

From the London People's Journal.

STABILITY.

BY MRS. A. J. HIPPILEY.

"Bide by the right."

It is stability of principle which is indispensably necessary amid the tumult and changes of the world, to maintain such a line of conduct as we know to be right.

There is nothing which proves weakness of mind so much as following the example of others, merely to avoid the pains and trouble of thinking, and examining for ourselves. Such a practice evinces a poverty and indolence of spirit, which will inevitably enslave it, and the mind will gradually sink into a lamentable state of supineness. We are endowed with reason, that we may distinguish good from evil, and a Divine precept "coming down from the Father of light," and truth tells us to try all things, to hold fast that which is good.

It is the distinguishing character of man to appreciate moral truth, and to follow its dictates from an inward principle, which is not a mere casual impulse, or current opinion of the day, but the calm deduction of the highest reason, harmonising with the declared will of God, and acting through the medium of an enlightened conscience.

"Every man," says Locke, "carries about him a touchstone, (reason,) if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glittering truth from appearance." We have also that silent monitor, Conscience, the warder of our actions, which, stife it as we may, is too great a power ever to be entirely subdued. It is always on the watch-tower to warn us against the approach of evil—and though we may slight the warnings, they are ever sounding in our ears, though at last, reduced to a "still small voice."

Having then these noble gifts, let us exercise them to the fullest extent, that they may not be cramped or weakened; knowing the finest mind and most amiable disposition will degenerate, if not actively exercised.

We have all duties to fulfil, for which a steady and determined principle of rectitude is essentially necessary, not only in those who occupy high positions, but also in the more quiet and retired stations of life. Without this internal guide, good intentions are valueless, and are in imminent danger of being altogether frustrated.

If steadfastness of mind be not cultivated, no obstacle to our improvement will be overcome, nor anything that is difficult accomplished. A wavering, unstable mind, engenders a feebleness of purpose, which renders its possessor unequal to combat with the difficulties which must be encountered more or less by all in the warfare of life.

The want of a fixed principle of action, and a laudable standard of character, prove fatal to the prospects and happiness of many. Lured by the temptations of a fascinating world, many a bright spirit and benevolent heart fall easy victims to their baneful effects. They go into the world with brilliant expectations, and hearts beating high with hope—but in an evil hour, they listen to the artful deceiver, and for want of resolution, suffer themselves to be ensnared and led astray. Like wax, they receive every impression, and are moulded by the opinions of others whom they allow to think for them; possessing no moral courage to resist the torrent, a flattering gale insensibly carries them down the stream of folly; they forsake the right path, but never without having cause for a long and bitter repentance: truly it is said, "our pleasant sins are made a rod to scourge us."

Unfortunately, ridicule is a weapon, to which the vacillating too often yield, forgetting that it belongs only to little and ungenerous minds; and that those who use it, are subjects for compassion rather than dread. "The most insignificant people are the most apt to sneer at others. They are safe from reprisals, and have no hope of rising in their own esteem, but by lowering their neighbors."

The mind requires constant exercise to give it health and strength; without this, it will languish and decline. It must also have an object for which to exert itself. Let us then not rest satisfied until we have set up the "standard of right and perfect," within our own minds, and having done so, strive to conform to it. No earnest endeavor to improve our nature is ever entirely thrown away, nor ultimately in vain. One struggle may appear ineffectual, one effort may seem unproductive of benefit, but the combination of patient, continued endeavors, will sooner or later produce a rich harvest.

There is very wide difference between stability of mind, and persisting in error, or a pertinacious adherence to our own opinion before we are convinced they are right. We are all short-sighted, and frequently our views are circumscribed within the boundaries of our own ideas; the same author we quoted before, says, "We see but in part, and we know but in part, and therefore it is no wonder we conclude not right by our partial views. This might instruct the proudest exteemer of his own parts, how useful it is to talk and consult with others, even such as come short of him in capacity, quickness, and penetration; for since no one sees all, and we generally have different prospects of the same thing, according to our different, as I may say, positions to it, it is not incongruous to think, nor beneath any man to try, whether another may not have notions of things which have escaped him, and which his reason would make use of, if they came into his mind."

We are divinely instructed to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasure, and knowing how to seek it, if we earnestly and diligently apply ourselves to the search, with sincerity of heart, and a calm inquiring mind, we shall not fail in

our great object. Let us not heed the sneers or frowns of the world, and let them not deter us in our pursuit of the good, whose price is far above rubies; having attained the priceless gem, let us hold it fast, and let it be the guide of our lives. "Our minds must be braced to the highest pitch they can be stretched to, without an overstrain," to persevere in the course which conscience approves.

"It is not by living a butterfly or caterpillar existence, and merely taking the color of surrounding circumstances, that eminence or virtue of any kind can be obtained."

We are endowed with faculties which render us capable of "almost anything"—such, at least, as would carry us farther than can be easily imagined; but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives ability and skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection. Shall these faculties be lost or weakened for want of energy or strength of purpose? Shall they be abused because we are deficient in moral courage to repel the attacks of ridicule and contempt? Let us exert our dormant energies, and investing ourselves with fearless truth and firm resolution, steadily keep our high aim in view, amidst the joys and toils of life—and as far as perfection is permitted to humanity—strenuously endeavor to attain it.

Without a fixed principle, we sail on a dangerous sea, abounding with rocks; "without compass by which to direct our course, or helm to guide our vessel; the sport of every adverse wind, and liable to innumerable dangers; we wander forth into an unknown wilderness, without a guide, and have no haven of rest in prospect before us."

By depending too much on others, we become strangers to our own resources, and imperceptibly fall into a state of imbecility. If circumstances rule us, we are indeed miserably governed; under such guidance no position of eminence is ever attained. By relying on circumstances, the mind will become effectually enfeebled, and will sink under the slightest discouragement. "We are all surrounded by circumstances, which we must combat by force of inward principle; this is the great moral warfare in which all good and true men must bear a part, and their weapons are not worldly but spiritual—that is, they consist of principles."

There is no faculty given to man, which is not bestowed upon us by the Great Giver, for action. It is not sufficient that our moral powers are sometimes aroused—it is not intended that they should repose in slothful inactivity—they must be always untiringly and vigorously engaged for the glory of the God who endowed us with them, the improvement of ourselves, and the benefit of our fellow creatures.

Those who devote themselves entirely to the world are always wavering in principle, they form their course in accordance with its ever-changing occurrences and customs, which latter Dr. Johnson calls "the plague of wise men and the idol of fools."

In the "wild war of life," we are beset with direful foes, but if we not only "choose well our battle gear," but set it firmly on, and act up to our motto, "bide by the right," we need neither "falter or fear." Well accounted, we may stand boldly forth, secure of victory. The unprincipled will "cease to lay their snares for one whom they see moving above them, in a higher sphere," and with a steadfast purpose.

There is no condition of life exempt from the performance of duties, and the career of very few proceeds so "calmly and uniformly, as not to oblige them to discover in some situation or other, what proportion they possess of the estimable qualities of man." Those in the humbler walks of life have their full share of temptation to encounter, and many are there who have bravely resisted them, and that too, when circumstances have arrayed themselves strongly against them. Those who have tilled a spot of earth "scarcely larger than is wanted for a grave," have given bright examples of virtue struggling with difficulties.

It is the resistance of temptation which constitutes virtue; "everything that is lovely in character, every act of moral bravery and virtue, derives its lustre from this battling with circumstances, and overcoming them. Various conduct comes out of the furnace shining with increased brightness."

"if privileged from trial,
How cheap a thing were virtue."

It is to stability of mind and adherence to high principle that we are indebted for many illustrious examples, both in ancient and modern history, of men, who, when the "world stood aghast with fear, stepped into the breach, and turned the battle to the gates."

Stability of principle enables us to obtain and keep a position in the world. The necessity of it cannot be too early inculcated; it should form the basis of education. Temper the youthful mind with right principle, and firmness of purpose, exclude the "dull alloy" of prejudice, and there will be no cowardly shrinking from duty—no pusillanimous yielding to circumstances in after years.

There are only two plans for our conduct in this world—the one dictated by worldly wisdom, the other that of determined adherence to conscience. The former demands that principle should be laid aside; the latter a steadfast perseverance in duty. Worldly wisdom leads its followers into dark and intricate paths, provides nothing to protect them from evil, and nothing on which they can rely for support; when vicissitudes and trials arise, they are "reeds shaken by the wind," and are left hopeless and disconsolate.

Opposed to this is true wisdom,—which will be given to those who earnestly seek it—and a firm adherence to its dictates. The path is straight and direct; let us proceed in it without fear or wavering, conscientiously discharging our duty, resolved, that should the world make

us unfortunate, it shall never make us base. These principles are a shield of inward peace, and though the wounds of adversity may be felt, the far severer ones of conscience cannot be known.

"True valour, Tullus,
Lies in the mind, the never-yielding purpose,
Nor owns the blind award of giddy Fortune."

It is by the high principle of individuals exhibited under trying circumstances that any nation ever became truly great; and it is by the want of it that so many have died away. In the language of Scripture, "the time would fail to tell" of those deathless names, who, through faith in principle and opposition to circumstances, "have wrought righteousness, and waxed valiant in fight," in the moral warfare of the world. The time would fail also to tell of those still more interesting triumphs of principle, which are every day exhibited in the quiet recesses of private life—the integrity of dependents, the mutual assistance of the poor, the kindness shown to the aged and infirm, the tenderness which hovers over the couch of sickness, and which seeks out the prisoner in his cell, the beneficence of neighbors, and the faithfulness of friends—these, bad as the world is, are sufficient to cast a halo of moral greatness over the destinies of man, which circumstances can neither give nor take away.

From "Sacred Poets of England and America."

THE CHIMES OF ENGLAND.

BY THE REV. A. C. COXE.

[Inserted by request of a Subscriber.]

THE chimes, the chimes of Motherland,
Of England, green and old,
That out from fane and ivied tower,
A thousand years have tolled;
How glorious must their music be
As breaks the hallowed day,
And calleth with a Saraph's voice
A nation up to pray.

Those chimes that tell a thousand tales,
Sweet tales of olden time!
And ring a thousand memories
At Vesper and at prime;
At bridal, and at burial,
For cottager and king—
Those chimes—those glorious Christian
chimes—
How blessedly they ring!

Those chimes, those chimes of Motherland,
Upon a Christmas morn,
Outbreking, as the angels did,
For a Redeemer born;
How merrily they call afar,
To cot and baron's hall,
With holly decked and mistletoe,
To keep the festival.

The chimes of England, how they peal
From tower and Gothic pile,
Where hymn and swelling anthem fill
The dim cathedral aisle;
Where windows bathe the holy light
On priestly heads that fall,
And stains the florid tracery
And banner-dighted walks.

And then those Easter-bells in spring,
Those glorious Easter chimes;
How loyally they hail thee round,
Old Queen of holy times!
From hill to hill like sentinels,
Responsively they cry,
And sing the rising of the Lord,
From vale to mountain high.

I love ye—chimes of Motherland,
With all this soul of mine,
And bless the Lord that I am sprung
Of good old English line!
And like a son I sing the lay
That England's glory tells;
For she is lovely to the Lord,
For you, ye Christian bells!

And heir of her ancestral fame,
And happy in my birth,
Thee, too, I love my forest-land,
The joy of all the earth;
For thine thy mother's voice shall be,
And here—where God is King—
With English chimes, from Christian spires
The wilderness shall ring.

From the Handbook of Angling.

THE PIKE.

The pike, commonly called Jack when under three or four pounds in weight, is a well-known fish—like many of us, better known than trusted or treated. He is a greedy, unsociable, tyrannical savage, and is hated like a Blue beard. Everybody girds at him with spear, gaff, hook, net, saare, and even with powder and shot. He has not a friend in the world. The horrible gorge hook is especially invented for the torment of his maw. Notwithstanding, he fights his way vigorously, grows into immense strength despite his many enemies, and lives longer than his greatest foe—man. His voracity is unbounded, and like the most accomplished corporate officer, he is nearly omnivorous, his palate giving the preference, however, to fish, flesh, and fowl. Dyspepsia never interferes with his digestion; and he possesses a quality that would have been valuable at La Trappe—he can fast without inconvenience for a fortnight. He can gorge himself then to the gills without the slightest derangement of the stomach. He is a shark and an ostrich combined. His body is comely to look

at; and if he could hide his head—by no means a diminished one—his green and silver vesture would attract many admirers. His intemperate habits however, render him an object of disgust and dread. He devours his own children; but strange to say, likes better (for eating) the children of his neighbors. Heat spoils his appetite cold sharpens it; and this very day (20th December 1846) a friend has sent me a gormandising specimen, caught by an armed gudgeon amidst the ice and snow of the Thames near Marlow. I envy the pike's constitution.

"NOT ONE OF THEM AR' SORT"
The New Orleans Delta tells the following good one:—

At a Session of the Circuit Court of Mississippi, in some country town, the lawyers who were in attendance were in the habit of putting up at a house of entertainment kept by a buxom widow lady, of a very high sense of propriety and great dignity of deportment. This lady always presided at the head of the table during meals, and the place of honor on her right was regarded as due to the most staid, proper, and elderly member of the bar. By unanimous consent of the Lawyers, Colonel B—, a very modest, discreet and pious counsellor, was selected for this distinction. Now, though possessing many sterling virtues, Col. B— possessed one weakness, but it was not a weakness of the head or of the heart, but of the eyelid. He had the habit of winking incessantly and involuntarily, which, with persons who did not know the cause of it, left an unfavorable impression of the Colonel's seriousness and sincerity. He was eternally being suspected of what he was the last man to conceive of, to wit, a design of joking or quizzing everybody, all on account of the perpetual motion of his eyelids. Well, on the first occasion the Colonel took possession of the seat nearest to "mine hostess," his bland and amiable expression, and dignified address, created quite a favourable impression upon her ladyship. The soup over, and the hostess began to ply the Colonel with various tempting dishes, all of which he accepted or declined with a smile, and with his invariable wink. At last it was perceptible to the company that the hostess was eyeing her distinguished guest rather inquiringly and significantly, these glances were always met by the Colonel with his usual smile and wink. But these amiable demonstrations were far from producing the effect designed upon Madame, who began to frown and look very threateningly at the innocent Colonel, who only smiled and winked the more fascinatingly. Finally, however, to the very great horror of the Bar, and the utter annihilation of the worthy Colonel, the hostess slapped the table indignantly with her right hand, and fixing her eyes very pointedly and fiercely upon the object of her wrath, cried out at the top of her voice, "You sanctified, weasen-faced old villain, I'll let you know I'm not one of them ar' sort!" What might have followed this explosion of wrath it would be difficult to conjecture, as the unfortunate possessor of the weak eyelid decamped in haste from the post of honor, and never after could be persuaded to act the agreeable to buxom widows.

THE MIND.

Of all the noble works of God, that of the human mind has ever been considered the grandest. It is, however, like all else created, capable of cultivation; and just in that degree as the mind is improved and rendered pure, is man fitted for rational enjoyment and pure happiness. That person who spends a whole existence without a realisation of the great ends for which he was designed; without feeling a soaring of the soul above mere mercenary motives and desires; not knowing that he is a portion, as it were, of one vast machine, in which each piece has a part to perform, having no heart beating in common with those of his fellow men, no feelings in which self is not the beginning and the end, may well be said not to live. His mind is shut in by a moral darkness, and he merely exists, a blank in the world, and goes to the tomb with scarcely a regret. Such beings we have seen and wondered at—wondered that a mortal, endowed with so many noble qualities, and capable of the highest attainment of intellectuality, should slumber on through a world like ours, in which is everything beautiful and sublime, to call forth his energies and excite his admiration—a world which affords subjects for exercising every lively attribute with which we are gifted, and opens a scene of the richest variety to the eye, and mind and the heart, and of such a diversified character, that we may never grow weary. If, then, you would wish to live, in the true sense of the word, cultivate the mind, give vent to pure affections and noble feelings, and pea not every thought and desire in self. Live more for the good of your fellow men, and in seeing their happiness you will promote your own.

SENTIMENT.

"Behold, my Flora how glorious Nature looks in her bloom! The trees are filled with blossoms, the wood is dressed in its green liverry, and the plain is carpeted with grass and flowers."—"Yes, Charles, I was thinking of the same thing. These flowers are dandelions, and when they are gathered and put into a pot, with a piece of good fat pork, they make the best greens in the world."

A man out West, whose house was recently destroyed by fire, publishes a card in which he thanks his fellow citizens for making an unsuccessful attempt to save his furniture, and expresses a hope that he will soon have an opportunity to reciprocate the favor.