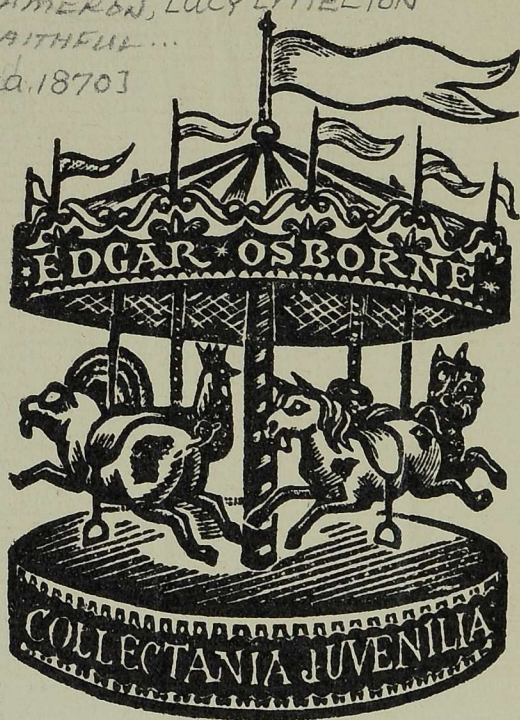


THE
FAITHFUL LITTLE GIRL
AND
MEMORY
MRS. CAMERON



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CAMERON, LUCY LYTTELTON
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THE
FAITHFUL LITTLE GIRL

AND
MEMORY

BY MRS CAMERON

AUTHOR OF "EMMA AND HER NURSE," &c.

LONDON
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THE
FAITHFUL LITTLE GIRL.

A LITTLE girl, called Lucilla, was one day sitting at work by her mamma, who was reading aloud the history of a very pious and excellent clergyman, who had left his native country, and gone into a distant and heathen land, to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the people that sat in darkness. She was in the midst of an account of some great suffer-

ings which he had been compelled to undergo, rather than be unfaithful to his heavenly Master, when the child, suddenly laying down her work, and looking earnestly in her mamma's face, said, "O, mamma! I wish I was a boy!"

Mamma. And why so, my dear?

Lucilla. Because I might go abroad too, and preach to the poor black people.

Mamma. And suppose you were a boy, do you not think that you must have many qualifications of which you are not now possessed, to make you fit to go abroad and preach to the blacks?

Lucilla. Yes, mamma, I must know their language; but, then, I might be

taught to speak their language, instead of learning to speak French.

Mamma. But there is something of still more consequence than learning to speak different languages.

Lucilla. What is that, mamma?

Mamma. If a person undertakes to be a clergyman in England, and much more if he goes abroad, where he will meet with greater difficulties, he must learn to be very patient. Do you think he would do the poor black people any good, if he was to go into a passion when they treated him ill or spoke unkindly to him?

Lucilla. No, mamma, he certainly must be patient.

Mamma. And he must be self-denying too. He must be ready, very often, to go without a good breakfast and dinner, and a warm fire and a comfortable bed; for these things cannot always be had in distant countries; and even in England he must be ready to deny himself in many ways.

Lucilla. Yes, mamma, he must certainly be patient and self-denying; but is there anything else he must be?

Mamma. Yes, he must be persevering and industrious; or else, when he met with any difficulty, he would say, "I cannot get over this difficulty; it is too much trouble to do such and such a thing; I will go back again to England."

Lucilla. Patient! self-denying! industrious! Is there anything else, mamma?

Mamma. There are many other things; but I will only mention two more—he must love God, and try to please him in all he does; and he must love his fellow-creatures, and be always desiring to do them good. But now, seriously, to put it all together, he must strive to love God with all his heart, and to love his neighbour as himself. And, in order to bring glory to God and good to his fellow-creatures, he must be patient, in bearing ill-treatment; he must be self-denying, in giving up his own comfort; and he must be persevering and active, in overcoming difficulties and doing good;

he must be continually looking up for strength to do all this through faith in that Saviour who alone can reconcile us to God, and enable us to do any good work.

Lucilla (after thinking some time).

Well, mamma, then you think, if I was a boy, I should not do for a clergyman?

Mamma. My love, he that is faithful in a little, will generally be faithful in a great deal. If you wish to know whether you would be likely to do your duty as a man, consider how you do it as a little girl. How do you behave in the nursery and in the school-room?

Lucilla. But, mamma, that is a different thing.

Mamma. Not at all, my little girl. We have all the same duties to do, though some in a larger way, and some in a less; and a little girl of ten years old, or even one of four years old, may, in her way, be as faithful as a grown-up man who is a clergyman, or a minister of state, or a king, is in his way.

Lucilla. I do not know, mamma, whether I am faithful; I never thought much about it.

Mamma. Well then, my dear, we will try to find it out. Next Saturday will be New-Year's Day, and I will in the meantime prepare a paper for you, which

I will read to you, and which, perhaps, will give you a little more knowledge of yourself than I think you have now.

Lucilla. Will you be so good, dear mamma, as to tell me what that paper will be? Will it be a story?

Mamma. No, not *quite* a story; and it will be all true, and I hope, too, it will furnish us with some employment very well suited to the day.

Lucilla. How glad I shall be when New-Year's Day is come! Thank you, dear mamma.

New-Year's Day very soon arrived. On that day the children were to drink tea down stairs with their papa and mamma, and Lucilla expected that the

paper her mamma talked of would be read aloud in the evening. But, after dinner, her mamma took her hand, and led her into her own room; and here, having shut the door, and stirred the little bright fire, she seated Lucilla on a stool by her side.

After a few minutes' silence, she said, "Now, my dear, I will fulfil the promise which I made to you; I will read you the little paper which I have prepared for you."

Then she took from her portfolio, which lay on her table before her, a paper; and as she began to read, Lucilla drew her stool still closer to her mamma.

The Paper written by Lucilla's Mamma.

LUCILLA is a little girl of ten years old; she has a papa and mamma who love her dearly, and take pains to make her a good child, and to teach her those things which she ought to know. Lucilla has a brother a year older than herself, and four little sisters who are younger. Thus Lucilla has many opportunities of gaining what is good, and she has it also in her power to be very useful; but she wishes to be in a situation very different to that in which Providence has placed her; a situation in which a great deal of piety, a great deal of charity, and a great deal of

humility, patience, self-denial, and perseverance would be wanted.

Let us examine Lucilla's conduct a little, in her present situation, and see whether, in that, she practises those graces of which she would, in another, want so much. For if she is not faithful in the management of one talent, how can we expect that she will be faithful in the management of ten? We will not go any further back than the last week, that what we put down may be easily recollected by Lucilla; and we will begin with Sunday.

When Lucilla was at church on Sunday, it is true that she spoke the words that were in the Prayer-Book during the great-

est part of the service ; but her eyes were continually wandering, and she seemed more intent upon watching the behaviour of her sisters and the different people who came into the church, than upon governing her own behaviour. No one would have supposed that she was in the house of God, or that she was listening to the words of salvation—was praying for the pardon of sin, and seeking for help to lead a godly, righteous, and sober life. Surely Lucilla failed in piety.

On Sunday evening, Lucilla, after rising from her tea, went and stood by the fire, waiting till her papa should call her to read. She had nothing to do—her little sister Sophia ran up to her, and

taking her by the frock, said, "O, dear sister Lucilla, will you tell us the story of Daniel? There will be quite time before we are sent for down to papa."

"O! do! do!" said the other little sisters, jumping about her.

"No," said Lucilla, "I can't now. I am cold, and I want to warm myself; go and ask somebody else." So Lucilla stood by the fire warming herself, till her face was so scorched, that her mamma coming into the room, reproved her, and sent her to sit at a distance from the fire. Had Lucilla felt real love to her sisters, would she have minded leaving the fire to do them good?

On Monday morning, Lucilla had just

sat down to her French exercises in the school-room, upon her stool before her desk, when her sister Charlotte coming in, went up to her and said, "Lucilla, you are sitting upon the music-stool, please to give it me, I am going to practise."

"I am just settled," answered Lucilla; "take one of the other stools."

"But those stools are too low," answered Charlotte; "you know I must not sit at the instrument upon a low stool; so, pray, Lucilla, give it me."

So Lucilla got up in a very ungracious manner, and pushed the stool away; and though Charlotte had civilly brought her another, she sat down upon it without thanking her.

Soon afterwards, her eldest brother coming in rather roughly (for he is apt sometimes to forget himself), cried out, "I wonder who has got my stool; I brought it up stairs this morning before breakfast, and whoever is sitting upon it must please to get up, for I must have it." None of the little girls got up; so he went first to one, and then to another; but when he came to Lucilla, "So, Mrs Lucilla," he said, laughing, "you are the guilty person. So, please to give up my stool."

"I have just been turned off one stool," answered Lucilla, in a very cross voice; "and I shall never finish my lesson, if I am to get up every minute."

“Well, I shan’t hinder you a minute,” answered her brother; “and there are more stools in the room—and don’t you see it is my stool?” But Lucilla did not stir. So her brother, after waiting for some minutes, took hold of the stool, roughly indeed, and pulled it from under her, and forced her to jump up; and while he ran away laughing, she burst into a passionate fit of crying, which her mamma just then coming in, observed, and inquired the cause of it from a young lady who was sitting at work in the room. Shall we call this patience?

On Wednesday morning, Lucilla sat down to practise a piece of music, which her master expected her to learn

perfectly, against he arrived next. The piece of music consisted of simple easy airs, and some very difficult passages. Lucilla tried to play over the difficult part once, and then she said aloud to one of her sisters, "This is so difficult, I cannot play it." So she completed the half-hour she had then to practise in playing over the easy airs which she knew already. Had she devoted that half-hour to practising the difficult passages, she would have learned them perfectly, and she would not have been blamed by her master for idleness, or set a bad example to her sister. Was this perseverance?

The same morning, when Lucilla had

finished her lessons, her mamma desired she would put on her coat and bonnet, and run in the garden. Her mamma repeated the order twice before Lucilla replied; she then rose slowly from her seat, shivering. "Do you wish me to walk to-day, mamma?" said she. "Do you not think it will snow?"

Her mamma was obliged to reply, in a grave manner, "I must have my orders obeyed, Lucilla, and instantly too." So Lucilla went up stairs, and put on her things, and went into the garden. But when there, she moved like a very old person, instead of running about merrily, like her sisters, and complained of the cold to everybody she saw, and looked

very miserable all the time she was out. So, when she had leave to go into the house again, she came in starved, trembling, and in a discontented frame of mind. We cannot call this self-denial.

Yesterday, at the usual hour, when the children met to their lessons, Lucilla did not appear. After some search, she was at last found at work in her own bedroom. As an excuse for not appearing, she said that she thought she could see better to do the piece of work she was engaged in at that hour, than after tea.

Her mamma replied, "Lucilla, to obey is better than sacrifice ; you were ordered to do your lessons now, and to work

after tea ; you have been only consulting your own self-will, Lucilla, in all this.”

“Indeed, mamma,” she answered, “I am not self-willed ; indeed I am not.”

As Lucilla’s mamma meant to notice this another time, she only said, in reply, “Lucilla, you remind me of the lady Madame de Genlis speaks of, who was very fond of talking of herself, and was so little aware of it, that she said, one day, ‘For my part, I never talk of myself.’”

In the evening, Lucilla was asked to play ; and she played a little air very well for a child of her age, and a lady in the room commended her for it ; and she became so conceited, that she was quite

unpleasant. She looked perfectly silly, she talked nonsense, laughed loud at nothing, and was entirely taken up with herself. Where is Lucilla's humility?

Here Lucilla's mamma stopped reading, as if she would give her child time to speak. She looked at her, and perceived that she had tears in her eyes, which were fixed upon the ground. "Mamma," said she, in a low voice, "what should I have done?"

Mamma. I will finish my paper, and then you will see.

Had Lucilla gone to the house of God hungry and thirsting after righteousness, feeling herself to be a poor sinful child; had she remembered that the

ground where she was standing was holy ground; she would have fed with reverence on the Bread of Life, and returned home strengthened and refreshed for the labours of charity, patience, perseverance, and self-denial, humble and obedient.

Thus, when her sisters asked her to talk to them about the Bible, she would have rejoiced to see such desires in their hearts, and would have gladly told them the story of Daniel, and thus impressed on their little minds the important duty of prayer.

When she was twice interrupted in her lessons to give up her seat, she would have said to herself, "It is indeed

unpleasant to be hindered in this way, but my brother and sister are certainly reasonable in their requests ; and though my brother is rather rough in his way of asking for it, yet he does not mean to be unkind ; so I will give up my seat quietly, and I shall soon be settled in another place ; and if I do not discompose my mind by ill-temper, I shall not be hindered much, and I shall be setting an example, too, of good-humour and compliance.”

When the difficult piece of music was to be practised, Lucilla need not be told what she should have done ; and I think, too, she will discover that she ought to have played cheerfully in the

garden, determined not to mind the cold. She would soon have found her task become easy ; and how sweet it is to find a task completed, which we have tried to do cheerfully and faithfully ! but if we perform our business by halves, we never leave it with satisfaction.

Had Lucilla been in an obedient and humble frame of mind, she would not have made the least change in her regular business, without consulting her mamma ; she would have said, “ However this may appear to me, mamma must be the best judge ; it is my duty to submit in everything.”

When reproved, she would have listened with humility ; and though at

first she might not see in herself the fault she was accused of, she would have refrained from self-defence, at least, till she had inquired into her own conduct by herself.

Had she been humble, she would have received the approbation of the lady for the little piece she had played to her, with a thankful feeling that such pains had been taken in her instruction as to enable her to do anything well ; or, at the least, she would not immediately have become silly, because, in some respects, she had been considered wise.

I much fear, too, that on all these occasions of which I have been speaking, Lucilla yielded, without a struggle, to

the natural feelings of an evil heart, and did not afterwards call herself to account for her unfaithfulness, and humble herself before God. How then can we hope that she has sought earnestly for that Holy Spirit, which alone can enable us to be faithful in our calling?

Lucilla's mamma stopped reading again; and Lucilla, wiping away the tears which had just been flowing fast from her eyes, said, "Mamma, I will not wish to be a boy again."

Mamma. That was certainly a silly wish, Lucilla; but I should not have taken all this trouble to cure you of wishing to be a boy, because I think you would soon have seen yourself the folly

of such a wish, and would have forgotten it in a little while ; but I wished to teach you a lesson that many grown people, as well as children, have need to learn—a lesson that I hope you will remember as long as you live. We are all apt to fancy that we could serve God better at some other time, in some other place, with some other companions, than at the time, in the place, or with the companions which God has appointed to us ; and while we form many vain wishes and plans, we neglect to do the duty that is now in our power. Your little circle of duty, my child, is in your father's house, and among your own family ; though even here you may

often give your mite of help to the poor in your neighbourhood, and the still poorer in strange and distant lands. Be faithful and diligent, my love, in performing the duties which are within your power, and in proportion to your faithfulness and diligence, your means of doing good will probably be increased; till from being a faithful servant of your heavenly Master in this world, you are called to His immediate presence, to wait upon Him, and to see His glory. For *they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.* (Daniel xii. 3.)

Lucilla kissed her mamma, and

whispered softly to her, "I will try, mamma, to be a faithful little girl;" and her mamma again reminded her that she must daily and hourly look up for strength from above, to do what is so very contrary to a fallen nature. "This little examination," she proceeded, "will make you see for yourself what I have so often tried to shew you—how very far our nature is departed from that holiness in which man was at first created, and how ready we are to fall into everything wrong."

They were thus employed, when a sound of many little voices was heard on the staircase; and a gentle tap at the door was followed by—"Mamma, tea

is ready." "And the plum-cake is come!"

"And may we come down, mamma?"

So their mamma opened the door, and three little fairies jumped about her, Sophia, and Charlotte, and little Jane. Lucilla had not quite dried up her tears; so her mamma bade her follow her in a few minutes, and she herself went into the drawing-room with the three young ones jumping about her.

The tea-things and the urn were set, the sofa was drawn to the fire, the curtains were let down, and the fire burned bright. "Here is the plum-cake!" cried little Jane, jumping on her papa's lap; for her papa sat by the table, just opposite the plum-cake.

“Am I to cut this great plum-cake?”
said their papa. “But who shall I find
to eat it?”

“I will eat some,” said little Jane.
“But you shall have some first, papa,
and mamma, and brother Edward, and
Lucilla, and Charlotte, and Sophia; and
I will keep a little bit for Mary-Anne,
because she is a little baby, and is gone
to sleep, and cannot sit up to drink tea
with us *great* girls.”

They all peeped at the plum-cake,
though they did not talk so much
about it as Jane; till their papa said,
“Now Edward is come, and Lucilla is
come, we must all be seated, and your
mamma is ready to pour out the tea

—and *perhaps* I may *try* to cut up this plum-cake.”

So all the party were soon seated. Lucilla placed herself by her mamma. She looked humble and gentle; and though she seemed thoughtful, was far from feeling unhappy.

I shall not undertake to relate all that passed at the tea-table; for there was more said than I can quite remember; only I must not forget to mention, that little Jane reminded her papa again that a little bit of plum-cake must be kept for Mary-Anne. And Lucilla asked her mamma's leave to let her put by her last slice for a good old woman who was sick, and who could

not eat anything that was not nice. "And perhaps, mamma," added she, "you will let me and Edward take it to her to-morrow, if it should be a nice frosty morning?" So Lucilla wrapped up the cake, and laid it by in her work-box.

And now tea was over, and the tea-things sent away. "And now, dear papa," said little Jane, perceiving her papa was going to rise from his chair, "do not go away; do, do stay a little while with us."

"O, do, pray, papa," said Sophia; "this is the first night in the year, and you can read in your study all the other nights in the year."

"Well," said their papa, smiling, "I

will stay a little while longer ;” and he suffered the little ones to pull him down into his chair. “ But I must not interrupt any plan your mamma had for you ; perhaps she was going to read to you.”

All their eyes were turned towards their mamma.

“ I did intend reading something to the children,” said their mamma, as she drew a paper from her work-bag.

When Lucilla saw a paper she coloured, and looked anxiously at her mamma.

Mamma. It is no paper you have ever seen, Lucilla (for her mamma guessed her thoughts).

Papa (taking the paper in his hand).

And I have never seen this paper; so I will stay and read it to you. It seems to be a story, and the title of it is *The Faithful Little Girl*. I hope you will all be faithful little girls. And now, come, all be seated.

The children were all in their places in a minute, except little Jane, who had got on her mamma's lap; and soon afterwards, though she was so *great* a girl, her gentle breathing gave notice that she had fallen asleep in her mother's arms.

The History of the Faithful Little Girl.

THERE was once, in a distant country, a great lord, who lived in a palace of

adamant, of beautiful and dazzling whiteness. This palace stood in a very lovely garden, where grew trees and flowers of every climate; groves of oranges, with underwood of flowering myrtle, rose above lawns of delicate turf; and these lawns were sprinkled with tufts of flowering shrubs or creepers, trailing over the shorn grass, or beds of sweet-scented flowers of every colour. Here were little hills, from which tumbled cascades, forming themselves into brooks which watered the valleys below. In the trees were birds of brilliant plumage and melodious voices; here were doves also, and many rare and pleasant animals, such as

deer, and antelopes of Asia, or the gambling lamb of Europe.

One thing was particularly to be noticed in this garden; the persons employed in its cultivation were of exquisite beauty, and were all dressed in white, with wreaths of different coloured flowers on their heads. It is true that their employments were not laborious, for no weeds grow in that garden, and there was nothing there which could soil the purity of their dress. They lived in perfect love and harmony together, and would assemble in groups in the warmer parts of the day, and would sit and sing songs of the sweetest melody; each would bear a part, and

yet all were in unison ; little children, in their white robes with wreaths of unopened buds, sang too, and though in softer tones, yet as sweetly as the rest. Their songs were all in praise of their Lord, and of His Son, from whom, it seems, they had received some very extraordinary favour.

The Lord of the palace would often converse with them as with His friends ; when they saw Him approach, they all went forth to meet Him, and they rejoiced greatly in His presence.

At some considerable distance from this garden, so far off that the glory of the palace could only be seen from it by a glass, there was a wide and barren

common, inhabited by a wretched and desolate set of people ; and so great was the compassion which the Lord of the palace felt for these unhappy people, that He determined to give them the opportunity of improving their circumstances, and of quitting their wretched abode.

I shall not here relate the wonderful means which His love made use of for this purpose ; the time I have before me would not suffice, nor is my pen able to undertake the task. But this I must mention ; it was the desire of the Lord of the palace, that the inhabitants of this common should not only leave their present abode, but that they should be

preferred so highly, as even to be admitted into His gardens. It was true that they could never deserve such a privilege by anything they could do, yet there was a certain fitness for their employments in the garden which they were all expected to gain, and various methods were used to produce that fitness in them.

Having thus explained the views of the Lord of the palace, I shall proceed to tell you in what manner a messenger sent from the palace conducted himself towards three little children who lived on this common ; as I hope the account may not be unprofitable to other young ones.

These children consisted of a boy,

named Impatience, a sister, called Constancy, and another lesser boy, whose name was Indolence; and they were all sitting together on the ground when the messenger thus addressed them: "My little children, my Master loves you very dearly, and He desires to have your presence in His garden. But all those who live in His garden, delight to do His work, and serve His pleasure; and unless you delight to do so too, you cannot be admitted to live with those who walk in white. Now, in order to make trial of you, I am commissioned to appoint you certain tasks to perform; and if you are faithful in doing the work I set you in this wilderness, you will be

called to do your Master's work in His garden of love and joy, where you will be in His immediate presence."

Then the messenger bade the children look a little way before them ; and they saw three small enclosed pieces of ground, in each of which grew one white lily. "To each of you," said the messenger, "I intrust a lily ; if you take care of this lily, other flowers will be given to you ; but if you neglect it, you must expect no more flowers to be given you. I cannot tell you when your Master will send to inquire after your conduct ; that hour and day will be hid from you ; but you must take care always to be found watching, always doing your Master's work."

The boys promised the messenger that they would pay great attention to their gardens ; but Constancy, after looking at the lily for some time, said to the messenger, " Sir, this lily comes from a distant country, and the climate here is very cold. I, too, am weak and ignorant, and cannot tell how to manage it. Surely then this lovely lily will not flourish here."

" My child," replied the messenger, " I will help you every day to take care of your lily, if you will wait for me."

Constancy thanked the messenger, and for that time he left them.

When he was gone, Impatience said to his brother and sister, " I wish he had

set us something more to do than to take care of *one* lily."

"I fancy," replied Constancy, "that we shall find enough to do in taking care of so delicate a plant in this uncertain climate."

"For my part," said Indolence, "I am very glad that we have *but one* lily to take care of; I never loved trouble; and I can lie and bask in the sunshine, or by the fire in my hut, all day, and just water the lily at morning and night. Surely one flower cannot require much care!"

"O, brother," replied Constancy, "you will be sadly deceived, I fear, if you think you can take care of your lily, and yet do nothing all day."

The next morning, Constasy was up early to attend her lily. She found it looking very sickly, and she began to cry. At last remembering what the messenger had said, that he would help her, if she would wait for him, she concluded he must mean that she must watch for his coming. So, remembering that he had come from the east, she looked towards the east, to the quarter where the bright palace was situated, and presently, just as the sun arose, the messenger appeared in view. He smiled at seeing her, and her heart bounded with joy. As soon as he came into the garden, he bade her look at the root of the plant, and she perceived a thousand

little insects ready to devour it. "These insects must be destroyed," said the messenger ; and then he left her.

Constancy had full employment that day in pulling off the insects ; but she had the comfort of perceiving her lily very much recovered ; and towards evening, when she had watered it, it perfumed the air delightfully.

Alas ! what became of the other two lilies ? Impatience had once watered his ; but when Constancy advised him to examine its root, he said he would not sit all day long watching one silly flower, as she did ; and so away he went and played with the naughty children on the common.

Indolence, also, lay on the ground, and pulled off a few insects from the root of his flower; but he would not be at the trouble of watering it, though Constancy several times reminded him of it. It was too much trouble, he said, to go and fetch water; so his lily hung down its head withering for want of moisture.

Constancy entreated her brothers, when she perceived how sickly their lilies looked, to ask for the assistance of the messenger; but Indolence said it was too much trouble; and Impatience said, he could surely manage one lily, without getting so much help.

Day after day passed away; Impa-

tience would not leave his playfellows, and Indolence would not leave his sunny bank, to attend to their lilies; nor would they ask the assistance of the messenger, for they cared not to follow his advice. Constancy alone patiently, from day to day, watched over her lily. Her faithful friend was ever at hand to advise and direct her in her difficulties or mistakes. He told her when to water her flower, he directed her how to screen it from the sun, how to clear it from insects, how to lighten the earth about it; and, though a plant of celestial growth, it bloomed and flourished in a foreign land.

Not so with the lilies of Impatience

and Indolence. Whether any life remained in the roots was not to be known, but certainly the stem, and leaves, and lovely blossoms had withered, and shewed no hope of revival. And when Constancy, even with tears, urged that the Lord of the palace might soon send to inquire into the state of their gardens; Impatience replied, that he did not suppose He would send yet, and when some certain schemes he was engaged in with his companions were concluded, he could, with a few days' care, recover his lily, he was quite sure. And Indolence would answer, yawning, that when the weather became a little pleasanter, he would attend better to his

lily, but it was too cold to work much out of doors.

It was now a year since the lilies had been planted in the children's gardens ; when Constancy going early into her garden, perceived not only her lily, but a little rose-tree, and a scented jessamine with yellow blossoms, growing on either side of the lily. She stood looking with surprise at these sweet flowers for some minutes ; when the messenger appearing, she ran towards him, and told him what had happened, and inquired if he knew anything about it.

“Constancy,” answered the messenger, smiling, “you have been faithful over your one flower, and the Lord of the

garden has intrusted you with two more. Be diligent, and see that you are faithful over these."

Constancy inquired if her brothers also had had two more flowers given them.

"No," replied the messenger; "and they will be called to a severe reckoning for their neglect of their lilies if they do not speedily repent."

As soon as the messenger was gone, Constancy made haste to call both her brothers. And she shewed them the beautiful flowers in her garden, and she repeated to them the words of the messenger, and urged them, with tears, to repent of their past neglect, and to attend to their lilies in future. She

went with them to their gardens; and after examining the plants, she said that she thought they were still alive, and that, with great care, they might recover; and she gave them directions what to do.

Impatience for a time forsook his playfellows, and Indolence his warm couch, to attend to their flowers; and soon there appeared signs of returning life in the plants. But though they took the advice of Constancy in some particulars, they would not follow it so far as to consult with the messenger. So, in a little while, they found difficulties in their work, which they had neither the will nor the power to over-

come; and, wearied with their labours, they, by degrees, gave them up, and returned each to the employments they best loved.

Meanwhile, the flowers of Constancy daily became more and more flourishing; and though she had more than one flower to attend to, yet she had now gained more experience; and, with the assistance of the messenger, she found herself now quite as able to take care of three flowers, as she had been, at first, to take care of one.

Another year passed away; and behold, instead of three, Constancy found, one morning, six flowers blooming in her garden; a pomegranate, with

buds of brilliant scarlet, a white blossomed myrtle, and the more lofty passion flower, had sprung up among the lily, the rose, and the jessamine.

Thus were the labours of Constancy increased; but the kind assistance of the messenger was always at hand. She was indeed often fatigued with working in the heat of the day, or chilled by the cold damps of the evening, and was much ridiculed by her brothers, as well as by other naughty children on the common, for giving up her time to a flower-bed. Yet she found so much delight in looking forwards to becoming an inhabitant of the celestial garden, and received, even in her own little

garden, such present pleasure from watching the growth of her flowers, and smelling their delicious scent, that she might be said, even now, to receive great enjoyment from her daily work.

Several years more passed away, and every year the plants of Constancy's garden became more numerous; and with them increased her labours, and the kind assistance also of the messenger. So the garden of Constancy promised to become as large and as flourishing as any that had been seen on that common.

But the Lord of the palace had a great delight in little children, and He determined that He would soon send for

these three children to dwell with Him in His garden. And for this purpose, He one day commissioned one of His servants to fetch Constancy to Him, provided that her garden was found well filled with flowers, and she was found fit for the employment of working in a celestial garden. "I mean," said He to his servants, "to inquire after her brothers shortly."

Now the servant that was sent, was one who had been so often employed in conducting the disobedient inhabitants of the common to places of punishment, that he was very much feared by the greater part of the people; yet a few, who loved their Lord, like Constancy,

received him with peace and joy, and he wore to them a very gentle appearance.

When he appeared in view, Constancy was working in her garden, and the messenger was helping her. She started at the first sight of the Lord's servant; and when he told her that her Lord required her to come into His presence, she answered, "He will never suffer me to appear in His garden; for I am a poor unprofitable child, and have never been able to work in my garden, without the help of my Lord's messenger."

The messenger encouraged her, and wiped away her tears. "It is true," he said, "that you are an unprofitable child; but your Lord has loved you;

and in His love you must seek, and you will find, repose. I will go with you and comfort you, till you reach the gates of His garden.”

Then Constancy called for her two brothers; and she said to them, “My Lord has sent for me, and He expects me to leave my garden, and appear in His presence. I shall see you no more here, my beloved brothers; we who have slept in one cradle, must now be parted; but, oh! let it not be for ever. Through the kindness of my Lord, I hope to be admitted into His presence, and to see the glory of His palace. O my brothers! and will you not come too? Now is the season for labour; in

a little while it will be too late. O, repent, repent of your neglect. You see how soon I have been called away, and your turn will come very soon; and if your garden should be found empty and uncultivated, what will become of you? If you will not do your Master's work here, how can you expect Him to employ you in His heavenly garden? Make haste, my brothers, my beloved brothers, to return to Him; seek for the assistance of His messenger, and you may yet live before Him; we may yet meet again in the land that is very far off. Our days of infancy were passed together; O, let our days of eternity be spent together also!" Then she spread out her arms

towards them, and she added, "My Lord is very merciful; who can speak His loving-kindness? How has He spared, and guided, and comforted a feeble, sinful child, like me! O, run to Him while yet there is time; work in His service while the season of work lasts."

She would have said more, but the servant was very urgent for her departure. He seized her hand, and his grasp was rough; and Constancy shrunk back, half unwilling to follow him. But the messenger, seeing her unwillingness, comforted her, and she leaned upon his arm. With his other hand he put on her forehead a garland of sweet buds, which he had plucked off her

flowers, not yet come to maturity ; and he refreshed her with certain sweet odours, which he sprinkled over her—odours with which the Lord of the palace had commissioned him to anoint His people.

Thus strengthened, she followed the servant beyond her garden, even to the extremity of the common. Her brothers followed her weeping, till they reached a narrow gate in a high wall of black marble, which bounded the common. The gate opened, and instantly closed again upon Constancy. Then the two brothers stood for some time looking at the spot where their beloved sister Constancy had for ever disappeared from their eyes.

But shall I say, "For ever?" I would hope that they mourned, not only for the loss of their sister, but for their neglect of her advice, and their ingratitude to their Lord; and that, pardoned through His mercy, they returned back to their gardens, to redeem the time that was lost; and that, when the King's servant came for them, he found them engaged in their Master's work, guided and directed by His messenger; for it is dreadful to think of the punishment that awaited those whom he did not find thus employed.

But of these boys I know no more; nor can I relate how Constancy passed through the narrow gate into the distant

gardens of the palace. But into those gardens she was admitted ; and, in her way thither, she had lost every feeling that was sad or sorrowful. Her outward dress wore no resemblance to that which she had worn on the common. The wreath of buds and the costly odours were all she retained. Her countenance was changed, and had become unspeakably lovely, and her garments were of dazzling whiteness.

All the inhabitants of the garden came forth to meet her ; and they tuned their songs to new notes of joy, that this little child had been found faithful. Then was she admitted into the presence of her Lord, and gratitude, and love, and

joy, took eternal possession of her heart.

And here I will stop; for who shall tell in what pleasures the glorious inhabitants of that celestial garden spend the countless days of eternity? Who shall tell what is that crown of life, which those only wear who have been faithful unto death?

But the time will come, when we *shall* know, if we are faithful and diligent in our Master's work—in the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope—each of us working in that part of the Master's garden which his Lord has assigned to him. Whether therefore we have one lily to cultivate, or two, or

three, or a hundred, let us be *stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord* (1 Cor. xv. 58).

The story was ended, and there was a silence for some minutes in the little party. The young ones still kept their eyes fixed on their papa, and he returned the little manuscript to their mamma, and looking round upon them, thus proceeded: "This is a pretty story; but I am sure that it was not written for your entertainment merely, it had some meaning which you should try to find out. Tell me, then, what you think it does mean?"

"I think," said Charlotte, "that the

garden means heaven ; and the common, this world ; and the children, mean us.”

“And, papa,” said Sophia, “does not the black wall through which Constancy passed, mean the grave?—for it hid her from her brothers’ sight.”

“I understand, too,” said Edward, “that the Lord of the garden means our heavenly Father ; and I think the messenger who helped Constancy, means that Spirit which helps us to do right ; but I do not thoroughly understand what the flowers mean.”

“Can you tell what they mean, Lucilla?” said her papa, turning to her ; “for you have said nothing yet.”

“I think,” answered Lucilla, “that they

mean opportunities of doing good which are put in our power ; but I do not see why it should be said that they are *heavenly* flowers."

Papa. You have all of you, on the whole, guessed very rightly ; and, with respect to the flowers, they may indeed mean opportunities of doing good ; but that is not all. In this world, we are like children at school, who have such tasks set them to learn as will make them most fit for the duties of their home. Our heavenly Father, in His providential care of His children, calls each of them to the exercise of those graces which they most stand in need of. Thus every exercise of grace, every labour

of love, performed in faith, may be considered as a preparation for glory, and may fitly be described by a flower of heavenly growth.

Lucilla. And why, papa, did there come, every year, more flowers in the garden of Constancy?

Papa. *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have* (Luke viii. 18).

Edward. And what are meant by the odours, and the wreath of buds?

Papa. To gain a title and right to heaven, we must be clothed with the righteousness of Christ—to be fitted to enjoy it, our hearts must be made new

and holy. The white robes and odours are, then, the righteousness and atonement of our Saviour; the wreath of buds, that holiness which the Spirit of God produces in our hearts. And now, my dear children, since you understand this story, we must come to the application.

Charlotte. What do you mean by the application, papa?

Papa. I mean, that you should each of you try to learn from this story what will be of use to yourselves. Have *you* no lily to cultivate?

Edward. I suppose we have, papa.

Papa. And do you think you have been faithful over your lily? Have you endeavoured faithfully to do your duty

in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call you?

“No, papa,” answered Lucilla, looking down.

Papa. We are now beginning a new year, and let your hearts be new too—let old things pass away. Some of us, perhaps, may never see another year. Though we may have neglected our duties and the cultivation of heavenly graces, and suffered our lilies to fade, like Impatience and Indolence, let it be so no more, lest, at an hour we think not of, it be said of us—*Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness* (Matt. xxv. 30). Let us humble ourselves before our Lord for our past

sins and neglects ; let us ask him to forgive us—to clothe us with His robe of righteousness—to send His messenger to us, to guide us and strengthen us to do our Father's will in this world, till we are brought, at last, to that true Paradise, where God himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and we shall dwell in His presence, where there is fulness of joy for ever.

The children listened attentively to their father's words, and the tears stood again in Lucilla's eyes. The little sleeping Jane was then dismissed to her crib ; and the rest of the family coming in, the evening was closed by a prayer and a hymn.

And here, too, I would close this little narrative, adding only, what I know will give everybody pleasure to hear—that, since this day, there has been an important change in the conduct of Lucilla. It is gradual, and often interrupted. Her lily, indeed, sometimes fades ; yet, by the same strength which assisted Constancy, it prospers, upon the whole : and before another New-Year's Day arrives, we have good reason to expect that Lucilla may, in a great degree, be deservedly called—

A FAITHFUL LITTLE GIRL.

L

M E M O R Y.

I AM nearly arrived at the end of my pilgrimage; I am drawing to the close of a long life. The pleasures of the world have no more power to deceive me, and I have seen the emptiness of its cares and pursuits. Many infirmities compass me about, and oblige me to spend great part of my time upon my sofa.

Here, among other occupations of my leisure hours, I have lately employed

myself in reviewing many periods of my early life, and considering the reports which Memory gives me of them. And one principal reason for doing this has been to benefit my younger friends. I am desirous to shew them, from my own experience, that though sin at the present moment may be fair and engaging, yet in the end it will appear in its native deformity; and I earnestly entreat them, in the actions of early life, to have a continual view to the recollections of advanced age.

There is still, however, another and more important end for which it becomes us to recall the principles and motives which have governed our past conduct;

it is that we may carry them to the foot of the cross, to be washed in the blood of that Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. For even the best among us have need to acknowledge that our trespasses are grown up unto the heavens; even the most pure of our actions have need of an atonement. What, then, shall we say of our secret iniquities, which are more in number than the hairs of our heads? For my own part, I acknowledge, O Lord, that, in myself, I am lost and undone, and that my hope is only in Thee. And I desire to declare solemnly, that I place no confidence in anything good I may have been enabled to do; but that, laying my

mouth in the dust, I acknowledge that I deserve to be cast out of the sight of my God for ever, and that my only hope of salvation rests upon the merits of Christ my Saviour.

And now, having stated my views on this point, I hope I may not be mistaken, when, for the benefit of my young friends, I relate to them various actions of my early life; some of which I remember with pleasure, and some with pain. Of my early life, I repeat, because I am anxious to lead these young ones to feel that the trials of childhood and early youth correspond to the trials of maturer age. Is it of importance that the man should do well? Is it of none

that the child should act aright? Do we value the fruit and yet disregard the blossom?

And now, let me introduce you to my old-fashioned sitting-room up stairs, which I seldom leave, except to go to church, or to pay a few visits of friendship and good-will, and sometimes, when the sun shines, to walk under a row of elm-trees, well inhabited by rooks, which runs round the church-yard. This church-yard I see from my window, and a church, with a spire, in the middle of it.

My room is wainscoted with oak; and over the fireplace hangs my mother's picture. On one side of it is that of my son Charles, who died when he was

sixteen—and a noble boy he was—his yellow hair curls round his face; and on the other side, answering to the picture of my son, is that of my two little girls, who died of the small-pox, between the age of four and five. Their names were Emma and Sophia, and they are drawn holding each other by the hand.

Below my mother is the picture of my husband in his gown and cassock and wig—he died in the very house where I am now living.

I often look at these valued pictures, and think where the dear persons they represent now are; for I believe they all died in faith, according to their several capacities, and are at rest in their

Saviour's bosom. But I forget myself ;
I was describing my room.

At the upper end of it there is a cabinet containing stuffed birds, and other curiosities which my father brought from the South Seas. I have a sofa on one side of the fireplace ; and on the other is my easy-chair, which I have had placed in such a situation that I can see from it the church rising above the elm-trees. And I have a small table before me, where my Bible, and Prayer-Book, and my portfolio, and my pen and ink, and my spectacles, and my knitting, are usually laid, ready to furnish me with employment, more or less interesting, as best suits the time of day and my bodily

infirmities : though I am often obliged to give up all employment except that of my thoughts, and rest myself entirely on my sofa. I am very old, and wear a black hood over my cap, and have always dressed in black since my husband's death.

Perhaps you may like to know that I have two companions who rarely ever forsake me, and who, contrary to their usual character, live together on very good terms. I mean a tortoise-shell cat and a yellow-and-white spaniel. They are both great favourites with my grandchildren when they come to see me.

And now, to make it more agreeable, you may imagine I have two or three of my grandchildren sitting on little

stools at my feet, and listening to the very same infantine recital which I am about to give to you.

When I was a very little girl, I remember my mother setting me a lesson to learn by heart. It was very easy, and I could have learned it with little trouble; but I was wholly taken up with play, and would not give my mind, in any degree, to my business. I knew that I was wrong in doing so, and I had been taught that, if I lifted up my heart in prayer, I should be enabled to conquer my sinful idleness; yet my heart felt hard, and I strove not against the evil that I knew was in it.

I remember that my mother was unwell, and that she lay on a sofa. She called to me many times to learn my lesson, but in vain. At last she went out of the room, and walked into the garden, for it was summer, and presently she returned with a very fine bunch of currants upon a leaf; and calling me to her, she said, that, if I would be a good little girl, and learn my lesson in five minutes, she would give me those currants. I promised her I would, and I sat down again to my book; but, instead of learning my lesson, I employed myself in watching the minute-hand of her watch.

When the five minutes were past, she called me to her, and bade me say my

lesson. She smiled at me, and spoke very kindly. I could have said part of my lesson ; but, alas ! I remember that I said not one word. After waiting my pleasure for some time, my mother rang the bell, and sent me away.

As my nurse took me out of the room, I remember seeing my mother remove the currants from the table ; and I saw her put her hand to her head, as if it ached, and she looked very grave. I had a feeling of sorrow, which to this day is fresh in my mind.

After that day my mother did not hear my lessons for many months ; for she was very ill. The memory of **this** circumstance is still painful to me.

I remember, in a certain town where I was taken when very young to visit a relation, that there was a large corner shop which we were obliged to pass very frequently; and this shop contained almost everything that could invite the desires of a little child. In one window were sugar-plums of every form, with fruit and cakes; and in the other were dolls, and coaches, and waggons, and windmills, dogs with coats of fur that barked, wooden birds that whistled in cages, and what not.

But, among all these things, there was a certain fireplace, the form of which is present with me still; it had a spit with a joint of meat roasting, and a

kettle hanging to boil, with all other necessary articles. The price of this fireplace I had inquired, and found it to amount to several shillings. I had been long in the habit of putting by all the pence and sixpences and shillings that were given me in a little box ; and with this money I had been taught to buy little useful articles for poor children ; and I had planned, when I left home, to purchase materials for a frock for a little girl near my own home who much needed it.

The contents of my box would buy the fireplace, or they would purchase the frock ; but they would not do both ; and there was a great struggle in my

mind whether the fireplace or the frock should be bought—for my mother generally left me at liberty to spend my money as I chose, though she endeavoured to assist and guide me in making my choice. And in the present instance she perfectly knew the feelings of my mind; indeed, I rarely concealed them from her.

One evening, after my return from a walk, in which I had passed the well-known shop, and taken a most minute survey of the fireplace, I lay down to sleep so full of the desire of it, that I could think of nothing else. The next morning I quite made up my mind to purchase it, and gave up all intentions of buying the frock.

When I made known my resolution to my mother, she represented to me the transitory nature of the pleasure I was going to purchase at the sacrifice of the comfort and advantage of my little nursling at home. She talked so sweetly to me of the reality of heavenly things, and of the emptiness of earthly things, that, when she was gone, I knelt down and prayed that the thoughts of my heart might be made clean, and that I might be enabled, in the days of my childhood, to live by faith, and not by sight, and be made willing now to give up my own pleasure for the good of a little lamb of my Saviour's flock.

I well remember the struggle of **my**

mind when I first knelt down, and how the image of the fireplace seemed continually to present itself before me, as I tried to think of my little girl at home. But, when I rose from my knees, I thank God that my mind seemed decided upon buying the frock, which I did that very morning, and so put it out of my power to buy the fireplace.

I own that, afterwards, whenever I passed the shop, I felt some feeling of regret; but this feeling became less painful every time; and when I returned home, and gave the frock to my little girl, all my regret was turned into joy; and I have never since thought of this circumstance, but

with pleasure and thankfulness. And in after-life the practice of self-denial became easier to me by this little early effort.

It is remarkable, and I never knew whether it was by accident, or whether it was arranged by the kindness of my mother, that a lady sent me, as a present from London, a fireplace, quite as pretty, though not of so expensive a kind, as the one which had cost me so many struggles. This happened about six weeks after my return home.

I had a little brother, a year younger than myself, who went to school. I had often been guilty of quarrelling with him, and had sometimes murmured when nice things had been given to

him while I had none. In short, I had often behaved in a very selfish, greedy, and ill-tempered manner towards him.

I remember, one day, my mother calling me to her (I was then nine years old, and it was the day on which we expected my little brother home for the Christmas holidays); and she took me by the hand, and smiling on me in her sweet way, she said, that she hoped she should see a great change in my behaviour towards my brother upon his return, and that in future, instead of quarrelling with him, which was the disgrace of a Christian child, I should treat him with tenderness and affection,

and that I should use my influence with him—for he was very fond of me—in leading him to secret prayer, and serious thoughts and habits ; for, she added, that boys at school had not, in general, the advantage of the same careful religious instruction which their sisters enjoyed at home ; and she told me that it was a sweet and honourable employment for little children to lead their companions into the ways of eternal life.

My mother's words sunk deep into my heart ; at least, as deep as anything ever sinks into a childish heart ; and she continued to remind me, from time to time, of this discourse, reproving me for my neglects, and assisting me by pro-

viding me with a retirement, and suggesting to me suitable seasons for withdrawing with my brother. She also taught me to pray for help in this undertaking, and wrote down a short prayer which I might teach my brother, with a few of Dr Watts's hymns, and verses out of the Bible.

I thankfully remember that I was kinder to my brother during these holidays than I had ever been before ; that I was more ready to share my fruit and cakes with him, to give up to him a favourite plaything, and, in short, that I consulted his comfort in everything far more than had ever been my custom before

In the course of the evening, too, the time prescribed by my mother, I generally persuaded him to come up stairs with me into my mother's room, where I taught him the prayer she had written down for me; then we read the verses out of the Bible, and sometimes sung part of a hymn together.

Very often, when we had finished this employment, my mother would come up to us; and drawing us about her, she would tell us stories out of the Bible, and occasionally lead us to talk to her about ourselves, which we did very openly. And my brother confessed to her many little faults into which he had fallen at school, and he promised that he

would pray for grace to keep out of them at his return.

Sometimes she took us to the window, and shewed us the stars, and talked to us about our everlasting home that was far beyond them. And, when our attention was wearied, she would sing to us, and play with us, and shew us pictures and other pretty things which she kept in her bureau.

My dear little brother certainly returned to school with many heavenly desires in his heart. I never saw him more ; for, within a month afterwards, he caught the measles and died.

I remember my mother afterwards telling me what thankfulness I ought to

feel, that I had been enabled to behave towards him in a way so contrary to my natural disposition, and that the last holidays we had spent together had been, as she hoped, a preparation for the dying-bed on which he was laid so soon afterwards; and she concluded with saying, "In all you do, my child, consider the end, and you will not do amiss."

And now I come to a very, very sad remembrance. When I was fourteen, my dear mother, who had always been delicate, fell into *very* bad health. She could not bear any noise or hurry, and I was ordered to step gently about the house, shut the door quietly, and not even to laugh or talk loud within her

hearing. She lay on the sofa almost all the day long.

During the greatest part of this time my aunt and her daughter, who was rather younger than myself, were in the house with us; and, alas! I thought that my mother needed no attention but what my aunt paid to her. I persuaded myself that it could not be expected of me, at my age, to lead so quiet and *dull* a life as my mother's health made necessary to her; and therefore I took every opportunity of getting out of the room to play with my cousin; and indeed, I am ashamed to say, that I was often sent out of the room because I was noisy.

There were a thousand little kind offices I might have done for my mother, and which I ought to have delighted in doing for so tender a parent; but, unless ordered to do them, they were quite neglected, or most unwillingly performed. I seemed only set upon enjoying myself with my cousin, in a way suitable to my years.

At length my aunt and cousin went away, and my poor mother soon afterwards became so decidedly ill, that no hopes were entertained of her life.

My father's elder brother, who was sent for, communicated the information to me, with a severe rebuke for my unkindness towards my beloved parent.

Then indeed I was overwhelmed with shame and remorse; and I hope I did strive to render the last hours of my honoured parent more comfortable; yet still the memory of my preceding neglect will ever be painful to me.

O that children would think betimes of what they owe to their parents! An hour will come, when every remembrance of neglect to a beloved father and mother, who tenderly reared them from their cradles, and are now for ever hid from them in this world, will sting like a scorpion. How sad to be forced to say, "I could once have comforted and helped a tender parent; I neglected that time; now I would willingly perform

the duteous act, and speak in the voice of kindness and love—but the grave has hid him from me, and I can never honour him again, except in sad remembrance.”

After my dear mother's death, I was placed at school, under the care of a lady whose piety and wisdom fitted her well to supply the place of my beloved mother. In her family I remained as parlour-boarder till I was eighteen; at which time the offer was made me of residing either in the family of my aunt, of whom I have before spoken, or in that of my father's elder brother, who lived on his estate very near this town.

My governess would have induced me

to accept my uncle's invitation in preference to that of my aunt; but the earnest persuasions of my cousin, and the hope of finding in her an agreeable companion, decided me upon choosing my aunt's house for my residence.

On this occasion, I remember, with deep regret, that I thought myself wiser than my kind adviser, and paid little or no deference to her opinion, though I ought to have paid the greatest, because she was well acquainted with the characters of my uncle and aunt, and with the circumstances attending their respective situations; she had also an intimate knowledge of my disposition and taste, and was well aware of the

kind of temptation I ought to have shunned most diligently.

To my aunt's house at Bath, then, I went. I met with an affectionate reception, and was not a little pleased with the new scenes and the new habits of life to which I was introduced.

My aunt allowed her daughter and myself more liberty than is good for the best disposed young people. We lavished much valuable time and money, which might have been far better spent, in a very unprofitable manner; and the strict habits in which I had been brought up were gradually giving way to the thoughtless customs of the society into which I was introduced.

I spent the greater part of the morning with my cousin in the parades and the pump-room, and the evenings were concluded in public ; and though I continued to read my Bible and pray in a morning and evening, yet my heart became daily less interested in the sacred employment, and my thoughts and affections daily more absorbed in the objects immediately surrounding me ; while still the lifeless form of religion I kept up satisfied my lukewarm heart that all was right.

The novelty of all I saw, with the pleasure of being gaily and fashionably dressed, was at first sufficiently interesting ; but in a little while these things became insipid, and yielded their

place to a feeling perfectly new to me, and that was the love of admiration; and I began to be pleased with vain and unmeaning compliments, and was much gratified by being followed, whenever I went into public, by strangers lately introduced to me, whose outward appearance and manners had certainly much to recommend them. As to the rest, I knew but little of the world, and therefore suspected no evil, though I could not help acknowledging to myself, that these flatterers often betrayed habits and opinions quite opposite to those which I had been taught to consider as really excellent.

This was a period of my life that I

remember with great pain. How vain and unprofitable was the discourse that passed between myself and my cousin in our retired hours! when, blessed with privileges far superior to those she had possessed, I might have been leading her to the knowledge of better things. I was, on the contrary, influenced by her in everything I did, laughed at what amused her, entered into her views, and followed her pursuits. Oh! misspent days! Oh! folly which I shall ever deplore! Oh! sad and painful recollection!

It was thus that I was spending my time when my eldest uncle arrived at Bath, or, I might rather say, was providentially brought there by a fit of illness,

for which his physicians had ordered the medicinal waters of that place.

My uncle had now an opportunity of becoming acquainted with my character and my present habits—an opportunity which he did not lose; and in the course of a few weeks he saw more into my real state than my aunt had done in several months. Yet I desire to speak with respect and reverence of my dear aunt; she was very kind to me, and I might have repaid her kindness in a far better way than I ever attempted to do.

My uncle was not only aware that I was going on generally ill with respect to the best things, but he saw that I was in danger of falling into habits, and forming

acquaintance and connections, very injurious to my worldly prospects and expectations. My uncle ventured to impart his fears on this last head to my aunt, and she immediately agreed with him in the propriety of removing me from the scene of danger, and acceded to his plan of taking me back with him—at the same time expressing her determination not to oppose my wishes on the subject; and she left the task of persuasion to him.

It did not seem very likely that my uncle would prevail with me; but he was satisfied that he was in the way of duty, and he did not despair of accomplishing the undertaking.

The following Sunday evening, after hearing an impressive sermon in the Abbey church, he took my arm, as was his custom, on account of his infirmities, when he walked with me, and led me to the south parade, his favourite resort.

Though above fifty years are passed since that day, yet the memory of it is still as fresh as if it were yesterday. "I am going home on Tuesday," said my uncle, after we had taken one turn in silence, "and I should much like to persuade you to return with me, and so would my wife. Should you like to pay us a visit? We are old people—but we would try to make you happy."

Since I had seen more of my uncle, I

had become much attached to him; yet I felt by no means disposed at that time to exchange my residence at Bath for his quiet abode. He knew my feelings, and appeared to take no notice of the confused manner in which I answered him. "This is an interesting town," said he, "and its situation very beautiful," he added, pointing to the lovely woody hill before us, scattered over with many white cottages, which seemed to present sweet retreats; "but it is a place replete with danger."

I made no reply.

"Do you find it very easy, my dear child," said he, "in this gay scene, to bear in mind that you are a stranger

and pilgrim upon earth? Are you not tempted to walk by sight and not by faith? In short, tell me candidly, are you not in some danger here of forgetting for what purpose you came into the world?"

I answered, "Are there not dangers, sir, in every place?"

"Certainly," replied my uncle; "but all places are not alike dangerous to all persons. Remember, my child, my beloved child, the end of all earthly things; and waste not the little season of preparation for eternity which life allows you, in laying the foundation of bitter regrets."

He perceived that he had drawn my

attention, and he thus proceeded: "Your father and mother sought for grace from Him who is willing to give it—far more willing than we are to receive it—and they were enabled to resist deceitful pleasures. They crowned their lives—now are they numbered with the saints; and they who counted their lives madness, where are they?"

Thus for some time he proceeded to talk to me, while a thousand convictions flashed on my mind; and when he paused for a few minutes, I turned to him with tears, and said to him, "What, dear uncle, do you wish me to leave Bath for ever?"

"No, not for ever," he replied, smiling;

“but I see that you are in a very dangerous situation, and I wish you to pause, to look round you, and consider what you are doing. Remember, that perhaps eternity may hang upon the present moment.”

“And must I leave all my friends?” I said again.

“If you really have any friends,” he answered, “who deserve that name, fear not that they will forget you in a few weeks.”

I made no reply; and my uncle thus concluded the discourse: “I do not wish to press you, my child, to a hasty decision; only promise me, that this very evening you will retire by yourself,

and pray earnestly to be guided to make a wise choice." So saying, he led me home, where my aunt and cousin were waiting tea for us.

The habit of secret earnest prayer had, alas! been much laid aside, and it was with unwillingness that I set about the duty. But, as soon as I could, I did withdraw into my own room; and it is sufficient to say, that, after a conflict of mind which was at the time very painful, I was enabled before the morning light to decide upon returning with my uncle for a few weeks, the time I then prescribed to myself. I remember with feelings of grateful acknowledgment to Him from whom every good thought

proceeds, that I was enabled thus to decide upon suffering affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. Yet I was not at that moment in a state of mind clearly to see how far my habits were really in opposition to my duty; but I saw and felt the advantage of being for awhile removed to a distance from scenes which I found so fascinating.

The following Tuesday I parted with my aunt and cousin, the latter of whom I never saw again. When we had ascended the hills above Bath, and I looked back on that beloved city for the last time, I felt as if I was taking leave of all earthly happiness; yet even at that

moment, a consciousness that I was in the path of duty shed a sweetness on my mind which I at this moment remember. There is a joy unspeakable in the ways of God, even when we are walking in the path of self-denial.

Not more than three weeks had passed away after our return, when my uncle's disease returned with such violence, that his death was hourly expected. I could not therefore at such a moment leave him. We spent three months in this state of suspense; at the close of which time he departed to his eternal rest.

I had not witnessed the dying bed of a Christian without benefit; and I am thankful to remember, that I decided

upon remaining with the widow of my revered uncle, and discharging towards her the duties of a daughter.

I cannot speak of this as, in all respects, a happy period of my life ; yet it is sweet to remember ; for in this season of discipline (for so I must consider it) I was prepared for the discharge of the active duties to which I was soon to be called.

My aunt lived, perhaps, too much in solitude ; and long habits, together with declining health, disabled her from entering with activity into those useful employments for the good of others, the lively discharge of which so often dries up the mourner's tears.

The only amusements my aunt pro-

vided for me, were reading to myself, and walking in the long chesnut avenue which led to the house, which was well peopled by rooks. A tender Father suits our day to our strength ; the weather is tempered to the shorn lamb ; and at that time I was in a state of mind to make a good use of my solitude. I was led to look beyond earthly to heavenly things, and to seek for the fulfilment of those promises of peace and joy, which we possess not, because we do not desire them, or desiring, do not patiently wait for them. Sometimes indeed I wished for habits of life and society more suited to my years, and was not without temptations to repine ; yet the general feelings of my heart were

satisfied that it was good to submit to the will of God. I had seen so much of the evil of my own heart, that I was deeply convinced of my inability to choose what is good for myself, and desirous to have my will conformed to His, and grieved when it was not so ; and I believed that, when it was good for me, my trials would be removed.

And now I have arrived at the close of the history of my early days ; for, shortly after this period, my late beloved husband was settled in this town ; and not many months after his introduction into my aunt's family, I became his wife.

Memory is not silent respecting the long and chequered period which passed

between the day of my marriage and that trying hour which has separated him from me till we meet again at the morning of the resurrection.

But I forbear to relate to my young friends what memory has to tell me respecting that part of my life, as less interesting and less improving to them than its narration of early days.

Yet, my children, before I take my leave of you, I am desirous that you should learn one more lesson from my little tale : it is, that those things only are really grievous to remember, which are offensive to God. Sin is the only source of painful recollection. Though we may have carried our sins to the foot of a

Saviour's cross, and have a good hope that, through grace, they are washed away, yet we never think of them but with pain. Sin is ugly, very ugly, when the mask is thrown aside which at the present moment it often wears. That which is displeasing to God, can never be otherwise than hateful to us, when we are enabled to view it aright. Thus the remembrance of sin in ourselves or others is very bitter; but it is not so with other remembrances. They may have somewhat of sadness; but time will mingle sweetness with that sorrow.

I can look upon those pictures I have described to you; I can call to mind my little darling fair ones lisping and

smiling; I can look at the very chair, through the frame of which, in the room where I am now sitting, I have seen them peep at each other and laugh with baby laughter—then kiss and run away—then begin the well-known game again, as well pleased as if it was quite new. I can call to mind their little dimpled hands joined together in infant prayer, their rosy cheeks gradually fading away to the palor of fatal disease, and their bright blue eyes closed in death.

I can recall to my mind my Charles; I can remember him buoyant with spirits, full of life and activity among his school-fellows, first in his plays, and first in his studies, generous and good-natured; yet

in the midst of all his gaiety, ever mindful of his secret prayer, of his Bible, and his eternal inheritance, dutiful, respectful, and affectionate to his parents.

Such was my Charles, when a consumption quickly cut short his days. I watched him on his bed of languishing, where he patiently exchanged for pain and sickness the sports and studies of his age, and willingly resigned every hope of worldly distinction for the prospect of early admission to celestial glory; and cheerfully sat himself down in the sinner's place, waiting for exaltation in due time, through His merits who bore the cross for him.

I can think of the beloved guide and

companion of my life, who has but lately entered into rest. Not a day passes, but Memory talks to me of these beloved ones. Sometimes I own that tears will trickle down my furrowed cheek as I think of them—but they are tears that have no bitterness.

Believe me, my young ones, and forgive me, if I repeat it more than once, it is sin, and sin only, that gives the sting to sorrow.

Fair young creatures, fresh out of your Creator's hand, whose natural stain of guilt has been cleansed by your Saviour's blood, whose natural corruption the Spirit of God stands ready to subdue within you, why, instead of delighting

yourselves in purifying a fallen nature, do you seek to pollute it yet more? Satan sees how fair your prospects are, how blooming are your hopes, and he resolves upon your destruction. He casts the baits of sin in your way; and, when he sees that you are caught, he smiles with all the malice of hell, while angels weep over you.

My children, however fair the appearance which sin may now assume, it will shew you its ugly form when it has succeeded in deceiving you. What is now tempting you as present, what you are now eagerly pursuing as future, will look *very very* different when it is past.

Pause awhile, and consider what your

views and feelings will be some time hence. The present and the future may deceive us, but the past rarely does. Sometimes, then, ask Memory what she has to tell you respecting the past, and she will often give you a lesson of wisdom for the future.

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