encounter the danger after it was once discovered. But he needed a revelation to teach him what the Bible interdicts, for they are actions too tempting to imply danger, and often too dangerous to be experienced without ruin. They are so multiform, also, that they are ever arising under a new aspect, and so numerous that precept cannot enumerate them, except in the form of general propositions, as we find most of them embraced in the Bible.

But the Bible not only interdicts certain practices, it enjoins some. It says, "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life." To boast, aspire, and fear nothing but our stomachs, seem far more likely modes of acquiring honour, riches, and life. We shall find, however, that the practices, moral and religious, that the Bible enjoins, are as temporarily beneficial as the prohibited practices are injurious; but, as I have already taxed your patience to the extent that you may be willing to accord it, I

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must borrow for the remaining topics another evening, if you shall feel sufficiently interested in them to again favour me with your attendance.

LECTURE III.

THE CONDUCT WHICH RESULTS BENEFICIALLY.

PROVIDENCE governs the world by methods which will excite our admiration in a degree proportioned to our acquaintance with them. When food is necessary to sustain life, we feel a gentle craving to notify us of the duty which is required of us. If we comply, we are rewarded with an enjoyment which is usually sufficient to ensure our compliance. We thus seem to possess the option of continuing in life, or of permitting our lamp to expire by withholding its oil ; but, practically, we possess no such option. We are created for purposes whose consummation is not made dependant on our volition. If we will not be enticed to duty by the pleasure which is kindly attached thereto, the next resort of Nature is coercion ; and we are gnawed by hunger with an intensity which increases with our contumacy, till we are compelled to provide means for our preservation, and even to eat revolting substances if no other are procurable.

A similar process is applicable to all the animal duties which are necessary, not to our existence merely, but to our health, vigour, succession, and general usefulness. Ambition may wish to dispense with sleep. We are told, hyperbolically I suppose, that the great Frederic of Prussia made the experiment, designing, if it succeeded, to introduce it into his armies. Idleness may desire to dispense with activity, while avarice and dissipation may wish to dispense with rest. Theorists may prescribe celibacy, and ascetics may proscribe mirth; but Nature is an overmatch for all of us; and, when we will not be enticed to duty, we are eventually compelled to submit to the intentions of our organization.

We are compelled to perform our duties in the manner, also, best adapted to their efficacy. We must partake of no food that is not nutritious. We must sleep at the periods best adapted to our refreshment. We must exercise enough for the healthful vigour of our organization, and we must refrain from exercise at the period when further exertion would be injurious. We must not use our teeth in operations that will impair their enamel, nor employ our sight

beyond what our eyes can endure without injury. The more nicely we conform to what is thus obviously for our health, the more Nature rewards us with attendant pleasures; and the more we deviate from this standard, the more Nature punishes us with attendant pains.

A like process attends the moral duties which promote the good of our fellow-men, as almsgiving, humility, courage, and other virtues. We are invited to the performance of them by an exquisite mental complacency, which in all cases accompanies the performance of moral duties, and which is intense in proportion as we perform the duties beneficially to our fellow-men. We are also rewarded by physical benefits, which are proportioned in degree by a like rule. Among these benefits are riches, honours, public esteem, and influence. But Providence has purposes to subserve by our moral conduct as well as our animal; and the consummation of these purposes is not risked on the moral pleasures and physical benefits thus kindly associated with the performance of moral duties. If we will not be enticed by benefits, Nature coerces us, by moral pains and physical penalties, till we submit to the performance of our duties,

or by our sufferings warn other persons from like contumacy. Providence disciplines us as we discipline our children. When bedtime arrives, we request them kindly to retire. If they obey, they depart with honour ; but if they are contumacious, we speak to them authoritatively, and augment our coercive processes till they who would not submit cheerfully and with honour, must submit with pain and dishonour.

The pleasures and benefits which attend our performance of duty are, you perceive, only enticements to the performance of the duties, and not the purposes for which the duties are enjoined. This arrangement of Providence men are continually reversing. They give alms, not to relieve the destitute (which probably is the design of Providence in enjoining the duty), but to enjoy the incidental rewards that result from almsgiving. They practise humility, not to sooth the feelings of the unfortunate and humble (which may be the design of Providence in enjoining humility), but to procure exaltation. They confer benefits on their enemies, not to promote the peace and happiness of mankind (which probably is the intention of Providence in enjoining the duty), but to gratify revenge, in

heaping coals of fire on the head of an enemy. Every such reversal of the intention of Providence is vicious. The virtues which are thus viciously performed become thereby discredited. The performer is rendering dishonourable what Providence is striving to render honourable. Like all other vices, his hypocrisy defeats its own end, and is requited with evil instead of benefit. Your enemy sees that your favours are intended to humble him. He repels them with disdain, and his hatred acquires additional rancour. The unfortunate and the unpretending see that your humility is but arrogance in disguise, and they despise you for your pride and presumption.

In the performance of our animal duties, a similar perversion is still more frequent and more directly punished. For the pleasure of eating, we eat when we are not hungry; for the pleasure of drinking, we drink when we are not thirsty; for the pleasure of inaction, we rest when we are not weary; for the pleasure of sleep, we slumber when we are not exhausted by wakefulness. A parent will sometimes entice a sick child to take medicine by mixing sweet-meats with it; but should the child, when he is

not sick, take medicine to obtain the sweetmeats, he will be injuring his health as well as perverting the kindness of his parent. In like manner, the object of Providence is not to dispense sensual pleasure, but to make us fulfil certain duties; and when we unnecessarily perform the duties for the sake of the attendant pleasure, we are perverting the kindness of Providence, and entailing on ourselves physical disease, and often mental derangement.

The Chinese are said to derive a sensual pleasure from certain appliances to the orifice of the ear. We are told that they employ instruments which are constructed for no other use. The practice is not confined to the Chinese, but all of us may have seen people who create a pleasure by introducing paper, or some other body, to titillate the ear. An incessant itching, which still further induces the practice, is the first evil consequence of the surreptitious pleasure, while impaired hearing is generally the ultimate result. This shows how strictly our organization conforms to the general intention of making corporeal pleasures enticements only to duty, and that we bring upon ourselves evil when we reverse this intention, and make corporeal pleasure the

motive for any physical action. When opium relieves pain or induces necessary sleep, its use accords with the intention of Providence, as above explained ; but when we chew opium to procure pleasure, we pervert the principle for which Providence designed pleasure, and organic injury ensues. The use of tobacco and of alcohol in all their forms is usually for pleasure only, and hence is obnoxious to censures like the above, and requited with evils.

From the foregoing principles we may learn the important rule of conduct, that neither physical, moral, nor mental pleasure is procurable, except from the discharge of our moral, mental, and physical duties ; and whoever attempts to procure it in any other way is sure to be disappointed.

Segid, an emperor of Ethiopia, after devoting many years to the toils of empire, resolved, says Doctor Johnson, to devote ten days to pleasure. Repairing with his whole court to a luxuriant island, he sought pleasure by a cessation of all useful occupations, and an abandonment to all that was deemed pleasurable, but useless. The experiment of each day resulted in disappoint-

ment, fear, anxiety, sickness, and death, till the court returned home with the conviction that no mortal can say that any future period shall be pleasurable and happy. Segid might have learned from his experiment the less obvious truth, that neither Nature in our animal and mental organization, nor Providence in the moral structure of the world, has made pleasure the object of any of its provisions. Pleasure is not an end, but a means. Had Segid performed virtuously the duties of his station, he would have received pleasure as an incident of the duties; but when he sought pleasure separated from usefulness, he was as little in the way of obtaining pleasure as a man would be to obtain riches who should seek them by hunting for them; they, like pleasure, being obtainable only as an incident of something else.

And what is thus true of pleasure is true of reputation, honour, riches, and all the other objects of gratification. When we make them the *motives* of our conduct (instead of the rewards), we reverse the order which Providence has established, and usually fail of obtaining what we are perversely seeking. When Solomon was asked what he most desired, he said, "Give thy

servant an understanding heart to judge thy people. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life of thine enemies, lo ! I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart ; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee what thou hast not asked, both riches and honour."

Had Solomon asked for honour, he might have become as ambitious a conqueror as Napoleon ; and, like him, have perished miserably after having desolated the world. Had he asked riches, he might have satisfied his avarice, but at the expense of, perhaps, the industry and happiness of his subjects, and even of his life and wealth, which an oppressed people might eventually have wrested from him. He asked to perform well his regal duties, and the performance brought with it riches and honour as incidents of duty : incidents which every king will realize who seeks not honour and riches, but the good of his subjects.

If a lawyer discharges well and faithfully his

legal duties, riches and honour will follow as natural incidents to duties thus discharged ; but, should he make riches the object of his efforts, he will not necessarily perform well and faithfully his legal duties, but subordinate them to his avarice, and lose his business and character without obtaining the riches even which he is viciously pursuing.

In a late number of the *Edinburgh Review*, a lawyer is spoken of who "in every instance made his client's cause his sole object. To advance this object was always his aim ; to put himself forward, never. The most happy illustrations, the most sound legal topics, were suggested by him quietly, almost secretly, to his leader, from whose far less learned lips came forth, as if they had been his own, the sense of Mr. Holroyd ; who, so far from giving the least indication of the sources whence the point had come, only said a word in its support when absolute necessity required."

The unambitious and unselfish Mr. Holroyd, who thus so merged himself in his legal duties as never to put himself forward, was, of course, put forward by no one else ; and he who so secret-

ly bestowed information on a less learned superior, was, of course, always deemed his subordinate; but such was not the catastrophe, nor is such the order of Providence. Mr. Holroyd, "having long adorned the London bar, was raised to the bench; and, as a judge, he fully sustained the high character which he carried with him from the forum;" while the mass of his associates, who were accustomed so to manage as to put themselves forward, and, instead of whispering the information which they communicated, took care always to publish it, were left to toil through life as unhonoured as their conduct was selfish; wondering, perhaps, why men so regardless of their own interests as Mr. Holroyd should be elevated above them.

The same review, in speaking of another lawyer who also became an English judge, says, "He enjoyed large emoluments, high rank, and general respect. To what did he owe these valuable possessions? To no rare genius, or even great talents or extraordinary accomplishments; but to constantly making, in business, the success of his cause the paramount object; and to never being drawn aside from the point of his client's interest by any selfish feeling of feeding

his own vanity, or making any sacrifices either to amusement or display."

These sketches of some distinguished men of Great Britain are written by Lord Brougham. The object of the writer is biography, but the sketches exhibit (as all biography will) that those who are most successful in obtaining riches, honours, and public respect, are not the persons who pursue these as the ends of their labours, but who obtain them as incidents to active virtues. Nor need we be surprised at such a result, or estimate it as any arbitrary interposition of Providence. To confer wealth and honour on a lawyer is not the object of legal science, or of clients, courts, and judges. Their object is to dispense justice, redress wrong, shield the innocent, and punish the guilty. Society, acting on the instincts, motives, and principles which Providence has implanted in human nature, has made wealth and honour to be incidents of the faithful discharge of these duties, and poverty and dishonour incidents of the selfish discharge of them.

A like principle pervades necessarily all the business occupations of life. If a clock-maker

will be faithful in the performance of all the duties which pertain to his business, he is as certain of ultimately earning a comfortable support, as he is that the labour which he is performing will ultimately produce a clock, and that the clock, when produced, will accurately keep time. Were the support not a regular part of the process, mechanical business would cease. If, however, a man deserts the proper routine of business, plays while he should work, or uses lead in his clock where he ought to use steel, he possesses no guarantee that he will acquire a support, but, rather, that he will suffer poverty, disgrace, and misery.

In the review just quoted, another lawyer is spoken of, who wrote a book on the law of marine insurance. The reviewer says, "The work was devoid of all pretension except to explain the subject, and record the points fixed by authority; claiming no praise for originality or profoundness of views, or for any very acute line of remark either upon the cases or principles."

What, think you, became of the young man who, in writing a law-book, seemed to think of nothing but to make it useful? The reviewer

tells us: "The book soon lifted its author to a certain consideration among practitioners, and in 1815 he was made a judge. Had he written a book to exhibit his originality, the profoundness of his views, and the vastness of his reading, he would probably have been stigmatized as a coxcomb, and ended his career by being simply Mr. Park, as he commenced it. To obtain meritorious books is beneficial to the world; and society is pledged, by all the machinery of its construction, to furnish readers and yield fame to the author of a meritorious book. But nothing is pledged to confer fame on persons who write only to render themselves famous; hence an author who selfishly makes fame his primary object, is inverting the natural order of things. His book will probably partake of the perversity of his motive, and, instead of yielding him fame, may yield him obloquy, if it escape contempt.

A politician who interests himself usefully in public interests will obtain official station as an incident of his usefulness; but, should he make office the motive of his political conduct, he will be as often uselessly busy as actively useful, and give offence by his officiousness rather than obtain favour by his usefulness. So a public offi-

cer who discharges faithfully his public duties will obtain popularity as an incident of his faithfulness; but, should he pursue popularity as the object of his actions, he will not necessarily discharge faithfully his public duties. He will subordinate them to his popularity, and probably so waver in his conduct, so fluctuate in his sentiments, so mislead his friends, as to fail in obtaining the popularity which he is selfishly pursuing. A physician who skilfully performs his practice will obtain celebrity and patronage as incidents of his skill; but, should he pursue celebrity and patronage as motives, he will magnify slight ailments, that he may obtain the merit of achieving astonishing recoveries. He will publish miraculous cures which never occurred, and he will be contemned rather than obtain patronage and celebrity.

The gospel ministry was instituted to teach men their moral and religious duties. Congregations are collected for this purpose, and edifices erected. A clergyman labouring faithfully in his vocation is but adapting his efforts to the moral and physical machinery with which he and his profession are surrounded. As a natural consequence of this adaptation, he will gain the

love and respect of his parishioners, with a reputation for eloquence, piety, and usefulness. These are incidents of faithfulness, and to award them is the duty of hearers, and their interest. Suppose, however, that he shall subordinate his duties to the obtaining of the respect and love of his people, and a reputation for eloquence. Nothing around him will harmonize with his selfish motives. The edifice was not founded to minister to his pride and ambition ; nor was the congregation collected and the ministry instituted for purposes so unworthy. We know each other so well, that he will not deceive his hearers, who will censure him as trifling and unfaithful. He will not be deemed even eloquent ; for, while he will preach what only he supposes will suit the feelings and taste of his hearers, he will be more likely to outrage both (acting from no virtuous standards) than to gratify either.

If a youth at college will pursue faithfully his studies, and render due honour to his teachers, he will, as a natural incident thereto, obtain the respect of the faculty, with information and habits of study which will aid him in his progress through life. Should he, however, make the respect of the faculty, and even collegiate hon-

ours, the primary objects of his efforts, he will not be sure of obtaining the respect of the faculty or a good education. His aims are vicious; they will comport with his obtaining fraudulent assistance, and parroting the labour of other persons. He will usually deceive no one but himself, and ultimately obtain disgrace. That a youth who studies diligently should acquire learning and useful habits, are consequences to which all the machinery of instruction is adapted. That learning and useful habits should confer honour, is a consequence with which all the machinery of society harmonizes; but neither society nor college is adapted to produce beneficial results to him who seeks merely collegiate honours.

In the Divine vision heretofore quoted, Solomon was promised long life on the condition of his keeping all the statutes of the Lord. He was not promised it on the condition of nursing his health. Some men make the preservation of their health the primary object of all their actions; and such persons are seldom successful in preserving health. They become valetudinary and hypochondriac, as a consequence of perverting the intention of Providence, by making

health the end of their actions instead of making it the means of virtuous activity. When a man is most in the performance of his duties, and not thinking of his health, he is usually pursuing the course which is best calculated to preserve health. Life seems to be given us as only a means of general usefulness, and not for selfish enjoyment. When a plant has germinated, blossomed, and perfected its seed, the object is accomplished for which it was endued with life, and it dies. When a man has run through all the changes of manhood, and is no longer capable of usefulness, his life seems no longer within the intention of Providence. Should his flesh become wounded, it will not heal. Should he break one of his bones, the fragments will not unite.

A man who marries a virtuous woman, for whom he feels affection and respect, and who entertains a similar feeling towards him, will, as an incident to a union thus virtuously contracted, acquire new friends, an improved station in society, a happy home, a careful housekeeper, a sympathizing friend, and perhaps wealth. To produce these results, the laws of society and nature conspire. But, suppose a man should make

wealth or friends the primary object in the selection of a wife; neither the laws of nature nor society conspire to ensure him, as an incident to such a union, a happy home or a sympathizing friend. He is perverting the ends of marriage, and will probably bring on himself various evils, just as if he should employ a razor to cut a rope; he would spoil the razor, and, perhaps, not even sever the rope; for the razor was not constructed for the use to which he is perverting it. We are safe neither physically nor morally when we deviate from the intentions of Providence. While a man walks on his feet, the exercise is usually safe and salutary; but if he will walk on his hands, with his feet upward, he cannot foresee the dangers and difficulties that may ensue: they may be apoplexy, or dislocation of his neck, or injury to himself and others in many different ways.

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If you are employed as a servant, an instructor of youth, or an agent of any kind, and perform faithfully the duties of your station, you will, as an incident of your faithfulness, obtain, without seeking it, the confidence of your employer, with the highest pecuniary compensation which such services as yours are worth. If, however, you

make any of these incidents the object of your conduct, you will so strive to attract the eye of your employer, and to make your services appear valuable and faithful, that you will become a mere eye-servant, and lose the reward which you are viciously seeking.

If you attend any public meeting, and devote yourself to the laudable objects for which the assemblage is collected, you will obtain, without seeking them, the applause and respect of the meeting. If, on the contrary, applause and respect be converted by you into motives for the government of your conduct, you will, on every question, vote according to your views of its popularity ; speak only what you suppose will be deemed eloquent ; and, thus speaking and voting you will make yourself ridiculous and useless. A man thus viciously influenced can hardly speak before his motives will be apparent ; and his speech will be as contemptible as the holiday-declaration of a schoolboy.

If a person is required to read aloud, or to conduct a lady into a drawing-room, he will perform the service with grace and ease if he attempt nothing but to perform usefully the re-

quired service ; but if he selfishly attempt an exhibition of grace and ease, he will assuredly exhibit awkwardness and formality.

The organization of society, from which proceed many of the foregoing results, is not more favourable to virtuous conduct than are the organization of man and the organization of the universe generally. Every man is constituted by Providence an independent sovereignty. He possesses powers of deliberation, retrospection, anticipation ; of publishing his thoughts or concealing them. He is termed a little world, being an epitome of his whole race : a million of men possessing, like a million of clocks, nothing more in aggregation (physical strength excepted) than what each man possesses separately. If, therefore, I presume to exercise revenge towards my fellow-men, I find them as vindictive as myself, and they will requite me with vengeance. If I am arrogant, I must exercise it on beings as arrogant as I am. If I am selfish, other men love themselves also. If I am passionate, I shall be encountered with equal rage, or ridiculed for my impotent bursts of passion. If I am censorious or unsocial, I shall either be deserted, or teased as a venomous reptile.

I have heard of a man who whipped his wife because she would not be good-natured and affectionate. This seems an odd remedy for ill-nature and dislike ; still they are usually thus medicined, though the application is not always a whip. If a man is morose, and dares to practise, in words or actions, what moroseness dictates, the world applies forthwith the horsewhip in a hundred ways, till the misanthrope regains his philanthropy. Scorn for scorn, blow for blow, is the discipline of the world ; and, with its thousand hands and thousand tongues, it presents a fearful odds against a contumelious individual.

The option presented to a man is like that presented to a caged canary. It may pine in its solitude if it chooses, refuse to eat, and angrily flutter against the wires of its cage till it bruise itself to death, then be cast unfeelingly forth to make a meal for its enemy the cat ; or it may gayly plume its wings, carol sweetly the tune it shall be taught, be fed and caressed for its pains, see its enemy the cat whipped for looking at it maliciously, and be mourned exceedingly when it shall, "like a shock of corn in due season," come to the finale of its gamut.

If a child hold in his hand an orange, the impulse of every other child is to snatch it from him. Experience soon teaches us to abandon so gross an exhibition of self-love. The teaching is sometimes performed by the nails of the assailed child, which impress the lesson on the face of the assailant, who will learn, long before he attain manhood, that his self-love can be promoted by giving an orange to his companion rather than by snatching one from him. Every man will resist your attempts to benefit yourself at the expense of his property or feelings, though he will assist you if you can benefit him also. You may dislike this double duty of providing for the interests of your neighbours as well as for your own; but you can act no way so advantageously as thus to love your neighbour as yourself, and no way so disadvantageously as to disregard the interests of your neighbour.

When a child accidentally hits his head against a table, his first impulse is revenge, and he will strike the table in return; but he soon learns that this is not the way to redress his injury. A similar principle is applicable to every species of revenge. It only excites retaliation. Revenge is like the children's game of seesaw.

You no sooner mount aloft, and see your antagonist, who is at the other extremity of the beam, precipitated to the ground, than you must see him begin to ascend, and precipitate you to the ground. Nor is this all. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, are only judicial standards of revenge. An individual who seeks revenge will deem six of your teeth necessary to repay one of his. Revenge is thus a self-augmenting process, and, therefore, hopeless as a remedy for injury.

But, though our organization has benevolently precluded revenge, we may obtain redress for injury by requiting good for evil. This constitutes an infliction so practically severe, that it has been compared to heaping coals of fire upon the aggressor's head. You may dislike the process, but no other is efficacious. Should the events of life yield you no opportunity to redress your injuries, this contingency Nature has also provided for. Forgive your enemies. Pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. To desire revenge is a mental disease, and these are a mental remedy, by which the festering of revenge will subside as suddenly, and by a cure as perfect, as the wounds of fabled heroes when some deity pours into the lacerated flesh a drop of celestial ether.

To take heed not to give our alms before men, to be seen of them, seems a very unreasonable requirement ; for, though we can perceive that the beneficiaries of charity may be desirous of escaping the reproach of known mendicity, yet why should not the giver enjoy the fame of his benefactions ? He should ; but he can obtain it by only giving in the above benevolent manner. If nine tenths of your alms escape publicity, or even ninety-nine hundredths escape, the single alms that shall be discovered, with indubitable marks around it of honest intentional concealment, will cause men to impute to you a hundred times more alms than you ever gave. Our organization forces on us this result. He who gives ostentatiously, receives credit for only what he gives. His ostentation proves that he gives only what is known, and the amount will usually be less than public estimation claims as his proportion ; hence the alms of such a man are viewed as evidences of his parsimony rather than of his munificence.

These examples, and the various biographies which I have quoted, show how greatly our interests are thwarted by ostentation, revenge, selfishness, moroseness, petulance, anger, arrogance,

vanity, ambition, emulation, avarice, and the various other modes of conduct which the Bible prohibits; and how greatly our interests are promoted by forgiveness, brotherly kindness, humility, disinterestedness, charity, and the various other modes of conduct that the Bible enjoins. And now direct your attention to the wonderful agreement which exists between the precepts of the Bible and the organization of man as I have briefly sketched it. The Bible prohibits only what is prohibited by our organization and the organization of the universe. The examples which I have adduced are sufficient in number and kind to elucidate the principle; and you will find, on investigation, that the principle is applicable universally. You may, therefore, eat and drink, not to recruit Nature, but to enjoy the pleasures of appetite, till gout, dyspepsy, corpulence, and apoplexy teach you that the injunctions of the Bible in favour of temperance, moderation, diligence, labour, and the prohibitions against excess, rioting, chambering, and wantonness, are founded in our organization, and not in the austerities of bigotry. You may make riches, fame, honour, power, and personal distinction the immediate motives of your thoughts, words, and actions; but, after you have

acquired the character of a knave, sharper, demagogue, time-server, sycophant, and worldling, and seen yourself surpassed in wealth, honour, fame, power, peace, respect, and happiness by some man who seemed never to think of anything but to be useful to his fellow-men by the most benevolent discharge of all the duties of his business and station, you will learn that, though you may refuse to act as the Bible enjoins, you must submit to the consequences that the Bible predicts.

The religious duties which the Bible enjoins are also founded on our organization, and eminently beneficial, though we are prone to estimate them as homage exacted by Deity for his own gratification, when we are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, to take not the name of the Lord in vain, and to keep holy the Sabbath day. The Bible contains no religious injunction that is not paralleled by some analogous provision of man in relation to human government. Our approaches to human legislators must bear the humble appellation of petitions even in our country, not to gratify the vanity of persons who are dependant on ourselves for the positions which they occupy, but to in-

spire a respect for the laws which they enact. A like policy produces the personal homage, the pompous titles, the profuse salaries with which all nations have ever invested their chief magistrate. We often underrate the intelligence of mankind, when, in the homage thus paid to occasionally a boy or girl, we fail to see the utility which lies at the foundation of the observances. No principle is better established by experience than that, the moment a ruler loses the respect of his people, he loses all power to be useful. The Bible expressly disclaims selfish motives in Deity. It says, "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or, if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man."* "The Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always."†

At a funeral in our city many years since, the officiating clergyman said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away—" He was proceeding to complete the sentence, "Blessed be the

* Job, ch. xxxv., v. 6, 7, 8. † Deuteronomy, ch. vi, v. 24.

name of the Lord," when the chief mourner desired him to stop. He did not wish to hear "Blessed be the name of the Lord." He was burying his wife, and he wanted to resent the affliction by a refusal of submission; but whom, except himself, did his rebellion injure? Submission was enjoined for our benefit under the inevitable evils of life, and not for the gratification of Deity, to whom "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. Who doth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?"*

But, however we may fail to discover theoretically that the religious requirements of the Bible subserve our temporal interests, we may discover it practically; for nothing is more consonant to experience and observation than that, as a man becomes languid in his religious feelings, he becomes less benevolent, less patient, less scrupulous, less peaceable, more easily subdued by temptations, more addicted to vices. A man who is known to respect the religious injunctions of the Bible, receives credit in advance for keep-

* Dan., ch. iv., v. 35.

ing the moral injunctions; while a man who is known to disregard the religious injunctions, is suspected of a tendency to disregard the moral injunctions, even though his conduct seems scrupulously cautious of their observance. We uniformly confide in a religious man in preference to an irreligious man, when we know nothing farther of the two individuals than the above difference. Of two physicians of whom we know nothing but their religious tenets, we should not so readily employ an irreligious as a religious man; not only because sinister considerations may induce an unprincipled man to disregard our life, but because he may abuse the intercourse which physicians are accustomed to obtain in our families. Of two lawyers who are strangers to us, we more readily employ the religious one than the irreligious; for we deem the irreligious more likely than the other to neglect our interests from selfish considerations. Of two ships of equal goodness, and whose commanders are unknown to us except as to their religious character, we prefer, for a long voyage, the ship commanded by a religious man to the ship commanded by an unbeliever.

If, then, the religious injunctions of the Bible

are thus practically connected with the moral injunctions, a disregard of the religious injunctions, by reason of doubts in relation to the retributions of a future life (as is alleged by some persons), is as irrational as to disregard the precepts against stealing, adultery, and drunkenness by reason of like doubts; a utility in the present life being equally discoverable in both cases. Finally, the Bible not only enjoins nothing, moral or religious, but what, by our organization, is beneficial to us, and prohibits nothing but what is injurious to us, but every course of conduct which can be beneficial is, I believe, included within the injunctions of the Bible, and every course which can be prejudicial is included within the prohibitions. This position is too general to be proved; but sufficient for the utility of the Bible is the extent of our conduct that admittedly falls within its cognizance. To rely on experience alone for a knowledge of what is injurious or beneficial, would in many cases be as fatal as to rely on experience to teach us the properties of arsenic; the knowledge would not be attained till we had lost the capability of being benefited by it

The Bible yields us this knowledge in advance,

hence is admirably adapted to a being who is incapable of foreseeing the results of his actions, and yet is momentarily required to act in new positions; to decide on projects whose acceptance may either enrich him or impoverish; and on questions that involve his peace, honour, and health. That we need some fixed principles which shall supply the place of our short-sightedness, and prevent us from choosing evil and rejecting good, has been conceded in all ages; and from the concession has proceeded the various codes of philosophy and morals with which the world has always abounded. To prove that the Bible is the guide thus needed has been the object of this discourse, which I will conclude by quoting the words of Locke, who, when entreated to draw up a system of morals, replied, "Did the world want a rule, I confess there would be no work so necessary nor so commendable; but the Gospel contains so perfect a body of ethics, that Reason may be excused from that inquiry, since she may find man's duty clearer in revelation than in herself."*

* Grove's Moral Philosophy, vol. i., p. 12.

LECTURE IV.

THE ART OF CONTROLLING OTHERS.

DURING one of Napoleon's military excursions from France, an insurrection occurred in Paris. The conspirators were captured, but not till they had committed open aggression, and greatly alarmed the city. Six of the prisoners were shot by order of the persons to whom the emperor had intrusted the government; but Napoleon, when he heard of the revolt and execution, expressed great disapprobation that so large a number had been shot. Why, think you? Because he feared that the world would deem him sanguinary in his justice and ferocious in his feelings. We see in this single instance that no station is so exalted as to disregard the sentiments and feelings of mankind; and that, to obtain in our favour the sentiments and feelings that we desire, we must rely on other means than power, station, physical force, or wealth.

This insubordination of men's feelings oper-

ates to protect the weak against the strong, the powerless against the powerful. What would be the condition of the whole female race, if their affections could be commanded by men's physical superiority? We should know nothing of the chivalry which induced armed knights to deem the smile of some fair lady an equivalent for privation, toil, and danger; nor would the hardy man of our forests employ his physical superiority to render as little laborious as possible the domestic duties of his wife.

The protective principle is augmented, in the case of women, by an organization which makes them but little solicitous for the love of man; while man is solicitous for the love of woman beyond any of his other wants. To feel love, woman must, in the significant language of life, be wooed; to retain love, she must be cherished; but in man, the feeling waits for no wooing, needs no cherishing.

Could a parent coerce the feelings and sentiments of his children as he can their corporeal organs, how defenceless would be childhood. But we desire their love, gratitude, and respect; and, to obtain these, our physical superiority is

ineffectual, unless we employ it for the pleasure, protection, and instruction of the children.

The protective principle is augmented in this case, too, by an organization which makes parents more solicitous to obtain the love, gratitude, and respect of the child, than the child is the love of the parent. Even the happiness of the child the parent desires more than the child desires it; hence, by an intuitive cunning, an offended child will not eat, that the parent may be afflicted at its abstinence; it will not play, that the parent may be afflicted by its want of recreation; it will grieve, that the parent may be afflicted by its grief.

But I address you to-night, not to prove that we desire in our favour the sentiments and feelings of mankind, and that, to gratify such desire, we must employ other expedients than physical force and official compulsion, but to teach you the means by which you may control the feelings and sentiments of mankind. For Providence, in creating us with keen sensibilities towards the sentiments and feelings of our fellow-men, has not tantalized us with wants which we cannot influence; nor, in protecting men's feel-

ings and sentiments from physical coercion, has Providence intended that men shall feel as they please towards any individual, regardless of his moral qualities, and possess towards him the sentiments which they please, regardless of his conduct.

A European need not solicit mankind not to deem him a negro. They cannot if they would, for our senses are compelled to note correctly the properties of bodies. A man of sound understanding need not solicit mankind not to deem him insane or idiotic. They possess no discretion in the matter, for our intellect is compelled to note correctly the properties of mind.

By virtue of these principles, we rely with confidence, while we are not criminal, that crimes will not be imputed to us; and while we are not vicious, that vices will not be imputed to us. So unnatural is any other conduct, that, when a man gratuitously attempts to prove himself not guilty of any crime, he excites a suspicion of guilt; and when he gratuitously rebuts the presumption of any vice, as when he boasts of courage, we suspect him of cowardice. The principle is often ludicrously manifested in a child, who will

give you the first intimation that he has broken your watch, by announcing that he has not thrown down your watch. A drunkard, when he feels the approach of excess, will make demonstrations of wisdom in his speech and firmness in his gait to prove that he is sober ; and a liar, when he utters an untruth, will accompany his communication with asseverations of its verity. We have, therefore, only to avoid conduct which we wish not imputed to us, and mankind cannot impute it.

Instead of doubting the efficacy of the principle, we presume on the forbearance of the world beyond the limit which Nature has thus assigned to it. We desire to avoid the imputation of enviousness, while we are envious ; to avoid the odium of revenge, without forbearing opportunities of vengeance ; not to be accounted mean, and still to enjoy the profits of meanness ; not to be accounted inhospitable, and still to avoid the trouble and expense of hospitality ; not to be deemed slanderous, and still to vent detraction ; not to be deemed liars, and still to utter untruths ; not to be deemed treacherous, and still to betray confidence.

Vain, however, are all such attempts. Man, though very ingenious in dissimulation, yet all his ingenuity is common to his whole race. The spider, when pursued, and his retreat hopelessly intercepted, will roll himself up into the form of a ball, and lie motionless. This stratagem will often deceive a boy who is in pursuit of the spider. The boy will suppose that the spider has already been killed, and will leave him ; or he will mistake the little ball for a piece of earth, and suppose that the spider is escaped. But, though a spider can thus deceive a boy, it cannot thus deceive another spider. A pursuing spider would detect the stratagem instantly. He would recognise in it a trick that belongs to every spider, and to which he, probably, had often resorted.

A hare, also, when pursued by hounds, knows well that his tracks are the means by which his pursuers detect him. He will, accordingly, double on his tracks. That is, he will run back some distance in the same footsteps, and then suddenly leap to a great distance, and run off in a new direction. His pursuers may not understand this stratagem, and, when they arrive at the end of the first track, may be unable to trace farther the artful fugitive. But think you a hare, were

he the pursuer, could be thus baffled? He would perceive immediately that the fugitive had doubled, and would know well where to find the new track. The trick is as much a part of the nature of each hare as the similarity of their appetites, tastes, and habits.

So a man cannot deceive men. You are masquerading before others who have masqueraded themselves. They know every turn of the game as skilfully as you. We are, to every essential extent, repetitions of each other. If what you utter proceeds from envy, no disguise can prevent your envy from being detected. If your actions result from penuriousness, no ostentation of liberality can hide it, no protestation of munificence conceal it.

The organization which thus precludes men from imparting to you any quality which you possess not, compels them to impute to you every quality which you possess; hence, while you are endeavouring, by artful professions of religion, to conceal irreligion, you compel the world to impute to you hypocrisy in addition to irreligion. While you are endeavouring, by professions of courage, to conceal cowardice, you force the

world to deem you a braggart as well as a coward. While you are endeavouring to disguise ingratitude by professions of gratitude, you make the world deem you deceitful as well as ingrate. While you are endeavouring to conceal ignorance by displays of knowledge, you are causing the world to deem you vain as well as ignorant.

But we can, if we please, employ this principle beneficially. If we desire to be deemed religious, we have only to be religious, and we must be thus deemed. If you desire to be deemed veracious, speak the truth habitually, and you must be thus deemed. If you desire to be deemed trustworthy, patriotic, benevolent, just, hospitable, philanthropic, studious, learned, be what you desire to be deemed, and your reputation must conform to what you are.

Nor need you be anxious to make men observe your good qualities. Any agency which you thus exert will transform your reputable actions into disreputable. It will convert learning into pedantry; religion into pharisaism; humility into ostentation; condescension into arrogance; praise into flattery. Any action, how good soever, the worst man will perform if you

compensate him for the performance ; hence, to the extent which a love of reputation influences your conduct, you are as little meritorious as he. His selfishness requires money, yours is satisfied with reputation.

Having thus shown how we may control the opinions of the world with reference to our character, both negatively and affirmatively, I will show how we may control the feelings of the world with reference to our persons. While the senses and intellect of mankind are so organized that men must, as we have seen, impute to us the qualities which we possess, the moral feelings of mankind are so organized that men must feel towards us according to the moral qualities which we possess. If we are lovely, we must be loved ; if hateful, we must be hated ; if contemptible, we must be contemned ; if despicable, we must be despised.

To ensure the uniformity of such results, Nature has formed men much alike. A million of organs, manufactured from the same pattern, possessing the same stops and notes, respond not to each other with more similarity of sound, on the pressure of any given key, than a million

of men will respond to each other, in similarity of approbation and aversion, on any given occurrence. When Queen Victoria, a very young maiden, arose from her seat during her coronation, and, disregarding etiquette, assisted an old nobleman, who was painfully endeavouring to ascend the steps of her throne, to yield her, according to the custom of the kingdom, his personal homage, the spectators responded to the action with acclamations. They needed no conference to ascertain the feeling which the action should excite in them. Providence had predetermined it for them.

If history shall record the incident, no period will arrive when the readers will not harmonize in feeling with the spectators. Eight hundred years ago, a son of William the Conqueror was entering his father's palace, when his brothers sprinkled some water on him from a room above. The action was in character with the childhood of the actors, but the sons were not fraternally disposed towards the brother who was made the object of this practical joke, and who, therefore, deemed the action an insult ; and, unsheathing his sword, he ran up stairs to inflict vengeance on the aggressors.

Actions like the above would not, probably, occur now among the sons of a king of England, for manners change ; but our organization changes not : hence, to know the feelings with which the water was thrown eight hundred years ago, enables us to understand now the feelings of the person on whom it was thrown.

The uniformity of our moral organization is exhibited in the abhorrence which our whole population feels towards Arnold, and the affection towards Washington. So definite, also, are the principles which regulate us, that our present feelings could have been predicted before Arnold practised treason or Washington exhibited patriotism. So the effect can be foreseen of any conduct, and, as we usually behave as we please, each of us can predetermine the feelings which the world shall entertain towards him, though, from the occasional complaints of men, you would imagine that the world dispensed its feelings either fortuitously or by favouritism. The obnoxious recognise any cause but their own agency in the aversion of the world. The world is, however, the most impartial of human tribunals. Like the broad Ontario, it is too vast to be embittered by the rills of

personal enmity, too vast to be sweetened by the tricklings of personal friendship.

As a preliminary, however, to a control of the feelings of the world, a man must know what conduct will excite in other men the feelings that he desires ; and, providentially, Nature, in giving us wants which require the concurrent feelings of other men, has not failed to suggest the means of obtaining such concurrence. As weariness dictates a recumbency of posture, and drowsiness a closing of the eyes ; as anger clinches our fists, and dictates the infliction of blows on the object of our anger (a dictate which we often see expended by an enraged man in striking his fists against each other when the restraints of society deter him from striking his enemy), so love, which requires in its gratification the concurrent affection of another being, dictates to us the looks, words, and actions that will obtain the required affection.

Novels are an exaggerated picture of human nature ; yet, as they derive their interest from our sympathy, they seldom depart wholly from real life. In novels, then, we often find described a person in whom love produces so ex-

alting an appreciation of the person beloved, and, by contrast, so humiliating a consciousness of his own inferiority, that the love to which he is a prey is deemed too presumptuous to be avowed, and manifests itself by only mute adoration, and incessant but secret efforts to delight and benefit. By the course, however, of the novel, the person thus yielding to the natural dictates of his intense feeling, excites, more effectually than he could by any other means, a reciprocal attachment in the person beloved.

We shall find that a principle like the above is general. If you feel complacency towards any person, it will dictate conduct that will excite in him complacency towards you. If you feel confidence in any person, it will dictate conduct that will excite in him confidence towards you. If you feel friendship for him, it will dictate conduct that will excite in him friendly feelings towards you. Sympathy will excite sympathy, respect will excite respect, liberality will excite liberality, forgiveness will excite forgiveness. In short, "as ye would that men should do to you, do ye to them likewise." This scriptural rule we are accustomed to estimate as a measure by which we are only to dis-

pense favours ; but it is equally applicable as a means for the obtaining of favours.

If we believe Doctor Darwin, an analogous principle is discoverable in quadrupeds. He says, when the shoulder of a horse itches, and he wants to allay the irritation, he goes to another horse and bites him on the shoulder ; and the bite is immediately returned on the corresponding part of the biter, who thus obtains the relief that he needed. This may be fanciful, but it illustrates the construction which I have given to the above scriptural rule, with this difference, however, which the Scriptures superadd, in deference, perhaps, to the moral intelligence of men, that we must perform our good actions “ hoping for nothing again.”*

To perform any action under the hope of an equivalent return deprives it of its beneficial influence. Why should you be exalted for humility, if you are humble for exaltation ? Why respected for disinterestedness, if you are disinterested to gain respect ? Why honoured for alms-giving, if you give alms to purchase honour ? Why befriended for your friendliness, if

* Luke vi., 35.

you are friendly to acquire friendship? This is to traffic for the feelings of other men, instead of controlling them by the processes of Nature.

If you do good to your enemy, as a result of your benevolence, the enemy must reproach himself for having injured so beneficent a person; but if you do good to him for the purpose of exciting his self-reproach, and thereby figuratively heaping coals of fire on his head, you are no more deserving of his gratitude than if you feasted him on poisoned sweetmeats, or gave him a house which you expected would fall and bury him in its ruins. If you will not judge unfavourably of your fellow-men, they will, as an incident of your estimable feelings, judge favourably of you; but if you refrain from judging other men for the mere purpose of procuring a similar forbearance from them, your selfish prudence presents no motive for their forbearance. If you will forgive men their trespasses against you, they will, as an incident of your amiable placability, forgive your occasional faults; but if you forgive to procure a reciprocation of forgiveness, your stratagem presents no inducement for any peculiar indulgence. The more corrupt your conduct, the more willingly would you en-

ter into such a compact with the world. Even the love of a woman Nature will not assist you to procure, if you seek her love for your own gratification. Such a motive possesses no attraction to her.

Nay, your love for her, how ardent soever, is not the motive by which her love can be acquired, though it will be an incident in your favour. She can love you only when she deems you lovely, and this you may not be, though you love her. So consonant is this truth to our experience, that, when we want to facilitate any person's suit to a lady, we adduce instances of his general loveliness, and palliate or refute any known instances of malevolence.

The rule, "As ye would that others should do to you, do ye to them likewise," is most efficacious when applied to our conduct towards man collectively. To a modified extent only will my love for an individual excite his love, and my friendship excite his friendship; but my love for mankind generally will uniformly excite the love of mankind towards me; and my friendliness for mankind generally will invariably excite the friendliness of mankind towards me.

This broad application conforms to the comprehensive benevolence of the Author of the rule, who, in all his provisions, seeks not the good of individuals only, nor the greatest good of the greatest number (which is the boasted extent of political benevolence), but the greatest good of all. The most predominating distinction between Washington and other men can be traced to the universality embraced by his feelings. Other men have been friendly to individuals, and thereby obtained individual friends; but he was friendly to all, and thereby made all men his friends. Other men have loved a sect or a party, and thereby obtained the love of a sect or party; but he loved his whole race, and thereby obtained the love of his whole race.

The like, to a modified extent, may be said of Howard. Other men have visited prisons to minister to the wants of particular individuals, but his feelings embraced the unfortunate of every grade and character. The distinction between individual benevolence and general benevolence involves a difference of motive and character. Individual benevolence is ever partially selfish; hence, "if ye love them which love you, what reward have you? do not even

the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?"

Providence has not, you perceive, subjected our feelings to the conduct of other men irrespective of their motives, but rather to their motives irrespective of their conduct. If you plunge into a river to save a man from drowning, the benevolent feeling which constitutes your motive will excite the approbation of beholders, even though you unfortunately encumber the person and drown him; but should you plunge into a river for the purpose of encumbering a struggling man, your malevolence will exasperate against you the beholders, though you accidentally become entangled with the drowning man and save him.

When Queen Victoria arose from her throne on the occasion already referred to, the plaudits with which she was greeted proceeded from the benevolence of her motives. Had she performed the action to display the imbecility of her aged adherent, disapprobation and resentment would have been excited. If we injure a person ever so severely, he becomes appeased immediately

when he learns that the injury was undesigned. If a man kill another by unconsciously administering to him food that is poisoned, the act is legally innocent ; but if you give him pure food, knowing that in his condition it will kill him, the act is murder.

But we are not content to let the feelings of other men towards us arise incidentally as a consequence of the feelings which we bear towards them. We want to be loved, without obtaining it as an incident of our loving others, but as an incident of our desire to be beloved. We want friends, not as an incident of our friendliness, but as an incident of our selfish desire to be benefited by friendship. We want to be trusted, not as an incident of our faithfulness, but as an incident of our curiosity or avarice. We want to be exalted, not as an incident of our humility, but as an incident of our ambition.

Nay, we strive to diverge still farther from the established moral order of Nature, and to be loved though we hate, respected though we are mean, trusted though we are treacherous, befriended though we are unfriendly, which are all moral impossibilities. I will not say that a

man can in no degree and in no instance feign love, and thereby excite love in return ; nor that flattery and presents may not, in particular cases, excite a modified friendship. These instances are a fraud on the processes of Nature, and, like other frauds, are only partial in their success, and restricted in their operation. A counterfeit feeling, even when it escapes detection as a counterfeit, is not as effective as a genuine feeling ; just as a set of false teeth, a counterfeit eye, and false hair, how skilfully soever formed, and though we may not suspect them to be counterfeit, will not produce the agreeable effect of a natural set of beautiful teeth, natural eyes, and natural hair. Something incongruous about the deception will rather shock us than excite our complacency.

Equal incongruities attend a feigned character. Forgiveness, when it results from benevolence, is always accompanied with congruous qualities throughout the whole man ; and which accompaniments will be wanting when forgiveness is only assumed to create self-reproach in an enemy. Humility is always attended with patience, diffidence, and other congruous qualities ; the absence of which must ever discriminate it from

the ostentatious humility that is only assumed to obtain exaltation. Friendliness, when it proceeds from kind feelings towards all men, must be ever distinguishable from the occasional and discrepant friendliness by which selfishness seeks to obtain favours.

And not only are congruous qualities wanting in such cases, but qualities which conflict with the assumptions are present. When an avaricious man seeks an alliance by marriage with wealth, the presumption is irresistible that love alone is not his motive. When an ambitious man professes patriotism, an ostentatious man liberality, a niggardly man hospitality, a morose man tenderness, an artful man frankness, we are compelled, by the organization of our thoughts and feelings, to suspect sinister motives. Few of us have attained to the meridian of life without having met with some person who has vainly endeavoured to gain our confidence. He has been professedly willing to repose in us his life, property, and honour; but, instead of reciprocating his confidence, we have, in the language of Junius, felt rather, "when he smiled, an inclination to guard our throats from danger;" and this person, in the progress of

events, has developed the character of a knave. Conduct that lacks sincerity is deficient in the quality that constitutes its efficacy. Like a piece of iron that possesses the form only of a magnet, it will not attract, though to the eye it may seem a perfect magnet. Nor need we wonder at this when we reflect that our feelings dictate not merely the actions which we perform and the words which we utter, but the expression of our countenance and the intonation of our voice. The tragedian who attempts to express fear at what he knows is no ghost, and surprise at what he has often heard, almost invariably, even when most successful, only caricatures the feelings that he is endeavouring to portray; so, in common life, we cannot counterfeit Nature accurately, we can only caricature it.

A child, at a very early age, will keep aloof from persons whose feelings are not in unison with infantile annoyance, though the persons may endeavour to conceal that they are annoyed; nor usually can men, whose intentions are destructive, make themselves pleasing to the individuals whom they desire to injure. In Captain Franklin's over-land journey to the Polar Seas, his party was reduced to famine. Some

of them died, and were secretly eaten by a portion of the survivors. One who had thus feasted evinced an appetite for the flesh of his living comrades. He endeavoured to conceal his cannibal propensities, but, from the principles we have been considering, they saw that he was only prowling around them like a ravenous wolf, and, in self-defence, they suddenly shot him dead.

But whatever success dissimulation may occasionally achieve against all the obstacles which Nature interposes to its success, it only demonstrates the efficacy of genuine feelings; for, if dissembled friendship will excite friendly feelings, how much more efficacious must be actual friendship?

The rule which we have been considering is as effective in bringing on me the malevolent feelings of the world as the good. If I feel ill-will towards men, they will feel ill-will towards me; if I am censorious, they will censure me; if I hate, they will hate me; if I insult, they will insult me; if I am unsocial, they will desert me; if inhospitable, they will neglect me; if contemptuous, they will condemn me; if de-

spicable, they will despise me. So unvarying is the operation of the rule, in both the good feelings and the bad, that, if any person will tell me accurately the feelings which he cherishes, I can, without further information, tell him how men feel towards him, just as a mathematician can tell you the last angle of a triangle when you tell him the first two angles.

To strike a person will not more naturally excite in him a desire to strike you in return, than a kind act will excite in him a desire to act kindly to you in return. Both cases proceed on the retaliatory process which belongs to our organization. And so exempt is the process from considerations of mere personal loss and gain, that a blow inflicted on any man excites a modified pugnacity against you of all men; and an act of kindness to any man excites the good-will towards you of all men. The mob which collects to exercise Lynch law on notorious profligacy is seldom composed of persons who have been personally injured by the offences that they seek to avenge.

Nero was the object of almost universal execration in Rome; but the victims to even his ma-

lignity were few in comparison to the number whom he had thus made his enemies. In cases of great cruelty, by a master to his apprentice, of a parent to his infant offspring, or where a child has been cruelly kidnapped from its mother, the feelings of strangers, who are accidentally passing near the scenes of such outrages, and whom the offender has no way personally injured, are often so intensely excited that the life of the criminal is preserved with difficulty from their natural vengeance.

So, too, when General Lafayette visited our country, and passed through it, the nations' guest, greeted by multitudes to whom he was personally a stranger, it resulted from the sympathy of our nature for feelings evinced by him at a period anterior even to our birth who thus honoured him. Society is like a spacious hall hung with mirrors around and above. You may address yourself to any one mirror; but, if you contemptuously yawn before it, all the others will return the yawn. Place yourself before it in an attitude of defiance, with clinched fists and threatening brow, the mirror will return your defiance, and all the others will repeat it.

Finally, then, if we will control our own feelings, we can control the feelings which other men shall bear towards us, and be loved or hated, as we shall elect; but if we will not control our own feelings, we cannot thereby prevent them, whatever they may be, from exciting in other men the feelings which are correlative to ours. We are, in this particular, like a man who is fallen into a deep river. He may perform actions which will keep him afloat, and he may perform actions that will drown him; but if, from ignorance or folly, he will not voluntarily control his fate and be saved, he cannot prevent death if he perform the actions that produce drowning: he will gain nothing by passiveness, but only leave to chance what he may control by effort.

But how can we control our own feelings? This I propose to inform you; but, as the topic is too important to be exhibited summarily, I must postpone it to my next, which will also be my concluding discourse.

LECTURE V.

THE ART OF SELF-CONTROL.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.” These two commandments are said to be a condensation of all that the Bible enjoins in reference to our conduct both religious and moral. But our feelings are not subject to our control.

“Love, free as air, disdains all human ties,
Spreads his soft wings, and in a moment flies.”

Pope thus represents love as not only independent of our will, but so perverse as to escape merely because we seek to bind him.

George, the fourth king of England of that name, after having been married about a year, wrote to his wife, from his palace of “Windsor Castle :

“April 30, 1796.

“Madam,

“Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other, because Nature has not made us suitable

to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power; let our intercourse, therefore, be restricted to that."

The logic of this letter is consonant to the known independence of our feelings, though we possess a latent conviction that the position is not correct. The prince (he was not yet king) seems to have deemed his condition more comiserable than blameworthy. He was, doubtless, called a very unfortunate gentleman. If, then, a husband cannot love a wife, whom a year previously he had solemnly promised to love, "how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" and how can he love all his neighbours, when some of them are not a little unlovely?

In view of these difficulties, men estimate a conformity of feeling to the requirements of the Bible as a consummation to be desired rather than a duty to be executed. And, truly, if our affections, passions, and other feelings be as independent of our will as they are theoretically deemed to be, not only the letter of the Prince of Wales is defensible, but marriage itself must be unsuited to a being so fickle as man, while the requirements of the Bible to love God

with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourself, are a sarcasm. But our passions, appetites, and other feelings are not thus independent of our volition.

In Scott's novel of *Kenilworth*, the unmerited persecutions and sorrows of the Countess of Leicester so affect us, and with the very feelings that Scott designed to excite, that we strive, though in vain, to appease our commiseration by reflecting that the events are fictitious. The words of the narrative will, as an essential part of their meaning, excite the feelings. Like the sounds of an organ, our feelings must burst forth if you press the proper key ; and, among the objects which can thus press us, none is so effective over a man's own feelings as his own words, thoughts, and actions ; hence a man can excite in himself any feeling if he know the words, thoughts, and actions with which the feeling is associated. To teach this constitutes the object of the present discourse ; and, when you have learned it, you will possess the art of self-control.

Every feeling gives to our appearance a peculiar look, to our voice a peculiar tone, to our

language a peculiar phraseology, to our limbs a peculiar action, to our thoughts a peculiar tendency. These natural associates of every feeling are so familiar to our experience, that we tell by a glance the feeling which is present with any person, be it love or anger, pride or humility, hope or despair. A painter can catch these evanescent appearances, as exhibited by the countenance, and fix them permanently on canvass. A theatrical performer can imitate them with corresponding intonations of voice and motion of his limbs. A dramatist can make artificial persons whose speeches will conform to the feelings that he endues them with, while the interlocutor in the dialogue will express by his answers the feelings which the speeches naturally excite. Nay, all of us, when we meet a friend who is in distress, know how to adapt our countenance, language, intonation, and actions so as to express sympathy, though perchance we feel it not, except as our effort to represent the sympathy causes us to feel it: for we are so constituted that the feeling of sympathy will arise in us when we assume the look, language, tone, and actions that belong to sympathy. I assert the like to be a general rule, and that a man can excite in himself any feeling if he will

speaking, looking, and acting as if he already possessed the feeling. The principle is among the most important, benevolent, and beneficial contrivances of Providence, as it indirectly subjects all our feelings to our control. If, for instance, a man will speak to his wife, and act towards her as he would speak and act if he loved her, his words and actions will excite in him love towards her. If he will speak and act as though he is estranged from her, he will soon feel as much estranged as his conduct indicates. If you will act and speak patriotically, you will soon possess the feelings of a patriot. If you will speak and act as though you are persecuted, you will soon feel that you are a martyr. If you will speak and act avariciously, you will soon become a miser.

Who has not seen a man commence calmly some narrative of personal grievance, and, before he closes, excite so forcibly his anger and revenge as to gnash his teeth and strike his fists violently against each other. When two boys fight in jest, they usually, after exchanging a few playful threats and blows, find themselves fighting in earnest.

Horace Walpole wrote a treatise on Historical Doubts, and Sir Walter Scott, in commenting thereon, says, "It is remarkable to observe how, in defending a system, which was probably, at first, adopted as a mere literary exercise, Mr. Walpole's doubts acquired in his own eyes the respectability of certainties, in which he could not brook contradiction." So, let circumstances place a man in a public meeting as the advocate of temperance, and, while he endeavours to prove that you ought not to drink brandy, he will convince himself (whether right or wrong I will not say) that you ought not to drink wine, beer, and cider. If he dwell long on the topic, his feelings may mount up to an interdict of even tea and coffee. I have seen a man harangue against the oppression of the Greeks by the Turks, the oppression of the Poles by the Russians, the oppression of the blacks by the whites, till, kindling as he proceeded, he who commenced his speech reluctantly, ended it a champion enlisted for life. During our Greek enthusiasm some years past, a collection to aid the Greeks was made in one of the New-York churches, and so perverted from the spirit of Christianity had our whole community become on the subject by constant reading, meetings, and speaking in behalf of

the Greeks, that a member of the congregation placed a dagger in the plate as his contribution, and the act was deemed both decorous and praiseworthy. We already look back on this religious occurrence with about the same astonishment as we experience in reading narratives of the early crusaders; but let us not believe that we possess an exemption from similar extravagances, but rather learn from them the influence over our feelings that is exercised by our words and actions.

Nearly every man possesses one topic that is more the subject of his speech and actions than any other, and on that topic his feelings will usually become excessive. A musician will sometimes deem all art inferior to the science of music. A painter will deem paintings the height of human achievement. A lawyer may become equally warped by his pursuits; the physician and the divine by theirs; the phrenologist by his. The man who makes gain the chief employment of his speech and actions, will often deem money the only object worthy of regard; while another, equally perverted in his feelings by excessive attention to the subject, will deem fame the only substantial good. The protracted

discussions which annually precede our political elections throw our whole community into a periodical excitement, that, when estimated with reference to the small personal interest that usually pertains to such contests, well sustains the sarcastic definition of party strife, that it is the madness of the many for the benefit of the few. When a man receives an injury from another, he may excite himself to any degree of revenge if he will only continue to make the injury the subject of his speech and actions. The confectioneer in Philadelphia, who lately murdered his daughter for marrying contrary to his inclination, is doubtless an example of the enormity to which our feelings may be stimulated by our words, thoughts, and actions.

If, therefore, you desire to feel complacency towards mankind, and general philanthropy, you must habitually speak and act as if you possessed complacency and philanthropy. Your feelings will soon harmonize with your words and actions. If you wish to possess the venom of a fiend, nothing is necessary but to speak and act as though you possessed such venom, and you will soon possess it. If you would love your children, and not be irritated by their playful-

ness, speak and act as love and patience would dictate, and you will soon feel as a parent ought to feel. A hired nurse, who is compelled by her condition to expressions of tenderness and acts of forbearance, will soon love the infant who abridges nightly her sleep; while its father, if he even unmeaningly fret at its irritability and helplessness, will soon feel it to be an intolerable burden. If a son would feel affection towards his parents, he must speak and act affectionately. If a scholar would honour his instructors, he must act and speak respectfully. If he would feel contempt for them, nothing more is necessary than to act and speak contemptuously; the contempt will speedily follow. You can apply the principle to all the relations of life: friend, brother, master, magistrate; and acquire all the feelings which ought to pertain to those relations, as hospitality, affection, benevolence, and respect; or acquire the feelings that ought not to pertain to them, as inhospitality, aversion, malevolence, and disrespect.

I will not assert that, in spite of counteracting influences, a man will in all cases be able to thus produce in himself love, or that he can in any case excite immediately the feeling that he

wishes to excite; yet, to a great extent, the moral prescription will be efficacious immediately, while its ultimate success is almost certain. The subjection of our feelings to our indirect control you cannot appreciate properly till you reflect that they could not have been subjected to the direct control of our will without the most disastrous consequences. If, for instance, I could not feel fear till I willed to feel it, I should lose the benefit of a counsellor who is now ever vigilant to warn me against danger. If I could not feel repugnance to crime till I willed to feel it, I should lose the benefit of an accuser that now spontaneously admonishes me when I contemplate the commission of evil. If we could not feel compassion till we willed to feel it, the beggar, who in our streets forces contributions from even avarice, might starve before he could find a man who would will to be compassionate.

Our religious feelings can be controlled by the same methods. Would we possess submission to the events of Providence (and what feeling is so well adapted to a being who at any moment may be deprived of wife, children, health, and property?), we must speak and act submissively; would you love God, you must speak and act as

though you loved him. When I was a young man, I joined a party one Sunday afternoon to visit Harlaem. My companions were as gay as youth and high health could render them; and, when we entered a private room, one of the young men commenced, in mere wantonness, an extempore prayer. As he proceeded, he diverged from levity to seriousness; his words exciting, unexpectedly, the feelings to which his language and actions bore affinity; and the speaker ended amid the embarrassment of half earnestness and half jest.

Even belief, which the Bible implicitly exacts, and which we often deem the most unreasonable of its exactions, being, we affirm, entirely beyond our control, is as tractable as any other of our feelings. We may believe in opposition to the clearest revelations of our intellect, and nothing is more common. A man may be intellectually certain that he can pass a night within a churchyard without supernatural molestation; yet he may be unable to so repress a belief in supernatural agencies as to prevent fear. A drunkard may vow reformation, and believe that he will never infringe it; while he may be intellectually certain, from having repeatedly broken similar

vows, that he will break the present. We often express surprise at the incredulity of parents. One will not believe that his son is profligate, though every other person is convinced of the fact, without knowing half the instances of his profligacy that are known to the parent. Belief, therefore, is no exception to the control that man possesses over his feelings; belief, not in the Bible alone, but in the revelations of Matthias, in Mormonism, witchcraft, the clairvoyance of animal magnetism, and, consequently, in anything, how intellectually absurd soever, provided we will act and speak for a season in accordance with the belief which we desire to create in ourselves. Nay, in reference to this pliancy of belief, we often say that a man may utter so frequently a known untruth as eventually to believe it.

The impulse which our feelings receive from our words and actions accounts for the sudden explosiveness of feeling which usually occurs when persons confess either love or hatred towards each other, or when a person publicly dedicates himself to religion; and, indeed, in every case in which a man announces the possession of any feeling, be it repentance or defiance. A

child is sometimes whipped till it will admit sorrow for its offence. I recommend no such discipline; but even the compulsory admission of repentance will sometimes excite the feeling which the words and actions are made to assume. So the repentance which the Bible enjoins will sometimes instantly, and always ultimately, be produced by the employment of words and actions which imply repentance. We sometimes allege that we cannot repent; but the initiatory steps are in our power, and we must resort to them if we would control our feelings, just as we must take the initiatory steps when we want to erect a house or possess an orchard.

You may ask whether I intend to recommend hypocrisy, since I require a man to act and speak differently from what his feelings may dictate. I answer no. I wish him to profess all that is virtuous, and to act conformably to the profession. This is his duty, and he possesses the power of compliance; for his words and actions are subject to his will. But he possesses not the feelings which the words and actions indicate. This he cannot help, for his feelings are not subject to his will. But they are controllable, and will conform to his words and actions; hence, to

insist that he will not speak and act as duty requires, by reason of his not possessing first congenial feelings, is as unreasonable as for a sailor to insist that he will not hoist his anchor, by reason of his not being first under way. The sailor would be endeavouring to reverse the order which Providence has established for the government of the physical world, and the other would be endeavouring to reverse the order which Providence has established for the government of the moral world. If duty required that a man should marry a particular woman, would he refuse to look at her and speak to her, by reason that he did not love her? Would he not say, in the significant language of experience, that he would try to love her? and, in compliance with his resolution, would he not approach her, look at her, speak kindly to her, act kindly towards her? and would any one be surprised if eventually he loved her?

If a man possessed no control over his feelings, he would be as unreliable as a tiger, whose unfitness for domestication may arise from such a defect. When provoked, he would be necessitated to fight; when alarmed, he would be compelled to flee. He would marry to-day, under

the influence of desire ; desert his wife to-morrow, under the influence of satiety. He would one day consecrate a church, the next day desecrate it. If he awoke in good humour, he would act benevolently ; if in bad humour, tyrannically. Every man's feelings are sufficiently versatile for these alternations ; but, by the control over them which our words and actions possess, most of us pass through life with a reasonable degree of consistency and decency of feeling, as well as of appearance.

Having shown how we may excite in ourselves love towards any particular individual, benevolence towards all men, humility under prosperity, courage under danger, dignity under adversity, forgiveness under persecution, and all other desirable feelings, nothing more seems necessary to self-control. But, practically, we still retain, as an essential part of our nature, hatred, pride, revenge, envy, and other undesirable feelings, which will arise in us, like heat and cold, on the presentation of proper appliances. And, when they arise, though our words, thoughts, and actions are not compelled to obey them, yet the tendency to obedience is powerful. Our feelings are the steam which puts in motion our

words, thoughts, and actions. Without the feeling of hunger a man will not eat ; especially will he not under the feeling of disgust. Without courage he will not oppose danger ; especially will he not under the feeling of fear. Hence, where you do not feel humility, you will find some practical difficulty in speaking and acting humbly ; and the difficulty will be infinitely greater while you are under the influence of pride. When you do not feel love, you will find some difficulty in speaking and acting affectionately ; and the difficulty will be infinitely increased while you are under the influence of hatred.

Two obstacles, therefore, exist against our system of self-control ; but the first is easily surmounted. When the desire of drink is absent, any drunkard can easily vow reformation. While weariness and disgust are not present, any sluggard can be laborious and diligent ; and, Satan himself, we are told by a proverb, is not morose when he is not displeased. The only great obstacle is the influence of adverse feelings : of speaking and acting affectionately when we are under the influence of aversion ; of speaking and acting courageously when we are under the in-

fluence of fear; of speaking and acting humbly when we are under the influence of pride.

The difficulty I admit to be great; and, in view of its magnitude, no dictate of wisdom and morality is more obvious than to avoid, when we can, the excitation in ourselves of any feeling which tends to produce conduct that we desire not to practise. The means of such avoidance are much within our power, and can be stated in one general rule: refrain from every word, thought, and action that would naturally proceed from the feeling that you desire not to excite. If you would not feel envy towards a prosperous friend, avoid every word, thought, and action in relation to him that you would employ if you envied him. If you would not become avaricious, avoid the words, thoughts, and actions that belong to avarice. If you would not feel unbelief, avoid the words, thoughts, and actions which unbelief would dictate. If a young woman would avoid any complacency of feeling towards a profligate man, she must avoid all words, thoughts, and actions in relation to him that complacency would dictate. If you would not feel hatred against your enemies, impatience under the painful dispensations of Providence,

contempt towards your inferiors, arrogance towards your dependants, meanness towards your superiors, malice towards your persecutors, avoid the words, thoughts, and actions which these several feelings would dictate if you possessed them.

The efficacy of the above rule, and, indeed, of all the preceding rules, depends on a principle which, when applied to our thoughts, is termed the association of ideas. If you slip down in the street and badly hurt yourself, you will think of the accident whenever you pass the spot on which it occurred. This process is so familiar to us, that we hide from a person any article of dress that was worn by a deceased friend. We know that the sight of the article will immediately excite a recollection of his loss. Our feelings obey a like principle of association. Persons who have been frightened in a carriage when it has been upset or run away with, are sometimes unable ever afterward to enter a carriage without apprehension. The association thus accidentally formed between fear and the carriage the persons mistake for danger, though they may know intellectually, from observation and experience, that the occurrence of such ac-

cidents is rare, and the danger small. Persons, also, who have heard much of midnight supernatural horrors, obtain often the feeling of fear, strongly associated with darkness and solitude, which become thereby insupportable. The fear which they feel is compatible with the clearest intellectual convictions of its absurdity. A burned child dreads the fire, says a proverb. But why? Because the fear and pain which the fire once occasioned him are so associated with the appearance of fire that he cannot approach it without apprehension.

By the same principle, if I employ towards any person the language or actions that I am accustomed to use when I am angry, they will excite in me the anger which custom has associated with them. If I employ the language and actions of pride, they will excite in me the pride that custom has associated with proud words and actions.

To avoid, therefore, the excitation in yourself of any undesirable feeling, the importance is obvious of avoiding all words, thoughts, and actions with which the feeling is associated. A person may resolve that he will no longer mourn

for his deceased friend ; yet, if he will seclude himself from society, and keep pondering over the endearing qualities of the deceased, grief will inevitably ensue by virtue of its association with the words and actions that you persist in employing. A person listening to a dull sermon may resolve that he will not sleep ; yet, if he will close his eyes and recline his head, drowsiness and sleep will almost inevitably follow.

When a man is insulted who desires not to return evil for evil, he may, in the language of the Bible, “let alone contention before it is meddled with,” and remain self-possessed ; but, if he will retort injurious expressions or injurious actions, he will, despite his resolutions, excite in himself anger and revenge, and, thus induced, he may plunge a dagger in the heart of his opponent. So irresistibly, almost, are we governed by our feelings, after we have permitted them to be excited in us, that the law meliorates the penalty of homicide when committed under sudden excitement. But I doubt if the law ought thus to respect our feelings when we assist in exciting them. We ought then to be classed with drunkards, who, having dementated themselves,

are not permitted to allege such madness in extenuation of crimes thereby induced.

That a husband should feel respect for the understanding of his wife is desirable, not only for his gratification, but for her self-complacency. I knew a man who probably would have assented to this proposition, and yet, to amuse his visitors, that happened to be numerous, he acquired a habit of speaking contemptuously to his wife, making her a butt for his pleasantry. He may have intended to "give honour unto his wife," but he soon felt towards her the contempt which his language had first only assumed; and, their intercourse becoming intolerable, they separated. The impolicy of his conduct (viewing it simply with reference to policy) was contrasted at the time by another member of the same society, a man in an elevated station, who possessed great intellectual and moral endowments. His wife was weak intellectually; still, the great deference with which he always listened to her remarks, and the general respect with which his visitors saw him always treat her, prevented them from discovering the intellectual difference which existed between the husband and wife, and doubtless prevented the husband himself from being

shocked with it, and the wife from being discouraged at it. These are not fancy sketches. Some of you may recollect the originals.

Even loud speaking is unfriendly to calmness of feeling ; not only by reason of the association which habit may have established between loud speaking and turbulent feelings, but also by reason of an exciting power which loud speaking seems to possess naturally. Rude nations, when rushing into battle, excite their courage and exasperate their animosity by loud cries, and even civilized nations employ the same expedient when the onset of battle is close and personal. This natural effect of loud speaking is a great obstruction to theatrical acting in cases where gentle feelings are to be expressed. The actor must speak loud, or he cannot be heard ; but he cannot speak loud without destroying in himself all illusion of gentleness, and hence increasing the natural difficulty of his imitation. We accordingly find that actors are usually more successful in characters that exhibit the turbulent feelings of ambition, rage, and courage, than in characters that exhibit the tranquil feelings of domestic peace and social benevolence. The Bible, in its injunctions, is particular in prescri-

bing, not the substance only of our speech, but the manner. It says, "Let your speech be always with grace." "The words of the wise are heard in quiet."

Our thoughts, of which I have, as yet, purposely omitted to speak, are less influential over our feelings than our words. Yet, let no man estimate thoughts as powerless. The Bible says, "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought." No injunction is more judicious; and not for the reason that the king may hear us, but to prevent the excitation in ourselves of the feelings which produce cursing. If we would not feel hatred against our enemies, we must refrain from not only openly reviling them, but from reviling them in thought. The like may be said of all our feelings. Both good thoughts and bad will arise in us without premeditation, and even against our will; but their continuance with us depends much upon our will. A thought is like a timid stranger. He shows himself at your door, but will not walk in unless you invite him, nor tarry unless you evince a wish to detain him; but, after being cordially entertained, you may not get rid of him without difficulty.

Every prominent action, good and bad—the voyage of Columbus, that discovered a New World; the invasion of Russia, that lost Napoleon the Old World—was originally nothing but a wandering thought in the mind of the actor. It might have been repelled never to return, and America would have been yet undiscovered, and Europe still in subjection to Napoleon. But the thought was cherished till it became familiar, and familiarized till it excited a feeling in its favour; and then the process to overt action came within the same instinct which urges us to procure food when we are hungry, and rest when we are weary. We cannot too much admire the forecast with which the Bible, in numerous passages, enjoins on us purity of thought: “Set your heart unto all the words which I command you.” “Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be clean.” “God knoweth your hearts.” “God is good to such as are of a clean heart.” By all which expressions, I understand that we are enjoined to conform to the requirements of the Bible, not in words only and in actions, but in thought and feeling.

But the rule which we have stated for the avoidance of injurious feelings relates to only

our words, thoughts, and actions. Other causes affect our feelings. We are counselled to "look not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." But why not? Because the sight may excite in us a desire to drink. We shall greatly underrate the example if we confine its application to intoxicating drinks. It is illustrative of a general principle; founded on which is the prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." We can understand why we should pray against poverty, but we may not assign the reason which the Bible assigns: "Lest I be poor and steal." Poverty is not necessarily connected with dishonesty; but poverty denying us the means of lawfully gratifying many of our desires, we are tempted to an unlawful gratification of them. The rich but rarely steal, and commit the same crimes that the poor commit. This proceeds from no moral superiority over the poor, but from the smaller temptation to which the rich are exposed. But the same prayer says, "Give me not riches;" and it assigns a reason, "lest I be full and deny God." Riches are not necessarily connected with pride, presumption, and thanklessness; but riches, by yielding us the ready means of gratifying our desires, tempt us

to a supercilious independence which is unfavourable to several moral and religious injunctions.

The foregoing principle has not escaped observation ; and by it, more than by any other rule, is regulated the degree of familiarity which is permitted between men and women ; the amusements that are deemed innocent, the dress that is reputable, the extent to which we may blamelessly expose unguarded property, and the portion of our time which we may dissipate in idleness. The principle is illustrated by Scott in the adventures of two young men, who are apparently amiable, and commencing together a friendly journey. One of them, an Englishman, is unarmed ; but the other, a Scotchman, wears a dirk. The Scotchman is requested not to wear his dirk ; and the adviser professes to see, like Macbeth, gouts of blood upon the blade—English blood. No fears could be more apparently unreasonable ; yet, before night, the travellers quarrelled. The Scotchman was excited by receiving a blow from the Englishman, and the possession of a dirk suggested a fatal revenge : he stabbed his companion through the heart.

I knew a man who frequently found his street door locked, owing to the timidity of his wife. He believed the precaution only a vexatious obstruction to his entrance. He kept remonstrating, but the practice was repeated. At length, as regularly as he rang for admittance, he became angry. He perceived the folly of discord; but his anger had become so associated with the obstruction that he could not separate them, and, as his only peaceful remedy, he abandoned the front door, and accustomed himself to enter his house by an open back door. You may laugh at this stratagem to avoid his own irascibility, and may think that he ought rather to have contested with his wife for mastery; but, without expressing my own opinion on so delicate a question, I adduce the anecdote to exhibit the agency that circumstances exercise over our feelings.

But temptation is not confined to the excitation of feelings that we ought to restrain. We read of "provoking each other unto love and good works." The foresight of man is so limited, that the events of life are rarely determined by premeditation, but by accident or its equivalent. If we place ourselves within the range of

good influences, the accidents which occur will partake of these influences, and be beneficial to us. If we place ourselves within the range of evil influences, the accidents will be injurious. Two men may arise together from the same dinner-table and emerge from the same door, both equally void of any definite object, and equally innocent in intention ; but one, by strolling within the influences of vice, may return home with disease incipient in his body, and a fatal friendship commenced in his feelings ; while the other, by mingling in virtuous society, may return home with the acquisition of an acquaintance that is to yield him domestic peace and social importance.

Our Saviour was found in the temple at Jerusalem, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and answering their questions. Tradition says that the meetings thus alluded to were held statedly, to deduce from the Scriptures practical rules of conduct as well as speculative doctrines. The result of these discussions still exist in books called the Talmud. The text, "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God," they held to be violated by every exposure to physical dangers that a man unnecessarily hazards ;

as by needlessly walking on the brink of a precipice, walking under a ladder, or handling broken glass and earthenware. A similar application of the text is given by the Saviour himself, when commanded by Satan to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, and rely for security on a special interposition of Providence. But the text is equally applicable, and more, to unnecessary exposures to evil moral influences; and the man who is so little acquainted with human nature, or so reckless, as to disregard the prohibition, is just in the condition to become a victim to the breach of it.

Yet how much soever I may prevent injurious feelings by forbearing words, thoughts, and actions with which they are associated, and by shunning external provocations, yet anger will arise within me, and malice, envy, selfishness, avarice, pride, emulation, ambition, and every other feeling. Exemption from them was not experienced by the hermits of old, who for that purpose secluded themselves from the world; much less will it be experienced by us. This brings me to consider the means by which I may resist the control of my feelings when their influence is present.

The words and actions that we first perform in obedience to any powerful feeling, operate like vent to fire that is raging within a closed building. The vent renders the feeling independent usually of further control, and it must thereafter run its course, like a malignant fever that is past the brief period in which it can be arrested. . We accordingly find, whenever a person stabs another on a sudden outbreak of passion, that the first stab, though it kill, increases the energy of the passion, and induces to numerous subsequent wounds, that are inflicted in only blind obedience to a rage no longer controllable, and whose fury must in some way expend itself.

But whether we will give vent to our feelings or not is within the control of our will. We know the story of a woman who destroyed her happiness and her husband's by scolding at his irregularities, and who at length reclaimed her husband and became happy by filling her mouth with cold water, and keeping it there while she felt angry. The moral of the story is applicable to every passion, and the prescription is doubtless alluded to in the injunction of the Bible, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Our feelings are really as evanescent as light-

ning, unless we keep them alive by our words, thoughts, and actions.

Instead, however, of strangling our feelings, we may vanquish them, which is preferable, as it will tend to prevent their recurrence. The mode consists in uttering words and performing actions that are opposite to those which the combated feelings dictate. "Do good for evil." "Render blessing for cursing." "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if naked, clothe him." We often estimate these precepts as merely the wishes of the lawgiver; but they are elucidations of a profound principle of our nature, like the prescriptions of a physician, who, when our hand is frozen, commands us to thrust it into cold water or rub it with snow, and not to obey our inclination by placing it before a fire.

But Nature, which enables us, for the harmony and benefit of mankind, to either vanquish our malevolent feelings or smother them, has, for the same reasons, withheld from us the power of terminating them by indulgence. The female who, in her domestic duties, yields to irritability, seeks in vain to allay it by scolding. The process only increases her disorder, and she becomes a

torment to herself, her husband, children, and servants. She eventually imagines that every event is specially arranged for her annoyance, though her only difficulty is, that her irritability is so increased by indulgence as to be annoyed by everything. She is like a person who has made herself giddy, and then thinks that everything around her is rotary.

An avaricious man illustrates the same retributive principle. He endeavours in vain to allay his avarice by accumulating wealth. His avarice will grow by indulgence, and he will mistake the growth for an increase of his necessities; hence, the more he practises accumulation, the more self-denying, penurious, and grasping he becomes. In the opinion of the world, he daily becomes richer; in his own feelings, he daily becomes poorer. Every possession also seems to become daily more insecure, and every security daily more suspicious, though the only difficulty is, that his suspicion and fears so increase by indulgence as to be alarmed by everything, and incapable of being satisfied by anything. He mistakes the increase of his fears for an increase of danger, and the diminution of his confidence for an augmentation of treachery in other men.

The misanthrope, too, who, in his intercourse with the world, yields to envy, seeks in vain to allay it by detraction. Objects of envy multiply on him faster than he can defame them, though the multiplication is produced by only his increased vigilance in pursuit of enviable objects, and his increased malignity in estimating them; till, like Shylock, he attains the ultimate misery of believing that he alone is unfortunate, and all other men are prosperous and happy.

But while the feelings that we viciously indulge are thus not merely insatiable, but subject to a growth, which proceeds onward with the petulant man till everything offends him, and he becomes as explosive as gunpowder; with the jealous man till, like Othello, he sees guilt in the most innocent actions; with the melancholy man till everything is coloured by his own gloom, and he becomes insane; with the hypochondriac till he feels disease in every pulsation, and contagion in every breeze: so the feelings that we virtuously indulge are subject to a like growth, which produces a like delusion, though of a happier character. To a man who indulges benevolence, everybody and everything will continually meliorate under the kind influences of his in-

creasing benevolence. Viewed through the medium of his increasing friendliness, everybody will seem more and more friendly ; through the medium of his increasing patience, everything will seem more and more calm ; through the medium of his increasing resignation, events will seem more and more seasonable.

Swift has said, that to be happy is only to be well deceived. This cynical aphorism may apply with truth to the soothing influences which the indulgence of benevolent feelings exerts over our perceptions. The mistress of a family will easily mistake the growth of her own forbearance for increased diligence on the part of her servants. A father will easily mistake the growth of his paternal feelings for increased loveliness on the part of his children ; and the growth of his conjugal feelings for increased attractions on the part of his wife ; who, instead of deteriorating by lapse of time (as unhappy old bachelors suppose), will hence daily develop new charms and increased claims upon his affections.

We are told by a poet that

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

A like remark seems appropriate to our feelings. Love is not necessarily the result of any quality in the object beloved; for, whom one man loves, another may hate. The person also whom you love to-day you may hate to-morrow: nothing may have changed but your own feelings. Content and discontent are severally not the result of any given external cause; for what I shall view with offence under one state of feeling, I shall view with pleasure under another. In a garden grow, side by side, a strawberry-vine, a tobacco-plant, a rosebush, and a poppy. The same earth is common to all, the same sunshine, the same shower; yet from these same sources the tobacco-plant draws tobacco, the rosebush the tints and fragrance of roses, the poppy opium, the strawberry-vine strawberries. So the events of life are common to all men; the same havoc by death, the same hopes frustrated, the same fears realized; yet from these similar occurrences the patient man extracts patience, the impatient man rage, the pious man hope, the impious man despair, the cheerful man tranquillity, the melancholy man madness.

These opposite effects prove that happiness and misery, despair and hope, depend not on ex-

ternal differences, but on different states of feeling ; hence, if our feelings are as much under our control as I have laboured to show they are, we can accomplish what is equivalent to controlling the events of life : we can control the effect which the events of life shall produce on us, and, parodying the couplet of Pope, say,

“ Happiness and wo from no condition rise,
In self-control the true distinction lies.”

To attain, however, this result, we must accustom ourselves to think, act, and speak under the guidance, not of our feelings, but of our intellect. The eye tells us what pleases the sight, the taste what gratifies the appetite, but intellect must determine whether the eye shall be permitted to look and the taste to enjoy. Poison may lurk under the sweetest flavour, destruction under the fairest appearances. Our feelings, too, must be subordinated to our intellect. Anger tells us what action will yield it delight, pride what answer will yield it gratification ; but intellect must determine whether anger shall be permitted to burst forth and pride to retort. The answer that thrills us with gratification while we are uttering it, and the action which delights us while we are performing it, may lead ultimately, but irresistibly, to the most disastrous

consequences. Intellect possesses the power to control our words, thoughts, and actions; hence we may reasonably infer that such was the functions that Nature designed it to perform.

Our feelings cannot prevent this supremacy of the intellect. At the command of intellect, the limbs of a man will quietly submit to the tortures of amputation; and his hands will submissively adjust his neck, that his head may be severed from his body.

Our feelings tell us the moral qualities of actions, as the senses tell us the physical qualities of bodies. And lest we should be disposed, in the accomplishment of our designs, to disregard the moral character of our conduct, our feelings are endued with a right of speech and petition, of which intellect cannot deprive them. Intellect must listen to them, though it need not obey. But, while intellect is thus intrusted by Nature with the high duty of ultimate control over our words, thoughts, and actions, it possesses no intuitive knowledge in the performance of the duty. To enlighten it in the discharge of this duty was the purport of nearly all the philosophy of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, as

it is now of the various moral speculations of modern philosophers. Before the time of Johnson, dictionaries existed, but they varied so much from each other that they possessed but small authority in establishing the orthography of any given word ; so, before the diffusion of the Bible, the various moral systems were so discordant that they exerted but small authority in establishing the morality of any given action. But the principal benefit which the world has derived from the Bible is not simply the possession of a standard in whose authority most men acquiesce (though this is a great benefit), but in the possession of a standard whose precepts so accord with the organization of man and the natural catenation of events, that its injunctions are the only conduct that can result beneficially, and its prohibitions the only conduct that must result injuriously.

The Bible, too, unlike all other systems of morality, is not composed of general propositions, whose meaning, like a riddle's, is anything and everything to which ingenuity can affix it. It abounds with examples, in detail, of both good practices and evil, through the whole compass of words, thoughts, feelings, and actions ; prohibit-

ing the evil and enjoining the good. It commands us, among an infinite variety of detail, to admonish one another; to exhort, rebuke, and edify. To bear with each other's weakness and infirmities. To comfort one another; to give and receive counsel. To honour each other; to forbear, forgive, and compassionate. To be faithful in our friendships, just in our dealings, blameless in our deportment, courteous in our manners, exemplary in our conduct (avoiding even the appearance of evil), diligent in our business, industrious in our habits. To do good even to our enemies, and evil to no one. To be gentle, harmless, humble, kind, long-suffering, meek, merciful, patient, peaceful, piteous. To be temperate, yet hospitable; grateful, yet abhor mischief wherever it may appear. To maintain our integrity in every situation. To speak truth under all circumstances. To repent of evil and make restitution, but to be persevering and steadfast in all that is good. To be righteous, sincere, submissive, and obedient. To love mankind, rely on God, cultivate resignation; to have no fellowship with the wicked, and to strive after perfection.

On the other hand, it prohibits anger, arro-

gance, backbiting, slander, evil speaking, covetousness, cruelty, boasting, cursing, drunkenness, envy, malice, oppression, pride, strife, stubbornness, talebearing, quarrelling, railing, profanity, and revenge. We must not boast, be haughty, exalt ourselves in any way, nor be conceited, scornful, contentious, disputatious. We must not flatter, lie, whisper, or deceive. We must avoid discontent, disobedience, frowardness, grudging, fraud, and hate. We must entice no man to evil, deceive no man with hypocrisy. We must eschew rebellion, murmuring, talkativeness, jealousy; be neither idle nor intemperate, jealous nor partial, ungrateful nor lukewarm, and, without fearing the face of man, keep all the commandments of God. And, after thus providing for the procurement of all the good that virtue can secure, and the avoidance of all the evil that prudence can avert, the Bible forgets not the countless ills of disease, death, disappointed hopes, from which no conduct can exempt us. Against these it teaches us a moral alchymy, by which they and every wo can be converted into hope, contentment, peace, and often joy.

Many people deem the whole merit of the Bible dependant on the question of its divinity; but,

if my estimate of its tenets be correct, the Bible, whether human or Divine (though human, I think, it cannot be), is precisely such a guide as our intellect needs. Even the rules which I have stated for the artificial control of our feelings, and by which rules our feelings may be brought in unison with virtue and piety, are taught in the Bible. It declares that the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord : still it enjoins the sacrifices.

This is the substance of all my rules. The only difference is, that I have stated the mode in which the rule produces its effect : the Bible commands the avaricious man to distribute alms despite his avarice ; the unbeliever to pray despite his unbelief. I have only added the experimental fact, that thus to give alms will excite benevolence, and thus to pray will excite belief ; just as forcibly swallowing a mouthful of food will sometimes excite a dormant appetite, and condoling with an afflicted friend will excite a languid sympathy.

The like may be said of the rules which I have given for the control of the feelings towards us of other men. I have stated none

which are not found in the Bible. But, finally, whether I am correct in my estimate of the Bible as a safe guide in the business of life, and whether I am correct in the rules which I have given for the government of our feelings and the feelings of others, are experimental propositions easily tested ; and, in truth, each one of us is every moment testing them. To your own experience, therefore, I refer you for either the refutation of these propositions and their rejection, or for their confirmation and adoption.

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