

ness he left to his junior officer the glory of completing the campaign, offering to serve under him as a volunteer. "With such reputation," said Lord Clyde, "as Major-general Outram has won for himself, he can afford to share glory and honor with others. But that does not lessen the value of the sacrifice he has made with such disinterested generosity."

If a man would get through life honorably and peaceably, he must necessarily learn to practise self-denial in small things as well as great. Men have to bear as well as forbear. The temper has to be held in subjection to the judgment; and the little demons of ill-humor, petulance, and sarcasm, kept resolutely at a distance. If once they find an entrance to the mind, they are very apt to return, and to establish for themselves a permanent occupation there.

It is necessary to one's personal happiness, to exercise control over one's words as well as acts: for there are words that strike even harder than blows; and men may "speak daggers," though they use none. "*Un coup de langue*," says the French proverb, "*est pire qu'un coup de lance*." The stinging repartee that rises to the lips, and which, if uttered, might cover an adversary with confusion, how difficult it sometimes is to resist saying it! "Heaven keep us," says Miss Bremer, in her "Home," "from the destroying power of words! There are words which sever hearts more than sharp swords do; there are words the point of which sting the heart through the course of a whole life."

Thus character exhibits itself in self-control of speech as much as in any thing else. The wise and forbearant man will restrain his desire to say a smart or severe thing at the expense of another's feelings; while the fool blurts out what he thinks, and will sacrifice his friend rather than his joke

"The mouth of a wise man," said Solomon, "is in his heart; the heart of a fool is in his mouth."

There are, however, men who are no fools, that are headlong in their language as in their acts, because of their want of forbearance and self-restraining patience. The impulsive genius, gifted with quick thought and incisive speech—perhaps carried away by the cheers of the moment—lets fly a sarcastic sentence which may return upon him to his own infinite damage. Even statesmen might be named, who have failed through their inability to resist the temptation of saying clever and spiteful things at their adversary's expense. "The turn of a sentence," says Bentham, "has decided the fate of many a friendship, and, for aught that we know, the fate of many a kingdom." So, when one is tempted to write a clever but harsh thing, though it may be difficult to restrain it, it is always better to leave it in the inkstand. "A goose's quill," says the Spanish proverb "often hurts more than a lion's claw."

Carlyle says, when speaking of Oliver Cromwell, "He that can not withal keep his mind to himself, can not practise any considerable thing whatsoever." It was said of William the Silent, by one of his greatest enemies, that an arrogant or indiscreet word was never known to fall from his lips. Like him, Washington was discretion itself in the use of speech, never taking advantage of an opponent, or seeking a short-lived triumph in a debate. And it is said that, in the long run, the world comes round to and supports the wise man who knows when and how to be silent.

We have heard men of great experience say that they have often regretted having spoken, but never once regretted holding their tongue. "Be silent," says Pythagoras, "or say something better than silence." "Speak fitly," says

George Herbert, "or be silent wisely." St. Francis de Sales, whom Leigh Hunt styled "the Gentleman Saint," has said: "It is better to remain silent than to speak the truth ill-humoredly, and so spoil an excellent dish by covering it with bad sauce." Another Frenchman, Lacordaire, characteristically puts speech first, and silence next. "After speech," he says, "silence is the greatest power in the world." Yet a word spoken in season, how powerful it may be! As the old Welsh proverb has it, "A golden tongue is in the mouth of the blessed."

It is related, as a remarkable instance of self-control on the part of De Leon, a distinguished Spanish poet of the sixteenth century, who lay for years in the dungeons of the Inquisition without light or society, because of his having translated a part of the Scriptures into his native tongue, that, on being liberated and restored to his professorship, an immense crowd attended his first lecture, expecting some account of his long imprisonment; but De Leon was too wise and too gentle to indulge in recrimination. He merely resumed the lecture which, five years before, had been so sadly interrupted, with the accustomed formula, "*Heri dicebamus*," and went directly into his subject.

There are, of course, times and occasions when the expression of indignation is not only justifiable but necessary. We are bound to be indignant at falsehood, selfishness, and cruelty. A man of true feeling fires up naturally at baseness or meanness of any sort, even in cases where he may be under no obligation to speak out. "I would have nothing to do," said Perthes, "with the man who can not be moved to indignation. There are more good people than bad in the world, and the bad get the upper hand merely because they are bolder. We can not help being pleased

with a man who uses his powers with decision; and we often take his side for no other reason than because he does so use them. No doubt, I have often repented speaking; but not less often have I repented keeping silence."\*

One who loves right can not be indifferent to wrong, or wrong-doing. If he feels warmly, he will speak warmly, out of the fullness of his heart. As a noble lady† has written:

"A noble heart doth teach a virtuous scorn—  
To scorn to owe a duty overlong,  
To scorn to be for benefits forborne,  
To scorn to lie, to scorn to do a wrong,  
To scorn to bear an injury in mind,  
To scorn a freeborn heart slave-like to bind."

We have, however, to be on our guard against impatient scorn. The best people are apt to have their impatient side, and often the very temper which makes men earnest makes them also intolerant.‡ "Of all mental gifts," says Miss Julia Wedgwood, "the rarest is intellectual patience; and the last lesson of culture is to believe in difficulties which are invisible to ourselves."

The best corrective of intolerance in disposition, is increase of wisdom and enlarged experience of life. Cultivated good sense will usually save men from the entanglements

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\* "Life of Perthes," ii., 216.

† Lady Elizabeth Carew.

‡ Francis Horner, in one of his letters, says: "It is among the very sincere and zealous friends of liberty that you will find the most perfect specimens of wrongheadedness; men of a dissenting, provincial cast of virtue—who (according to one of Sharpe's favorite phrases) will drive a wedge the broad end foremost—utter strangers to all moderation in political business."—FRANCIS HORNER'S *Life and Correspondence* (1843), ii., 133.

in which moral impatience is apt to involve them; good sense consisting chiefly in that temper of mind which enables its possessor to deal with the practical affairs of life with justice, judgment, discretion, and charity. Hence men of culture and experience are invariably found the most forbearant and tolerant, as ignorant and narrow-minded persons are found the most unforgiving and intolerant. Men of large and generous natures, in proportion to their practical wisdom, are disposed to make allowance for the defects and disadvantages of others—allowance for the controlling power of circumstances in the formation of character, and the limited power of resistance of weak and fallible natures to temptation and error. "I see no fault committed," said Goethe, "which I also might not have committed." So a wise and good man exclaimed, when he saw a criminal drawn on his hurdle to Tyburn: "There goes Jonathan Bradford—but for the grace of God!"

Life will always be, to a great extent, what we ourselves make it. The cheerful man makes a cheerful world, the gloomy man a gloomy one. We usually find but our own temperament reflected in the dispositions of those about us. If we are ourselves querulous, we will find them so; if we are unforgiving and uncharitable to them, they will be the same to us. A person returning from an evening party not long ago, complained to a policeman on his beat that an ill-looking fellow was following him: it turned out to be only his own shadow! And such usually is human life to each of us; it is, for the most part, but the reflection of ourselves.

If we would be at peace with others, and insure their respect, we must have regard for their personality. Every man has his peculiarities of manner and character, as he has peculiarities of form and feature; and we must have for

bearance in dealing with them, as we expect them to have forbearance in dealing with us. We may not be conscious of our own peculiarities, yet they exist nevertheless. There is a village in South America where *gotos* or *goitres* are so common that to be without one is regarded as a deformity. One day a party of Englishmen passed through the place, when quite a crowd collected to jeer them, shouting: "See, see these people—they have got *no gotos!*"

Many persons give themselves a great deal of fidget concerning what other people think of them and their peculiarities. Some are too much disposed to take the ill-natured side, and, judging by themselves, infer the worst. But it is very often the case that the uncharitableness of others, where it really exists, is but the reflection of our own want of charity and want of temper. It still oftener happens, that the worry we subject ourselves to has its source in our own imagination. And even though those about us may think of us uncharitably, we shall not mend matters by exasperating ourselves against them. We may thereby only expose ourselves unnecessarily to their ill-nature or caprice. "The ill that comes out of our mouth," says George Herbert, "ofttimes falls into our bosom."

The great and good philosopher Faraday communicated the following piece of admirable advice, full of practical wisdom, the result of a rich experience of life, in a letter to his friend, Professor Tyndall: "Let me, as an old man, who ought by this time to have profited by experience, say that when I was younger I found I often misrepresented the intentions of people, and that they did not mean what at the time I supposed they meant; and further, that, as a general rule, it was better to be a little dull of apprehension where phrases seemed to imply pique, and quick in perception

when, on the contrary, they seemed to imply kindly feeling. The real truth never fails ultimately to appear; and opposing parties, if wrong, are sooner convinced when replied to forbearingly, than when overwhelmed. All I mean to say is, that it is better to be blind to the results of partisanship, and quick to see good-will. One has more happiness in one's self in endeavoring to follow the things that make for peace. You can hardly imagine how often I have been heated in private when opposed, as I have thought unjustly and superciliously, and yet I have striven, and succeeded, I hope, in keeping down replies of the like kind; and I know I have never lost by it."\*

While the painter Barry was at Rome, he involved himself, as was his wont, in furious quarrels with the artists and dilettanti, about picture-painting and picture-dealing, upon which his friend and countryman, Edmund Burke—always the generous friend of struggling merit—wrote to him kindly and sensibly: "Believe me, dear Barry, that the arms with which the ill dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us, and we reconciled to it, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves; which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature as much as they contribute to our repose and fortune; for nothing can be so unworthy of a well-composed soul as to pass away life in bickerings and litigations—in snarling and scuffling with every one about us. We must be at peace with our

\* Professor Tyndall on "Faraday as a Discoverer," pp. 40, 41.

species, if not for their sakes, at least very much for our own."\*

No one knew the value of self-control better than the poet Burns, and no one could teach it more eloquently to others; but when it came to practice, Burns was as weak as the weakest. He could not deny himself the pleasure of uttering a harsh and clever sarcasm at another's expense. One of his biographers observes of him, that it was no extravagant arithmetic to say that for every ten jokes he made himself a hundred enemies. But this was not all. Poor Burns exercised no control over his appetites, but freely gave them the rein:

"Thus thoughtless follies laid him low  
And stained his name."

Nor had he the self-denial to resist giving publicity to compositions originally intended for the delight of the tap-room, but which continued secretly to sow pollution broadcast in

\* Yet Burke himself, though capable of giving Barry such excellent advice, was by no means immaculate as regarded his own temper. When he lay ill at Beaconsfield, Fox, from whom he had become separated by political differences arising out of the French Revolution, went down to see his old friend. But Burke would not grant him an interview; he positively refused to see him. On his return to town, Fox told his friend Coke the result of his journey; and when Coke lamented Burke's obstinacy, Fox only replied good-naturedly: "Ah! never mind, Tom; I always find every Irishman has got a piece of potato in his head." Yet Fox with his usual generosity, when he heard of Burke's impending death, wrote a most kind and cordial letter to Mrs. Burke, expressive of his grief and sympathy; and when Burke was no more, Fox was the first to propose that he should be interred with public honors in Westminster Abbey—which only Burke's own express wish, that he should be buried at Beaconsfield, prevented being carried out.

the minds of youth. Indeed, notwithstanding the many exquisite poems of this writer, it is not saying too much to aver that his immoral writings have done far more harm than his purer writings have done good; and that it would be better that all his writings should be destroyed and forgotten, provided his indecent songs could be destroyed with them.

The remark applies alike to Beranger, who has been styled "the Burns of France." Beranger was of the same bright incisive genius; he had the same love of pleasure, the same love of popularity; and while he flattered French vanity to the top of its bent, he also painted the vices most loved by his countrymen with the pen of a master. Beranger's songs and Thiers's History probably did more than any thing else to re-establish the Napoleonic dynasty in France. But that was a small evil compared with the moral mischief which many of Beranger's songs are calculated to produce; for, circulating freely as they do in French households, they exhibit pictures of nastiness and vice which are enough to pollute and destroy a nation.

One of Burns's finest poems, written in his twenty-eighth year, is entitled "A Bard's Epitaph." It is a description, by anticipation, of his own life. Wordsworth has said of it: "Here is a sincere and solemn avowal; a public declaration from his own will; a confession at once devout, poetical, and human; a history in the shape of a prophecy." It concludes with these lines:

"Reader, attend—whether thy soul  
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,  
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole  
In low pursuit;  
Know—prudent, cautious self-control,  
Is Wisdom's root."

One of the vices before which Burns fell—and it may be said to be a master-vice, because it is productive of so many other vices—was drinking. Not that he was a drunkard, but because he yielded to the temptations of drink, with its degrading associations, and thereby lowered and depraved his whole nature.\* But poor Burns did not stand alone; for, alas! of all vices, the unrestrained appetite for drink was in his time, as it continues to be now, the most prevalent, popular, degrading, and destructive.

Were it possible to conceive the existence of a tyrant who should compel his people to give up to him one-third or more of their earnings, and require them at the same time to consume a commodity that should brutalize and degrade them, destroy the peace and comfort of their families, and sow in themselves the seeds of disease and premature death—what indignation meetings, what monster processions, there would be! What eloquent speeches and apostrophes to the spirit of liberty!—what appeals against a despotism so monstrous and so unnatural! And yet such a tyrant really exists among us—the tyrant of unrestrained appetite, whom no force of arms, or voices, or votes can resist, while men are willing to be his slaves.

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\* When Curran, the Irish barrister, visited Burns's cabin in 1810, he found it converted into a public-house, and the landlord who showed it was drunk. "There," said he, pointing to a corner on one side of the fire, with a most *mal a propos* laugh—"there is the very spot where Robert Burns was born." "The genius and the fate of the man," says Curran, "were already heavy on my heart; but the drunken laugh of the landlord gave me such a view of the rock on which he had foundered, that I could not stand it, but burst into tears."

The power of this tyrant can only be overcome by moral means—by self-discipline, self-respect, and self-control. There is no other way of withstanding the despotism of appetite in any of its forms. No reform of institutions, no extended power of voting, no improved form of government, no amount of scholastic instruction, can possibly elevate the character of a people who voluntarily abandon themselves to sensual indulgence. The pursuit of ignoble pleasure is the degradation of true happiness; it saps the morals, destroys the energies, and degrades the manliness and robustness of individuals as of nations.

The courage of self-control exhibits itself in many ways, but in none more clearly than in honest living. Men without the virtue of self-denial are not only subject to their own selfish desires, but they are usually in bondage to others who are like-minded with themselves. What others do, they do. They must live according to the artificial standard of their class, spending like their neighbors, regardless of the consequences, at the same time that all are, perhaps, aspiring after a style of living higher than their means. Each carries the others along with him, and they have not the moral courage to stop. They can not resist the temptation of living high, though it may be at the expense of others; and they gradually become reckless of debt, until it enthralles them. In all this there is great moral cowardice, pusillanimity, and want of manly independence of character.

A right-minded man will shrink from seeming to be what he is not, or pretending to be richer than he really is, or assuming a style of living that his circumstances will not justify. He will have the courage to live honestly within his own means, rather than dishonestly upon the means of other people; for he who incurs debts in striving to main-

tain a style of living beyond his income, is in spirit as dishonest as the man who openly picks your pocket.

To many this may seem an extreme view, but it will bear the strictest test. Living at the cost of others is not only dishonesty, but it is untruthfulness in deed, as lying is in word. The proverb of George Herbert, that "debtors are liars," is justified by experience. Shaftesbury somewhere says that a restlessness to have something which we have not, and to be something which we are not, is the root of all immorality.\* No reliance is to be placed on the saying—a very dangerous one—of Mirabeau, that "*La petite morale était l'ennemie de la grande.*" On the contrary, strict adherence to even the smallest details of morality is the foundation of all manly and noble character.

The honorable man is frugal of his means, and pays his way honestly. He does not seek to pass himself off as richer than he is, or, by running into debt, open an account with ruin. As that man is not poor whose means are small but whose desires are under control, so that man is rich whose means are more than sufficient for his wants. When Socrates saw a great quantity of riches, jewels, and furniture of great value, carried in pomp through Athens, he

\* The chaplain of Horsemonger Lane Jail, in his annual report to the Surrey justices, thus states the result of his careful study of the causes of dishonesty: "From my experience of predatory crime, founded upon a careful study of the character of a great variety of prisoners, I conclude that habitual dishonesty is to be referred neither to ignorance, nor to drunkenness, nor to poverty, nor to overcrowding in towns, nor to temptation from surrounding wealth—nor, indeed, to any one of the many indirect causes to which it is sometimes referred—but mainly to a disposition to acquire property with a less degree of labor than ordinary industry." The italics are the author's.