

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

THE SWEETEST WORD.
On sweet, world of holy meaning
Cometh to me 'er and 'er,
And the echoes of its music
Linger ever—evermore.
Trust—no other word we utter
Can so sweet and precious be,
Tuning all life's jarring discords
Into heavenly harmony!

Clouds of thickest blackness gathered
O'er my soul's dark sea of sin,
And the port of heaven was guarded
From my guilty entering in;
Then came Jesus, walking to me
O'er the surging waves of sin,
Calling, clear above the tempest,
"He that trusteth, heaven shall win!"

Now, through all the sacred pages,
Where my word and doom had been,
Gleam those golden words of promise,
"He that trusteth, heaven shall win!"
Blessed, sure, and blood-guaranteed,
Let me drink its sweetness in;
He that trusts his soul to Jesus,
"He that trusteth, heaven shall win!"

Trust—O Saviour! give its fullness
To me at thy feet in prayer;
Grant my dying lips to breathe it,
Leave its lingering sweetness there—
Sweetness there, to stay the breaking
Of the hearts which love me so;
Whisper from my silent coffin,
"Trust the hand which lays me low!"

Miscellaneous.

ANOTHER CROOKED PATH.
What is it? You will see. One day Archie's father sent him on an errand, and as it was a nice sunny morning, Archie enjoyed the ride as any boy may well think. He made the good old horse go fast or slow just as he had a mind to, and the spring birds were singing on every tree he passed. His father told him not to stop on the way. So he went and did his errand, and was trotting home with a merry laugh, when he caught sight of some boys in a fern-yard.

And what should he do but ride into the yard just to say "good morning," that was all. The boys were playing at marbles. Archie watched them from the horse's back, until he got so interested that he slipped off his saddle and took his turn in the game; and he played and played, until two hours were gone.

Archie was quite frightened when he found how the time went. He jumped on Charlie's back, and away he went. But nothing looked so pleasantly as when the fields were as green, and the sky as blue, and the sun as bright, and the birds as gay; but Archie, he was not as happy. He was innocent when he rode along in the morning, and now he felt guilty. He had done exactly what his father told him not to do. He had stopped by the way, all the while knowing his father was waiting for the errand.

"Oh, dear, what excuse can I make?" thought Archie. Excuse? Why none. There was no excuse to make. Speak the truth, like an honest fellow. Pretty soon Archie spied his father coming down the road to meet him. His father was afraid lest some accident had happened. "I am glad you have reached home safely, my son. What has detained you?" asked his father.

"I lost my way," said Archie, "and it took me some time to get right again." His father, of course, believed him. He never caught Archie in a lie before. He went home and said the same thing to his mother. Do you think he felt any happier for it? No, no, no. He was in a crooked path, and you never find peace there. He tried to appear easy and happy; but he was uneasy and miserable, and did not really like to look his parents in the face.

He did not sleep well that night. Nobody sleeps well on a lie. He did not wake up bright. Nobody wakes up bright on a lie. He was not comfortable all day. Nobody is comfortable with a lie for a boy's companion. Do you think they are?

So it went on several weeks, and Archie was almost forgetting it; almost, I said, for there was still a sore spot whenever he thought of it, and that sore spot on his memory he could never get over. By-and-by the gentleman in whose yard he stopped came to see his father. As soon as Archie set eyes on him his heart beat violently, and he turned pale.

In a few minutes the man turned to Archie, and asked, "How did you get home the other day, my boy? Our boys had a very pleasant visit from you." How do you think Archie felt? Mr. Mann then turned to his father and said, "You must tell Archie come again. When he was there a few weeks ago he only stayed about two hours. We hoped he had come to spend the whole day."

There, it was all out. His father and mother had caught him in a direct lie. Archie felt so ashamed, so sorry, and yet he had rather have it out than in. It was a relief to have his parents know it, and to have their forgiveness. Nor was that all: Archie felt he had given his heavenly Parent. He knew that "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." An abomination! Think how God must hate liars. Archie felt troubled and humbled, and prayed God to forgive him this great sin, for Jesus' sake.

Not a great while after, his mother sent him to buy her something at the shop. Archie did so, but did not bring home the right change.

"Is this all the money, Archie?" asked his mother, looking him right in the eye.

"Yes, mother."

"I hope, my dear son, you are not deceiving me again," she said.

Archie was honest this time, and it almost broke his heart to be thus suspected; yet he felt it was just, and went away sorrowfully.

These are the consequences of falsehood. It is a crooked path, and hard to get out of. A liar cannot be immediately believed. It takes time to restore confidence in his word, even when he speaks the truth.—*Child's Paper.*

LESSONS OF SILENCE.—How long will your people listen with interest? said a strange preacher to a pastor. "I have never tried them, and would advise you not to," was the reply. "If your sermon is good, don't spoil it by overgiving. If it is poor, they will stand still less of it."

A SERIOUS JOKE.

Boys often think it a very smart thing to get one of their number into a temporary difficulty, thereby causing an embarrassment of behaviour which greatly excites their mirth and ridicule, though often the poor boy who is the victim finds, like the frog in the hot tub, that although it is sport to them, it is death to him; in other words, being the butt of his fellows wounds his feelings and makes him truly wretched, while the enjoyment that arises from the suffering of another is indeed fleeting pleasure.

Two years ago the writer of this article attended a picnic where the children were ranged around tables and waited upon by kind ladies, who furnished them with an abundance of good things. All seemed happy and contented except one little boy, who, sad and silent, stood apart from the rest. "He has been forgotten," I thought, and drew the attention of the lady near me to the child.

"There is a little boy who looks wistfully at the cakes and pies," I said, "but he seems to be eating nothing."

"Why, do you not know that he cannot eat?" the lady asked, in evident surprise; and then she told me his sad story. Here it is:—

Two boys were playing together in a back yard of a dwelling where one of them lived. They had every thing to make their lives pleasant—friends, fortune, health, and no future was brighter than theirs. As they ran through the yard, one of them stopped a moment before a vat of dark, clear liquid, and asked his playmate what it was.

"I know," was the reply, "taste it."

"Is it good?"

"Yes, real good; taste it!"

The little fellow put his mouth down and took one swallow of the liquid. It was strong like, and it stung the membranes of his throat and destroyed his palate, and from that day this he has never eaten of solid food. Bread, butter, or sugar and water is all the nourishment his feeble life receives. The story is true. It was a cruel joke, and the boy that perpetrated it will bitterly repent it, for it will yet probably cost a human life.

Some boys were playing on a frozen pond that had several spots of weak ice. One of the boys tied his skates together and whirled them to the centre of one of them, where he left them lying. "Just wait," he said to the boy near, "till Joe Burke comes down, and we'll have some fun."

Joe was a small, poorly-dressed boy, who suffered much at the hands of his elder and more knowing companions. When he came to the pond, the boy to whom the skates belonged was sitting on the ice, looking quite forlorn. "If I only had my skates, I'd go home," he was saying. "May be you will let me run over and get them, Joe, like a good fellow; then they are," pointing to the spot. Joe, who was possessed of an accommodating spirit, ran briskly to get them, and as the other boy had planned and foreseen, broke through the ice, that was only strong enough to bear the skates, and got a thorough wetting.

There was great laughter at his rueful face. There he scrambled out, but he was poor, and had no clothes to exchange for his wet ones. The cold and dampness struck into his feeble frame, and he died in less than a month, of typhoid fever, the physicians said, but the drenching "for fun" sowed the seeds.

I have related two practical jokes, with the results. They were not so very funny, after all. Even if they had not ended so fatally, you have only to imagine what your feelings would be in such positions, and avoid an amusement that has for its foundation even the temporary unhappiness of a fellow-being. There are a thousand sports that involve no peril or suffering. Embrace them all, to the entire exclusion of such questionable pleasures as practical jokes.—*Christian Times.*

CONSEQUENCES OF A LIE.

Bessie was a little girl, and not very old. One morning she was pinning a rose upon her bosom, when her mother called her to take care of the baby for a few minutes. Now Bessie just then wanted to go out into the garden to play, so she came very unwillingly.

Her mother bade her sit down in her little chair, placed the baby carefully in her lap, and left the room. The red rose instantly attracted the little one's attention, and quick as thought, the chubby little fingers grasped it; and before Bessie could prevent it, the rose was crushed and scattered. Bessie was so very angry that she struck the baby a hard blow, which made it scream. The mother, hearing the uproar, ran to see what was the matter. Bessie, to save herself from punishment, told her mother that her little brother Ben, who was playing in the room, had struck the baby.

Ben, although he declared his innocence, received the punishment which Bessie so richly deserved. Bessie went to school soon after, but she did not feel happy.

That night, as she lay in her bed, she could not go to sleep for thinking of the dreadful wrong she had committed against her brother and against God; and she resolved to tell her mother all the truth the next morning. When morning came, however, she felt as if there was something in her throat; she could not make up her mind to confess the sin; it did not then seem so great as it did the night before. As day after day passed, Bessie felt the burden less and less, and she might have fallen into the same sin again, had a temptation offered itself, but for a sad event. One morning, when she came home from school, she found Ben very ill. He had been sick all the forenoon. He continued to grow worse, and the next evening he died.

Poor Bessie! it seemed as if her heart would break. Kind friends tried to comfort her. They told her that he was happy; that he had gone to live with the Saviour, who loved little children; and, as she was good, she would go to him, though he could not come again to her.

"Oh! said the child, "I am not crying because he has gone to heaven, but because I told her the lie about him; because he got the punishment that belonged to me."

For a long time she refused to be comforted. Many years have passed away. Bessie is now a woman; but the remembrance of that lie yet stings her soul to the quick. It took less than one minute to utter it, but many years have not effaced the sorrow and shame which followed it.—*N. Y. Observer.*

The right kind of a Boy.—"Take a drink, bub."

"No, I thank you."

"Yes, take some beer. It will do you good."

"O no, I can't," said George. "I belong to the Band of Hope."

The men looked at each other, but no one tried any more to get him to drink.

His man sent him to the store to look for his pen, and was the way he came to be his pen. While he waited for his pen, one of the men spoke up.

"Well, I say, boy, if you won't drink, there is a cent for you to buy some nuts."

"Thank you, sir, for the cent, but I don't spend my cents for nuts; I put them in the bank."

When he was gone, the men looked at each other, and one said, "I say, Jack, I think it would be as well for all of us to leave off beer, and put our cents into the bank," and so they all thought, and agreed to do it.

As for papa, when he went home that night, and saw his wife and babe, and thought of all that that day he had done, he felt very bad. At last he made up his mind to sign the pledge and drink no more, and then they were all happy.—*Picture Paper.*

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O'er my soul's dark sea of sin,
And the port of heaven was guarded
From my guilty entering in;
Then came Jesus, walking to me
O'er the surging waves of sin,
Calling, clear above the tempest,
"He that trusteth, heaven shall win!"

Now, through all the sacred pages,
Where my word and doom had been,
Gleam those golden words of promise,
"He that trusteth, heaven shall win!"
Blessed, sure, and blood-guaranteed,
Let me drink its sweetness in;
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To me at thy feet in prayer;
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Archie was quite frightened when he found how the time went. He jumped on Charlie's back, and away he went. But nothing looked so pleasantly as when the fields were as green, and the sky as blue, and the sun as bright, and the birds as gay; but Archie, he was not as happy. He was innocent when he rode along in the morning, and now he felt guilty. He had done exactly what his father told him not to do. He had stopped by the way, all the while knowing his father was waiting for the errand.

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