



Boys
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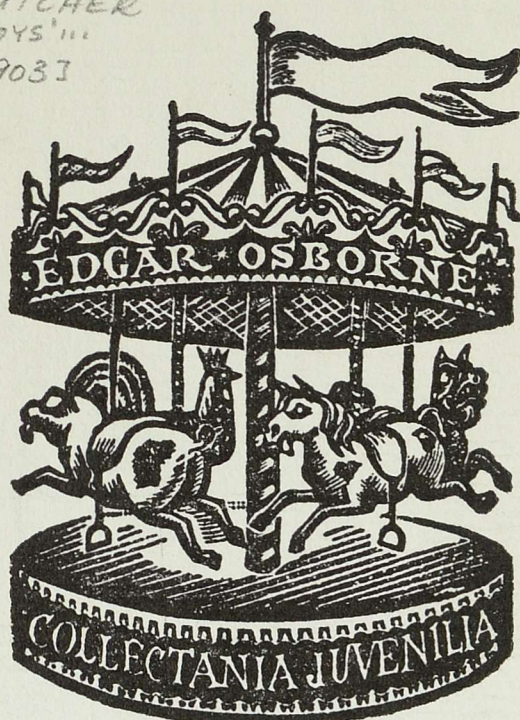
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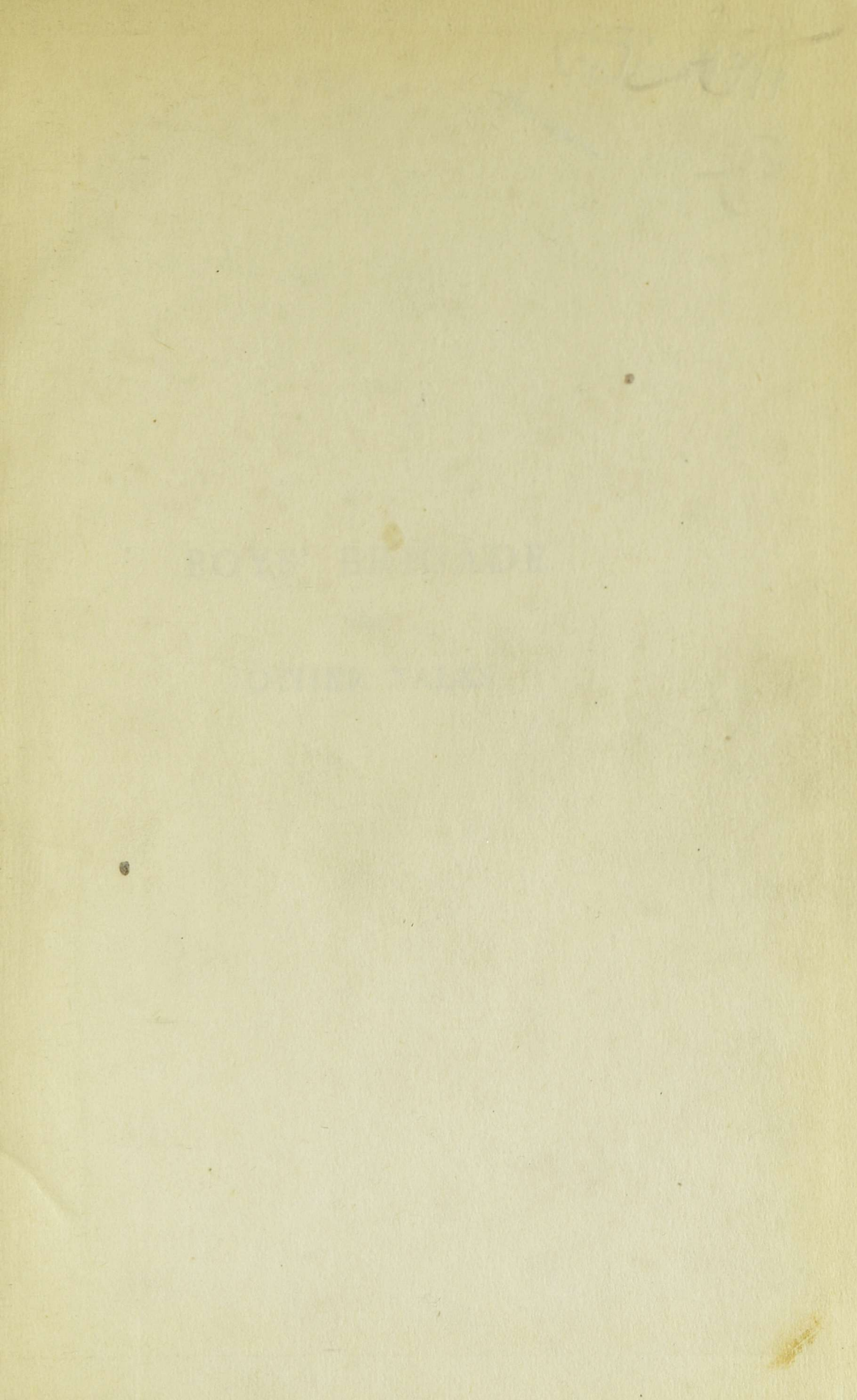
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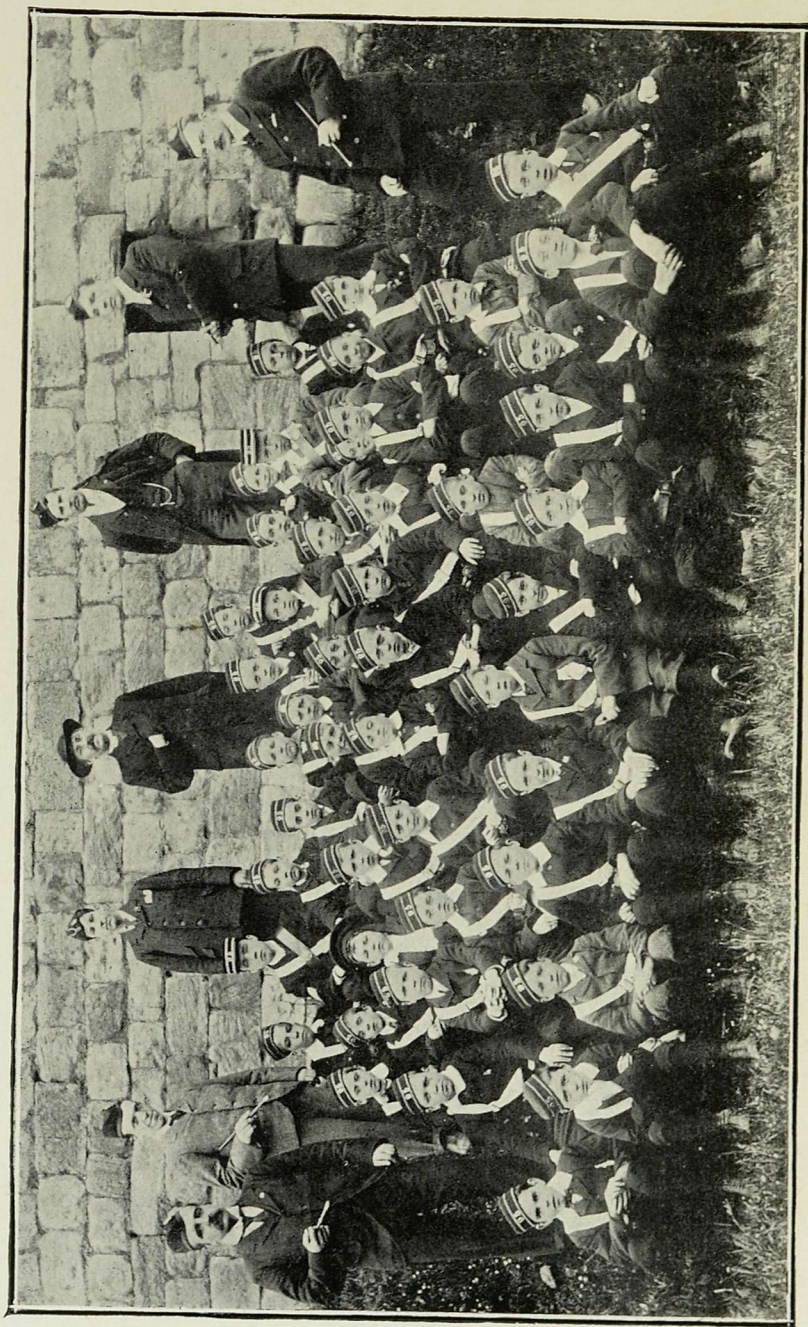


Hypnoctor

BOYS' BRIGADE

AND

OTHER TALKS



FIELD DAY OF THE XCV. GLASGOW COMPANY

BOYS' BRIGADE

AND

OTHER TALKS

BY

J. WILLIAMS BUTCHER

LONDON

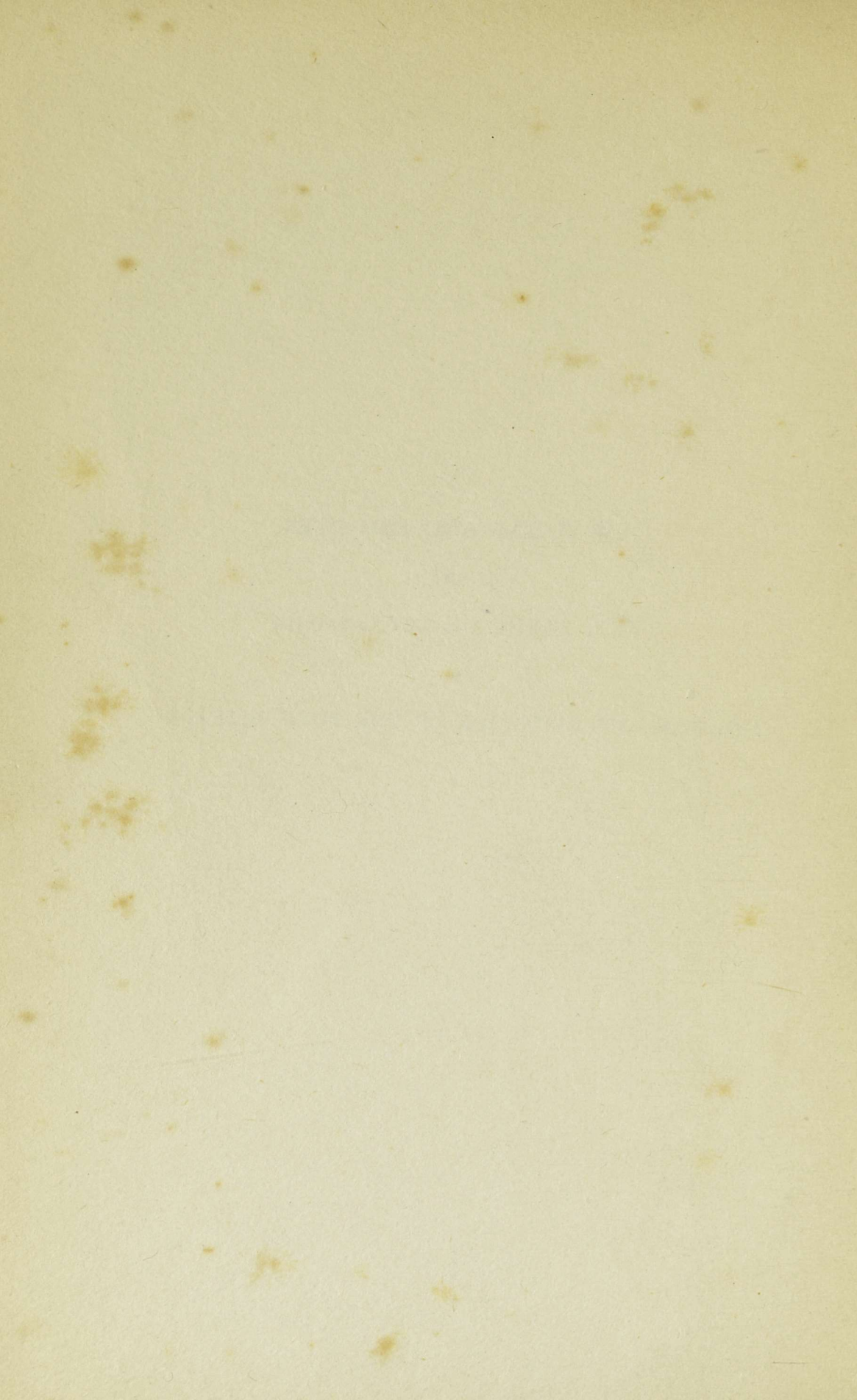
CHARLES H. KELLY

2, CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, AND

26, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C



To
THE N.C.O.S AND PRIVATES
OF THE
XXX, XXXIII, AND XCV COMPANIES
OF
THE GLASGOW BATTALION OF THE BOYS' BRIGADE



CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHUMS	9
HONOUR BRIGHT !	17
ON CYCLING	24
WONDERFUL MAN	32
THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD	40
LIKE MEN	47
"DON'T GET WAXY"	55
THE BIOGRAPH	62
THE GRAPHOPHONE, AND OTHER WONDERS	67
ON BEING KIND	75
ON INFLUENCE AND LEADING STRAIGHT	81
KYNANCE COVE	89
GARGOYLES	96
GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL : THE MEMORIAL OF A BRAVE DEED	103
DOES IT PAY ?	111
"X" AND "Y" : THE TWO UNKNOWN QUANTITIES	117
WHAT THE OLD YEAR SAYS	122
THE EYES OF GOD	129
THE APPOINTED PLACE	134

	PAGE
THE LESSON OF AN OLD SUN-DIAL	140
THE PALIMPSEST	145
A TALK ABOUT AN ANNIVERSARY HYMN	151
THE OLD POWDER-FLASK	157
"THE ONE IN THE MIDDLE"	163
MORNING AND EVENING	169
CROWTHORNE QUARRY	176
A WONDERFUL PICTURE—THE PRAYING CHRIST	183
"THE PLACE OF LAUGHTER"	188

BOYS' BRIGADE

AND OTHER TALKS

CHUMS.

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

"Walk with the wise and thou shalt be wise, but a companion of fools shall smart for it."—PROVERBS xiii. 20.

I AM going to speak to you this morning about your "chums," and the influence they exert both upon character and conduct.

Let me tell you, first, exactly what I understand by a "chum." If I were to call any one by this name, I should mean, not only that he was one of my friends, but rather that he was my special friend, the one I liked the best, whose company I preferred to that of any other. With him I should not trouble about other com-

panions, and no number of other lads could make up for his absence.

It sometimes happens that a boy's brother may also be his "chum," and when this is so it is pleasant and fitting. But it more often happens that the "chum" is outside the home circle, and in this case the stranger by blood comes nearer to us than our own kith and kin. For we tell our "chum" everything, we speak to him of our hopes and plans for that distant future when we shall be men. In fact, we open to him our inmost selves, and say, "Look in, old fellow. I have no secret from you."

Now there are four things concerning a chum which are worth knowing and remembering—

1. EVERY BOY CAN CHOOSE HIS OWN CHUM.

You certainly cannot always choose the people that you have to do with in life. No one was ever asked who he would like to have for his father or mother, his brother or sister. They are provided for us, and we have to take them as they have to take us, "for better, for worse." No one, however, can compel you to accept any

one as your chum. Just as it takes two to make a quarrel, and if you resolutely resolve not to quarrel, no one can force you into it: so it takes two to make a friendship, and however much the other party may seek to be your chum, if you do not reciprocate the feeling no chumship will result. Each must care for the other, each must draw and be drawn into this close friendship. This being so, it follows that every boy is himself responsible for the character of his chumships; therefore, be very careful what type of lad you choose. Don't be in a hurry. Take time to find out what sort of fellow he is, if he be straight, and true, and manly. Then, if he be all this, and your heart goes out to him, and he returns your advances, stick closely to him, and never let any petty squabble or miserable misunderstanding part you.

2. A CHUM DOES MUCH TO MOULD OUR CHARACTER AND SHAPE OUR AFTER LIFE.

All you boys are men in the making. You are not men yet, either physically or mentally, but every year you live finds you somewhat

nearer the full vigour of your manhood. Each day adds its little something in the way of growth and development, and little by little, almost imperceptibly, but very surely, your bodies grow, your muscles develop, your minds expand. So it is with that which we call character. Day by day, by things that in themselves are so small that we hardly pause to notice them, our characters are being shaped into strength and nobleness and beauty, or into that which is the very opposite of these good traits.

Few things influence us in this direction more than do our chums. Our talks with them, the suggestions they make to us, the aims with which they inspire us, the tempers they exhibit, and the general tenor of their conduct—all these things will have a strong and an enduring effect upon us.

At Knaresboro', one of the older towns of Yorkshire, there is a world-famed well. From a limestone rock water is always dripping. So strongly is this water impregnated with lime, that in time the lime encrusts with a coating of stone any object that is placed within the dripping

water. There you would find many things frail in themselves, birds' nests, pieces of lace, and such like, and because this water continually drips, drips, drips upon them, they in time become practically turned into stone, and are hard and durable. So it is with the influence of your chums. Every day their influence is one of the forces that are shaping and moulding and determining your character, and in time the characters thus shaped will be fixed and permanent.

3. OUR CHUMS AFFECT THE OPINION WHICH OTHERS FORM OF US.

An old proverb says, "A man is known by his friends." So also is a boy. Another proverb runs, "Birds of a feather flock together." The meaning of this is, that a right-minded boy will have a right-minded chum; but if the chum be bad you may be almost certain that the boy is not much better.

Sometimes we hear a boy say, "I don't care what he thinks of me," and this is, almost always, a sure sign of something wrong. Every

boy ought to care for the good opinion of good men.

There are some chumships that cause those who love us best much anxiety and foreboding. Not long since a mother said to me, "I am troubled about my boy Willie. He is making a friend of Jack So-and-so, and, from what I know of Jack, I fear his influence upon Willie."

It is only natural that chums should have a certain likeness in thought, a certain similarity in taste, something in common. But do not let that something be evil; and if ever a wise man or a good woman should warn you against one who is fast becoming a chum, then pull up, and ask yourself "Why?" and if your conscience gives you a reason for so doing, stop the friendship before he becomes a chum.

4. A GOOD CHUM MEANS HAPPINESS; A BAD CHUM MEANS SORROW.

In the text we read, "Walk with the wise and thou shalt be wise." The word "the wise" means those who are going on safe lines, and not

on dangerous paths. If this part of the text is full of encouragement, the other part is full of warning, "A companion of fools shall smart for it." I have seen both sides fully proved in the case of boys whom I have known. I have known some who have not been naturally strong in purpose, in resolution, or in effort. They have taken as their "chums" those who were strong, who knew what was right, and who followed it, no matter what it cost them; and I have seen these weaker boys—who were not bad, only weak—growing stronger and more resolute day by day.

And I have seen the opposite. Some weeks ago there came a youth to me. He said, "I have something that I want to tell you." I saw it was something very hard to tell, so I gave him his time, and, bit by bit, he told me a sad, sad story. When he had finished, I asked him how it all came about. This was his reply:

"You know So-and-so, my chum. Well, he suggested and urged that I should do this thing, and at last I did it."

You see, it was his chum who had an evil mind, and who led him into temptation and fall.

He was a big fellow, almost a young man, yet, as we talked, the tears ran down his cheeks because he had thus sinned, through the influence of his chum.

Let every boy here present pray this day a new prayer—"Give me, O God, a true friend, that he may help me to keep Thy holy laws!"

HONOUR BRIGHT!

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

Most of you will recognize these words as a boy's guarantee of good faith. You have used them yourself, or heard them used by others, many, many times over.

Here, for instance, are two lads, both of whom are stamp collectors. One of them has brought to school some duplicates, which he wants to "swop," and he has been showing them to the other, who suggests that he should take them home and look in his album, and that next day he will bring them back, and, with them, such as he also has for exchange. And when he notices a certain look, half of doubt, half of reluctance, on the first boy's face, he says, "I'll bring them back all right; honour bright!"

Or one boy is trying to make an appointment with another to meet him at a certain place that

they may spend a holiday together in a country ramble, and the other, who has been disappointed before by No. 1 not keeping such an appointment, looks dubious, till his friend cries, "I really will be there this time, old fellow; honour bright!"

Now these words mean much more than those who use them sometimes think. For all through life there can be few aims more noble and worthy than that which seeks, under all circumstances and in all places, to keep "honour bright." Whatever a man may gain in the way of wealth or position or fame, if, in the gaining of it, he dims and tarnishes his honour, he becomes a poor man. For he has lost the wealth that remains when money and fame alike are useless. The Book tells us, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." And he only has a good name who has kept his "honour bright." Then remember three things:—

1. ALWAYS KEEP YOUR WORD.

In some parts of the country when they want to speak of a man whose words are always to be

relied upon, they say, "That man's word is his bond." When a very little boy, living in the town of High Wycombe, I used to be taken occasionally to see an old lady and gentleman who were members of the Society of Friends—Quakers they are sometimes called—and I had been told how they made it a point of solemn duty to keep all their promises to the letter. One day they had arranged to call in an open pony-carriage for a friend to take her for a drive. It came on to rain very unexpectedly, but they were there at the time appointed, and when their friend expressed surprise, the old gentleman said, "Friend, we promised thee we would call, and we did not say, 'If it be fine.'" This made a great impression upon me, and I can clearly remember with what reverence I looked upon these old people as upon those whose honour was always bright.

When the great Dr. Arnold was headmaster of Rugby, he used to put such trust in the boys that in time they came to recognize what this meant, and one of them is reported to have said, "It's a shame to tell Arnold a lie. He always believes what a fellow tells him." And if we

could only learn the lesson, it is a shame at any time to break our word or speak falsely, for every time we do this we dim and tarnish our honour.

2. ALWAYS OBEY WHEN OUT OF SIGHT AS FULLY AS YOU WOULD WHEN IN SIGHT.

There are some boys who forget this rule entirely, and though prompt in obedience when in the presence of their parents or seniors, do not scruple in certain things to flagrantly disobey when far from their supervision.

One day I was walking from Didsbury to Manchester, and I saw a boy whose father I knew slightly, and who, I knew, would not have dared to do what I saw him do, had his father been in sight. He waited till the road had turned an angle, then he looked back to see if any one whom he knew was in sight, and, not seeing any one, he drew a packet of cigarettes from his pocket and began to smoke. I thought then, and have often thought since, that that sly disobedience was a tarnish on Frank's honour.

If you were to ask many a man who is now

fallen and disgraced, he would say that it all began in this way—little acts of disobedience in secret; things done “just for a lark,” or because “other fellows did them,” but carefully kept from his parents’ knowledge; a “bit of fun,” not so wrong in itself perhaps, but that meant, alas, the tarnishing of honour.

The true motive of obedience is not the fear of punishment, but the high-souled determination to rule life and conduct by the wishes of those who love us so well and who have a right to command.

3. ALWAYS ACT STRAIGHTLY IN DEALING WITH THE THINGS OF OTHERS.

As you grow older you will have many chances of getting gain by acts that are not straightforward, but that savour of cheating and of dishonesty. All gain with guilt is loss. Whatever you may seem to get, you will be poorer, rather than richer, by it if it has meant the dimming of your honour.

Not long ago a minister, well known in Glasgow, told the boys and girls of his church

this sad story. There was a boy who had taken the proud position of Dux in the school, and had carried off the prize attached thereto in seeming triumph and honour. But some time after he wrote to the Rector (as the headmaster is called in Scotland), and confessed that he had gained the position by cheating at an examination, and that from then onward he had never known a day's peace. He sent back his medal, and asked the Rector what he ought to do. He was willing, if he thought it right, to advertise his sin in the newspapers, so keenly was he conscious that his honour was no longer bright.

There is a fine story told of the Duke of Wellington. He wanted to purchase some ground belonging to a much poorer man whose property adjoined his own. One day his steward came to him and said:

"Your Grace, I have bought that field you wanted, and as the man was in needy circumstances I have got it very cheap."

"How much did you pay for it?" asked the Duke.

"Only £800," replied the steward, "and it is worth at least £1100."

"Then, sir," said the hero of Waterloo, "you have sold my honour for £300," and writing a cheque for £300 he bade his steward carry it to the seller, and know in future that his master's honour was more to him than a cheap plot of land.

Lads! take this word, "Honour bright!" and let the motto of the playground be, by the help of God, the steady, sturdy motto of all your life.

A good name is rather
to be chosen than great riches,
favour rather
than silver & gold

1. Keep your word
2. Drive game & go home
practice

ON CYCLING.

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

"In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—ROMANS xii. 11.

MANY of you boys are expert cyclists, many more of you think that you could soon become expert if you only had a chance, and probably not one of you would raise any objection if some kind friend were to offer you the gift of an up-to-date machine.

I expect, however, that already some of you are thinking, "Whatever has cycling to do with this text—or this text with cycling?"

Now I confess that just at first the connection is not very obvious, but I hope to show you that there is a sense in which the one may touch the other, for the rules herein laid down for the control of daily life are just the same rules which the

cyclist has to observe if he would become an expert and a safe rider.

When a boy begins to ride there are three things he has to acquire, and when once he has acquired them, and so long as he remembers them, he may be trusted to go almost anywhere. They are: (1) Balance; (2) Progress; (3) Caution.

1. BALANCE. This is the first lesson. You remember how, when you first mounted your cycle, it was almost impossible to keep your seat. The machine would fall to the one side or the other, and even after you began to use the pedals, a very little thing made you lose your balance and "come a cropper." But in a short time you learnt to balance, and then the first difficulty was past.

Can you not see this same lesson in my text? It bids us be "in diligence not slothful," and that means whole-hearted, earnest persevering in the daily toils of life. It also speaks of "serving the Lord," which means that we are not to let any of life's busy toils, or all of them together, take up so much of our time and thought as to lead us to forget God.

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If you think, you will find that you already

know certain who have failed to keep this balance. Some are not "diligent in business," but careless and indolent, regarding their work, whether in the class-room at school or in the shop or office after they have left school, as something to be endured, to be got through with the least possible effort, and of such you may be sure that sooner or later they also will "come a cropper." Even if they have at times thoughts of God that are deep and solemn and true, yet if they do not remember that religion must show itself in fidelity to the duties of to-day they will lose their balance.

Most men and boys, however, fall on the other side—they forget to "serve the Lord." There are so many things that threaten to take up all our time and thought—work, study, pleasure, money-making, and other like interests. I have known many—ah! so many—to whom business has been all and everything, and they have failed to keep the balance and have come to a sad fall.

One day two men, who had in the days of their boyhood been schoolfellows, were taking a drive in the old home country. The one, a celebrated London minister, had not been there for years.

Presently a fine new mansion gleamed white and beautiful through the trees. Said the minister:

"That is new since I was here; to whom does it belong?"

The other mentioned the name of one who had also been a schoolmate.

"Oh!" said the first, "I did not know that he had got on so well as that. He must be very wealthy;" and the reply was:

"I suppose he is. Shall I tell you what that place has cost him?"

"Yes."

"His soul," was the solemn, the awful answer. He had lost his balance, boys.

2. The next thing for the cyclist to learn is PROGRESS. There is one thing that with all your cleverness you cannot do, and that is, remain in the saddle with the bicycle at a standstill. Within limits, rapid riding is safe riding. When I was learning to ride I found great difficulty in mounting if there was the slightest rise in the road. One day I jumped into the saddle, but felt I was not safe. My teacher, however, said, "You are all right now; go on," but I was timid, and instead of going on I came off, and

that so precipitately that my side bore the signs thereof for many weeks, and my cycle bears the marks of it to this day. To be safe there must be progress.

Do you see this in the text? I do. What about "fervent in spirit"? It means earnest in purpose—so earnest that each day you strive to attain your purpose, each day you get a little nearer to it.

When you start for a ride you have as a rule a goal. You ask at the onset, "Where shall we go to to-day? Loch Lomond? Helensburgh? Strathblane?" And as you ride on you see the milestones which tell you as you pass by that you are a mile further from the starting-place—a mile nearer your goal. So in life's long journey there is a goal to be reached, and each day should be a milestone, saying to us, "This much nearer." In one of St. Paul's letters he speaks of this, for he says, "Forgetting the things that are behind, I press on toward the goal."

There was once a skilled inventor who surmounted many practical difficulties that baffled his competitors. One day he was asked how it was that he succeeded where others failed. His

answer was suggestive : " I keep it ever before me." In other words he was " fervent in spirit," earnest in purpose, and so made progress.

Understand, boys, that in life, as in cycling, the attempt to simply stand still and stay where you are means coming to grief. Not indolence, but progress, as the result of definite purpose and strong effort, is what we must maintain.

3. And the final requisite is " CAUTION." Most of the accidents that happen to cyclists are the result of a want of caution, a failure to use the brake, to slow up when there is danger. Many think it a fine, daring and manly thing to despise the brake ; it really is arrant folly, to be condemned, not admired.

A short time ago two brothers started from an English town one Bank Holiday to ride to their home some miles distant. They never reached home. They were riding a tandem—a brakeless tandem ! A little way out of the town from which they started was a steep hill ; at the bottom of the hill was a quarry. They lost control of the machine on the hill and were both dashed over the wall into the quarry, and there

their bodies were found when search was made for them.

Again, I was once riding near to Loch Lomond with a friend. We had a long, steady downgrade before us ; I was ahead. Soon I heard my friend coming behind at a furious rate. I was just about to cry out, "Pull up, man," when there was a crash, and he lay in the road. I dismounted and ran to him, expecting to find him badly injured. Fortunately he had escaped injury, and when I said, "Why did you not brake?" he said, "I forgot that I had a brake."

Is this, the necessity for caution, also in the text? Yes. "Serving the Lord." That means taking God as our Master and doing as He bids us do. Or, in other words, listening to the voice of conscience, and especially to its "Thou shalt not." God gave us part of our nature with our hands upon the brake, and we release the pressure at our peril.

I have known some splendid fellows come to a terrible fall because they would not use the brake. Conscience said, "Too fast! Slow up! Take care!" and they laughed and took no heed, and then the crash came.

But one says, "Oh! bother the brake; I can back-pedal when I want to." That is very insecure. You may have too great speed on to render that possible. Your will may fail you and circumstances be too powerful for you to stop just when you want to. No, no! If the road of life be marked with a danger signal and you see the red letters on the white ground as you run by, then down with the brake at once. Listen to the voice of conscience, and in the strength of God's restraining grace control and master the machine.

Now, lads, when you again read this twelfth chapter of Romans, remember the lesson, and all through life, by God's help, keep your BALANCE, make PROGRESS, be CAUTIOUS.

WONDERFUL MAN.

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

"Spirit, soul, and body."—1 THESS. v. 23.

HAVE you ever taken the trouble to think out the wonders of that nature which God has given to us ?

Try to define Man, and to classify him in relation to the rest of creation. What is man ?

First comes the naturalist, and he answers our question from his standpoint: "Man is an animal:—vertebrate, mammal, biped." Now this is all true, but somehow or other we think it is not all the truth. So again we ask our question.

Then comes the philosopher, and he says: "Man is the thinking, self-conscious, intelligent animal." This is better; but still we are not quite satisfied, and once again we repeat the question.

This time the Christian answers: "Man is the animal who can know and love God, and thus become a child of God." And now we feel the answer is complete.

In our short text St. Paul speaks of each part of our complex nature. He begins at the top and works downward; we will invert the order and work upward. Thus we have:—

(1) The Body—the animal part.

(2) The Soul (or, as it is called to-day, the Mind)—the thinking part.

(3) The Spirit—the God-knowing part.

1. THE ANIMAL THAT IS WITHIN US.

Down at the bottom of our nature we are animals, and every boy born into this world has of necessity a large share of the animal in him. There comes a time in a lad's life when he wakes up to recognize things that had passed unnoticed before, and he feels the animal stirring within. If he is a sensitive, pure-thoughted boy he is probably troubled, and wonders what it means, and perhaps thinks that it is a sign of special badness in him that is not common to others.

But this is a mistake; the animal is in all; its presence there is in itself no sin, nor can we be surprised if ever and again it asserts itself.

Just think in how many ways the animal manifests its presence. Here is one sly, crafty, cunning. There is a good deal of the fox in that boy. Here is another, fierce, cruel, ready to take by any means that which he desires from those who possess it, but cannot defend themselves. I see the tiger in him. Here is a boy proud of his feats of strength, of his athletic skill, of his personal appearance. I can find the same thing in a race-horse or a charger. Again, here is a lad greedy in appetite, not only liking good things, but often failing to know when he has had enough—and I cannot but think that there is a bit of the pig to be seen in him. And lastly there is a boy with unclean thoughts and impure conversation, and I see in him the very worst and lowest form of the animal.

I said that there is no sin in the presence of the animal; but now I say a more important word—there is sin in letting the animal rule and become supreme.

It is probable that it is through the animal

within you that most of your temptations will come. It is here the great battles of life will have to be fought by you. If you let the lowest of your nature rule and riot and subdue the higher parts, you will be just an animal, or very little more, and your life will be full of sin and evil. The animal is there—will always be there—but we may hold it in check, and cause it also to be a part of that which we daily offer to God.

2. THE MIND THAT IS WITHIN US.

This is a far higher part of our nature, for if the animal within links us to the beasts, the mind raises us above them. Sometimes we see in some animals what looks very like a suggestion of mind, of reason. We usually call it “instinct,” and it is very wonderful. When, however, you consider how the mind of man can conquer the forces of nature ; can contrive, adapt and utilize the materials of which this earth is made, that they may fulfil his purpose, or can make for himself a realm of pure thought in which he largely dwells—then man stands out supreme above all the beasts.

Think, for instance, of man's inventions. I spent some hours a few days since in one of our great shipbuilding yards, and when I saw the marvellous machines, in bewildering succession, all contributing to the building of the beautiful ocean-going liner, I understood from them the marvel of man's mind.

You all have ridden in our trams. Twenty years ago the electrically-driven tram was not dreamt of; now it is one of the commonplace sights of our city, and a horse car would be a strange antiquity. The electric car is but another proof of the power of mind.

Go some day to the Mitchell Library, and look round on those tiers of shelves and on the many thousand books that they contain. Each book is the product of some mind, and many of them are the result of deepest thought, and speak again of the wonder of this part of man's nature.

In our Glasgow Exhibition you saw the splendid pictures hanging upon the walls of the Art Gallery, and when you had gazed at them you went into the grounds and listened to the music of the bands. Mind once more !

In this city there are many vast business concerns, whose trading links country to country the world over. At their head are clever, capable men, who can plan where best to buy and where best to sell, and so make large fortunes. I know many of you hope to be classed among such men one day. Their success is another proof of mind.

And, in greater or lesser degree, each of us has this wonderful mind life, and it is ours to cultivate it. Just as, by your weekly drill and by athletics and manly sports, you develop your bodies, so by reading, by observation, by thinking, and by study you must develop your minds. Have always before you some worthy purpose, and steadily work towards it.

3. THE SPIRIT THAT IS WITHIN US.

This is quite as real as the other two parts of our nature, and it is by far the highest, noblest, and most important part thereof. All your other powers, whether of body or mind, are limited by time and bound by sense. The spirit life is not thus limited or bound. It links us to God,

and we never live the full, rich life God means us to live if we neglect our spirit part.

There are two ways in which this spirit life may become real and conscious to us.

There is (a) *Obedience* to God's voice within, which we call conscience. Jesus said to His disciples: "If any man will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," and that means that knowledge of God comes to us through obedience to God. Be resolute in doing what you are certain God would have you do, and resolute also in turning from things that He forbids. Live up to lessons learnt from His Word. Read your Bibles and pray over them. Ask Him to lead and keep you, and thus as you grow up you shall know that the part of your being that makes God, and things that are beyond time and sense, real to you, is growing stronger and stronger.

Then the other method shall come into play, and you shall have (b) *Experience* or inward certainty, based upon the facts of your own lives. This is perhaps hardly yours as yet; it will, however, surely come later on if you are true to the voice of conscience, and even now you may know something of it, for little children, far

younger than you, can honestly sing in Faber's well-known hymn—

“I have felt Thee in my thought,
Fighting with sin for me,
And when my heart loves God, I know
That love is all from Thee.”

Boys !

Don't live the lowest life, or you will be only
an ANIMAL ;

Don't live simply the middle life, or you will
be but a MAN ;

Live also the highest, and you shall be a SON
OF GOD.

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD.

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."—EPHESIANS VI. 11.

IN the olden days, before the knights or the men-at-arms went out to battle, they were accustomed to cover the greater part of their bodies with heavy pieces of defensive armour.

To-day you will not find much of this armour left in the equipment of the British soldier; one or two regiments of the Horse Guards and the Lancers still wear a kind of breastplate, called a cuirass, and certain other regiments have a sort of helmet, but they are used only on parade or on State occasions; they would be considered utterly unfit for active service. If ever you want to see a splendid collection of old armour you must go to Edinburgh Castle, or, better still, to the Tower of London, and then you will understand what

is meant when you are told that most of this armour was for purposes of defence.

Have any of you ever thought how it was that St. Paul in this letter says so much about armour? When he wrote it he was a prisoner in Rome, guarded by one of the Imperial soldiers. Many a time the prisoner and his guard would enter into conversation, and what more likely than that the soldier should tell St. Paul about some of the battles that he had been in, and pointing to helmet, shield, or breastplate, recall some occasion on which, but for that especial piece of armour, he had been sorely wounded, perhaps slain? A little later, when St. Paul was dictating his letter, he remembered this, and used the soldier's armour as an illustration.

Now let us think about the three main pieces of defensive armour—the helmet, breastplate, and shield.

1. THE HELMET.—There, lying on a settle or a table, was the polished headpiece. A great dint showed how once it had warded off some savage blow that, but for its protection, would have cleft the owner's head.

Now the Apostle knew that Christian soldiers would have to encounter many a blow aimed at their heads, for then, as now, many a skilful attack is made upon the Faith, and unless one is fully armed it is not easy to resist.

I have known several who, as they grew up and went into the world, had to meet those who made light of religion, ridiculed it, or argued against it; often, also, those who were thus assailed did not ask if there was not a full answer, but took it for granted that these, to them, new attacks could not be resisted.

At other times the attack comes through what is read, and the reader does not trouble to read the other side, and thus again there is wounding.

Not long ago a boy I know well said to his chum: "When I grow old enough to please myself I shan't go to church. There is no God; it's all stuff that the parsons talk, and they don't believe it themselves." He had met in his work with those who talked thus to him, and, not having a helmet, he was wounded by their blows.

St. Paul calls this the Helmet of Salvation, because he knew that if any one has proved the power of the Lord Jesus first to forgive sin, and

then to keep from sinning, he will have a ready answer to these attacks. When the man born blind was assailed by the Pharisees, and they told him that Jesus was not a good man, he, rejoicing in his sight and remembering his blindness, said, "One thing I know," and that was his defence.

Have you a like helmet?

2. THE BREASTPLATE.—This defends the heart. In the Bible the heart is regarded as the seat of our affections and impulses, and therefore this breastplate is to defend us against those influences which, if yielded to, would mean the love of those things which God forbids, and therefore the loss of our love to God Himself. It is called the breastplate of righteousness, and the word "righteousness" relates to conduct.

We all know how the sense of having done a wrong thing weakens us in our effort to resist the next temptation. Every time we resist a temptation we are strengthened for further resistance, and every time we yield thereto we are weakened, and are more likely to fall on the next attack. If a boy would be really safe from

fall he must let his conscience rule—it will tell him what is right, and, if he ask, God will give him grace to do it; but if he does not strive to possess and use this breastplate of righteousness he will be certainly and sorely wounded.

I read the other day of a man whose sight was failing fast, so he went to an oculist, who, after examining his eyes, said, “You have formed such a habit; you must give it up at once, or in less than a year you will be quite blind.” The man walked to the window, looked at the bright sunshine and said very sadly, “Then good-bye, dear sun, I cannot give up that sin.” Poor fellow, he had lost his breastplate.

3. THE SHIELD.—This is the movable piece of armour that does not defend any one special part of the body, but rather every part in turn, as need arises. It is called the Shield of Faith, and this word Faith is one of those that we use so often that we rarely trouble to think exactly what it means.

It is that wonderful power by means of which we are sure of things of which our five physical senses tell us nothing. We become conscious of

most things by the evidence of one or more of our physical senses, by sight, or smell, or touch, or taste, or hearing. But there are facts to the excellence of which physical sense gives no evidence. And here Faith steps in. It is that which makes sure of God's presence and of God's help, and that tells us that, though sin seems very strong, and at times all-powerful, yet God is far stronger, and in the end He and not sin will conquer. This sure confidence is a grand protection in hours of attack.

If I am perfectly certain that God is near, that He is on my side when I am trying to do His will, and that, however dark things may seem, He will bring them all right, then I am full of strength to do and courage to dare.

In the dark days of the French Revolution, when good men and women were falling beneath the guillotine daily, a party of nuns were being carried to execution; that was an hour of many-sided peril for them, yet so did this shield defend them that on the very road to death they sang the Latin version of the Psalm "God be merciful unto us and bless us," and thus, without fear, they faced grim death.

Take the whole armour, lads.

There is an old Greek story about a man named Achilles. It is said that when he was born his mother was told to dip him in a certain stream and he would become invulnerable to any weapon made by man; she did so, but, holding him by the heel, she kept that part untouched by the water, and in later days one who knew this wounded him there, and thus caused his death. What does the old hymn say?

“Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole.”

LIKE MEN.

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."—1 COR. XVI. 13.

THE city of Corinth at the time when St. Paul wrote this letter was a town of great importance and of boundless wealth. It was also a very gay place, and many of its pleasures leaned to the seamy side of life. The Christians that composed the little Church—and we must never forget that the Apostle's letters were all written to Churches that were small in number—had been but recently converted from the heathenism that still surrounded them. Two dangers continually confronted them.

1. There was the temptation that arose from their old life and from their former associates, many of whom would be close relatives or intimate friends. In the face of this danger St.

Paul says to them, "Watch, stand fast." They were to be like the pickets of the army, all ears and eyes, ready to discern the approach of danger and to face it without faltering. He would say the same thing to us. "Look out for the approach of that which is sinful, for the influence that is bad; don't let it take you by surprise, stand up boldly and resolutely in opposition to it."

2. The other danger arose from the certainty of opposition to their efforts to live the Christian life, perhaps also of persecution because of these efforts. So he adds, "Quit you like men, be strong," which we might in homelier phrase render: "Be true to your conscience, and never show the white feather."

This is excellent advice for you lads, who should never forget that the very object for which the Brigade of which you are the N. C. O.s or privates is, "The advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys." Whenever a lad will take the trouble to understand this word of counsel and will try resolutely to follow it, he will have taken a great stride on the road that leads to a noble manhood.

There are two ways in which the words may be understood : a wrong and a right way.

1. There are many boys who think that the quickest road to manliness is to copy certain of the actions of men, without possessing the real spirit of manliness. This generally results in what is known as "the mannish" rather than "the manly." Thus a lad may talk in a very big way ; may have an opinion about everything, and not hesitate to express that opinion in the presence of those who are older and wiser than himself ; may speak with self-confidence about things of which he knows next to nothing, and thus perform the operation known as "opening his mouth to put his foot in it ;" may worry his mother's life half out until he gets long trousers and turned-up collars ; may go along the street puffing at a cigarette, and thus make himself, as General Baden-Powell told the boys of the London Battalion the other day, "a little ass" ; he may do all this, and fancy that he is "very like a man," whereas all the time he is lacking the first essentials of the manly spirit. Take my word for it, lads, no one really respects the "mannish" boy.

2. In all true manliness we find three elements.

SELF-CONTROL.—This means the power of rightly governing our thoughts, words, and deeds. You cyclists know that when you are coasting down a hill, all is right so long as you have the machine under control, and can pull up if danger presents itself, but if the machine has got beyond your control, then you are in peril. It is so with many parts of our natures and dispositions.

When you see a boy in a thorough temper, so passionate as to be almost beside himself, then you see at once that he has lost control. That sad, yet common sight, a man staggering under the influence of drink, is another phase of the loss of self-control; in this case it is appetite that has gained the upper hand. God has given us a nature parts of which need to be kept with the brake continually applied, and woe be to the one who lets these passions or appetites "go."

Another way in which we need to exercise self-control is in our ability to accept reproof. Few things are more difficult than to take reproof in the right spirit. If on parade you have been careless or larking, if in attendance you have

been late and irregular, and your officers reprove you, then the very way in which you take the reproof will be one of the best indications of the extent to which you possess the manly spirit. So, also, in the affairs that are outside the Brigade; he who receives reproof with modesty and the effort to amend, has learnt good lessons in the art of self-control.

HIGH COURAGE.—In the Boer war, at the battle of the Tugela, one of the first to cross the river was a bugler, fourteen years of age. His name was John Dunn. He had barely got on the far side than he was hit by the splinters of a shell and wounded in the muscle of his right arm and in the breast. Dropping his bugle he seized it with his left hand, and continued to sound the call. When Britain heard of that brave deed, it recognized that the lad Dunn was one of the heroes of the campaign. Yet there is a courage that is braver still. The spirit that does the right thing at all costs is the spirit of the highest courage. This makes us speak the truth without hesitation whatever it may involve; this makes us follow duty, however difficult it may be.

I read some time ago of a Scottish postman

whose conduct seemed to me to be more noble even than many a deed that has won the coveted V.C. It was a wild night of snow and storm. At Moffat the people stood waiting for the mail from Dumfries; presently it came, and they pleaded with McGeorge, the mailman, not to attempt to proceed further. "They blamed me once; they'll never blame me again," was his reply. At night a riderless horse came into Moffat; the next day a shepherd told how on the hillside he had seen something glint in the sunshine, and forcing his way through the drift, had found the mail-bag, its brass fittings shining from afar, whilst buried in the snow, one hand stretched out pointing to the bags, lay McGeorge, dead in the discharge of his duty, "wi' a kind o' a pleasure on his face."

KINDLY SERVICE.—The more manly a man is the more will he long to prove and use his strength in the doing of kind and helpful services for other folk. It is not a sign of real strength when one is more anxious to be served than to serve. If the Lord Jesus be our Example, that is, One whom we ought to copy, then He, the Truest Man, teaches us that in matters of

service "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

I have told you one incident from the late war. Here is another; I read it in a letter which the young British soldier spoken of sent home to his people. It was in one of those unhappy reverses that our arms too frequently encountered. A private was badly wounded and fell as he was struck, lying still within the line of fire. As he lay there helpless he saw a young Boer coming toward him, and thought that all was up with him now. To his intense surprise, the Boer said in kindly tone, "Are you much hurt, old fellow?" Then at risk to himself he removed him to a place of shelter out of the line of fire, gave him a drink from his water-bottle, and as soon as possible sent the ambulance to his aid. No more manly act was performed by Briton or Boer throughout the entire campaign, and yet it is not exactly the type of manliness that is most praised. This precise kind of service you are not able to render, but the act that helps another at home, at school, or in the wide, wide world, is open to you all.

If you desire to carry out St. Paul's counsel,

and to "Quit you like men," I commend to you this true manliness of SELF-CONTROL, HIGH COURAGE, and KINDLY SERVICE, all of which is according to the teaching of the Lord our Master.

“DON'T GET WAXY.”

A BOYS' BRIGADE ADDRESS.

Not long since I passed two boys in earnest conversation. I have no idea what they had been discussing, but evidently they had not seen eye to eye upon some matter, and the one lad looked rather red and upset and was raising his voice in loud tones. Just as I went by I heard number two say, “It’s all right, old fellow, don’t get waxy.” These words of excellent advice shall form my text this morning. You all know what it means to get “waxy,” for the probability is that we all have been in this condition more times than we care to remember. The one who gets “waxy” is the one who on slight provocation gives way to anger, ill-temper, or sulks. Some fellows get “waxy” very quickly; it is the one thing that spoils their character and interferes with their friendships. Now listen,

and I will tell you how it strikes the one who looks on.

1. THE BOY WHO "GETS WAXY" SOON BECOMES A DISAGREEABLE COMPANION. You can never be sure of him. One moment he is bright and merry and jolly, and the next moment something has displeased him and he is surly, sulky and passionate. One day I was discussing dogs with a gentleman who knew a great deal more about them than I did. I was expressing my preference for a collie, and he said, "I don't much care for collies, they have such uncertain tempers that you are never sure of them." Don't you think some boys are wonderfully like collies? In the Lake District you will often be told that the boating is not very safe because of sudden squalls; the gusts come sweeping over the mountain tops, and you may be caught before you know what best to do. You will find it just like this with the fellow who "gets waxy," the squalls are very sudden and very unpleasant. You dare not be free with such an one, you have to be always on your guard. If you are talking with him you are afraid to indulge in any pleasantries; if you are playing, you know

that if the game goes against him he will “cut up rough,” and at last you find out that the best plan is to leave him alone and seek out more pleasant companions.

2. THE BOY WHO “GETS IN A WAX” LOOKS VERY SMALL. Do you know the oft-quoted lines of the poet Burns :

“O wad some Pow’r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us,
It wad frae mony a blunder free us
And foolish notion”?

If you know these lines, think of them when the danger comes to you of giving way to temper and of getting in a “wax.” For whenever you yield you make yourselves look uncommonly silly. You would search a long time before you could find anything that makes a boy look more foolish than giving way to the sulks, and this is perhaps the most common form in which a “wax” manifests itself. No one likes to look foolish. This is why some fellows can never stand a joke and hate to be chaffed, because they think it makes them foolish in the eyes of others. But no amount of chaff, or fun, and no joke can ever make one look so utterly foolish as a boy

makes himself when he "gets in a wax." Many a one has lost the good esteem of other and of older folk because they have found that he cannot take a joke or enjoy a bit of fun at his own expense without losing his temper over it. Grown-up folk find it very hard to respect any one who quickly loses temper.

3. THE BOY WHO "GETS IN A WAX" OFTEN DOES THINGS THAT HE SOON COMES TO BITTERLY REGRET. We are told that "Anger is brief madness," and in moments of passion many things are both said and done that never would have been said or done had we been our true selves. And the trouble of it is, that once said it cannot be unsaid; once done it cannot be undone. We may regret a thing, but regret does not undo it. If you were to ask those who have to do with our Law Courts they would tell you that many a terrible crime was committed in a moment of unreasoning passion. One scene of my school life stands out very clearly in memory. I was in our playing-field, and all at once I heard one of my school-fellows cry out. Looking round I saw two fellows struggling on the grass. The one who was below had cried

for help, so I ran up just in time to prevent the other from driving his knife, which he had opened and held ready, right into his companion's body. They had been playing, and the one had called the other by a nickname that he did not like, and in a moment the fierce temper had blazed out, and if some one had not been there to prevent, he, in his momentary madness, would have wounded, if not killed, his comrade. A bitter word is so quickly said, and though it may not be really meant, though the one who said it may seek to take it back, yet it may inflict a wound that will hurt and pain for many a long day. It was good advice that a mother gave to her laddie :

“Keep a watch on your words, my darling,
For words are wonderful things;
They are sweet like the bee's fresh honey,
Like the bee, they have terrible stings.
They can bless like the warm, glad sunshine,
And brighten a lonely life :
They can cut in the strife of anger
Like an open, two-edged knife.
Keep them back if they're cold and cruel,
Under bar and ban and seal :
The wounds that they make, my darling,
Are always hard to heal.”

I wonder how many of us have lost happy hours, or refused good things, or broken valued friendships by "getting in a wax"?

Sometimes I have known very foolish vows made in a moment of temper. Now, as a rule, it is always right and necessary that you should keep your word, but there is one case in which it is wrong to keep your word. If in temper you say you will do a wrong thing, then you only add to the wrong by doing it, and the right course here is to break the foolish word lest the cause of regret become the greater.

Have you ever known what it means to have a thunder-storm in the home? I see you have. When it was by your ill-temper you made every one feel uncomfortable, when you were sorry for it, but the temper would not let you give in or say so. Take my word for it, neither father nor mother nor any one else thanks a lad for causing a storm in the home atmosphere.

4. To "GET IN A WAX" IS A SINFUL THING. If we remembered this we should be much more watchful than we often are. For if we are really trying to live a true, Christ-like life, then whenever we give way to temper we find that Conscience

troubles us. We cannot imagine that during His boyhood Jesus ever "got in a wax." The very utterance of the impossibility sounds almost as an irreverence. We are to copy Him, and what He did not do we should seek very earnestly to avoid. There are plenty of temptations in life without our adding to them by the wicked impulses that seize us when we yield to passion.

I think I hear a lad say, "I can't help it." Try, my boy, only try in God's strength. "And if at first you don't succeed, Try, try, try again." Think, take time, pray. It is recorded of a Greek in the days of the long ago, that he advised his sons that if ever they felt that temper was mastering them they should repeat the alphabet before making any reply. Repeat the alphabet! I know of a much better plan than that. Let a boy cry "God help me," and if he really mean it, he will not "get in a wax."

THE BIOGRAPH.

AMID all the pleasant things in the recent Exhibition that so delighted you, nothing was more popular than the wonderful biograph. We all pressed with the crowd into the Grand Hall, and waited patiently in the darkness till the hour arrived for the pictures to be shown. Then we were in turn interested, delighted, and amused. To many of you the biograph simply meant "a bit of fun," and you thought of it as something to laugh at. But now I would have you regard it as one of the most wonderful inventions even of this age of wonderful inventions, and then I would have you learn from it a very solemn but a very useful lesson.

The pictures that you see moving on the screen are a series of little photographs. With wonderful quickness, by a process that is instantaneous, photograph after photograph is taken of

the scene, taken, as you would phrase it, "as quick as thought." These are duly developed, arranged, and made into one long, continuous film, and then by a brilliant light, by a skilful arrangement of lenses, and by rapid unwinding of the film, the picture as you see it is thrown upon the screen, reproducing all the movement of the original scene before your eyes.

So true to fact are these pictures, that many a strange thing has been shown in public that certainly was never intended. I remember once a picture of a large crowd that had gathered on some public occasion, and there, in the midst of the crowd, was a pickpocket, busy at his evil tricks. You saw him press closely up to his victim, put his hand into her pocket, quickly draw something out, pass it on to his accomplice, and then dodge out of the way. How careful we all would be if we thought some camera were busy recording every ungentle, rude, or evil act that we were guilty of.

Boys and girls, such a camera is daily, hourly at work. Each of us has his own biograph. Every part of the apparatus is there. The photographs are being taken when we are not

thinking anything about them; they are made silently into permanent films, and in days yet to come, when the lights are dim, and other voices are silent, and all is quiet, we shall see over again many scenes in the life of to-day, and—because to this biograph a phonograph is also joined—we shall hear words that we thought would die as soon as they were uttered.

You all know what this biograph really is—we call it Memory. I know of few things about which you could think that are more wonderful than memory. Very clever men who have studied the subject for years tell us that in our brain there are thousands and thousands of tiny cells, so tiny that a needle's point would cover quite a host of them, and that they are being filled with the thoughts and the lessons and the scenes of to-day; and when something happens that touches them, they reproduce all that long past that is stored up in them. So long as life and reason last, memory will be active. Therefore we must be very careful, and not trust to the keeping of these brain-cells things that we shall be ashamed to think of in after years, nor let the busy film-maker take pictures that will cause us

to blush for very shame and sorrow when our boyhood and our youth give place to manhood's years, and the biograph makes our past live once again.

Let me tell you one incident that will illustrate how unexpectedly, how exactly, and how sternly true this biograph is. It was at a funeral. God had taken a dear mother to Himself, and by the grave-side, with his father and brothers and sisters, stood a boy nearly sixteen years of age. The minister, who knew him well, noticed that Frank was very troubled, and seemed to be the most distressed of all. His mother had been called to heaven very suddenly, and the minister thought that perhaps this was partly the cause of Frank's trouble, for he had come home from school not thinking mother was even ill, and had found that he would never again on earth hear her dear voice. So the good man tried to comfort the boy. But Frank said, "It is not only that mother is dead ; but, oh, sir, the very last time I spoke to her I was rude and disobedient, and now I can never tell her how sorry I am." Poor Frank ! The biograph was painfully, terribly exact in its truthful detail.

If you were to go to the men and women of this church, and ask them, they would tell you that in memory's biograph there are some films they would like to destroy; but the instruments are now out of their reach, and it is no use for them to cry, "Please don't turn on that picture. I don't want to see it." The picture is there, and they must look at it, despite the pain.

The Blessed Lord said to His disciples, "Watch and pray," and I think He says the same to us to-day. When evil tempts, when temper rises, when angry words come to the lips, when unclean thoughts are suggested to the mind, "Watch and pray." Then none of these unpleasant and hateful films shall be made, but, by His help, pleasant and noble and holy memories shall be treasured up for the days that are before you.

Think of life's biograph, and thus, by God's kind help, seek to lay up a rich store of such pictures as shall fill your future with peace and gladness.

THE GRAPHOPHONE, AND OTHER WONDERS.

AT an entertainment held in connection with a Sunday School a few months since, the great object of interest to many of the children present was a large graphophone. It seemed so strange to hear from that great brass, trumpet-shaped contrivance the voice of one whom they had never seen, and to hear it as it reproduced now a song and now a speech.

Have you ever asked any one to show you the mechanism of a graphophone? Not long since I stayed for a few days with a friend who had one, and one evening he offered to show me how the records were made upon the wax cylinders. A clean, fresh cylinder was placed upon the steel bar, the clockwork was duly wound up, it was set going, and I was told to speak down the trumpet. For a minute I could not think what to say;

then I began some lines from the poet Browning ; they happened to be just about the right length for the cylinder. When I had finished the cylinder was taken off, gently dusted, the clock-work re-wound, a reproducer replaced the recorder that had marked the wax at the vibration of my voice, and then I heard my own voice, or something like it, repeating over again the words, "I was born humble, sickly, mean, a slave," and so on to the end. I could not help saying aloud, "Wonderful ! wonderful ! !"

Since then I have thought of the graphophone very often, but the part I think most about is that wonderful cylinder of wax that keeps a practically permanent record of the sound of my voice and of the words that I uttered.

Yet I know of something that is far more wonderful than that, something that is so small that a needle point will cover many thousands of them, something that stores and treasures up not only words that we speak, but also thoughts that we think, and all things that we learn or that make any impression upon our consciousness. Can you guess what these wonderful things are ? They are our brain-cells.

I was speaking some time ago to a man who had made a study of the brain, and he told me how all that passes in our lives is stored up in one of these cells, and is there ready for future use when required, and that what we call our memory is just the unlocking of one of these myriad cells, that then tells its secret and closes itself up again for yet another day. In the brain and spinal cord of the average man there are something like three billion of these cells. If you will think of this, I am sure that you will agree with me that this is so wonderful that we can never cease to wonder at it, and to adore God, who has caused us to be thus wonderfully made.

I remember that some months since, when we were talking about the biograph, I told you about these brain-cells, and the lesson that we then learned was that we ought to be very careful what we entrusted to the keeping of these cells. To-day our lesson is different. There are two things for us to learn. Firstly, how great and wise God is, who has given such a marvellous instrument for our use as the human brain. Secondly, how wonderful man is, who uses his

brain to store his thoughts, and to convey his commands to the rest of his body.

1. THE INSTRUMENT SPEAKS OF THE WISDOM OF ITS MAKER.

Whenever we see a beautiful picture, or a wonderful machine, or a magnificent building, we think of the artist or the mechanic or the architect, and in like manner when we think of the wonders of the human body we think also of the One who made it, even God. No one ever takes it for granted that a cleverly-constructed machine made itself, every one knows that it must have a maker; and the wonderful body that we inhabit, with its wonderful brain, that also has had its Maker.

Let us think a little more about the brain. If some one were to tread heavily on your toes, you would certainly feel it; if you had a gathered finger, you would say that it pained you; and if at cricket you had a nasty blow, you would be conscious of the hurt. Do you know that every pain and ache and hurt that we feel, we feel not in the part actually suffering, but in the brain?

For this wonderful part of the body is not only a storehouse for the cells that treasure up the events and experiences of life for our future use ; it is also a centre where all the nerves from the different parts of the body meet : and what really happens when we feel any pain is that the part hurt sends its message along a nerve to this brain centre, and the pain is felt there, whilst the brain in its turn associates it with the injured part that we may know where the hurt is. All sensation—that means all feeling—is in the brain.

If you were to use the telephone you would ring up the central exchange and tell them the number with which you wanted to be connected, and they would join you on to that number, and then you could talk to the one that you desired to speak with. This central exchange has wires running to all parts of the city, and I in the west send word that I want some one in the east ; my message goes to the central exchange, and from thence on the right wire it goes out again to the east.

Now the brain is just like this. A stone has got into my shoe and is hurting my foot ; I need to take off my shoe and take it out, so the mes-

sage goes from the foot to the brain, then I am conscious of what is wrong, and the brain sends a message to my hands to take off the shoe.

The more you know about the brain the more full of wonder it will become to you, and the more you will recognize the wisdom of God in making such a wonderful instrument for our use.

I cannot understand any one who can say, "How clever was the inventor of the graphophone and of the telephone," and yet not see how infinitely wise is the God who made the brain that thought out these clever things, and that all our life long is performing such marvels.

2. THE INSTRUMENT NEEDS SOME ONE TO USE IT.

When I hear the graphophone singing its song or delivering its speech, I know that some human voice has first spoken on to the cylinder its message—the machine is distinct from the voice that thus has used it. In the same way if I listen to a message through the telephone I know that it is not the telephone that is speaking, it only conveys the sound of a human voice to me, and

enables me to hear at a great distance the voice of the speaker as if I were close to him.

So, if you can understand it, you make use of your body and of your brain (as the most wonderful part of the body), but you are not that which you make use of. In other words, we are not our bodies. These wonderful bodies are like houses which God has given us to inhabit for a time, so long, that is, as we live here on this earth. But God has made us more than body; our body has an end, it decays and passes away; but our real selves, the spirit part that dwells in the body and is distinct from the body, does not die.

Now I know that this is a difficult thought for you to lay hold of, but put your thinking caps on for a minute or two. Clever men tell us that every thought makes some slight change in the matter of the brain, and that the brain is the medium of thought, just as it is the storehouse of the thoughts of long ago; but it is not the brain that thinks, it is *I* that use it when I think.

If I sit at the piano and play some choice music, you hear the music as the notes struck

give out their harmonious sounds; but it is not the piano that plays, I am playing upon the piano. So when I use my brain, or by its help use any other part of my body, I, the unseen tenant, am using that which God has given me to enable me to live upon this earth and to make myself and my will known to others who, like myself, are living here for a time.

So, lads and lasses, don't make the mistake of thinking that you are only what your bodies are, and of simply letting them have their way in all things. The body is a wonderful machine, made and given to me by God for me to use for the highest and best purposes, and the best use I can make of the body is so to use it that it helps me, and helps others also, to do the will of God, who has given it to me for that very purpose.

ON BEING KIND.

I SOMETIMES wonder what you boys and girls read. I should like to think that every one of you is fond of reading, and is trying to gather together a little library of your own, for one of the ways to become fond of books is to feel as we look at them that they are "our very own."

Always take care of your books and treat them well, don't leave them to lie about anywhere, or to be flung into any odd corner out of the way, but have a place for them and keep them in that place.

However, I am not to talk about books this morning; I was led to say this much because I wanted to tell you about some words that you will find in one of the books written by the late Charles Kingsley. Be quite sure that as you gather up your library you find place for Kingsley's books, for they are amongst the best

reading that you could possibly get. He was very fond of writing rhyming letters to his friends, and one day in a letter to Tom Hughes, the man who wrote *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, he put these lines—

“Do the work that's nearest,
Though it's dull at whiles,
Helping, when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.”

I suppose you all understand what Kingsley meant by this: that we should try day by day to do all the good that we can in the way of cheering, encouraging, and helping those who are in need of a kind word, a kind smile, or a kind deed.

Now I am not quite sure that we all try to remember how easy it is to be kind, and how a little kindness goes a very long way to make life sweet and bright for other folk. You and I have been receiving kindness all our lives long; indeed, so accustomed are we to being kindly treated, that we are very much surprised and pained if any one ever treats us unkindly, it is something that we are not used to.

We are sometimes told that “Evil is wrought

by want of thought, as well as want of heart," but the want of thought will not excuse us for failing to do deeds of kindness, or for leaving the lame dog on the wrong side of the stile when we could have helped him over. Let us understand that we cannot all at once see what a word or deed of kindness may mean to the one who receives it.

I have read of a young lady who was hurrying across a street when she ran into a poor laddie who was selling newspapers, and almost knocked him down. Turning round, she said, "I beg your pardon, my little fellow." He looked at her in surprise, and then a smile spread all over his face, and drove away the gathering tears as he said, "Ye can have my parding, miss, and welcome, and if ye want to run agin me again and bowl me clean over, I won't say a word." When the lady had passed on, he turned to his mate and added, "I never had any one beg my parding afore, and it kind of made me feel queer." I think that it must be worth a kind word to make any one "feel queer" in that way.

A few days ago I was looking at a newspaper, and my eye caught this record of a kind act. A

poor woman was seen by a police officer to carefully pick something off the pavement and hide it in her apron. A little further on she stooped again and did the same thing, so the policeman stopped her and asked what she had there.

“‘You are hiding a jewel,’ the watcher said.
 (Ah, that was her heart—had the truth been read.)
 ‘What have you stolen?’ he asked again.
 Then the dim eyes filled with a sudden pain,
 And under the flickering light of the gas
 She showed him her gleanings. ‘It’s broken glass,’
 She said. ‘I ha’e lifted it up frae the street
 To be oot o’ the road o’ the bairnies’ feet.’”

Now what do you think of that? It was a small thing for the poor old woman to do, but how many cut and painful feet did she thus save? and how often, think you, in God’s book above, will there be a record like this, “She saved So-and-so from much pain.”

I have told you what an old woman did for the “bairnies,” now let me tell you what a school-boy did for an old woman. It is another illustration of what is meant by “Helping when you meet them, Lame dogs over stiles,” or better still, it is an illustration of what the Lord Jesus meant when He said, “Inasmuch as ye did it

unto one of these least, ye did it unto Me." I
will give it you just as I read it years ago.

"The woman was old, and ragged, and grey,
And bent with the chill of the winter's day;
The streets were white with a recent snow,
And the woman's feet with age were slow.

At the crowded crossing she waited long,
Jostled aside by the careless throng
Of human beings who passed her by,
Unheeding the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout,
Glad in the freedom of 'school let out,'
Came happy boys, like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow, piled white and deep.
Past the woman, so old and grey,
Hastened the children on their way.

None offered a helping hand to her,
So weak, so timid, afraid to stir,
Lest the carriage wheels, or the horses' feet,
Should trample her down in the slippery street.

At last came out of the merry troop,
The gayest boy of all the group;
He paused beside her and whispered low,
'I'll help you across if you want to go.'

Her aged hand on his strong young arm
She placed, and so, without hurt or harm,
He guided the trembling feet along,
Proud that his own were firm and strong;
Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy and well content.

'She's somebody's mother, boys, you know,
For all that she's aged, and poor, and slow,
And some one, some time, may lend a hand
To help my mother—you understand—
If ever she's poor, and old, and grey,
And her own dear boy is far away.'

'Somebody's mother' bowed low her head
In her home that night, and the prayer she said
Was, 'God be kind to that noble boy,
Who is "Somebody's son," and pride and joy.' "

Ah, lads and lasses, there are a lot of us who have grown up now, who once dreamed about the great things that we would do when we were but men or women. The great things have not been done; I do not suppose they will ever be done; perhaps it was not in God's plan that we should do great things.

Possibly also you will not find all your bright dreams come exactly true; but there is one thing every one of us, older or younger, may do, and may do every day we live—we may "scatter seeds of kindness, for our reaping by and by."

ON INFLUENCE AND LEADING STRAIGHT.

MANY of you will have read some of Tennyson's poems, and all, I expect, will know at least two of them: "The May Queen" and "The Charge of the Light Brigade." In one of his poems that you probably do not know so well, "The Princess," there is a charming song, one verse of which runs thus:

"O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying."

If you think for a minute or two, you will see that what Tennyson here means is that the influences of our life are like echoes that are never stilled, but are as the ripples in the pond made by the stones that we fling into the water,

growing larger and larger in ever-widening circles.

Now this is a thing worth thinking about, for none of us would like to set agoing some bad influence that would continue to do a lot of mischief long after we had forgotten all about it; and, on the other hand, if an influence that is on the right side is to be so powerful, then it is worth while trying to exert it.

Have you ever been to the Zoological Gardens and had a good look at the monkey-house? It is rare fun, I can assure you. They are such queer little creatures, and are so fond of copying what they see men and women doing. You need not tell them at home that I said they were very like monkeys, but in one respect most folk, whether they be lads and lasses or grown-ups, are like these queer little bipeds; they are full of the imitative tendency; that is to say, they are fond of copying other folk. Now if there are those who copy there must also be those who are copied, and it is just as well for us to understand that as we grow up, whether we like it or not, we shall in turn belong to both classes; that is to say, we shall both copy and be copied.

In the olden days, before printing was invented, all books had to be written by hand. The process was something like this: the author would write the first copy, then some one whose business it was to copy manuscripts would make a copy from it; if this man in copying did his work carelessly, then when it in turn passed on to another that he might copy it, he would reproduce all the mistakes that the last man had made, and so on. Therefore it was needful to be very careful lest mistakes once made should be repeated over and over again. It is just like this with our lives. We cannot be too careful what kind of a copy we set, because it is sure to be reproduced by some one or other. This is what we mean by our influence: it is setting a good lead to those who follow after.

Do you ever play at "follow the leader"? There is a sense in which much of our life is this game played on a large scale, only the leader cannot always tell who are following him. All the more reason then that he should always try to lead straight. I can tell you a story that will illustrate this. I heard the Rev. Charles Garrett tell it many years ago. He had just

gone to the city of Manchester to begin his ministry there. One evening he had to speak at a meeting in a chapel that he had not been to before; he was not quite sure of the way, and after a time he found himself walking by the side of a long and high wall; he was not certain that this was right, so hearing footsteps behind him he stopped to inquire. In a minute or so a boy and girl came up, and he said to them, "Can you tell me the way to Irwell Street Chapel?" The girl answered, "No, sir, we can't; we want to go there ourselves, and when we saw you were a minister we said, 'We'll follow him; he's sure to lead us right.'" Now that was rare confidence to put in any man, but why should not you and I always lead so straight that others may rightly place a like confidence in us?

There is one book that I want all my boy friends to read. Don't tell me it is out of date; for I tell you that there never has been a boys' book written to equal it, and it will be a very long time before such a book will be written again. It is that old favourite, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Those who know it well will

remember all about Arthur, and how he led both Tom Brown and Tom's chum East, and he led them straight just because he walked straight himself.

Sometimes I get talking to some of my friends who are school-masters about boys whom I knew when they were at school, and I have more than once heard this said, "His was a good influence," and it meant just the same as if the master had said, "He led straight."

Years ago I was spending a holiday with a friend, and we had a great many long walks together. Now if you have long walks you will probably also have long talks, and many a long talk upon all sorts of subjects we had. One day we talked about influence, conscious and unconscious, and my friend said something that I have never forgotten: "I am so afraid lest any one should suffer from my influence that I have half made up my mind not to make any more friends." It set me thinking; it was perhaps not the wisest thing to think or say, for he could not avoid influencing others whether he made friends or no, and probably, being a good man, he could exert a more powerful influence for good upon

his friends than he ever could exert upon those who only half knew him, but it showed how much he felt that

“Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.”

There is one thing certain, that if we are going to “lead straight” we must be decided as to the path that we ourselves are walking in, and we must so walk in it that others are not left in uncertainty as to what path it is. We all know that there are times when it wants a lot of pluck to take the right path; men and women find this out quite as often as do boys and girls. But you never would follow through life one who wobbled here and there.

When I was at school near to Dover, we used often to cross a large field—I think of it to-day as the largest single field I have ever seen. There was no made road, but the public had a certain right-of-way from corner to corner; every year the farmer ploughed his field, road and all, and every year a fresh path had to be trodden down. Now a great deal depended upon who first crossed the field after the ploughing. If it was one who “led straight” the path

was fairly direct; but if it was a wobbler, then the next would follow in his steps, and it was a crooked way. I want you to be like "Good King Wenceslaus" in the carol, and be able to say to all, "Mark the footsteps that I take; tread thou in them boldly."

When the late Dr. James Wood, of Southport, went to Wesley College, Sheffield, on his first night there he heard one of the boys say in a loud whisper, as he pointed to a group of new fellows who were feeling a bit homesick: "What sort of fellows will these new boys be? I wonder if they will be of the good sort?" When he heard that he felt he must let it be known what his path was to be, so he quietly said, "You may as well know what I mean to try to be." It wanted courage to do that, didn't it?

Now for a closing story. It is about the celebrated battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The British forces were encamped some miles away, and to reach the enemy's trenches a pathless desert had to be crossed by night. The officer did not feel that it would be safe to trust a native, and he was perplexed how to find the way, when a young naval lieutenant offered to guide the

troops by the stars. In the battle this youth was one of the first to fall, mortally wounded. When the commanding officer went to see how it fared with him, the battle having been fought and won, he looked up and said eagerly, "Colonel, didn't I lead them straight?"

That's it, lads: "Lead Straight."

KYNANCE COVE.

How many of you can tell, straight away, the name of the most southerly point of England? The Lizard? Yes, that's right.

After all the business of the recent Conference was ended, I went to see the wonders of this far-famed spot. Not that the actual point that is called the "Lizard" has anything very beautiful about it—it is but a long, low spit of land running out into the sea; but close at hand, within half-a-mile eastward and westward, there may be seen some of the most lovely coast scenery that can be found throughout the whole length of the shores of our Island Home. Fortunately it was a perfect day, not very hot, but with a bright blue sky, such as I have only seen in Cornwall; a sky that brought out in all their charm the wonderful colours of the water,

as it broke upon the rocks or rippled on the whitest sand.

A little to the west of the Lizard is Kynance Cove, said by many to be the gem of all the beauties of the county. You must see this place when the tide is low, for at high water the rocks are inaccessible, the sand is covered, and the water roaring in the caverns prevents one from exploring their recesses. Perhaps you have seen pictures of the Cove, for artists love its beauty, and do not tire of trying to transfer some of it to their canvas. I had seen some of these pictures, and used to think that the colours were exaggerated, and that no water could show at once such deep blues, and strange purples and wonderful greens, fringed with a foam of dazzling whiteness; but now that I have been to Kynance and seen it for myself, I know that no picture can be as beautiful and no colours that man can put on a canvas so fair and lovely as those which Nature here treats us to when in her kindlier moods.

I wish I were able to paint in words a picture that would help you to see what, in memory, I am now gazing at. You go down a steep path

to a little bay that is almost a semicircle. High cliffs of a wonderful rock known as Serpentine, a rock more like marble than ordinary rock, and which I was told is not found elsewhere, close the sweep of the Cove. Within the bay are detached masses of this same rock forming little islands, whilst between them are stretches of sand, the whitest and finest that I have seen, made by the waves that in their winter fury have crushed and pounded innumerable shells until the shore has become thus strewn with this fair sand-covering. The rocks are not only very hard, but they also have marvellous colours. The main tint is a deep purple-red, but it is veined with green and pink, and here and there you find streaks of a colour that is like the yellow plumage of a canary.

From this Serpentine, with the Malachite (as the green rock is termed), and other rocks whose names I won't trouble you with, beautiful ornaments are made, for the stone takes a fine polish, and these you can see, and if you have not spent all your money, you can buy, in the many little shops that offer them for sale.

But it is the water that shows the richest colour

of all. Out at sea it is a deep blue of the tint known as ultramarine; nearer the shore it turns to an emerald green, except where there are rocks that rise near to the surface, and they change it to a series of purples; still further in, just as the waves break on the sand, it is such a light, delicate green that you seem to be looking right through it, as if the water is full of sunlight—indeed one of the party said that it looked like liquid ginger-beer bottles, and though one did not like the comparison, yet I know of none that gives you the tint more truly—and this again gives place to the cresting foam, as white as fancy can picture.

When you first see the Cove, before you have opportunity to examine the rocks closely, the great masses of Serpentine seem to rise black and stern from the circling waters, and as I looked at them first from a distance, and then close at hand, they taught me a lesson which now I pass on to you.

It seemed to me that Kynance Cove on that summer morning was like a picture of our lives. The rippling, beautiful waters represented the bright and pleasant days, the happy holidays,

the agreeable pursuits, and all that is congenial and welcome. And the rocks, rising in their strength and in their darkness, stood for the less pleasant, but perhaps the more important things, the duties, and the difficult toils and the hard tasks that at first do not seem very inviting or desirable, but that prove to have in them so much that is noble and grand—yes, and fair and beautiful also—when once we earnestly face them, and by hard and faithful work get the polished stone out of the rugged and shapeless mass.

I believe that God in His goodness means that there shall be very much that is bright and joyous in our lives, just as there were the blue skies and the rippling, many-coloured waters in that fair scene at Kynance on the day that I am telling you about.

I am also sure that God means that there shall be the real worth of toil, and the dignity of work and the grandeur of duty in our lives, or else with all that is so pleasant they would lack worth and purpose.

Kynance would not be one half so beautiful if it were only sand and sea. The rocks, beautiful in themselves, make both sand and sea more lovely.

As you go through life you will learn the value of contrasts, and you will find that in any picture you need the shade to throw the light into brighter relief.

There was, in my boyhood's days, an old song about "all work and no play," and there was a second verse about "all play and no work." I don't know which to dread the most. I want some play to give me rest, and to refresh and to fit me for further work; I must have work, or I shall find at the last that I can no longer enjoy the hours of play, and I shall come to despise myself as one whose life has been all wasted.

Beautiful as are the tints and visions of the water, it is not from them that the enduring and useful articles that add to the charm of the home are made, not from them that the workers get food for the family; it is from the rock that hides its beauty, and must be quarried and cut and shaped and polished ere the hidden worth is revealed.

If we can understand life aright we shall not make little of the sunny laughter or the pleasant holiday or the merry game, we shall value all bright and beautiful hours, and treasure up their

memories as we treasure precious things ; but at the same time we shall look on work and labour as the more enduring and the more important, and we shall not forget that he who seeks finds the elements of permanent worth and beauty not in the mirth of the hour that passes, but in the purpose of the strenuous hours in which we attempt to fulfil the task that God has allotted to us.

GARGOYLES.

THERE is one thing that I should greatly like to teach some of you boys, and that is to understand and take an interest in the old churches that are to be found in various parts of the land. The grand old cathedrals are not only beautiful buildings in which God's people have worshipped Him for many, many long years, but if you take the trouble to learn about them you will find that they are full of historic interest—indeed, we might almost call them histories in stone.

Perhaps some day you will go to Gloucester, and then even the younger of you will see a great difference between the heavy building of the part called the nave and the part that is more to the east, which is known as the choir, and is so beautiful that some say it has never been surpassed by any church in any land. If you, then, were to ask its history you would hear a wonder-

ful story about the murdered king, Edward II., and a brave old man known as Abbot Thokey, who, when no one else would give the body of the king decent burial, risked his own life to do honour to his dead sovereign, and how in after days Edward III. recognized this and showered honour and wealth upon Gloucester in return.

But to-day I must not stop to say anything more about cathedrals in general, because I want to tell you about one special feature that you can see in each and all of these old churches.

Do you know what a gargoyle is? I expect that many of you have never even heard the word before, and that you rather wonder whatever it can be that has such a strange name. Let us walk round the outside of the church. Look up to the place where the roof joins the walls; do you see those queer jutting stones, some of which are so worn by the weather that to-day they are almost shapeless? Let us go to the other side, where the storms do not beat so violently, and where, therefore, the design of the carving has been better preserved. How ugly many of them are, such grinning faces, so hideous that we are thankful that we don't often

have to meet beings that are quite so repulsive in their looks.

What are they for? If it was raining heavily you would soon see, for out of the mouths of those dragons, or demons, or grinning men you would see a thin stream of water trickling, and then you would know that they are water-spouts to carry off the rain-water from the roofs.

But why are they so ugly? The answer to this question should teach us a great lesson. You will notice that they are all outside the church, and they were made thus repulsive to symbolize the truth that all unclean and hateful things are by the power of the Holy Spirit driven out of God's house, for where His Word of Truth comes it expels all error, passion, uncleanness and sin. Possibly, if you have read history, you may think that the actual fact did not just coincide with the idea thus symbolized, and I am afraid that is true, for sometimes evil does get inside the house of God, but for all that the idea is right enough, and where God comes evil flies.

The monks and the builders who raised these splendid churches, in the days of long ago, teach us by these quaint stones the same lesson that

Jesus taught when He drove the traders out of the Temple, scattering them with His scourge of cords. God's house must be a holy place, and all forms of evil, whether it be an evil thought, word, or deed, should give way to the influences of His Gospel which hold sway there.

Sometimes we wish that this were always true, and that when we come to the house of God all the evil of our hearts would leave us; but even if we are sadly conscious that sinful thoughts and tempers do come with us to the holy place and will persist in forcing themselves upon us there as well as in the world outside, yet we can always resist them by remembering that it will not be God's house for us unless we earnestly strive to keep all that is unholy outside. No building as such can in the highest and truest sense be of itself God's house, for God does not dwell in houses built by our hands, but if we learn to love the place of prayer and worship, and always seek to let holy thoughts and good influences rule us therein, then the church becomes to us God's house indeed.

There is, however, another way in which we may apply the lesson taught by the gargoyles.

You remember the word in which St. Paul tells us that we are the temples of God. Turn to the third chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and then, with the help of the marginal references or a Concordance, turn to other passages, and you will be surprised to find how often the apostle speaks of the Christian as being the temple of God. Now, if this is to be in any real sense true of us, it will mean that all evil, unholy, unclean things are to be driven out, for the inside of God's temple must be all fair and beautiful.

Let us see what this means to you and me. The other day something happened that did not please you, and in a minute you were so angry, the scowl came over your face, the bitter words flew to your tongue, and the fist was clenched ready for the blow. That meant that at least one ugly spirit was *within*. Or you had done something that was forbidden, and on being questioned you prevaricated or denied—at all events you did not at once and frankly tell the truth. Another ugly thing *inside*. Or you were at play with other fellows, and you would have your own way, and sulked and spoiled the

game for them as well as for yourself—in other words, you were abominably selfish. That means another and a very ugly spirit *not yet driven out*. Or possibly some one suggested a nasty, unclean thought, and instead of turning from it with indignation, you encouraged it with further talk, even though you knew that it was very wrong. This is the ugliest of all the ugly things that try to get into God's temple, and if the temple is to be holy this must certainly be cast out, and that at once. All these ugly things, even if at first they are within, must be where the grinning faces or repulsive forms of the gargoyles are—*outside*, and there they must be kept.

I think, however, that I can hear some lad say, "How can I turn them out?"

That is a very important question, and one that it is wise to ask. Remember how the temple was cleansed. Jesus turned out the men and the things that defiled. Now, if He did that for God's house once, don't you think that He will do it for God's house again, and especially if the boy who longs that his body may be "God's temple" were to ask Him? What do we read? "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be

full." Our joy cannot be full so long as we know that the evil things are on the wrong side of God's house—inside instead of outside. So, it is plain what we have to do. We must strive against these things, all the time asking the help of the Lord Jesus, and then the ugly faces will soon be on the outside.

I have just thought of an illustration that may help you to see this clearly. A lad was one day doing some weeding for me in my garden; he came across a big weed, and I heard him say to it, as he gave a great tug, "What are you doing there? you have no right there! Up you come!" That is to be your attitude towards all that your conscience tells you must not be found in the temple of God, whose temple ye are. "You have no right here; out you go!"

Now the next time you pass a really old church, look up at the gargoyles, and remember that ugly things are to be, one and all, *outside*.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL :

THE MEMORIAL OF A BRAVE DEED.

I AM going to tell you to-day of an event that you will read of in your History of England, and of a very brave deed that stands connected therewith.

When the sturdy old King Edward I. died at Burgh-on-Sands, he was succeeded by his son, Edward II. The son was a very different man from his father ; he was so weak and incapable that he became the mere tool of his favourites—men whom he had raised to positions of power, incurring thereby the jealousy and hatred of the older barons. Two of these were called Piers Gaveston and Hugh De Spenser. These men exerted a very bad influence upon him, and their advice, which he nearly always followed, created for him many enemies. In a war with Robert the Bruce of Scotland he suffered the humiliating

defeat of Bannockburn (a fact which you Scotch lads and lassies do not forget), and this increased the hatred and suspicion by which he was regarded. Then his queen, Isabella, rose against him, and with the aid of one Roger Mortimer, a man of great power, they took the unhappy king prisoner, caused him to be solemnly deposed, and then imprisoned him in Berkeley Castle.

Now there can be little doubt that Mortimer had reasons of his own for wanting the deposed king out of the way, and probably Isabella also felt that things would never go well with her so long as her husband lived to be a possible source of trouble, so they decided on the extreme course of having him put to death. It was not likely that the barons in council would have consented to such an extreme measure, therefore Mortimer took matters into his own hands, and sent some of his men to Berkeley Castle with orders to put the unhappy Edward to death. This was done in about the most cruel and diabolical manner possible. Then came the question where the body should be buried. The lord of the castle was desirous that it should receive the burial due to a king. He sent to three of the great churches

near at hand to ascertain if they would receive the murdered king's body and give it honourable burial. But, afraid to risk the anger of Isabella and of Mortimer, the Abbots of Bristol, Kingswood and Malmesbury in succession refused to grant the request. The old writers do not make it quite plain whether the body was actually taken to these churches and turned away, or whether permission to bring it there was all that was asked. In any case it seemed as if there was no place where the king could be decently buried.

Then the old Abbot of Gloucester, by name Thokey, heard of it, and he sent his chariot, on which the arms of his church were painted, so that all who met it knew to whom it belonged, and he brought in state the body to his monastery of St. Peter's at Gloucester, and in the presence of all the monks clothed it in the robes that as abbot he himself would wear, and then in a stately procession carried it into the church and placed it in a tomb near to the high altar on the north side of the choir.

Now that was a brave, a very brave act, for he knew that those who had caused a king to be murdered, even if he were a deposed king, would

not hesitate to wreak their anger upon an abbot ; but of this he cared little—Edward had been his king and his guest, and he would do his duty whatever Isabella and Mortimer might think or do.

For a few years it seemed as if the deed had ended in itself, but after a time great results began to follow. When Edward III. assumed the full power of his position he built a costly and beautiful monument over his father's tomb, and he and the queen Philippa, and the Black Prince, and William the king of Scotland, all made costly gifts to the monastery ; their example was followed by many, many others, until the Abbot became so rich that he decided to alter the choir of his church and rebuild it with great magnificence.

Old Abbot Thokey was dead by this time, so the work fell on his successors—Abbots Wygmore, Staunton, and Horton. Between them they gave us the present choir, which is in some respects as beautiful as anything that exists in any of our English cathedrals. This is the lasting memorial of the brave and noble deed of the good old Abbot Thokey.

Whenever I think of this, or see a picture of Gloucester that reminds me of it, I begin to see that in some way or another God takes care of every really brave and noble act and does not let it die. I do not mean to say that the result will always be as evident and as splendid as is the result in the case I have told you about; but I am sure that all that is done from a sense of duty, especially when that duty is full of danger, cannot fail to produce some worthy result. If there is nothing else that follows the brave deed, there is always the fact that he who does it is made a nobler and a better man thereby. A cowardly act cannot be a pleasant memory, nor can it have any really helpful influence upon the one who is guilty of it. He may, perhaps, for a time escape unpleasant consequences that would have followed the braver deed, but think how terrible it must be to have your conscience ever saying to you, "You are a coward! a coward! a coward!" I should think that he would give anything to stop that voice.

On the other hand there is this certain fact, that if one is brave enough to do the right thing, not being deterred by the fear of consequences,

then, whatever the consequences may be, there will always be deep down in his inmost consciousness the thought, "I played the man, I did the right."

I know that it often happens that the brave act does not seem to be the safest or the wisest at the time. No doubt the Abbots of Bristol, of Kingswood and of Malmesbury thought that they had acted very prudently when they refused to receive the body of Edward, and that they would have sore misgivings and shake their heads solemnly over the foolish act of the Abbot of Gloucester, thinking that he and his abbey would have to suffer greatly for a deed that seemed to bid defiance to those who then were in power and who were using their power so cruelly. But I expect that in their hearts both Isabella and Mortimer admired the brave old man, and thought a lot more of him than they did of the others whose conduct had been so wanting in courage.

Have you ever heard the song, "The Vicar of Bray"? If you have you know how he continually changed his opinions and shaped his conduct in order to please those who were in

power; and whilst others were being ejected from their churches for conscience' sake he, by a lot of miserable trimming, managed to keep his position. The result is that to-day all that hear about him despise him.

I heard a story a little while ago that will bring this lesson home to the life of to-day. There was a young woman in a large draper's shop in London; she was trying to be a Christian and to do right. One day a customer asked her for a certain kind of cloth; she showed the best that they had in stock, but the customer wanted a more expensive quality. The young woman said, "That is the most expensive cloth of that kind that we have." At that minute one of the firm was passing and heard it, so quickly altering the price, he said to her, "That will never do; go after the lady and tell her you have found this at a higher price." The girl took the cloth and, catching up the lady, said distinctly, "I am sorry that I cannot find any at a higher price." A little later on she was summoned to the private office, and her employer said to her, "Did I not tell you to report that cloth at such a price?"

"Yes, sir," was the answer.

"Why did you not do it then? am I not your master?" said her employer.

"Well, sir, you are, and you aren't," replied the brave girl. "I cannot do a wrong thing even at your bidding."

The master looked at her, then he said, "You are right; I did not think you had been so brave; you may go."

To my mind this deed ranks with the deed of the old Abbot, for both were true to their sense of duty, and dared the consequences; and though no splendid building will be the permanent memorial of the young woman's courage, yet in the thoughts that it stirred in the mind of her employer, in the example that it set to others, and in the strengthening of her own character, her deed lives, and shall live for ever.

DOES IT PAY?

THIS is a question that is often asked instead of the nobler one, "Is it right?" For sometimes the thought that determines our conduct is, "Will it bring me any gain or any pleasure, and will the pleasure be worth the price that I shall have to pay for it?" I want to prove to you that whatever may seem to be the result, it never pays to act in opposition to our conscience, that is, to do wrong.

1. SIN DOES NOT KEEP ITS PROMISES.

If you were to ask many who have grown old in doing wrong, and who started to do wrong because they thought they would have a better time than if they were to listen always to conscience, you would find that they would tell you the same thing that good men say, "A sinful life does not satisfy." Just at first it is full of

excitement and of delight, but this soon passes away and leaves only regrets behind.

If you watch a bonfire built of brushwood you will see that it blazes finely for a few minutes, then it goes out, and there is nothing left but ashes. When the Exhibition fireworks were on, I heard one say to his comrade, "Well, that's done, and only smoke's left." And the "afterward" of sin is very like this. When the sin is past the pleasure is gone, and only pain is left. Sin is full of cruel deceit. "There may be joy in doing, but it palls when done."

In the city of Cairo the principal building is the Citadel. Years ago a very cruel deed was done there. The ruler of Egypt had long been at feud with certain Bedouin chiefs. Professing to want their friendship and to be willing to forget the past, he invited them to a grand feast. Not suspecting any treachery they came. He feasted them right royally, but when, the feast over, they were leaving the Citadel, they found that the gate of the courtyard was closed against them. When they called the warder to open, the answer was a murderous fire of musketry directed against them from the loopholed

walls that surrounded the courtyard. Out of all the number only one escaped to tell the world the tale of treachery. This is very like sin ; it promises good things and gives evil.

2. SIN TAKES FROM US THINGS WE DO NOT WISH TO LOSE.

The first thing it takes is our self-respect, and with it our peace of mind. As soon as the wrong thing is done Conscience begins to speak, and sin cannot answer that.

Do you remember how, when Judas took the money back to the priests, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood," they answered, "What is that to us? See thou to it." That is sin all over. It robs us and then laughs at us.

Long years ago I used to read a little story called *Mother's Last Words*, and I remember how in that story a lad who had stolen something thought in his sleep that he heard voices calling "Thief! thief!" And not only does sin take away our self-respect, but it takes the respect of others also. If ever those who have to do with you come to say, "I can't trust you, I can't

believe what you say," then you have suffered a terrible loss and have to blame sin for it.

3. SIN BRINGS US WHAT WE DO NOT WANT TO HAVE.

I once knew a part of London in which were to be found a great many who through sin had fallen very low; indeed, I think I may say that there were as many sad proofs of what sin brings men to gathered there as in any other part of Britain, except, of course, in the prisons. One day I was talking to a gentleman who knew a great deal about that neighbourhood, and he told me that he could find men who once were in high positions, in the learned professions, in good businesses of their own, and who had been brought down by sin.

In the *Methodist Recorder*, a paper that many of you see, I saw a few days ago a letter written by a friend of mine. He has been the headmaster of a large boarding-school. He is now a magistrate. In this letter he told how a man was brought before him on a charge of drunkenness. He thought that he looked an educated man, and asking a few questions he found that

he had been a boy in Skye, had come to Glasgow, and had trained for the teaching profession at the same college that he himself had been at; then he had been a school-master in Oban, and yet there he was in the dock of a police court.

I could tell you to-day of boys who were once in my own classes, and who listened to sin, and have found that sin is very cruel. I know of one who died through his wrong-doings, of another who has been in prison, and of a third who has had to flee the country.

4. SIN IS EASY TO DO, BUT OH! SO HARD TO UNDO.

It is always easier to go down-hill than to climb up again. I was once under Beachy Head, and I saw a young man who had climbed a long way down and was in great peril, but when we told him to go back and climb up, he said he could not do it, for his head was held by a rock; if the coastguards had not come with ropes he would have been dashed to pieces.

Years since I had a chum who went wrong, and when friends urged him to give up a certain bad habit, he said, "I can't; I have tried awfully

hard, but I can't." Even if by God's help you do turn from sin and find power to live again a good life, yet the memory of the evil days will always remain a sorrow and a pain.

There is a story told of a boy who was very untruthful. His father had tried many ways of curing him, and at last hit on the plan of driving a nail into a certain board every time he detected his son in an untruth. As the board grew blacker and blacker the lad got heartily ashamed, and tried very hard to cure himself of the sinful habit. His father, seeing this, promised to pull out a nail whenever he gained the victory and told the truth. After a time the board was nearly clear, and the father, to encourage the lad, said, "See, Willie, nearly all the nails are gone." "Yes, father," said the boy, "but the marks are left." "I can't forget," said one to me not long since, who was mourning over an old and pardoned sin.

"The way of transgressors is hard." Listen to Conscience, boys and girls, and put your hearts and lives into God's keeping.

X " AND " Y ": THE TWO UNKNOWN QUANTITIES.

THIS looks something like a lesson in algebra, and so it is, only not quite the same kind of algebra as you will find in your school books, though that will greatly help us to understand what we are going to talk about this morning.

You boys and girls who at school have learnt a little algebra, know that after the earlier chapters have been mastered you come to simple equations, and then you get familiar with " x ," the unknown quantity whose value, by working out the equation, you have to ascertain. After simple equations come problems. Here you have first to state your problem in the form of an equation, and then work it out.

Here is an illustration of an easy problem :—

"A person spends one-third of his income in board and lodging, one-eighth in clothing, one-tenth in charity, and saves £318. What is his income? Now you start. Let " x " = income in pounds. Then

$$x = \frac{x}{3} + \frac{x}{8} + \frac{x}{10} + 318,$$

and you soon find out how much the man has year by year. I'll let you work it out for yourselves. The answer is £720.

A little later on you come to problems involving two unknown quantities " x " and " y ," and in working out such, you know that if you can find the value of one it is very easy to find the value of the other. As the school books phrase it, " x determines y ."

Will you lads and lasses be greatly surprised if I tell you that, to us older folk, each one of you is as a problem with two unknown quantities, and if we could determine the one we should find it easy to discover the other? One of the unknowns is your future. What kind of men and women will you be, say, in ten or twenty years' time? Let " y " stand for that. Now

what does " x " stand for? Let us try and find out what this other unknown means. I think we can manage to discover it if we try to state the problem.

What things go to make up a worthy and useful life? We will arrange them, so far as we know anything about them. First of all comes "home." We know a great deal about that. How good and loving and wise and careful father and mother are. How many times they pray both for and with you, and how, if it lay altogether with them, they would secure for you a good future. We know also something about your brothers and sisters, and what a happy, merry home life many of you have. Next to home comes "school." About this, also, we can know much. We see your lessons, we hear your talk both about work and play, and we can observe the measure of diligence and interest that you display in regard to your tasks. Then come your "physical powers," and they can be ascertained easily enough. Your "brain power" is not quite so readily discoverable, but still we have a pretty correct estimate of it. Then we must put into the equation your "temperament

—your disposition,” for we know that it is an easier thing for some to do the right than it is for others. Lastly we must take account of your “companions,” for they have a very great deal to do with determining your future. Now can we state the problem? Will it run thus:—

y = home + school + health + brains + disposition + companions?

No, something else is wanted yet, x must come in; and by x I understand your deepest, most earnest, aim, purpose, motive. Without this we cannot solve the problem. Till we know what x is we cannot say what y will be. And it all depends upon x whether y shall turn out a + or a - quantity. That is to say, it all depends upon the purpose of your heart whether your future shall be a rich success or a miserable failure.

Now, lads and lasses, what is “ x ” with you? There are only two who can really know it unless you declare it. These two are yourself and your God. In the moments when you think deeply and seriously—when you really know yourselves—do you find that purpose to be faithful, honest, pure, diligent, kindly, useful:

to be in fact an out-and-out Christian? Can you then really sing with absolute honesty the prayer—

“Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise”?

If so, then knowing what your “ x ” equals, I am confident also that the other unknown, the “ y ,” shall be a glorious gain.

WHAT THE OLD YEAR SAYS.

"The days that are past."—DEUT. iv. 32.

I HAVE at home a rather strange book. I do not think that there is any one else living to whom it would prove interesting, and yet to me it is full of interest. It contains a record of my thoughts and experiences during the two years throughout which I was a Sunday School teacher in the town of Brighton. As I turn over the pages of that book, written entirely by myself, many thoughts come crowding upon me, and many lessons from the past are taught over again.

To-day you write what will be almost the last page of one of the volumes which contain your life-story. Every word of it has been written by yourself, and, therefore, it must be full of interest to you. Now, I propose that we should turn over the leaves and read some of the things

therein recorded, and learn certain lessons that the Book of the Old Year should teach.

1. First in order comes "BE GRATEFUL."

For the year has brought us more happy hours than we can well remember, yet it will be worth our while to try and recall them. Some foolish people only remember the unpleasant things and the dark days of life, and let the pleasant things and the sunny hours pass by without a thought.

Have you heard the fable about the girl that grumbled? Nothing ever pleased her; other people always had better things than she had; other boys and girls always had more pleasures and delights. At least, so she chose to think. One day she fell asleep after a long, unhappy, discontented grumble. Then a fairy came and asked her what was wrong, and offered to show her all the bright and happy and pleasant things that had come that day into the life of one whom he knew. And so the fairy began and went through hour after hour of the day, until the grumbler said, "I wish I could have such things—but I never get them." Then the fairy said, "I'll show you now the one to whom all

these good things came," and he showed her a picture of herself.

But we will not be grumblers as we turn over the Book of the Old Year. What do the pages speak about? Father, mother, brothers, sisters, home, love, health, work, play, books, games, presents, holidays. What a lot to be grateful for. And that is not all. For there are many pages that tell of God's love and God's care and God's help. Yes, the first lesson certainly is "Be grateful."

2. The second is "BE WISE."

For each day should add to our store of knowledge and of wisdom. The first time I went to the Children's Home at Edgworth I did not know the way, so soon after I left the railway station I saw a boy that I thought belonged to the Home, and I asked him to direct me. Very politely he said, "I am going there, sir; may I walk with you?" So we got into conversation, and he told me he was sixteen years of age, and had left school, and was one of the "working boys." "Oh," I said, "you have left school; is that because you have learnt all you need to learn?" And with a merry twinkle

in his eye he looked up and said, "Hardly that, sir. I don't expect you have, have you?" He "had me" there, and I readily answered, "No, and never shall."

Each day has its own lesson, and he is wise who tries to learn the lesson of the day in the day, and to take care that to-day adds something to yesterday's store. Nothing can be more foolish than to let the idle days glide by without leaving us any the better, any the wiser. "Work while you work, and play while you play," is a splendid motto for every boy and girl; and whether you are at school or have got into business, you have still lots of lessons to learn.

The good Bishop Hannington, who was martyred while trying to reach Uganda, used to look back sorrowfully to his wasted school-days, and say, "I was never driven to learn. Would that I had been driven." But there is one thing better than being driven, and that is to learn cheerfully without the driving. So the second lesson of the Book of the Old Year is "Be wise."

3. The third is "BE PATIENT."

Some folk want to do everything in a hurry,

and have done with it, and when they find that the only way to do great and worthy deeds is to do each little deed well, and in its own time, and to keep on doing little deeds in this same patient, earnest spirit, they get discouraged and give up trying.

I once heard a story that made this plain. An old grandfather's clock, that had gone steadily all the year, had just struck twelve on the midnight of December 31. Then the pendulum stopped swinging.

The dial looked down to the pendulum, and said, "What's the matter? what have you stopped for?"

And in a grieved voice the pendulum replied, "Why, I've just been thinking that we are beginning another year, and in that year there will be 365 days, and in each day 24 hours, and in each hour 60 minutes, and in each minute 60 seconds, and I shall have to tick once a second, and that means I have got to tick 31,536,000 times, and I know I can't get through such a lot of work, and so I don't see the use of trying."

And the wise dial answered, "You foolish little thing! Don't you know you will always

have a second to tick in, and will never have to give two ticks at once?"

And the pendulum scratched its head and said, "I never thought of that," and off it started and went on till it had ticked all the 31,536,000, except the few it had lost through its folly.

Just so each task brings its own strength and its own time, and we need not be afraid because the tasks are many. This, then, is the third lesson of the Book of the Old Year, "Be patient."

4. And the last is "BE CAREFUL."

For the day that is past comes not again. Vespasian, the Roman Emperor, if he felt that he had gained nothing from any day, nor given to it "something to keep in store," used to say, "*Diem perdidit*" (I have lost a day). Our bright, beautiful boyhood or girlhood only comes to us once, and if we spoil it or waste it, or let it be ruined by acts that conscience forbids, we can never recall it to alter the writing that is written.

In one of his poems Longfellow, one of the sweet singers of America, writes:

"Whatever hath been written must remain,
Nor be erased, nor written o'er again."

Therefore let us think and watch and pray, lest we write things that are foolish or evil, or fail to write those good things which only can be written by the help of God.

These are the lessons that the Book of the Old Year teaches us to-day. Let us at least try to learn them thoroughly.

THE EYES OF GOD.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch over the evil and the good."—PROVERBS XV. 5.

IN a certain Sunday School in the city of Liverpool there used to be immediately over the superintendent's desk a large painted eye. The artist had so skilfully drawn it that, in whatever part of the room you might be, that eye seemed to be looking directly at you. I suppose it was intended to remind all, both old and young, of those words that read, "Thou God seest me."

I once asked a friend to come and help me at some meeting that was being held there, and as soon as it was over he said to me, "Before I come again, have that eye painted out. It haunts me, and makes me feel uncomfortable." Now, there are certain texts that do for boys and girls the very same thing that the painted eye did for my friend—they haunt them and make them feel uncomfortable. This text is one of them.

It generally happens, however, that if a text like this makes one thus unhappy, it is either because the text is not understood, or else because the one who is troubled by it has a guilty conscience. I think that many are troubled by this text simply because they have never really understood it; so many people think that God plays the spy in order to get them into trouble. I hope I need not tell you that it does not mean anything like this, and that such a thought of God is altogether false.

Many long years ago some one had hung over my crib a small piece of cardboard, on which were printed the words, "Thou God seest me," and though it is so long ago that I cannot even recall where I was living at the time, I do distinctly remember how I hated that piece of cardboard, for it made me think of God as a big man in blue.

Look again at this text, and you will see warning and encouragement in it, and both are equal.

There is WARNING. It tells us that God sees evil. If we felt that no one ever saw us when we were tempted to an evil thing, how much

harder it would be for us to resist ! Whenever a temptation comes and a whisper says " Nobody will see," that very whisper adds to the force of the temptation ; whereas, if we know that our misdeed will be seen or known by others, it helps to keep us from the wrong act ; and though this is not the most worthy reason for resisting temptation, it certainly helps us.

Two children once had been sent early to bed. Some older folk were coming to tea, and they were not wanted. There were good things to eat, and it was hard to see them and not have even a bite. I confess I feel a good deal of sympathy for those bairns. Presently, when all was quiet, they crept down to have a look. There was a plate of cakes—they were so tempting ! Who would be likely to know if one was taken ? And so the hand was just going out when one of the pair said, " Can't God count ? "

Yes, lads and lasses, God can count. Remember that ; it will help you to say " No " when it is very hard to say it.

There is ENCOURAGEMENT. If sometimes we are apt to think that wicked people have it all their own way, this text tells us that God

sees them, and a lot of other texts tell us that God is on the side of those who do right; and it is something to be able to say, "God is on my side." It was that that made the martyrs of old so brave and bold, and that makes them so happy now.

Then, again, the text tells us that God sees the good and takes care of them. A long time ago now, I remember to have read of an accident that happened in a mine in Cornwall. The miners were imprisoned. A rescue party saved all but one. At last they got near enough to him to speak to him, though they could not save his life. "Are you alone?" they asked. "Yes," he answered; "only God is with me." But what an "only"! God kept watch over the good.

There is just one thing more I want to say. God sees the boy who wants to do the right, and He helps him. I know this to be true, because times without number He has helped me. Some of you are school-boys. There is a story of school life that I should like you all to read. It is called *St. Winifred's*. In it there is a character called Charlie Evson; he is brother to the hero

of the tale, and what is told us about his conduct illustrates how God sees and helps those who bravely try to do the right. Do not let the thought of the eyes of God make you feel uncomfortable, but rather let it fill you with all strength and confidence.

THE APPOINTED PLACE.

"That he might go to his own place."—ACTS i. 25.

JUDAS the traitor, when too late, had seen the sin of his evil deed, and had taken his own life. Peter the impulsive thought that the number of the Apostles ought to be made up to twelve, and, without waiting for God's guidance, he suggested that they should cast lots for one to take the place of Judas. This was a blunder, for God was preparing Saul of Tarsus to become Paul the Apostle, and thus complete the twelve. But in these words that Peter used concerning Judas there is a great truth—and it is this truth that I want to teach to you, children, this morning.

The words speak to me of three big things, each of which has a big name. I will tell you the big names, and then try to make all clear to you.

1. DESTINATION, or the place that awaits us.

2. DETERMINATION, or the fitting of self for a place.

3. CLASSIFICATION, or the putting each into the place for which he has made himself fit.

1. DESTINATION.—Every one living has “his own place.” Whenever we go upon a journey we know that the journey must have a destination, a goal, and, as a rule, we decide beforehand the place towards which we will journey. If, when the holidays are beginning, you go to one of the railway stations near to a great school, you will see a crowd of boys all eager and happy, and each one has his ticket for a special station—he is going “to his own place”—home.

If, some morning shortly before nine o'clock, you were to be in London and were to take your stand in Liverpool Street, and watch the thousands of men and boys who come in by the two railways—the North London and the Great Eastern, whose termini are side by side—you would see them all hurrying this way or that, for each one has “his own place” to go to.

It is just so with you lads and lasses in regard to your after life. Your boyhood or girlhood is

preparing you for your place in life when grown up. In the great engineering shops of Glasgow there are boys from fourteen or fifteen upward preparing for their place—some to be engineers on board ship, some to be railway constructors, and some to take charge of works abroad. And if you go during the session to the University at Gilmorehill you will see the same; youths preparing for their place in the various professions—ministers, doctors, teachers, lawyers that are to be.

And so, in like manner, all this life of ours is a journey towards some definite place. It cannot end in nothing or nowhere. There is a "place," a goal toward which we are surely travelling. This is the lesson which John Bunyan teaches in his beautiful allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. When Christian left his home, he started for the Celestial City, and every day of his pilgrimage he knew that was the place he was bound for. So the first lesson runs thus: "There is some place that is to be 'my own place.' What is it like? Where shall I find myself when the journey ends?"

2. DETERMINATION, or the getting ready for the place. God's Word teaches us very plainly that our "own place" will be the place for which we make ourselves fit. God does not say of each one as he is born, "This one shall go to this place, and this one to that." He wants us all to be with Him in His eternal home, but He has made us such that the determination of the place must rest with ourselves.

This is about the most solemn of all the facts of life upon which your thought can dwell. Sometimes we see this illustrated in daily life. Years ago I knew two brothers, both brought up in the same home, with the same loving care and the same rich advantages. But each has made his own place. The one was lazy and indolent, and to-day, though educated for an honourable profession, he is a failure, getting a poor living as best he can. The other worked hard, and has now made a name for himself as a professional man in a large English city. Each made his "own place." It is so in school. The diligent boy gets towards the top of the class—it is his "own place"; whereas the place of the lazy lad is at the bottom, and he gets it too.

Years ago in Glasgow streets stood a ragged, lonely boy aged eight. No one took any notice of him. As he stood there, lonely and unhappy, he made up his mind that, if he lived to be a man, he would care for the friendless boys of Glasgow. He has lived to be a man, and he has made his place in Scotland, and in the love of the men and women of Scotland, for to-day that once ragged boy is Mr. Quarrier, of the Orphan Homes, perhaps the finest homes of their kind in all Britain.

Parents cannot determine our place. Even Jesus, though He said, "I go to prepare a place for you," can only get it ready; and unless we are true and obedient, and pure and kind and God-loving, that bright and fair place will not be ours.

3. CLASSIFICATION, or the sorting out and putting each in "his own place." And the words "his own" mean the place he has made himself fit for. Think of this. Judas was one of Christ's comrades, yet now he is far from Christ because his heart was evil. This sorting out will be full of surprises, but there will be no

mistakes. If we love God, if we listen to God's voice within, which we call "conscience," if God's will be our law, then "our own place" will be that which Jesus has made ready for us.

A little boy and his still smaller sister were playing at trains. He had tied two chairs together, and placed the little lassie in the one behind him. He was engine, and driver, and guard, and porter, all in one. By and by he came to a stop, and shouted "London!" Then he went on again till, stopping once more, he cried "Glasgow!" Again he puffed away, till, at the third stop, he called "Edinburgh!" But now his geography failed, so at the fourth stop he paused, and then said "Heaven!" The little girl heard, and said, "Stop, please, Sammie, I fink I'll get out here." But heaven, children, is "a prepared place for prepared people," and if we want "to get out here," you and I must ask God to help us to so live as to make it "our own place."

THE LESSON OF AN OLD SUN-DIAL.

IN one of the Midland counties there is to be found a beautiful old-time village that in the days of the long ago was a place of more importance than it is to-day. No railway runs very near to it. When the railway leaves a place alone, that place is almost sure to be stranded and left to gradual decay. In the very heart of the village stands a quaint old house. A date upon it tells us that it was built soon after James VI. of Scotland became James I. of England. Over the porch, built into the wall, is a sun-dial, and on the face of the dial a good man, now nearly four hundred years ago, engraved these wise words—

“DO THY WORK CHEERFULLY.”

How bright and sunny and happy life would be for us all if we were to take the advice of

this motto, and, day by day, whatever our task might be, learn ever to "do our work cheerfully"!

There are at least four reasons, and all of them good reasons, why work should be cheerfully done:—

1. IT IS WORTH DOING.

Life is meant for work, and not alone for play. To make our games and our amusements and our fun the main and principal things of life is to turn the true order upside down. To be sullen and discontented about our work, and cheerful and happy only when at play, is a sure sign that evil forces are at work within.

Sometimes you meet a boy who grumbles loudly and often at his work. He thinks it is not good enough for him, that he is wasting his time by having to attend to simple details that "any fellow could do"; he wants something better and more important, and, as a result, he puts little heart into his daily tasks, and certainly does not do them "cheerfully." He forgets that before you can write a good flowing hand you must practise pages of pot-hooks and hangers. As you go through life you will find

that the one who thinks himself too good or too clever for his work is sure to end in being a failure. Whatever you may have to do, at school or at business, with hand or brain, buckle to with a willing mind and a cheerful heart, and you will find it to have in it much that will give you pleasure.

2. CHEERFULNESS CONDUCE TO SUCCESS.

It is a very rare thing for any one to be able to do his best unless he is bright and cheery about it. To succeed, you must do your best.

Some of you have read the splendid story of Nehemiah, and the plucky, cheerful way in which he set about his very difficult task. In the account of it you come across the sentence, "The people had a mind to work," which, as I understand it, simply means this, that, despite all difficulty, they were so determined and so cheery that they accomplished their task.

When soldiers are dispirited and full of gloom, and are reluctant to obey orders, they are near to a bad defeat; but when they are full of hope and courage, and are quick and alert in obedience to commands, they are almost sure to win the

day. In your life which lies ahead in the long, long future, if you go to each new duty with a song and a prayer and a cheerful heart, you will make day after day to tell the story of "Something attempted, something done"; and that means success.

3. CHEERFULNESS HELPS OTHERS.

Many of the folk we meet with have a much harder lot than we have, and their tasks are more difficult and less attractive; but a bright smile and a cheery word and a determination on our part to make little of our difficulties will wonderfully help them. A grumbler makes things look bad for himself and others; he takes the brightness of hope out of the prospect. But a cheerful soul, be he man or boy, makes sunshine wherever he goes. Boys and girls often say to themselves, "I want to do some good." Be cheerful in your work, and you will do much more good by that one thing than you can imagine.

4. OUR WORK IS GOD-APPOINTED, and, therefore, should be done willingly and well. When

our parents tell us to do this or that, and it is done at once, earnestly and with a smile, our obedience makes them glad at heart. God, who is our Father in heaven, also loves a cheerful response to His commands.

Some years ago I went for the first time to the house of a gentleman who has since become a dear friend of mine. Amongst other members of his family, he introduced me to his youngest daughter, a bright, happy lassie of about fourteen years of age. In introducing her he said, "This is Emmie. I call her my Sunbeam." I was often in his house, and I soon got to understand why her father had given Emmie so beautiful a pet name. Let me tell you the secret. She did her work cheerfully.

THE PALIMPSEST.

THERE are many things in this world that you lads and lasses have never heard of, and I expect that I am going to speak to you this day about one of these very things.

How many of you know what a "Palimpsest" is? I can see from your faces that you have never even heard the word. Now listen while I tell you all about it.

If you want a new book, you go to a book-seller's shop and ask for it, and he gives you a book clearly printed, nicely bound, and, most likely, beautifully illustrated. But in the olden days there was no such thing as printing. It was invented about the year A.D. 1450. And yet there were books long before that. Paper again, as we know it, is not a very ancient invention. The old Egyptians used a thick film of the bark of a tree, they called it papyrus, and we get

our word "paper" from that. But many ancient peoples in other lands than Egypt, who knew little of papyrus, wrote or possessed books. And these books were all written by hand, and most of them were written upon rolls of parchment, or prepared skin. This made a book a very costly thing, and it sometimes happened that, either to lessen expense, or else because no other parchment was ready at hand, a book that was not greatly valued would be washed, the writing erased, and the parchment cleaned, so that another book might be written thereupon. It happened, however, that if the ink that was used were of a good quality, in time the original writing, which had sunk deeply into the skin, began to show again. And chemists have in recent days found out ways by which they can recover the first writing, and so there exist to-day parchment rolls that contain two separate works, written the one above the other, and these are called "palimpsests." In Paris there is one very old manuscript of the New Testament which has been thus treated, and over it is written the work of a Father of the Church known as Ephraim the Syrian.

When we are very, very young our minds are like the new fresh parchment that has never yet been written upon ; and all through our childhood our parents, our teachers, our ministers have been trying to cover the parchment with the record of good things, pure thoughts, simple lessons of God and of the Lord Jesus. Other influences come in time and try to erase this good record, and to write over it that which is evil. So there are three things for you to bear in mind.

1. KEEP THE FIRST WRITING CLEAR AND DISTINCT.

We soon come to an age when nothing can be written without our consent ; not a word, good or bad, can be inscribed upon the parchment if we refuse to allow it. Then many a record that is faint and dim can be traced over with a firm, bold hand. You remember that when you had your first copybook there were strokes and figures and letters for you to copy over. They were just outlined to guide you, but with pen and ink you filled them in with a strong black stroke. So write in, plainly and boldly, all that

is good and fair which, during your early days, others have traced for your guidance.

2. WATCH LEST EVIL TRY TO ERASE THE GOOD WRITING.

It *will* try to do this in order that it may write its own bad record, and make your mind like a parchment covered over with a writing that all good men will grieve at. But this it cannot do without your consent, although it will try very hard to gain that consent. It is, however, one thing to be tempted by evil, and quite another thing to give way to it. Jesus, the Master, once said to His friend Peter, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, but I have prayed for thee," and every boy or girl may take that word and put his or her own name in the place of Peter's, and, listening quietly, may hear Jesus say, "Willie, I have prayed for thee"; "Nellie, I have prayed for thee." Be always on your guard, like a sentry, who cries, "Who goes there?" and thus prevent evil thoughts, words, deeds, or companionships from turning your mind into an unhappy "palimpsest."

3. IF EVIL DOES ERASE THE GOOD, AND WRITE ITS OWN BAD STORY, REMEMBER GOD'S LOVE CAN RESTORE THE ORIGINAL RECORD.

I told you that chemists had discovered a method of so treating the parchment that the first writing could be made clear and be thus plainly read again.

But the Love of God can do more than this. It can not only revive the first, the good writing, but it can *cancel* the second, the evil record. I know evil leaves its traces—just as a nail pulled out of wood leaves a hole, or as a bad wound, when it is healed, leaves a scar—but if any lad knows he has encouraged that which is wrong, and is really sorry, let him take heart. God will forgive, and God will take away the writing that he mourns, so that ere he reaches the heavenly home the record shall all have disappeared.

Sometimes evil seems to discourage us from any attempt to make the record once again good and pure. It makes a big blot on the page, and when we see it, and mourn and want to get rid thereof, it chuckles and cries, "You can't; it's

fast in." True! We *can't*, but GOD CAN, and if some of these palimpsests in human minds show first good and then evil, there are others that turn the process round and show first evil and then good. Therefore no one need be discouraged, but all may come to Him who takes away the "handwriting that is against us."

A TALK ABOUT AN ANNIVERSARY
HYMN.

“Jesus, who calledst little ones to Thee,

To Thee I come ;

O take my hand in Thine, and speak to me,

And lead me home ;

Lest from the path of life my feet should stray,

And Satan, prowling, make Thy lamb his prey."

C. C. BELL.

A FEW years since a very beautiful tune was written to the hymn by Cardinal Newman, "Lead, Kindly Light!" In a village called Hickling, near to the town of Melton Mowbray, lived a lady who took great interest in the children, and who was arranging and teaching certain hymns that were to be sung at a Children's Service in the village. She had heard this tune, "Sandon," and wished to teach it to the children, but felt that the words of the hymn for which it had been written were not

exactly suitable for boys and girls to sing. But she had a brother living in the quaint Lincolnshire town in which John Wesley was born, the town of Epworth. He had often written hymns. Perhaps he could help her now by writing one to suit this tune of somewhat unusual metre. So she wrote to her brother, and the brother thought, and, I expect, he asked God to guide his pen, and in a short time he sent to his sister the verses which now form the well-known and much-loved hymn, the first verse of which is printed above, and whose other verses I hope you will find and read and learn for yourselves.

Not long after, the hymn was contributed to a manuscript magazine in connection with our Trinity Church in Liverpool, called the *Rainbow*, and thus little by little it became known, and has since been included in many a Sunday School hymn-book and used at hundreds of anniversary services.

As you know, it is one of our anniversary hymns to-day, and this has led me to take the third verse as my text for the "Children's Talk" this morning. You all know it:

“O gentle Jesus, make this heart of mine
(So full of sin)

As holy, harmless, undefiled as Thine,
And dwell therein :

Then, God my Father, I like Thee shall know
And grow in wisdom, as in strength I grow.”

Now, concerning this verse there are three questions which I want each boy or girl carefully to answer.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR HEART IS
“FULL OF SIN” ?

This is a question not to be answered offhand. Before we can wisely answer it we must have a little quiet talk with our conscience, and hear what it has to say. Let us go back, say, for one week, and then very honestly take day by day. “Have I given way to temper and spoken angry words, or done passionate deeds? Have I been in any way disobedient, doing what mother told me not to do, or leaving undone what I was bidden do? Have I told an untruth, or been dishonest, or acted in a way that was not upright? Have I loved myself so much as to forget to love others more, and, therefore, have I treated them unkindly? Come, Conscience! what do you say? Yes?”

I am afraid my conscience says to me, and your conscience says to you, that our hearts are "full of sin."

Then, think again how often the desire for something wrong, something that Conscience loudly said "No" to, has been felt; and though the Holy Spirit helped us to resist, and to be successful in our resistance, yet the very desire goes a long way to prove that the heart is "full of sin."

2. Now for the second question. ARE YOU CONTENT THAT YOUR HEART SHOULD REMAIN "FULL OF SIN"?

I feel quite sure that every one of you has often thought, "I wish I were better than I am. I would like to be really good." A boy whom I knew very well, and who had this desire to be really good, once said plainly to me, "It is so *awfully hard* to be good," and I quite agreed with him, because without the help of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God's Son, that is, of Jesus) it is "awfully hard." So hard, in fact, as to be impossible. But it does not follow on this account that we should be content to let our hearts remain "full of sin." For think what

this will mean in the long, long days that lie before us—a bad life, an evil influence, leading others to live bad lives, a hopeless death, and a shutting-out from the Great Father's home, where all His children gather with pure and thankful hearts.

3. So this brings me to question three. Do YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS CAN MAKE YOUR HEART "HOLY, HARMLESS, UNDEFILED" ?

I do. I know He can, for one of the most wonderful things in life to me is what Jesus has, by His Holy Spirit, done in my own heart. Suppose you children were to think of the very best and dearest Christian man or woman that you know to-day, some one whom you love because he is so good and so winsome. Then suppose you one day were to say to him, "Why are you so much more lovable than other people?" I think I know what he would say. He would use the words the Apostle Paul once used, and answer, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And "the grace of God" just means the love of Jesus working in our hearts.

And this is the only way by which we can get sin out of our hearts, for Jesus not only pardons,

but He gives us power over sin. Do you remember when you got into a big passion and said and did naughty things? After a little while you were very, very sorry, and you told mother so, and she forgave you. But that did not mean that mother took the passionate nature away. She could not do that. But Jesus can. That is what we mean when we sing :

“He breaks the power of cancelled sin.”

He first “cancels”—that is, He forgives the sin, and then He “breaks its power”—that is, He enables us to conquer it so that we do the wrong thing no more.

If you will earnestly ask Him, He will come, and by His Spirit, whose presence you shall feel, will dwell within your heart, and turn the evil, sinful nature into that which is good and gentle and pure, like unto Himself.

Now read or sing the hymn right through, and when you come to this third verse, pray it as well as sing it.

THE OLD POWDER-FLASK.

WHEN any of you boys or girls who live in one of the larger towns or cities of Britain have a half-holiday, and the day proves damp and rainy, and you wonder what to do, then take this advice. Ask mother's leave, and go to the Museum and look at the many quaint or beautiful and always interesting things to be seen there.

One day, a year or two ago, I wandered into the Museum that then stood in the Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow, and there, in one of the cases, I saw a very old powder-horn. It took me back to the days before cartridges were invented, when all who carried guns, whether for sport or other purposes, carried powder in their horns or flasks, and bullets, and wads, and a ramrod, and loaded their guns at the muzzle, and then rammed the charge home. This special flask

was made of horn. It had once belonged to a Scottish chieftain, and bore the date 1689. Along the side this legend had been carved :

“A man of words and not of deeds
Is like a garden full of weeds.”

Now let us see just what this means. You know, I dare say, some boys or girls who are full of promises. To hear them talk you would think them capable of the finest deeds and the grandest achievements. Only it all ends in talk. Their promises are like pie-crust—made to be broken. They are always going to do great things, but the unfortunate mistake they make is that they forget to do them. It is always “to-morrow” with them, and never “to-day.” They illustrate the old verse, written many long years ago :

“There’s a little mischief-making
Elfin, who is ever nigh,
Thwarting every undertaking,
And his name is ‘By and by.’
‘What you ought to do this minute
Will be better done,’ he’ll cry,
‘If to-morrow you’ll begin it.
Put it off,’ says By and by.”

There are at least two ways in which

“A man (or boy, or girl) of words and not of
deeds

Is like a garden full of weeds.”

1. THE FIRST IS, HE IS A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT.

For a garden is meant to grow either flowers or fruits or vegetables, and if it be overrun with weeds it is utterly useless. I once had a lady friend who bought what she thought was a packet of mignonette seed. Whether it was a fraud or an accident I don't know, but I remember well how proud she was to show me the long row of young plants as they had just pushed through the soil. A week or two after she said, “I don't like the look of my mignonette.” And when I saw it I replied, “No, I should think not. It is chickweed!” And so it turned out, and a nice job she had to root it all up. We want you to be of those who do rather than promise.

The first time I was at a prayer-meeting in Yorkshire, there was an old man who made some very quaint responses. All at once, in reply to something in the prayer, he shouted out;

"That's it, Lord! Turn out profession and put in possession!"

All who love you desire to see you doing all that is right and worthy; but they are not anxious that you should talk a great deal about your good intentions, lest time should prove the words to be idle and vain. A little girl who indulged more in words than in deeds once flung her arms round her mother's neck, and said with great emphasis, "Oh, mother, I do love you so!" and her mother, who longed for the deed rather than the word, said, "Nellie, I should find it so much easier to believe in your love if you would do more readily what I tell you to do."

2. The second point of resemblance between the "man of words" and the "garden of weeds" is that in both cases *THE MISCHIEF SPREADS*.

If you have ever tried to keep a bright, clean garden plot, while close at hand is a plot ill-kept and overrun with weeds, you will understand how true this is. You have seen children pluck the stalk that is crowned with the feathery seeds of the dandelion, and give puff! puff! puff! to see which can blow them away the quicker.

But have you ever thought that the wind is doing the same thing every day during the season of seeding; and that every seed falls somewhere, and many of them take root and spring up in the next spring-time? A good farmer who is careful and particular, and whose fields are clean, will groan with dismay when he sees an ill-kept field, full of all those weeds that prove so injurious to good crops.

In a very similar way a boy or girl who is given to big talk, who makes many promises, and is always boasting of what he or she is going to do, is almost certain to fall into other sins.

For example, exaggeration is only divided by a very thin line from lying, and it is easy to cross that line without knowing it. The boy who brags often finds himself in the position of being nearly found out, and he acts in a way perilously akin to deception in order to escape detection. If his purpose in all this "big talk" is to stand well in the thought of others, then he will certainly do what is sometimes termed "drawing the long-bow," which is only another way of saying that he will go beyond the truth; and when he comes to think quietly over it he

will despise himself for so doing, and fear lest, when he is found out, others will despise him also. And he is sure to be found out. A master in business may at first be deceived by a glib tongue and by ready promises, but when he has proved that the performance is not equal to the promise, he will not be very ready to trust that lad with anything; but will think concerning the "boy of words," "that lad has too much to say for himself." You may take as a settled fact, that a boy slower of speech, but more prompt and reliable in action, is more valued by every one, than one who makes large and ready promises, but is careless, forgetful, and negligent in the fulfilment thereof.

Remember then the old powder-flask and its wise words, and if you are at any time tempted to big, boastful talk, or to think that promises are in themselves sufficient, then recall this lesson, "Fewer words, more deeds!"

“THE ONE IN THE MIDDLE.”

“*A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance.*”—PROV. xv. 13.

IN the days of the long ago there was a magazine called *Merry and Wise*. The merry heart here spoken of is like that magazine, it is also the wise heart.

When a boy or girl has the wisdom of which God's Book teaches, then his heart is full of brightness, and it is a natural thing that he should be merry. One of the lies that the devil is busy circulating, and that, alas, he gets thousands to believe, is that God does not like His children to be merry, and that if you want to have a lot of real gladness in your life you must not be a Christian too soon.

I am not going to argue that point to-day. I simply say that it is not true, not a little bit true, and the happiest folk I know are those whose consciences are right with God, and who are made glad by the knowledge that it is so.

But I want to make you see how wise it is to cultivate a bright, joyous spirit, and how foolish it is to go about with an unhappy, discontented mind. For there are some folk who are always on the growl. Nothing seems to please them except being miserable themselves and trying to make others so also. I expect you know some such. They must have been born on a foggy day and the fog got inside them, and they have never been able to get it out. Poor folk, I do pity them. There is always something to find fault with. If it is a lovely, fine day, they think it will rain to-morrow; if they are having a real good holiday, they will tell you that they know of some one else who has three days more than they have; and if they have a new suit of clothes, they are quite sure that in time it will wear out and they will want another.

Now I want to tell you in the first place how to get a merry heart, and then to show you how foolish and evil a discontented spirit is.

1. KEEP RIGHT WITH GOD.

Each has within himself a testing-machine to tell whether conduct is up to the standard or no.

I saw not long ago a contrivance for testing milk. Sometimes the milk you buy comes out of the "cow with the iron tail," or at all events some of it does, and this little machine just showed by a clever method whether it was real, good milk or poor, watered stuff that you had bought. So I have a sure contrivance for testing my thoughts and tempers and words and deeds. It is called Conscience. I need to take care of it, for it can easily be put out of order if I misuse it. When I do use it properly it tells me very surely if my acts are worthy a child of God, and if they will meet with His approval. If not, then I have to check the thought, to turn out the temper, or to stop the deed. And whenever I am true to my conscience I feel a quiet joy which God gives me, and I go merrily onward, singing in my heart, if not with my voice.

2. OPEN YOUR EYES TO SEE HOW GOD LOVES YOU.

For any one who will can see this. I never get away from the busy town into the beautiful country without feeling how kind it is of God to put so much that is beautiful into the world that

He has made for me. If you will think of home and parents and friends, and all that each day brings; if you will compare your lot with that of some whose lot is so different, say with those who never knew love, or who do not to-day know what health means, then you will find plenty to be glad about. But, above all, never forget how Jesus loves you, and how He came from heaven to earth and died on the cross for you and me. It is worth thinking about, and the more you think about it the more you will want to sing God's praise with a merry heart.

The text tells us that a merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, and that means a bright, sunny face. I never met with any one who did not like to have sunny, cheerful, contented people round them, but oh, I have known lots who have been made unhappy by a discontented, grumbling spirit. There are few things that grow upon us more than a tendency to be discontented; once give way to the grumbling mood, and you will grumble when you do not mean to, just because you have allowed it to become your nature.

I saw the other day an advertisement of a

polish, and it showed a lot of laddies putting a box of it to their eyes, and the box was big enough to hide the sun. You can hide the sun with a couple of halfpennies if you put each close enough to your eye. And of course you can find little troubles every day if you look for them, and if you stick them in your eyes they will shut out all the sunlight and the brightness.

Some folk have faces sour enough to make the milk turn. I once read of a man so disagreeable that they said that at home they used his smile to keep the children quiet. Poor children, but poorer father!

Boys, learn to have a cheerful, merry heart. We would rather have you laugh than cry, rather hear you sing than sigh. God is so good to us all that we ought to rejoice and be glad, and if we cannot be thus merry of heart there is something wrong. Now listen while I tell you a story of some birds, and be sure to learn the lesson of it and to make up your mind not to be "The one in the Middle":

"Five very plump birds met one pleasant spring day,
And seated themselves in a row on a rail;
The two biggest sat with their backs turned this way,
And straight as an arrow hung each little tail.

Then four of them merrily sang 'Summer's coming,
And soon we shall hear the brown honey-bees humming,
And see brightest sunshine—oh, hey diddle-diddle.'

Except when it rains,' said the one in the middle.

'And there will be roses, red, yellow and pink,'

Sang the four in a chorus once more, 'and the rill
Will give us the sweetest of water to drink,

And grass-seed be plenty in field and on hill:

And a host of our kindred their way will be winging
Toward our home, all the news of the sunny south bringing,
And we'll feast on the berries—oh, hey diddle-diddle.'

'Some berries are poison,' said the one in the middle.

Then 'Don't be so cross,' said the four, coaxingly,

As they looked kindly at her, 'for certainly, dear,
There is not the least reason why glum you should be

When the time that we've wished for all winter is here.

Come, be happy and gay, and cease trouble to borrow,
Take good care of to-day—hope the best for to-morrow,
And join in our singing—oh, hey diddle-diddle.'

'I won't, and that's flat,' said the one in the middle."

MORNING AND EVENING.

"To stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and also at even."—1 CHRON. xxiii. 30.

THIS is a part of the instructions for the service of the priests under the law of Moses. It is also a message for all of us who believe that "All good things around us, Come from Heaven above."

Whenever a friend gives us any gift, we regard it as both ungrateful and discourteous not to both say and feel "Thank you"; and surely it is not less ungrateful to fail in saying and feeling "Thank you" to God for all His daily gifts to us. Let us see if we can find anything that calls for a word of praise to God when we say our morning and evening prayers.

Take first the MORNING. I suppose most of us kneel by our bedside ere we leave the bedroom. That means that not long before we woke up out of our sleep, and in health and

happiness looked forward to the work and play of another day. Now I can see at least two things that call for "Thank you" in this.

A great many of us do not like the dark, we have all sorts of strange fears concerning things that lurk in the darkness, and I have known a good many lads and lasses who begged hard for "a wee peep of gas" to go to sleep with. When the morning comes all the darkness has passed, and we find that God has taken care of us whilst we slept, and that the foes of the dark—real or imaginary—have not been able to harm us.

Long years ago now I read of a little child who had wakened up one wild night, and as she heard the noises of the storm, she was filled with fear. But mother came, and placing the candle by the bedside, she took her little daughter's hand in hers and explained all that caused her fear.

"That harsh roaring noise : it is only the brook by which you play in the summer days ; the rain has swollen it, and now it riots over the stones out of which you build your castles. That wild whistling, like some angry spirit : it is only the wind making music in the chimney.

That heavy thud: it is but the swaying of the boughs of the old tree that grows outside your window." Thus mother makes the little one feel that all is well, and that she need not be afraid, because there somewhere in the darkness of the house mother is, and mother watches. So, only with a much greater confidence, may we all remember that throughout the long night God takes care of us, and we are safe. In a child's hymn we sing:

"Through the long night watches
May Thine angels spread
Their bright wings above me,
Watching round my bed."

But it is not only God's angels that watch; He Himself keeps guard, and therefore every morning His care calls for "Thank you."

Another call is found in the very fact that we have awakened from sleep. It is hardly to be expected that you should understand how much every one owes to sleep. You can remember, however, one day in your holidays when you had long hours of pleasure, so that when you got to bed you were almost too tired to undress, and you fell asleep as soon as your eyes closed, or

your head touched the pillow. The next morning you woke up and all the fatigue was gone, and you were as fresh as a lark. Sleep had done that for you ; it had relaxed the tired, strained muscles, it had quietened the irritated nerves, it had brought back tone and vigour. This is why the poet speaks of "Nature's own restorer, balmy sleep."

You have heard of that good man, Charles Garrett. I once heard him say that after a long sickness, during which for many weary nights he could get no sleep, he fully understood why the Psalmist in one of his songs of praise cries in deep thankfulness, "I both laid me down and slept ; I awaked, for Thou hadst sustained me." So here at least are two morning calls for a "Thank you" right from the heart to God, who gives us all good things.

And now for the call at EVENING. The day has run its course, and the probability is that it will have brought us a great deal of pleasure. It is a grand thing to be strong, and able to enjoy our work and our play ; it is a grand thing to have honest work, whether at school or in business, to occupy our thought, and then to

have a time of leisure, and friends whom we love, to join in our pleasures and pastimes ; it is a grand thing to have a happy home, with the love of parents, and of brothers and sisters, to make the home like a little heaven on earth. These all call for a "Thank you."

Most likely, also, we have had during the day some task or duty that has tried our powers, and we began to wonder if we really could do it, for it seemed so difficult ; but we have done it, and found it far less difficult than it seemed, and there is always joy in succeeding in the thing in which we feared that we should fail ; so that here again is a call for gratitude.

As we look over the day, there is another thing that will probably occur to nearly all of us : we have been kept safe from all hurt and harm. I dare say you have noticed that if ever any one has a very narrow escape, he says that he ought to be very thankful, and he says truly. The consciousness of peril safely passed should make us full of thankfulness ; but when you come to think of it, the wonder is that in our busy city life we are so rarely conscious of peril, yet we must often be very near to danger, but

God bids the danger pass us by, and we never know how near we have been to maiming or to hurt.

In the days of the old stage coaches, those days that now seem so long past, a party of gentlemen had gathered round the fire at a country inn, where they were to spend the night. One after another told of adventure and of danger through which he had that day passed, and many added, "Well, thank God, I was not hurt." Then one who had been a silent listener said that he had great cause to thank God also. "What!" said one of the party, "have you also had some accident? This seems to have been a day of general misadventure." "Ah," replied the silent one, "it is my very freedom from danger that makes me thank God, for whilst you all were telling of your escapes, I thought how good God had been to me in not letting even the shadow of danger cross my pathway." Don't you think he was right? and that his safety called for a "Thank you" quite as much as their rescue from circumstances of peril?

And this will be the call that we shall hear most of the evenings of our life: a day that

from its sunny dawn to its golden sunset has been free from peril and from loss.

When I was quite a young man I used to meet in a class, the leader of which was a well-known minister who is now the editor of a weekly paper. One evening he came into the class-room, and standing before the fire, he said, "As I was dressing this morning, the question came to me, 'How much owest thou unto thy Lord?' and I have spent the day in trying to answer it: I have been surprised to find how many things there have been in my life for which I have forgotten to give thanks, and God's goodness to me has overwhelmed me."

It overwhelms all who thus recognize it. Morning and evening praise God, and do not let a day pass without a real, glad, heartsome "Thank you" to your Heavenly Father, whose love is so constant and so kind.

CROWTHORNE QUARRY.

THE other day I was at the Children's Home, Edgworth. Four boys, each of whom has a beautiful home with all that love can give him, had undertaken to support an orphan lad, and as they had never seen either the boy himself or the home in which he lived, I offered to take them over. It was a lovely summer morning, the sun was bright and warm, and the wide stretching moorland looked its very best. I am not quite sure which of the five enjoyed the day the most. The lads had bought a new cricket bat (a fine cane-handled one), and a ball, to give their young friend, and their fathers had also told them that they might each add a shilling to the gift, and I can assure you it was a sight to see the pleasure on their faces as they gave Robert their gifts, and if you could have seen *his* face as he took first the bat, then the ball, and

lastly, in succession, the four shillings, you would not have had much doubt as to his state of mind. We went all over the Homes, into the Dairy, the Cloggers', Carpenters', Blacksmiths' shops, the Knitting-room, the School, the Dining-hall, past the Hospital, over the Eric Townsend House, where a family of twenty-five boys live, including one that used to be a Claremont Street Sunday School boy, and so on till we had seen nearly all that was to be seen. In the afternoon my boy friends, with Robert, had a good time in the swimming bath, and whilst they played cricket I walked with the Governor to see their quarry whence they have quarried the stones of which the entire village has been built. It was whilst waiting here and thinking about you lads and lasses who belong to Claremont Street, and who take such a kindly interest in the work of these Homes, that the Quarry turned preacher and my thoughts arranged themselves thus: (1) Quarrying stones is hard work. (2) Hard work is good both for our bodies and for our characters. (3) There is often much rubbish to be moved before you can reach the stone that is of use for building purposes. Then as I turned to look at the Home

nestling on the hill below, the Quarry stuck to its text, and these three thoughts were the heads of the sermon that it preached to me.

1. **HARD WORK.** How little there is, that is really worth the doing, that can be done without it. All those bright dreams that we sometimes indulge in, concerning what we are going to be and to do when we are grown up, they can only be realized by hard work. The houses that are now the Homes of happy boys and girls; the fields that looked so bright and fresh and green, in contrast to the dark, dank moorland around them; the miles of wall that enclose them—these things had never come to be save for the hard work that had made a big gash in the hill-side, and lifted so many tons of good hard stone out of its native bed, and shaped and dressed and trimmed it into serviceable blocks for houses or for walls. It is just so all through life. Good things never come simply by wishing for them, nor do they come by effort that is half-hearted and indolent. Whether it be in school or at business, it is hard work that pays, it is hard work that produces good results. Up on the hillside by the brow of the quarry, I talked about

some of the old boys who long years ago had lived and worked and played in the Home below. Of one after another I heard good reports, reports that make the Governor's heart full of gladness as he tells the story, but it was always the same thing, "Success comes to the one who works."

2. But it is not only in the direct result and reward of hard work that good is found. In the BUILDING UP OF A STRONG BODY and IN THE WORKING OUT OF A NOBLE CHARACTER hard work plays a most important part. If you were to ask what were the real results of all the labour that the masses of stone removed from that quarry on the hillside represent, you would not simply be shown the ranges of buildings, or the neat and trim fences, or the well-made roads. You would be told of boys who came to the Home at Edgworth and to its keen moorland air, weak in body, lacking in muscle, lazy, mischievous, and with many evil tendencies. To-day the majority of these same boys are strong and vigorous in body, self-reliant and trustworthy in character, doing well for themselves and others in various parts of the old country, or in some new home in that land of opportunity for

the healthy and the upright—the Dominion of Canada. It was the hard work of the quarry that did much to transform them both in body and mind. Hammers, wedges, picks, crowbars, and the slow winding of the crane that lifts the quarried stone from its native bed—all these have helped to give them health, to develop muscle, to turn their indolence into wise activity, and to teach them the joy of that work that ends in “something attempted, something done.” Dr. Watts tells us that “Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do,” and I am sure that a very large proportion of the badness that is to be found in the world comes from the want of some hard work that would occupy mind and body with a worthy purpose. Boys, girls, don’t shirk work, don’t be idle, don’t loaf and lounge and waste your lives in laziness, but learn the joy and the uplifting of some worthy toil.

3. As I looked at the quarry I saw that there was RUBBISH TO BE REMOVED, for I noticed that the upper layers of the stone were so soft and so broken that they would be of no service for purposes of building. Some of this was simply waste, and as it was removed it was just tipped

into the hole from whence the good stone had been taken. Some of it was broken fine with hammers, and then ground into sand, so that it served a purpose later on, being mixed with lime and ashes to form mortar. Not until all this had been removed did the workers come to the fine hard stone that will stand the weather and prove of splendid service in the builders' hands. Can you read any lesson in this? I can. Before we get down to that which is best and most useful in our characters it often happens that there is a great deal that has to be removed and got rid of, and until the useless and the waste, sometimes perhaps even the bad, is thus removed, no one can get at the good that nevertheless is there all the time. There has to be a great deal of this done at Edgworth, not only in the Crowthorne Quarry, but also in the Homes where God's men and women are trying to find the real, good stuff in the lives and characters of boys and girls who have so long given way to that which is evil, or who have such bad influences surrounding them, that the good is deep buried out of sight. But love and kindness, coupled with responsive effort on the part of the boys and girls themselves, get

rid of the rubbish, and then the good shows itself. I fancy that you have something to do in the removal of some waste stuff also. I am sure that the good stone is there, only there is other stuff on top, and you have first of all to get that all away. It is not easy work, but it is needful work, and it is full of promise. I am certain of one thing, and that is that if you will try earnestly, patiently, prayerfully to conquer evil tempers, to turn from bad habits, to break from hurtful companionships, you will not try in vain. Never think that it is no use trying, that there is no real grit in you, only a lot of soft useless stuff; I know better than that, God has not made you of rubbish. Work hard, be resolute, and keep at it, and soon you will strike good rock, and out of the stone that you shall quarry God will build a noble and lasting building.

A WONDERFUL PICTURE—THE PRAYING CHRIST.

THOSE of you who are still at school, and most of you who have left school, will know at once what is meant by the comparison of adjectives; how that there are three degrees—the positive, the comparative, and the superlative. Read carefully the chapters in the Bible that tell of the building of the Tabernacle or of the Temple, you will find that there were also degrees of comparison in those ancient houses of God. All was holy, yet there was the part into which only the priests were allowed to enter, which was called the Holy Place; and within that was a part carefully screened off into which the High Priest alone entered, and that but once a year, which was named the Holy of Holies. I wonder if you will think it a strange fancy if I tell you that to me God's Book has in like

manner its degrees of comparison, its holy place and its holy of holies. All the Bible is holy, but there is one part specially holy, the Gospels; which tell of the life and words of the Lord Jesus; and within them is the holy of holies, the seventeenth chapter of St. John. You remember what that chapter contains? Christ's own prayer; not the pattern prayer that He taught His disciples to use—we find that elsewhere—but the prayer that was His own when He was face to face with death. In such a solemn moment we should not be surprised to find that His thought was all about Himself, His coming conflict, and the agony of the cross; but if you will read it carefully you will discover that even in these circumstances Jesus thought more about others than about Himself.

A short time ago there was exhibited in Liverpool a wonderful picture by a French artist. It was called "*La Prière Sacerdotale*," which means the prayer of the Priest, and this, you will remember, is one of the names which the Bible gives to our Lord. I want to try and make you see that picture. The painter has represented the prayer as prayed in the

room in which Jesus had eaten the last supper with His disciples. The room is a very simple one, the walls are whitewashed, plain, and bare; everything has been removed from the table, which is simply covered with a white cloth. Behind the table, in the centre, stands the Lord, with His eleven apostles on either side. All the figures are clothed in white, and save for the shading, the flesh tints, and the hair, there is very little colour in the picture. At first one looks at the disciples, for there is so much of sorrow, wonder, and perplexity in their faces; but in a little time one forgets all about the disciples, and sees only Jesus—the praying Jesus.

In another part of the Bible there is a passage that tells us, “He ever liveth to make intercession for us.” This is a thought to be taken to our hearts. Jesus, who now is on the throne of heaven’s glory, prays for us even as He prayed for His disciples in that wonderful prayer as He was hastening to His cross. Sometimes if you shut your eyes you can, at will, conjure up a mental picture, and see in imagination all that you want to see. Try it now. See Jesus, with His hands outstretched, praying for you. Say

to yourself, "He knows me, knows my need, my temptations, my weaknesses, my desires, my character, and knowing all this, He prays for me."

A friend of mine told me the other day an incident from his own boyhood that will, I think, help you to understand just what I mean when I tell you that the thought of the Lord Jesus as praying for you will often help you to keep straight. A brother, much older than himself, stood to him somewhat in the relation in which your fathers stand to most of you. One day, for some act of disobedience, the brother had punished the lad, and he was sent to his bedroom in disgrace. He was angry, and sore in spirit, and full of bitter thoughts. Then the suggestion came to him that he should do something to spite them all, and thus get revenged for his punishment. He knew that in his mother's room there was a box that contained papers that he was supposed not to see or handle. It would be a fine thing to go and turn them out and look over them all. He knew that the box was not locked, for by accident he had discovered that fact a day or two before. So on tiptoe he crept to his

mother's room, and very gently pushed the door ajar. Then he started back, for there was that dear mother on her knees, praying for her naughty lad, and asking God to change his heart. All the bitterness went at once, more gently even than before he crept back to his own room, and his mother never knew what he had been so nearly doing, and what it was that had saved him from the evil act. And in after life, when he was no longer a little boy, but had grown into a strong youth, and even later, in his useful manhood, the memory of his mother praying for him had turned him from many a sin and nerved him to conquer many a temptation.

Now put three things together in your thoughts:—(1) This chapter in St. John's gospel. (2) This picture of the Lord pleading so earnestly for those whom He loves. (3) The text that tells us that He still prays for us, even though He be in heaven. Then whenever life is hard or duty is difficult, or it seems almost impossible to keep in straight paths, the picture that you will have in your mind of "The Praying Jesus" will be a real help and blessing to you, even as the memory of his praying mother was to my friend.

“THE PLACE OF LAUGHTER.”

I HAVE just finished reading the life of James Chalmers of New Guinea, a great and noble man, a missionary who, after a long life of service that was full of peril, died at the hands of those whose good he was seeking—died a victim to cannibal ignorance and cruelty. When any friend wants to give you a book, ask for the life of this brave man; for it will do you good to see how bold and earnest and self-forgetting a servant of God should and can be. In this book there is a letter from Mr. Chalmers in which he tells of a prayer offered by one of his converts at a mission station in New Guinea. The man had been a cannibal, and still was, in certain respects, a savage; he had, however, learnt enough concerning God to cause him to turn to Him, and to make him a simple, true-hearted Christian man. In his prayer he spoke of heaven

as "the place of laughter." Now this phrase struck Mr. Chalmers greatly, and he explains that the inhabitants of New Guinea, when all is well with them, when they are not bent on mischief or any revengeful act, are full of mirth and gladness, so that the idea in this native's prayer evidently was that if their consciences were quite clear from all sense of sin and guilt, they must be very happy, and therefore naturally would laugh much. If this is what the man thought, it seems to me he was not very far wrong. For real, joyous laughter is possible only to those whose hearts are right, and whose consciences are free from the burden of wrong-doing.

What a beautiful name this is for God's home, where He gathers all His own; "the place of laughter." You know what the Revelation tells of heaven: that "there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;" these are the things that make laughter impossible; but when they are all done away, then there will be real gladness and holy mirth. I have met occasionally with those who seemed to think that God did not want us to be very bright, to be too glad; and so these good people have acted as

if a sad face and a mournful voice would please Him more than a merry face and a joyful tone. I think that such folk do a lot of harm without ever meaning it, for they give other people such a false idea of what God is, and of what He wants His children to be. Do you know what a Concordance is? If father has one, borrow it, and then look up all the passages in the Bible that speak about rejoicing, and being glad, and making merry, and you will be surprised to find how many they are.

“The place of laughter”—but that must mean real, genuine laughter that has the whole heart and soul in it. Now I want you children to recognize that there is laughter that has no mirth or gladness in it at all. I have often heard an *EMPTY LAUGH* that I have known has given no pleasure; it has been a laughter that has defied conscience, and has tried to make believe that all is quite right, whereas the mind has been uneasy, and the conscience has said all the time, “This is very wrong.” This kind of laughter makes one sad. This is the laugh that you hear so often as you walk along our streets, and if you turn to look at the faces of those

whose noisy, unmusical laugh has arrested you, you will not see any gladness written there.

Then there is another kind of laugh that is void of gladness; I hardly know how to name it, but I think you will understand what I mean if I call it the LYING LAUGH. A boy has done a wrong thing, and has been punished; he knows that he is in disgrace, but he wants to brazen it out, and to make others believe that it does not trouble him a little bit; so he laughs a hard, false laugh that deceives no one: it does not deceive those who are older, they understand it too well; it does not deceive himself, for his heart is very sad whilst he is trying to pretend to be careless and merry.

There is yet another kind of false laugh; this I will call the CRUEL LAUGH. For there are some so utterly base and bad that they can make fun of the troubles and misfortunes of others. I have known a schoolboy laugh as if it were a fine joke when some other fellow has got into a row, and though at times it may only be thoughtlessness, yet there are other times when this tendency to gloat over the troubles of another is the sign of a thoroughly bad and contemptible spirit.

But having now recognized the false types of laughter, let us go back to the thought that true laughter means a heart right with God, and a clear and happy conscience. Laughter is the outward sign of gladness, and gladness is the natural condition of every one who has no unhappy secrets, no heavy burdens, no pressing sorrow to trouble him. In this life it often happens that a good man has trouble and sorrow that prevent him from feeling very merry; but in heaven he will know none of these things; it will be all bright, and his heart being always happy, it will be natural that for him heaven should be what the New Guinea convert called it—"The place of laughter." And, lads and lasses, take this word from me: just as you keep your hearts and consciences right, just as you try to live gentle, unselfish, and loving lives, so you will find that this earth will be for you a "place of laughter" too. This is far better than making it a place of bitterness, or a place of anger, or a place of tears; and I have lived long enough to learn this lesson—that to a large extent our own actions are the cause of our tears.

