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My beloved Child
from

Her affectionate
Mother V.

24th May 1830



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THE
CHILD'S DUTY.

DEDICATED
BY A MOTHER, TO HER CHILDREN.

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THE
CHILD'S DUTY.

IN dedicating this little book to you, my dear children, it is my object and most earnest desire, to impress upon you, to the utmost of my power, the importance of the subject of which it treats ; namely, your morals and religion.

You will shortly go to school, where but little attention, may, perhaps, be given to your religious education ; and in your subsequent intercourse with the world, you will find that a very small portion of regard is paid to religion, or that still more rarely is it made the guide and director of the actions of your fellow creatures. Nevertheless, though such is not the practice of the world we live in, you may believe, from the experience of your mother, that you will derive a

greater satisfaction in making the desire of pleasing your God the rule of all your actions, than any other you can name. You will find the satisfaction of acting according to the dictates of virtue and gratitude, for all the benefits you are enjoying, far superior to the transient entertainment afforded by the gratification of an unlawful pleasure; and you will be enabled to reflect, that in denying yourself a thing which you know to be forbidden, you have paid a portion of

the debt of thanks, which you, in common with all your fellow creatures, owe to God your Creator, who has given you every thing that you possess and enjoy: and to Jesus Christ, who, after leading on earth a life of sorrow, persecution, and poverty, suffered, for your sake, a death of the greatest pain and ignominy.

Let us begin, by examining what are the deeds of God towards you, which demand this thankfulness on your part, and indeed on the part

of us all, for we have all alike experienced his benefits.

In the first place : He created you ; and through His goodness in providing persons to take care of you from the moment of your birth, you have been preserved in health and safety, being, of yourself, totally incapable of obtaining those necessaries to existence, without which you must inevitably have perished.

In the second place : having preserved you through the years of

your childhood, He has followed up this first act of kindness by innumerable other blessings. He has appointed persons to provide you with clothes and food : He has given you health, and the capacity of enjoying the good things he places in your way : He has provided amusements, to make your leisure hours happy, and everything that you enjoy is His free gift. Remember that, by depriving you of those instruments He has made use of, to promote your welfare,

namely, your parents and friends, it is in His power to afflict you with poverty, disease, ill usage, and many other evils ; but His affection for you is so great, that He prefers pouring down upon you all the blessings you enjoy ; upon you, who have never had the means of conferring the smallest benefit upon Him ; who are created by His power, supported by His care, nourished, and made happy by His love. These blessings are alone amply sufficient to call forth the deepest sense of

gratitude ; but I have yet to name a benefit God has conferred on us, which surpasses every other in love and benevolence.

He gave his only Son Jesus Christ to die for us, and thereby to make atonement for the sins of mankind. You are at present too young to understand the meaning, and the reasons of the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; but when you are older, you will read books which will explain it to you. In the mean time, you

must content yourself with knowing this to be the fact: *viz.* that a great many years ago, God gave so great a proof of his love for us, that he consented to permit his only Son Jesus Christ to appear upon earth; to lead a life of great privation, sorrow, and poverty, at the same time giving us an example of every virtue, as a pattern, by which we are to regulate our actions; to die for our sins, that through his death, and by his intercession, God his Father might

be induced to pardon us our iniquities. When you think then on all these gratuitous acts of kindness and affection, you will, I am sure, be impressed with the greatness of the gratitude you owe to God and Jesus Christ, and you will say to yourselves, How shall we repay our Creator and our Saviour for all these great benefits he has conferred upon us?

Having seen how very great the goodness of God has been, and still is, towards us, let us proceed to

examine who and what is this Creator, who condescends to exercise such benevolence towards us.

God is a spirit, all powerful, and perfectly good. He created the world we live in. The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the forests, the plains, every living thing : man, beasts, birds, fishes, insects, were produced at his command, in the short space of one week. His power and benevolence are so great, that though, according to some computations, there are no fewer

than five hundred millions of people inhabiting the world, He takes the same care of every separate individual, as though there existed but that one.

God knows and sees every action and every thought ; hears every word that we utter ; there is nothing that we can keep so secret, as that God shall not know it. Our existence depends on Him alone: He has power to destroy us in an instant, and to annihilate the whole world, if it suit his pleasure ; no one thing

is impossible to Him, and with the same facility as He created the world and every thing in it, can He reduce it to the chaos from which it was taken. God has endowed the earth with the wonderful faculty of producing large trees, from so small a thing as a seed. Not only was He the Creator of mankind, and the largest animals that inhabit the land or water, such as elephants and whales, but also of insects, and creatures so astonishingly small, that it requires the

assistance of magnifying glasses, even to perceive them ; and yet these diminutive creatures are endowed with the same appetites and organs as the larger animals ; and you discover the same Almighty hand, capable, alike, of performing the grandest and most stupendous works, and of producing creatures so minute, as to be invisible to the naked eye.

By and by, when you are older, you will read books which will impress you with a still higher idea

than it is in the power of this little work to give you, of the wonderful powers of the Creator, as demonstrated by the objects around us; indeed, the farther we go in the examination of nature, the greater must our astonishment be. In some of these books you will read, that the sun, which to our eyes does not appear near so large, is, in fact, one million three hundred thousand times larger than the world, and no less than ninety-five millions of miles distant from us.

Again, in other books, you will read histories of bees and other insects, which fill you with astonishment, not more at the surprising sagacity of these little animals, than at the extraordinary power of Him through whose agency these wonders are effected.

God, then, an all-powerful and all-perfect being, Lord and Creator of the world, and every thing you see around you, has been pleased to endow you with health and happiness, and all the blessings which

you so largely share. It is in His power to deprive you of them this instant ; but His love for you is very great, and He prefers shewing it you by making you happy ; and in return for so many blessings, He only requires that you should do what He has commanded you, and endeavour to lead a good life, avoiding every thing that is forbidden in those Scriptures which He caused to be written for you, to learn from them your duty in life.

And shall we presume to say,

that this is too much for us to do, in return for so many benefits? Shall we say, that we consider this too high a price for all the blessings we enjoy? I earnestly hope that you will be the last ever to say or to think so, my dear children.

Those, indeed, who neglect to do as God has commanded them, who do not endeavour to lead a good life, nor read the Scriptures, to learn what is forbidden and what is enjoined, are guilty of the very great crime of ingratitude towards

God. What should you think of one, who having received many favours from a friend or brother, refused to prove himself grateful, by doing a good deed by his friend in return? You would, I am sure, think him very wicked and very ungrateful; how much more guilty then are those who receive every blessing, every enjoyment, and every mercy from God, their Creator and Preserver, and notwithstanding his known desires, and commands, neglect to regulate their conduct and

lives accordingly, nor even take the trouble to acquire from the Scriptures, a knowledge of His wishes and commands on the subject! Shun, my dear children, the example of such, and let their ingratitude excite your sorrow; lament with me, that there should exist persons who can so far forget the duty they owe to their Father and God.

Our next inquiry must be, into the means we possess of acquiring a knowledge of our duty; and what are those things we must do to

please our Father, and demonstrate our gratitude to him. I have already told you, that God sent his Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, and to be a pattern for our conduct through life.

Four men who passed their lives with Him, from the time He entered on his public ministry, until that of his death, have left us detailed accounts of His manner of life, His conversations, and the precepts He enjoined. These accounts are those which are known by the

name of the Gospels ; and the men who wrote them, are called, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In these Gospels it is, that you must expect to find your duty recorded ; and when you attain the proper age, it is incumbent upon you to read them with great attention, and very frequently ; to acquire an accurate knowledge of them, and to apply the precepts which you will find there, to your daily actions, asking yourselves : “Is this that I am going to do, not displeasing to God, nor

contrary to the injunctions of the Bible?" And this more particularly, when you are about to do something, the propriety of which may appear doubtful.

If you carefully examine into the motive of your action, whether it be such as God will approve, and regulate your conduct according to the answer your conscience will give to such a question, honestly put, you will be sure to be doing right, and feel a satisfaction in the conviction.

It is another proof of the great kindness of God towards us, that those acts which He requires as a debt of gratitude for all His blessings, are precisely such as will, in themselves, most contribute to our welfare. In your experience in the world, you will find that virtue is its own reward, and that those who do well, will be found a happier race than those who do ill; and though we are very often ignorant of the punishment incurred by those whom we know to have led

a bad life, yet we may be assured that there is some drawback which we may not be able to perceive, to the prosperity they apparently enjoy, which in all probability embitters the general tenor of their lives ; and indeed if this were not the case, if we could not discover that the wicked suffered in any way from the commission of sin, but that, on the contrary, their life appeared the more replete with enjoyment, yet must we beware of following their example ; for in the

Scripture you will learn that there is another world to which we shall hereafter be transported, there to be punished or rewarded, according to the lives we have led in this world.

There the good will lead a life of eternal happiness, and the wicked, one of eternal misery. Who will, who can, therefore, hesitate to prefer eternal happiness, promised to us in the next world, to the transient enjoyment produced by the gratification of a forbidden pleasure,

and which entails great misery upon us hereafter ?

It is in *the Scriptures* that you will find your duties recorded. The New Testament is the Word of God himself, spoken through his Son, our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let your conduct through life be regulated by it. Again I say it : remember, that it is a perfect book ; beware of doing anything that is forbidden in it ; and remember, moreover, that your obedience to its dictates, is not only a proof of gra-

titude to your Father and Creator, but the condition of your happiness in the next life and in this.

You are not yet old enough to understand this perfect Book, and therefore must wait some little time before you read it. But in the mean time, I have selected for you some of the numerous passages suited to your comprehension, in which the rules for your conduct are pointed out. Give them your earnest attention, and never forget that the subject of which I am treat-

ing, involves your happiness or misery in this world and the next.

We have three duties to perform : a duty to God ; a duty to our fellow creatures, and a duty to ourselves.

Our duty to God being unquestionably of the highest importance, my beginning shall be with those texts which treat of that duty.

CHAPTER I.

THE DUTY TO GOD.

1. Thou shalt worship the Lord God, and him only shalt thou serve.
(Luke iv. 8.)

Here is the first plain command of the Lord God. *He* alone is to be worshipped and served; you must not presume to think any thing can

be equal to Him, either in greatness, or in goodness.

2. If you will enter into life, keep my commandments. (Matt. xix. 17.)

3. If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John xiv. 15.)

4. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. (John v. 3.)

By the term "enter into life," is

meant being removed to Heaven after our death. If therefore we expect to be happy in the next world, we must “keep the commandments.” We must keep them for the sake of the reward held out to us, and we must keep them because God has commanded us to do so, and it is our business to obey Him.

The love of God will be a natural feeling within us. We are naturally inclined to love those who love us, and who confer benefits upon us.

That God loves us we can have no doubt, for nothing but great love can have induced Him to pour down every blessing and mercy upon us ; for He is very well aware, that *we* have done nothing to deserve so much at His hands: let us then most heartily love Him in return, and shew our love by keeping His commandments, by regulating our conduct according to them, and avoiding that which is forbidden in them.

The commandments to which the texts principally refer, are ten in

number. The four first relate to our duty to God: the six last to our duty to our fellow creatures. We are now treating of the duty to God, and I shall therefore at present only explain to you the four first commandments.

COMMANDMENT I.

Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

COMMANDMENT II.

Thou shall not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness

of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

These commandments were given at a time when the nation to whom

they were revealed, was very prone to the worship of idols, or things made of wood and stone, in various shapes, sometimes resembling animals, and sometimes men, which they were perverse enough to pray to and worship, as if such things made by men like themselves, could have the power of granting them their request. In these days there is little danger of our falling into this very gross sin ; but there is some of our making what is called in Scripture, “ a God of the world,” or,

in other words, being so much taken up with the pleasures and occupations of the world, as to neglect the worship of the Lord. We must beware of falling into this great sin, but aim rather at that which we know to be pleasing to Him, and scrupulously avoid those things which He has forbidden, that by so doing we may hope to form one of the thousands of those that love Him, and keep His commandments, to whom He will shew mercy.

By doing this, we at least shew

our desire of paying something towards the great debt of gratitude we owe to our God and Father for all his mercies.

COMMANDMENT III.

Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain.

By taking the name of the Lord God in vain, is meant, using it irreverently, or on trifling occasions,

and more particularly in the case of swearing, or calling God to be witness of an assertion which we know to be false. This last is a very great sin, and commonly called *perjury*; and the object of the third commandment is principally to shew how very great is God's detestation of a crime which may lead to such fearful results.

Beware, my children, of using the name of God lightly, or irreverently in conversation: remember it is too sacred a name, and denoting too

great and good a being to be used as freely as other expressions; and God having declared he will not consider him as guiltless, or without sin, who takes His name in vain, incur not this anger of your benefactor and Creator, but obey his command in this respect as in every other.

COMMANDMENT IV.

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it

thou shalt do no manner of work, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid servant, thy cattle and the stranger that is within thy gates ; for in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.

In order to contribute to the happiness of the creatures whom he has created, God determined that there

should be a day set apart in every week, for them to rest from their labours, and He ordained that this resting day should extend, not only to mankind, but also to the beasts of the field.

This is the day we call *Sunday*. On Sunday labourers and workmen of all descriptions refrain from their daily labours; the shops are shut, and every one enjoys his repose, acquiring thereby spirits and strength to begin the labours of the ensuing week.

Beasts also reap the benefit of

this institution : horses and oxen which are hard worked during the week at the dray or the plough, have the whole of this day to recruit their strength, and remain quietly and happily in their stable. God also considered that day as the fittest for his worship, and therefore He said : “Thou shalt keep it holy,” by which I conceive Him to mean that we shall worship Him in his churches, and devote a part of the day to reading the Scriptures, and examining our conduct, or trying to find

out whether we are in the habit of using our best endeavours to make it agreeable and acceptable to God.

Sunday is the Lord's Day, and so far from wishing it to be one of gloom and sorrow to you, He wishes you to be happy, and enjoy yourselves to the utmost of your power, provided always that you do nothing which He has forbidden.

I have now explained to you the four commandments, which relate

to your duty to God. The explanation of the six last is reserved for another chapter, in which will be considered the duty you owe to your fellow creatures.

At present, hearken to a few more passages in Scriptures, where the duty to God is set forth.

1. We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts v. 29.)

It may often happen that your companions will attempt to induce you to do something, either for your own pleasure or theirs, which you

know to be wrong. On these occasions remember the words of the above text: "we ought to obey God rather than men," and manfully resist the temptation, for the Scripture also says; "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." See what a reward is held out to those who resist a temptation to do what is wrong! No less than the crown of life, or everlasting hap-

piness in the next world. Moreover, resisting temptation, is one of the means you possess of pleasing and shewing your gratitude to God, for what He has done for you.

2. Men ought always to pray.
(Luke xviii. 1.)

3. In every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God. (Phil. iv. 6.)

4. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers ; He will fulfil the

desire of them that fear Him. (1 Peter iii. 12.)

5. We know that God heareth not sinners ; but if a man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him He heareth. (John ix. 11.)

Another duty to God is Prayer. It is a most merciful command of our God, that we should pray to Him. By praying is meant asking those things we are desirous of possessing, and if they are good for us,

and asked in a reverential and earnest manner, God will surely grant them to us. "Let your requests be made known unto God, by prayer and supplication."

God will hear the righteous, and he will "fulfil their desire;" or, in other words, grant the requests of them that fear Him, and do His will—(see nos. 4 and 5.) But you must also observe, that He will not listen to the prayers of the wicked. It is very presumptuous in those, who are aware that they live in a habit

of disregarding God's commands, to ask favours of him whom they neglect. It is, moreover, useless, since God has declared, that sinners He will not hear, but those only who worship Him and do His will.

Your duty to God then, may be summed up in a few words : Him, and Him only you are to worship and to serve ; and this by loving and obeying Him, in preference to any human being ; by praying to

Him, by doing all in your power to please Him, and by strictly endeavouring to keep his commandments: and you must manifest your thankfulness to Him, by praise, by adoration, and by thanksgiving.

CHAPTER II.

YOUR DUTY TO YOUR FELLOW CREA-
TURES.

THE six last commandments, from the Decalogue, which relate to this branch of your duty.

COMMANDMENT V.

Honor thy father and thy mother, and thy days shall be long in

the land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

Almighty God has been pleased to provide you with parents, to take care of you, and educate you. They love and cherish you, under Providence they provide for your numerous wants ; they go through a great deal for you, and suffer much sorrow and anxiety on your account. You would be helpless without them ; for as yet you

have neither strength nor experience to provide for your necessities, independent of them ; to their affection for you, you owe the comforts and happiness you enjoy. It is therefore your duty, in the words of the commandment, to honour them ; that is, to obey and reverence them ; first, because God commands you to do so ; secondly, because they know what is good for you, infinitely better than it is possible you should, having more experience and greater knowledge ; and thirdly, because

as they have done much for you, you should strive to repay them by gratitude, obedience, respect, and love.

COMMANDMENT VI.

Thou shalt do no murder.

This commandment is one, which not only the Lord God will punish, but also the law of the land.

So heinous is the crime, that he who commits it must pay for it with his life. It is so improbable that

you should have any temptation to commit it, that it is needless for me to dwell upon the enormity of the crime. It is obvious to the meanest capacity.

COMMANDMENT VII.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

In this commandment we are forbidden to commit a sin, the nature of which you are not yet able to understand. When you are old

enough to comprehend it, remember, the sin is to the full as great as any of those that are prohibited in the Decalogue ; and so heinous is it in the sight of God, that in former times he commanded that amongst the Jews it should be punished by *death*. In these days, though it is not punishable by our laws, God will surely most severely visit the sin on the perpetrator, either in this world or the next. Bear this in mind, my dear children, and I entreat you, for your own sake, to beware

of the sin, when you shall have arrived at the knowledge of it.

COMMANDMENT VIII.

Thou shalt not steal.

This is another commandment the violation of which is punishable by the laws of the country. Stealing is a sin to which you will have little more temptation than to murder. You are possessed of all that you can want; those who fall into the temptation, are often driven to

it by poverty, hunger and misery, and perhaps have not in their youth been taught how great is the crime in the sight of God. Let us lament and grieve for such persons ; and let us be thankful, that not only you have not the temptation to the sin, but, that if you had, you know the importance of resisting it, and preserving your innocence in the sight of God.

COMMANDMENT IX.

Thou shalt not bear false witness
against thy neighbour.

To bear false witness against your neighbour, means, to assert something to the prejudice of your neighbour, or one of your acquaintance, which you know to be false. In this prohibition is included the vice of lying. Lying is bearing false witness ; it is asserting, or bearing false witness of something that is not. So great is Almighty God's

detestation of this vice, that at the time the Scriptures were written, a man named Annanias, and a woman named Sapphira, were struck dead in one instant for having lied. Lying is a vice, which is not only hateful in the sight of God, but it will also cause you to be despised amongst men. No one will give credit to, nor trust a liar.

COMMANDMENT X.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet

thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

By coveting, is meant, envying another man his goods, and being desirous of appropriating them to yourself by improper means. Throughout the Scriptures covetousness is mentioned as a great sin, and most hateful to God.

We may reason thus, when we feel a disposition to envy. "Why should not my friend enjoy such a thing, he has as good a right to it as

I have ; if it were in my possession instead of his, I should blame him for envying me. I am therefore wrong in desiring to deprive him of that to which he has as good a right as myself."

I have now made an end of explaining to you the Ten Commandments. They are the standard of your conduct in this life. All that you do must be judged by that standard. Whilst our Saviour Jesus Christ was on earth, a man came to him,

and asked him, saying : “ Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ? ” Jesus Christ answered him : “ Thou knowest the Commandments.” As much as to say : You know the Commandments ; keep *them*, and you shall inherit eternal life ; that is, you shall live for ever in perfect happiness in Heaven, when you have ceased to inhabit this world.

St. Paul, a follower of Jesus Christ, and a man commanded by Him to preach His doctrines to the world, says : If there be any other com-

mandments than these, it is briefly comprehended in this saying : “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” You will not willingly inflict any pain on yourself, but on the contrary, are disposed to gratify yourself by every means in your power; be as willing then to give others pleasure as yourself. “Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.” This is a golden rule, bear it well in your mind, never forget it, act up to it, and you cannot fail of being right.

CHAPTER III.

IN this chapter, I intend to call to your notice other texts of Scripture, which may be applied to your daily behaviour to all your fellow creatures. The qualities most acceptable to God our Father, are the love of Him and our neighbour, peace and union amongst ourselves, justice, truth, and above all, charity.

LOVE.

In a former chapter I have spoken of the love of God. In this, it is a question only of the love of our neighbour.

1. "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love ;" says our Saviour. (Rom. xii. 10.)

It is our duty to follow His example as far as we can in all things ; He has set us the example of love ; for His love for us was so great, that He even died for us ; He voluntarily gave His life for us, that we might,

through Him, ultimately go to Heaven. We can only imitate Him by loving our neighbours, and doing them all the good in our power.

2. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer. (1 John iii. 15.)

Such is the Lord's detestation of one who is unkind to his brother, that He has compared him even to so dreadful a thing as a murderer! You may judge then how hateful in God's sight, is that man who hates his brother and behaves unkindly towards him.

PEACE AND UNION.

1. Be at peace amongst yourselves. (1 Thess. v. 13.)

2. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (Rom. xii. 18.)

3. Let all bitterness, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. (Eph. iv. 31.)

These are the words of St. Paul,

the preacher of the doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Remember them well, learn them by heart.— You are to take pains to live peaceably with your brothers, and friends, and companions, and all about you ; when you feel anger rising in your heart, at any offence that some one may have given you, then think of these words : “ Let bitterness and anger be put away from you.”

Consider that if your brother has offended you, that you offend your God much more every day ; for all

persons are sinners ; and every duty that you omit is an offence to Him ; and yet He does not cease to bless you, but suffers you to enjoy the same happiness, though it is in His power to punish you by depriving you of many things which you would be sorry to lose.

Consider this, and as your God and Father forgives you, so do you forgive and live in peace with your brother, or whoever may have offended you.

This text also is a very direct re-

proof to those who are of a quarrelsome disposition, who call each other by bad names. It is impossible to avoid anger, clamour, and bitterness of speech and feeling when you quarrel. Avoid then the company of those who are disposed to do so ; and especially take care yourself not to provoke others, by your behaviour, to be angry and quarrel with you.

JUSTICE.

“ All things whatsoever you would men should do unto you, do you even so to them.” (Matt. vii. 12.)

This is the great and golden rule of justice. If you act up to this rule you will always be just. When you are about to do any thing by your companion, ask yourself whether you would like to be served so ; if your conscience says “ Yes,” then you may safely do it. If, on the contrary, it says “ No,” then desist certainly. “ Do as you would be

done by." Learn this rule by heart, apply it on all occasions : it is the way to be just and fair in all your dealings.



TRUTH.

In the explanation of the ninth Commandment, I have spoken of truth, and shewn you the great importance of it. Little therefore remains for me to say upon the subject, except to remind you of it, and entreat you to beware of being drawn into a lie, on any pretence

whatever ; for it is a vice most hateful, and despicable in the eyes of God and man, and none but the wicked are guilty of it. Learn by heart the words of St. Paul the Apostle : “ Lie not one to another ; speak the truth in love.”

CHARITY.

The virtue of charity, is one that comprehends many other good qualities. It is a most indispensable virtue, for we are expressly told, that however great and wise we may be,

and however attentive to our other duties, if we have not charity, we are worth nothing. By charity you are to understand,

In the first place :—

Relieving those people who are poor and miserable, and in great want, but this without ostentation ; for we are told in the Bible, “ When thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” This is a figurative expression, the meaning of which is, that your gifts should be made with so

much secrecy, that persons as near to you as your right hand is to your left, should scarcely be able to discover them. God your Father, who sees in secret, shall reward you for them openly in this world or the next.

1. "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men." (Gal. vi. 10.)

Remember this text, and strive to comply with it.

In the second place, charity consists,

In forgiving those who have injured and offended us.

1. "If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. iii. 13.)

2. "Be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." (Eph. iv. 32.)

3. "If thy brother trespass (or sin) against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him; and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent,

thou shalt forgive him." (Matt. xviii. 15.)

4. "Avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath." (Rom. xii. 19.)

5. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Rom. xii. 20.)

The aim of all these passages is, to inculcate forgiveness and kindness; and this is a branch of charity, most acceptable to the Lord God, in whose eyes and in the Scripture, it is esteemed of the highest importance. Jesus Christ has said:—

“If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matt. vi. 15.)

Consider what you have at stake; no less than the forgiveness of God! If we persist in an unforgiving behaviour towards those who have offended us, God will do unto us, as we do unto them; and we assuredly stand in need of His pardon, full as much as those with whom we are angry need ours.

Who can say that he has not often said, or done, or thought things, for which God in his infinite perfection must blame us?

Let us then learn to think humbly of ourselves, and let us recollect when we feel angry with others, that we have often sinned as much against the Lord God, as those persons have against us ; that we therefore, standing greatly in need of His pardon, can only earn it by the pardon of those who have offended us.

In the third place:—

Charity thinketh no evil : that is, is not disposed readily to find fault with others.

1. “ Judge not, that ye be not judged.” (Matt. vii. 1.)

2. “ Speak evil of no man.” (Titus iii. 2.)

Do not hastily judge of other persons' motives, nor attribute bad ones to them. You are anxious God should judge you yourself leniently ; do then as you would be done by, and do not take upon

yourself to think ill of persons' motives of action without *very certain* proof.

Above all ; “ Speak no evil of any man,” first, because God commands it, and next, because you cannot do any man more harm, than by speaking evil of him, and therefore you would not like another to speak evil of you.

Do as you would be done by.

To sum up this head of Charity, I will give you the Scripture definition of the virtue, to which I en-

treat you to pay the greatest attention, and endeavour never to forget.

“ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbol.

“ And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

“ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I

give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind : charity envieth not ; charity vaunteth not itself ; is not puffed up ; doth not behave itself unseemly ; seeketh not her own ; is not easily provoked ; thinketh no evil.

“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

“Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.”

(1 Cor. xiii. 1—8.)

CHAPTER IV.

YOUR DUTY TO YOURSELF.

YOUR third and last duty, is that which you owe to yourself; and God has pronounced this duty to be as important as the other two.

By the duty you owe to yourself, is meant the striving to acquire

those qualities, which have reference only to yourself, and most pleasing to God.

These are, Humility and Meekness, Contentment and Obedience.

HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS

Were the distinguishing characters of our blessed Saviour. When persecuted and reviled, he bore all with perfect humility and meekness. He reviled not again, but suffered patiently under the greatest provo-

cation. This is a quality hard to imitate, for we are all of a stubborn and unforgiving nature : it is, however, your business to use your best endeavours to do so.

Jesus Christ conceived it of so much importance to be humble minded, that he constantly enjoined it to his followers. I have enumerated a few of the texts relating to it, which I recommend you to learn by heart.

1. " I say unto every man that is among you, not to think of himself

more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly." (Rom. xii. 3.)

2. "Be not wise in your own conceits." (Rom. xii. 16.) Remember a part of the definition of charity, which I gave you at the close of the last chapter.

3. "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." (1. Cor. xiii. 4.)

4. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." (James iv. 6.)

5. "Learn of me," saith our Saviour, "for I am meek and lowly of heart." (Matt. xi. 29.)

6. "Let every one be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (James i. 19.)

The meaning of this last text, is, that you should be more disposed to listen to and gain information from others, than to talk yourself, and that if you hear any thing that offends you, be not in a hurry to resent it,

for the wrath or anger of men, is not right in the sight of God.

Attend, I entreat you, to these texts, and remember that your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who died for your sake, that you might be happy hereafter, requires of you in the strongest manner, to be humble and meek, and has said: "Blessed are the meek."

CONTENTMENT.

You will find contentment contri-

bute much to your happiness. To be often wishing for what it is not in your power to obtain, is only likely to make you ill-tempered and disagreeable to yourself and to your friends. St. Paul, who I have often named to you, says, "Let us not envy one another, for charity envieth not," you have already seen this last remark, in the definition of charity at the end of the third chapter. Again, St. Paul says, "Be content with such things as ye have: for God hath said, I will never leave

thee, nor forsake thee." The tenth Commandment also refers to contentment. "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbour's." You certainly will do well, when you try to better your condition by the best means in your power ; but this must be done, not by taking anything you wish to have from another, or repining at your friends being in the enjoyment of something better than yourself, but by using your own exertions, and honest endeavours, rather than by envying and

coveting that which belongs to another.

If you are humble, as you should be, you will not be disposed to think more highly of yourself than of your companions, nor be often fancying you can do every thing better than they: to do this, is to be *conceited*, and a conceited person is always disliked. You have, however, a better reason to avoid conceit and pride, than the dislike of men; for you have seen that

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.”

OBEDIENCE.

1. “Children, obey your parents.”

With respect to this text, I need only refer you to what has been said upon the subject of the fifth Commandment. All that you will find there, is applicable to the text before you.

CHAPTER V.



IN the foregoing chapters, I have endeavoured to place before you distinctly, the duties you are bound to perform so long as you live.

I have attempted to explain and set forth your duty to God, your duty to your neighbour, and your duty to yourself. It now only remains for me to sum up the whole

as shortly and distinctly as possible.

1. YOUR DUTY TO GOD.

Love him, because he loves you very much, heaping upon you every blessing, and every good, and not only this has he done; He has given his only Son Jesus Christ, to die for your sakes, because in his wisdom, he knew that unless Jesus Christ died for you, you could not go to Heaven after your death. This, as

I have told you, is a sacrifice you cannot understand ; it is sufficient that you know the fact, and must be grateful for it.

Shew your love to God : by keeping his commandments, and doing what you know will please him, taking the greatest care to avoid what will displease him.

Fear him : because life and death are in his power, because in an instant he could deprive you of every enjoyment, and even of life itself. It is easy to conceive the power of

the Lord God to do these things, for if he could create the world, and all that is in it, he surely has power to destroy it. Fear him then, for his power is infinite ; love him, because, instead of making use of that power to your detriment, he employs it in making you happy.

2. YOUR DUTY TO YOUR NEIGHBOUR.

In the second and third chapters, I have spoken of your duty to your neighbours : I sum it up thus :

In all your intercourse with your parents, and those who are older and wiser than yourself, be obedient, respectful, and kind. In all your intercourse with your companions, *do as you would be done by*. Be just in all your dealings; be charitable and forgiving. Be always sincere; do not affect that which you cannot feel, and, above all, scorn to tell a lie. Remember a liar is despised by God and man, a nuisance in society, and a contemptible wretch, worthy not so much of your anger, as of your scorn and pity.

3. YOUR DUTY TO YOURSELF.

is to be humble and meek. Do not be apt to think better of yourself than of another. Be contented with whatever is given to you, and be obedient to your parents, and to those whom they have placed about you.

These then, my dear children, are your duties. God, your Creator, and your preserver, has commanded you to perform them: God, to

whom you owe every thing, has laid these obligations upon you, and has pronounced them the only return you can make for all that he has done, and is doing for you, and they are small, indeed, in comparison with what he has done for you ; it is therefore the more incumbent upon you to perform them.

I know that it is difficult always to do well, and that you will often be much inclined to follow your inclinations, without staying to inquire whether they are right or

wrong ; but, my dear children, never forget that God has constantly his eye upon you : he sees every thing that you do, hears every thing that you say, knows every thing that you think of : No, not a word, a thought, a deed is hidden from him. The more you try to please him, the more he will love you. If you have done wrong, be sorry for it ; ask the forgiveness of God, and regret not so much having committed the sin, as the having displeased God, the great and perfect God, whose bene-

fits you are every instant of your life enjoying.

If you sincerely ask God's forgiveness in your prayers, and resolve no more to repeat the fault, he will most assuredly grant it; but you must take care that you keep your promise and resolution.

Remember, the reward you will attain for trying to do well all your life, is perfect happiness after death, for ever and ever; but if you do wrong without sorrow, remorse or

repentance, eternal misery must be your portion hereafter.

Never relax then in your efforts to do well : read over often the contents of this little book ; learn by heart the texts from Scripture which it contains : When you are older, read the Bible with the greatest attention, particularly that part called the New Testament, or History of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Make yourself better acquainted with that book, than any other that does exist, or ever will exist. In

the mean time, my dear children, and until you are old enough to understand it, I have written this little book for your instruction ; and that it may be of some use in teaching you your duty, is the most fervent desire of your sincerely well-wishing and very affectionate

MOTHER.

February 26, 1828.

THE END.

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