

THE

TWO ROADS





The day passed rapidly away in these amusements; the boys were most successful in their fishing, and the girls had gathered beautiful bouquets of flowers to take home.

The Two Roads;

OR,

HENRY WOOD.



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TORONTO AND MONTREAL.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SIXPENCE AND THE CONSCIENCE.

“FATHER, will you give me sixpence to put into the contribution-box to-night?” said Charles to his father, as they were on their way to church.

“Why? Will it not be as well for me to put it in for you, with my own gift, for the good cause?” inquired Mr Gregory.

“Because, sir,” said George, “it seems to me more like doing something myself, when I give it; and if you have no objections I should like to have a few pence.”

“Certainly, my son. I think just as you do about it, and I intended to furnish each of you with a little money to contribute to-night. It

would be a good plan for you all to cultivate the habit of giving cheerfully to such an object as we are to hear about this evening. But I should like you to lay aside some of the pennies that you now spend so foolishly sometimes ; and then, when the call is made for a contribution, you would be ready with your own, and would not have to borrow of me."

Charles smiled at the idea of "borrowing" of his father, thinking there was no great probability of his ever paying, or of being called on to pay. He was the eldest of three children, and was now about fourteen. A friend of his, a boy of his own years, who had been sent to his father's house to board during the winter, and go with him to the village academy, made the fourth in the group of children now ready to go to church to hear a discourse on the wants of the heathen world. Mr Gregory gave each of them a sixpence, not omitting the new-comer, Henry Wood, who received his money with a pleasant "Thank you, sir," and in a few minutes they were all on their way to the house of God.

This was a very excellent plan of Mr Gregory to train up his children in habits of benevolence ; and as he gave them instruction in regard to the motives on which they ought to

give, he had certainly every reason to believe that they would be benefited themselves while they were trying to do good to others.

As they were walking to church, he said to his children—

“Which do you think God will love the most, the man who gives a crown, or the man who gives a hundred?”

Charles was usually the first to speak, and after a moment's reflection, he replied—

“I have always thought that God looked at the heart, and loved men as he found their hearts to be right.”

“Very well answered, my son ; and then you will remember that He will require of a man according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not. If you have but a farthing to give, and sincerely desire to do good with it, God will accept it, while he will reject the offering of the man who gives a hundred pounds only to be known and praised for it.”

“And that,” said Charles, “is what is taught us in the story of the widow who cast two mites into the treasury of the Lord—though there were many rich gifts cast in too, Jesus said hers was more than all the rest.”

Henry Wood had been listening to this conversation, and ventured to ask if there was not

something about the same thing in the story of Cain and Abel; where we are told that what Abel brought was accepted, and what Cain brought was not; because one was given from a very different feeling towards God than the other.

Mr Gregory told him that the same principle was involved, and that if our hearts were right, and we really loved to give to the cause of Christ, it made no difference whether we gave much or little.

"But it would make some difference in the amount that is given," said Mrs Gregory, "if everybody thought that whether they give little or much, it would be all the same."

"Sure enough," Mr Gregory replied; "and I ought to have added, that if the heart is rightly affected in view of the object, we shall give according to our ability. God knows what we are able to do, and when we make a contribution to His cause, we profess to do what we can. If we deceive ourselves, or our neighbours, in the matter, we cannot deceive Him, for He knows our purses as well as our purposes."

"Who were they, John?" asked Mrs Gregory, of one of the younger children, "who pretended to give all that they had to the Apostles, and yet kept back a part?"

"Ananias and Sapphira," the little boy answered, promptly, and pleased that he could have a word in the conversation.

"And they fell down dead," the mother said, "when the crime was brought home to them."

In this way the parents and children were conversing as they walked to church; and thus Mr Gregory endeavoured to fulfil the Divine command, to teach his children their duty, "as they lie down, and as they rise up, as they sit in the house, and as they go by the way." He would thus unite pleasant remarks with good instruction, making the children happy in his society, while he implanted those principles that would be of service to them in all their future lives.

They reached the sanctuary, and reverently took their seats. The children did not need to be spoken to or watched to keep them in order while at church. They had been led to believe and feel that it was none other than the house of God. They knew that the eye of God was on them, and that He would be dishonoured and displeased if they should trifle in His presence.

The minister who led the service was a very excellent man, whom the children knew and

loved as their pastor; and they listened to his words with that interest which attachment to him and reverence for the Word of God would naturally inspire. He preached on the subject of missions to the heathen, and made a statement of the misery of those who are living and dying without the blessed knowledge of the way of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. He told them of the cruelties which the heathen inflict upon themselves—how they pierce their flesh with knives, and swing upon hooks, and walk through the fire, and fall down before the wheels of the iron car—in the vain hope that their gods would be pleased with these horrid deeds of blood. And then he spoke of the means employed to send the Gospel to these degraded heathen, to proclaim to them the way to heaven, and to persuade them to put away from them their dumb idols, and worship the only living and true God.

“ But these missionaries must be supported while they are preaching the Gospel among the poor heathen; and Christians who stay at home ought to be willing to give freely of their money to sustain those who go.”

After the sermon, the contribution was taken up by passing a box around to each pew, to receive the offerings. “ It is of no importance,”

said the pastor (as the officers were about to proceed with the boxes), "so far as *you* are concerned, whether the amount of your gift be great or small. If it is according to your *ability*, and is given from love to Christ, and the souls for whom Christ died, it will be owned and blessed. Cast in *the mites*, if you have no more to give, and the Saviour will regard the offering. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

The box came to the pew in which sat Mr and Mrs Gregory, with their children. They dropped in their contributions, each one putting his own hand into the box as it passed him.

The services were soon concluded, and they returned home, conversing by the way of the truth they had heard. When they were assembled at home for family worship, Mr Gregory spoke to them of the duty of prayer, that what had just been given might be made the means of great good to those who are perishing for want of the Gospel; and after uniting in devotional exercises, they parted for the night.

There was one of that little group who did not rest well that night. As he lay down upon his bed, the thought of something wrong that

he had done that day troubled him, and he could not get to sleep. He knew that God's eye is on us always, and that God knows the thoughts of our hearts, as well as the words of our lips, and for all these things will bring us into judgment. He turned over in the bed, and then he covered up his face, and tried to think about something else ; but in spite of all he could do, the thought would come back that he had sinned against God, and God was angry with him. It was dark, and whether he opened his eyes or closed them, he could see in the darkness the eye of God looking down on him, and he thought every moment that God would speak to him, and call him to account for what he had done.

The night was long and very tedious. He heard the clock striking ten—eleven—twelve—and then he dozed a little, and did not hear it again till two—three—after which he dozed again till daybreak, when he felt better, as he was more afraid of God in the darkness than in the light. He dressed himself as soon as it was light enough, and went out of doors to find something in the way of amusement.

I have not told you which of the family it was who was so troubled in his conscience, but you see it was one of the boys.

In the course of the day, the boys were back and forward from the village near which they lived and where they went to school, sometimes all of them together, and at other times apart, just as it happened.

In the afternoon, when school was out, and they were all at home, in want of something to do, Henry Wood proposed that they should go out behind the barn and have some fun.

"What can we do there?" inquired Charles Gregory; "there's nothing going on that I know of."

"I've got something that you do not know of," replied Henry, "and we will have a good time of it."

Off they went, and were joined by one or two of the neighbours' boys, so that quite a party was soon assembled.

Henry now drew out of his pocket a paper of powder and a small cannon, and proposed that they should fire a salute. Of course the powder and cannon were received with great glee by the boys, who were always ready for sport of that kind.

"Charles, you run to the house and get a coal of fire," said Henry, "while I load her; and be a little sly about it, or your father may see you."

"Well," said Charles, "I do not believe he would like it, if he knew we had powder, for he has often told us it was a very dangerous thing to play with."

"But did he ever tell you not to get it, or not to play with it?" demanded Henry, who inferred from the remark of Charles that Mr Gregory had given no special order on the subject.

"I do not know that he has, for he knows that we have no money to buy it with, and when he gives us money he always knows what we are going to do with it."

"He *thinks* he does, you mean," interrupted Henry. "How does he know what you did with the money he gave you to put into the money-box at church last night?"

Charles looked at Henry with astonishment, not knowing what to make of the question. At length he spoke up to him with great animation, and said—

"Why, Henry Wood, do you suppose that anybody would be so wicked as to steal the money that his father gave him to put in the box?" Henry was silent for a moment, and went on ramming the wad into the cannon. But he soon bridled up, and asked if anybody was going after the fire?

Charles told him that he could go himself if he wanted it, but for his part he was not willing to have anything to do with firing the cannon un- he got his father's permission. So saying, he marched off, without looking back at the boys.

His little brother John followed him, and taking him by the hand walked away with him without saying a word.

Charles was troubled to know what he should do. It was wrong for Henry to have the powder secretly, but he was not quite sure that it was his duty to tell his father what was going on ; and now that he and John had both left the ground, he felt that perhaps that was enough, and he would say nothing.

The boys with the cannon soon supplied themselves with fire from one of the houses in the neighbourhood, for they were afraid to go to Mr Gregory's after the two boys had departed ; and presently the cannon was fired, again and again, and the boys sent up shouts at every discharge. Charles and John heard them, and it was a great trial to them both to resist joining them, but duty triumphed, and they sauntered away home.

When tea-time came, the boys were all at their posts with hands and faces clean, and all

cheerful, as if the day had been a very pleasant one. Mr Gregory returned from his business, and, as he took his seat at the head of the table, inquired of the children how they were getting on at school, and what had occurred during the day ; and the evening passed away pleasantly in social conversation, and was closed with prayer.

“ You were up later last night than usual,” Mrs Gregory said to the boys, “ and you must try to get to bed early to-night ;”—a hint which they readily took, and soon were their weary heads on the pillow.

If one of these children was uneasy and restless the night before, he was much more so now, when he looked back upon the deeds of another day. *All these things, he thought within himself, are written in the book of God's remembrance, and will be read out against me in the day of judgment.* Again, he was distressed at the thought that God's eye was upon him, and he tried to call back the pleasure he had found in the day past, and to forget the presence of Him who seeth in secret. But it was impossible. Conscience was awake at the very time when he desired it to be asleep, and he could not be at peace.

He tried to persuade himself that it was a

very small matter to take a *sixpence*; it was so little that it could hardly make any difference in the amount of the collection, and would have done very little good if he had put it in.

“What would a sixpence do,” he said to himself, “in the way of hiring a man to carry Bibles to the heathen? And what would it buy for a man to eat? It is only a few pennies, and will never be missed. But then it was not mine! It was Mr Gregory’s money, and he gave it to me to put in the box; and, if I didn’t put it in, I ought to have given it back to him. So it is as if I stole it! Yes, I did steal it! And it was given by Mr Gregory to do good with. He told us, on the way, that we were giving this money to the Lord! Oh, what a wicked boy I am, to rob God, and to take money that was to go for the poor wretched heathen! Why I am worse than they are.”

Henry was very much troubled as these thoughts pressed themselves on his heart. He turned over and over in the bed, and tried to get in a softer place of the pillow, and to lie where it was cooler, for he began to be very restless; but the more he turned about, the less peace of mind did he find; and at last, worn out with anxiety, he sank into an uneasy slumber, and dreamed that he was

taken to a gloomy dungeon and shut up in the dark, where he had nobed to sleep on, and where he was told he would have to stay for ever. The fright that he got, when he thought the iron door was shut upon him, waked him, and he was more afraid to go to sleep, than he was to lie awake with the eye of an angry God looking down upon him. That was a long, long night, and he was very glad, indeed, when the first rays of the morning darted into his bed-room window. He was soon up and dressed; for any thing seemed better to him than lying there with such a fire in his bosom.

Never did a boy enter upon a day with such a determination to be merry as Henry Wood did that morning. He did not pray when he arose, for he knew that God was displeased with him, and he was afraid to mock Him with his prayers. But he would play hard, and drive away all thought of the wrong he had done. This was the plan he took to get rid of his distress, instead of going to God and penitently confessing his sin, and then to Mr Gregory and asking his forgiveness, as he ought to have done.

His plan worked very well for his purpose. He was the liveliest, wildest boy at school that day, making more fun than all the rest, and "carrying on" as if he had just got his liberty

after being shut up in the house a year. Now, there was no way by which his sin was likely to be found out, unless he told of it himself, and before night he was persuaded that it would never be known, and he need not give himself any more trouble about it. Indeed, he wondered at his own folly, as he called it, "in being so frightened the night before." It was only a trifle. It would never be known, and nobody would be any the worse for it.

In this way he hardened his heart and quieted his conscience. Concealing his sin, and then persuading himself that it was only a trifle, he made it far greater; while he shut his eyes against it, and thus refused to see its nature, and its consequences. It was the first step in the way of crime.

It was an awful step! You may think, as he did, that taking a sixpence is no great matter, and that it will lead to nothing serious. But you do not see the bearings that it has upon all his future life. It is like starting a great stone from the top of a hill; it was very easy to hold it there before it began to roll, but, after it is on the way, who will attempt to stop it? Onward and downward it goes, getting force as it descends, until it dashes itself to pieces beneath.

CHAPTER II.

THE SHILLING AND THE DISCOVERY.

A FEW weeks after the painful events we have mentioned in the previous chapter, a collection was taken up in the church which Mr Gregory attended, and, as he was going to the city in a few days, it was handed to him, that he might take it with him, and pay it over to the society for whose benefit it was intended. Mr Gregory carried the money home with him after it had been counted, and found it to amount precisely to six pounds one shilling. He took the trouble to count it again after he reached home, and found the sum to be just what he had been told it was when it was put into his hands. But, as much of it was in silver and copper, he thought he would lay it all aside together, and when he went to the city he would just pay the sum to the society, and use the change as he should need it at home.

It was very imprudent and unwise in Mr Gregory to leave money in that way lying on the mantel-piece in the parlour. He ought to

have put it carefully into some private drawer, just as it was, and locked it up. To put it where he did, was placing temptation in the way of children and servants, and we do not know how easily they may be led into sin when they are suddenly tempted. Our Lord has told us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and we should be very careful not to put ourselves in the way of it, nor to lead others into it.

Mrs Gregory saw the money lying there, and, while her husband was gone, she took it and put it away with care. As she did not know what use her husband was expected to make of the collection, she rolled it up in a paper, and kept it separately from all other money until he should return.

When Mr Gregory came from the city, he took the money, and as his wife mentioned to him that she had found it lying on the mantel-piece, and, thinking it wrong to leave it so exposed, had put it carefully away,—he was induced to count it again. There were now only six pounds exactly. He recurred to the memorandum which he made it his pocket-book when it was first counted, and satisfied himself that there were six pounds one shilling when he went away, and there was not a doubt that a shilling had been taken.

He asked his wife if she was sure that she had not had occasion to use a shilling, and so had taken it, and forgotten to replace it; but she assured him that she had all the money she needed, and had not withdrawn from the collection a single penny. There was a mystery about it, and they were filled with anxiety.

It was plain that some one in the house had taken the money, for had a thief from abroad come in to steal, he would have taken the whole of it. It was a small sum to lose, and that made it the more likely that some of the children, or the servant, had been guilty of the theft. What hours of pain did those parents suffer, in the thought that perhaps one of their own children had taken this money!

The servant had not been long in the family, and they were induced to believe, on the whole, that she was the thief; and this served to heighten the distress of their hearts as they retired to rest that night, with feelings very different from any they had ever had since they kept house. Oh, if children knew how deep is the anguish with which their misconduct fills the hearts of their parents, would they not strive against sin?

Early the next morning, Mrs Gregory asked the servant girl to come into the nursery, and then, in a very gentle way, she introduced the

subject of the lost money, and inquired if she could give any information as to what had become of it. The perfect composure of the girl, and the entire sense of innocence which she manifested, satisfied Mrs Gregory that Susan knew nothing of the matter. The girl seemed to be distressed at the thought that any one in the house could be so wicked as to steal; and the idea of being herself suspected of such a crime was very painful to her. But Mrs Gregory did not charge her with having done it. She was more considerate than to wound the feelings of one who might be innocent; and when the girl left her presence, it was with the injunction to say nothing in the family of what had happened.

The children were then called in and questioned very closely. The youngest was examined first. John was frightened when his mother asked him if he had seen any one with money that he ought not to have; and when his mother went on to speak of what had been done, the little fellow burst into tears, and sobbed loud and long.

"You know, I never did such a wicked thing in my life," he cried out,—and it was hard to pacify him.

George and Charles were next brought in

from play, and in reply to inquiries made of them, they declared their ignorance of the whole affair—they did not know that there was any money on the mantel-piece. This was the first moment they had heard there was any, and they never would have touched it, even if they had seen it.

Henry Wood was now called, and was highly indignant that such a crime should be imputed to him. He declared that “he was as innocent as a lamb, and he did not see why they should think of charging him with being a thief!” After Mr Gregory had conversed with Charles and Henry, his fears were excited that one or the other of these boys was guilty. But as he had no evidence of the fact, he could only urge them to confess their sin, if indeed they had sinned.

In the evening, the family were assembled as usual for worship, and Mr Gregory read the fifty-first Psalm. He enforced its solemn truths with a few very pointed remarks, telling the children that all sin was committed against God, and however secret it might be, the great God sees and knows all that is done under the sun, and He will surely bring it into judgment ! In the last day, when we and all the world are before Him, the one who took this money and

then denies it, as I fear one of this family has done, will be brought out and exposed as a thief and a liar! But neither of the boys exhibited any emotion, and, after prayers, all the children retired to bed.

The next day, Mr and Mrs Gregory had occasion to be absent, and were not expected home till late in the evening. It was with reluctance that they ever left the children at home in that way, but duty seemed to require it. Though Susan had not been with them long, they had every reason to suppose her trustworthy; and as they left the group of children at the door, and Susan in the midst of them, the anxious parents charged them to mind what Susan said, and let her give a good account of them at night.

Susan had been well brought up for a girl in her condition. She had been well instructed in the Bible, and had read **many** good books, and was sensitive to every thing that affected her character. She knew that an honest name was her fortune; and to have been suspected, for a moment, by Mrs Gregory, as the purloiner of the missing shilling, had given her no little uneasiness. With all this, too, she had not a little superstition about her, and almost as soon as Mr and Mrs Gregory were out of sight, she

resolved to try an experiment which she had heard of as having been employed on a similar occasion. Perhaps it was wrong in her to do such a thing in the absence of her employers; but she was careful to injure nothing, and to have the whole thing among themselves.

She first called all the children into the dining-room, and told them that the shilling, which there had been so much talk about, had not been found, and there was a way to tell whether anybody in the house had taken it. She said, that in a family where she had once lived, some money was stolen from a work-box, and all denied having taken it; but finally they tried the plan she was going to purpose, and the guilty person was detected, and the money recovered. I do not say that these were the very words Susan used, but it was the substance of what she said.

The children were all anxious to know what it was, and readily agreed to do as Susan should direct.

She then told Henry to go to the poultry-yard and catch the old cock, and when caught to hold him fast and bring him to her. While he was gone, she went into the back kitchen for a large black kettle, which was thickly coated with soot, and this she turned bottom upwards

and placed on the middle of the table in the dining-room. She had no sooner done this, and partly closed the shutters, than Henry appeared with the old cock tightly secured under his arm. Susan raised one side of the kettle high enough to slip chanticleer under it, and then darkened the room by closing the shutters.

The room was perfectly still, except the scratching of the old cock's feet as he stepped about in his cage. Susan then told them that all she wanted was that each of them should step up and lay one hand boldly on the kettle, and the one at whose touch the cock should crow would be known as the thief!

All things being ready, Susan said—

“Now, children, I shall go up and put my hand fairly on the kettle and come away again, and if the cock does not crow I am clear; and then I shall want each of you to do the same, and if the one who took the missing money lays a hand upon the kettle, and the cock crows when he touches it, we shall know who is the thief! Now, are you all ready for this trial? If any one of you is afraid to try the experiment, all you have to do is to say so on the spot, and we need not go any further.”

No one spoke! The truth is they were all

afraid, though only one of them had any reason to fear. Susan had arranged them in a row across the room, and then slowly approached the kettle and laid her hand on it, so that they all heard the sound, as well as saw, indistinctly, the motion, and then she slowly stepped back and took her place at the head of the row. Henry Wood now advanced boldly, as if he were going to fight, and was not afraid of any thing. He turned back with the tread of a conqueror, for the cock did not crow! Charles walked up, and returned with a smile on his face, that said, "I knew that I was safe enough." Little John, the youngest boy, only remained, but he was very reluctant to go. He cried about it and said "he did not do it, and he did not want to touch the old black kettle." But up he went, and though he cried at the moment, he laughed heartily when it was all over.

And lo! the cock had not crowed at all!

The shutters were now all opened.

"Hold up your hands," said Susan, at the same time raising her own. They were all open and up in an instant—the right hand of each one of them having a black mark from the kettle, except Henry Wood's, which was as clean as when he went into the room.

"*There is the thief!*" exclaimed Susan,

“you were afraid to touch the kettle, lest the cock should crow and you would be found out.”

Henry was confounded in a moment. It was plain that while all the rest had laid their hands on the kettle, and brought away the marks, he had been afraid to do so, his guilty conscience making him tremble lest the cock should crow! But he was caught now, and Susan told him to produce the money without a moment's delay, or she should tell Mr Gregory, and have him sent off to jail as a thief. He begged her not to do so, and said he would go and get it, as he had hid it away.

It so happened that Mr and Mrs Gregory, being disappointed in the object of their visit, returned without delay, and reached home in a very short time after this trial was over. The old cock had scarcely smoothed his ruffled feathers, and the kettle been snugly returned to its place, before they came in, and were informed at once of what had taken place. They disapproved of the means to which Susan had resorted, but they were greatly relieved by having the guilty party detected.

The children were very much affected, and so was Mrs Gregory, at this result. Though it was very plain before that some one of the family had stolen the money, it was still more

distressing to have the crime brought home to one who must now be marked with the stain of this foul deed. It was but a few moments before Henry arrived with the shilling in his hand. He was surprised to see Mrs Gregory at home, and his face was covered with the blush of shame. He saw it was useless to attempt any apology for his crime, and he wept bitterly as he held out the money to Mrs Gregory. It seemed as if he were really glad to get rid of it as soon as possible.

"Take it to Mr Gregory," she said to him as he drew near. "I do not wish to touch the stolen silver."

Henry turned away with a fresh burst of tears, and handed the money to Mr Gregory, who had just entered the room, and was scarcely able to restrain tears of grief at the sight of such a sinner in the bosom of his own family!

"My son," said he,—“for I feel toward you as a father,—I do not know what to say or what to do. You have brought shame and sorrow into our house, such as we have never felt before, and yet we are not so much distressed for ourselves as we are for you. Tell me, now, if you do not think that you have been very wicked?”

"Yes, sir, I do."

“How came you to think of such a thing as stealing this money?”

Henry was so much broken down by his sudden exposure, that he could scarcely speak; but, after some hesitation, and much urging, he said—

“I went into the parlour to get a book I left there, and saw the money on the mantle-piece. It was all in a pile, and it came into my mind that a piece or two of it would never be missed, and that I might have it as well as not; and so I took only one piece. Oh! I wish I hadn’t seen it there at all!”

“But,” replied Mr Gregory, “could you not let it alone, when you saw it? Why did you touch it, Henry? You knew it was not yours.”

“I don’t know. I wanted some money; but after I took it I was afraid to spend it, and so I hid it where nobody would find it, and I was afraid to go and look at it myself.”

“But, Henry, did you not think, while you were in the parlour, that God was looking at you?”

“No, sir, I did not think about it at all.”

“But you know that He did see you, and you know that He is able to bring the most secret thing to light. It would have been of no great consequence if you had never been found out in this life; but every thing we do, even in the dark,

is known to the great God, and will be made known hereafter to angels and to men. Your sin is now recorded against you ; and oh ! my child, what a doom awaits you, unless you repent of all your sins, and find pardon through the Lord Jesus Christ !”

Henry was very deeply moved by this appeal, and Mr Gregory thought it best to follow it up, by bringing to his mind the punishment which such sin must deserve. He therefore proceeded as follows :

‘ Every sin deserves God’s wrath and curse, both in this life, and in that which is to come. And now, tell me, what punishment, Henry, do you think you deserve ?”

He was speechless ; for what could he say ? He knew that he was very wicked, and that his sin ought not to be overlooked ; but he did not like pronouncing sentence upon himself, and so he was silent.

“ You ought to feel, too,” continued Mr Gregory, “ that your guilt is proportioned to the instruction you have enjoyed. You have had the most careful instruction, and you knew that sin is very offensive to the God who made you, and upholds you from hour to hour. What will your father and mother say, when they hear this sad story ?”

"Oh! don't tell them of it," cried Henry
"I wouldn't have them know it for all the world."

"But I *must* tell them. It would be very wrong in me to conceal it from them. I should not feel that I was doing as I would be done by, if I should not inform them of an event so nearly concerning the eternal wellbeing of their child. And you must probably be the bearer of the sad news to your afflicted parents."

Henry did not know what to make of this last remark; and he looked at Mr Gregory for an explanation. He continued:

"It seems to me, it would be hardly right for me to retain a child in my house, with my own children, who is guilty of such a crime as this of which you have been convicted; and I think I shall have to send you home, to be under your father's care, that he may take such a course with you as appears to him to be best."

This was a dreadful blow to the boy, and he was ready to sink down in grief and shame. Mrs Gregory, who had been sitting by, and listening to this conversation, now remarked, that she thought Henry's sin was greatly increased by his denying it so often.

"Certainly," said Mr Gregory; "and now that you have spoken of it, I remember, and I wish Henry would remember, with how much

seriousness he assured me, over and over again, that he did not know any thing about the matter. God heard those falsehoods, and they will all be brought out in the light of the judgment day, with the sin of stealing, which you have now confessed. Let this be deeply impressed on your heart, and may you be preserved from ever falling into such dreadful sin again !”

“ You see,” said Mrs Gregory, “ how one sin opens the way for another, and, indeed, seems to make the second almost a matter of course. You thought that you must deny the crime when you were asked about it, and thus you have added greatly to your guilt in the sight of a holy God.”

This was a mournful day in Mr Gregory’s house, the saddest those parents had ever known ; and now they called all their children into the nursery, and with tears commended them to the grace of God, which alone is sufficient to restrain from sin, and renew the wicked heart. The children, too, were very sad ; and when night came on, they all felt very much as if there had been a death in the house that day.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRAP-DOOR.

"WHAT shall be done with Henry?" asked Mr Gregory, after the children had retired to their rooms for the night.

"What shall be done *for* him, I would rather ask?" replied Mrs Gregory, and her husband cordially adopted her amendment to his inquiry.

"Yes, that is what I mean," he said, "for I would not do any thing to him, or with him, but with the hope of doing him good; and I am entirely at a loss to know what step to take."

"It is plain that we must not conceal it from his parents, and I am not prepared to give them such anguish as I know this disclosure must cause. I know that we should be almost distracted if Mr Wood should send home one of our children as a thief; and I cannot bear to think of sending Henry to him with such a stain upon him."

“And yet he must go; for we cannot have him with our children, if he has no more principle than he discovers now. He may be their ruin.”

These were the words of Mrs Gregory, and she felt no less for Henry Wood and his parents than her husband did. After long and patient consultation, they resolved that the best plan would be to write a letter to Mr Wood, and relate to him all the particulars of this distressing case, and be, in some measure, guided by the opinion which he should express when he came to know the facts.

This seemed to be the best plan to pursue, and indeed the only one upon which their wounded and excited feelings could settle upon at all in this trying situation; and Mr Gregory accordingly wrote to Mr Wood, giving an account of what had taken place.

Satisfied that he had done his duty, Mr Gregory was willing to leave the issue with Providence, to whom he desired to commit all his ways.

Henry had feared, from a remark which Mr Gregory dropped, that he was to be sent home at once, and in disgrace. It was, therefore, quite a relief to his mind to observe no preparations making for that movement; and the

entire silence of the family on the subject encouraged him to hope that they were about to let it pass.

A few days, however, elapsed, and the stage drew up at the door. A lady was handed out, whom Henry recognised, in an instant, as his mother, and he rushed out to meet her, while Mrs Gregory and the children waited at the door. Mrs Wood received her son with tears in her eyes, and kissed him without a smile!

She led him in by the hand, and was very courteously received by Mrs Gregory, who conducted her to the parlour, where she was soon left alone with her son.

Mrs Wood was a woman of strong feelings, and it was with very great reluctance that she had consented to allow Henry to spend the winter away from her in the country. He was her eldest son, and her heart had been bound up in him. But the truth must be told, that he had very early in life learned to take advantage of her indulgence, and to form habits which more judgment and less fondness on her part would probably have prevented. She was aware of this, and yet she promised herself that he would get over them as he grew older. Mr Wood saw the evil that his boy was likely to suffer, and it was with the hope

of his being greatly benefited by the residence of a few months in the family of his excellent friend, that he had drawn a very reluctant consent from the mother, to part, for a short season, with her darling son.

As soon as Mrs Wood found herself alone with Henry, she drew him near to her and burst into a flood of tears.

"My son, you have broken the hearts of your parents, and what more can I say?"

"Oh, mother! don't cry so," said Henry; "I know I have done very wrong, but I will never do so again—I never will."

"How often have you told me so before, my son, when your father and I have had occasion to reprove you for your faults; and now, when you promise me again, there is something that tells me it is all in vain. My dear son, tell me now, and tell me truly, if you ever, before this, took any money that did not belong to you?"

"No, mother, I never did."

"I hope you speak the truth; but you denied that you took this shilling, and how do I know that you are telling me what is true in relation to the past? Henry, my son, God knows all that you have said and done, and will call you to account for every act of

your life; and I wish you to tell me, as you will answer it when you come to stand before Him in judgment, if you ever were guilty of stealing any money before this instance, in which you have now been detected?"

He was silent a moment, and was evidently troubled. At length he answered—

"Not exactly *stealing*."

"And pray what was it?" quickly demanded Mrs Wood.

"Why, one time, Mr Gregory gave us each a sixpence to put into the contribution box, in the church, and I kept my sixpence to spend. I suppose it was mine after he gave it to me."

Mrs Wood buried her face in her hands, and wept bitterly. This was a disclosure so unexpected, and displaying so much deception and depravity, that she could scarcely credit her own senses when she heard the confession. Here was a boy, fourteen years old, robbing God, defrauding the cause of Christ, deceiving his own conscience and his friends, and now trying to justify his sin in the sight of his mother! She was greatly excited, but after giving vent to her feelings in tears, she told him that she was not in a fit state of mind to talk with him any more that night. She took him by the hand, and leading him to the bed-

side, they kneeled together, while she prayed for him with more earnestness, and more of a broken heart, than she had ever felt in prayer. It was, indeed, high time that she felt deeply ; and as she laid her hand on the head of this sinful child, she called loudly and fervently on the Lord to have mercy upon him, and renew his heart. She then asked Henry to pray for himself, which he did, but with very imperfect petitions. He could repeat the Lord's prayer, however, and this he did at his mother's desire, and she joined her voice with his, as he said, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Afterwards they separated for the night.

Mrs Wood's pillow was wet with her tears that night.

It was Mrs Wood's intention to return the next day to the city, but this conversation led her to change her purpose, that she might take still further counsel with Mr Gregory. This she did, after having given him a full account of the painful confession which Henry had made to her the night before. Mr Gregory was astonished at the statement, and had as much difficulty in believing it as Mrs Wood had when it was first revealed to her. It was agreed between them, that Henry should be

left where he was, and that Mr Gregory should be governed in his discipline by his own sense of duty, and should send him home whenever in his judgment it was desirable so to do.

"I am very anxious," said Mr Gregory to him one morning, a few days after Mrs Wood's visit, "that you should feel the force of the reasons that have led me to overlook your late dreadful sin, without any other punishment than your own conscience must inflict. You saw, as I did, the grief of your tender and anxious mother, when she knew that her son had done wrong, and it was my hope that your own suffering, in consequence of her sorrow, had been deep enough to make you sensible of the evil of your ways, and that the lesson thus painfully learned would not soon be forgotten. I wish now, that you would tell me how you view your own conduct in this matter?"

Henry was silent, and Mr Gregory continued: "Does it not appear to you, that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God, and that you deserve His displeasure?"

"Yes, sir," replied Henry, without emotion.

"And if no judgment from heaven is sent upon you to punish you, and I choose to pass it by, as I have thus far done, is it probable that you will ever repeat the thing?"

“No, sir, I am sure I never shall do so any more?”

“I have no doubt that your present purpose is good, and that you think you will be a good boy in future, but I confess I have my fears about it. You have formed a habit that has been growing upon you from the early years of childhood ; and you will need the grace of God to keep the good resolutions you have formed for a single day or hour. You have made no calculations for the power of temptation ; and my fear is, that all your resolutions will give way when the moment of trial comes.”

These judicious counsels of Mr Gregory were followed by others of the same nature ; and after they had both kneeled together in prayer, Henry retired and joined the boys at play. His companions would not have thought, from any thing in his manner, that he had just been engaged in such solemn business ; and he contrived very shortly to banish from his own mind all the serious feelings which this interview had awakened.

The remainder of the winter passed away without any incident worthy to mention. The boys pursued their studies at the village-school with more than usual diligence and success, while their amusements being in-doors more than they had been in the autumn, were oftener

under the eye of Mr and Mrs Gregory, receiving their parental care and counsel.

Spring had come, and the month of March quite advanced, when Henry was to return to his father's in the city. His general deportment had given satisfaction and pleasure to his friends; and the letters which Mr Gregory had often addressed to his parents, had conveyed the intelligence, so delightful to their anxious hearts, that Henry had shown no sign of yielding again to his besetting sin.

He had just gone to bed one night, having been unusually still all the evening, when one of the villagers called at the door, and desired to see Mr Gregory a few moments. It was Mr Jones, a man who kept a confectionary store in the village, not far from the academy. He was shown into the parlour, where there was no one except Mr and Mrs Gregory; and as he took his seat he seemed to be very much embarrassed, as if he had come on a disagreeable errand. Mr Gregory received him pleasantly, and made the usual inquiries after his own health and that of his family, which he answered without making any in return. At length he found boldness to ask, "How much longer Mr Gregory expected to keep Henry Wood with him?"

Mr Gregory was awake to the bearing of the question in a moment, and replied

“It depends very much upon circumstances, and I think it likely you may have some special reason for desiring to know, and if you have, I pray that you tell me, without hesitation.”

“Well,” answered Mr Jones, “for some time back, I have had a notion that while that lad is always full of his fun, and up to all sorts of good-natured tricks, he had some that were not so clever. I have been keeping an eye on him for some time; and when the boys came into the store, as they do every day, (some of them with money to buy candy or fruit,) I have noticed that Henry would go off by himself, and slip an orange, or a bunch of raisins, or a fig or two, or something of that sort, into his pocket, and pretty soon be among the boys, as careless and lively as any of them. This has been going on for some weeks; and though what he would take at once is a very small affair, and even when all put together would not amount to much, I thought I should try some way to break him off the habit, and to teach him a lesson that he would never forget.”

“I am glad to hear you say so,” said Mr Gregory, “though we are pained, far more than you could be, to know there was any necessity for it. But do go on, and tell me if you have taken any step towards the course you have just now proposed?”

“I do not know that you will approve of the course I took, and I had to be so sly about it that I did not consult with anybody; having a notion that it would be better to keep it all to myself, and if it failed, then nobody would be any the wiser for it. I have a trap-door that leads down to a cellar, with a step-ladder under the door, and this passage is on one side of the store, where the barrels are standing, on which I have some of the choicest of my fruits set out, to be seen by those who come in. I arranged the bolt of the door so, that, when I pulled it out below, the door would fall down into the cellar. Then I fastened to the bolt a strong cord, which I stretched along under the floor to the part behind the counter where I was in the habit of standing, and there I drew it through a hole, and made it fast. By this contrivance I could, with a sudden jerk, pull away the bolt, and let the trap-door fall suddenly, and drop anybody that should be on it to the bottom of the cellar. Keeping a bright look-out on the boys as they were in the store this afternoon, I noticed Henry looking round to see when my attention was turned away, and as he carelessly walked along on the trap-door, and slipped a handful of figs into his pocket, I gave the cord

a twitch, and down went the door ! and down in the dark cellar tumbled the poor fellow, into a crockery crate filled with straw, that I had placed to catch him, lest the fall should injure him. Never was a boy so terribly frightened. He thought it was all over with him. Such a screaming as he set up was enough to make anybody that heard him pity him from the bottom of the heart, and we all hastened to the edge of the pit, and called out to him to know what was the matter.

“ ‘ I’ll never do so again ; never ! never ! never ! ’ he cried out.

“ ‘ Do what ? ’ said I.

“ ‘ Oh ! hook things. I only just took two or three. Oh ! take me out—let me out, and I’ll never do so again as long as I live.’

“ The other boys in the store were at first greatly alarmed, as they did not know what to make of the incident, nor how serious it might be to the boy in the cellar. But as I was very quiet about it, and told them to keep still, they were soon calmed, and we gathered round the edge of the pit into which Henry had fallen, and asked him if he was hurt.

“ ‘ Oh ! yes, I guess I am,’ he cried out. ‘ I’ve hurt my arm, and my back, and I’m almost dead. Do come and take me out.’

"It would have been very easy to help the fellow out of his dismal condition, but I thought it would be a good time to teach him some things, and so I said to him—

" 'Henry, you have stolen fruit in this store a great many times, and you thought nobody knew it; but I saw you, and God has seen you, and now you have got yourself into this place by your wickedness. Are you sorry that you have been so wicked before?'

" 'Oh, yes, sir, I am, and I will never do so again. Oh, help me out or I'll die.'

"As the cellar was not very deep, we had no difficulty in raising him out. And glad enough he was to find himself once more in the light of day and in the land of the living. But he was dreadfully mortified at the thought of his exposure, and of the misfortune that had so suddenly come upon him. The boys were all around him, and would go home and tell of it; they would tell of it at school, too, and there would be no end to the disgrace that would follow him."

Mr Gregory had been variously affected by this strange recital. But he was deeply pained at the sad disclosure now made.

"We feel thankful to you," at length Mr Gregory observed, "for calling to inform us of

Henry's misconduct ; and we cannot complain of you for taking your own way to bring him to a sense of his guilt, though it was a very mortifying way of punishing him."

"I knew it was, sir ; but you see, I thought it would do him good."

"I trust it will, and I do not doubt that your motive was right and proper. We shall have to take him in hand, and see if he can be led to sincere repentance. Oh ! that God would give him a new heart !"

CHAPTER IV.

THE FISHING PARTY.

"I SUPPOSE that there can be no doubt as to our duty now," Mr Gregory remarked to his wife at their first waking the next morning ; "we must now commit the child to his parents, and tell them we have done for him all we can, though with little success."

After breakfast, (at which the children were very silent and thoughtful,) Mr Gregory asked Henry to come into the parlour with him a few minutes.

"Do you think," asked Mr Gregory, "that you will ever be any better; that you will ever learn to fear God and keep His commandments?"

"I hope so," said Henry, as a sense of his sin seemed to press on his heart, and he burst into tears. It is a bitter thing to sin against God, and the way of transgressors is hard.

"You remember when your mother came here last autumn, and when she sat here where I am sitting now, you put your head in her lap, and on your knees promised her that you would never grieve her nor offend God with such wickedness again. Do you remember it, Henry?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I do, as well as if it were yesterday, and I thought then I never would do so again."

"And is there any probability that you will ever be any better than you are now? I have my fears that you have formed a habit that will drag you down to hell. It is terrible to think of it, and I tremble when I say so; but, unless you break it up, it will be your ruin."

Henry appeared to be moved, and Mr Gregory was himself much affected by a view of Henry's danger.

"God is angry with the wicked every day," said Mr Gregory, "and with you now he is greatly displeased. You have sinned in the midst

of much light, and when so many things concurred to induce you to do right. But now there is only one course left for me. I have done all that I can, and I feel that it is my duty to send you to your father's care, that he may do, as none but a father can do, for a wayward child. I will pray for you so long as you live, if my own life is spared ; but you must pray for yourself. And now I mean that you shall go home by the very next stage, if I can find any one to take charge of you on the way."

Henry was surprised by this sudden announcement ; but there was no help for it, and he must submit. Mr Gregory went out to his business, and left Henry to get his things together.

In the evening, Mr Gregory had a long and very serious conversation with Henry, in which he set before him, in as forcible terms as he could command, the danger of the habit which he had evidently formed, and of which he was fast becoming a slave.

"You will be ruined by it, my son, if you do not stop where you are, and learn now to fear God and obey His holy law. You are even now on the very brink of destruction. I never knew a boy of your age, of such a disposition and with such advantages, who had at so early an age, become so habituated to such a sin,

and I am afraid that it is even already too late for me to say any thing that will avail to save you. You must go to your parents, and I charge you now, if you would not bring their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, to repent and reform. You can still be a comfort and blessing to your parents; and you may be a living curse to them, and your death a relief."

Henry was touched but not melted. He looked down upon the carpet and remained silent, as Mr Gregory continued to beseech him to resolve, and to pray for grace from God to help him in his resolution, that he would not, from that hour, yield from such temptation.

He was awakened very early in the morning by Mrs Gregory, who had gone quietly into his room and gently roused him from his slumbers. He started as he awoke, and wondered at seeing her standing over him with a countenance marked with sadness and tears. She told him to be quiet, that the boys in the next room were still fast asleep, and she had come to say a few words to him, as she might not have another opportunity.

"You know I love you, Henry, and would do any thing in my power to make you happy; but I have been thinking all night of your mother, who loves you more than I can; and if I am so

much pained when you do wrong, what must be the sorrow of her heart when she hears that you are still going on in sin? You will try and please her when you go home, will you not?"

"Yes, ma'am, I will," said Henry, firmly.

"I know you will at first, but my fear is, that in a little while you will get into your old ways again, and forget those lessons of sad experience which you have learned while you have been with us. Did you ever hear of the boy who asked his father if he should cut off the weeds close to the ground, when they were out working in the garden?"

"Not that I remember," said Henry.

"Well, the boy thought it would do just as well to cut the weeds up with a hoe; but his father told him the weeds would soon spring up again, and grow as rapidly as ever. To clear them out effectually, he must PULL THEM UP BY THE ROOTS. It is just so, Henry, with these evil habits that now have become so deeply rooted in your heart. You have an idea that by merely *resolving* that you will never do it again, you will get the better of your habits and grow up a good man. But your heart must be renewed. The root of sin is in the heart, and the root must be destroyed, or you will not be any better for these good resolutions. And I do hope that you will

seek the grace of God to implant better principles in your soul. My heart is so pained with what I have heard, that I cannot bear that you should go to your mother. What an awful thing it is for a child to break his mother's heart by his misconduct! Can you bear to think of it, Henry?"

Henry drew the covering over his head and wept. It was the first time that tears of *sorrow* had come to his eyes since his fall. But he loved his mother, and was distressed by these remarks of Mrs Gregory. She was silent a moment or two, and then kneeling down by his bed, offered a brief but earnest prayer for Henry, and also for his parents, that they might be strengthened for the trial they must meet on the return of their child, and that they might be enabled by Divine grace to train him hereafter in the way he should go. She gave Henry a kiss of true affection when she rose from her knees, and left him to prepare breakfast.

While sitting at breakfast, the stage-coach drove up to the door, and to their surprise Mr Wood made his appearance. He came into the house with a glad face, hoping to find his son was still improving in his conduct. Judge of the effect on his mind when he was told the circumstance which had just transpired.

Mr Wood spent the day in the house in a state of mind more easily felt than described.

As they parted for the night, he said, "You can go to bed, Henry. No, stay—I cannot say another word to you to-night, and my head is so distressed that I scarcely know what to think of. But we can pray, Henry. If we can do nothing else, we can pray. Kneel down here with me, and let us pray."

So they kneeled down there—father and son—and, after a few moments of solemn silence, Mr Wood poured out the struggling feelings of his soul in such broken petitions as he could command.

Henry was affected. He even wept. How could he help it, if he were not lost to all sensibility! While yet on their knees, the father turned to his son, and putting his arms around him, said, "I have prayed *for* you, my son; and now I must pray *to* you to have mercy on me, if you will not on yourself. You are killing me! For the sake of your father—for the sake of your mother, to whom I dread to mention what I have now heard of you—for the sake of your own precious soul, I beg of you to make confession of your sin to God, and seek His pardon through the blood of Christ."

They rose from their knees, and as Mr Wood resumed his seat, Henry buried his head in his father's bosom, and sobbed out—

"I will try, father, evermore to be good."

"Ah, my son, how soon may that good resolve give way when temptation meets you. I know that you sometimes feel it to be an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God ; but your wicked heart loves it, evil and bitter as it is, and I fear you will persist in it. I am discouraged, and I leave you to your own reflections now, with prayer that the grace of God may prevail to subdue your heart, and draw you from the jaws of destruction. O God ! have compassion on him—my Henry ! my first born !"

Henry withdrew to his own chamber—"to rest but not to sleep ;" the impression made on his heart by the distress of Mrs Gregory, and the deep agony of his father's prayer, could not be effaced. In the retirement of his room the memory of his crimes swept over his soul as if with the bitterness of death. In the anguish of his heart he poured out his soul's troubles into the ear of his Maker, in a way, till now, unknown to him. It was the cry of the prodigal—"I will arise and go to my Father ;" and the Father heard him and said, "This my son was dead, and is alive again ; was lost, and is found."

It was with a changed demeanour that Henry entered the breakfast-room next day. His face showed the struggle of the night ; and Mr Gre-

gory and his father both felt that now, or never, was the time for fighting the battle against his besetting sin.

Now, you must not suppose that during all these fallings into sin, Henry had no struggles; that no good resolutions had sprung up in his mind or heart. Many a time he had resolved that *now* he would turn over a new leaf; but the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Henry relied, unfortunately, on *his own* strength, and not on God's; and when the temptation came he fell. Reader, beware of *trusting in self*.

It was a happy thing for the poor boy that he had such friends around him, who saw his danger, and tried to keep him from sin. Had he lived with godless parents, who left him to the freedom of his own will, how small would have been the hope of his escape!

But the day of mercy had now come; God had found the lost sheep and was bringing him back into the fold.

Mr Gregory soon saw that a great change had taken place in the character of Henry; and afraid that a transition to new scenes would distract the mind from the work of amendment, proposed to Mr Wood that Henry should continue with his family as heretofore.

Mr Wood was too glad to accept the offer, and took leave of his son with many anxious wishes and prayers for his progress in the Christian life.

In the first flush of a new resolution, how easy to obtain the victory *for a time* over besetting sin. But when days or weeks have elapsed, and we settle into our daily routine, how hard, how very hard, to get the better of long-cherished habits.

Poor Henry found it to be a bitter thing so long to have served sin, and how hard a thing to throw off the yoke of Satan after being so long his follower. It seemed as if the devil felt that now was the crisis of his history; and that if he could but keep him *now*, he would be his for ever; and temptations seemed to lurk for Henry in every event of the day.

But the power of the prince of darkness was broken; the Saviour had found the lamb of His flock, and who could pluck the strayed one out of His hand?

It was about three months after the events just mentioned, and Henry had been maintaining a consistent character among his companions, and was fast gaining the confidence of Mr Gregory, when an event occurred which put the finishing impulse to the desire after the right way on which Henry had now entered.

The family of Mr Gregory made a fishing party to a small lake in the neighbourhood. Mr Gregory was himself engaged in his business, so, in case of danger, he thought it well to send a servant, with the strictest charges to keep well away from the *deep* water.

The children were in the highest glee—the boys at the idea of the fish they should catch, and the girls promising themselves such fine romping over the grassy slopes, and gathering the beautiful wild flowers to bring home.

The day passed rapidly away in these amusements. The boys were most successful in their fishing, and the girls were quite loaded with the bouquets of flowers which they had made up.

Susan had brought with her a basket, well stored by Mrs Gregory with a nice lunch, and she thought it time now to lay it out on the green grass, and she thus left the children for a little to themselves.

It appeared that little Mary had seen a pretty flower growing at the very edge of the bank; and when Susan turned away, she thought now was the time to get it. In stretching out her hand to catch it, she overbalanced herself and fell in. Susan heard the scream she gave, and ran to her assistance; but the water was deep, and in spite of the frantic

efforts she made to get at her, Mary was slowly drifted from the shore by a slight current.

Henry, who had all this time been standing in an attitude of intense eagerness, at last said, "Susan, I can swim a little, and Mary is only a little way from the shore—I'll try and save her—be you ready to help." He slipped off his coat and waistcoat, and, in another instant, was striking out bravely towards Mary.

Mary had been buoyed up at first by her dry clothes, but, as these became wet, she was gradually sinking. Another minute would have been too late, when Henry reached her. Gradually, bit by bit, he brought her within reach of Susan's hand, who lifted her on shore. Henry was much exhausted by his exertions, and was glad of Charles' hand to assist him on to the bank.

Mary was saved, and saved by him; he had now had an opportunity of giving some recompense to Mr Gregory for his kindness to him; and a new consciousness that there was a work before him in life, imparted new vigour to his character.

Need we describe the agitation and gratitude of Mrs Gregory when they arrived home, and the feeling which filled her heart as she said

to Henry, "This my daughter was lost, and is found. Oh! Henry, under God, I owe her to you."

It needed only some such action as this to confirm the mind of Henry on the course which he had now adopted. It gave him a self-respect, which, he had bitterly felt, he had lost in the eyes of his companions. He felt how different it was to do good and to do evil—that of the *two roads* the narrow way was the happy one. His character began to rise; and now he felt that his highest privilege was, to fight the good fight of faith, and finish his course with joy.

Dear reader, never despair because you have fallen into sin. Christ says, "I came to call sinners to repentance." The way is ever open to Him; and when you fall, call out in the language of faith—"Rejoice not over me, oh, mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise again." And Jesus, who has fought the fight Himself, will nerve your heart for victory.
