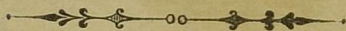


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THE APPRENTICE.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

So you have entered on the business of life! You have left the society of boys, and are beginning to mingle with men. Your talk will no longer be of games and sports, of school-duties and excitements, vexations and pleasures; but of pounds, shillings, and pence, the way to acquire them, and the uses to which they can be put when acquired. I hope you will enter with vigour and resolution upon your momentous and untried engagements.

I can remember some of the feelings which stirred within me when, at about your age, I began life as you are now beginning it; and I think I can form a tolerable idea of what yours are just now.

They are mingled emotions. There is a little *regret* at leaving your young companions, and your boyish pleasures. You feel that you are not quite a man yet; and that holidays and play have not altogether lost their charms. But, to

counterbalance this feeling, you find some pleasure in the novelty of your occupations, you have some *joy* at the thought that the stricter restraints of boyhood are past—that your personal liberty, though yet under subjection, will be held in with a slacker rein—and that, in many particulars which hitherto have been subject to somewhat close scrutiny, you will henceforward be your own master.

But then, *apprehension* comes in to damp your pleasure. You stand more alone, and you doubt and hesitate in your steps. You have put on the world's armour; but you have not proved it, and would almost be glad to put it off again. You look forward, and there is so much to learn, (yes, and something to unlearn too,) and so much to endure, that you shrink from the trial, and wish that the pathway of life were more pleasant, and the realities of life more inviting, than they seem to be. But then comes forward *hope*, and puts to flight your unmanly fears. The world is before you, and, as your prospect extends, there are bright and still brighter scenes opening to your view. "Just now, indeed," whispers hope, "there are a few difficulties to be surmounted—a little unpleasantness to be endured; but these borne and overcome—one step after another taken—a certain point reached—and all will be pleasant and smooth."

Am I right in my description? Well, far be it from me, my dear boy, to overcloud your flattering views. On the contrary, I would add new inducements to your perseverance, and encourage, rather than damp your ardour. I would endeavour to soften your regrets, allay your apprehen-

sions, increase your pleasures, and give stability, if not new animation, to your hopes.

What do you say, Charles? Will you accept my correspondence on these terms? Will you give me your confidence, and receive mine in return? Having passed over the ground which you are about to traverse, I may be, in some measure, able to direct your course—to point out some dangers that are, to you, unseen—and to suggest some motives for a continuance in well doing, that may be useful to you.

You have known me all your life, Charles. We have romped together on the green grass of your father's lawn, when you could do little more than crawl after and over your great play-fellow. When you became older, who but your uncle taught you to handle a bat and catch a ball—to trundle a hoop, to fly a kite, and to make one? And then, to proceed to weightier matters, we have travelled together through the pages of *Walkingame*, solving, in our progress, the mysteries of profit and loss, vulgar fractions, and decimals. We have been companions in long woodland strolls, till our legs ached with the exertion; and then we have rested under the shade of some old oak tree, and talked of nature and nature's God, and his love to poor sinners like ourselves. We have spoken of times past in my history, and of times to come in yours; and—in short—you know that I love you, and wish your welfare from my heart. You are now far away from me; and, what is of more account with you, from your *home*—and we shall not, perhaps, very often see each other again. But I would fain keep up our old friendship; and, until you bid me withhold

my pen, I shall do what I can to stir up your remembrance of me. In exchange, will you now and then let me hear from you? Tell me your troubles, if you have any; and bid me share in your pleasures. Lay claim to my advice and assistance when you think you need them; and you may at all times depend on receiving the advice—together with the sincere sympathy—of

Your affectionate

UNCLE.

LETTER II.

LEAVING HOME.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I THOUGHT I should find favour with you ; and I thank you heartily for the frankness with which you accept the offer of my future correspondence. To show you that I value the permission, I will make it as little tedious as possible, while I will do my best to make it useful.

I fully anticipated one part of your letter ; for I am not too old to remember what were my own emotions under similar circumstances. You say that you are very comfortable—but—“ there ’s no place like home.” Very true, dear Charles ; and you have given me a comprehensive text to enlarge upon. But I shall not avail myself of it to any considerable extent. The little book * which I enclose, and which I advise, nay, entreat you to read—to read with seriousness and prayer—contains all, and more than all that could be included within the compass of very many letters ; and is written with such simplicity and affection, that you will, I am sure, be deeply interested in its perusal. It will guard you against

* “ Young Man from Home.”

many dangers to which you are unwittingly exposed, and, through the Divine blessing, strengthen you in those principles which alone lead to happiness here, and eternal life hereafter.

Perhaps, in some of my future letters, I may incidentally repeat what you will have read in "The Young Man from Home;" but, in general, I think my remarks will relate to a different class of subjects. The writer of that book, as a Christian minister, has addressed it to young men generally, so as to render it suitable to every one, of whatever class of society, in whose hands it may be placed. But your uncle writes to you as a tradesman, who, having stood behind the counter—boy and man—during the course of a quarter of a century, must be contented to take lower ground, and enter only upon such subjects as his past experience may suggest.

Well, you have left home, and have taken up your abode with strangers; and you naturally feel the—isolation, shall I call it? of such a condition. You have, however, I am sure, too much good sense to be very much cast down about it. You will, on the contrary, reason with yourself in some such manner as this: "It is true, I have left home; but then, it was necessary that I should do so. My parents cannot afford to keep me in idleness; and if they could, I would not be so kept. It is necessary that I should learn to do something by which I may become a useful member of society, as well as that I may be put into a way of supporting myself in future life. My father thought that a certain trade would be the most desirable for me, and my own choice agreed with his views. But

I could not learn this business at home; and therefore it was quite necessary that I should quit my father's house. I will therefore be as cheerful and happy as I can, and try to make myself at home here." Am I mistaken, Charles, in supposing that you have had some such thoughts as these? I am pretty sure you have. Well then, for your comfort, let me tell you that your feelings of desolation will very soon take their flight, and that new sources of pleasure will very soon open to you. And in order that this may be the case with the least possible delay, I will give you one single and simple piece of advice. It is this—Be always doing something.

I expect that, in general, you will find but little want of employment in Mr. T—'s shop or warehouses. He has a good brisk trade, I am told; and, where such is the case, there is always something to be done. But it sometimes happens, that when every body else has his hands full, and more than full, of business, there is a difficulty in finding work for a young apprentice. But this depends very much upon the youth himself. I have known some apprentices who, when first placed behind a counter, have required almost the whole time of another person to set them to little jobs, merely to keep them from moping. There may have been no unwillingness to work; but they seemed to have no knack of finding out work for themselves: and so they have gone on from day to day, and from week to week, until their employers have been tired of finding work for them.

I have known others who, even on the first day of entering the shop, have found suitable employ-

ment for themselves, and have kept themselves busy without imposing any tax upon the time and attention of those around them.

Now, I need not tell you which sort of lad is most likely to find favour and happiness—at first, at any rate. It may be, that a few months afterwards there has not been so much difference as might have been expected; but if not, it has arisen from other circumstances unconnected with the possession, or the want, of this kind of general aptitude for business. Take my advice then, dear Charles, and keep your hands busy from morning to night; and your mind will then be too well employed to waste itself in useless regrets about leaving home.

Do you ask how you are to do this—supposing you have no one by you to set you to work, or no one at leisure to attend to you? Simply by observation and attention to all that is around you. There are a multitude of little things with which you will very soon become acquainted, and to which you may always turn your hand with advantage; and you will gain fresh knowledge of more every day: and having once been instructed in the right way of setting about them, you will find but little difficulty in keeping yourself fully employed for hours together, without any kind of superintendence.

In addition to this, be watchful for opportunities of being useful to your superiors. You can hardly tell how much goodwill is gained by a cheerful offer of assistance from a young apprentice. For instance—if your master or any of the assistants is waiting on a customer, and you see him going to another part of the pre-

mises for goods, just step up and ask if you can do it for him : and carry this willingness to oblige through all your conduct ; you will then have plenty of friends about you.

If, however, after all, you are neither set to work by others, nor can find any thing to do yourself, do not be backward in asking for it. It will cost you but a few words to say, " I have done so and so ; what shall I do next, sir ? "

But then, to carry out this plan of constant employment, and to keep your mind in such vigorous exercise as to leave no room for homesickness, you must provide for your leisure, as well as your business hours. This, however, is a subject which cannot be thrust in at the close of a letter. It must have, at least, a whole one to itself. You shall shortly hear from me again : in the mean time, I shall be glad to hear how you like your business, and in what kind of work you have been principally engaged. Of course, you have not yet had much to do with your master's customers ; but this will come in good time ; and the more observant and attentive you are, the sooner will you be prepared for taking a responsible station behind the counter.

One thing more. I have used two terms that at present, no doubt, seem strange to you—" *apprentice* " and " *master* . " As to the first, it is not quite correct, as you are yet only on trial, and may, or may not, become an apprentice to Mr. T. Still, while you are with him, you hold the rank and perform the duties of an apprentice ; and the name may therefore pass. As to the other word, I confess that I have very little sympathy with the squeamishness with which some modern appren-

tices and assistants regard it ; and I trust you will be above it too. The term "*employer*" perhaps sounds rather less harshly—does not grate quite so much on the ear of pride ; and as far as shop assistants are concerned, it is a proper enough term for any thing I know to the contrary. But when and while you are an *apprentice*, I hope you will never be ashamed of having and acknowledging a *master*.

LETTER III.

SERVILE EMPLOYMENTS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I AM glad you begin to feel more at home, and that you have no time to be idle, even if you were inclined to be so. Since, as you say, you, at present, find but little leisure time out of business, I shall wait a few weeks before I write to you on the subject I hinted at in my last. By that time I hope you will have become settled down as a regular apprentice with Mr. T.; but if not, the immediate necessity for continuing our correspondence will be prevented. There is, however, another subject to which your last letter has opened a way, upon which you will not be angry with me for enlarging a little.

Am I mistaken, Charles, in thinking that you are a *little* inclined to be dissatisfied with the kind of work to which you are put—that you did not expect *quite* such servile duties to be required of you as you find to be the case? I know this is a very common cause of something like disgust to youths just leaving home as you have done; and I am not sorry that you have given me an opportunity of saying a few words about it. You will, I am sure, forgive me if I have mistaken the meaning of two or three

sentences in your letter; and if I have not, I think I shall be able to remove, or, at least, to allay, the little irritation you have felt.

You do not give me the particulars of the "few little things that rather surprised you," and which, though you shall "perhaps get used to in time," are "not of a nature to furnish you with much instruction in the business you are put to learn." Excuse me, Charles, for quoting your own words.

As you have not told me the particulars, I must content myself with guessing what these few little things may be; or rather, let me tell you what were some of the duties of apprentices in my young days, and give you my opinion as to their utility and reasonableness. I think it most likely that by this means I shall meet your case.

I can just now call to mind two lads who were about my own age, and were my companions during the years of our several apprenticeships. They were in the same trade as myself; and that trade was, as you know, the one which you are now beginning to learn. But we each had different masters; and each, as an apprentice, was treated in a somewhat different manner. I will give you a slight sketch of the duties required of each, beginning with myself.

My bed-room was a comfortable apartment in the upper part of my master's house, and, in addition to myself, was used by my fellow apprentice and the assistant—or, as he was then called, though I believe the title is almost obsolete now—the "journeyman." At six o'clock we were roused from our beds by a bell which

communicated with our master's bed-room ; and the two apprentices were expected to be ready to descend into the shop by half-past six. As we had some rough and dirty work to do before breakfast, we took care to put on our old coats or jackets and a linen apron, and were then ready to open the shop. Ours was a large shop, with a great number of windows in it ; and the shutters were heavy, unwieldy things, and enough of them to make our arms ache a little before we had done. I remember the exact number, as well as though I had taken them down but yesterday : there were twenty-nine to the shop, and fourteen to the warehouse — forty-three in all. However, it was the rule that the shop should be opened by seven o'clock, and we generally managed to get it done by that time. The next thing to be done was to sweep out the shop. This job we took in turn, and while one was performing it, the other was employed in dusting the goods on the shelves, clearing out one or other of the windows and cleaning it, and waiting on any early customer that might happen to come in. The sweeping of the shop, I can assure you, was no trifling work. There was plenty of dust to be swept up, and our master was very particular that it should be done thoroughly. I believe that he would rather have seen a dusty parlour than a dusty shop : we were, therefore, obliged to remove every thing from the floor, and brush under the counters and shelves before we used the sprinkler and hair broom. It has often occurred to me, that if some housemaids had taken lessons in sweeping of my old master, there would not be so many complaints by mistresses of

sluttish work in this particular. But this is a digression.

The next thing was to sweep the pavement in front of the shop, and a crossing in the road just opposite the shop door; and if the road was very dirty, we had to scrape as well as sweep it.

After this was all done, the counters and chairs were to be rubbed and polished. By this time it was half-past seven o'clock, and our master and the journeyman—assistant, I mean—were ready to take their places in the shop, and relieve us for half an hour, that we might wash and dress for the day. This we were not allowed to do in the bed-room; but we had a little room partitioned off from an out-building in the yard, in which, besides all necessary materials for our ablutions, were also a blacking bottle and brushes for our shoes, which we were expected to clean ourselves—and to clean well too; for our master did not approve of slovenly dress in his shop. Half an hour was allowed us for these matters, and then the bell rang for breakfast. After breakfast, the elder apprentice was pretty much employed behind the counter; but the younger one had other work to do, and was rarely—except on very busy days—allowed to serve a customer, at least during the first year of his apprenticeship. In fact, he was the warehouse and errand boy. The warehouses, of which there were three, were placed under his charge; and he was expected to know every piece of goods contained in them, and to keep them in good order and condition. In the shop, he had to wait upon his master, and his shopman and older apprentice, and to perform all the inferior drudgery of

the business ; and perhaps two or three hours in the day were taken up with carrying out parcels to the houses of customers. At night, a good portion of the clearing up of the shop fell to his lot ; and at nine o'clock, or thereabouts, the forty-three shutters were replaced by the same hands that removed them in the morning.

Such was my situation, Charles, when I first entered upon business ; and I felt very strongly inclined, at one time, to rebel against the requirements of my master, and to insist upon it that the work I was called to perform was degrading, and altogether apart from, and at variance with, the business he had engaged to teach me. Perhaps I should have carried out my incipient rebellion, if I had not, happily, fallen in with an old schoolfellow—one of the two apprentices I just now mentioned. It was natural that we should soon begin to compare notes ; and though Samuel did not seem to think that there were any remarkable hardships in his situation, I soon discovered that if *his* was the common lot of apprentices, *I* was too well off to complain.

In addition to the burdens which I had thought too grievous to be borne, my young friend had others still heavier, and drudgery more severe. Instead of a neat and wholesome bed-room, his resting-place at night was a truckle bed in one corner of the shop, or rather, as I believe, under the counter. Instead of living with his master and his family in the parlour, and being treated as on an equality with, and with respect by, his master's children, he was expected to take his meals with the housemaid in the kitchen ; and at night, after the shop was closed, to sit there

till he went to bed. Of course, being placed thus on an equality—or rather on a disparity—with the servant, he had not much respect from that quarter; and the children of the family, unchecked, frequently treated him with marked impertinence.

He was not only required to clean his own shoes—a circumstance in my own lot that had galled me exceedingly—but he was expected to clean all the shoes, and knives and forks, in the house; to chop wood for the fires, and draw water for the washing. But I need not fill up my letter with any further details: it is enough to say, that poor Sam was indeed the drudge of the family, from the master to the maid, and that, at least for the first two or three years of his apprenticeship, he had but little opportunity of learning any part of the trade, for which a premium fully as high as my own had been paid. It was well for me, as I said before, that I renewed my school acquaintance with Samuel; for he was a humble, contented lad, and put to shame my petulance and discontent.

But I had another acquaintance. He was apprenticed to a person who had a very large business, and employed a great many hands. The consequence of this was, that the apprentice's work was less varied than my own. For instance, a porter was employed, whose business it was to perform many duties that, in my situation, devolved upon myself. The opening and shutting up and sweeping out of the shop; the warehouse work, or a great part of it; the carrying out of parcels; and the obnoxious shoe-cleaning, were all taken off the apprentice's

hands ; and the time that would have been thus occupied was very differently spent, though I question if with more advantage to himself.

For the first year or two of *his* apprenticeship, he had but little to do with the active business of the counter : instead of which, he was made what was called the “ *cashier*.” That is, it was his duty to receive from the shopmen all the money that was paid at the counter, taking charge of it through the day, and entering in a book each amount that he received against the name of the shopman from whom he received it : the shopmen also keeping a check book in which they entered the sums thus paid over to him. These books were examined and balanced every night, and the money was then handed over to the principal. This certainly is an excellent plan ; and at some future time I may have something more to say to you about it : but now, I only refer to it as being the main duty of my young acquaintance, and as placed in comparison with my own duties. In this respect, I am bound to say that all the advantage was not on his side. But I have filled up my paper, and must wait for another opportunity of giving my opinion on this subject.

In the mean time, dear Charles, let me entreat you to be cheerful and active ; and remember the many exhortations to humility with which the word of God abounds—especially as they relate to the young. Above all, pray for grace and guidance. “ Trust in the Lord with all thine heart ; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,” Prov. iii. 5, 6.

LETTER IV.

SERVILE EMPLOYMENTS—CONTINUED.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

ACCORDING to my promise, I resume the subject of my last letter. Let me first remind you, that a good and wise father will never think of placing so dear a treasure as a *son* under the care of one whose fidelity and qualifications he does not think equal to the trust. This would be an act of cruelty to a child, that should never be suspected in any parent; much less, a Christian parent. Then, we should remember too, that a master not only undertakes to teach a young apprentice his business; but also, to give such a general training and direction to his character and habits, as will fit him for future life. In short, that he stands in a parent's place to his young and important charge.

A youth should—and a youth of sense, such as you are, Charles; will—always keep these two principles in view. And now I will proceed to the main object of this letter.

1. Far from thinking it unnecessary, it is, in my opinion, very desirable that a young man should be habituated to perform—or, at least, to consider it no degradation to perform—very many of the offices that, in every rank of life, are left, perhaps too much, to the care of others. There

are some men so helpless that they would be at a loss to know how to brush their own clothes, or smooth their own hats, if left to themselves to do so. These, however, are matters which do not in the least affect *your* comfort, because you have always been taught so far to wait upon yourself. But I see no reason why these practices of self-service should not be carried a little further, and why you should not be your own shoe-black. On the contrary, I do not think it an unimportant part of a young man's education. It teaches him to depend more upon himself, and less on others. It renders him less helpless, and less dependent on outward circumstances for personal comfort : and this, believe me, Charles, is a great thing in such an uncertain world as ours. I can remember with pleasure, the skilfulness to which I attained in shoe-cleaning while I was an apprentice ; and flatter myself that I could, even now, if necessary, compete with many a sharp house-boy in the application of Day and Martin's blacking. Indeed, I am inclined to think that the principle I am advocating might be carried still further with advantage. I knew a youth very well, who, when placed in a situation in which little regard was paid to his personal appearance and comfort by his employers, found it greatly beneficial to himself that he had been taught, when a child, to amuse himself with a needle and thread, and retained sufficient handiness with these implements to darn a hole in his stockings, or fasten a loose button on his garments, without troubling either laundress or tailor. That young man is now a gentleman, in every proper sense of the word ; but he is not ashamed of his early acquirements,

and could, I dare say, easily revert to them if necessary. But enough of this, especially as I do not know whether shoe-cleaning be among the things which are required of you. If it is not, however, I am half inclined to recommend you occasionally to practise it, just to get your hand in, if I may be allowed such an expression.

2. To proceed to more weighty matters. Whatever may be said respecting mere domestic arrangements, the young apprentice ought to think himself well off in being instructed in the very lowest offices connected with his business; for, if he is not, he will never thoroughly learn his trade. It is as much the real business of a tradesman to keep his shop in a proper state of cleanliness—his pavement free from dust—and, if the situation of his shop render it either necessary or practicable, an inviting path from the opposite side of the street—as it is for him to treat his customers with civility when they enter his shop. And as it is a part of the tradesman's duty to attend to these matters, either personally or by deputy, so it is manifestly his duty to teach his apprentice how such things ought to be done. It was the practice of my old master, and I think it was a very good one, to put a besom into the hands of a new apprentice in the first hour of his entering the premises; and to direct him to sweep the front pavement. This was beginning at the right end, at all events. I remember a young man once applying to him for a vacancy that had occurred in his shop. I believe all the preliminaries were agreed upon, and the young man was on the point of being engaged, when—unfortunately, as far as his success in this case was concerned—he put the

question to his anticipated employer, "I suppose, sir, I shall not be required to sweep out the shop?" My master first coughed a short dry cough, and then replied, "I am afraid, sir, that my situation won't suit you. Good morning, sir." My master was right. He did *not* expect his assistant to sweep out the shop. He would have considered it a waste of time that might be better employed: but he would have nothing to do with a young man who thought himself of too much importance to handle a broom, if necessary. I remember another occasion, on which an assistant hesitated to take out a parcel of goods to a customer who lived a few streets off, because it was too heavy to take under his arm, and it was not respectable to be seen wheeling a truck in the street. "Oh, very well," said my master, "then I will wheel the truck myself. I am not afraid of having *my* respectability called into question." The young man had good sense enough to see his error, and to repair it too; and, I believe, profited by the incident.

You remember, Charles, our laughing at the anecdote which we read some where, of an iron-monger's apprentice who thrust the frying pan up between his back and his coat, because he was ashamed to be met with it in his hand by some old acquaintances, and the ridiculous confusion he was in when his foolish trick was discovered. Such instances as these might be multiplied by a reference to many cases within my own circle; but a word to the wise is enough.

"But how can I be learning my business and carrying out parcels at the same time?" In a certain and important sense this *is* your business.

You are forwarding your master's interests. It is necessary that the goods which his customers have bought should be conveyed to them, unless they choose to take them away themselves; and this service naturally falls to your lot, as being, at present, the least efficient person in his employ. Neither is it without use to yourself. You are attaining business habits—habits of expedition, and accuracy, and observation—which will be very useful to you by and by. There is another particular in which a young apprentice is benefited by being thus employed. Generally speaking, the confinement of a shop is a severe trial to the health and spirits of a lad who has been used to several hours of recreation and out of doors exercise every day; and it is really desirable and kind, that, for some time after commencing a new course of discipline, it should be softened as much as possible by every available relaxation. And it is a relaxation to be permitted to breathe the fresh air, and stretch the limbs in a smart walk, although it be with a parcel under the arm.

As to warehouse work, it is the most advantageous kind of employment in which a young apprentice can be engaged. By having under his care a warehouse stock of almost every description of goods sold in the trade he is learning, he gains much useful information that could not be obtained in an equal space of time behind the counter, where his attention would probably be confined to only one department of the trade. He sees what goods are most in demand; he learns the method of keeping them securely and orderly; and he becomes acquainted with the technical terms of his trade. I have known ap-

prentices of only a few months' standing, who were really more efficient in these particulars than many shopmen who had passed through a different kind of training.

In all these matters, my dear Charles, and in many others which an unthinking youth might be apt to class together under the reproachful, but very incorrect, title of *servile employments*, you have the elements of future knowledge of the trade you are desirous of learning. They are its A B C, and as you cheerfully or reluctantly pass through these initiatory duties, so, in all probability, will be your future progress and success.

It is hardly necessary or desirable that I should give you my opinion as to how far, and to what particular services, my remarks extend; and where the reasonableness of such requirements terminates. It is not necessary; for I am persuaded that nothing will be required of you by Mr. T. which is incompatible with your own advantage: and it is not desirable, because the circumstances of every business differ so much as to render specific rules inapplicable. I may, however, just say, that if the young acquaintance of mine, to whom I first referred, had been treated a little less as a house-boy, and the other whom I mentioned, a little more as a shop-boy, they would each have gained a better knowledge of their trade than they did attain; and, as far as human means were concerned, would have secured greater success than in after-days fell to their lot.

You will excuse my having enlarged on this subject. I have done so from a knowledge of the

error to which you, Charles, in common with all young folks in your situation, are liable. I mean that of thinking *any* part of their business to be beneath them. This is pride, my dear boy, and we are all too prone to be proud : and if its baneful influence and effects extended only to the present time, and affected only our mortal interests, it would be of comparatively little consequence. But it is not so. It shuts the heart against the humbling doctrines of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ : it repels the influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart : it shuts out many a soul from happiness and eternal life. Pray, then, and pray earnestly, for humility—for that humility which will not only render you contented and teachable in the common business of life ; but which is also essential to your growth in grace, and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour. Let us remember, that “ unless we be converted and become as *little children*, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven ; ” and let us take Him for our example, who, though he was God, and “ thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet took upon him the form of a servant,” Phil. ii. 6, 7.

LETTER V.

A SHORT ONE.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

YOURS, received this morning, has given me very great pleasure. I am glad that you took my strictures in good part; and I am sure you will never repent of the determination you have formed, of attending with cheerfulness and perseverance to *every* duty required of you. You shall soon hear again from

Your affectionate

UNCLE.

LETTER VI.

THE INDENTURES.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

You have now passed the important period. Your indentures are "signed, sealed, and delivered;" and are placed, by mutual consent, in the custody of your uncle: and for a term of years you have yielded yourself up to the guardianship and care of an individual with whom, a few months ago, you were entirely unacquainted. Well, may this important step, and every future step in your life, be attended with the Divine blessing; and thus conduce to your present and everlasting welfare. And of this there is, at present, no reason to doubt. "The path of duty is the path of safety;" and I am persuaded that your dear parents considered the matter well, and sought Divine direction, before placing you in your present situation. It was necessary that you should be put into a way of providing for yourself in future life: in order to this, it was desirable that you should be placed under the care of one who could give you the needful instruction in the business for which you appeared adapted, and to which you had yourself evinced a preference: and they have taken every means of satisfying themselves that he who has taken this responsible charge is

every way fitted to sustain it. Having done this, their duty is so far discharged, and it remains with yourself and your master to fulfil the trust which has been placed in you both.

But I shall not, in this letter, enter upon the subject of the various and important duties now devolving upon you. In my future letters, I may, from time to time, touch upon them. Just now, however, I feel more inclined to institute a comparison between your present station and one of infinitely greater moment; and to found upon it a question—the question of questions—which deeply concerns yourself.

You understand me, Charles, I am sure; and I have this advantage in writing to you on the subject of religion:—I need not take up time in explaining to you the broad fact on which the religion of the Bible is founded—that man is a guilty and ruined creature. Nor need I dwell upon the glorious revelation of the blessed gospel—that Jesus Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour. These are truths which you have known long since, at least in theory; and to combat with you as though you believed them not, would be an insult to your understanding and your heart.

Let me then indulge my fancy—and my hope too—in looking at you in a twofold character: in one, as it regards this world; in the other, as it relates to the next: and I will endeavour to trace some resemblance between the things which are temporal and those which are eternal. And, to begin—

You have now a master on earth, and you have “a Master in heaven” too, Col. iv. 1.

“One is your Master, even Christ,” Matt. xxiii. 8. Your earthly master expects honour and obedience: so does your heavenly Master. “Keep my commandments,” is his requirement; and, “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him,” is his language, John v. 23. You are not only to honour and obey your earthly master; but you must be diligent and teachable, or the end of your apprenticeship will not be answered. You are to learn of your master, and to work for him. And thus it is, too, with regard to your heavenly Master. “Learn of me,” is the emphatic, yet condescending demand of the Saviour, Matt. xi. 29. “Go, work to-day,” is his command.

Well, then, what do you expect from your earthly master for this honour and obedience, this teachableness and diligence? He has engaged to support you in suitable comfort through the whole course of your apprenticeship, and to initiate you into his business. And your heavenly Master’s promise is this, “My grace is sufficient for thee,” 2 Cor. xii. 9; and his engagement, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye,” Psa. xxxii. 8.

Again; while under the care and lawful government of your master, you are not at liberty to act as you please; you will, perhaps, be obliged to forego some pleasures upon which you had reckoned, or to submit to some unpleasant requirements upon which you had not calculated. In either case, however, you will find your duty to be your advantage. You are bound to seek your master’s interests in prefer-

ence to your own: devoting your abilities, whether mental or bodily, natural or acquired, to his service. And is not this peculiarly the case between you and your heavenly Master? "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

But is it so, dear Charles? This is the question—the all-important question. Are you Christ's? Is he your spiritual Master? Are you his willing servant? Are you learning of him? Are you taking up your cross daily and following him? Nothing but this entire consecration to him of body and spirit can preserve you from the dangers of your new situation, and give a right direction and bias to your new pursuits. And, more than this, nothing else can prepare you for an eternal world. Will you not, then, from this time say, "THOU art the guide of my youth?"

"Lord, I am thine, entirely thine;
Purchased and saved by blood Divine.
With full consent thine I would be,
And own thy sov'reign right in me.

"Thee, my NEW MASTER, now I call,
And consecrate to thee my all.
Lord! let me live and die to thee,
Be thine through all eternity."

That these may be your sentiments, is my earnest desire.

LETTER VII.

PERSONAL EXPENSES—INTRODUCTORY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

HITHERTO you have had little to do with money on your own account. Your school-boy expenses were few, and easily met by a few pence weekly, or a few shillings quarterly; you had neither scope nor temptation to great extravagance. But your position in this respect is now altered, and you will bear with me while I point out some particulars in which you are exposed to danger.

I do not know exactly how your personal expenses are to be met; whether you will be intrusted by your parents with a regular allowance, sufficiently large to furnish you with clothing, and other necessaries, as you may want them; or whether they propose to retain their superintendence of these matters, and to supply you merely with pocket money for smaller expenses. What I shall say, however, will be applicable to either case.

I have just observed, that you are exposed to danger. Do not, however, imagine that I charge you with a disposition to extravagance. I have never known or thought this of you. On the contrary, I trust your mind is too well regu-

lated, and that your habits are too well formed, to allow of your being readily led into error in this particular. Still, dear Charles, there *is* danger—danger arising from your own inexperience, from the influence of example, and, still more, from the evil tendencies of human nature.

I once knew a youth, who, when he left home for a distant situation, was followed by the heart-felt encomiums of his mother, who thankfully congratulated herself that her son had never entailed the slightest unnecessary expense upon her. He had never, she said, wasted a single shilling in extravagance—never evinced the least discontent with any economical arrangement which she had found it necessary to make, or at the exercise of any self-denial on his own part which the straitened circumstances of the family had called for. I met the same youth two or three years afterwards, and was grieved beyond measure at the change which was too manifest in his habits. His former neat and unassuming dress had given place to garments of the most expensive quality, and the newest fashion; his finger was ornamented with a gold ring, and his breast with a large gaudy brooch; and a large bunch of seals and keys—at least three of each—was attached to his watch by a chain that was intended to look like gold, whatever it might be in reality. This was not all. I had an opportunity of visiting him at his lodgings, (he did not live in his employer's house, as you do in that of your master,) and other instances of profuse expenditure met my eye, and pained my heart. A flute, that must have cost some pounds, lay on the table,

and beside it, a pile of music-sheets and books which must have cost as many more: and a set of book-shelves, which hung against the wall, was crowded with richly bound volumes. *This* was not all. In the course of my visit to him I had occasion to ask the time of day, upon which he pulled out his watch. But it was not the watch that his mother had given him three years before, on his leaving home, and which had been her own for many long years. It was one of a more modern manufacture, and certainly more elegant in appearance. I could not forbear remarking to the young man, that he had a new time-piece.

"Yes," he said, with a tone of affected indifference—but I noticed a slight blush on his cheek as he said it—"Yes, I changed the old one; it was good for nothing—quite worn out; and besides, it was such an ugly bit of goods that I was perpetually laughed at for carrying it."

You know my old watch, Charles, and you once asked me why I did not part with it and get a new one, since it was so old-fashioned, and so irregular in its movements: and you remember that I told you that I would not part with it for the best watch in the world, because it had been my father's when he was a boy, and had been given to me by him when I first went out as an apprentice. You will not wonder, then, that I felt moved by the young man's statement that he had bartered away his mother's watch. I told him so; and I pointed to the luxuries which he had gathered round him, and asked him how he could reconcile himself to the enjoyment of them

when he compared them with his mother's straitened circumstances, and the sacrifices she had made on his account. I did not then know, what I afterwards learned, that for the last year or two, his demands upon his mother's purse (though receiving an ample salary from his employers) had been constant and excessive, or I should have spoken more freely to him. But, if I had, I fear that extravagant habits, and a notion of not being able to do without any thing and every thing that happened to take his fancy, had obtained too firm a hold upon him to be easily shaken off. At all events, they were not shaken off until one disappointment after another stripped him of all his gewgaws and finery, and compelled him to limit his personal expenses even within the bounds of real convenience. It was well for him that he retained a principle of common honesty, in spite of his habits of profusion. It is not every spendthrift that does so.

This instance of deterioration of character is only one of many, that are, alas! to be daily witnessed. But it may be useful to you, if you will allow it to stand as a beacon to warn you of the danger to which you are exposed. The young man referred to, was by no means destitute of good sense; but he went out into the world without experience, was exposed to the influence of bad example, and his personal vanity obtaining a sad ascendancy in his heart, he degenerated into a silly fop.

While I have been writing the above, I have recollected a letter which I saw some years ago, bearing upon the same subject. It was from a father in the country to his son in London, who

had written home for money for the purchase of a new coat. It was to the following effect, though not in exactly the same language.

“My dear John:—We were very glad to hear from you, though your letter was none of the longest, and did not touch upon one subject that you know is next to our hearts. I hope, my dear boy, that you will not forget your Creator in the days of your youth. Do let us sometimes hear, dear John, what your thoughts are about religion. We are sorry that your clothes are wearing out; your dear mother thought that the new suit you had when you left home would have lasted you for best much beyond the present time. We are sorry, too, that your earnings are not sufficient for clothing you decently, as you say. Thirty pounds a year, with board and lodging, certainly is not a small sum; and, in my young days, I think I should have made it clothe me, and saved some out of it too: but then, to be sure, I did not live in London. As to sending you the money you mention, I really cannot manage it without getting into debt, which I am very unwilling to do. Times have gone rather crooked with us lately. Our poor cow was taken bad and died, as I think your sister informed you. Then, your dear mother was laid up for several weeks with a low fever, from which she is hardly recovered; and the doctor’s bill is a long one. Altogether, we have had a hard struggle to keep above water, as we say here. However, it is a great mercy that your mother is spared; and I hope, by the blessing of God, we shall come to rights again; but we must work hard and live sparingly to do it. I have been speaking to your mother about your request;

and she tells me that she can manage to alter my best coat to fit you, by the help of an old one of yours as a pattern. My coat, you know, is nothing the worse for wear to speak of, and, when altered, will be as good as a new one. For my own part, I can do very well with my white round frock for Sundays. Indeed, I feel more comfortable in a round frock than in a coat at any time, and more especially in warm weather. So I shall not miss the coat; and, as soon as your mother can finish the alteration, it shall be sent to you the same way as the last parcel," etc.

I confess, my dear Charles, that I did not read this simple-hearted epistle without deep emotion. I fancied the young man, like the prodigal son of old, spending his earnings as fast as he received them, "in riotous living," while his father was, perhaps, debarring himself almost the necessaries of life to add to the comforts of the sick mother. I thought I saw him casting aside his every day coat before it was half worn out, because it was not so fashionable as that of his fellow servant. Then, the best coat must be taken into common wear, and, in a few weeks, had lost the gloss that it should have retained six months longer. And then he must have a new one; but had no money to pay for it. Then came his letter to his hard-working father, and the reply. Surely that reply cut his heart deeply. And when the altered garment reached him, could he, do you think, examine its quality, or criticise its fashion? Would he throw it aside in disgust, and wonder how his father could ever think that *he* could wear such a homely and ill-fitting coat—and in London too? Surely not. Rather let us hope that honest

penitential tears fell upon the father's self-denying gift, and the mother's workmanship—that "Father, I have sinned!" burst from his lips—that the coat was thenceforward worn with almost reverential care—and that, best of all, the kind-hearted father was not long permitted to wear his white round frock on Sundays, because he had no Sunday coat.

But I find I have written a tolerably long letter, without getting beyond an introduction to the subject I had proposed to myself. The rest shall follow.

LETTER VIII

PERSONAL EXPENSES—DRESS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

AN apprentice, in your circumstances, has but very few really necessary personal expenses. Indeed, with the exception of suitable clothing, I know of none that can strictly come under that denomination. Of course, a still further exception must be made for medical advice, if needed, and occasional journeys to and from home.

But, though not absolutely essential, there are some sources of expenditure which, when kept under proper control, are quite allowable, and more or less desirable.

But there are other personal expenses to which you may be tempted, which will be utterly undesirable—conducting neither to your respectability in the view of others, nor, in any possible way, to your own improvement; but which, on the contrary, will lower your character, and diminish your peace of mind—to say nothing of the additional burden which every instance of extravagance will throw upon your parents, upon whose resources you are, and will be for many years, entirely dependent.

I am sure that you now contemplate nothing of this kind. You feel that it would be very wrong to throw away a shilling in waste, and

you are determined not to do so. Well, then, to be fore-warned is to be fore-armed; and I may venture to say you will thank me for putting you on your guard against the first approach of danger.

But I will not fill up this letter with general remarks, but go straight to those particulars which most demand caution. And, first,

Dress. This is generally, though not always, the first point at which extravagant expense commences. A youth just having left home, is by no means the best judge of what is suitable or necessary for him in this particular. He sees, perhaps, that others in the same situation and business as himself have a more varied and expensive wardrobe than his own; and he is led to believe that, in order to his being looked upon as respectable, it is necessary that certain additions should be made to his own. Unhappily, the mind of a lad is generally too prone to novelty, and susceptible of vanity, to need any strong arguments in this direction. The consequence is, that a habit is formed, which, carried to its utmost extent, has been the ruin of many a family. Now, do not, my dear Charles, misunderstand me here. It is desirable, and even requisite, that you should, in your dress, as in other things, have some regard to the habits and customs of the class of society to which you belong. For instance, it would not be seemly for you to appear behind your master's counter in the same kind and quality of garments that would be very decent and suitable if worn by your father's stable-boy. There would be an evident unfitness in it, that would be neither beneficial to yourself nor

your master's business. But, on the other hand, there is almost as evident, and quite as real, an unfitness in the dress of a young man to his station and circumstances, when he adopts every fashion as fast as it appears, and shows himself off in the shop, in garments invented only for the drawing-room. Of the two extremes, this is, indeed, by far the most deserving of ridicule and contempt.

The difficulty with you, Charles, I believe will be in discovering the proper medium, so as not to be led unawares and by degrees into the extravagance which every person of sense must condemn. Take these rules, or maxims, then, for your guidance.

1. It is not necessary that you should dress fashionably ; or adopt a style of dress on one day of the week, that would be inconsistent with your station on other days.

2. A suit of clothes ought to last you, for best, at least a full year.

3. It is not necessary to have more than one suit of clothes for best, or to study variety in any portion of it. If I were to see a youth on three successive Sundays—or on any three Sundays in the space of as many months—changing his attire as a chameleon is said to change its colour ; if I were to notice him now in a black coat, and then in a brown ; at one time in a silk waistcoat, and at another in a cloth one ; and so on—I might possibly wrong him, but I should certainly set him down for an incipient fop.

4. It is no disgrace to wear a mended garment. Nobody will think the worse of you, though your coat may have a patch on the elbow

or under the arm. I mean, nobody whose opinion is worth having.

5. It *is* a mark of slovenliness, and consequently it *is* disgraceful, to be seen in rags, or anything like raggedness. I once lived with a tradesman who, on one occasion, addressed one of his assistants thus: "Mr. —, your coat is out at the elbow: pray change it. As many patches as you please; but I have a great aversion to holes."

6. Never be tempted to order or purchase any article of clothing that you do not really want, however much you may admire its quality, colour, texture, fashion, or cheapness. It is the first step to extravagance.

7. Take care of your clothes. Do not let them lie about your chamber when they are not in wear. There are more reasons than one for this piece of advice; but I need only give you one now; they will be exposed to injury from dust. Neither thrust them hastily or roughly into your box or drawer; that too will injure them. Fold them carefully, and lay them smoothly in their proper place. With a little care of this kind, your clothes will last much longer than they otherwise could do; and they will look respectable to the last.

N. B. The same remarks apply to your hats. A careful person will make one hat outlast three belonging to one of careless habits.

8. Avoid slovenliness in every part of your dress. It is slovenly to wear a dusty or a greasy garment—to wear slippers in the middle of the day—to have loose buttons depending from any part of your dress, or no buttons where buttons

ought to be—to go about in shoes that have lost their strings; and many other things are slovenly; your own good sense will point out to you what they are, if you only adopt the general principle of neatness. This piece of advice is not out of place here; for I assure you that slovenly people are almost always very expensive in their clothing.

9. Do not be ashamed to wear old clothes—*very* old clothes—when the nature of your work requires it.

10. When you really want new clothes, be guided in your choice of them by the recollection that you will some day have to wear them in the shop.

11. Light and washable garments, though pleasant in very hot weather, and low in price as far as the material is concerned, are among the most expensive things you can wear, and this for a very obvious reason. Do not, therefore, indulge too much in them. They are the luxuries of dress.

12. Be scrupulously clean in your linen, but not fastidious. When you feel half inclined to throw aside—a shirt for instance, after one day's wear, because the plaited front is a little rumpled, or the starched wristbands have lost their first stiffness, remember that washing wears out clothes, and that unnecessary washing should therefore be avoided. Besides, your washing bill will be increased a certain number of pence by every such whim.

I will not go on to further particulars. Perhaps you will think that I have already been too minute. But no: if what I have written should tend to counteract the first temptation to super-

fluous expense in dress, I shall not have written in vain. I am sure you would be surprised if you could know the difference there is, even for a single year, between the personal expenses of a frugal and an extravagant young man, in the article of clothes alone. But when this difference is carried out for a succession of years, the total amount is absolutely alarming. I can call to mind two examples, and will mention them by way of illustrating this point.

Henry B. and James R. were fellow apprentices to a mercer. Henry was a neat, modest lad when he first became an apprentice; but he soon sunk down into a lover of fine clothes. Unhappily, he was an orphan with considerable expectations; and his guardians allowed him far too large a sum for pocket money, and interposed no check upon his manner of spending it. The consequence was, that, in the course of a year or two, he was a thorough spendthrift. Not a month—I really might almost say, not a week—passed in which his tailor was not called into requisition. It was no unusual thing for him to order a new waistcoat, wear it once, and then give it away, because he did not like it as well as he expected he should. Three months was the longest extent of service allowed to his coats; in that space of time they had become unfashionable. A hat was worn out in about the same space of time. And as to other garments, such as boots, stocks, neckcloths, and so on, they were perpetually varied with every whim. The errand boy had a good time of it while Henry was in his master's shop, for the cast off garments generally fell to his lot. Altogether, and at a very moderate calculation, Henry could

not have spent less than forty pounds a year on dress alone—making a total of two hundred pounds for the five years of his apprenticeship. And this, independent of under clothing and washing bills, in which he was proportionably profuse.

James R. was altogether very different in his habits. I presume he had a careful mother, as you have, Charles; and this makes a great difference. Then, his resources were limited; and this is really no mean advantage to a youth, who cannot be expected to understand the full value of money. At all events, he was as economical as his fellow apprentice was extravagant. A good suit of clothes lasted him a year for best, without any intermediate partial filling up; and would have lasted him still longer, but there was a danger of their being outgrown. Then, he took such care to have clothes suitable to his business, and such care of them in the business, that he never looked shabby behind the counter. In short, he carried this principle of frugality throughout his whole attire; and I am persuaded that fifty pounds would have covered the whole expense of his clothing, (with the exceptions I made in the former case,) during the whole term of his apprenticeship. And yet, of the two young men, James always appeared the better dressed.

Here, then, were a hundred and fifty pounds wasted—yes, wasted—by a young man before he was out of his apprenticeship. But the evil did not end here. His extravagance was exhibited in a multitude of other ways; and I fear that habits and connexions were then formed that have since exerted a lamentable influence over his character and prospects.

Beware then, dear Charles, of temptation to finery and extravagance in dress. Remember that, while you are an apprentice, *every* expense falls—not upon yourself, but—upon your parents, who have already done much for you in placing you in your present situation; and that it is certainly unjust to draw unnecessarily upon their resources. Remember, too, that vanity in dress is a sure sign of a foolish and weak mind, and generally defeats its own object, by exciting ridicule instead of commanding respect. In the course of my life, I have met with many scores of rich merchants and tradesmen; but I do not remember one who was really respected, and yet was an absolute fop in dress. Generally, their attire has been so plain, as to furnish a good example to young men who have had to do with them.

But, remember, above all, that extravagance and vanity, in this or in any particular, is *sin*; sin, as being opposed to that spirit of humility and self-denial which the gospel of Jesus Christ every where inculcates.

I have now written a long letter, and have yet more to say about personal expenses. It is a very important subject, and has many ramifications. You will soon hear from me again.

LETTER IX.

PERSONAL EXPENSES—BOOKS, ETC.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I SAID, in my last letter, that there are some personal expenses which, though not absolutely necessary, may be justifiably indulged, if kept within bounds. You will be at no loss to understand that I refer principally to books, and other helps to mental improvement or recreation. It is a false and an unworthy notion, that a tradesman can have no business with any books beyond his day-book and ledger; and if ever you hear such an opinion advanced, you may be sure that the speaker is a very ignorant, or a very narrow-minded person. Nothing to do with books! Such a maxim might have passed uncontradicted in the days of monkish superstition and degradation; but it will not pass now. I certainly did once know a tradesman who made it his boast that he had never, after he commenced business, read through any book that was thicker than his thumb; and sneered at his apprentices if they showed symptoms of being fonder of reading than he was himself. But, happily, such instances are rare.

But our business just now is, not with the uses, but with one of the abuses of a taste for

reading ; that is, a disproportionate expense lavished upon it.

I have known instances in which young men in trade have seemed to be beside themselves, in an inordinate craving for books. Their sole pleasure has seemed to consist in accumulating heaps upon heaps of them. Now, setting aside the fact that, in almost every such case, no discrimination has been exercised in useful selection, and that a taste for unprofitable—yes, and very injurious—reading has been induced, it is enough to say here that, in the indulgence of this propensity, the most frightful extravagance has been practised. And there is greater danger of extravagance in this particular than in many others, because the object of it is not, in itself, blamable. “If I do spend a good deal of money,” argues the young man, “why, it almost all goes for books; and it cannot be wrong to get up a good library.” Yes it is, just so far as you overstep the bounds of proper frugality and real usefulness. And then, a taste for reading—no, let me rather say a craving for books—grows by what it feeds upon. It is a diseased mental appetite—never satisfied. Indeed there is no possibility of satisfying it. It would require a princely revenue to buy up every new book as fast as it makes its appearance; and the most insatiable, persevering, and affluent book collectors, cannot keep pace with the press.

Let me, then, recommend for your adoption, two general rules with regard to book-buying.

1. Settle in your own mind how much annually you may, with propriety, allow yourself for this purpose.

2. Never, under any circumstances, go beyond this sum.

With regard to the first rule, it will be proper to take into consideration some circumstances upon which I do not profess myself able to offer a correct judgment : indeed, it will be better that you should exercise your own.

A strict adherence to the second rule, will prevent your being willing to throw away money on trash, and will thus conduce to the cultivation of your mind. I have now in recollection two private libraries. One belongs to a person who never cared, or took account of how much money he spent upon books ; and the consequence is, that his book-shelves present the most heterogeneous mass of valuable literature and mere rubbish that can well be imagined. I must say, however, that if the rubbish were removed, more than half the shelves would be empty. The other library is the property of a person who has accumulated it by degrees, and with a conscientious adherence to the rules I have recommended to you. It is much smaller than the first, but far more valuable. There is scarcely a worthless volume in the whole collection. And the real benefit which has been derived from the books, in either case, is still more decidedly in favour of strict economy. But this does not bear upon our present subject.

I will just allude to one other source of personal expense, to which you may possibly be in danger of unduly giving way. You are fond of *music* ; and some part of your leisure time may, without impropriety, be devoted to the indulgence of this

taste. It probably will, if you have musical companions. But, if so, keep a strict and jealous eye upon the demands that it may make upon your purse. I knew a number of young men and apprentices, who used to meet very early in the morning, before the business of the day commenced, to play on divers musical instruments. This would have been all very well, if it had been kept within bounds; but one thing led to another. New music must be bought, and fresh instruments added to the band: and, in the warmth of their zeal, they forgot that music and musical instruments cost a great deal of money. They found it out afterwards.

Among other incidental expenses in which you may allowably indulge, I may, perhaps, mention an occasional attendance on public lectures on scientific subjects. I need scarcely offer a cautionary remark here, for your opportunities of indulging in this expense will be so very limited, that you will not be able to exceed proper bounds. Yet I must add one caution: whenever an opportunity does offer, be fully persuaded, both that the object is worthy of attention, and that you are likely to derive some benefit by turning *your* attention to it.

With regard to small purchases connected with personal convenience or comfort, it is hardly necessary for me to write. A pocket-knife, or any other equally useful article, more or less, in the course of a year or two, will make no *great* difference; but there may be extravagance even in these matters. Never, therefore, spend money on them merely to gratify a whim—it will be time enough to buy when you really want.

I think I may now quit this part of the subject. In my next, I shall mention some personal expenses which may *not* be allowed, if you would maintain self-respect and the good opinion of those around you.

But, before I conclude this letter, I must add a few words about devoting some portion of even your comparatively small income to religious and charitable purposes. If we think rightly, dear Charles, on the all-important subject of religion, we shall argue that we are not our own, 1 Cor. vi. 19, and that all our—so called—possessions, whether larger or smaller, are intrusted to us as stewards, that they may be used for the advantage of their true Owner. When, therefore, we lavish on ourselves—our own comforts or artificial wants—the *whole* of our resources; what can we expect but a curse with our gains, and “leanness in our souls?” Conscientiously, then, devote a part of your money, however small the whole amount may be, to the service of God; and make no difficulty of doing so, even at the sacrifice of personal gratification. It should be with you a matter of duty, and not of choice; or, rather, of duty and choice combined. What proportion will be proper, or precisely in what particular channels your willing offerings should flow, are matters that must rest with yourself to determine; always remembering, that “God loveth a cheerful giver.”

A word or two more, and I will close this letter. Much as frugality and self-denial are to be desired, and liberality in the cause of God to be recommended—bear in mind that neither of these constitutes *religion*. On the contrary, the first

quality may degenerate into covetousness, and the second into pride and vain-glory; and, without the grace of God in the soul, they are likely thus to degenerate. Seek, then, my dear Charles, that Divine grace which alone can correct the bad tendencies of the human heart, and enable you to act aright in all the varied circumstances of life.

LETTER X.

PERSONAL EXPENSES—MISCHIEVOUS ONES.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I COME now to those personal expenses in which an apprentice has no business to indulge ; but in which, unhappily, too many do indulge, to their great injury. If I did not know how powerful the influence of example is in these matters, I might almost pass over this subject. But I do know it ; and, however unnecessary my remarks may now appear to you, you know that it is an inspired maxim, “ Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

In the first place, then, beware of being induced to spend money on

Trinkets. By trinkets, I mean such articles as breast-pins, brooches, watch-chains, guards, seals, keys, finger-rings, and so on ; together with knickknacks of any kind that are intended more for show than for use, or which, if intended for use, are not adapted for *your* use. It is distressing to think of the money that is spent in such finery by some young men ; and it is more painful still to contemplate the silly vanity which is thus nourished. I have known many instances in which the culpable victims of this kind of pride have seemed infatuated in their attempts

thus to outshine every one they came near, spending many a pound on baubles which were of no use in the world but to cause their wearers to be laughed at.

If those who are given to this sort of extravagance could be supposed capable of reflection, and would reflect, they would be convinced that, if such glittering ornaments have *any* proper place, that proper place is not in the shop of a tradesman; and that they only serve to render their wearers ridiculous in the eyes of all sensible people.

Do not then, dear Charles, fall into this error. If, for the sake of convenience, you adopt *any* articles of this kind, let them be of the simplest and least ostentatious description, and keep them as much as possible out of sight. Remember, that "wisdom is more precious than rubies," Prov. iii. 15; and that "a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God an ornament of great price," 1 Pet. iii. 4.

A habit of visiting the *pastry cook's shop* is a great expense to any young man that falls into it, to say nothing of the injurious consequences to health that a continual indulgence in sweets invariably produces. The money that is spent by some lads, on buns, tarts, cakes, fruit, and other things of the same nature, would—I write with no fear of exaggeration—would furnish wholesome daily food for a starving family. This is a very sad reflection; and such waste is likely, sooner or later, to lead to grievous consequences, perhaps to the pangs of real and unsatisfied hunger for a morsel of bread. Take care then, dear Charles, how you begin to pamper

your appetite : it is a fearful, a very sinful waste of money.

Another wanton expense indulged in by too many young men is that of *smoking cigars*. As in the habit I have just alluded to, I shall say nothing here about its influence on the health and morals, but merely notice its extravagance. If you begin it, a few pence, and that only occasionally, may perhaps be lavished on it at first. But as the habit becomes confirmed, who can tell to what it may lead ? I have known young men in business who have spent, upon an average, five shillings a week on cigars ; but this sum is small, compared with what I have heard of others. I was reading a little while ago, of one who, though in indifferent circumstances, managed thus to squander fourteen shillings a week. But even this sum sinks into insignificance upon further comparison. Without, however, having recourse to extreme cases to give point to the advice, pray avoid the very beginning of evil. You will find no difficulty in avoiding it in the outset ; for smoking is invariably nauseous to the young beginner.

Snuff-taking, though less expensive than smoking, is altogether a waste of money. I should, however, hardly think it necessary to warn you against it as a needless extravagance, were it not that I have known instances in which the habit has been commenced for the sake of gratifying vanity with a showy snuff-box ; and, sometimes, for the better opportunity of displaying the elegant ring on the little finger of the hand that is occupied in conveying the snuff to the nostrils.

Do not spend money in the hire of books from

a *circulating library*. There are two reasons why you should not do so; but I shall now only say that it will be paying too dear for the extreme chance of deriving benefit from the reading thus obtained. Shilling after shilling soon vanishes when this practice becomes confirmed.

I have not yet alluded to what may be termed decidedly vicious modes of extravagance, and I shall not here speak of vicious connexions; a love of theatrical amusements and those who frequent them; and wine, as ruinous drains of the purse—and that for three reasons. First, because the restraints of apprenticeship are rigid in these particulars. Next, because I trust, that when actual temptations do occur, your principles will be strengthened by Divine grace firmly to resist them. And last, because merely pecuniary considerations ought here to give place to those of a far more important nature. If, therefore, I should at some future time direct your attention to these ruinous vices, it will be totally apart from the poor and insufficient argument of, “How much will they cost?”

Independent, however, of vicious pursuits, there are some other matters which might be added to those already mentioned; but perhaps I have said enough: the principle which I wish to recommend is the same in all. That principle is *conscientious frugality*. There is an excellent maxim, though not an inspired one, which I may venture to recommend to your adoption: “He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little.” Here is also another to the same effect: “Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves.” Conquer the first

inclinations to a *little* profusion and extravagance, and you will have no trouble with them on a larger scale : but once given way to, and it is like the letting out of water—first a few drops ; then a trickling stream ; and last, an overwhelming flood.

And now, to guard more effectually against the dangers I have referred to, let it be your first concern to seek daily supplies of grace to help in time of need. Consider your own weakness, and go “to the Strong for strength.” Let your earnest prayer be, “Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil.” Do not imagine that such a petition as this is suitable only to times of *great* emergency, or to temptations to evident and open sin. The fact is, that the danger to be apprehended in your case arises from the circumstance, that no *great* moral principle appears to be endangered by the indulgence of small personal extravagances. Ah, but there is sin in them : there is a not taking up of the cross daily and following the Saviour. It is a sparing of the right hand, the right foot, and the right eye, Mark ix. 45—47.

But, in connexion with thus seeking Divine aid, there is one plan which I do most earnestly recommend you to adopt ; and, by all means, commence it at once. It is this : keep a regular and systematic cash account ; and never spend a single penny without entering it. You will find this one of the greatest preservatives against extravagance ; for you would not like to spend money foolishly, and have the transaction staring you in the face for months and years afterwards. You will also find it very satisfactory to be able at any

time to account for your past expenditure ; and it will be useful in enlarging and *fixing* your experience of the true value of money, as well as in training you to habits of mercantile accuracy. I have heard of a rich merchant of London, who kept such a correct account of his personal expenses, that on balancing up for the year, and finding a deficiency of *one penny*, he was made quite unhappy by his neglect and carelessness ; and the uncomfortable feeling was not banished from his mind until, several weeks afterwards, he passed over Waterloo bridge, where there is, or was, a toll of one penny for foot passengers. He then remembered that he had paid the same toll about a year before, and had forgotten to enter it in his book. I know a person with a limited income, and a tolerably large family, who attributes much of his freedom from pecuniary embarrassment to the fact of his keeping a strict account of all his outgoings.

One other piece of advice, and I will close this letter, and, with it, conclude the subject. Never get into debt. However necessary credit may be to an extensive commercial system, a tradesman's apprentice has no business with it. And yet, I have known some unhappy instances, in which mere lads have been foolish enough to contract debts—yes, *large* debts ; and have found tradesmen—I had almost said—*wicked* enough to trust them. The evils to which a door has thus been opened are too many and complicated to be enumerated here.

LETTER XI.

MISEMPLOYMENT OF LEISURE TIME.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

SOME time ago, I promised that I would give you some hints as to filling up your leisure time : and since you tell me that your busy season is nearly over, and that you expect soon to have more spare time upon your hands, I may as well do so now.

Before I proceed to this subject, however, let me thank you for the good part in which you have taken my past strictures. I have been almost afraid sometimes, while writing to you—especially the last three or four letters—that you would think me too severe against the indulgences of young men in general—that I had forgotten the time when I was young—and that I might make greater allowance for the inexperience and propensities of those who are young now. But, in fact, it is because I *do* remember my own youth, its inexperience and its propensities, that I have written at all. Truly, I can say of myself, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that I am not consumed ; because his compassions fail not.” And a sincere desire that you may be preserved from similar dangers, has encouraged, and still encourages me to write thus plainly to you.

And now, as to the employment of your time. I suppose, after all, you will not have a very large share of this precious commodity upon your own hands. Perhaps, an hour or two after the business of the day is over will be its utmost extent. Well, this time, comparatively little as it is, is far too valuable to be wasted; though many young men do waste, and worse than waste it; and it is possible that you may sometimes be tempted to employ it in not the most profitable manner.

It is not an unusual regulation in houses of business, that, to a certain hour in the evening, the young men and apprentices are allowed to leave the house after the business of the day is over. Now, supposing this to be so in your case, I can easily imagine that, after a close confinement of at least twelve hours to the duties of the shop, you may feel greatly inclined to avail yourself of this permission. I know very well the inducements presented by the prospect of an hour's exercise in the open air, and a fine evening sky, to a youth tired with the monotony of business; and I can scarcely bring myself to say, *never* give way to the inducement. But you will allow me to mention some objections to the *frequent* practice.

In the first place, it may be safely affirmed that evening air is generally unwholesome, and that more injury than benefit is likely to accrue from an indulgence in evening walks. Half an hour's run, early in the morning, before the business of the day commences, will do you more good than double the time given to the same object in the evening.

But, setting aside the question of health, there are other evils connected with evening rambles, on which account they are better avoided. There is danger of forming unprofitable acquaintances and bad habits. For instance, you will, on such occasions, probably meet with youths with whom you have necessarily become partially acquainted in the course of business, but a more intimate connexion with whom may endanger your morals in no ordinary degree. It is not every fellow apprentice who may be trusted as a safe companion; and companions picked up by the dubious light of a gas lamp, a shop window, or a bright moon, are very likely to be unsafe ones. Neither is it altogether impossible that you may be tempted to consort, at such a time, with some whom you would wish to avoid in broad daylight.

And then, as to habits: in large towns, the streets are the only available places for an evening's walk; and in walking about them for the purpose of shaking off the restraints of the day, beguiling a leisure hour, or under the plea of recruiting health and spirits, there is a danger of acquiring a listless, lounging habit, which will do you no good. To stare in at the windows of shops which are still open, is a favourite amusement of lads who are given to evening street exercise; but it is an amusement in which I should be sorry for you to indulge. You have something better to do with your time.

I have already warned you against cigar-smoking and indulgence in confectionary, etc.; so I need only say here, that, almost invariably, these bad habits are commenced by young men in your

situation in evening walks through the streets. I am told, however, that out-of-door smoking is become unpopular—that, having been discarded by men in the higher ranks of society, and in their turn by those in the intermediate ones, it has at length become too disreputable for any young man who cares for his character. If this be so, I am heartily glad of it: and there is one temptation the less for you.

But, dear Charles, there are other dangers that crowd the streets, even in the early hours of night. Shall I, from motives of delicacy, refrain to advise you of them? It would be a false delicacy, which I do not court; but, lest I should overstep the bounds of propriety, I will take Scripture for my expositor.

“For at the window of my house
I looked through my casement,
And beheld among the simple ones,
I discerned among the youths,
A young man void of understanding,
Passing through the street near her corner;
And he went the way to her house,
In the twilight, in the evening,
In the black and dark night:
And, behold, there met him a woman
With the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

With her much fair speech she caused him to yield,
With the flattering of her lips she forced him.
He goeth after her straightway,
As an ox goeth to the slaughter,
Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.

Her house is the way to hell,
Going down to the chambers of death.”

Prov. vii. 6—10, 21, 22, 27.

Need I say more on this subject, Charles? Perhaps not; and yet let me add one parting

admonition. Since "many strong men have been slain" by this insidious foe, how needful is it that you should feel your weakness and danger; and, when you pray, "Lead me not into temptation," how desirable is it that you should not put yourself in the way of temptation! Many a young man has had bitter cause to lament having taken an evening's walk through the streets of a town or city.

There is yet one other danger to which I must allude here. Let me illustrate it. G. M. was apprenticed to a tradesman in a town. He was diligent in business, obliging in his manners, and respected by his master for his integrity and propriety of demeanour, until he was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, at which time a decided change was manifested in him. The first circumstance that excited notice, was his overpassing the hour at which, by the rules of the house, he ought to have come in from his evening's walk. This, at length, occurred so frequently, that his master was compelled to remonstrate with him on the subject. He made some excuse, and promised amendment in future. He soon, however, transgressed again; and, added to this, he became mysterious in his manners, disobliging to his customers, and indolent in his business. Very soon, suspicions began to be excited as to his honesty: a trap was set for him; and he was taken in the very act of pocketing money he had received from a customer. Then the mystery was unravelled; and here it is, for your warning. G. M. had regularly availed himself of the opportunity of taking an evening's walk after the shop was closed. One night, on returning home through

a back street, he was overtaken by a young man whom he casually knew, and who insisted on walking home with him. He became interested in his conversation, and agreed to walk with him on the succeeding evening. A few walks increased their intimacy, and within a week of the first meeting G. M. congratulated himself on the acquisition of such an excellent companion for his hitherto solitary walks. One night, they were walking arm in arm through the street in which they first commenced their acquaintance, when the new-found friend turned suddenly into a dark passage, and invited G. M. to follow. "Where are you going?" asked the young man. "Oh, never mind," was the rejoinder: "come along, and I'll show you what you never saw before; though I am sure you will like it." Thus conjured, he followed his companion up a flight of stairs, and into a large room brilliantly lighted up. It was a *billiard room*, and the table was surrounded by young men of their own rank in life, all of whom were eagerly engaged in the fascinating game. "I can't stay here," whispered G. M. "Phoo, phoo," returned his companion; "you need not play; I am not going to play; I only like to look on sometimes." They did stay and look on; and before they left, G. M.'s head was in a whirl of excitement. He could not get the rattling of the balls out of his mind through the whole night. The next evening he was eager to go and look on again—and the next—and the next. But why delay recording the result. From looking on, he began to play; and, as he handled the cues, he felt as he had never felt before. The spirit of gambling had entered his heart. I have

told you the consequence. Again, dear Charles, let me repeat the sacred caution, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

I could lengthen this letter; but time and space forbid. I will only add an apostolic admonition: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil," Eph. v. 15, 16.

LETTER XII.

EMPLOYMENT OF LEISURE TIME.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I CANNOT do better than by commencing this letter with the sentence that concluded my last, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Take this for your motto: let it be your leading, acting, influential principle in all that you do.

The gist of my last letter was—employ your leisure time *at home*; I will now make a few observations as to how it should be employed there; for, even there, it may be wasted. An hour's gossip and small talk with fellow apprentices and assistants is far from being a profitable amusement. You will surely have had enough of this in your day's business.

Neither can I recommend a draught or chess-board. It is not an unusual thing for these games to be taken up by young men, as a recreation after the business of the day. But, setting aside the question as to the utility or propriety of these things in the abstract, and whether they may not be profitably indulged in as a recreation from reading and abstruse studies, they are certainly not such recreations as the nature of *your* employment demands. No: the best recreation for you will be found *in* reading and study.

Perhaps you will have anticipated this, and will say that I could not have mentioned a more agreeable mode of spending a leisure hour. Even here, however, I must interpose a warning. It is not every kind of reading that will be equally beneficial to you; and just in proportion as your time for reading is limited, so ought you to be careful that that small portion should be occupied to the best advantage.

Now is the time for you to carry on the education that was only commenced at school; and, in doing so, you will probably find that what was a laborious task two or three years ago, will now be an agreeable amusement. Remember that what is really valuable in education, if suffered now to pass away, will most likely be lost to you through life. There is no reason why a tradesman's apprentice should not make some effort towards the attainment of useful knowledge. Natural history will afford you a wide field for intellectual improvement. The history of nations is a subject neither above nor beneath your notice. The biography of practical men will be eminently useful. These, and many other kindred studies, may profitably fill up a portion of your leisure time; nor will they unfit you—with proper caution on your part—for the common every-day business of life. I repeat, with proper caution; for there will be some little danger of their exercising an undue influence on your mind. Guard carefully against this; and should you find that any intellectual pursuit engrosses your thoughts and deadens your energies when employed in your daily occupations, be sure that it is doing you no good: it will be better at

once to lay it aside. Above all things, do not fall into the exceedingly reprehensible practice of taking books with you into the shop—secreting them behind the shelves, or in some snug drawer—and stealing away to them from time to time when you think you can do so unobserved, or at every unoccupied moment. I must strongly condemn this very bad habit, and warn you against it.

There is one branch of study which I venture particularly to recommend to you; and that is, the history of your own trade—not in its mere commercial details only; but more particularly as bearing upon its natural productions, the various processes which they undergo, the different sciences which are brought to bear upon their manufacture, and so on. You will find both present pleasure, and, probably, future profit in the investigation. Or, to say nothing of profit, it will distinguish you from the mere pounds, shillings, and pence automaton, which illiberal writers and speakers describe a shopkeeper to be. Why is it that many tradesmen know so little of the nature and history of the commodities in which they deal? Why, for instance, should a grocer in the country, be able only to tell that all the sugar he sells comes from London and the West India Docks? Why, rather, should he not be able to describe the sugar-cane, its country, its cultivation, and the process by which its juice is extracted and converted into the crystalized substance which he sells? Why is it that an iron-monger should scarcely know that the principal article in his shop is a mineral dug out of the earth; and that, before it reaches him in the form

of a nail or a frying-pan, it must be smelted, cast, forged, and so on? Why should a draper be at a loss to point out to an inquisitive customer, the difference between linen and cotton, or to speak with certainty as to which is the warp and which the woof of the calico he holds in his hand? Or why should a haberdasher gravely announce that pearl buttons are made of composition paste? Surely they would be none the worse tradesmen if they possessed a little more particular information. And yet such instances of indolent ignorance do occur every day. I fear so, at least. A young man would find shopkeeping a far more intellectual employment than at first sight it appears, if he would only make it so by intelligent inquiry.

I cannot avoid saying here, how very superior are the advantages of young men in the present day to those of even the last generation. Five and twenty years have produced wonderful changes in literature. I may safely assert, that one shilling will now procure a greater amount of really useful information than could have been purchased for five shillings then. In fact, many sources of instruction, now easily accessible, were then neither opened nor thought of. Let the young men of the present day see to it, then, that these advantages be rightly improved. But I must pass on to a more important subject.

Amidst all the appliances already mentioned for disposing of your leisure time, do not forget that you have an immortal spirit to prepare for eternity. There will be much of the world—worldly anxieties, worldly frivolities, worldly impertinences, clinging to you after a day spent in

worldly business ; and as you would avoid being entirely entangled by "the cares of this world," and corrupted by their influence, you *must* devote some of your leisure to retirement, self-examination, and devotion. Half an hour's solitude in your chamber, if practicable, will be thus happily and usefully spent. It will recruit your spirits, strengthen your principles, and prepare you for future duties. Nor must I omit to urge upon you not to neglect religious books. Above all, prize and search the Scriptures. Have always in course of reading some work of a decidedly scriptural character and devotional tendency ; and try to turn to it, not as a matter of course or of duty, but of delight and instruction.

I think I have now marked out sufficiently ample employment for your leisure time, so that you need not have recourse either to out-of-door lounging or in-door trifling. But mind, I would not have you become a misanthrope ; and, in condemning small talk and gossip with your fellow apprentices, do not understand that I recommend you to avoid intercourse with them. No such thing. If your companions are in any degree intelligent, and equally desirous of improvement with yourself, your intercourse may reasonably be expected to be both pleasant and profitable, and you may learn from each other what, perhaps, you cannot find in books. But "let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth ;" and "let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with the salt" of piety and good humour.

I have said nothing about novel reading, though I have warned you to avoid circulating libraries,

in most of which novels are the staple commodity. I shall not say much in addition. I really do not see that you can possibly have one spare minute to give to this kind of reading, and your best plan is to avoid it altogether.

I have written more fully on the employment of your leisure time than I perhaps should have done, but for the fact that public attention is now directed to the earlier closing of houses of business—particularly of retail shops. I am very glad of it. It was time for something to be done towards shortening the hours of unnecessary fatigue and confinement to which young men in business have been compelled to submit. I say *unnecessary*; for I know, and have known, but very few, if any, shops, in which the average transactions of a day might not be compressed with ease into two-thirds of the time over which they have been extended. I truly hope that the time is at hand when every retail shop, both in large and small towns, will be closed sufficiently early to allow recreation to the young men and apprentices employed in them. But yet, I look forward to it with some apprehension, lest the time thus afforded should be grievously misemployed. Should the plan of early closing be universally adopted, and be found by experience to tend to the demoralization rather than the improvement of those for whose benefit it has been designed, it will not be surprising that masters should give up the attempt in despair and disgust. That you, for one, may furnish your quota of evidence in favour of the attempt, is my earnest wish.

LETTER XIII

EARLY RISING.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

You tell me, that while you quite coincide with all that I urged in my last letter, yet that you feel it necessary to take more out-of-door exercise than is at your command during the day. I fully admit the desirableness of your doing so; and I will try to put you in a way of accomplishing this object with advantage to yourself. In fact, two words will give you my advice, and I do not know that much more need be added to them by way of enforcing or explaining them. I mean—
RISE EARLY.

You have informed me, that you are not required to open shop before seven o'clock; and that it is rarely later than ten at night when you retire to your chamber. Now, allowing one hour for morning and evening devotions—and I trust, dear Charles, that you never permit yourself to lie down or rise up, without reading the Scriptures, and committing your cares and concerns, your body and soul, into the hands of a faithful and merciful Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer—I say, devoting one hour to this indispensable duty and high privilege, you have eight hours for undisturbed repose.

Now, though eight hours is not an extrava-

gant amount of rest for a young man who has been actively engaged through the day, yet I think seven hours will answer every purpose for which sleep was designed. Try it, Charles ; leave your bed-room at six o'clock instead of seven, and you will then have a clear hour for healthy exercise. Take this hour, then, and appropriate it to this express purpose. Strike out for a brisk walk—if possible, away from houses and streets, into the country ; or, if not near enough the country, do the best you can. Even the streets of London, at an early hour of the morning, have more pure and bracing air in them than at any other part of the day. If you are fortunate enough to have a companion whose taste assimilates to your own, by all means secure his company. Walking with a companion of the right sort is far preferable to walking alone. But should your walk be a solitary one, and the locality favourable, I should not recommend you to take a book with you ; but rather go out with your eyes open, your mind disengaged, and seek for bodily exercise. Your mind need not, however, be idle. There is enough in the morning sky, the hedge-row at your side, and the ground beneath your feet, to furnish you with subjects for thought, inquiry, and devout contemplation. I may safely say, that my recollections of past enjoyment of the beauties of nature, are intimately connected with many a morning's walk when an apprentice.

It is very likely, as you become acquainted with young men of your own class, that you will be invited to join in morning athletic exercises. As you have a river near you, boating and bathing will probably be among the number ; for they

almost naturally present themselves as excellent amusements to young men of healthy constitutions and high spirits. I have also known many a good game of cricket played out between five and seven o'clock in the morning, by tradesmen's assistants and apprentices. I see no objection at all to these things. If kept within bounds, you will derive real benefit from these exercises; and you will carry into your business so much energy and spirit, that your master will be benefited by them too. Take care, however, of two things. First, That you adopt necessary caution against real danger. Neither boat nor bathe alone. You had better forego the pleasure than incur the risk. Second, Do not take such violent or continued exercise of any kind as to produce weariness. If you do this, your object will be defeated. I may as well add a third caution; though I shall some day enlarge a little more upon the subject: Be sure that your companions are proper ones—such as your conscience altogether approves. I am free to say here, however, that I have not half so much apprehension on this score as when warning you against *evening* companions. Young men who habitually rise early in the morning for the love of it, or for the sake of health and exercise, may be somewhat exuberant in spirits, and, perhaps, too much given to frolic; but I must have very distinct proof to make me believe them to be depraved and worthless.

I could say a great deal about the advantages of early rising generally; but I do not know that it is necessary. Books have been written to enumerate and prove them, numerous proverbs have attested them, and health, long life, and

wealth have been almost infallibly promised to the persevering early riser. I cannot answer for these results, because they are at the disposal of a Supreme Being, who, by his providence, often frustrates the wisest designs and best laid plans. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows," Psa. cxxvii. 1, 2. Still, as far as means are available, we are called upon to use them; and you are, without controversy, more likely to realize health and competence as an early, than as a late riser.

What I have said about both evening and morning occupations will admit of variations. There may be occasions in which an evening walk may be profitably taken; and there will be mornings when out-of-door exercise cannot be taken. At all events, however, *rise early*, and employ the time thus at your own disposal to the best advantage that circumstances will allow.

LETTER XIV.

HONESTY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I HAVE kept you a long time out of the shop: let us now return to it. And yet I feel at a loss how to enter upon the subject which I have proposed to myself; and would, if I could, altogether pass it over. But as this may not be, I will introduce it by a short narrative, which, alas! is but one of many others equally painful, though salutary to contemplate.

Not many years ago, I attended the assizes held in a county town at a considerable distance from home, and witnessed one trial which, above all the rest, excited my interest. The prisoner was a young man, not much more than twenty years of age. The crime with which he was charged was that of robbing his employer. During the trial, the young man appeared ready to sink under the united effects of exhaustion and shame. Proof after proof accumulated as the trial proceeded; and, without quitting their box, the jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. "My mother, my poor mother," groaned the unhappy prisoner, and, convulsively stretching out his arms, would have fallen, if he had not been caught in the arms of a turnkey who stood at a little distance behind him. He was carried

fainting from the dock ; and I afterwards heard that sentence of transportation was passed upon him.

Charles, that unhappy young man was once innocent, respected, and happy. A tender mother had clasped him in her arms, watched his infant smiles, supplied his childish wants : an affectionate father had toiled, and planned, and prayed for the future honourable course of his only son : and both had endeavoured to train his steps in “the way of peace.” And they thought, they hoped, that success had crowned their endeavours. Yes, William *did* give early promise of future excellence. He left school with a character for probity and ingenuousness which few boys attain : and, when he became an apprentice, not a fear was excited in the bosom of his parents, that their son would fail in any one duty of his situation ; much less that he would bring dishonour on his name, and distress to his once happy family. But he did fall ; and—allow me once again to pen the caution —“let him that thinketh *he* standeth take heed lest *he* fall.”

But it was not all at once that he fell. No ; it was by degrees—step by step. I would not willingly give you pain, Charles ; but his example may serve you for a warning to beware of the first, the slightest, the most apparently insignificant, deviation from the paths of rectitude. Believe me, that in sketching the downward career of William —, I am tracing that of thousands more.

For two years after this young man first entered the shop of his master, he had, as far as

strict integrity was concerned, preserved "a conscience void of offence towards God and men." In no single instance had he felt even the slightest wish to appropriate any portion of his master's property to his own use. He was really honest, was believed to be so, and trusted accordingly. But on one occasion, as he was returning from a customer's house, he went into a shop to make a purchase for himself. It amounted to *sixpence* more than he had about him of his own. But he had taken money of the customer; and from that money he *borrowed* what was sufficient to pay for what he had bought. On his return home, he immediately went up-stairs, replaced the borrowed sixpence from money which he had in his box, and paid the proper amount into the hands of his master. Now, this may seem but a very trivial matter: there was no evil intention — not even the smallest idea of dishonesty; but — *it broke the ice.*

Some time after this, another similar occasion was presented to him. He was alone in the shop, the whole family, with the exception of himself, being at dinner, and his shoemaker brought in a pair of shoes which he had repaired for him. William had no money in his pocket, and he could not leave the shop to fetch it from his room. Again he *borrowed* his master's money — taking fifteen pence from the till to meet the shoemaker's demand. Perhaps he would not have done this, had not the man stepped out at the shop door for a minute to speak to an acquaintance whom he saw passing by. This gave William an opportunity of trans-

ferring the cash unperceived. What a thing is conscience ! William had no rest until he had slipped into his room, taken the fifteen pence from his box, and, with an inward sensation of guilt, watched an opportunity of replacing it in the till unobserved.

Again and again did temptations to this system of borrowing and repaying present themselves to William ; and every time in which it was repeated, his mind became more at ease, and, at length, his conscience ceased to reproach him for the act. The facility which he found (and which, in fact, was afforded him by his reputation for honesty) in these petty transactions, encouraged him to proceed further : he borrowed—still *borrowed*—larger sums ; sums which he could not immediately repay. But he kept a secret account of them ; intending—fully intending—to replace them when remittances from home reached him. But, in the mean time, this practice of supplying himself with money with so much ease, had tempted him to incur expenses which he could not meet if he repaid the abstractions from his master's till. A struggle ensued—guilt conquered—the secret account was destroyed—and William felt himself, knew himself, and consented to be—A THIEF.

For years after this he carried on a system of petty depredation on his master's property, unsuspected to the last. His apprenticeship expired, and his character was yet unblemished. He left the house of his indulgent and trusting master—entered another situation—was soon suspected, watched, and detected. The result I have stated to you ; and now he knows, by miserable

experience, that "the way of transgressors is hard."

And now, Charles, I come to the application of this melancholy narrative. Had the young man to whom it refers been solemnly assured, when he first became an apprentice, that such things would take place in his history, he would, in all probability, have replied in some such language as that of Hazael of old: "But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" 2 Kings viii. 13. He would have scorned the supposition, and almost have questioned its possibility. If, when he first *borrowed* sixpence of his master's money, a faithful monitor had whispered in his ear, "This is the first step to your degradation and ruin," and could he have been brought to believe it, he would have shuddered at the thought, and shrunk back from touching the fatal coin as though it were a plague sore. Perhaps a faithful monitor *did* speak; but he gave no heed to the tones. "Clothed," as he thought, in the "triple brass" of his innocence of intention and integrity of heart, he neglected the caution, and opened a way for the next temptation. Alas! he forgot the Divine declaration, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," Jer. xvii. 9; and he neglected the scriptural injunction, to "abstain from all *appearance* of evil," 1 Thess. v. 22.

Again, when he looked at the silver in his master's till, and as he put out his hand to take it, did no voice ever whisper in his bosom, "Touch not the accursed thing?" Yes, perhaps it did; but this voice had before been

quieted by the prompt restoration of what he had at other times taken; and he intended to restore again. It was but taking a temporary loan; no one would be injured by it, while he himself would be advantaged. And thus, from time to time, he struggled with his conscience; until, at length, conscience ceased to struggle with him.

But I will not pursue these reflections on this single case; nor should I have written so much about it, but that I firmly believe that, in a great majority of instances of dishonesty towards employers, the first steps in this direction have been taken under the specious plea of *borrowing*. But, almost as certainly, this practice of clandestine borrowing will eventually end in downright stealing.

But I hope better things of you, Charles, though I thus write. That I have written thus plainly, arises from my knowledge of the extreme facilities and the strong temptations to which a youth in your situation is necessarily exposed. Indeed, in many cases, facility itself furnishes the first temptation. Arm yourself against it, then, by some such considerations as the following.

“The eye of God is upon me. Shall I hazard my soul and its eternal interests, for the sake of a momentary indulgence, or to avoid a slight inconvenience?”

“The eye of man may be upon me; and my character, and my temporal interests, are perhaps waiting the event of my first struggle against temptation.”

“The happiness of my friends is at stake.

What would be their horror to know that I were even suspected of being a thief!"

"My peace of mind is at stake. What enjoyment could I possibly experience, if under a continual apprehension of detection; or what self-respect could I entertain, if *once* I gave way to temptation?"

"And supposing I could 'put forth my hand and steal,' undiscovered, what worldly advantage should I gain, when 'treasures of wickedness profit nothing;' and 'wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished?'" Prov. x. 2; xiii. 11.

And let these considerations be accompanied by—

Earnest, heartfelt prayer. "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not," Psa. xvii. 5. "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," Psa. cxix. 37. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me," Psa. xxv. 21. "Thy spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness," Psa. cxliii. 10.

Humble, but entire reliance on Divine grace, and corresponding distrust of your own strength. Make God your strong fortress and refuge, Psa. lxxi. 3.

Making his word your guide and counsellor. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word," Psa. cxix. 9.

Adopting every means in your power as preventatives against temptation. For instance—

Be frugal and methodical in your personal expenses.

Never entirely exhaust your small stock of money; but rather forego a desirable expendi-

ture than run the risk of being moneyless, even for a single day.

Carry your money in your pocket—or so much of it, at least, as you are likely to want for casual expenses. You will not be obliged to spend any the more for having it at hand. It is a miserable thing when boys, or men either, cannot carry money about with them without an intolerable longing to get rid of it, and so are continually asking themselves, “What *shall* I buy? What *can* I buy?”

Avoid the necessity of borrowing money of any one; and, above all, never—never, as you value your peace of mind, your character, your safety, your worldly advantage, your eternal interests—never borrow money from your master’s till: to borrow implies the consent of the lender; if, therefore, you take money from your master’s till without his consent, you do not borrow, but—steal. No intention of repaying would save the culprit from the penalty of the law for stealing. At this very time, a young man whom I knew as an apprentice—the son of pious parents—is in a county jail for robbing his master. He says, and his friends believe, that he had no intention of stealing; he only borrowed, and fully intended to repay. It is needless to say that this plea availed him nothing in a court of justice.

LETTER XV

HONESTY—FIDELITY

MY DEAR CHARLES,

WHEN, in my last, I urged upon you the practice of strict honesty, I alluded particularly to only one aspect of it; that is, as it relates to money. But honesty does not commence and terminate in this particular alone; nor is this the only point on which your principles may be assailed. An apprentice may scrupulously avoid appropriating to his own use a single penny that is not his own—or the system of business in which he is employed may be so methodical and strict—or the nature of it may be such, as to render it next to impossible that he should do so without immediate detection; and yet he may be essentially and practically dishonest. It is but a few days since I saw, in a London paper, an account of a most extensive robbery committed by a draper's assistant; a robbery, not of money, but of goods, and to such an amount that a horse and cart were required to remove them from the place of concealment. Such instances, indeed, to a greater or less extent, are perpetually occurring in every trade; and while they tell loudly of a sad state of morals too prevalent among young men in trade, they proclaim equally loudly, that no precautions

sufficiently stringent can be adopted against dishonesty in one form or another. It would be distressing, though useful, to trace the history of a dishonest shopman through every gradation of his guilt. Partially I have done so, in the case of William —; but much more filling up would be required in portraying the course of so thorough and finished a rogue as the one I have just mentioned must have been. Perhaps the first theft he committed was that of a pair of shoe-strings from the ribbon drawer, or a silk handkerchief from the piece, or a yard of Irish for shirt-collars from the roll. Or, quite as likely, he became entangled in the snares of some designing and wicked female, and was drawn into the vortex of crime by first secretly making some trifling present from his employer's shop to secure her favour. In *either*, as in *every* case, there can be no doubt that the first aberration was comparatively slight; the next and the next became greater and greater, until detection and ruin was the result. Beware, then, of yielding to dishonesty in little things. It is dishonest to take or to use the least portion of a master's property without consent or purchase.

But it is possible that a young man may never violate the rules of common honesty, and yet be utterly untrustworthy. There is a higher kind of honesty than that which regards tangible objects alone. The quality I mean, is that of FIDELITY. Allow me to instance a few particulars in which it will be shown.

1. Fidelity will preserve you from that kind of service which the Bible calls "eyeservice;" and which it so distinctly condemns. "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters

according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with *eyeservice*, as menpleasers," Eph. vi. 5, 6. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with *eyeservice*, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God," Col. iii. 22. There are apprentices who, when under the eye and immediate direction of their masters, can be diligent, useful, and obliging; but *will* be so only then. Whenever they are left to themselves, their masters' business and interests are forgotten and disregarded. Now, whatever good qualities these youths may possess, they cannot reckon fidelity among the number. It is very difficult to avoid eyeservice—to act in every case, in the absence of a master, precisely as we should act in his presence—to pay the same regard to his interests—to move with the same expedition in his service—to make the same efforts to please his customers, and so on; nor do I believe that any thing short of the grace of God will enable a young man to be thus uniformly faithful. Without *this*, the right motive is wanting; and nothing can supply its place. "With good will doing service, *as to the Lord, and not to men*," Eph. vi. 7. "In singleness of heart, *fearing God*," Col. iii. 22. Let this feeling animate you in all you do, and then only will you fairly earn a character for fidelity.

2. Fidelity will manifest itself in your concern for the reputation of your master. An apprentice who would shrink from the idea of committing depredations on his master's property, may evince a total disregard to what is of far more importance—his character. To a certain extent,

and often to a considerable extent, you will become acquainted with your master's secrets and circumstances; you will witness what transpires in his family; you may perhaps sometimes, at least, suspect the pressure of temporary embarrassment, from an unusual slackness of trade or unexpected losses or disappointments; you will know or guess the extent of his business; you will know something of his pecuniary obligations; you will become acquainted with his customers, and what are their responsibilities to him. These, and many other matters of a similar nature, will, I repeat, come to *your* knowledge; but they ought to be as carefully conserved in your own mind as though you had taken a solemn oath not to divulge them. It is, indeed, impossible to calculate the amount of mischief which may accrue from your making them topics of conversation. It is not too much to say, that the ruin of many a tradesman might be traced to the unprincipled tattling of apprentices and servants. If, therefore, you ever meet with any person who endeavours to worm this kind of information out of you—and it is not unlikely that you may be thus exposed—tell them plainly, that you make it a principle not to talk of your master's affairs; and more than this, avoid their company in future. You will thus show that you deserve a character for fidelity.

3. Fidelity will be further shown by a conscientious care of your master's property. It is not enough that you do not appropriate it; you must not waste it, nor suffer it to be wasted. Much, in this respect, will depend on your care. Goods may be spoiled or lost from the neglect of a

wasteful apprentice. A grocer's apprentice, who carelessly and thoughtlessly throws into the scale an extra half ounce of sugar, or any other article, with every pound that he weighs for a customer, is guilty of infidelity to his master. And so is a draper's apprentice, when he gives over-measure. I once was shown a calculation made by a draper of my acquaintance, the result of which was truly astounding. He proved, as far as such a problem would admit of proof, that for a series of years he had lost upwards of fifty pounds a year by the unfair measurements of one of his young men. After this, it may seem a trivial thing to say that an apprentice or assistant, who uniformly uses a sheet of paper for wrapping up a parcel of goods, when half a sheet would answer the purpose equally well, is, to that extent at least, deficient in fidelity.

4. There is one other characteristic of fidelity which it is necessary to mention. It will prevent the concealment by an apprentice of any thing which ought to be communicated to his master. It will lead him to a frank confession of his own errors, in order that they may be rectified and their mischievous results prevented, as well as that suspicion and blame may not unjustly attach to another. It will also compel him to speak out boldly, when he has reason to believe that his master's interest or property is suffering injury from any other person in his employ. This is a difficult duty; but it is a duty and therefore *must* be performed. Far be it from me to intimate that you ought to set yourself as a spy upon your fellow apprentices or servants; or that it is your duty to indulge an

ill-natured tattling disposition on every slight occasion. But there are occasions in which every consideration must be merged into the one of strict fidelity. I will give you a case in point. A young man, whom I knew some years ago, thought he had reason to suspect that a fellow shopman was in the habit of robbing his master's till. For some time he hesitated as to what course he ought to take. He did not like unjustly to accuse his companion, neither did he like the idea of being looked upon as a spy; at the same time, he dared not rest while he feared that his master was suffering daily injury. He therefore watched the proceedings of the suspected individual more narrowly; and his suspicions were, in consequence, more than ever confirmed. His duty was then plain: he communicated to his employer what he had seen; and left it with him to take what further steps he thought proper. The event proved that the suspicions were well-founded. Should a similar case ever occur in your experience, Charles, it will be your duty to act in the same manner, and leave the consequences. Let it never be said of you, "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him," *Psa. l. 18*. My hope is, however, that you may never be placed in such delicate and painful circumstances.

More might perhaps be added, as to other ways in which fidelity will exhibit itself; but I shall add only one other remark.

I have already said, that nothing but the grace of God can insure your strict fidelity to man. I will now say, that no person, of whatever rank, who does not act with fidelity to his fellow men,

has any right to conclude that he possesses the grace of God. "He [only] that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" Luke xvi. 10, 11.

LETTER XVI.

TRUTH.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

It is a mistaken notion, though a prevalent one, that tradesmen are frequently obliged to tell falsehoods. So prevalent, indeed, is the idea, that it is by some persons considered rather as a compliment than otherwise to remind a tradesman that he is privileged to do so in his business. It is looked upon as a mark of superior cleverness, when a customer can be persuaded by the eloquence of the shopkeeper to believe that

“Black’s not so very black; nor white so white.”

This qualification has been made the theme of the poet:

“’Tis education forms the common mind;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined.
Boastful and rough, your first son is a squire;
The next a tradesman, meek, and *much a liar*.”

But, is it so? Is it impossible that a business contract should be made, and a law of God not broken? Cannot the common and necessary affairs of life be carried on without the commission of sin? Is there, in short, any necessity that a tradesman should be a liar? Certainly not. If there were, unhappy would be the

condition of the trading world ; for whatever allowance may be made by sinful fellow men—however they may palliate and explain away iniquity—no such palliations are admitted by a holy God. His word proclaims, that “*all* liars shall have their part in the second death,” Rev. xxi. 8. There are no exceptions made in favour of “white lies,” or “business lies.” *All* “lying lips are abomination to the Lord,” Prov. xii. 22, and will assuredly be put to shame.

But, before a general charge against any body of persons is admitted, it ought to be thoroughly investigated ; and before tradesmen, as tradesmen, are branded with the hateful charge of being indifferent to truth in their daily transactions, it ought to be proved that, as a body, they deserve it. I think they do not, Charles. I believe there is fully as great a regard for truth to be found behind a tradesman’s counter as in any other place in the world. I might go a step further, and say that perhaps there is more disregard to truth to be found on the customer’s side of the counter than on the tradesman’s ; and I might quote Solomon to prove my position—“It is naught, it is naught, saith the *buyer* : but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth,” Prov. xx. 14. But here the exculpation must end. Truth is often lamentably set at nought both by buyer and seller ; and it would be a futile attempt to shift the crime backwards and forwards from one party to the other ; or to examine minutely on which side the balance preponderates. Happily, there are multitudes of buyers and sellers who meet in the daily walks of life without incurring the guilt of falsehood ; and the facility which attends their

transactions sufficiently proves the inutility of it. Indeed, I am so thoroughly convinced that no kind of permanent advantage can be gained by what are called "business lies," that I feel no hesitation in recommending you, even as a matter of worldly policy, to "choose the way of truth."

I am sure that you fully agree with me in the preceding remarks—that you have such a strict regard for truth, that you would shudder at the thought of uttering a premeditated falsehood. Still, it is desirable that you should ever be on your guard, lest, in the hurry of business, or under the temptations of some petty and temporary advantage, you should incautiously involve yourself in assertions that will not bear the severe scrutiny of conscience.

The great danger to which you are exposed, in this respect, will be found in your anxiety to promote your master's interests. You will sometimes have questions put to you by customers, which you may perceive, or suppose, to be the turning point of their making a purchase or declining it; or you may see that a few words not strictly true, spoken in recommendation of some article which you wish to dispose of, may force its sale. Here then is the point—"Shall I, by an evasion of the question put, or by an extravagant commendation of the article which I hold in my hand, secure a purchaser, and thus benefit and please my master; or am I bound, by a strict adherence to truth, to lose the chance of a sale, and subject myself to blame?" In either case, dear Charles, do not hesitate between right and wrong, and never give heed to

expediency. You may possibly lose a small advantage; but you will gain a greater. Your customer may for that time disappoint you: but if you are seen to possess a regard for the truth, you will be almost sure to have that customer's respect; and that respect is likely to turn greatly to your advantage, as well as to that of your master. I have known many instances in which deception practised towards customers, though successful at the time, has lost them for the future; and I have seen the case reversed, where the future confidence of a good customer has been secured by a regard to truth under present disadvantage. Nor will your master be disposed to blame you, if he sees that you do all that is in your power honestly and honourably to promote his interests. A wise tradesman knows that, in the end, a conscientious lad is far more valuable to him than one who does not boggle at a lie. He would rather have it said by a customer, "I like that young man, because I can depend on what he tells me:" than, "Your apprentice is a clever fellow; he took me in on such an occasion, but I shall know how to believe him in future." He very well knows, that a youth who does not hesitate to deceive a customer, will not hesitate to deceive his master whenever an occasion offers; and he will naturally suspect and treat him accordingly.

After all, a young man who can only succeed in selling goods by telling lies about them, is but an indifferent salesman; and, however he may pride himself on his abilities, (and there are those who can "glory in their shame,") it will generally be found that his truth-loving fellow shopman is more successful than himself.

But, setting aside these minor considerations, your duty is clear. "Thou God seest me," and hearest me, should always be present in your mind: and whatever advantage a departure from truth may promise you, let your inward feeling and actuating principle be, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

If you thus scrupulously adhere to truth in your dealings with your customers, it is not likely that you will fail in the same adherence to it towards your master. The temptation to violate it certainly will not generally be so great. But there may be circumstances in which you will, even here, be exposed to temptation. You may, on some occasion, have laid yourself open to blame, and feel inclined to avoid it by concealment, equivocation, or denial. Never, however, give way to such an inclination. Remember the fine lines of George Herbert.

"Lie not, but let thy heart be true to God;
 Thy mouth, to it; thy actions, to them both:
 Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod;
 The stormy working soul spits lies and froth.
*Dare to be true Nothing can need a lie;
 A fault which needs it most, grows two thereby."*

Or, should you forget these, do not forget the words of Holy Writ, "Lord who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and *speaketh the truth in his heart.*—He that doeth these things shall never be moved," Psa. xv. 1, 2, 5.

LETTER XVII.

AFFABILITY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

A FEW weeks ago, I spent two days at D—; and on the morning of my arrival, remembering that my watch had previously shown symptoms of wanting cleaning, I went into a watchmaker's shop; and the following conversation passed between the watchmaker and myself.

“Will you have the kindness to look at this watch, and see what is the matter with it? I rather expect it wants cleaning.”

Watchmaker. [Opening the watch, and giving a cursory glance at the works.] Yes, it seems to want cleaning.

“I shall be in D— till to-morrow night. Can you manage to clean it between now and then?”

W. [Bluntly enough, and returning the watch.] No.

“I am sorry for that. Would not that be time enough?”

W. No. I could clean it; but I could not regulate it in that time. A watch wants regulating after it has been cleaned.

“I am aware of that; but, perhaps, if it were cleaned, I might alter the regulator myself if necessary, or —”

W. [Cutting me short.] Oh no:—could'nt

tell any thing about it. It must be properly regulated.

“Well, then, I suppose I must take away my watch uncleaned. But stay—I shall be in D—again on Tuesday,” [this was Friday,] “could you clean and regulate it by that time?”

W. Perhaps I might; but I can't promise.

“Well, if I leave it till then, can you lend me any kind of a watch for the time? I shall feel rather awkward without one.”

W. No. I have not one to spare.

Thus repulsed at every step, I replaced my watch in my pocket, and left the shop.

A little time after this, I went to B— for a visit of two or three days; and as my watch still remained uncleaned, and had not become more regular in its movements, I took it to a watchmaker in *that* town, with the old story.

“Yes, it certainly wants cleaning,” said the young man; “it is quite clogged with dust.”

“Can you clean it before I leave B—? I shall most likely leave the day after to-morrow.”

“Oh yes, I will clean it with pleasure; but I fear I shall not be able to regulate it properly in that time. But I will do the best I can, so that you will be able to regulate it afterwards.”

“Thank you,” was my reply; and I put the watch into his hands.

“But stop, sir,” he said, as I was leaving the shop. “You will perhaps want a watch while I am setting this to rights. Here is one that I can spare for a day or two.”

I accepted the offer; and, at the time promised, my own watch was delivered to me in proper condition.

I give you these apparently trifling particulars, in order to introduce a few remarks about a very desirable and a very necessary quality for every tradesman to possess—AFFABILITY. So necessary, indeed, is it that a tradesman should be affable, that (in the present day, at all events) it is next to impossible for him to succeed without it. I certainly have heard of lawyers, and physicians, and philosophers, who have attained to considerable eminence in spite of almost unbearable churlishness, and perhaps may really have become popular by means of this unamiable singularity: but I never yet heard, and I never expect to hear, of a shop being thronged with customers because the master and his servants are surly and disagreeable. On the contrary, I have heard of and known many a business that has gone to decay on that account. Depend upon it, Charles, unless a youth can bring himself to be affable, he had better be any thing else than a tradesman.

Of the two watchmakers with whom I had to do, one was affable and the other was not. The first was right in not undertaking what he could not perform; and if he really objected on principle, or from a regard to his reputation, to clean a watch without afterwards regulating it, he was not to blame for refusing to depart from his general rule: but he might have done it more graciously. I have heard it said of a nobleman of high rank and great influence, that he never suffered an applicant for a favour to leave his presence without feeling enchanted with the reception he had met, although the boon was denied; and that it was pleasanter to be refused a

favour by him, than to receive one from others. I certainly cannot say as much for my watchmaker—I was any thing but enchanted with his demeanour. On the other hand, the watchmaker at B— was so evidently hearty in his wish to oblige a customer, and so affable in his manner, that if he had spoiled my watch, (which, however, he did not,) I could not think him a bad tradesman. And—to give a practical bearing and point to my observations—watchmaker the first lost something, and watchmaker the second gained something, for their respective want of, and possession of, affability on those particular occasions—to say nothing of their customer's good or bad opinion of them.

Now, my dear Charles, will you make use of these incidents? They apply to every trade and to every tradesman—whether master, assistant, or apprentice; but with this difference:—if a *master* be wanting in affability, the injury inflicted is principally upon himself: but when an assistant or apprentice is thus unamiable, his employer or master is the party who suffers for it; and to what extent it is often impossible to determine. I have often—very often—heard it said, “I cannot bear to enter that shop, the shopmen are so rude;” or, “I will never again be served by that young man, he was quite cross with me once, because,” etc.; or, “I have left off dealing at that shop, there are none but ill-bred apprentices to serve you.” And, more than this, I have seen customers walk into a shop, look round, and the next minute walk out again, because an offensive, or, in other words, an ill-behaved young man or apprentice was making towards them. Still further

I have known, in more businesses than one, the trade diminishing—customers falling off, one after another, the poor master all the while wondering what had become of them—and, by and by, when too late, the truth has come out, that a want of affability in a young man or an apprentice has caused the desertion. It is next to impossible, in such cases, for a master to regain the good graces, or conciliate his offended customers. He is made a party in every offence that has been given; and the frequent retort—should he apologize for what has transpired—is, “But why do you keep such a one behind your counter?” Or, at least, the only consolation he can get, is, “Well, we are sorry that you should be injured, as it is not your fault; but we have gone elsewhere and been well treated, and so we shall continue to go there.”

These are serious consequences arising from want of affability; but, be assured, I have not overstated them. You see that it is impossible for an apprentice to be thoroughly faithful to his master without the cultivation and practice of courtesy towards his master's customers. I believe that this view of the case will be quite enough to put you on your guard against a neglect of it. In my next letter I will conclude this subject. Meanwhile, I may remind you that an apostle did not think it beneath the dignity of his office to urge upon those to whom he wrote, the observance of this and every other social duty. “Be courteous,” 1 Pet. iii. 8, is an excellent motto for a Christian tradesman.

LETTER XVIII.

AFFABILITY—CONTINUED.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

“WHAT is affability?” The question is to the purpose; for though I have recommended to you its constant practice, and said something about the disadvantages of a want of it, I have not exactly told you in what sense I have used the term. I will first tell you what it is *not*.

1. It is not *cringing obsequiousness*. It is needful to warn you of this; for it sometimes happens that, in aspiring to be agreeable and pleasing, a youth will overshoot the mark, and fall into a mode of address and behaviour which is always ridiculous, and often disgusting. I have seen some tradesmen put on such airs of slavish veneration, and heard them make use of such fulsome compliments towards their customers, as must have disgusted people of sense. If tradesmen would give their customers credit for good taste and discernment, they would as much avoid cringing obsequiousness as they would cultivate true affability.

2. It is not *hypocrisy*. I have heard it repeated again and again, that a complete tradesman must be a complete hypocrite. This is not true: if it were, a complete tradesman would be one of the most despicable characters in existence. The fact is, there is no need for the

smallest degree of hypocrisy. Only let a tradesman be well imbued with a spirit of love and goodwill; let him have a benevolent desire to please all with whom he comes in contact, and a determination to be pleased with all; and let him, in addition to this, fully understand the relation which subsists between himself and his customers; and affability, without hypocrisy, will be the natural result.

3. It is not *frivolity*. It is very important to bear this in mind. I have sometimes heard good men lament the necessity which they have thought has been laid upon them, of being frivolous and nonsensical in their intercourse with their customers. And, sometimes, this supposed necessity forms a standing excuse for the most unbecoming levity in others of less tender consciences. There is a mistake here, and I should be sorry for you to fall into it. It is true, there are a great many people in the world who are very well pleased with nonsense and frivolity; but there are other ways of pleasing even these, and a conscientious tradesman will try to search out these methods. And though he must, in some measure, adapt himself to every variety of character which comes before him, he will do so in the fear of God—remembering the necessity laid upon him, to do *all things* to the glory of God, and “that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment,” 1 Cor. x. 31; Matt. xii. 36.

4. Affability is not improper *familiarity*. Far from being so, it is almost the reverse of it; and the effects of the two qualities are equally distant from each other. An affable tradesman, or

apprentice, is never in danger of offending his customers; but improper familiarity in either is sure to offend at some time or other. If you do not keep your proper distance, your customers will be sure to let you know it. They like to be, and they ought to be, treated with respect; and the more this respect can be combined with freedom of manner the better, so that the respect predominates. But the moment this is merged into familiarity the danger begins. I have sometimes been amused at hearing a young man talking away in fine style with the hope and expectation of pleasing his customer; and up to a certain point this has succeeded: and then an instantaneous change has been perceptible in the countenance of the listener—smiles have turned to dark and ominous frowns—the occasional smart repartee to sullen silence; or, “Please to let me know what my things come to”—spoken in tones of awful displeasure, have fallen upon the ears of the astounded tradesman. The whole mystery of the matter was, that he had talked himself into over familiarity. I believe that, next to absolute incivility, more customers are offended by familiarity than any thing else; and that it is far safer for a tradesman—particularly a young one, or a subordinate—to talk too little than too much.

I will just remark here as a general rule, which you will do well to observe, that the very customers who are most apt to take the greatest liberty of speech with a tradesman, are the first to notice and resent any apparent deficiency of respect on his part. This is rather too bad, but it cannot be helped; and the only thing is to set a double guard upon your lips in such cases. Above all, never

joke at the expense of a customer, either verbally or practically. There is no class of persons in whom jesting is more inconvenient than that of tradesmen. It is almost certain to offend. True, their customers often shower jokes upon them; but they should never be retaliated. Policy and affability alike forbid it.

In having thus endeavoured to explain what affability is not, I believe I have saved myself the trouble of telling you what it *is*. If any thing more be necessary, it is only a summary of what has been already intimated. Affability, then, comprehends hearty good will towards every body, thorough and constant good humour, an easy deportment, and obliging manners. In short, it is true courtesy of feeling brought into every day exercise.

As to the way in which it is to be attained, and the manner in which it should be shown, I believe the true secret—if it be a secret—may be explained in a very few words. Accustom yourself to consider your own interests as identified with those of your master; and look upon every customer who comes into your master's shop as being friendly to those interests, and intending to confer upon him a personal favour. You will then feel yourself bound to show good will and gratitude, both on your master's account and on your own. Let this good will and gratitude be expressed in the way most natural to yourself at the time, without any effort or striving for effect, and you may then be pretty certain of deserving and enjoying a reputation for well-bred affability.

LETTER XIX.

GOOD TEMPER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

NOTWITHSTANDING all the kindly feeling which you may possess, and, under ordinary circumstances, exercise, towards your master's customers, I am afraid you will sometimes have your patience pretty severely tested. There are so many varieties of temper among all classes of buyers, and so much caprice, and occasionally so much insolence, shown by them, that it requires a great effort to preserve that equanimity of temper which it is absolutely necessary for a tradesman to possess. Defoe, who very well knew what he was writing about, has admirably portrayed the tradesman's difficulties in this particular. "Every tradesman," he writes, "must furnish himself with a competent stock of patience; I mean, that patience which is needful to bear with all sorts of impertinence, and the most provoking curiosity that it is possible to imagine the buyers, even the worst of them, are or can be guilty of. A tradesman behind his counter must have no flesh and blood about him, no passions, no resentment. He must never be angry; no, not so much as seem to be so. If customers tumble him five hundred pounds' worth of goods, and scarce bid

money for any thing—nay, though they really come to his shop with no intent to buy, as many do, only to see what is to be sold, and if they cannot be better pleased than they are at some other shop where they intend to buy, it is all one, the tradesman must take it, and place it to the account of his calling, that it is his business to be ill used and resent nothing; and so must answer as obligingly to those that give him an hour or two's trouble and buy nothing, as he does to those who in half that time lay out ten or twenty pounds."

And then, after giving an example of this kind of impertinence, he goes on to say, "Here you see, and I could give many examples like this, how, and in what manner a shopkeeper is to behave himself in the way of his business—what impertinences, what taunts, flouts, and ridiculous things, he must bear in his business, and must not show the least return, or the least signal of disgust—he must have no passions—no fire in his temper—he must be all soft and smooth; nay, if his real temper be naturally fiery and hot, he must show none of it in his shop. It is true, natural tempers are not to be always counterfeited—the man cannot easily be a lamb in his shop, and a lion in himself; but let it be easy or hard, it must be done, and it is done."

This was written upwards of a hundred years ago; and, in some respects, there has been since then an improvement in the customs and manners of the country; nevertheless, it would be no libel to make pretty nearly the same charges against customers in the present day. It is

true, some sorts of trades are more subject to this trying process than others; and the one to which the writer had particular reference is perhaps the most disagreeable in this respect: but, more or less, all tradesmen must make up their minds to bear with the tempers and bad dispositions of others without showing, or even feeling—if they can possibly help it—any bad temper in return. Perhaps this is the hardest lesson which an apprentice has to learn; but the sooner it is learned the better for his own interest and comfort too.

It will not be unprofitable, while urging some reasons why an apprentice should always be good-tempered, just to glance at the cause of too many of his customers being bad-tempered or otherwise provoking.

Sometimes this unamiable disposition in a customer arises from real malignity of mind. There are not a few persons in the world who are tyrants in heart, and never let slip an opportunity of exercising their miserable propensity. Servants and shopkeepers are considered by them as fair game; and, of course, the apprentice, and next to him, the assistant, as being more helpless, come in for the largest share of their petty tyranny. It is hardly worth while, under any circumstances, to be angry with such people. Their natural disposition is a sufficient punishment to themselves, and should rather excite our compassion. If you ever come into contact with any such, do not be put out of temper by them; but congratulate yourself that they have no power, however they may have the inclination, to make you miserable; and commiserate those over whom they do hold such a power. I remember a young man, who,

after being really grossly insulted by such a customer, merely smiled after she had taken her departure, and coolly remarked, "Ah, my sweet lady, I would not be your husband for a trifle."

Sometimes a customer is offended by not receiving the immediate attention of the master of the shop; and vents his or her displeasure upon the innocent apprentice or assistant—refusing to be charmed, charm they never so wisely. If you suspect this to be the case, the best plan will be to hint to your master, if he is within call, that you think the customer would be better pleased by his own personal services. But, at all events, do not lose your patience; redouble your efforts to please, and then, if you are unsuccessful, it will be no fault of yours.

There are, again, some people who profess to look upon tradesmen in general as a caste so inferior to their own, that they fancy it beneath them to behave with common civility in their presence. Polite, in their way, to all the world besides, they have no courtesy to show to a shopkeeper. These characters should excite pity rather than anger. While they "hedge themselves in" with proud notions of their rank and station, it may be that they fear being outstripped in every thing else by the very class which they affect to despise. Such people are often found to be very condescending to their servants and workpeople, because the same danger (in their foolish imaginations) does not exist.

Occasionally, customers are irritated by the inaptitude of an apprentice at understanding and supplying their wants. To feel vexed under such circumstances will only make the matter worse:

the only way is to increase your attention, and make greater exertions to please; and comfort yourself that you are growing older and more competent every day.

Some customers have a notion that none but the principal can do justice to them; or, at least, that they shall gain some advantage by being served at his hands; and so, without meaning to be rude or ill-natured, they repel the services of an apprentice or assistant. I will give you an instance of this, and show you how it was met. A young man was standing behind his employer's counter when a lady entered, looked round, and inquired for Mr. A. "He is not at home, madam," was the reply; "but, perhaps, I can have the pleasure of supplying his place." "Oh no," was the somewhat ungracious answer, "I do not think you can serve me with what I want. Mr. A. always serves *me* himself." The young man again expressed his regret that Mr. A. was from home, and still offered to do his best in his employer's absence to please the difficult customer. At last she was persuaded to take a seat at the counter; and, with great unwillingness and reserve, mentioned a few trifling articles which she required. While serving her with these, the young man exerted all his powers of pleasing, though perhaps inwardly vexed with the very sullen demeanour of his customer. After a great deal of fault-finding and grumbling, she began to relax, became more communicative, bought one article after another with less suspicion, and at length went through her whole and long list of intended purchases, and left the shop in high good humour. After this, whenever she visited the shop, she

made a point of being served by this young man, and was as vexed when disappointed of this as she had previously been on the opposite account; and when, in course of events, he became part proprietor of the business, on the retirement of his employer, she was for years one of his best and most constant customers, and recommended his shop to all her acquaintances. In relating this circumstance afterwards, the young man said, "I was, on that first occasion, more than once on the point of giving way to bad temper; but my better sense prevailed."

But it often happens that the temper of a tradesman is severely tried by his customers, when they are far from intending to be troublesome or provoking; but are only exercising their natural indecision and aptitude at trifling. They set no value themselves upon time, and think (if they think about it) that it is as valueless to others: and all the while the tradesman is fretting to know how much of this precious commodity is being wasted, and is heartily wishing to be rid of such unprofitable business connexions. The tradesman, however, must take things as he finds them, and so must his apprentice; and if the time thus apparently wasted be spent in controlling and regulating his temper, it will, after all, *not* be wasted, but prove to have been turned to profitable account.

Well, the sum and substance of all I have said, is—"Keep your temper under control, under all kinds of provocations." Let me now add, that you are bound to do so on two accounts.

1. As a matter of *policy*. It is next to impossible that any advantage can arise to a tradesman

by showing resentment, however just, towards his customers. On the contrary, he must expect to be injured by it. Every person in the world has some influence; and in nothing much more than in giving a good or bad impression of a shop or a shopkeeper. And if a tradesman lose his temper or patience in any one instance, he may, as the natural consequence, calculate upon losing not only the single customer who succeeded in irritating him, but several others besides. True, as an apprentice, this would not immediately affect *you*; but this very consideration furnishes a powerful reason why you should set a guard over your heart and tongue. Fidelity to your master demands that you should always preserve a character for good temper.

Remember, too, that “a soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger,” Prov. xv. 1. Many a rough and overbearing customer has been brought round to civility, if not to absolute suavity, by the imperturbable good temper of an apprentice. You will doubtless have opportunities enough of trying this experiment; and I have no doubt you will succeed, if you set to work the right way.

And then, the only way to secure any reasonable degree of comfort in this bustling, wrangling world, is to exercise thorough and constant good temper. A youth who is hot and hasty in disposition, and uses no means of correcting his infirmity, is sure to have plenty of work to do—plenty of ill-will and enmity to grapple with—plenty of insults, or supposed insults, to resent. On the other hand, a good-tempered youth escapes at least half these inconveniences, and cares nothing about the

other half. Have you never heard it said at school, "There's no fun in trying to tease such an one, for he wont be teased:" and, consequently, when the fun ceases, the attempt is given up.

2. Keep your temper, as a matter of *principle*. Remember that the gospel, which is the Christian's avowed rule of conduct, breathes throughout a spirit of benevolence, forbearance, and good will, which is entirely incompatible with the exhibition of resentment or ill temper. "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same," Luke vi. 32, 33. Apply this principle to the exercise of good temper in return for bad, and act upon it; and you will do well. And then, think of Him, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again," and thus set us an example, that we should follow his steps, 1 Pet. ii. 23, 24. Remember, too, that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness: against such there is no law," Gal. v. 22, 23.

I have, throughout this letter, taken it for granted that you really *must* be severely tried and roughly provoked by the bad tempers of others, before your own patience can be in danger of giving way; and I do sincerely hope that this is not assuming too much in your favour. If it be wrong under *any* circumstance to give way to anger and bad temper, how much is the sin increased when this disposition is in any case indulged without cause! And if an occasional inequality of temper produces unhappiness to its possessor, how miserable must he be whose temper is never

at rest; but is like the troubled sea—continually “casting up mire and dirt!” I can think of no human character more truly pitiable, than that of a thoroughly bad-tempered and violent man. Already, a hundred times over, he is a murderer in his heart, Matt. xv. 19; 1 John iii. 15: and temptation and opportunity only are wanting to make him a murderer in deed. It is certain, that though evil qualities are indigenous to the human heart, they do not at once attain to a full growth; and it is equally certain, that the most ill-tempered man in the world would never have arrived at that unhappy pre-eminence, if the first emotions of impatience under provocation had been nipped in the bud.

I have alluded principally, in this letter, to your master's customers; but the same considerations which recommend constant good temper towards them, will, in some degree or other, apply to your intercourse with every body around you. A bad-tempered apprentice or assistant is a complete nuisance in any shop, and will be justly treated as such; while a good-tempered youth will as certainly be appreciated and esteemed for that very thing. I believe that you will try to merit such a character.

LETTER XX.

SABBATH OCCUPATIONS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

MANY months have passed away since you left home; but you may be sure that you are not forgotten there, and that you are not unfrequently the subject of conversation. Last Sunday, I spent an hour or two in the evening with your father and mother. We went together to the house of God; and on our return we assembled in the parlour which you know so well. I am sure you can fancy us in our several places and employments: your father in his accustomed place by the fireside; your mother at the table, hearing your little brother read his Scripture lesson; your sister seated by her father's knees; and your uncle on the opposite side of the fire. And you will be at no loss to picture the scene, when, at the close of the evening, your father read from the family Bible the chapter from which the evening text had been taken, and afterwards offered up solemn prayer for the blessing of God—"even life for evermore"—on the whole family. I need scarcely say that the dear boy, now so far from his father's house, and perhaps exposed to temptation, so far from his father's eye, was especially commended to our gracious heavenly Father. Nor will you be surprised

that, after rising from our knees, your affectionate mother said, "I wonder what Charles is doing now, and how he has been employed to-day."

With this expression of maternal anxiety fresh in my memory, what subject can I better adopt for this letter than *sabbath occupations*?

I do not know any time in which a youth feels more sensibly the difference between home and abroad, than the sabbath. On other days, his mind is occupied—he has no time to draw comparisons: and, besides, he knows that he has entered on a new kind of life, and he expects on those days all the difference that he finds. But not so on the sabbath. He looks for the same enjoyments, the same intercourse, the same occupations, and—it may be—the same restraints; but he looks in vain. He finds himself alone. I believe that, very often, the full sense of his loneliness is not felt by a youth from home until the first Sunday evening after leaving his father's house. With this conviction, I should have touched upon this subject before, if I had not known that you are happy in having a master who cares for your spiritual as well as your temporal improvement, and who wishes, not indeed that you should "forget your own people and your father's house," but that you should have no cause to remember them by way of painful contrast. After all, however, I dare say that you often turn wistful thoughts homewards at the dawn of the sabbath; and that your thoughts linger there to its very close. And let it be so, dear Charles. I should be sorry to think that it were otherwise. I am persuaded that the remembrance of a youthful sabbath home—the orderly walk to the house of God,

the happy fireside, the religious conversation, the family Bible—have preserved many a young man from the snares of the tempter; have withheld him from running into the same excess of riot on the sabbath day into which others have run; have drawn him—perhaps almost in spite of himself—to the sanctuary; have forced reflections upon his mind which he would have been glad to banish; and, in the end, have been instrumental in saving his soul. Never, then, even attempt to forget your sabbath days at home.

I have alluded to the anxiety which your master probably feels to give you the advantages of home on the Lord's day; but I have no doubt, that he would be one of the readiest to acknowledge that, in this particular, above all others, there are difficulties which cannot be altogether obviated; at any rate, without your own cordial co-operation. He knows that the same bonds which sit lightly—so lightly as hardly to be felt—when borne with filial affection, become galling when imposed by a stranger's hand; and that a father's eye, a father's voice, and a father's influence, are at this time, more than any other, needed to guide, counsel, and protect. Watchful and conscientious, therefore, as a master may be, he cannot, without a degree of harshness which would at once counteract his efforts, prevent the exercise of greater liberty of action than would probably be looked for by a youth at home. It is possible that this increased liberty may prove an advantage rather than a disadvantage to you. It *will be* an advantage, if it leads you to reflection; if it leads you to think rightly of your own actual responsibility; if it induces you to follow, for their own sake, those

ways which, without reflection and as a matter of course, you would have followed in your father's house ; if, in a word, it should induce you, under a sense of your own weakness, ignorance, and consequent danger, to cry unto God, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth." Should this be the case, dear Charles—and oh that it may be so !—you will have no cause to regret your absence from a beloved home, even on a sabbath day.

But, on the other hand, there is danger that a feeling of freedom from restraint may involve a departure from some, at least, of the good old ways of sabbath consecration and occupation. Perhaps, already, you have in some measure exulted in your liberty, and made the leisure of the sabbath too much subservient to your own ways, your own pleasures, and your own words, Isa. lviii. 13. If so, let me entreat you to pause and reflect. "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls," Jer. vi. 16.

It would be very difficult to trace the almost imperceptible steps, by which many young men depart from the profitable observance of the Lord's day, until they arrive at a total disregard of its claims. But it may be useful to you for me to endeavour to do so ; and perhaps it can be best done by turning back my memory to past scenes and old companions.

You have heard me speak of Henry P. ; and his history will furnish a salutary warning.

The parents of Henry were esteemed pious, and, I have no reason to doubt, endeavoured to train

up their children in the fear of God, and in reverence to his word and his sabbaths. There was certainly nothing in the general conduct of Henry, when I first became acquainted with him, that indicated the contrary: he was regular and attentive in the house of God, and moral in his deportment; and hopes were entertained by many, that in him the saying would be exemplified, "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God," Psa. xcii. 13.

It is not for me to say exactly what was the first backward step: probably, Henry himself would not be able to point it out, were he disposed to do so. It is difficult to ascertain the precise point where health of body terminates and disease commences: it is so in many other things: it was so in this. The first unpromising sign in my young acquaintance, was an increasing habit of late attendance at the house of God: sometimes he arrived many minutes after the service commenced; then he frequently deferred his appearance until the prayers were over, and when he did arrive, seemed heated with over-exertion; then, after a short time, he became altogether irregular in his attendance, frequently absenting himself for many Sundays in succession. I was at that time sufficiently intimate with him to ask the reason of this irregularity; and he told me that he had lately commenced a practice of taking a walk between breakfast time and that of public service; and that he had sometimes walked so far as to be hurried in returning, and after all arrived too late; and that, occasionally, tempted by the

beauty of the day, he had kept out the whole of the morning, to enjoy the beauties of nature and breathe the fresh country air, which he could not enjoy on other days. He further justified himself in the practice, by saying that he had nothing to occupy his time, and no facilities for reading quietly at that time of day, either in his own chamber or in his master's parlour. He said, also, that he always took out with him some religious book ; and that he made up for his morning irregularity, by scrupulously attending both the afternoon and evening services.

In the course of a little time, however, he found that his morning walks fatigued him so much, that he was glad of an afternoon's quiet in his own chamber : sometimes, to sleep off the effects of his exertion ; and at others, to write home to his friends. At first leaving home, he had abstained from letter writing on Sundays ; but now he never thought of writing a letter, whatever might be its subject, at any other time. But, to show that there was a consciousness that this was not quite right, his letters were very seldom dated on the day they were written ; but generally a day earlier or later. About this time, too, he began to pay Sunday visits to one or two families with whom he was acquainted, and who were considered as not being over-strict in their observance of the sabbath, or " righteous over-much," as he learned to express it.

The next falling off in Henry's outward regard for the sabbath, was observable in the companions of his walks. Formerly, he had taken them alone ; but he began to find that solitude was not always agreeable, and he preferred to it even the

society of young men who were notoriously gay, and, to say the least, indifferent to religion. It is true, he did not altogether give up *occasional* attendance at the house of God; but it became more and more irregular, and far between.

After a time, Henry's name was frequently mentioned in connexion with Sunday bathing and boating parties, in summer; and skating parties, in winter: the house of God was entirely forsaken; and he was rarely to be met with in his master's house from breakfast time till late in the evening. Perhaps you may ask how he was allowed to proceed thus far without his master's notice. I believe he did not altogether escape rebuke; but there were two or three things that unhappily gave him greater facilities than would fall to the lot of many apprentices. His master, though professedly a religious man, did not think himself called upon to regulate his household according to the word of God; and he also held what he called *liberal* opinions as to the obligations of the sabbath. Then, Henry had from the first, and at the request of his father, attended a different place of worship from that of his master; so that much of his irregularity was never known. And, lastly, the master knew that his apprentice had a will of his own, and he did not choose to encounter the trouble of controlling the actions of a young man who would soon be freed from his guardianship—and that, moreover, on a point to which he himself did not attach much importance.

It would take up too much time to notice every particular in which Henry, at length, violated the sanctity of the holy day. At the time he had completed his term of apprenticeship, he had not

entered a place of worship for more than two years ; and, except when prevented by bad weather, had seldom passed an hour of the day in his master's house. Frequently, he returned to it at such a late hour as to create altercations between his master and himself ; and, more than once, it was too evident that he was in a state bordering at least upon intoxication. His former companions—those with whom he had “walked to the house of God in company”—had, of course, been long discarded, or had discarded him ; and the dissolute and profane were become his delight. He had entered deeply into the spirit of scepticism. Having first *walked* “in the counsel of the ungodly,” then “*stood* in the way of sinners,” at last he *sat* “in the seat of the scornful,” Psa. i. 1.

After leaving his master, Henry obtained a situation in London, when he greedily availed himself of increased facilities of mis-spending his sabbaths. Tea-gardens, steam-boat excursions, private concerts, and country jaunts, at once dissipated his time and consumed his salary : and, to destroy all remaining checks of conscience, which had perhaps hitherto too much interrupted his repose of mind, he embraced the sentiments of a notorious infidel ; and a professed infidel, Henry continues to the present day. As far as regards worldly success, I believe he has prospered. He was clever in his business, and captivating in his manners : he married a young lady with considerable property, whom he met at a Sunday party ; and he has hitherto succeeded in trade. But worldly prosperity is no criterion, either of God's blessing or even of temporal happiness. These are “the ungodly, who prosper in the world ;

they increase in riches," *Psa. lxxiii. 12*; who seem to flourish as the green bay tree, *Psa. xxxvii. 35*; but equally true is it of all such, that "the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked," *Prov. iii. 33*; and that "the way of peace have they not known," *Rom. iii. 17*.

And now, as a fitting appendix to this sketch, allow me to urge you, by every thing which you hold dear in relation to your soul and eternity, to "keep holy the sabbath day." Do not listen to the insidious arguments of any who may try to persuade you, that the obligation to observe the sabbath has ceased with the ancient Jewish dispensation. I know that this argument is urged, and sometimes with effect, upon the young and unwary. But should you ever be thus attacked, tell your tempter that the sabbath was instituted at the creation—that, even if the letter of the law *be* done away, the spirit still remains in all its force—that you consider it one of the greatest proofs of the benignity and love of God towards man, that he should have condescended to institute an often-recurring day of rest from labour—that one day in seven is but a small portion of time to dedicate to his worship, whose we are, and whom we ought to serve—and that, so far from counting the services of the sabbath burdensome and fatiguing, they are to you "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable," *Isa. lviii. 13*.

It is not for me, dear Charles, to lay down any precise rules for the filling up of your time on the Lord's day. Much must depend upon circumstances. But I may venture on some general recommendations, which will be adapted to any circumstances in which you are or may be placed.

1. Do not make the leisure of the sabbath an occasion or excuse for sloth. I have known many young men who were early risers on every other day in the week, very much given to late rising on Sundays—never making their appearance until called to breakfast; and often disarranging the family by keeping the breakfast waiting for them. Avoid this. Make it a permanent rule to rise at least as early on this morning as on any other. It cannot surely be otherwise than offensive to your Master in heaven, that on *his* day you should grudge that time and exertion to *his* service, which on other days you willingly yield to the service of your master on earth.

2. Be conscientiously punctual in your attendance on the public worship of God; “not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is,” Heb. x. 25. Remember, that “faith cometh by hearing,” Rom. x. 17; and that it is only by a sincere regard to the appointed means of grace, that the grace of God can be hoped for. Let me add, too, another direction: “Take heed how you hear,” Luke viii. 18, and “what you hear,” Mark iv. 24. Be prayerful and earnest *when* you go to the house of God, and be careful *where* you go. Do not mistake me here. I mean plainly this—Go where the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in all its fulness and freeness—that gospel which is summed up and contained in the words of the Saviour, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” John iii. 16. As far as you have liberty of choice at present, exercise it with a decided reference to

this prime characteristic, rather than to any minor points ; and, when altogether freed from control, let this still be your first consideration in seeking or in fixing yourself in a sabbath home.

3. Devote some part of the sabbath to reading the Scriptures, secret prayer, meditation, and self-examination. Without these, the religion of the heart cannot flourish. There can be no soul-prosperity, unless the word of God be our delight—no communion with God, unless we seek it in his own appointed way—no certainty of an interest in the Saviour, unless we examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

These are all sabbath occupations, which *must not* be neglected if we would enjoy religion. There are other matters which may or may not be duties, according to the circumstances in which we are placed. It is a scriptural maxim of universal application, that “no man liveth to himself;” and it is equally true that no man ought to live to himself if he could. You have been blessed with advantages which many of your fellow creatures greatly need—the advantages of early education : and you ought, as far as lies in your power, to supply their want out of your abundance. Is there no Sunday school in which you might be usefully employed ? no tract society in which you might become a distributor ? I leave these questions to your consideration. It may be, that some peculiarities in your situation may prevent your entering into these plans of usefulness, although you may feel desirous of doing so. Of this, you can judge for yourself better than I can possibly judge for you. Take, however, one caution, affectionately but strenuously

urged—Do not suffer any plan of active usefulness to infringe upon or displace your own positive duties to yourself and your God. It is possible—it is much to be feared—that personal activity in the cause of God, may sometimes usurp the place of personal consecration and devotedness to him. It will be an awful thing at the last day, to hear the Judge of the secrets of the heart declare, to some who would plead their outward exertions in his service—"I never knew you," Matt. vii. 23. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," Matt. xxiii. 23.

I cannot close this letter without entreating you, as you value eternal happiness—ay, and temporal happiness too—never to violate the duties of the sabbath. Your present situation certainly prevents much of the danger to which some are exposed, but you will not always have the eye of a conscientious master upon you; and even while you have, increasing years will diminish your present wholesome restraints, and leave you more at liberty to act for yourself. Never, then, be persuaded to join a Sunday pleasure party—to visit a Sunday tea garden—to enter a Sunday concert room. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not," Prov. i. 10. "Destruction and misery are in their ways," Rom. iii. 16. Let this be your firm resolve, your deliberate choice, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," Psa. lxxxiv. 10. With Moses, choose rather (if need be) "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. xi. 25.

But what shall I say of Sunday walks—Sunday letter writing—and Sunday visiting? Each of these *may*, in particular cases, be not only harmless but profitable; but they are far more likely to be very injurious. In every case, be fully persuaded in your own mind that they will be profitable; and always exercise vigilant caution. And, if a single doubt exists, give self-denial the advantage of that doubt. It will be safer to do so. If you were walking near a precipice, you would not be anxious to choose your path by the very edge, and calculate to an inch how close you could venture without losing your balance and falling over. You would rather—and especially if the ground were slippery—shrink back as far from it as the nature of the path would allow. Apply this, my dear Charles, to the subject of sabbath occupations, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

LETTER XXI.

DEVOTIONAL HABITS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

INTIMATELY connected with the object of my last letter, is the habit of private devotion. It is hardly possible to imagine that any individual, who conscientiously regards the Lord's day and devotes it to its proper purposes, can at the same time be altogether unmindful of closet duties. And yet, as each duty has its peculiar incentives and pleasure, so it has likewise its peculiar hinderances and difficulties ; and, for this reason, I mention each subject separately.

In entering on this subject, I must take something for granted. I shall suppose that you really feel the importance of "drawing nigh unto God;" that you earnestly desire to do so in accordance with the word of God ; and that you enter into the meaning of the Saviour's declaration, that "God is a Spirit : and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 24. Without such convictions, dear Charles, the form of prayer is but a solemn mockery ; it is "bodily exercise" which "profiteth little," 1 Tim. iv. 8. It is vain for us to draw near to God with the mouth, and honour him with the lip, while the heart is removed far from

him, Isa. xxix. 13. I will now adduce some reasons why you should not be discouraged in the exercise of this solemn duty; why you should not lose this inestimable privilege.

You *will* meet with discouragements. This is certain. There never yet, perhaps, lived a Christian who could at all times, with equal facility, shake off the encumbrances of the world while entering into his closet to hold communion with his God and Saviour; who did not, at some period of his history, feel tempted to restrain prayer before God; and who has not had occasion, again and again, to repeat the complaint—

“ How *many* hinderances we meet,
In coming to a mercy-seat ! ”

I will mention one or two of the hinderances which may arise out of the circumstances in which you are placed.

You may probably sometimes feel the want of a place suitable for retirement. You cannot “ enter into your closet ” *alone*. When you retire to your chamber at night, it is not solitary retirement. You have companions there, and, it may be, companions who, neglecting the duty of prayer themselves, may be supposed to look with wonder and scorn upon your devotions, and perhaps (though this will be found a case of rare occurrence) endeavour to interrupt and distract your mind while thus engaged. I readily acknowledge that this is trying; but it cannot form a valid excuse for the neglect of prayer; indeed, it rather furnishes an additional inducement to perseverance in it. Without obtruding your religious exercises upon others, or acting on the principle

which the Redeemer so expressly condemns—that of loving to pray in the synagogues or in the corners of the streets, to be seen of men, Matt. vi. 5; it is incumbent on you to show that you are not ashamed of religion, nor of any of its requirements; but that, if need be, you are willing to suffer shame for the name of Christ, Acts v. 41. Bear in mind the example of Daniel, who, though exposed not only to obloquy, but to certain and imminent danger, by stedfastly persevering in prayer and supplication to his God, went into his chamber, and prayed and gave thanks to God as aforetime, Dan. vi. 10. Who can tell that the same stedfastness on your part, combined (mark this) with courtesy of demeanour and unimpeachable diligence and fidelity in the business of life, may “convince the gainsayers,” Tit. i. 9, and lead them to consideration, and, perhaps, win a soul to Christ. It will assuredly command respect towards yourself.

Then, I can very well believe that bodily fatigue may sometimes be a hinderance to secret prayer; or, at least, to regularity in your approach to the mercy-seat. There are few Christians engaged in active pursuits in life, who have not often been so overcome with bodily languor when retired to their chambers, as to feel even prayer to be an exertion almost beyond their physical powers; and who have, it may be in the very act of devotion, lost all consciousness of the duty in which they were engaged, and have at length risen from their knees overwhelmed with confusion at the thought that they “could not watch for one hour”—nay, even for a small portion of an hour. Like the weary disciples in

the garden of Gethsemane, "their eyes were heavy," and they had fallen asleep, Mark xiv. 40. What a mercy it is, dear Charles, that "we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," Heb. iv. 15, and who knows when the spirit is willing, though the flesh be weak, Mark xiv. 38. Still, be watchful; rouse yourself, for a few moments, from your lassitude, and approach the footstool of your gracious Saviour, with the full persuasion that he is able to do for you exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think, Eph. iii. 20.

The mind, like the fool's eye, too often wanders to the ends of the earth, but can with difficulty be raised above it; and any thing rather than prayer will engage its attention. Alas, that prayer should ever be "a task and a burden," rather than the highest enjoyment and delight. This is too often the case: but must we give way to such a feeling? No, rather let it furnish at once a motive and a plea; and if no other words can find utterance, let this be your petition and request—"Lord, teach me to pray."

Allow one other admonition here. Never let family prayer usurp the place of private devotion. If it be, as I trust it is, your happiness to live in a family where God is remembered and worshipped morning and evening, this is not a reason why you should neglect the more private devotions of the chamber. Rather let it be an incentive to your perseverance; and let it be your care to bring your mind at the family altar into that devotional state which will be favourable to drawing near to God in secret. Happy is that house in which God is socially worshipped;

but culpable is that member of the family who satisfies himself that the duty of devotion begins and ends in family prayer.

Is it necessary that I should put you in remembrance of the importance and necessity of prayer; or remind you of the mercies which you daily need, and for which prayer and praise ought daily to be expressed? I need surely only remind you that you are guilty, and need pardon; polluted, and need cleansing; weak, and need assistance; ignorant, and need wisdom: that you are entirely dependent on the providence of God for health, strength, and reason; that you are exposed to the snares of the world and of Satan, and that it is yours to ask for protection and deliverance. In short, that as all you receive must come from God, so it is your blessed privilege to be permitted in all things, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known your requests unto him, Phil. iv. 6.

I have before now recommended to you the reading of the Scriptures in connexion with private devotion. Do not neglect the Bible. Make it your closet companion, and read it with prayer: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law," Psal. cxix. 18.

I have referred to devotional habits, as finding exercise in the retirement of the chamber at the close of the day. But let your determination also be, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up," Psal. v. 3. And neither with morning nor evening devotions let the habit expire. Rather, be it your earnest desire to "be in the fear of the Lord all the day long," Prov.

xxiii. 17 ; and though necessarily debarred from retirement for prayer, let the spirit of prayer go with you into all the business of life.

But I must not forget, dear Charles, that throughout this letter I have been writing on a supposition ; nor can I close it without reminding you, that the devotional habit I have endeavoured to recommend can only be exercised by a heart at peace with God, through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless this be the case, there may indeed be “ a form of godliness,” but there will be no “ power ” of godliness. Naturally averse to God, the heart will not be excited to one truly devotional feeling, until it be influenced by the Spirit of Divine grace. There is such a thing as a religion of mere rites and duties ; but it is a religion that touches not the heart, and tends to deceive and ruin the soul. If, then, you have not hitherto obtained that pardon and peace which flow from the cross ; that “ repentance which needeth not to be repented of ; ” and that hatred to sin which uniformly accompanies salvation ; let it be your first object to obtain them. Rest not, oh, rest not, till you have fled for refuge to lay hold of the only hope set before you in the gospel ; and take encouragement to do so from the testimony concerning the crucified Jesus, that, “ Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins,” Acts v. 31.

LETTER XXII.

FELLOW APPRENTICES AND ASSISTANTS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

IN shops where several young men are employed, it often happens that much trouble arises from their disagreements; and sometimes the greatest drawback to happiness, in the situation of a junior apprentice especially, is to be found in his subjection to the caprice of older apprentices and assistants. There is too great a proneness in human nature, when "dressed in a little brief authority," to exert that authority to the utmost; and unreasonable requirements, harsh language, and sometimes systematic tyranny, make the lot of the apprentice very grievous, when the protecting power of the legitimate master is asleep or away. I do not say this to make you fancy that you are exposed to evils which, probably in your case, have no existence; and still less to stir you up to rebellion against the lawful and beneficial control which greater experience and advanced years ought to give: but that you may be put into a way of counteracting any disposition in yourself to insubordination, and of exercising that discretion, and cultivating that kindly spirit, which will enable you to live peaceably with all.

It is not always that the blame of unseemly

contentions rests with the older party. I have known many instances in which lads, of what is called a high spirit—in other words, a proud, and self-sufficient, and unmanageable spirit—have carried confusion and disorder with them wherever they have gone. They have disdained to be taught; exulted in setting at nought all counsel and reproof; rebelled against the authority even of a master; and treated with contempt the mildest requests of those to whom superior knowledge, longer standing, and greater responsibility have given a claim to respect and obedience. Such youths as these have no just cause to complain of being uncomfortable or unhappy—it is the natural consequence of their misconduct; nor of being disliked and roughly used—it is the fruit of their own doings. The probable end of such will be ignorance, disappointment, lasting discontent, and disgrace.

There are others, however, who, without being indisposed to submit to control, have formed a wrong estimate of the nature of their station. They have left school with the false notion that now they are *free*—not tied down to a dull routine of duties, nor subject to the restraints of tuition. The time of leaving school and becoming an apprentice has been looked forward to with a sort of joyful exultation, as the commencement of an era of happy independence. Alas, they have exulted too soon. They begin to find that their boasted independence is as far, or farther, off than ever; that their duties are becoming more onerous, and their restraints more galling; and, worse than all, that instead of one master, they are subject to the control, and per-

haps the caprices, of some who make but little allowance for the feelings of the young. But of such, however miserable they may fancy themselves for a while, there is no reason to despair. They will soon become inured to the difficulties of their situation, or surmount them, and learn to make the best of every thing and every body around.

This, then, is one side of the subject: but there is another view to be taken of it. After a while, the young apprentice becomes an old apprentice or an assistant; and, supposing him to be such a one as I first described, he becomes imperious and exacting, just in proportion as he formerly had been impatient and uncontrollable; and woe to the boy who is doomed to feel the weight of his petty tyranny. I have seen such characters in both circumstances—have seen the misery that has been inflicted on a really well-disposed lad, by the domineering manner, unreasonable requirements, blustering threatenings, and unmanly blows, of one who a few years before spurned at every attempt at mild and judicious government, and followed no will but his own. And I have heard the victim of his unbridled passions declare, that, if certain of a fortune at the end of the term, he would not live over again the past years of thralldom. If it should be said here, “It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth,” I would answer, “Yes, but not the yoke of slavery,” which describes most nearly the misery of such a condition.

“But,” a stranger might ask, “is this treatment allowed by the master?” No; generally

speaking, the master knows nothing about it. There are multitudes of opportunities for it away from the master's eye. In his presence it is carefully concealed; and the young apprentice has perhaps too much spirit to complain, or he may shrink from the disgrace of being a tale-bearer, or he may dread the vengeance of his tormentor. But enough of this: I hope I have been writing of what has been rather than what is. I believe that an improved system in houses of business has done much to remedy this evil. It is more the custom now than it used to be to distribute the business of a shop—whether larger or smaller—into suitable departments, thus giving to each of the employed his own peculiar duties. To a great extent this has done away with the “fag system.” It is to be hoped, too, that there are few such characters as the one I have described; and, especially, that you may never meet with such a one. Indeed, my main reason for referring to the subject is to show you the hatefulness of a tyrannical disposition, and to entreat you to cultivate those habits of subordination while you are young, which will materially prevent you from becoming an aggressor on the liberty and happiness of others when you are older.

In the first place, then, let me advise you to be obliging and kindly disposed to every body. Never think it a hardship to do any thing which will tend to lighten the labour or care of another, though it may add a little to your own. Let this rule be ever present and influential with you, “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ,” Gal. vi. 2.

Then, be respectful in your behaviour, not only to your master, but to all about you. It is a great mistake, to suppose that respect is either degrading to him who exercises it, or displeasing to him who receives it, though the parties may be on a level as regards age or station. It is undue familiarity which is degrading and offensive. Remember the lines of Cowper :

“The man who hails you ‘Tom or Jack,’
And proves by thumps upon your back
How he esteems your merit,
Is such a friend, that one had need
Be very much a friend indeed,
To pardon or to bear it.”

It is most likely that respectful behaviour on your part will meet with a kind and considerate return ; but should you occasionally be addressed in a manner somewhat repugnant to your own feelings, never mind it, but execute the commission, or attend to the demand, just as though they had been made in the softest tones and with the most winning smiles. This will be much better than adding more “grievous words,” which will be sure to “stir up anger ;” and, in the end, you will find that the haughty tone will be lowered, and the dictatorial style moderated.

Again, do not forget that your fellow apprentices, and the assistants in your master’s shop, are entitled in some measure to direct your movements ; and that it is your duty to regard their directions. And remember, too, that it is in their power to give you valuable instruction in your business, which will be lost to you, either if you think yourself above receiving

instruction from such a source, or if you are careless about obliging, in every reasonable way, those who would instruct you.

Lastly, in connexion with all these considerations, cultivate humility; that meekness and humility which are "in the sight of God of great price," and which will teach you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. This will save you from many a mortification which you would otherwise have to bear. "That will break a proud man's heart, which does not disturb a humble man's sleep."

After all, there may be times in which you really feel yourself aggrieved, and perhaps oppressed. In such a case, your only peaceable plan will be to refer the matter to the decision of your master. This course will in the end save much heart-burning and confusion. You had better do this once, than be perpetually wrangling about the right to command, and the obligation to obey; or in exercising your ingenuity, and injuring your temper and character, in acts of resistance to what you conceive to be unreasonable and oppressive.

Let me now pass on to the future, and suppose you to be no longer a *young* apprentice; but approaching the end of your term, or even to be past that era, and becoming an assistant; and that you have under your control a lad just come from home, and who feels, as you once felt, the dreariness of living among strangers, and the hardship of constant employment and confinement to a shop from morning to night. It was a very touching command given to the ancient Israelites, and repeated again and again:

“Thou shalt not oppress a stranger : for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt,” Exod. xxiii. 9. And though I do not mean to compare modern apprenticeship to the Egyptian bondage there referred to, yet the direction is still applicable, inasmuch as whatever you once felt of desolation, or susceptibility to unkindness, is felt now by him who is entering on the same path which you have already trodden. Be, then, kind, and tender, and forbearing. Cheer his spirits, and let him look up to you as a friend and counsellor, and not as a persecutor or unfeeling exactor. “Be pitiful, be courteous,” 1 Pet. iii. 8. Bear with his infirmities of temper, if he has any, and encourage him to perseverance and diligence, both by precept and example.

I must add a few words about your intercourse with fellow apprentices, considered as equals. It is to be hoped that the young men, with whom you are or may be thus connected, are in every respect pleasant and suitable companions, not only in the hours of business, but in those of recreation and leisure. Indeed, it will add very much to your enjoyment if you can make friends as well as companions of them—rendering and receiving mutual assistance in the business of the day, following the same intellectual pursuits, and, especially, taking sweet counsel together in the paths of piety. Many a pleasing history might be recorded of youths, who, led by the hand of Providence into the same family, have been made very useful in strengthening each other, and becoming fellow helpers in the ways of religion, in addition to those of worldly prosperity; and who have formed friendships in the days of fellow appren-

ticeship which have lasted through life with unspeakable advantage to both parties.

But do not forget that you are as liable to be influenced for evil as for good; and that, if your fellow apprentices are not in character and disposition what they ought to be, you are in danger of copying those very particulars in which they themselves need to be improved. Be very guarded, therefore, how you set up either the morals, opinions, or habits of others as a standard for your own. Remember, that imperfection is the common lot of all, and that it will be your wisdom to exercise discrimination, not only in forming friendships, but also in imitating your friends. Do not, because your fellow apprentice may have many redeeming traits of character, and much that renders him attractive—do not follow his example, when your heart and conscience condemn it, or even where it is doubtful. But, above all, do not “follow the multitude to do evil”—undisguised and flagrant evil. It is possible that you may be placed in circumstances where all around you are despisers of God and holiness. Should this be the case, be firm to your principles; let nothing tempt you, by an unguarded word or action, to weaken the barriers of purity and virtue, or to confound right with wrong. And that you may be preserved in your integrity, let your earnest supplication be, “Lead me in a plain path, because of those who overlook me.”

LETTER XXIII.

THE MASTER'S FAMILY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

VERY much of your domestic happiness, while an apprentice, will depend upon yourself. It is no uncommon thing to hear apprentices complain of their want of comfort in their master's family; but, generally, if the complaint were sifted, it would be found that the cause originated in their own extravagant expectations, or in their own misconduct. You will give me leave, then, to offer you a few cautions; which, if duly observed, will, I am convinced, tend to your advantage.

Leaving out of the question your master, who, though paramount in the shop, has perhaps little time or inclination to interfere with domestic affairs; and whom, moreover, you feel it your duty as a good and faithful apprentice to obey in all things—there are others towards whom you have duties to perform which are no less binding upon you.

At the head of these, of course, I place the mistress of the family. Your first duty towards her is evidently that of personal respect. This ought to be felt and shown, because both her station and her sex demand it. I should—and you would too—think very meanly of a young man who

would be guilty of intentional rudeness to his master's wife. But, without going so far as this, it is very possible to exhibit such an indifference to her known wishes, and, indeed, to the necessary amenities of social intercourse, as to give rise to continual heart-burnings and dissatisfaction. On the other hand, it is equally possible for an apprentice, by a constant desire to please and to be pleased, and by the constant practice of those little attentions and kindnesses which it is in the power of every one to show, and which constitute the charm of domestic intercourse, to insure a return of good-will, and an almost maternal interest in his welfare, the remembrance of which will last through life. I need not say which of these classes of feeling is in every respect the most desirable.

It will do no harm, if I mention a few little things which cannot be otherwise than annoying to the mistress of the house, and which yet, either from indifference or perverseness, are very often persisted in by the young apprentice—ay, and by older ones too.

On a wet or dirty day, if you should have occasion to walk out, it will be by no means pleasant for the marks of your dirty shoes to be traceable from the shop door at the bottom of the stairs, to the door of your own room at the upper part of the house, and through any room and passage in your progress. It will be more particularly disagreeable, if door mats are amply provided and conveniently placed for the very purpose of averting domestic strife in this particular. Neither will the good lady be pleased to see a pool of water in the lobby or hall, having its

source in your dripping umbrella, when you have been often requested to deposit such an article in a more convenient place for draining.

The mistress of a house does not generally like to see the hats, etc., of her husband's apprentices lying on chairs and tables where they have been carelessly thrown; nor does she think that the work of hanging them in their proper places belongs to her, though she may perhaps do it several times a day, for the sake of tidiness. She naturally argues, that the owners and wearers of these hats, etc., are the proper persons to take care of them.

A good housewife wishes to have every room in her house kept in a decent state; and she does not think it orderly for clothes, hats, boots, shoes, books, papers, music, and various other articles, to be scattered about every part of the room:—a heap of clothes here; a pile of books there; dirty shoes thrust under the bed; and so on. Unfortunately, many apprentices think differently; and from this difference of opinion arise many and grievous complaints on both sides. “I never knew such a slovenly boy as Frederic is,” says the lady; “his room is always in a litter: if I put it to rights one day, it is all wrong again the next.” “I wish they would let my things alone,” says Frederic, as he enters his bed-room at night; “they have been turning all my clothes into my trunk, and putting my books straight. What does it signify if I do leave them about? I hate this setting to rights.” I need not say which of these two parties has the best of the argument.

It is very offensive to a mistress when apprentices or young men are frequently and unnecessarily finding their way into the kitchen, interfering

with, and interrupting, the work of the servants, and very likely making mischief among them.

It is any thing but agreeable to a kind-hearted mistress of a family, to hear of the murmurings and complaints of apprentices and young men, relating to domestic matters, through the medium of servants. She justly thinks, if there be any cause of complaint, or any alteration wished for, in any particular under her management, that she is entitled to have the complaint or request made to herself, without the intervention of a third party.

I could very easily extend these remarks ; but, perhaps, I have already said enough ; and believe me, when I tell you, that attention to such apparently trifling particulars as these, will materially add to your comfort and respectability as an apprentice, and will not be without use in forming your character and habits for future life. Let me tell you, too, that the station of mistress of a tradesman's family—particularly where several young men are employed in the business—is attended with many trials of temper, which none but a good housewife can thoroughly enter into or understand. But it is the duty, and it ought to be the pleasure, of every apprentice, to avoid adding the weight of a single feather to the burden of household cares, which often press heavily upon her.

If there are children in the family, you have duties towards them. In all your intercourse, you are bound to set before them an example of good breeding, and especially of respect to their parents ; and it will be your wisdom to secure their attachment, by being ready at all times to oblige them to the extent of your ability.

The servants of the family have a right to expect from you due consideration ; but you ought not to treat them with familiarity. Do not make associates of them. If you have need of their services, let your communications be restricted to the particular matter in hand ; and, by all means, avoid conversation with them on the affairs of the business or the family. Make no complaint to them, and receive no complaints from them. This is the only way to insure their respect, to say nothing of your own ; and will do much to maintain peace in your master's family.

Let me, in conclusion, remind you, that in *all* the duties of life, whether apparently trifling (I say *apparently*, for no duties are *really* trifling) or important, you will have need of that "wisdom which is profitable to direct;" of that "wisdom which is from above," and which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, and full of good works." It is this alone which can effectually assist you in rendering to all their dues—"honour to whom honour, fear to whom fear." And you know where it is said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him," James i. 5.

LETTER XXIV.

PERSONAL HABITS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I LATELY spent an evening with a friend whom I very highly esteem, and who, added to a cultivated mind, has powers of conversation such as are possessed by but few; and yet, I am free to confess, that I was not sorry when the visit was over. The truth is, that he had so many disagreeable habits, that I could scarcely turn my attention to any thing besides them. For instance, he filled up every pause in the conversation with a sort of whispering whistle—sometimes breaking off in the middle of a note to answer or ask a question, or make a remark, and the next moment taking up again the interrupted whistle just as if nothing had happened, or as though he were thinking more about his tune than any thing else. Then, he kept up a sort of running accompaniment to the music of his lips, with a rapid tapping with his fingers' ends upon the table, varied occasionally by a vigorous stroke with the knuckles of his clenched fist. When tired of this, he commenced a piece of music, by beating the back of one of his hands with the fingers of the other. By and by, warming I suppose with his exertions, he caught hold of a chair, and tilting it on one leg upon the floor, he placed the

palm of his hand upon the opposite corner of the back, and made the piece of furniture revolve upon its axis with such rapidity, that I felt compelled, by the fear of a broken shin, to remove a few feet from such a dangerous vicinity. All this time, my friend's conversation was uninterrupted by these and several other vagaries; and I verily believe he himself was so unconscious of his peculiarities, that had he been charged, at the close of the evening, with whistling, beating time, twirling a chair, etc., he would have stoutly denied the imputation.

When I returned home, two things were forcibly impressed upon my mind. The first was, that it is a very great pity for young men to suffer themselves to contract peculiar and disagreeable personal habits: the second was, that it is a very silly thing to notice, and especially to be ruffled by, such habits in others.

As I thought partly for your benefit, I shall not apologize for reminding you that youth is the time in which habits, as well as character, are principally formed. It is too often the case, that young men—sometimes from a real, sometimes from an assumed, indifference to the opinions of others, and sometimes without thinking about the matter, and without being even aware of the fact—contract personal peculiarities which cling to them through life. Yes, through life; for when a habit is once formed, it is very difficult to abandon it. Let me tell you, too, that bad or unpleasant habits are more easily contracted than good or pleasant ones. Even though disagreeable habits may not in themselves be criminal, they are generally

accompanied by a very unamiable disregard to the feelings of others; and this *is* criminal.

It would be impossible to mention a tenth part of the bad habits, which are to be seen in daily intercourse with the world. Sometimes they are observable in strange and unnatural contortions of the countenance; sometimes in a sort of perpetual motion of the arms and legs, or hands and feet; sometimes in the speech and voice; and sometimes in very awkward and unpleasant modes of eating and drinking. As a general principle, let me urgently recommend you to avoid, in any particular, transgressing the known rules of society. If you allow yourself only once to do so, it is too likely to become a confirmed habit, and you will find that you cannot indulge in it without injury to yourself and injustice to others.

I must just add, that every disagreeable habit you contract is an impediment in the way of your future success in life. You will be sure to meet with people who will be fastidious enough to notice, and to be offended by, any transgression of good manners; and you will come into contact with many more, who, without being quite offended, will rather have to do with a young man or a tradesman whose general habits are pleasing, than with one who is continually practising some bad or awkward habit.

I hope you will not be quite tired of this subject—which, I confess, is not a very inviting one—for I have a few more words to add. However much you may strive to avoid bad habits yourself, do not suffer yourself to be annoyed by them in others. I have known some persons whose lives

have been made almost miserable by a nervous susceptibility to some peculiar habit or habits in those around them. Should you, then, ever feel irritated by such a cause, strive powerfully against the feeling, as you wish to pass with any degree of comfort through life. Make up your mind at once, never to annoy your neighbours by the practice of disagreeable habits, and never to be annoyed by any in which they may unfortunately indulge. Be this your rule—

“I’ll not willingly offend,
Nor be easily offended;
What’s amiss I’ll strive to mend,
And endure what can’t be mended.”

My next letter will treat of an entirely different subject; but let me, once for all, remind you, that not only will your success in life be considerably influenced by your attention to or neglect of little things, which, indeed, *seem* almost too unimportant to write about, or even think about; but that they have an equal tendency to exalt or degrade the Christian character, and even religion itself. It is a disgrace to a Christian if it can be said of him, “He may be a very good man for any thing we know; but he is a very disagreeable man: it is impossible to be in his company without being tormented by his bad habits.” On the contrary, it equally recommends religion, and him who professes it, when this principle of the apostle Paul, as to ministers, is adopted and carried out in common life, “Giving no offence in *any thing*, that the ministry be not blamed,” 2 Cor. vi. 3.

LETTER XXV.

COMPANIONS.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

It is not likely that your intercourse with young men of your own age and station has been, or will be, restricted to your fellow apprentices. Nor is it altogether desirable that it should. Man is pre-eminently a social being, and dependent upon others for much of his comfort and enjoyment; and he who, from peculiar temperament of mind or the force of circumstances, is shut out from the companionship of his fellows, is deprived of much true pleasure, and of many opportunities of doing good and getting good. I have no wish, therefore, to restrain your natural inclination to form acquaintances; but merely to regulate it: and, in doing this, I would rather furnish you with motives for the exercise of prudence than for the indulgence of suspicion. Prudence is proper and necessary at all times, and under all circumstances; but a suspicious temper is most unamiable. I was speaking, a few days ago, with a good man who had once been engaged in soliciting contributions towards some benevolent object; and an incident which he related will illustrate what I mean. In the course of his

visits, he called upon a person who, upon being informed of his object, and without taking the trouble of examining his credentials, met his application by saying, "How do I know that you are not an impostor?" Now, this was suspicion, and not prudence. He called upon many others, who examined into the credentials which were produced, and fully satisfied themselves of the correctness of his statement, and the claims of the charity which he advocated, before they contributed to it. This was prudence, and not suspicion. In precisely the same manner we ought to act in the choice of companions. We ought to examine their credentials—their character; but we ought not to take for granted that they are unworthy or dangerous, without investigation.

With these preliminary remarks, then, I will proceed to my subject—a prudent and judicious choice of companions.

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to remind you, how much depends upon your choice of companions; and yet this is a matter in which "line upon line, and precept upon precept," seems demanded. The fact is, that you cannot be too cautious—too prudent. Your reputation and your real character will, if not entirely, yet in a great measure, depend upon this choice. Common proverbs tell us, and tell us truly, that "Birds of a feather flock together;" that "A man is known by the company he keeps:" and Scripture teaches us, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed," Prov. xiii. 20. And if the chosen companions of a youth be found among the vulgar, the low-lived,

the dissipated, and the irreligious, he will soon resemble them.

What, then, are the qualifications for which you ought to look before you enter into the bonds of close companionship? I will briefly point out some of them.

1. It is desirable that your companions should be, at least, on a par with, if not superior to, yourself in mental cultivation and resources. A man in business would not think it expedient to enter into partnership with another whose capital was very inferior to his own; unless, indeed, this deficiency were made up by superior experience, talent, industry, or connexions. Just so you ought, in common prudence, to act. No good can be expected from a companionship between the well-informed and the totally ignorant. On the contrary, mischief will result: the one will gradually sink in intelligence, if not to the level, yet by far too near the level of the other. Mind, I am speaking of equal companionship. It is another thing, where a wish to impart benefit and instruction leads the young man of information and talent into the society of any who have received fewer advantages than himself; or where the young man whose education may have been neglected, but who wishes to improve, seeks the society of those who are farther advanced than himself. In either of these cases the object is praiseworthy; but, until it be in some measure accomplished, the parties may indeed stand to each other in the relation of teacher and pupil, but not in that of companions.

2. Not only should your chosen companions

have received somewhat equal mental advantages to your own, but they should also be able and willing to put them to good account. To refer again to the idea of a partnership: it would be one of a very unequal nature, though the nominal capital of each party were the same in amount, if that of only one of them were to be employed, while that of the other was locked up, or only used for purposes of personal gratification. So also with companionship. If *your* store of information only be used, while that of your companion is closely reserved in his own bosom, you might as well have no companion.

3. A still worse companion is he, who, not content with neglecting his mental powers and the advantages of early training, is at actual pains to misapply them. Alas, there are many such—many who, possessing good talents, do their utmost to pervert them; and who turn the blessing of education and mental culture into a curse. With such, let it be your great concern never to be found. Adopt the pious determination of the psalmist; “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person,” Psa. ci. 3, 4. “It happens,” writes Mr. Taylor, in his “Advice to the Teens;” “It happens, sometimes, that a dissipated companion shows his depravity at first glance. The rattle of one sort of serpent serves to give alarm, and puts the otherwise unwary on their guard. Now this is well. A youth must be dull indeed who cannot tell an openly wicked man. A single oath betrays him; one proposal to break the Lord’s day, in a

party of pleasure, evinces, beyond all sophistry, that religion is unknown; and if so, the inference is easily drawn. You can gain no good from one who has no good in him. Set this down as a rule; nor let brilliancy of talent, hospitality, or warmth of protestation, ever impose upon you. Those who fear not God do not regard man. He who openly breaks one commandment ought to be suspected of an inclination to disregard any other, should a temptation so to do come in his way. What should hinder him? He has no proper principle. Many have the name of being worthy, kind-hearted creatures, who, by that very circumstance, ought the more to be shunned, as the sins they indulge in seem, to a young mind, balanced by their good qualities. Vice, in all the deformity of profligacy, is not so dangerous, as not being so likely to allure, as that vice which appears in the garb of benevolence. It is Satan putting on the appearance of an angel of light. Ever recollect, 'sin is a reproach to any people;' nothing can make it honourable, or take from it its natural, unalienable quality of evil. You venture too much when you come into an atmosphere so contagious—venture the more from your previous distance from such society: as persons in high health, fresh from the country, are more apt to catch the small-pox, when they come in contact with the diseased."

4. Beware of sceptical companions. Do not flatter yourself that you are safe from the artifices of infidelity, or that your heart is as adamant against the shafts of ridicule, and that your principles are so strongly grounded and well

guarded as to preclude the necessity of caution. Nor ought you rashly to enter into such companionship as this, as the champion of virtue and revelation. Many a young man, in the ardour of his zeal—strong zeal, but not according to knowledge—has thus exposed his principles to imminent danger, and himself to almost certain moral contamination. Too ignorant to meet the argument, or to perceive the sophistry of the opponents of evangelical truth, or even to be aware to what their insinuations tend, the advocate has been silenced and confounded, and the irreligious emboldened by their easy victory over such a feeble antagonist.

After all that can be said, the conclusion of the whole matter will be this:—The only safe and profitable companions for you, will be *pious* companions. Mental culture may do much; respectability of character may do much; and propriety of manners may do much; but only in combination with true piety can they do every thing, to make frequent intercourse and close companionship truly desirable. It will be well, then, if you adopt the sentiment, and act upon it; “I am a companion of all them that fear thee”—“the excellent, in whom is all my delight,” Psa. cxix. 63; xvi. 3. And may it be your great concern to become a fit companion for them.

It is possible, with all the prudence you may exercise in the choice of companions, that you may be deceived, and find that you have made a wrong estimate of the worth of some whom you have chosen. In such a case, do not hesitate to discontinue the connexion. “A little courage”—I again quote from Mr. Taylor’s work;

“A little courage exerted, or a little suffering endured, at an early stage in the connexion, or at an early period of life, will suffice to extricate you from very dangerous circumstances. If you suffer the opportunity to slip, you may never recover it. More intimacy may give more ties to bind you; every fresh meeting adds a new rivet to your fetters. The sooner, therefore, they are snapped, the easier it is done, and the better for you.”

Will you permit another caution. Never let any companionship which you may form, interfere with, or jostle out, the active and positive duties of life. To spend even five minutes in conversation with an acquaintance or friend, when you ought to be engaged in your master's business, is a direct deviation from duty; and no good can be expected from any companion who can knowingly encourage you in it. Never allow the companions of your leisure hours to intrude themselves—for it is an intrusion—into your master's shop, for the sole purpose of holding conversation with you. It is nothing more nor less than robbing your master of so much time and attention that fairly belong to him, and not to yourself.

It is my fervent desire that religion may, as in all things else, guide you in your choice of companions, and that it may also sanctify and bless your intercourse.

LETTER XXVI.

FEMALE SOCIETY.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I SHALL not suppose that you are capable of that silly affectation—for it is nothing else—which thinks it manly to rail at the female sex in general, or to treat with rudeness or contempt any female, of whatever age or station. The youth who can systematically do this, proves himself as much beneath the objects of his stupid derision, as he pretends to believe they are beneath him; and he, of all others, is most likely to play the fool, or—more likely still—the knave, on the point to which, in particular, I am about to refer. But what *he* may do, just to amuse his idle hours, or to prove his superior cleverness, and without the most distant intention of redeeming his fragile promises, another, with more correct principles, may do in the simplicity of his heart, and with the utmost seriousness and honesty of intention. To speak out plainly, I refer to premature engagements—to those engagements which have matrimony in view. You smile, Charles; and I wish there were no need to warn a young man of eighteen, or thereabouts, against this false step; but there is no imprudence of more common occurrence than this; and, short of actual guilt, I do not

know any thing more likely to entail lasting inconvenience and unhappiness to him who falls into it: and, too often, guilt is included in the train of consequences which follows.

You are now arrived at an age in which the affections are ardent; the passions and hopes are alike strong, and caution is equally weak. Nor ought we to wish it to be otherwise. Who would desire to ingraft upon youth the chilliness and suspicions of age; to put old heads upon young shoulders, or old hearts into young bosoms? No good or wise man would desire it. No; to a certain extent we may be allowed to say, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth:" and yet, youth is a season for trial and probation as well as of joy. Happy is he, who, while enjoying the present, is not unmindful of the future; who ponders the path of his feet, that his ways may be established; who, before he begins to build, sits down calmly and counts the cost; and who learns and practises the important lesson, "Keep thy heart with all diligence," Prov. iv. 23.

In the situation in which a young apprentice is placed, he will probably become partially acquainted with many young females, and converse with them. Perhaps, too, he may be thrown into their society in the families which he occasionally visits; or there may probably be young ladies in his master's family. In either case, he is very likely to indulge himself in fancies which, if acted upon, will prove mischievous. A pretty face may attract his notice, or a few commonplace sentences, spoken in a

soft and winning tone, may lay hold upon his imagination ; and on this slight basis he may raise a superstructure of delicious but idle romance. Perhaps, after a while, the fancy cools, and the entangled one regains his liberty. It is, however, but for a little while. More powerful attractions renew the same tumultuous feelings ; and again they may subside ; but only to be again revived towards another object ; and, at length, the mind becomes so habituated to these excitements, that it cannot do without them.

Now, all this is very mischievous. It may be natural that a youth should be thus affected ; but the evil is, Charles, that nature is not a safe guide. Nature is short-sighted, and, what is worse, it is depraved. Let us see what is the mental condition of a youth who gives himself up to fond imaginings of this kind. He lives in an ideal world, adorned with fairy scenes, enriched with gorgeous colours, and brightened by a tenfold vivid sunshine. But it *is* an ideal world. The scenes will soon disappear, the colours will fade, and the false glare be exchanged, like the meteor's flash, for deeper gloom. But, while it lasts, the mind which should be actively engaged in seeking improvement and laying a solid foundation for future excellence, is absorbed in the idle occupation of erecting magnificent edifices, and contemplating them through the vista of future years. The commonplace duties of life become irksome ; and, worse than all, too often the duties of religion become uninteresting too. An idol is set up in the heart, and God is banished. Or if, as is sometimes the case, youthful piety *seems* to gather strength and vigour from this source, it is only a

false enthusiasm which is induced—an unreal fire which is kindled. “I thought I was worshipping God,” is the confession put into the mouth of one of his characters by a powerful writer, “but I feel now that I was only worshipping you.”

I have, however, been supposing that wisdom, or, more likely, accident, has in some degree prevailed; so far prevailed as to prevent the consummation of folly, against which I set my warning in the first part of this letter. Let us now suppose the young man proceeding a step further, and entering into an engagement, which is one of the most solemn and important in life. I say, let us suppose a young man of your own age—it is not a case of rare occurrence, Charles—carrying out the tumultuous wishes of his heart, inspiring reciprocal feelings, and contracting to marry, at some future day, the object of his present affections. It will then be a mercy if one or other of the following evils do not result.

The young people will be entirely unsuitable to each other. The choice was made without judgment, and the engagement without consideration. Each may be in the possession of qualities which would render them desirable partners for others; but which may be totally unsuitable as it regards this particular connexion. Early education, prejudices, habits, tastes, predilections, family connexions, modes of thinking and acting, and many other matters which are easily overlooked in the first ardour of early love, are, very likely, so adverse, one or all of them, as to render it next to impossible that minds so differently constituted should ever assimilate.

They will, perhaps, marry at too early an age,

or at an imprudent time. After the connexion is formed, and until its consummation be attained, all will be endured with impatience. The remaining years or months of apprenticeship will be looked upon as so much good time wasted from *the great business* of life; and as soon as they are over, every thing must be made to give way to it. And every thing does give way to it; but what is the result? The young man is too inexperienced to grapple with the difficulties of business; and the young wife is equally unfit to take her station at the head of a family, unaided by the wisdom and kindness of him who should be her counsellor as well as her friend and husband. A few years of embarrassment and increasing trouble ensue; and by the time the young tradesman would have been really competent to take upon himself the responsibilities of business and matrimony, he is thrown, with a helpless family, destitute upon the world.

If this evil be avoided by a later marriage, it will, in all probability, be a marriage with but little remaining affection. It is difficult to fix a time at which a young tradesman may prudently commence business on his own account. Very much must depend upon the circumstances in which he is placed. As a general rule, however, it may be assumed, that from the age of twenty-five to that of thirty is some where about the best time for him to do so; or rather, to think about doing it. Let us suppose, then, that a matrimonial engagement has been formed by a young man at the age of eighteen, and that at twenty-eight he is in circumstances to justify his marrying. Here are ten years of tedious courtship. But

during these ten years, the growing experience of both parties will expose the fallacy of their young hopes: they will see, what they ought at first to have seen, but did not, that the choice they have made was an unwise one; superior, or, at least, newer attractions will be presented to the one, and more eligible offers to the other; but they cannot, in honour, recede from their long-formed engagement. But the ardour of first affection will cool, and a feeling of regret for their past precipitancy will succeed to it. Perhaps those feelings will gain the ascendancy only in one bosom; and to the honour of females let it be said, that love, when once really felt, is more firm and enduring with them than with our sex. But even then, the evil is but half diminished; and when, at length, a sense of honour compels the young man to fulfil his engagement, and enter into the married life, it is at an actual sacrifice which he once little contemplated, and would have deemed impossible. Honour demands that he should yield his hand; but there is no heart with it.

But supposing the affections of each should have endured through absence and the changes of so long a course of years, another evil may have arisen. Alterations may have taken place in both. Habits, scarcely formed in the days of their first acquaintance with each other, may have at length become a second nature with each.

Possibly an alteration may have taken place in the religious character of one of the parties. They were once alike undecided for God or for the world. But now the case is altered; there

is an immense distance between them—a distance as great as that between darkness and light, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. Oh, how many instances might be adduced, in which a holy and devoted man has been united for life to a worldly-minded woman; or a pious, godly woman to a dissolute and unbelieving husband! And the union has been entered into with a full knowledge of the wide gulf that had been placed between their souls, and with a full recognition of the truth, that no concord can subsist between light and darkness, Christ and Belial, him that believeth and an infidel, 2 Cor. vi. 15. But there has been no honourable way of escape from the certain misery of such an unequal state.*

The evils glanced at in the three preceding paragraphs admit, in general, of but one alternative: the engagement may be abruptly broken off. But this is an alternative which no young man of right moral principles can coolly contemplate at the outset of his connexion; and none but the most powerful reasons and the most urgent necessity can ever justify it. And even then, an indelible blot will remain upon his character for life.

As a summary of all that I have written in this letter, allow me to urge upon you two serious cautions. First, make it your fixed determination to defer all matrimonial engagements until the time be, at least, fast approaching, in which you may prudently marry. If you follow this advice, you will probably have to struggle with many an

* In the case supposed, the change which has taken place should, however, be frankly stated, and efforts used, in dependence on God's grace, for the conversion of the irreligious party.

incipient passion; but you will be the better for it. For thousands who have had to lament having made too early a choice, it would be difficult to find one who has regretted having nipped a boyish attachment in the bud. The second caution is, Be guarded in all your intercourse with the sex: and, while you treat every female with that courtesy and kindness which, as females, they have a right to expect from you, never let your attentions towards any one be so marked as to give the individual herself, or any one else, reason to suppose that your affections are excited towards her. Many an ill-fated connexion has arisen from a simple misunderstanding of this nature.

In conclusion, do not think that I wish either to advise, or to advocate, a monastic seclusion from female society, or a stern moroseness when compelled to enter it. A singularity of this kind would, in itself, be ridiculous; it would deprive you of many an opportunity of improvement, and increase the danger which you would desire to shun. It is by the society of virtuous and intelligent females that a young man is guarded against the frivolous and the designing; and in which he learns to set a just estimate upon the value of character in himself.

Neither so far mistake me, as to suppose that my advice leads to perpetual celibacy. "Marriage is honourable in all;" it is the most natural and the most honourable state of man. Keep, then, matrimony in view. Look forward to it, not with the eye of imagination merely, but with that of reason; and let your present conduct be influenced by the future prospect. Picture to yourself, if you please, the object whom you could

love and cherish through life. We will say nothing of personal charms; but let us glance at those more enduring beauties which you would desire her to possess. Think of her as concentrating in her mind, that purity which shall blush at an indecent allusion, and shrink from a contact with vice—that gentleness of disposition which shall sympathize in all your cares, and whose reproofs shall be as an excellent oil—that simplicity of aim and singleness of heart which shall scorn the concealment of any action of life, and which shall preserve her integrity entire in all things concerning yourself—that firmness which shall prompt her, and that wisdom which shall enable her, to support you with her counsels, and encourage you in every honourable course—and, above all things, that religion which shall impart a brighter lustre, and give additional value, to every moral virtue. And then, let your constant aim be to become worthy of such a possession. Such an image as this constantly before you, would have a powerful influence upon your own character. It might assist you in the hour of temptation, and give vigour to your honourable exertions.

I say, therefore, keep matrimony in view. “The wish to marry,” says Mr. Taylor, in his “Advice to the Teens,” and in his sentiments I fully concur, “if it be prudently indulged, will always be connected with the attaining such an income as may fairly be proposed to the party and her friends. He who determines to live a single life, perhaps contracts his endeavours to his sole wants; or squanders without proper calculation, on the idea that he can always procure enough for himself. A bad system this, in every view. That

hope which aims at a partner beloved, a family, a fire-side, will become active beyond expectation ; will elicit talents, and urge them to their full energy ; will court the powerful assistance of economy ; and thus eventually will be attained an object, which had, at one time, appeared to be at an inaccessible distance."

Once more, I repeat, keep matrimony in view ; and let the anticipation of it encourage the formation of those home virtues which alone can make a wedded life a happy one ; but which, where they do exist, make it the happiest : let it stimulate in you habits of forethought and industry : let it influence you in the choice of future situations, and line of employment : let it direct you in the choice of associates and friends, such as you would not be compelled to disown in wedded life : let it curb your passions : and let it excite you to immediate decision of character on the subject of religion, prompting you to say, in sincerity of soul, "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*" All this, and more, a rational and well-controlled anticipation of matrimony is calculated to accomplish. And here, for the present, let the matter rest. Beyond this it will not be safe to advance. Wait for future days, increased experience, and more extended opportunities of observation, before you direct and fix your choice.

LETTER XXVII.

EXPIRATION OF APPRENTICESHIP.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I SUPPOSE I must add my mite of congratulation to the many you will receive on the near approach of the time of release from your apprenticeship. And I do congratulate you ; not so much, however, that your day of liberty is at hand ; as that, for several years, you have been enabled to raise for yourself and maintain a character for perseverance and good conduct, which will be eminently beneficial to you in future life. This, indeed, is well, and ought to call forth your gratitude to Him who has kept you, and who alone is still “able to keep you from falling.”

In looking back through any definite lapse of time, we have abundant materials for reflection. A single day bears with it innumerable mercies to be acknowledged with thankfulness, and, alas ! many follies to be deplored with deep penitence. At the close of a year, who can but be affected by the remembrance of the “goodness and mercy” which have followed through all its days, and can but exclaim,

“God of my life, to thee belong
The thankful heart, the grateful song ;
Touch’d by thy love, each tuneful chord
Resounds the goodness of the Lord.

“Thou hast preserved my fleeting breath,
And chased the gloomy shades of death;
The venom’d arrows vainly fly,
When God my great Deliverer’s nigh.”

But a still more lengthened space of time is now, with you, drawing to a close. One of the stages of life, and an important one—one that has had much to do in the formation and development of your character—is almost past. Let this, then, be a time with you for retrospection and self-examination.

What reason have you for *gratitude*! Can you not remember many critical periods in which, “had it not been for the Lord, who was on your side,” you would have been overpowered by temptation—would have run with the multitude to evil: but your “soul was delivered as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers, the snare was broken, and you escaped.” Have there not been other times of still greater apparent danger, in which your “feet were almost gone, your steps had well nigh slipped;” but “the mercy of the Lord held you up?” Psa. cxxiv. 1, 2; lxxiii. 2; xciv. 18.

What reasons for *humiliation*! Can you not call to mind much perverseness and rebellion against God; many vain and unholy thoughts and desires; some actual departures from the ways of truth and uprightness—the “paths of pleasantness and peace;” much neglect of early religious instruction; many good resolutions forgotten or broken; much time murdered; and many opportunities for usefulness unimproved? And will not your earnest cry be, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord.”

“Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee?”
“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions,” Psa. cxliii. 2; Job xl. 4; Psa. li. 1.

What motives for future *confidence* and *entire self-dedication*! “Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.” “Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name,” Psa. lxiii. 3, 4, 7.

Leaving these few thoughts, dear Charles, for your further amplification, I will proceed to one or two other subjects bearing upon your anticipated change of circumstances.

The first relates to your entering into business for yourself. I suppose that this is a great object of desire with most apprentices; and, indeed, the end proposed by an apprenticeship is, not the mere employment of present time — for, were this all, employment might be found at less expense to the friends of a youth; but rather, that he should be qualified for future success in the business which he is learning. But it is one thing to keep an ultimate object steadily in view, and another to make undue haste in its attainment. I have said, in a previous letter, that twenty-five is the earliest age at which a young man can commence business with a fair prospect of success: but, perhaps, I should not be wrong in saying, that comparatively few young men are fit to do so under the age of thirty. The judgment must be matured, the experience enlarged, the habits formed, and

experience acquired ; or the probability of success in trade will be very small. And the modicum of either of these qualities attained by a youth in his apprenticeship will be but as a drop in the bucket, compared with what is actually required. In fact, he has just commenced the necessary training. I know that *some* instances to the contrary may be adduced—of men who have entered into business at a very early age, and have met with almost unlooked-for success. But such instances are exceedingly rare, especially when contrasted with the numberless cases of failure from this cause. Let me recommend you, then, by all means to lay aside all thoughts of entering into business for some years to come ; and diligently to employ the intermediate time in laying up a store of experience, which is the surest means of future success. In doing this, you will but practically recognise the overruling providence of God, who “gives riches and wealth,” and who can take them away ; who can cast a blight upon the best concerted schemes of worldly wisdom and prudence ; but who, at the same time, adapts the means employed to the end desired, and requires us to do so too, Isa. xxviii. 26—29.

And now, a few words about a future situation. In the first place, however, do not be in too great a hurry to leave your present master. He may probably ask you to remain with him for a few months, or a year, after your apprenticeship is expired. Should he do this, by all means accede to the proposal. Even supposing the salary he may offer you is not commensurate with your supposed abilities, or so large in

amount as you think you could obtain in other quarters, let this be no hinderance. The simple fact, that you have been asked to continue in your master's employ, when he was released from all obligation to retain you, will be better to you than any number of pounds you would be likely to gain by a change. Perhaps your leaving him at the end of your term would be an inconvenience to him; and, if so, you will best show your gratitude for past kindnesses by thus obliging him. Or, quite as likely, the offer may be made to you in kindness, and as a sort of attestation of the regard he has for you. In this case, I am sure you should reciprocate the feeling, and thankfully accept the favour.

It will be desirable, however, that you should see more of business in general, and of the various ways of conducting it, than can be seen in one particular locality; and you ought therefore, eventually, to leave the house of your apprenticeship, and seek another employer. A few hints respecting this change of situation will suffice.

Do not, as a matter of choice, take a situation in the same town in which you have passed your apprenticeship. There are two reasons against your doing so. One is comprised in the paragraph above. The other is, that, except in very large towns, there is generally a spirit of rivalry between tradesmen in the same business, which would probably interrupt that cordiality of feeling which ought to be kept up between your first master and yourself; and, to a certain extent, it might be really injurious to his interests.

Seek a situation under a conscientiously pious employer. It is a happy circumstance that this

is not a very difficult thing to do. Our land, guilty in some respects as it is, is not like the cities of the plain, in which ten righteous persons could not be found. All our tradesmen do not bow the knee to Mammon or to Baal. On the contrary, I believe that a large proportion of the heartfelt piety and active benevolence which raises our country so high above the surrounding nations, is to be found in that class of society which includes men of business. By all means, then, seek a truly religious employer.

Do not be too eager to obtain a large salary for your services. It is right that you should not be careless in this particular. "The labourer is worthy of his hire;" and your talents and character ought (to use a commercial phrase) to fetch their market value. But you had better make a little sacrifice in this particular, if necessary, than put yourself in the way of temptation. I know some young men who have rejected good situations in regular families, where business has been conducted on upright principles, because they could receive larger salaries in other houses. The consequence has been just what might be expected—a sad deterioration of character; and, perhaps, ultimate ruin. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

LETTER XXVIII.

RELIGIOUS DECISION.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

THIS is the last letter you will receive from me while you are an apprentice. I do not intend to make it a long one ; but I wish to embody in it the one great principle which I have endeavoured to enforce in all my past correspondence. I mean, RELIGIOUS DECISION. And by religious decision I mean, that habit of mind which will lead you to bring every action of life, and every motive to action, to the test of Scriptural truth and holiness, whatever may be the consequences. That this quality *is* attainable, is proved by daily intercourse with many, who, though *in* the world, with all its busy concerns, are evidently not *of* the world, but “declare plainly”—more plainly by actions than by words—“that they are seeking a country, even a heavenly,” Heb. xi. 14. So evidently and plainly, indeed, is this shown, that the irreligious and profane often are compelled to bear their unwilling testimony to the great and important fact—that religion, with such persons, is more than a name or a set of notions—that it is a living and influential principle.

But, on the other hand, there are too many who are so ambiguous and undecided in their

conduct, that it is difficult—nay, impossible—to ascertain their true character and appropriate station. They seem to answer to the apostle's description, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," 2 Tim. iii. 7; and of whom the most charitable observer is obliged to say, "I stand in doubt of you," Gal. iv. 20. "Unstable as water," they cannot "excel," Gen. xlix. 4; but are like "a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed," James i. 6. To such, the prophet's appeal must take the place of all eulogium; "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him," 1 Kings xviii. 21.

I need not tell you, Charles, how truly undesirable is such a position; nor need I say much to you on the duty of coming to an immediate decision on the subject of religion. You cannot fail to remember the emphatic declarations of the blessed Saviour, "He that is not with me is against me;" and, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words; of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father," Matt. xii. 30; Mark viii. 38: and I would fain think that I hear you respond, with the apostle Paul, "I am *not* ashamed of the gospel of Christ," Rom. i. 16; and with Joshua, "As for me—I will serve the Lord," Josh. xxiv. 15.

But, in order to the attainment of religious decision, it is first of all necessary that you should possess the principle of true piety in your soul; and this cannot be until you are "reconciled to God" by the atonement of the Lord

Jesus Christ, and live by faith in that atonement. I have, I know, urged this before; but the immense importance of the subject compels me to return to it, and, if possible, with increased seriousness. "Ye must be born again," and "except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," are the declarations of the Saviour himself, John iii. 7; Matt. xviii. 3. Let this, then, be your first great concern; and suffer no thoughts of present engagements or future prospects to intrude and come between your soul and the momentous inquiry, "Am I 'renewed in the spirit of my mind;' have I truly repented of sin; have I made earnest and believing application to that gracious Redeemer who has engaged to 'cast out none' who come to him, and 'whose blood cleanseth from all sin;' have I been regenerated by the Holy Spirit's influences; have I been converted from sin to holiness, from 'darkness to light,' from the power of Satan to the 'kingdom of God's dear Son?'" Eph. iv. 23; John vi. 37; 1 John i. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Col. i. 13. If this matter has not yet been satisfactorily set at rest in your own mind, let your mind never rest until it has—until you can say, with the apostle Peter, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," John xxi. 17.

But though a personal interest in the Lord Jesus Christ be the indispensable foundation for religious decision, 1 Cor. iii. 11, yet there may be, and there are, different degrees of excellency and durability in the fabrics raised upon it. There are too many, whose piety it would be wrong to doubt, who yet, like Nicodemus, come to the

Saviour by night, and, like the fearful disciples, follow him afar off. And why is this? They are wanting in religious decision. How, then, is this to be obtained? Here is the answer, in the experience of one who was eminently decided in religion: "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved," Psa. xvi. 8. And here it is again, in the language of the apostle: "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," Phil. iii. 8; Gal. vi. 14. Follow in the footsteps of these eminent men. Set a right estimate upon temporal advantages as compared with spiritual; keep your eye of faith stedfastly fixed on the things which are not seen; distrust your own steadiness and determination, and set the Lord always before you—in the bustling scenes of business, in solitude and repose, in recreation and leisure—set Him before you as your Guide, your Helper, your final Judge, and, in the person of his incarnate Son, as your great Exemplar—and the object will be attained; you will be *decidedly* religious. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint," Isa. xl. 31.

If we trace the progress of an undecided young man, from the close of his apprenticeship through succeeding years, we shall see that he is perpetually falling into snares and committing errors, which another, who has wisely determined, at all

events, to stand firm for religion, overcomes or avoids.

His first step will probably be a false one. In seeking a future situation, he will not be so anxious to obtain one in which he may escape the snares and pollutions of the world, and in which he may be encouraged by the example of his superiors and associates to "follow on to know the Lord," as for one in which his temporal interests may be most successfully advanced.

Having made his worldly interests paramount in the choice of a situation, he will have paved the way for their further ascendancy when opposed to the requirements of strict principle in the business of life. If he finds that he can only retain his situation by conforming to worldly and sinful maxims, by sacrificing truth and honesty to expediency, by the frequent practice of mean and unworthy tricks of trade, and that he must not be over-scrupulous in the means employed to advance his employer's supposed interests; the probability is, that the dictates of his conscience will be disregarded, and contamination brought upon his soul.

If thrown into the society of the dissolute and profane, his indecision will prevent him from making a determined stand for morality, and much less for evangelical truth. He will shrink from the avowal of sentiments at variance with those of his associates. By his own tacit consent he will be open to the seductions of vice. To avoid the appearance or the suspicion of being singular, he will enter into scenes of dissipation and folly. Prayer will be neglected, and the sabbath dishonoured, for fear of the "world's dread frown"

or cutting sneer, until, at length, the mind will become callous; and he who once thought himself, and was thought by others, "not far from the kingdom of God," Mark xii. 34, is eventually to be found far—very far, even from its borders.

Once more then, dear Charles, let me entreat you to be decided for religion. Let it influence every step you take; make it your companion—your dearest friend. Never scruple, if called upon, to avow by words that you are "on the Lord's side;" but, above all, let your actions proclaim the preference you have made. Let no motives of worldly policy induce you to deviate from the straight and narrow path of Christian integrity. It may be that a steady adherence to religious principle will at some time or other expose you to inconvenience, obloquy, loss: so let it be; "If any man will come after me," said the Saviour, "let him take up his cross, and follow me," Matt. xvi. 24. It is but of little importance that you lose an advantage, an extra profit, a customer, a situation, a friend, a fortune; but it is of infinite importance that you do not lose YOUR SOUL.

THE END.



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