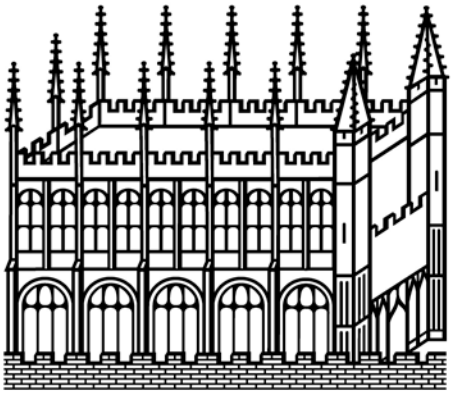

THE NEW SCHOLAR.

THE NEW SCHOLAR;

OR,

THE FEAR OF GOD AND THE FEAR OF MAN,

HOW THEY DIFFER AND WHICH TO CHOOSE.

EDINBURGH:
JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE & HUNTER,
104 HIGH STREET.

THE author wishes, in the following pages, to bring before the young the God-loving, God-fearing Christian scholar, in contrast with the deceitful, hypocritical, selfish, and disobedient, that they may learn to love and imitate the one, and abhor and shun the other. May God give them grace to choose the good part, and above every earthly pleasure, or desirable good, to seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness!

S. R.

THE NEW SCHOLAR.

CHAPTER I.

"NEWS, boys! I have some news to tell you," cried Frank Henley,—running towards the playground, where a number of boys were assembled. He was soon surrounded by a group of them.

"What is it, Frank? What is it?" asked many voices.

"We are to have a new scholar, and he is coming to-morrow," answered Frank. "Not a half-scholar, as I call the day-scholars, but a whole one,—a boarder."

"How do you know?" "What is his name?"

"How old is he?" "Where is he from?" were questions rapidly asked.

"I can answer but one of these questions," said Frank. "I heard Mr Harding say so himself,—to Mr Neville the assistant; so it is true, you see."

"Did you not even hear his name, Frank?" asked one.

"No! I have told you all I know," said Frank, and you will have to wait until to-morrow to find out the rest."

"Oh dear! that is a great while to wait," said Bob Newton. "But one thing we know, he cannot be younger than eleven years, for none are admitted here younger; and it is not likely he is over sixteen, for boys generally leave school at that age. I hope he is a real good-natured fellow."

"Come now," said Dick Wells, "suppose one of us should go and ask Mr Harding about him.

There! He is just walking down the garden towards the summer-house, with a book in his hand. He is going there to read, I suppose; a capital chance to ask him."

"I will not ask him this time," said Harry Blake, "for it fell to my lot last time, and Mr Harding will think all the curiosity of the school is centred in me."

"How can you be so foolish?" said Philip Graham,—a tall, slender boy, fourteen years of age, with an uncommonly sedate countenance, small light blue eyes, and rather a precise air. "To-morrow is time enough to know. What difference can one day make?"

"Oh! Phil would not condescend to be curious," said Bob Newton. "It is too undignified for him."

"Come now," said Frank Henley, "all who wish to find out about the new scholar stand round me, and we will cast lots who shall go

and ask Mr Harding, and then there will be no trouble about it."

The lot fell upon little Joseph Green, one of the smallest boys. Joseph was very timid, and it was a hard task for him, but he felt ashamed to own it, or complain of his lot.

"Now," said Frank, "it will not answer to ask too many questions of Mr Harding, for he would think that rude, and perhaps not tell us any thing."

"Well," said one, "ask his name, of course. There is a great deal in a name. It seems to tell one how a boy looks."

"Ask his age," said another. "Ask where he is from," said another. "Where he will sit," said a third. "Where he will sleep," said a fourth. "What kind of a boy he is," said a fifth.

"Oh, that is too many," said one of the older boys. "It would never do to ask so

many. I think three questions are as many as it will do to ask."

"I think so, too! I think so, too!" said several voices. "Three are enough—what shall they be? Three will tell very little."

After some discussion, it was decided the three most important items were his name, his age, and whether he was from the city or the country; and little Joe Green was despatched to acquire the important information. He soon reached the summer-house where Mr Harding was sitting, who raised his eyes from his book as he heard the approach of footsteps.

"Well, Joseph," he said, kindly, "what do you wish?"

"Please, sir," said Joe, hesitatingly, "the boys sent me to ask you, if you would tell us the name of the new scholar who is coming to-morrow."

"How did you know there was one coming?" asked Mr Harding, smiling.

"Frank Henley heard you tell Mr Neville so, sir," replied Joe.

"Well, his name is Maurice Gray," said Mr Harding.

"Please, sir, tell me how old he is?" asked Joe.

"He is several years older than yourself, Joe," answered Mr Harding. "He is fourteen, I believe."

"The boys told me to ask you, sir," continued Joe, "whether he was from the city or the country?"

He is from a small country village, a hundred miles from here," replied Mr Harding.

"Thank you, sir," said Joe, bowing and preparing to run away.

"Would you not like to know something more of him?" asked Mr Harding, good-naturedly.

"Yes, sir, very much," answered Joe, "but the boys told me I must not ask you but three questions, or you would think we were very rude;" and without waiting for further information, Joe left Mr Harding, and hastened back to the playground.

"Maurice Gray—fourteen years old—from a country village," he said as soon as he could, and as fast as he could speak, and in a very loud voice, as if he was anxious to complete all the duties of his mission as soon as possible.

"'Maurice Gray,'—a pretty name, is it not?" said Frank Henley.

"Fourteen years old,—that is just our age, Dick," said Tom Bailey; "he will be one of the oldest scholars. I hope he has not an old sober head like Philip Graham, who thinks it such a condescension to play with us now and then, and seems to think it is wicked to laugh or have any fun at all. Mr Harding thinks him

a model of good conduct, and a pattern for us all. I think he is a very disagreeable fellow; he is proud, and never notices the younger boys at all, and seems to think boys are made for nothing but to study and go to church! I hope Maurice Gray is a real jovial fellow, Dick, like you and I."

"Yes, indeed I do," answered Dick. "I hate 'pattern boys,' like Phil Graham. One never feels at ease with them. If the fellow that is coming is to my mind, I shall be quite polite to him, for I like a new friend once in a while. As he is from the country, I suppose we shall have to teach him a thing or two. I suppose he is not much of a scholar. This is probably his first coming out into the world. Well, we shall see what he is like to-morrow. I wonder if he will come in the stage at eleven o'clock, or whether his father will bring him. To-morrow is not a great way off."

To-morrow came in its proper place, and a bright, lovely summer day it was; and at eleven o'clock every ear was opened as the old stage-coach came rumbling leisurely along, and great was the satisfaction that beamed from divers faces as it was heard distinctly to stop at the front door. Mr Harding left the room to receive his new pupil, and after being absent half an hour, returned without him, to the evident dissatisfaction of the many eyes that were fixed upon the door, for they all knew they must now wait until after school to be introduced to the new scholar.

They had not been long assembled on the playground after school, before Mr Harding and Maurice Gray were seen coming from the house together.

"Here he comes! Here he comes!" said several voices; but no—they walked down the neat gravel walk, and then into the garden.

Mr Harding was talking very busily to Maurice, who was listening with great attention.

"He is not so tall as I am by an inch or two," said Philip Graham, drawing up his thin figure to its full height, "though he is fourteen years of age."

"Oh, he cannot equal Phil Graham in any thing, of course," said Tom Bailey aside. "No one pretends to equal the model scholar, the 'pattern of propriety'—even in outward appearance. I am sure I hope Maurice is not such a stiff conceited fellow, looking down upon everybody else."

"Why," said Dick Wells, "how should we know how straight we ought to walk, or how sober we ought to look, how perfectly we ought to recite, how still we ought to be in school-hours, how obedient to the rules of the school, if we had not some such perfect pattern before us as Phil Graham!"

"Mr Harding says," said Louis Tarleton, a lame, sickly-looking boy leaning on a crutch, "that if we all kept a Bible on our desks as Philip Graham does, and studied it each day, we should all know how to do right."

This was a long and a bold speech for Louis Tarleton to make, and he coloured deeply, for all eyes turned upon him.

"It is one thing to keep a Bible there, and another thing to read it," said Dick, whistling and walking off.

"Oh, here they come, certainly," said Frank Henley, "straight towards the playground," as Mr Harding and Maurice approached. Mr Harding introduced Maurice to his new friends, and all were agreeably impressed by his kind, gentlemanly manners, his fine, open countenance, and his pleasant smile; there was also a dignity and self-command about him above his years, which inspired a feeling of respect.

"Well, Maurice," said Mr Harding, upon leaving him, "I see you will soon make friends here, and I hope we shall make you happy."

"I will try to deserve friends, sir," said Maurice, bowing respectfully, "and then I do not fear but I shall make them."

"I love him already," said Mr Harding to himself, as he walked towards the house. "He will be a friend to me, and an ornament to the school,—I see it in the very expression of his face. He is a serious-minded, conscientious boy, or I am much mistaken, though his eye and lip have a merry smile."

Maurice Gray joined eagerly in the games proposed, and showed himself expert in them all, and seemed as much interested in the plays of the youngest boys, as those of his own age. He left his game of ball to disentangle little Joe Green's kite from a high tree, and gave his arm most kindly to lame Louis, as they

walked towards the house, at the ringing of the dinner-bell.

"Nothing of a scholar, of course, or he would not be so fond of play," muttered Philip Graham to himself, looking very wise, as he put a book in his pocket.

"A right merry, pleasant fellow," said Dick Wells and Tom Bailey.

"How obliging and good-natured he is!" said Joe Green.

"A new broom sweeps clean," said Frank Henley.

"It is not often I have any thing but my crutch to lean on," said lame Louis, looking up gratefully into Maurice's face, with his sad eyes, as the other boys all passed quickly by and left the two far behind.

"My arm shall always be at your service," said Maurice, "if it suits you."

"I can get along much faster with it," said

Louis, "and then I do not feel so lonely either, to go with some one, for the boys always reach the house, and get seated at table long before I can get there."

A smile of satisfaction might have been seen on Mr Harding's expressive face, as Maurice Gray entered the dining-room, with lame Louis leaning on his arm, and a look as if he would have said, "I am not deceived, I am sure, in my first impressions of this boy."

CHAPTER II.

MR HARDING'S residence was about two miles from the beautiful village of N. There was a fine garden in front, a large play-ground at one side, and behind the house were a farm-yard and vegetable garden. Beyond were thick woods, pleasant fields, and shady roads. He built the house expressly for his school, and all was well arranged according to a plan of his own. The chambers were large and airy, each containing four beds, one in each corner of the room. A door opened near each bed into a light, good-sized dressing-room. One of these was appropriated to each scholar, to contain his clothes, &c. Each was fitted with a neat writing-desk and chair, so that it was a pleasant

and quiet place for a boy to retire for study, or solitude, if he felt so disposed.

In addition to his boarders, Mr Harding received at his school day-scholars from the neighbouring village. One wing of the house was occupied by Mr Harding and his family, which consisted of a wife and twin daughters, Minna and Rose, eight years of age. They attended the school each day regularly, occupying small seats by their father's desk. They were allowed occasionally to visit the boys' play-ground as spectators of their games, and considered it a great treat so to do. But they were always attended by one of their parents, or placed under the especial care of one of the most trusty boys. Philip Graham had this honour conferred upon him oftener than any other boy, and he was quite proud of the trust reposed in him.

Once in three months, Mr Harding had what

he called a public day, when gentlemen from the village and the neighbouring country-seats, were invited to attend the school, and hear the recitations, or examine the boys, as they pleased. Mr Harding would allow no special preparation for this day. He wished the boys to show exactly what they were, and this was a great incitement to them to be diligent students. He allowed the boys free access at all times to his fine garden, under certain restrictions, and it was seldom his laws in this respect were broken.

"Look here, Dick! Quick, or I shall be discovered"—said Tom Bailey one day, about a week after Maurice Gray had entered the school, as he was creeping stealthily from Maurice's closet. "Come quickly, Tom." Tom obeyed. "Here," said Dick, "is your good, merry fellow, we have been calculating upon. Why, he is worse than Philip Graham. See here! Phil has only a Bible on his desk, which

I do not think he opens very often, though he would have Mr Harding think he does; but Maurice Gray has a Bible, and a book of sermons, and some tracts! They are all for show, of course. No boy would ever read such books, I am certain, unless he was compelled to, and I would not believe Maurice ever reads them if he told me so. He is worse than Phil Graham, is he not?"

"He may be," answered Tom, "in some respects, but he is a much pleasanter fellow than Philip, and does not think half so much of himself. He loves a good game so well, that I guess we can make something of him. I suppose he has been living in the country with some old grandmother, who has made him a parting present of her whole library for a keepsake; but whether he reads such dry books or not, he is nothing like Phil Graham. He has none of that sanctified, long-faced, stiff look, that Phil has."

"Well, time will show," said Dick, "what we can make of Maurice Gray. Though he is sociable and talkative, he manages somehow to keep one at an awful distance. I cannot understand it, for he is any thing but proud or haughty. I saw him to-day helping Peter to lift a large box into the house, which was too heavy for him. I am sure Phil Graham would have let Peter break his back, before he would raise a finger to assist any servant boy."

"There is one thing very certain," said Tom, "and that is that Mr Harding takes a great liking to Maurice. Never since I have been here has he invited a boy to take tea with him during the first week of his being here, and Maurice last evening not only took tea with him, but took a walk of an hour after tea, with Mr and Mrs Harding, and Minna and Rose. I saw them returning. Minna had his hand, and Rose was skipping by his side, and they were

both talking to him as if they had known each other for a long time."

"Well, to-day is Saturday, and our afternoon for the woods," said Dick. "I guess we shall find out a little more about Maurice on our walk. Bob Newton is coming out to go with us. I gave him a little commission to execute for me in the village. Some half-dozen of us older boys will separate from the rest and go along together, and Maurice shall be one. I wish Bob Newton was a boarder, don't you? He is such a clever fellow."

"He would not be so useful to us, if he was," said Tom Bailey, smiling significantly. "I had rather trust him with my errands in the village, than any other day-scholar we have, or even Peter. He knows so well how to manage things, and keep an innocent face on all the while. It requires some talent to do that. Do you think we can trust Maurice Gray?

"No knowing until we have tried him," said Dick. "I am not sure but it is too soon to begin, but he is such a pleasant fellow he is worth trying for; if he has a few rusty notions I think we can wear them away, and make a friend of him."

It was a glorious summer afternoon, and as soon as dinner was over the whole school set off to enjoy their half-holiday in a long ramble through woods and fields. Soon after entering the woods, six or eight of the older boys separated themselves from the others, Dick Wells so managing that Maurice Gray should be one of the number. They were shortly after joined by Bob Newton from the village, who carried on his arm a basket, which he delivered to Dick. After wandering about until they were weary, amusing themselves with chasing squirrels, searching for wild flowers, &c., they seated themselves to rest near the outskirts of the

wood, in a lovely spot, commanding a view of fresh and flower-bespangled meadows, and thriving fields of corn and grain.

"Here is a nice place to take our lunch," said Dick, throwing himself on the grass and opening his basket. The others gladly seated themselves round him. Dick removed slyly part of the contents of his basket, and passed the basket containing the remainder to the boys, as they sat. It contained a generous supply of cakes and dried fruits, which were soon consumed with great relish by the little party.

He then produced a couple of bottles and proceeded to uncork them. "You got them from the right place, Bob," he said, "so we may be sure it is good, for poor champagne is bad enough."

He poured out a glass, and presented it first, from courtesy, to Maurice Gray, as he was a

stranger. To his surprise and mortification, Maurice politely, but decidedly, declined it.

"Do you not drink champagne, Maurice?" said Dick. "If not, just try this. It is very nice, and quite refreshing after a walk."

"No, I thank you," said Maurice, "you must excuse me Dick, I had rather not take any."

"Why, you are not very polite," said Dick, "to decline taking it, when I got it on purpose to treat you with, thinking to give you pleasure."

"I am sorry you should consider me impolite," said Maurice. "I do not intend to be so, but I would rather be thought impolite, than do what I feel to be wrong."

"Wrong!" said Dick; "why, what can there be wrong in a simple glass of champagne? Do not be so queer. A young man, fourteen years of age, is certainly at liberty to take a glass of wine, if he pleases. We no longer consider

ourselves children. I am sure I, for one, feel capable of judging what is right and fitting for me to do; but there are plenty to drink it if you will not, Maurice;" and the bottles were speedily emptied by the other boys.

"You lost a most excellent glass of champagne, Maurice," said Bob Newton. "What is there wrong in taking it, I should like to know?"

"Would you have done the same, if Mr Harding had been here?" said Maurice, gently. "Would you, Dick, have done the same as you have done, if Mr Harding had been of our party?"

"Well," said Dick, hesitatingly, "to speak the truth, Maurice, I should not; but we are not obliged to be all the time under his eye. He will know nothing of it."

"My father placed me here," said Maurice, "to be under Mr Harding's care, in his absence

from home. He told me to regard him as a friend, master, and protector, and expects me in all things to consult Mr Harding's wishes and opinions; and I should feel as if I was acting very wrong to do any thing contrary to them. I would not do, when absent from him, what I would not do in his presence; and besides that, I know my father would disapprove of it. He is far away at sea, thousands of miles from here, and would never know it, but I love him too well to do what I know he would condemn."

"Oh, you are too particular, altogether," said Tom Bailey. "You will lose some of these ideas after you have been here a while, and see what capital times we have. A boy of fourteen must begin to act a little independently, and to think a little for himself, or he will be a baby all his life."

"I have begun to think for myself, and to act

independently," answered Maurice; "and that is one reason why I declined taking wine. I scorn the character of a hypocrite. To think one way and appear to act one way, and in reality be doing things directly contrary to the principles and appearance, is what of all things I despise. I am afraid to begin at fourteen years of age to drink a glass of wine, for in a short time I might want a bottle, and then, losing my relish for wine, I might be induced to take something more stimulating and powerful, and who can tell what the end might be? I might become an indolent, useless man, or a habitual drunkard, and perhaps lose soul and body both. I do not say this would certainly be the case, but it has been the case of very many, and I might add another to the number. It is best to be on the safe side, depend upon it; and I am determined to do what I think is right in this case, even though

I should lose your good opinion by so doing. I should be glad to join you any time in an innocent frolic, when my conscience does not interfere; but when that speaks to me, I must obey its voice. My father allows me plenty of pocket-money; and a treat of cakes and fruit on our walks, if Mr Harding does not disapprove of it, I shall always be ready to give in my turn; but you must never expect wine from me, nor invite me to join with you in drinking it; and now, suppose you all make up your minds to give it up, before it becomes necessary to your pleasure to have it. It will cost you now but little self-denial, and by and by it may cost you much, or you may have imbibed so strong a relish for it, that you will think you cannot give it up at all."

"I am not ready to agree to any such proposition," said Dick; "but you will not inform on us, Maurice?"

"I shall never do any thing to bring you into difficulty," replied Maurice; "be assured of that; but you must not invite me to join your parties as long as you use champagne or wine of any kind. I shall be quite content to join the younger boys on a walk or in a play."

Maurice stood up as he spoke, and though, at first, some of the boys were inclined to ridicule him, he spoke with so much dignity and independence, and commanded so much respect by his manly bearing, that no laugh was raised, and all seemed desirous of conciliating his good-will.

"He is a fine independent fellow," said Frank Henley. "If his notions are strict, I am not sure but they are correct. I like a boy," continued he, rising, "who is not afraid to express an opinion, though he knows every one is against him. Give me you hand, Maurice, —I stand by you; and though I drank the

wine, I think it would be better not to do it, and for the very reasons you have given."

Maurice gave his hand cordially. "If you would all reflect a little upon the subject," he said, kindly looking around, "I do believe you would all be of my mind. By doing when absent from Mr Harding what you would not do in his presence, you show more respect to him than you do to your Maker, in whose presence we always are."

The last words Maurice uttered with solemnity, and a pause followed, which was presently interrupted by the sound of some one approaching from the meadow which outskirted the wood. The boys started and looked eagerly in that direction, to ascertain who was coming to interrupt their retirement.

One figure only appeared. Bob Newton, who was nearest the meadow, said, "It is Philip Graham, but he sees nothing but the book he

is reading. He does not know we are here,—but look! Dick, Tom, Frank—stand here, just where I am. He is now leaning against a tree. See! he has a cigar in his mouth; and do you not recognise by the cover of that volume, that it is no book from Mr Harding's library, I am sure? We know where it came from, do we not? Mr Shaw's circulating library,—plain as the sun. I can tell the cover of his books as far off as I can see them."

"So can I," said Dick, "I am quite sure it is from Shaw's. There is your 'pattern, model boy,' stealing off alone to break two of Mr Harding's rules. He little suspects his 'model' of such deceit. That is the way your stiff, long-faced fellows often turn out."

"Why," said Bob Newton, "do you remember, Dick, what a time Mr Harding had, when I brought that cigar to school to give you, and set you a few lessons in smoking—what a

long speech he made to us about boys at fourteen getting into such habits, and how he strictly forbade any one ever to bring a cigar to school?"

"I remember it well," said Dick. "Mr Harding would hardly believe that his best boy would stealthily break two of his rules. The circulating library is forbidden, as we all know, decidedly and entirely."

"Well, that is a foolish rule, I think," said Tom; "and whenever I get a chance, I must say I get a book now and then, but I do not set up to be a pattern, like Philip."—

The boys had unawares raised their voices, and Philip started, and looking in the direction from whence they proceeded, discerned, through the trees, the group that was watching him. He hastily pulled the cigar from his mouth, and concealed it, and pocketing the book, he approached the woods with a grave aspect.

"That must be a very interesting book, Philip," said Bob Newton, "as we have been looking at you certainly for ten minutes, without you being aware we were so near you."

"And a fine cigar, I should imagine also," said Dick. "Pray, where do you buy your cigars, Mr Graham? Does Mr Harding furnish you? We need not inquire whose circulating library you encourage, as the cover of the book speaks plainly enough for itself. There is no mistaking that."

Philip looked exceedingly embarrassed. The colour flew to his face, he made an attempt to speak, but turned and walked away, without a word.

"Well," said Bob, "the next time Mr Harding tells us to imitate Philip Graham, I shall think of this."

Mark the difference between Philip Graham and Maurice Gray: Philip served in the letter,

Maurice served in the spirit. Philip loved best the praise of men; but Maurice, the praise of God.

CHAPTER III.

Two or three weeks after the last-mentioned incident, a group of boys were assembled on the play-ground, when there appeared at the gate an aged woman of quiet and quaint aspect. Her dress was old-fashioned and peculiar, and her manner and appearance were those of one who seldom crept from her own homely fire-side, to mingle in the great world. Her face, though bearing deeply the stern mark of time, wore such an expression of peace, and sweet, holy serenity, that none could look at it without loving it, and feeling that they were in the presence of one who walked with God. She opened the large gate timidly, and looked rather dismayed to find herself suddenly in the

midst of a large party of boys, all curiously looking at her.

"Is Maurice Gray here?" she asked.

"No, he is not, ma'am, he is in the house," was the answer. "Have you brought any thing to sell? You seem to have a nice, large basket."

"No, I have not," she replied. "I called to see Maurice Gray. Will you tell me where I shall find him?"

"If you will tell us what you have in your nice, large basket," said Bob Newton, looking around him very mischievously, "I will promise to find him for you."

"How can you be so rude?" said lame Louis, who stood near. "I will go and find Maurice for you, ma'am; but I cannot go so quick as the other boys, because I am lame;" and Louis walked towards the house.

"Now, please, old lady," said Dick, "just

tell us if you are Maurice's grandmother, who taught him to be such a good boy."

"I am sorry," said the old lady, "that Maurice has such rude companions."

"We all know he had a good old grandmother," said Dick, "or he would not have such a pile of good books, and so many stupid notions about some things. It is a thousand pities it is so, for he is such a pleasant, good-tempered, merry fellow, and such a favourite with us all, in spite of his odd ideas."

"Please, give us a peep," said Bob Newton, "into your nice basket, and we will praise Maurice up to the skies."

The old woman made no answer. Her eyes were fixed on the distance, for she saw Maurice approaching, and hastened forward to meet him. Maurice looked grieved and vexed when he saw her surrounded by the boys, all rudely looking at her, but running hastily towards

her, exclaimed, "My good kind nurse, how glad I am to see you!" and giving her his arm, and relieving her of her basket, he led her towards the house.

"Nurse!—he called her nurse!" said Dick; "then she is not his grandmother. I did not suppose she was."

"I fear she will think us but a rude, wild set of boys," said Frank Henley. "I could not treat an old person so rudely."

"Why, it was all in fun," said Dick and Bob, looking rather ashamed. "It was only fun. I would not harm the good old lady for a crown."

About half an hour after this, Maurice, with his old nurse, and Mr Harding, were seen leaving the house together, and quitting the grounds, proceeded down the road towards the village.

In less than an hour, Maurice and Mr Har-

ding returned together. Mr Harding went into the house, and Maurice approached the playground.

"Now, Bob," said Frank Henley, "if Maurice was a quarrelsome, cross fellow, you and Dick would have a battle with him for your treatment of his old nurse; for he looked much vexed when he saw how she was situated." But Maurice came towards them with his usual pleasant smile.

"What is the name of your good old nurse, Maurice?" said Louis Tarleton.

"Burton," answered Maurice; "and I am sorry she was not better received by my friends on her first visit to me; but, probably, none of you feel towards an old person as I do, or have had the same cause. But I must persuade you to love and respect her, for she is coming to live in the little green cottage, half a mile from the school, and Mrs Harding has

promised to employ her when sickness or any extra occasion shall require her services. I am sure, when you know her, you will never treat her disrespectfully again; let me tell you something of her."

The boys gathered round Maurice.

"I suppose all of you have mothers who watched over your childhood, wiped your tears, and gave you every pleasure, but I have no remembrance of my mother. She died when I was hardly a year old. My father, who is an officer in the navy, was absent on a long cruise at the time, and I was left entirely to the care of good Nurse Burton. She has often described to me my mother's farewell of me. She was very young—scarcely twenty—when she died. My nurse took me to her, and laid me on the bed by her side. She placed her feeble hand on my head, and prayed silently a few moments, and then said, 'I have put up once

more, and for the last time, the one only prayer I have offered for my little Maurice since the first hour of his birth. It is that he might be in spirit and in truth a follower of the blessed Redeemer. Oh! nurse,' she said, 'you watched over my motherless childhood—be the guide of this dear little boy—I commit him in confidence to you; and I give you but one injunction in regard to him, and that is that you will teach him, as you did me, from the earliest opening of his reason, to have the single eye that discerns clearly God's will, and the single purpose that fulfils it. As it regards this world's wealth, honours, or pleasures, I have no wish. God's will is mine. So long as my Saviour is his Saviour, through life and through eternity, I ask nothing more.'

"My dear mother died; and strictly and faithfully did my good nurse perform my mother's dying request. Her time, her strength,

her mind and soul were devoted wholly to taking care of me. In health and sickness, by night and by day, she watched over me, studied my happiness and improvement in all things, and thought nothing a sacrifice on her part that might contribute to my welfare and pleasure. My father returned home about a year after my mother's death; but his home was so desolate, that after committing me again to the tender care of Nurse Burton, he left us. My nurse is a woman of excellent sense. Her mind is elevated by religious truths. She has a good common education, and she was the only instructor I had, or required, in my earliest childhood. She patiently toiled with me through the first elements of education, but the chief and most delightful study to us both was the Bible. Before I could read, she told me pleasant stories from its pages, and instilled into my mind its sacred truths. And if there is

now within me any desire of right, or any proper notions of duty, I owe them all, under God's blessing, to her pious and early instructions. As soon as I could speak, she taught me to pray, and endeavoured above all things to impress upon my mind, that I was ever in the presence of the all-seeing God, and that outward forms, without the spirit of religion, were abomination in His sight. O! how happily and quietly we lived together,—my father's visits to us alone interrupting and giving variety and delight to our humble home.

" My first grief was when, at the age of ten years, after having been a year under my father's instruction, he was ordered to sea, and I was sent to a school about six miles from our home; but I was to return every Saturday and stay until Monday, and my nurse would visit me during the week, and so we became reconciled. At that school I remained until I was

thirteen years of age, when it was broken up, and for a year I was again under the instruction of my father; but on his again being ordered to sea the other day, he placed me here under the care of Mr Harding,—having, at the earnest request of my kind nurse, obtained a home for her in this neighbourhood, where she could often see me. She gladly left her native village, and many friends who valued her, to come here among strangers to be near me. Only think what a desolate childhood mine would have been without her love and care, and how ignorant I might have been of the best knowledge, that of right and duty, without her faithful teachings. When you think of the love you bear your mothers, and remember this was the only mother I ever knew, you will not be surprised at the attachment and respect I feel towards her. I hope I shall have the pleasure of taking some of you to see her at

her little green cottage, and when you know her you will learn to love her too."

The bell soon summoned the boys to their rooms to prepare for afternoon school. Several entered their chamber together. They observed the large basket which Nurse Burton had carried on her arm, on a table near Maurice's bed; and the cover being off, they saw it contained some plum-cake, most temptingly iced, and a quantity of fine ripe peaches and plums. Maurice and Philip Graham first entered the room together.

"Maurice," said Philip, in a low voice, on observing the basket, "you had better put those things out of the way, if you wish to keep them. Conceal them among your clothes, or you will get into trouble, if Mr Harding discovers that you have them."

Several other boys, entering at the same time, said the same thing, telling him it was

against the rules of the school for any presents of that kind to be accepted.

"Indeed," said Maurice, "I did not know it was against the rules of the school, or I would on no account have accepted them from my kind nurse, though it would have disappointed her much, had I refused them."

"Well," said Dick, "you have done it now, and so nothing remains but to hide them. You must do it quickly, too, for there is the second bell."

The boys hastily descended to the school-room, and they had all taken their seats before Maurice entered; and to their surprise he held in his hand the basket, and walked directly up to Mr Harding's desk, and addressing him, said—

"I did not know, sir, it was against your rules for us to receive presents of this kind, or I should not have accepted this that my good

nurse brought me to-day; though it would have grieved her much if I had refused it, as she made the cake for me herself, and brought the fruit all the way from our own garden, thinking I would like it better if it came from home. Be so kind, sir, as to pardon me for accepting it, and not oblige me to return it to my nurse, as it would disappoint her much. I am willing you should do what you think best with it."

Mr Harding's eyes beamed with pleasure, as he looked upon the open, ingenuous countenance of Maurice.

"Maurice!" he said, "your honesty merits my warmest praise. I give you permission to accept the present from your good nurse, and to do with it as you please."

Satisfaction beamed from the faces of many of the boys at this eulogium from Mr Harding, and one only expressed envy and discontent. Philip Graham had always merited, by his out-

ward conduct and good scholarship, the esteem of his teacher, who could only judge of his character by what he saw; but Philip had done nothing to win the affection of his teacher. The friendly confidence with which Maurice regarded Mr Harding had evidently won his love. Philip saw a rival in the new scholar, who would take his place in Mr Harding's esteem; and his cold heart, instead of feeling that there was room enough in the world for all, looked upon him with envy and dislike. But Maurice was wholly unaware of it, and equally unaware that he had done any thing to excite praise or surprise in any one. He was habitually honest and upright. The Bible taught him that as God knows all things, it is of little importance to hide any thing from the knowledge of man, and that deceit and hypocrisy were hateful in God's sight, and would sooner or later be unveiled.

"Come, boys," said Maurice, after school, as they entered the playgrounds, "one and all take seats on the grass here, and help me to dispose of the contents of Nurse Burton's basket, and you will see what excellent cake she makes, and what fine fruit grows in our old garden. Come, Philip," he said, as Philip Graham seemed turning away, as if he thought it too childish to join the group. "I know that boys as big as you like a good slice of cake as well as we—so come, take a seat with us. This is a generous loaf, and quite enough for all, and I have borrowed a plate and knife that I may serve it up handsomely."

Such a pleasant, good-natured smile accompanied Maurice's words, that Philip could not resist them, and he joined the party.

"No, I thank you, Maurice," said Bob Newton, as Maurice handed him a slice in his turn. "I was so rude to your good nurse to-

day, that I do really believe it would choke me, if I should attempt to eat it. The truth is, Maurice, I never did any thing I was more ashamed of, and I am willing to own it."

"Nor I either," said Dick. "Bob and I both feel alike about it, and wish to go with you to see your good nurse, to apologize to her and ask her pardon for our rude, ungentlemanly conduct. We were much excited and in a high frolic when she appeared at the gate, and you know her dress and appearance are peculiar, and we were very thoughtless and did wrong, and must certainly apologize for our misconduct."

"Well," said Maurice, "I am glad you feel so about it, boys. I knew if I told you all about her you would respect her, and when you know her, you cannot fail to love her; but she is so good, she will never remember it against you. I will forgive you in her name, and we will go together and explain all to her, and all

will be forgiven and forgotten; so now do oblige me by helping to eat up the cake and fruit, or I shall not enjoy my slice at all."

"Well, Maurice," said Bob, "you always make us do whatever you please; so we will accept our share, though we do not at all deserve it."

"You were a bold fellow, Maurice," said Tom Bailey, "to take this basket to Mr Harding."

"Why, what else could I have done with it?" said Maurice. "I had accepted it, unconscious that I was doing what was forbidden. You do not suppose I would hide it and deceive Mr Harding? That would indeed have been hard for me to do; but there was nothing hard in telling him that I had unintentionally broken his rules. I am sure, had I concealed it, I could never have eaten any of it. Besides, I should have done wrong, and offended God and my own conscience."

"You are a strange fellow, Maurice," said Frank Henley, "but I like your way of dealing. I do not believe another boy in school would have done so; but you have proved that it is the best way."

"The right way is always the best way," said Maurice, "and the only way in which we ought to act."

CHAPTER IV.

"Do not look so sad, Louis," said Maurice one day, as he joined the lame Louis who was sitting alone under a tree in the playground, and with dejected face watching the boys at play. His crutch lay beside him on the ground. The board on his knee showed that he had been trying to amuse himself with some solitary game. "Come, let me help you at a game. I should like it much."

Tears filled the eyes of the lame boy. "Oh, no, indeed," he said, "you must not sit moping here with me. You are such a good hand at play, and enjoy it so much, the boys will all be after you. You sat here a long time with me yesterday, and through all the recess to-day. Indeed, I cannot permit you to do it now."

"Oh, I have had play enough and want to rest now," answered Maurice. "I want to be with you a while. There are plenty to play without me."

"I shall never forget your kindness to me, even if I live to be an old man; but if you insist upon sitting here with a poor lame boy like me, let us talk a little, instead of taking a game. I should like to tell you a thought that was in my mind just as you came up."

"Well, what was it?" asked Maurice, kindly.

"I was wondering why it is, that of all the boys here, I am the only one that is deformed and lame. I should be so happy if I could run about and play with the others."

"Ah, Louis," replied Maurice, "there is but one answer to that question. It is your heavenly Father's will. God is your Maker and mine. He is the Maker of all mankind. He makes some sound in mind and body, and others

weak and deformed. He makes some rich and others poor. As we are all the work of His Almighty hand, He certainly has a right to create us as He pleases. All He does is for some wise purpose, and it is not for us to question His ways. You must hear my good nurse speak on these subjects. She can teach you far better than I can. You have been promising me you would call and see her for a long while. We shall have plenty of time; let us go there now. Take my arm, and we will walk slowly so as not to tire you."

Louis, leaning with one arm on his crutch and the other on his friend, walked slowly down the shady road and reached the little green cottage. Under the porch covered with creepers and honeysuckles, quite shaded from sight, on a low bench, sat Nurse Burton with a Bible on her lap.

"Ah, my dear child," she said, as she saw

Maurice, "I thought you would come to-day. You are just in time for us to read our evening lesson together, as we used to do at home. And who is this young gentleman," she asked, looking tenderly at lame Louis. "I recollect I saw him the day I first called on you at the school."

"It is Louis Tarleton—one of my best friends, nurse," answered Maurice, "and I know you will love him. But first we will read together, and then we will talk a while."

Maurice seated himself by his old nurse, and they read through a chapter alternately, Nurse Burton often stopping to explain and comment on different verses as they read. There was, indeed, a striking contrast between the stooping, worn-out form, the wrinkled face and the trembling voice of the old nurse, and the youthful figure, glowing countenance, and musical tones of Maurice, as they sat there together

pondering the blessed word of life—the help and strength of the aged, the guide and counsellor of the young. The descending sun gleamed through the fresh creeper and honeysuckle, and fell with its golden light across their faces,—an emblem of the blessed Sun of Righteousness which inwardly shed its sanctifying rays over their spirits.

"Do you not love the Bible, young gentleman?" said Nurse Burton, addressing Louis, as she closed the book.

"I have never read it much," answered Louis, "but you and Maurice seem to enjoy it so much, and it appears to make you both so happy, that I wish I could love to read it. You see I am lame, and I cannot play like the other boys; so I read a great deal, and am often at a loss for something to interest me, and Mr Harding says no one ever tires of reading the Bible. I do not know why, but it has always seemed a

dull book to me. Do you not think it is hard for me to be lame, nurse, and unable to run or jump with the other boys? I have to sit moping alone, or crawl around on crutches."

"Ah, speak reverently, my child," said Nurse Burton, "of your affliction; it is God's hand upon you. You see not its purpose yet, but be assured there is a wise purpose in it. Let the language of your soul be,

'I cannot, Lord, Thy purpose see,
But all is well, since ruled by Thee;'

and,

'My Father's hand will never cause
His child a needless tear.'

"Have you learned, dear child, to love God as a father and friend? If not, your lot is indeed a hard one, and your cross a heavy one; but only learn that, and you will have but the single desire that His will may be done in you and by you. You will prefer to keep your

affliction if He wills it, and it will be to you a visible token of His care over you."

"Oh, how I wish I could feel so!" said Louis, with emotion, tears filling his eyes. "How can I, good nurse? Will you teach me?"

"The blessed Spirit will teach you, dear child," replied the good nurse, "and you can obtain all you need, and that freely, by asking of Him who giveth liberally. Begin now to pray for it, and you will receive in abundance. Study the blessed Bible; and if my poor assistance can help you to understand its wondrous truths, come to me with dear Maurice, and we will read it together."

"I have long felt," replied Louis, "that I might be happier if I could feel reconciled to my lot. Perhaps if I learned to love God, I should think less of my own troubles and more of Him, and then I might be happier."

"It surely would be so, my dear," replied the nurse. "Have you no parents, Louis?"

"My parents both died when I was an infant," answered Louis, "and I have neither brother nor sister."

"Then you must feel the more need of a heavenly Friend, my dear child," answered the nurse. "He can supply the place of all others in your heart, and by His presence life will become to you so full of sweet flowers, lovely music, and pleasant pictures, that you will be as happy as you can desire. What relatives have you, my dear?"

"I have an uncle," replied Louis, "who is always generous and kind to me, but he is himself a lonely man, having neither home, wife, nor children; and though he sometimes takes me to the house where he boards, on a visit, it is not pleasant to me, and I generally pass my vacations at school; and then, good nurse,

I am often very sick. Last spring I was so ill that my life was despaired of. I have never felt so strong since, and I heard the physician tell my uncle, that I could never bear so severe an illness again. That has often made me think a great deal about dying, and I have concluded that it would be quite as well to die, as to live here in pain, weakness, and mortification, through a long life. For of what use can I ever be in the world, or what pleasure can I take in living?"

"Oh, my dear child," answered the nurse, "speak not so of the lot God ordains for you. Light from above must and will be shed upon your path, and then all will be bright and happy to you. Oh, Father of mercies," continued the godly woman, raising her eyes and hands to heaven, "send down Thy blessed light and truth into the soul of this child of Thine. Give him the oil of joy for mourning, and the

garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, for Jesus Christ's sake."

The boys sat a few minutes longer, conversing with the good nurse; and as they walked homeward, Maurice saw that a calmer and more chastened spirit expressed itself in the sad and dejected face of his companion; and his heart rejoiced, for he hoped the poor lad would now find the Comforter he so much needed.

It was a public day at the school. There was a class arranged for recitation, and many visitors were present. Frank Henley was at the head of the class, Maurice second, and Philip Graham third. A question was given to Maurice, who hesitated. He was quickly prompted by Frank; but instead of availing himself of his assistance, he replied, "I do not recollect the answer to that question." The question was passed to Philip, who replied correctly, and took Maurice's place.

Frank Henley seemed quite puzzled at this, and as several boys stood together on the play-ground after school, he said, "Maurice, did you not hear me prompt you this morning? You must have heard, for I spoke right into your ear."

"Yes," answered Maurice. "I heard you, Frank, and am much obliged to you for wishing to assist me."

"Then, if you heard me, why did you not answer the question?" asked Frank.

"Because," replied Maurice, "it was my memory, and not yours, that ought to have been ready. It would have been you answering, and not me, and that would not have been right."

"And so, you preferred the mortification of missing the question," said Frank, "before all the visitors, and losing your place in the class, to using my memory! Besides, allowing Philip Graham, who would not have hesitated (had he

not known the answer) to have made use of the prompting I intended for you, to take your place."

"Philip would not have been so simple," said Bob Newton, "as to have lost his place, if he could have kept it by any means. He knows well enough how to get along, and save himself from disgrace. When he has not properly prepared his lessons, I have many a time seen him with a scrap of paper in his hand, which he adroitly concealed, and adroitly read, too, if occasion required. If Mr Harding knew that, what would he think of his model! You are too particular, Maurice, you may depend upon it, to get along here; and you will find it so, by and by."

"I must do what my conscience tells me is right," answered Maurice, "whether I get along well or not. If I do not, I should be very unhappy."

"Which would cause you to feel most unpleasantly," asked Frank—"to miss a question on exhibition day, lose your place in the class, and cause the visitors to think you were an indolent, careless scholar, or to answer one single question by my prompting?"

"I should prefer missing several questions," answered Maurice, "and have the character of an indolent scholar, than do what I thought was dishonest; but I have only missed one to-day, and I have answered many in various classes correctly, and I do not think that either Mr Harding or the visitors will be so unreasonable as to think I am usually indolent or careless about my lessons."

"Well, you are a strange fellow," said Bob Newton, "and all I can say is, there is not another boy in school that has such notions."

CHAPTER V.

"OH, what have I done? What have I done?" cried Maurice Gray. "What shall I do? What will Mr Harding think of me? My unlucky ball. I was so engaged in my game, that I did not notice how near I was to the conservatory, and thus have disobeyed my teacher, and now I am punished for it."

"What is it? What is it, Maurice?" cried several voices, and the boys quickly gathered round to ascertain what had happened.

"Alas!" answered Maurice, "my ball has broken a square of glass in the conservatory. I threw it with such force that I fear it has thrown down some plants, for I heard a loud crash. Let us go and see."

The boys hastened to the conservatory. They were allowed to view the flowers from the outside, but were strictly forbidden to enter it without permission from their teacher.

"Yes, it is too true," said Maurice. "Oh, I am so sorry. I have thrown down that beautiful scarlet cactus in full bloom, which Mr Harding showed us yesterday, and have probably injured it very much. What will Mr Harding think of me?"

"Oh, say nothing about it—say nothing about it," said Dick Wells. "Such things have often happened here before, and no one could ever tell who did the mischief. Mr Harding has tried in vain, every way, and offered rewards to have the offender made known. But we have a way of managing such things. So do not trouble yourself about it, Maurice. You are too good a fellow to get punished. None of us will allow it; depend upon that."

"I suppose he will be glad enough to hide that from Mr Harding," said Philip Graham, aside to Bob Newton, "though he was so bold in acknowledging his fault about the present from the old nurse. This is quite a different and a more serious affair."

"Broken glass and broken flowers are two things which very seriously try Mr Harding's temper," said Bob Newton aloud. "He thinks such things are always the result of carelessness or wilfulness, and he has preached more upon them than upon almost any thing else."

"Oh, never mind, Maurice," said Frank Henley. "I can easily get you out of the scrape, and I will do it."

Maurice stood thoughtfully looking at the mischief he had done, and hardly heeding the various remarks made by his companions; and did not observe that Frank Henley had instantly left the group, after saying

that he could and would get him out of his difficulty.

"How fortunate," said Tom Bailey, "that Mr Harding is absent this afternoon! I saw him ride away with his family immediately after dinner, and he will not probably return until dark, and he will not find this out until to-morrow. So we have time to arrange all about the matter, and to prepare ourselves for the cross-questioning we shall all get on the subject."

At this moment Frank Henley reappeared with Maurice's ball in his hand, and presented it to him. Maurice looked at him with surprise. "Here, Maurice," said Frank, "here is your ball. You are now safe from discovery. It is not every boy in school I would have broken one of its rules to serve. But I cannot see you punished."

"Oh, Frank," said Maurice, "you have not

entered the conservatory against Mr Harding's commands! How could you?"

"How could I! Why," said Frank, "to make you safe. There will now be no ball found there, and Mr Harding will not know how the glass was broken. We will all agree that we know nothing about it, and he will think it was the gardener, or Peter, or one of the other servants, and you will get off. I really thought you would be grateful for my services, but your looks express any thing but gratitude. I should think I had injured you."

"Oh, Frank," said Maurice, "you intended to do me a service, and have acted from feelings of friendship and kindness to me. I do feel truly grateful for your intentions, but you have injured yourself, without at all assisting me."

"How do you mean, Maurice, that I have not assisted you?" said Frank. "The ball cannot now testify against you. It is easy enough

for all of us to keep quiet, and you will never be discovered."

"Oh, but I have done wrong," said Maurice, "and I cannot conceal it from my teacher. I shall go to him directly when we assemble in the hall for prayers to-night, if I cannot see him before. I could not rest to-night without confessing all and receiving his forgiveness for my disobedience and carelessness. I am sure he will not be unreasonable or unkind, and I prefer receiving the punishment I deserve to deceiving him."

"You will not be such a simpleton as that, surely," said Bob Newton, "when Frank has done so much to get you out of the difficulty. It would be treating him very unhandsomely, and exposing yourself unnecessarily to Mr Harding's censure."

"I am not ungrateful to you, Frank, for the kindness you intended me," said Maurice; "but

there is only one path for me, and that is the right one. It is ever plain and open to us all, if we will but see it. There are many winding and crooked ways, but they are always full of perplexity and trouble. Suppose I follow your advice, and conceal what I have done from our teacher, I shall cause you all to practise deceit, the blame of the accident will rest on the wrong person, and feeling that he has been injured and deceived, it will be a long time before Mr Harding forgets the affair. But if I do right and confess my fault, and submit myself to my just punishment, no one will be involved but myself, and no one but the real offender will be suspected."

"And Frank—what will he do in that case?" asked little Joe Green, who stood intently gazing at Maurice, and apparently quite confounded at the new doctrines he was uttering.

"Oh!" said Frank, "I can manage it easy

enough for myself. If Maurice does not choose to accept my assistance, I can easily replace his ball where I found it; that is clear enough. I have not the fancy for being punished that he has, and am willing to be obliged to a friend once in a while."

"And so am I, Frank," said Maurice, "and to no one sooner than yourself; but suppose I deceived my teacher, I cannot deceive God, who knoweth all things. I feel that His all-seeing eye is upon me, and I must act as in His sight."

"You are a proud fellow, Maurice," said Frank, in an angry tone, and seizing the ball roughly from his hand, he walked towards the conservatory.

The bell rang for evening prayers.

"I guess Maurice will change his mind to-night about confessing this accident," said Phil Graham to Frank Henley, as they walked together towards the hall. "Depend upon it,

with all his bragging and preaching about right and conscience, he has repented fifty times of not accepting your offer to get him out of his scrape without exposure."

"I do not agree with you there, Phil," said Frank. "He would not accept it now, if it was made to him this moment; but he is a character you cannot well understand, Phil. Your motto has always been plain enough to us all, 'Make clean the outside of the cup and the platter,' but Maurice's seems to be, 'Make clean the inside.' I must own he is a noble fellow. Though I was provoked with him this afternoon for spurning my assistance, I have got over it now, and I like him all the better for it, and I wish I was like him."

"Well, we shall see how he'll manage it," answered Philip. "Depend upon it, his heart will fail to-night, and he will be glad to keep clean the outside, and let the inside go."

It was quite a large assembly that gathered at morning and evening prayer, at Mr Harding's school. It included his own family, his pupils, and the numerous servants of his household. Mr Harding was in his accustomed place when the boys entered, and was thoughtfully turning over the leaves of the sacred volume that lay before him. The silence in the room was interrupted by Maurice, who leaving his seat approached Mr Harding, and asked permission to speak a few words to him before the evening exercises commenced; adding, "I have done something unintentionally, but carelessly, sir, which will displease you, and I cannot retire for the night happily, until I have confessed it to you."

He then related the occurrences of the afternoon, and blamed himself very much for becoming so absorbed in his game as to approach so close to the forbidden side of the playground

near the conservatory, and concluded by saying, "I am exceedingly sorry, sir. I submit myself cheerfully to the punishment I deserve; only let me know that you will not think I would wilfully do any thing to injure you, or deliberately disobey your commands."

There was a profound silence in the room, while Maurice spoke, and his words were heard distinctly by all.

The silence continued a moment after he had ceased to speak, when, to the surprise of all, Frank Henley left his seat, and approaching his teacher, said—

"I too have done wrong to-day, sir, and have disobeyed you; and though in times past I have always endeavoured to conceal from you the accidents and disobedience of which I have been guilty, I so admire the bold and honest conduct of Maurice, that I am induced to follow his example. Unknown to Maurice, and wish-

ing to save him from exposure, I entered the conservatory, contrary to your orders, and took away his ball. I presented it to him, telling him, as that could not now witness against him, it would be easy for him to get out of the difficulty; that you would never suspect him, but would impute the blame to some other person, who I could answer for it would never be discovered. I was angry with him for decidedly, but kindly, refusing to accept my proposal and conceal it from you; and seized the ball roughly from his hand, saying, I was not then going to get myself into trouble, and that I should return it to the conservatory. I left him intending so to do; but as I walked along, my own mean conduct contrasted with the brave and honest course of Maurice presented itself vividly to my mind. He was so different from any boy I had ever met with before, that I could not help admiring him and desiring to imitate him.

A voice seemed sounding in my ear, 'Truth, brave Frank,—be honest, Frank.' It was a new idea for me to act upon, and I did not know that I should have courage to do it; but I am glad I have, sir, for I feel much happier than if I had concealed my disobedience, and I am willing to be punished as I deserve."

Frank ceased to speak. Mr Harding looked much agitated, and seemed struggling to command his feelings. There was a breathless silence in the room. All eyes were turned, first on the teacher, and then on the two manly youths who stood before him. At length Mr Harding said--

"Maurice, you have done me more service to-day, than you could have done me injury, had you broken all the glass in my conservatory, and destroyed every plant that it contains. I would be willing that such an accident should occur very often, for the sake of your good

example, and feel grateful to you for its effect upon Frank—I trust it will be of lasting benefit to his character. I freely forgive you your carelessness; and to show my esteem for your character and influence, will reward you by forgiving Frank the fault he has committed in his effort to serve you. Frank!" he continued, turning towards him, "you deserve commendation for the effort you have made to confess your fault. The struggle must have been hard for you, if you have hitherto been in the habit of deceiving and concealing. I trust you will henceforth follow the good example of Maurice, and I hope ere long you will be uniformly actuated by the same high notions of duty which influence him. For that which alone gives permanency to any good intentions or resolutions is to act in the fear and love of our heavenly Father."

Mr Harding then extended his hand kindly,

first to Maurice, and then to Frank. They bowed and retired to their seats, and the exercises of the evening proceeded.

CHAPTER VI.

It was the holy Sabbath-day. The services of the sanctuary were over. It was a rule of Mr Harding's that each boy should pass the intervening time from the close of the afternoon service until tea-time, in his own closet. Books appropriate for the day were provided for all, and a lesson in the Bible was to be learned for the evening, that part of the Sabbath being devoted entirely by Mr Harding to the religious instruction of his pupils. Let us glance for a moment into the closets of some of the boys most conspicuous in our story, and see how they are passing the precious hours of God's holy day, when none but the all-secing Eye is upon them.

Frank Henley sat at his desk; his Bible and question-book lay open before him. He had evidently been studying his lesson, but his head was now leaning on his hand, and an expression of thought was upon his features quite foreign to his usual light-hearted, gay look. He seemed pondering in his mind some important subject. Yes!—new thoughts had lately sprung up in his heart. He had felt the nobleness of confessing a fault even to his fellow-creature, and that led him to reflect how often he had deceived him. The words of Maurice—"We cannot deceive God, who knoweth all things"—had led him to think how often, by deceit and falsehood, and neglect of duty, he must have offended his great Creator. The Bible lesson of the afternoon had drawn his thoughts into a serious train; the Spirit of the Holy One was near, hovering around his retirement with most precious and blessed boons and

benedictions, all ready to pour into his youthful soul. God grant he may open his heart to receive them, and not grieve Him away by thoughtlessness or love of ease!

Dick Wells had stolen into the closet of Tom Bailey, unknown to any one; they were sitting close together, talking very earnestly in low whispers, lest it should be discovered that they had transgressed a rule of the school, and were passing the hours together. They appeared to be laying a plan for something which was difficult to settle, as they often paused thoughtfully, and then resumed their conversation as if undecided what course to take. Had one been near, he might have heard such phrases as these—"Splendid horses"—"Best circus in the country"—"Fine music"—"I am determined I will go"—"Somehow or other, I am quite decided about that. I had rather be punished for going than not go at all; but we

can manage so as not to be discovered, I know."

"Bob Newton is going," said Dick, "and Frank Henley will go, and Harry Blake and Will Foster—we are sure of those. Will it do to ask Maurice Gray?"

"I should like much to have him, if we could persuade him to join us," said Tom; "but he is so very strict, I do not think there is any use in asking him, for we do not of course wish any one to know of it, who will not heartily join us."

"Maurice is so fond of a frolic, and delights so much in horses," said Dick, "that we might perhaps persuade him to go."

"Don't you believe it," answered Tom. "He loves fun and horses too, I know, as well as any of us; and could he go with Mr Harding's permission, he would enjoy it much; but Maurice would never run away and go. I am certain of that."

"He is bold enough to do it, if he chose," said Dick. "There is no cowardice in him. I am no coward, but I dare not act as he does in some things. I have not the same kind of courage. There is something I cannot understand about him, but I do like him exceedingly for all that."

"There will be no harm in sounding him some time," said Tom. "We are sure of one thing, he will not betray us, or get us into any trouble."

"Our best plan," said Dick, "I think, will be to ask permission to go to the woods on Wednesday afternoon, when the circus is in the village; and then the older boys can separate themselves from the rest. That will not excite suspicion, for we often do that; and then make the best of our way as fast as possible to the village, and if we have good luck, and do not meet Mr Harding, nor his assistant Mr Neville,

we shall get along well; perhaps we may think of some other way before the time."

Well," said Tom, "we will consider this plan settled unless we can think of a better."

Philip Graham sat at his desk, with his Bible and question-book before him, studying his lesson most attentively for a short time—for he was quick to learn—and it was not many minutes before he had it prepared. He then slyly drew a book from his desk and looked around the room. But why? No person could possibly be concealed there. He then looked from his window, and then drew his chair back a little that he might not be seen from the outside, and then opened the book he had taken from his desk and was soon absorbed in its pages. Dick and Tom would have recognised it at a glance as belonging to Mr Shaw's circulating library.

Lame Louis begged permission of Maurice

Gray to pass the hours with him ; but Maurice firmly refused his request unless he could obtain the consent of Mr Harding ; and to oblige Louis, Maurice went with him to their teacher to request the favour, which was kindly granted.

The sad and dejected expression of Louis's pale face was softened into a look of more gentleness and submission, which was quite touching. They appeared deeply interested in the evening lesson, and Louis often paused and with much earnestness asked his young teacher the explanation of various passages as they proceeded. After they had completed their lesson, Maurice turned to another part of the Bible, and they read and conversed with great interest on the subjects of various chapters.

The hours passed rapidly away, and the ringing of the bell to summon them to tea, still found them studying with pleasure that Holy Book which can alone make us " wise unto sal-

vation," and afford us consolation under all the difficulties and trials of life.

"Maurice," said Philip Graham, entering his closet one day, where Maurice sat preparing his lessons for school—"I have a word to say to you alone."

"Well, what is it Philip?" said Maurice, laying down his book. "Can I do any thing to assist you?"

"Oh no," said Philip, "quite the contrary; I want to do you a favour."

"I am much obliged to you," said Maurice. "What may it be?"

"I observe you are very fond of reading," said Philip. "Is it not so?"

"Yes, indeed," said Maurice, "it is one of my chief pleasures. The having lived all my life in the country, and being greatly dependent upon myself for amusement, has given me, I suppose, a taste for reading."

"And how do you like the books of Mr Harding's library," asked Philip,—"such as we are permitted to use?"

"Very much, indeed," replied Maurice. "I have not been at a loss since I have been here for interesting reading, and it must be a long time before I have exhausted the library, especially as Mr Harding is so kind as to be constantly adding to it."

"But would you not sometimes like a change," asked Philip, "in your reading? I have a plan I think you would like, which will make a pleasant variety in your reading, give you much pleasure, and I will take all the trouble of it. I am a subscriber to Mr Shaw's circulating library, and I thought if you would like to pay half the subscription, you can pay the money to me. I will obtain and return all the books, and so no one will know that you have any thing to do with it."

"I dare say, Philip," said Maurice, "you intend me a favour, and therefore I am obliged to you; but in the first place, I will never wilfully break any of Mr Harding's rules, and you know one of them is, that we shall never take books from the circulating libraries. In the second place, my father has expressed a wish to me that I should never read frivolous books, as he says it gives one a disrelish for useful reading; and as Mr Harding provides us with works of history, biography, and travels, I therefore can have no use for Mr Shaw's books. And in the third place, I have no taste now for works of fiction, and do not wish to acquire one, as I fear it might injure me, and cause me to waste my time."

"Oh," answered Philip, "as for that, I like history, biography, and travels, also; but I must have a variety. Novels are delightful,

and will never injure you. I have been reading as many as I choose for several years, and I do not see that I am any the worse for it."

"But the love you have acquired for them," said Maurice, "leads you deliberately to disobey your teacher to obtain them. I should think that was evil enough, and you know not to what else they may lead you."

"Oh! such rules I always think are made for the younger boys," said Philip. "I am no longer a child, and will not submit like a child to every such regulation. If I set a good example and keep my own counsel, that is enough, I am sure. When have I ever failed in a lesson, or been reproved by my teacher? There is not a boy in school so exemplary as I am. But come! do not be a child any longer, Maurice," he continued, drawing a book from his pocket, "just take this and examine it. It shall cost you nothing. It is a most thrilling

story. If you read this, I know you will thankfully accept my proposal."

Maurice drew back, and refused the book.

"No, Philip," he said, "you cannot, by any means, tempt or persuade me to have any thing to do with that book, or any other that is forbidden us. It is wrong, and I am afraid to do what is wrong."

At this moment the bell rang for dinner. Footsteps were heard in the hall. Philip, unperceived by Maurice, hastily concealed the book under some pamphlets and papers on his desk, and left him. Maurice thought no more of the book; and Philip was that day summoned home to visit his father, who was very ill.

A fortnight passed away, when one morning Mr Harding was called out of school, and after being absent a few minutes he returned, looking unusually grave, and addressing his school, said, "that Mr Shaw from the village,

had just called to look up a book, that had for several weeks been missing from his library, and which was taken out by one of the pupils of the school. He refuses to give the name of the boy, as he is under a solemn promise of secrecy, unless the book cannot be otherwise obtained. The book, he said, was a new one, and the only copy he had; and as one volume was missing, he could not use the other, or he would not have made known the circumstances to me. But as the young gentleman who had it had not called for some time, he must excuse him for using the most prompt method for obtaining his property, and he should make known his name unless he received his book without needless delay. I am exceedingly grieved," continued Mr Harding, "that any one should have violated what I consider one of the most important rules of my school, as you all know how strongly I have often ex-

pressed my abhorrence of the kind of books usually found in circulating libraries, such as Mr Shaw's. It seems to me also an act of ingratitude, as I have been at the personal expense of purchasing a library for your use, of such books as I approve. I advise whoever has the book Mr Shaw is in search of, to confess it immediately, otherwise Mr Shaw will himself make it known."

No one spoke or moved.

Mr Harding looked carefully around the room, and then added, "There is no one absent from the school now but Philip Graham, and his conduct has been such as to exonerate him from the suspicion of so gross a violation of duty, and of course it must be one of those now present."

Mr Shaw returned home, and Mr Harding then directed the boys to remain in their places while he visited their rooms in search of the missing book. He was absent but a few mo-

ments, when he reappeared in the school-room, bringing a book which they all knew came from the forbidden circulating library. His countenance was very grave, and he said with unusual emotion—

"I have found this book where I least expected to find it, and where, before searching, I should have felt certain it would not be found. It was concealed under papers and pamphlets on the desk of Maurice Gray."

Maurice involuntarily started at the sound of his name, but soon recovered himself and looked steadily at his teacher.

"Oh, Maurice!" said Mr Harding, with much feeling, "have I indeed been deceived in you? Why did you not, as on former occasions, come forward and confess your fault?"

Maurice arose in his seat, and said, respectfully, "I have nothing to confess, sir. I did not know the book was there."

"Then you accuse some one," said Mr Harding, "of secreting the book under papers upon your desk, do you?"

"It must have been done by some one else, sir," answered Maurice, "for I have never read, nor even taken into my hand, a book from the circulating library, since I entered your school."

"The missing book is found secreted upon your desk, Maurice," said Mr Harding. "Every thing looks against you, but I am persuaded you have never yet deceived me."

"Circumstances are certainly against me, sir," said Maurice, looking calmly at his teacher with his full, honest eye, "but I do not dare to lie or deceive. I believe I have never given you cause to doubt my integrity, and I hope you will believe me, when I say I did not know the book was there. As it has been found there, and has been missing for a fortnight, I know of

but one way in which it could have been put there. But I beg of you to take some other method of ascertaining the truth. I may implicate one who is innocent, and nothing but your express commands can cause me to make known my suspicions. If you will please to wait a day or two longer, perhaps all will be cleared up."

"I have such confidence in you, Maurice," said Mr Harding, "and feel such a respect for your wishes, that I will let the matter rest until to-morrow, when Mr Neville returns, and I will consult with him as to the best course to pursue."

Philip Graham returned that evening to school. He looked very sad and much softened. He had come from the deathbed and funeral of his father, and was received with much kindness and sympathy by Mr Harding.

Mr Neville returned the next day, but not

until the boys had been assembled in school for an hour, and of course Mr Harding had no opportunity to consult with him on the discovery of the offender.

After the lessons were over, Mr Harding related to Mr Neville, in presence of the whole school, the circumstances of the missing book, and concluded by asking him if he could conceive who would have taken the book from the library, or how it could have been concealed on Maurice's desk without his knowledge. "I have had this in my possession," he added, producing the book, "and have examined its contents, and it has made me the more determined to discover who among my pupils could have such a low and depraved taste as to feel inclined to read it. I feel ashamed to think that I have a boy in my school who has a taste for such reading."

Mr Neville looked much disturbed while Mr

Harding was speaking, and after a few moments he said—

"It is most painful to me to be obliged to bring disgrace and reproach upon one who has hitherto occupied a high position in the school, in every way; but it is my duty to state what I know of this affair, that suspicion may not rest where it is undeserved. I intended to have made known to you, sir," he continued, addressing Mr Harding, "the circumstances which occurred a fortnight since; but as I was very much occupied at the time in preparations for my journey, it escaped my mind, and I had quite forgotten the affair, until you mentioned what occurred here yesterday.

"It was about a fortnight since, I was on my way to the closet of Maurice Gray. I wished to speak with him alone. As I approached the closet, I heard some one conversing with him within, and not wishing to

interrupt them, I retired to a window in the room to wait until his visitor departed, and unintentionally overheard the conversation within. Some one was urging Maurice to become a subscriber to the circulating library, telling him he should have no trouble about it, that he would procure and return all the books, &c., and he seemed at the same time to be urging upon him a volume to read. Maurice Gray firmly and positively refused to have any thing to do with it, giving the best of reasons for so doing, that he would never wilfully break a rule of the school—that his father entirely disapproved of such reading—that he did not wish to cultivate a taste for it himself—that he was perfectly satisfied with, and much interested in, the books which were provided for him to read. His companion was still urging Maurice to do as he desired, when the bell interrupted them, the other boys entered the room, and he was

obliged to leave. I saw no book in his hand when he left the closet. I think it must then have been left there. The boy who was conversing with Maurice, and whom I saw leave the closet, was Philip Graham."

Mr Harding started with surprise. He was well aware that among his older pupils there were some he could not trust, as they preferred their own will to his; but Philip Graham, from outward conduct, had always been exemplary,—what the boys called "Mr Harding's model." He was a brilliant scholar—punctual and studious, and was supposed by his teachers to be a boy of strict moral principles. His comrades knew him better, but it was a great disappointment to Mr Harding to find he had been so deceived. He sat silent at his desk for some minutes, and then called Philip Graham, who arose in his seat.

"There can be no doubt," said Mr Harding,

"of the entire correctness of Mr Neville's statement. If you have any excuse to make, or any explanation to give, you have an opportunity."

Philip stood erect. His eyes were cast down, but his countenance was unmoved, and he made no reply.

"It grieves me more than I can express," continued Mr Harding, "to be compelled to look not only with suspicion and distrust, but with deep disapprobation, on one whom I have always regarded with confidence and esteem. I must henceforth regard you as opposed to my plans and my interests. This is the first offence of yours that has come to my knowledge, but it is one of great aggravation. You have deliberately disobeyed me, and as you are a subscriber to the library, your offence is probably one of long standing. Nor is that all. You have used your influence to induce another to break my rules, and to pervert his mind with

such vile trash as this book contains. I cannot suppose that this is your only attempt. It may be that you have induced others, whose minds, unlike that of Maurice, are not fortified by good principles, to follow your example. I need not say that you have lost the high place in my regard which you formerly held, and nothing but a long course of correct conduct can restore you to my confidence. My sympathy with your great affliction leads me to suspend for the present the infliction of merited punishment. One word of advice I must give you. Of all the severe judgments which our blessed Redeemer denounced, none were more severe than those which respect hypocrites—those who appeared outwardly righteous, but were within full of deceit and wickedness. Go to your private room, Philip, and let the rest of the day be passed in meditation on your past conduct, and may God give you a penitent spirit, and a desire

for the future to live a penitent life ! May He give you a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within you !"

Philip obeyed, and silently left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

"UNLUCKY! unlucky! unlucky!" cried Dick Wells, joining a group of the older boys on the playground. "Is it not, Tom, the most unlucky thing in the world that the birthday-fête and the circus come on the same day? I never heard of any thing more provoking. How can we manage it?"

"It is indeed bad enough," answered Tom, "but we must do the best we can, and that is, to leave home as early as possible, and come out of the circus before it is over, and try to be at home again by four o'clock, which is the hour we are invited to the fête."

"Yes, that is all we can do," answered Dick, "unless we give it up altogether, and that is

what I will not do, happen what may. There never was such a tempting handbill, and I must go, and think of the consequences afterwards."

"We must obtain permission," said Tom, "to go to the woods immediately after dinner, and as soon as we are out of sight, make the best of our way to the village. One of us must try to keep an eye to the time, and just before four we must leave; and if we are fifteen minutes too late, Mr Harding will think we did not know the hour, or that we wandered farther than we intended."

"Well, that is what we will conclude upon," said Dick. "How many of us are there? Bob Newton joins us at the tent. He is to buy our tickets and have all ready, so that there will be no delay. Why, Maurice, I did not observe you were here. I did not mean you should know our secret, as I thought there would be

no use in inviting you; you are so fearful of disobeying Mr Harding. Come now! do be somebody for once. Join our party, and see the most delightful circus in the world."

"You must, Maurice," said Bob Newton, "as you have overheard the whole plan, you cannot help it. You are so fond of horses, and ride so well yourself, you will enjoy it; and you may learn something useful too in the way of managing a horse—eh?"

"Oh! say nothing more to me about it," answered Maurice. "You all know very well that I will not join you; but I fear you will all get into trouble, so you had better give it up. I am sure the pleasant entertainment Mr Harding gives us on Wednesday ought to be sufficient amusement for us, and suppose you were detained, or did not know the hour, how mortified you would all feel to be discovered at such a time—to say nothing of the disobedience,

and the meanness of skulking away in such a manner to attend a circus. Better give it up."

"We have thought it all over, Maurice," said Dick, "and are quite resolved to run all risks and go, and nothing you can say will induce us to change our minds. So if we cannot induce you to join us, we will drop the subject."

Maurice made no answer, but putting his arm within Frank's, he coaxingly led him away.

"Now, Frank," he said, as they walked along, "it is but a short time since you determined to be more conscientious, and that you would not again violate Mr Harding's rules. Why will you allow the first temptation to draw you away from your duty?"

"Oh, Maurice!" said Frank, "I cannot withstand such a temptation as this. It is too much for me. Of all things in the world, the circus is my delight. After this I do intend to try to do right."

"Until the next temptation comes, Frank," said Maurice. "Where is the virtue of doing right, when there is no temptation to do wrong?"

"That is true," said Frank; "but this once, Maurice, I must follow my inclination. I am quite as determined as the others. Happen what will, I attend the circus this time."

"I fear you will repent of it," answered Maurice. "It seems to me to be quite impossible for you to leave the village after the circus, and be here in time for the fête. If you are late, Mr Harding will think you very ungentlemanly, and feel as if you treated him with great rudeness."

"Oh! trust us, Maurice," said Frank, "for slipping in unobserved. We have done such things before now. Mr Harding will never know but that we came in with the rest, there will be so many there. Depend upon it, we will not be discovered."

"I am sorry to see you so determined, Frank. I hoped I might persuade you to abandon the plan; though I had but little hope of influencing the other boys. But you are more guilty than the others, because you are breaking a resolution to do right, and had already taken one step, and are now going backwards, and will find it harder than ever to commence again."

"I wish I was thoroughly good like you, Maurice," said Frank, "then I could do right easily enough. But I never can be. I never thought I should like to be good until I knew you. Almost all the boys I ever knew before who pretended to be good, were like Philip Graham; good enough before their teacher, but elsewhere, just like all the other boys. And though I never pretended to be good myself, I always despised hypocrisy, more than any thing else. But it seems to make no dif-

ference with you where you are or who you are with, and that is a character I would like to imitate."

"Do not talk to me so," said Maurice. "No one knows my heart save myself, and Him who knoweth all things; so no one can know how often I fail in all my endeavours to be and to do what I desire. But my heavenly Father, through his mercy in Christ Jesus, has compassion on my weakness, and gives me the earnest, constant desire to serve and to please Him. He pardons my manifold transgressions, and comforts me with assurances of His love and care towards all those who sincerely wait upon Him."

"Well, Maurice," said Frank, "I would like to be as good as you, and after the circus, I am going to try again, but I cannot give up that now, so good bye." And off ran Frank to join the circus party.

The birthday-fête mentioned just now, was a little festival which Mr Harding held every year on the birthday of his little twin-daughters, Minna and Rose.

Many of the children, with their parents, and other friends of Mr Harding from the village and neighbouring country-seats, with all the pupils, were invited to attend. A table was spread on the lawn under the shade of the lofty elms. Various games were played, in which old and young participated, and every thing was done by Mr and Mrs Harding to make the jubilee pleasant to the guests.

Minna and Rose, queens of the day, were crowned with wreaths of flowers, and presided at the feast. They also received from their parents and many of the visitors, useful and beautiful gifts.

The day was always anticipated by the pupils of the school with great pleasure; but those who

were at this time determined to attend the circus were so engrossed in that, that they did not regard it with their usual interest. Good Nurse Burton had been several days at the school, assisting and directing in preparations for the fête.

The long-expected Wednesday at last arrived. The day was fine. The grass on the lawn had been recently mowed, and was soft as velvet beneath the feet. The air was fragrant with flowers and new hay; and the table, most tastefully decorated with flowers, was profusely covered with ices, confectionary, and fine fruit. The boys readily obtained permission from Mr Harding to pass an hour or two in the woods before the time appointed for the fête; and according to their previous plan, as soon as they were out of sight of the house, they turned into the road leading to the village, and rapidly pursued their way thither.

Now it happened that some indispensable ar-

ticle for the entertainment was forgotten, and none of the attendants being at leisure to ride to the village, Mr Harding mounted his horse in haste, and proceeded thither to execute the commission. He was detained longer than he expected, and it was but a moment or two before four o'clock, when he turned his face homeward. He happened to be passing the circus-ground just as the people were leaving it, and reined up his horse to let the crowd pass. To his great surprise, among the first who came from the tent were several boys of his own school, who, casting an anxious look at the old church-clock, set off in rapid steps for home. He had hardly recovered from his surprise before the crowd had dispersed, and he was again moving onward, when he saw a solitary figure emerge from the tent, and strike into a circuitous route leading towards his house. It was Philip Graham!

Mr Harding rode slowly homeward, pondering on the deceitfulness and ingratitude of those he so earnestly and constantly endeavoured to benefit and make happy, and did not reach the scene of festivity until many of his guests had assembled.

The boys who had attended the circus made great haste to get home, and arrived before their teacher, and they congratulated themselves much on his not being present on their arrival, and felt quite sure they would not be detected. They were consequently in high spirits, and entered with great enthusiasm into the games and pastimes of the day.

The festival was highly enjoyed by all, and the moon shone brightly on the pleasant party ere they dispersed for the night.

"Did we not do well, Maurice?" said Frank, as they retired together, on the breaking up of

the party. "Was it not a lucky thing that Mr Harding was absent when we returned?"

"Oh, lucky! lucky! lucky!" said Dick and Tom, upon joining them. "Two frolics in one day is a rare thing. Now, Maurice, do you not wish you had gone? Who is the wiser for it? I would not have missed it for any thing."

The school was assembled next morning, when Mr Harding entered. He stood in his desk, and addressing his pupils, said—"Before commencing the lessons of the morning, I have a few words to say. The chief design I have in celebrating the little festivals on the birth-day of my children, is to give a pleasant holi-day to my school. You must perceive it is attended with much trouble and expense, and did I not think it gave much pleasure to you all, and that it would be among the pleasant remembrances of your school-days in after life, and cause you to feel that your teacher loved

you, and was desirous of promoting your pleasure in every innocent way, as well as your improvement, be assured the celebration of yesterday would be the last.

"There are many among you who understand my plans, and appreciate my indulgence, and I am sure they look upon me as a friend as well as a teacher; but there are others among you of a very different disposition. I do not doubt that you all enjoyed yesterday's pastimes, and you doubtless thought I did also, but you are mistaken. I hoped to have enjoyed the day as I usually have done, but there was one circumstance which brought a chill over my heart and spirits, and made the joyous scene to me one of darkness and sadness. It is hard to meet with deceit and ingratitude, and to receive it too in return for kind sympathy and affection."

There was a pause. The older boys looked askance at each other. Mr Harding resumed,

"I rode to the village in haste yesterday afternoon to execute a forgotten commission, connected with our little festival, and was on my return home, when the spectators of the circus were just leaving the tent. I stopped to let the crowd pass, and imagine my surprise and sorrow, when I saw among the crowd a number of my own pupils, hastily moving towards their home as if fearful of being late at my festival. I saw them distinctly, and recognised each, or I could hardly have believed them capable of such bold disobedience, and that too on the very afternoon when I was doing all in my power to promote their happiness. Now, I wish every boy present, who attended the circus yesterday afternoon, to arise in his seat."

One after another, with countenances expressive of great mortification, the boys reluctantly arose in their seats, until the six who had gone in the party together were all standing.

Mr Harding looked around. "This is not all," he said. Still, no one moved.

"This is all who were of our party, sir," said Dick Wells. "There were but six."

"There is another present," said Mr Harding, "who did not join your party, but who attended the circus, whom I saw slyly leave the tent, after all the spectators had gone, and make his way home by a circuitous route. Philip Graham! why do you not rise in your seat with the rest? Do not think because you went more slyly and stealthily than the others, and wished not only to keep a fair face before me, but also before your schoolmates, that you were unseen?

"It is hardly a year since some of you requested permission to attend the circus, and then, in denying your request, I stated to you that as long as you were under my charge, I would never consent to your frequenting a place, where you would probably hear vulgar and pro-

fane language, and where you might imbibe a taste for mountebank exhibitions, and the lowest grade of dramatic performances. As there are some present, who have entered school since that time, I again express my opinion, and repeat my commands on the subject. The punishment I shall inflict on those who disobeyed me yesterday, will be to suspend them from the school for one month at the end of this term. Philip Graham will be suspended two months. I shall also write to your parents the particulars of your conduct, that they may deal with you as they think proper.

"As for you, Frank," continued Mr Harding, "you had boldly taken the first step in the paths of honesty and rectitude, and are capable of becoming an honourable and high-minded youth. I feel greatly disappointed that the first temptation has caused you to fall. I fear you are too much governed by your associates.

If you were always to choose good ones, you might do well; but there is no security for a person who cannot stand alone, who does not possess in his own heart those principles and that strength which will lead him to act rightly, independently of all outward circumstances, and to resist in the hour of temptation. Each of us must bear his own burden, and give his own account to the Judge of all. Strive and pray, I entreat you, for that grace and light from above—that firm religious conscientiousness and love to your Creator—which can alone give you the victory over sudden temptation."

Frank Henley seemed deeply impressed by Mr Harding's advice, and much distressed at his own misconduct, but Philip Graham exhibited no emotion!

And here we must take leave of Mr Harding's little community. The diversity of cha-

racter which we have seen in it may be found in larger and older communities all the world over—and each of them answers to some representation or image, which we find in the sacred Scriptures. There are those who fear God and desire to please and obey Him. Their habitual thought is, "*Thou God seest me;*" and so convinced are they that to love God and keep His commandments is their reasonable duty, that they would suffer any reproach or ridicule rather than disobey them—no matter what numbers may be found in the way of evil, nor what flattering promises of enjoyment may be held out, the RIGHT or WRONG of the thing is first in their thoughts. Concealment or detection they have nothing to do with, for there is nothing they wish to conceal or fear to expose. They are sincere and guileless people. *Maurice Gray* evidently belongs to this group.

And then we have another class, and the

world is full of them. The chief motive which leads them to do right is that it is more creditable. They oblige themselves to maintain two opposite characters, and while they vainly suppose themselves to be in favour with the wicked companions whom they despise, and with the good whom they cannot but respect, they seldom fail to lose the confidence of both, and to be exposed and detested as deceivers and hypocrites. *Philip Graham* is a striking example of this class of persons. The history of both not only illustrates the worldly proverb, that "honesty is the best policy;" but the higher and far more comprehensive truth, that "the fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE." *

* Prov. i. 7.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER.