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Sketch of the life and
character of Thomas Cooke

Dr Messrs

from

The American G. J. Union



SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

THOMAS COOKE PAUL,

SON OF D'ARCY PAUL,

OF PETERSBURG, VA.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,

BY REV. E. D. SANDERS.


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THOMAS C. PAUL.

LETTER I.

HIS BIRTH AND RELATIVES.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Since your great bereavement, it has for the first time occurred to my mind, in desiring to impart consolation and improvement to you, to write you a short series of letters containing an account of THOMAS COOKE PAUL, the most remarkable youth for piety and excellence I ever knew. This is saying much in his praise, as my acquaintance with the young has

been very extensive, especially during the years since I entered the ministry. Evidently prepared for that glorious world, to which, doubtless, your deeply lamented and devotedly pious mother has so recently gone, he was called from this life at an age but little greater than your own. He was removed to enjoy higher happiness, as we trust, in the midst of brighter scenes; just as we have known a choice plant transferred to unfold its beauties in some more lovely spot. I also hope that your kind father, the endeared companion of my youth, and my constant friend in manhood, may find some solace to the bitterness of his grief, in reading this narrative with you, and in making his own reflec-

tions. And I have no doubt, from what I am happy to learn of your disposition and habits, you will listen to his remarks with the most respectful attention, especially as he has, in the character of a good father and of a faithful minister, a two-fold claim upon your reverence and love. You may rely implicitly on all the statements that I shall make respecting Thomas, for I wrote out the facts soon after his death, with the intention of publishing a brief sketch of his life. I also noted down many of his striking remarks, as nearly exact as it was possible to record them. Yet I shall be able to give you but a very small portion of his observations, which, from their richness and beauty,

were like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." It is my hope that you will find these letters entertaining. We know that intelligent persons are deeply interested in the biographies of extraordinary men. Why should not the young be delighted with biographies of distinguished youth? Now, for reasons very easily explained, we find in our libraries many lives of men and but very few of youth.

Few distinguish themselves in early life, and of this number few die young. And but very few of this limited class find a biographer to record their excellencies. As there is a manifest scarcity of this kind of books, I have often wished that the young of our country, and

indeed of the world, could have a full and just account of THOMAS C. PAUL.

He was the fourth son of D'Arcy and Elizabeth S. Paul, and was born in the town of Petersburg, Virginia, September 3, 1831. He died June 2, 1845. In this short life of thirteen years and nine months, it is believed, he accomplished much, through grace, for the glory of God and the welfare of mankind.

His father, an extensive merchant, was compelled, from his numerous engagements, both of a religious and secular nature, to give up the direction of his early training in a very great degree, (as is usually the case,) to his mother.

As mothers generally have so much to do with their children at a period when impressions are the most abiding, you readily perceive, young as you are, how important it is that they should be not only very pious, but also well-informed.

Thomas had no sister. His affectionate heart would have loved one most tenderly. His youngest brother died in early childhood. He always spoke of him as being in heaven. Just before he himself was called away, he expressed the joyful hope of soon meeting him in heaven.

As his two surviving brothers were much older than himself, he was, in respect to companionship whilst young, almost in the situa-

tion of an only child. Now, James, you are yourself an only child, and as you also were so long blessed with the constant and kind attentions of a devoted and godly mother, and as you are likewise favoured with the watchful care of a pious father, you can very easily imagine his situation in life.



LETTER II.

HIS RELIGIOUS HOPES—HIS PERSONAL
APPEARANCE.

MY DEAR JAMES,—In my previous letter you were informed of a striking similarity in the allotments of Providence to yourself and to Thomas C. Paul. It grieves me deeply to think of another point of resemblance. I allude to it, that I may suggest a few most consoling reflections. As he and his mother have been separated, so are you now parted from that dear parent whom you so fondly and so justly loved. Now, as his mother confidently believes that her child is inexpressibly happy, and as she would not raise

a hand to have him brought back to this world of disappointment, so may you feel in respect to your exemplary mother.

She offered many prayers for you. It is your privilege to hope that they will be answered. She trained you to excellent habits. These habits you can, by the grace of God, confirm. She gave you many choice precepts. These precepts you must strive to remember and follow. O then how joyfully, beyond any thing we can conceive, will you go to her! Thus David consoled himself, when he said of his deceased child, "I shall go to him."

It was a delightful thought, repeatedly expressed by this pious youth, that he would soon be re-

united to his beloved mother and other religious friends. He had, through faith, a full assurance to speak of this anticipated pleasure as confidently as if he had been about to sail for a residence in Europe, with arrangements already made for them to follow him after a short season.

For many months previous to his last illness, no one, perhaps, witnessed more of his intellectual and moral excellencies than myself. At my first interview with him, I was struck with the intelligent and benevolent cast of his countenance. These favourable impressions were subsequently deepened by every development of his active intellect and warm heart.

As I have many things to say of him, it may not be uninteresting to give you some idea of his appearance. In size, he was small for his age, but of a remarkably graceful and well-proportioned form. As he paid unusual attention to his manners and to personal neatness, he had an air of gentility and refinement.

His features were delicate and regular. His complexion was very fair, and generally too pale to indicate the best health. He had a high expansive forehead, and clear blue eyes of unusual animation. There was in his countenance the manifest stamp of a lively mind and a kindly disposition, with a

beaming expression of hope and cheerfulness.

This assemblage of agreeable features made his personal appearance interesting. But you know that in our world something is almost always wanting to complete a perfect picture. Had he possessed a fuller habit and a ruddy complexion, he would have been called singularly handsome.

But of how very little importance are beauty and elegance, compared with a pure heart and a preparation for death! Had his person been tenfold more lovely and attractive, his elegant appearance could not have prolonged life. Now, as I have described him as he first appeared to me, I will close this letter

with a brief account of my last interview with him.

He was reclining on a couch, resting his head on his hand. I never saw his eye brighter, nor his countenance more placid. I had the great pleasure of seeing a sweet smile on his features, (which had become as pale, and, from his fair complexion, as white as the human face ever appears.) To my question, "What can I do for you, Thomas?" he replied, "Pray for me, if you please," and added, with a cheerful, affectionate look, and in a confident, tender tone, "The grave has no gloom for me."



LETTER III.

HIS INTELLECTUAL QUALITIES.

MY DEAR JAMES,—It will be interesting to you, perhaps, to receive some definite knowledge respecting the character of Thomas's mind, and the extent of his acquirements. His features, as I have already mentioned, were strikingly intellectual. His bright, beaming countenance, his meditative aspect and inquisitive look, plainly indicated an active and vigorous understanding.

His close discriminating attention to passing occurrences of an interesting nature, to the neglect of

trifles however amusing, was peculiarly characteristic. In the parlour and in the public assembly, he always appeared as a most intent and absorbed listener. Thus he early acquired a vast amount of important information, and formed the inestimable habit of selecting objects most worthy of notice.

So great was his attention to all public speakers, and especially ministers, that he often surprised his friends, by repeating, in his own language, the facts and sentiments to which he had listened. Extraordinary attention makes an extraordinary memory. The memory, by habitual attentiveness, may be strengthened to a surprising extent. In most persons it is far more sus-

ceptible of improvement than any other faculty of the mind.

With this habit of close observation, he had constantly enjoyed, at home and abroad, the society of many highly intelligent and cultivated minds. He had, from his earliest years, spent much time with various clergymen, to whom he was especially attached. He had long read histories, biographies, narratives and the current news of the day, with intense interest. Consequently he had accumulated an amount of general information altogether unusual in one of his years.

Now, James, would you like to know how his parents and friends cultivated this disposition to acquire knowledge? They took pains

to awaken his curiosity, by remarks and questions. They gave instructive answers to his inquiries. Sometimes they referred him to an interesting article in a book or newspaper. Most children thus trained from the first, will be regarded as naturally gifted with a love of knowledge. But how many youths are sadly complained of for their stupidity, their aversion to books, and their extreme fondness of low, degrading pleasures. Some of this class, it must be admitted, were naturally deficient. But many more belong to it for want of pains to instruct them, and to draw out their inquiries. Perhaps they have been silenced by brief, impatient, or discouraging answers.

His habit of attentiveness merits this notice, for it lay at the foundation of all his attainments. He turned it to every matter in hand. He pursued nothing which he could not pursue with interest. He entered with his whole soul upon every study.

He made himself master of all the ordinary branches of an English education. He scarcely evinced the slightest preference for one study over another. He knew they were all necessary, and whatever was necessary would, at its own proper time, receive his undivided attention.

Had his life been spared, he would doubtless have made great progress in mathematical and phi-

losophical studies. He loved them. But he had made greater advancement in knowledge of the languages. He learned them with facility. When interrupted by his last illness, he was daily making rapid progress in Latin, Greek, and French. But in these studies many persons have made greater attainments at his age. He had laid a good foundation in accuracy, and in a thorough knowledge of first principles. But his parents had not injudiciously stimulated him to extraordinary efforts. His knowledge of the English language was probably the greatest of all his intellectual attainments. He wrote it and spoke it uniformly with great accuracy. I do not recollect ever to have heard

from him, during our long and frequent intercourse, a single inaccurate expression.

He conversed with fluency. He argued, either in the debating society or in conversation, with closeness. He declaimed with so much gracefulness of manner, in a voice so well modulated, and with an animation so natural, that an artist, who took a picture of him, and exhibited it at the window, inscribed beneath it, "The Young Orator." For one of his years, he was the best debater and declaimer that I ever knew.

There is an erroneous opinion that children and youth of remarkable talents and attainments are, necessarily, very short-lived. Hun-

dreds of cases can be quoted, of remarkable youth who lived to accomplish great results. Of these, I will mention John Milton, Alexander Pope, Isaac Watts, Sir William Jones, and Robert Hall.

The truth is, all delicate children, whether their minds are active or dull, require especial attention, and should not be too much confined. No sickly child should, by any means, be urged on to great efforts. In some cases, no doubt, disease itself stimulates the mind, as a great injury done to a tree will hasten the maturity of its imperfect fruit.

Many a parent, who is delighted with the advancement of a sickly child, does not know that it probably results, in part, from a feverish

excitement of the brain. Such a child should be kept almost entirely from books and exciting conversation, and should take much exercise in the open air.

Now, my dear James, as your constitution is somewhat delicate, and your habits are studious, I hope you will not sacrifice life or health for knowledge. In our schools and colleges, many of the most promising youth destroy their constitutions by excessive confinement and application. An increase of knowledge is a small compensation for ruined health.



LETTER IV.

HIS MANNER IN CONVERSATION.

MY DEAR JAMES,—I hope you will spare no pains to improve yourself in the use of language. Many converse sensibly who, through early negligence, never converse elegantly. Surely what must be always practised should be admirably practised. Above all things, like Thomas, reject every vulgar phrase, and in listening to an intelligent friend, carefully observe every beautiful expression.

His manner was marked with an easy, flowing courtesy on all occasions, whether with intimate friends, or entire strangers; whether the sub-

ject was serious or humorous. In a warm discussion he sometimes appeared too positive, but never ill-natured. Even then he seemed desirous of pleasing. He aimed at a kindly manner, "soft words and hard arguments."

His engaging address was based on the first requisite of true politeness, a heart overflowing with goodwill to all mankind. The possession of a benevolent disposition, and the cultivation of the same delicate taste and love of refinement, would render many, who are born to fewer advantages than he enjoyed, remarkably agreeable; ever gentle, ever prudent, ever welcome.

One of his greatest charms in conversation was a soft, well modulated

voice. Some of its more tender tones might appear to a stranger as somewhat affected. It was entirely free from four great faults; a boisterous loudness, a drawling monotony, a nasal twang, and a muttering indistinctness. Many have one or more of these defects without ever suspecting it.

I think you will be pleased to learn by what means he improved his voice. He read aloud, listening to its accents; he embraced occasions to hear great orators; he frequently declaimed; and he gladly availed himself of any friendly criticism. By so commendable a course, and by so great perseverance, a faulty voice can be corrected; a good one brought to perfection.

The most striking feature of his conversation was his earnestness. So active was his mind, that he entered upon every topic with an animation which showed itself in the kindling lustre of his eye and changing countenance; in the ever-varying tones of his delightful voice; and in a forcible and natural emphasis. Every young person should cultivate the habit of giving his whole soul to the subject in hand. His manner may then be marked with faults, but not the fault of dulness.

He was sometimes very grave, sometimes playful, often argumentative. Few indeed of his age take more delight in argument. Fewer still can sustain themselves with his ability. But I never heard him try

to prove any thing that he did not believe true. Always, my dear young friend, in every question, take the side which in your opinion is right. Then you can truly say, when your sentiments are opposed, "I do not think so;" and you can easily assign your reasons.

Often has he gone hastily to the library to bring some book to prove his point, or to disprove another's assertion. So excellent was his memory, that he frequently delighted his friends by the facility with which he would turn to the very page where he had noticed some fact or opinion which he subsequently needed. The invaluable habit of close observation, among other advantages, supplies materials for conversation.

He expressed his ideas in words well selected and grammatically arranged. He was fluent. His language, in short, was in all respects such as would grace one of mature years and thorough education. This resulted partly from extensive reading, partly from unusually constant and familiar intercourse with older persons, especially his mother; partly from translating other languages, and writing his own. For a long time he composed much for his mother. He delighted to write for her. In gratifying her, he improved himself. Writing with care imparts correctness to conversation.

LETTER V.

HIS REGARD FOR THE BIBLE IN HIS
CHILDHOOD.

MY DEAR JAMES,—You have been informed of the intellectual excellencies of THOMAS C. PAUL. His religious habits were not less remarkable. I will now give you an account of the exemplary manner in which he read and revered the Bible. In the present letter this account will be confined to his early childhood. In the next, it will be carried on to the close of his life.

The following extract is taken from a letter written to a friend by his bereaved mother. It shows how

early a child may be taught that the Bible is a divine book, and how early his curiosity may be awakened to learn its contents, and how deeply he may feel the truth of all its declarations.

“In answer to the inquiries contained in your letter respecting my lamented Thomas, I will state, that when he was very young, say between two and three years old, he had a Hieroglyphic Bible, of which he was very fond. He took great interest in listening to its narratives of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, &c.

“At this early age, or very soon after, he asked me many questions about the Bible, which astonished me, some of which I found a diffi-

culty in answering to my own satisfaction.

“Before he was five years of age, he read the Scriptures himself, and manifested great reverence for their authority. Coming to me about this time, he said, ‘My mother, I don’t like to hear persons say, My father is rich; for the Bible says, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ ”

Are not these, my dear James, very delightful incidents? May we not suppose that those early impressions, through the blessing of God, influenced him as long as he lived? How desirable it is that the wheat should be sown and take root

before the enemy has time to cover the whole ground with tares!

Upon his infant mind the truth was stamped in characters never to be erased, never for a moment to be obscured, that God's holy word is to be "a lamp to our feet." He then felt, and always felt, that riches are trifles compared with the pearl of great price; compared with the pardon of sin, and the favour of God.

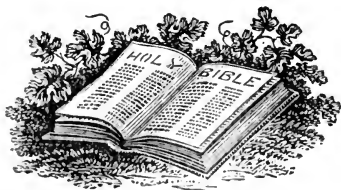
He began very early to quote Scripture as decisive authority. Two ministers being in his father's drawing-room, looking at some books, one of them remarked, "Here is a book that I have desired to lay my hands on for a long time." This little child, playing on the floor, hastily said, with a look of amaze-

ment, "What is thy neighbour's, thou shalt not covet."

The astonished clergyman caught him up in his arms, exclaiming, "My precious little fellow, I do not covet the book. I merely wish to read it."

In another way he showed his estimation of the Sacred Scriptures. His favourite present to a friend was a Bible or New Testament. He gave away many. Before he was four years old, being in the city of New York, he had received some kind attentions from a waiter in a hotel. He came to his mother and said that he would like to give that waiter a Bible. She indulged him. The grateful man gave him in return a little book called, "The Way for a Child to be saved."

When he was eight years old, he for the first time came in possession of five dollars. Without consulting any one, he went to a book-store and laid out half of it to purchase his mother a Bible. What reverence for God, what filial affection and noble generosity are beautifully blended, like the colours of a rainbow, in this single act!



LETTER VI.

HIS REGARD FOR THE BIBLE IN HIS
YOUTH.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Thomas's mind expanded. He became very fond of general reading. But in his eyes the Bible surpassed all other books, as much as the sun outshines the stars. Through his whole life he read it with constancy and delight.

No youth, perhaps, could with more propriety appeal to God, and say, "O how I love thy law. It is my meditation all the day. How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." He was at first most in-

terested in its historical parts and biographical sketches. He afterwards became fond of its parables and rich imagery; its precepts, doctrines and tender sentiments.

His chamber was adjoining to the chamber of his parents. Again and again have they opened the intermediate door to remind him that it was time to close his book and retire. Sometimes he has said, in his peculiarly soft tone and engaging manner, "Just let me finish this chapter, if you please."

Here we see great reverence for the Sacred Scriptures, and a great desire to become acquainted with their precious truths. And yet, when we consider that they came from God, it seems surprising, that

more individuals of all ages do not read them with the same zeal and constancy. Truly it is very sinful to slight and neglect the Holy Bible.

To him it could have been said, as Paul wrote to Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." Now, dear James, will you not be stimulated by this bright example, to take the word of God as your constant companion. Read it. Pray to God for grace to understand it and to love it. With the Bible in your hand, and the love of it in your heart, you will be happy; happier far than any of your ungodly acquaintances.

This important habit of reading

the Scriptures frequently and extensively, has the sanction of many weighty names among men distinguished for accomplishing a vast amount of important work. I will name two. William Wilberforce, more distinguished than any English statesman for an harmonious union of greatness and piety, in the midst of his most pressing engagements, employed a young man to read the Scriptures to him at stated times, as he walked in the garden for exercise.

Dr. Herman Boerhaave, one of the most eminent of modern physicians, a German, whose fame for learning, talent and piety spread through all Europe, invariably spent an hour every morning in reading

the Bible and in other religious exercises. We are told that he spoke of this hour of retirement as the best preparation for an arduous day's work. With such examples before you, I hope, my dear James, that you will be more stimulated than ever to read God's holy word.

For years previous to his death, Thomas constantly carried a Testament with him, at home and abroad, to read at his leisure moments. And yet so free was he from any thing like religious display, that few, if any, of his most intimate young associates knew the fact. In this praiseworthy course he may now be followed by the poorest youth, who is able to read, as so many cheap little Testaments are now published.

This habit appears the more admirable in Thomas, as he was of so lively and joyous a disposition. Of strong social feelings, fond of innocent sports in the open air, as light-hearted and merry as any one on the play-ground, he thus kept as a treasure in his bosom, a copy of those holy precepts, which he had firmly resolved, by the grace of God, ever to take as his only guide; ever, as well in youth as in age, as well in health and joy as in sickness and sorrow, conscientiously to follow.

Are not these incidents in the life of Thomas very striking, my young friend? Yet there are many among his acquaintances, who can mention other similar facts. I regret that I have not room in this

letter to narrate several which were to me exceedingly interesting. One, however, I will not omit.

The reading of the Scriptures afforded him great comfort and joy during his long illness. He loved them more and more. They shed upon his path a soft and clear light which dissipated all gloom and fear. In five months immediately preceding his death, he read the Old Testament nearly through, and the New Testament through twice.



LETTER VII.

HIS ATTENTION TO THE DUTY OF
PRAYER.

MY DEAR JAMES,—I will now proceed to tell you how faithfully Thomas attended to the duty of prayer. He was, like yourself, taught, as every child should be taught, to pray in infancy, as soon as he could lisp the name of God. Religious parents who are neglectful of the pious training of their young children, will at a later period find in them, almost universally, a stubborn reluctance to devotional exercises.

He at first repeated his little prayers after his mother. As soon

as he was able to say them without prompting, he came regularly, kneeled down by her, and offered them up to God, through Jesus Christ, in a very solemn manner. It is not remembered, that he ever hesitated, when called to the performance of this duty.

And why should he have hesitated? The habit had been formed before his recollection. It had never been interrupted. It was entwined in his memory with timely and delightful instruction, and with tender and soothing caresses. Many retain through life a most pleasing remembrance of the soft and gentle manner in which their affectionate mothers taught and encouraged them to praise God, and to supplicate his

protecting care and sustaining grace.

We are told of kind watchful angels. It is said by the Psalmist, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." Now what, among men, do you think most resembles this angelic guardianship? Surely godly mothers, with their warm hearts, teaching, in the most engaging manner conceivable, their infant offspring to bless and revere the name of God.

When Thomas was about five years old, an aged minister on a visit to the family, unexpectedly to the child, opened the door of a room, and found him there alone on his knees engaged in prayer. How lovely a sight was that to the eye of a

saint? Let every child be taught that there is a God, who seeth in secret, and who hears and rewards prayer.

The venerable man stopped in amazement. He told the mother what he had seen, and added in a tone of encouragement, "If you will persevere in training this child so piously, you may hope, through the blessing of God, to see him a great and good man."

Now observe carefully as you grow up, and see if you can find a single corrupt person, of whom it can be proved that he was early, kindly, and constantly, up to his very manhood, trained in the ways of piety, and always kept from evil associates. I am very certain, my dear

James, you will find no instance of the kind.

When a son of very pious parents becomes profligate and abandoned, he is universally noticed; especially if he is the son of a minister. The case is spoken of everywhere. Abandoned men are delighted. They slanderously affirm that it is nothing uncommon. Now read the explanation in a few words.

This youth was probably well taught at home by his religious parents, but ruinously corrupted abroad by wicked companions. Or he may have been carefully watched over in his earliest years, whilst under his father's roof; but lamentably neglected at a later period, and in some other situation. In

either case the divine rule was violated. The child was not trained up in the way he should go.

One custom was constantly observed by Thomas up to his last illness. Some may regard it as a weakness in him to have retained it so long. Others may admire such devotion to his mother. Others still may see in it the power of long-cherished habit. After having privately read the Scriptures at night in his own chamber, he went into his mother's room, kneeled down by her, as he had always done from infancy, and offered up his evening prayers. Then kissing her and bidding her "Good night," he withdrew and immediately sought repose.

As he drew near his end, he felt a

strong assurance that his prayers were heard. On one occasion he said, in great ecstasy, "My mother, I believe in prayer. I believe in getting an answer to prayer." He then gave a reason for this belief, from his own personal experience.



LETTER VIII.

HIS ATTENTION TO FAMILY WORSHIP AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Thomas took a deep and constant interest in family worship. In his father's absence he frequently read the chapter before prayer. Sometimes he would make the selection himself, and select judiciously. This remark must of course be understood in reference to the few last years of his life.

But at an earlier period many incidents of an unusual character in respect to worship, occurred. The following is an extract from a letter of one who witnessed the circum-

stance narrated. It shows that he was in early childhood impressively solemn in devotional exercises. I am prepared to say, from frequent observation, that this solemnity was eminently characteristic of him in his youth.

“An aged gentleman, a neighbour, called one evening on the family, and remained to tea. He was not a professor of religion. Mr. Paul being absent, Thomas, not yet five years old, asked a blessing with such propriety of words and manner, that the old gentleman was affected even to tears, and said to me, ‘Old as I am, I never saw the like,’ or words to that effect.”

When he was about twelve years of age, his father at the time being

from home, he came one morning to the bed-side of his mother, who was sick, and said, "My mother, I am sorry you are sick. If you wish me to stay from school to wait on you, I will do so." He then rang the bell, read a chapter in the Bible, and called on one of the religious servants to pray. On such occasions as have now been described, he always appeared with the solemn air and bearing of manhood, so becoming the service of God.

I wish to call your very particular attention to this solemnity of behaviour which he habitually manifested during all religious observances. It contrasts, very strikingly, with the irreverent manner of many young persons. Surely at family worship,

in the social meeting for prayer, and in the church, during divine service, no youth should dare to trifle, by smiling, whispering, communicating by signs, or seeking his amusement in any other ungodly way.

Thomas was thus devout in his appearance, doubtless, from cherishing a deep and sincere reverence for the all-seeing God. "The Lord is in his holy temple." Christ is in the midst of two or three gathered together in his name. This doctrine of God's peculiar presence with his worshipping people he cordially received. His deep interest in family and social prayer has reminded me of a passage in the life of the late Dr. Milne, a labor-

ious and distinguished missionary in China. "In his early years Dr. Milne attended a Sabbath evening school, which was taught in the neighbourhood of his residence. Here his knowledge of evangelical truth increased, and oftentimes impressions of its importance were made upon his mind. Sometimes he used to walk home from the school alone, about a mile, over the brow of a hill, praying all the way. At this time he began the worship of God in his mother's family, and also held some meetings for prayer, with his sisters and other children, in a barn that belonged to the premises."

You are prepared to learn that Thomas did not, like some of our

youth, stand on the steps of the church, to stare at the assembling or retiring people; that he did not purposely seek an obscure place that he might indulge in play; that he was not in the habit of going out during the service. Indeed, his good-breeding, without this fixed religious principle, would have preserved him from such improprieties. In the daily worship at the Institute which he attended, he sat directly before the principal, who could not fail to notice how intently he watched for every religious expression.

It was a custom in the Sabbath-school, when he was a child, to distribute tickets as a reward for good lessons and behaviour. These tick-

ets, when they reached a certain number, could be exchanged for a Bible, or for one or more Testaments. He was very studious and regular, and thus obtained several books, which he gave away to supply the destitute.

Before he was thirteen years old he was solicited to become a teacher of a class of children in one of the Sabbath-schools. But he declined. He had already commenced giving religious instruction to the coloured people of his father's family. Sabbath after Sabbath he read the Scriptures to them in his impressive manner, and kindly answered, to the best of his abilities, all their inquiries.



LETTER IX.

HIS INTEREST IN MISSIONARIES.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Thomas was early taught the origin of missionary operations. He knew that all true religion was once confined to the small country called Palestine, embracing Judea and situated on the eastern side of the Mediterranean sea. He knew that our Saviour commissioned his disciples to go from that country “into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” I think it very probable that he could have repeated our Saviour’s very words as

we have them in the last three verses of Matthew.

He was likewise taught what missionaries had accomplished, by the blessing of God. He learned that by them the gospel had been carried to the Romans, the French, the Germans, the English, and many other nations; and that by them our own forefathers, who were once heathen, worshipping idols, and sometimes sacrificing human beings, were converted to God.

He was told that all the world would yet be brought to a knowledge of Christ. He was not ignorant that God could convert all nations by miracles, by angels, and in many other ways. But he believed that God chooses to do it in

the way our Saviour has pointed out, that is, by sending missionaries to preach the gospel everywhere.

For these reasons he delighted to hear what the missionaries were doing. He would sit down by his mother, and listen to the latest accounts of their labours with as much pleasure as most children listen to tales. Many parents, dear James, think children far more deficient than they are. Children crave a knowledge of facts; not false stories. They love tales, only because they fancy them true, at least for the moment. But the Bible and other books which contain facts, are of far greater interest.

Such was his anxiety to hear

accounts of missionary operations when he was very young. This anxiety never diminished. "He was, for years," his father remarks, "not a listener, but a reader. He delighted to read the missionary notices, letters, &c." It was a pleasure to him, in the study of geography, to observe upon the maps the missionary stations. But I will return to his childhood, for it was then that he imbibed an extraordinary zeal for the missionary cause, and began to make extraordinary sacrifices in its behalf.

He was informed that missionaries, in their great expenses of travelling, of printing Bibles and tracts, and of various other operations, were supported by Christians at home.

He perceived that any one could take part in this great and good work. He was delighted with the idea. He went to a missionary meeting. He heard the prayers, the addresses, the hymns. When the contribution was taken up, he gave all the money he had, and went home with a determination to give more at the next anniversary.

He knew in what high terms our Redeemer spoke of the poor widow who cast into the treasury of the Lord all the money she possessed; two little mites. But, perhaps, he did not consider that God could guide a little piece of money, given by a child, till it should buy a book or tract; and that God could guide that little book or tract till it should

reach some heathen and bring him to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ; and that God could qualify that heathen to become a minister of the gospel. What wonderful facts will be brought to light in eternity!

He procured a box, and called it his Missionary-box. All the little pieces of money he could get he dropped into it. Several of his friends gave him small sums for the same purpose. With what pleasure did he empty it at the next missionary meeting! His interest in the cause increased year after year. The more we do for so good an object, the dearer it is to us.

He received twenty-five cents a week to spend as he chose. He asked and obtained permission to

abstain from some one of the luxuries of the table and to receive the value in money; one half of which he laid aside for the missionaries. For several months together he denied himself butter, or tea and coffee, or some other article in which most persons indulge. One of his last yearly contributions for foreign missions was twenty-five dollars! How much can be done when the heart is enlisted.



LETTER X.

HIS REGARD FOR MINISTERS OF THE
GOSPEL.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Very few children have ever been more in the society of ministers, than Thomas C. Paul had been from his earliest infancy. They were frequently, and sometimes for several days together, in his father's family. He regarded them with great reverence. But his long acquaintance with them made him entirely at his ease in their company. He delighted to converse with them, and he received from them many an expression of fondness and esteem.

He watched for opportunities to show them obliging attentions. He would go to their rooms to see if the servants had provided every thing necessary for their comfort. He would bring them the choicest fruit he could find. He would search the library for such books as they desired to see. In short, he would do all in his power, with the most manifest pleasure and in the kindest manner, to promote their enjoyment.

Many ministers of the gospel are straitened in their circumstances for Christ's sake. They could acquire ample means, perhaps great wealth, if they would give themselves up to worldly pursuits. But they renounce the world to serve

the Lord and promote his glory, by securing their own salvation, by edifying Christians, by calling sinners to repentance, and by presenting, to the eyes of all, attractive examples of purity, benevolence, and godliness. For such as give even a cup of cold water to his self-denying servants, in the name of Christ, there is a sure reward. This Thomas believed.

To many of these visitors, upon leaving his father's house, he made little presents of books, handkerchiefs, or other useful articles. Placing a gold coin of five dollars in the hands of a venerable minister, he said, "Take this, if you please, to your little son." He obtained a new coat for another, to

whom he knew such an expression of regard would be both timely and acceptable. No wonder, dear James, that so many should lament the early death of one who uniformly availed himself of all his resources in so many acts of judicious benevolence.

When he was very young, he followed a minister to his chamber, and, with a child's simplicity, said, "Why, sir, have you not on your newer clothes?" His reply, in substance, was, "I am wearing my best, my little friend." He hastened to his mother with an air of great concern, and told her that their guest was very destitute of clothes. I know not whether she smiled most at his question, pardonable in a

small child, or at his description; "My mother, the clothes which he is wearing are thread-bare, and, would you believe it, they are his very best." "How do you know?" "I asked him, and he told me so." Away he went with his burdened mind to his father, and entreated him to give the minister a suit of clothes. He was indulged.

Returning with a light heart, he invited the clergyman to walk down town with him a few minutes. Without naming his object, he requested him to stop with him a little while at the shop of a tailor, who, being previously instructed what to do, surprised the reverend visitor by approaching him to take his measure. A little playfulness

of this kind was always characteristic of Thomas. But if he sought amusement by surprising his friends, it was always in a pleasant way. His was a "wit that loved to play, not wound."

He obtained, when about twelve years of age, a costly umbrella, which he greatly prized. Soon after he observed that his pastor, having called at his father's on a rainy day, had one of inferior quality. "Let me give him mine," said he, in an under-tone to his mother. How bright was his expressive eye, and how happy was his generous heart, when, following this worthy minister to the door, he placed in his hand the handsome present.

Our Saviour tells us, that "Who-

soever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." This was strikingly exemplified in his case. His remarkable virtues and kind manner induced these pious divines to take a lively interest in giving him instruction and advice, by which he was still more advanced in wisdom and excellence.

But nowhere did he exhibit more regard for ministers than in the house of God. He listened to their sermons with profound attention. Thus his heart, judgment and memory were all improved. Upon returning from church, he often created surprise, by repeating, with great accuracy, much of the discourse.

His fondness for ministers and his attention to their sermons have reminded me of Edward VI., who became king of England in 1547, in his tenth year. Edward studied closely, and made great attainments in knowledge. But his favourite study was the Bible. He took the greatest pleasure in listening to sermons.

Bishop Latimer, who was afterwards burned at the stake in Oxford, was the young king's favourite preacher. A pulpit was erected in one of the royal gardens, where Edward, surrounded by his court, loved to sit out of doors, and listen to his discourses, which were long and eloquent. Some of these sermons, with which Edward was so much

delighted, were preserved. They are remarkable for zeal, fearlessness and singularity. Like Thomas Paul, Edward died young, distinguished for piety, learning and gentleness of disposition.



LETTER XI.

THOMAS AND HIS TEACHERS.

MY DEAR JAMES,—I will now inform you of Thomas's conduct towards his teachers. As you are in a course of education, I hope and believe that you will find this part of the narrative particularly profitable, perhaps interesting. Possibly some good resolution may be confirmed. Possibly some wrong opinion may be corrected.

He was never known to be insolent to a teacher. Some are insolent because they are urged on by mischievous companions. This

is insolence from a desire of pleasing others, and shows great weakness. Some are insolent to display their courage. This is insolence from a love of low distinction, and betrays an ill-directed ambition. In short, many are insolent, and otherwise perverse at school, and afterwards at college, not so much from a bad disposition as from a want of firmness, or from false views of what is honourable. It is better to be unknown than ill-known.

It is not known that Thomas ever spoke ill of a teacher. He had little time and less disposition to look for faults in his conduct. If he heard of any, he hoped the report was a slander. If he saw any, he hoped the teacher meant well. At least,

he did not try to mend matters by joining a group of fault-finders. Some are ever speaking ill of their teachers while at school, and of their neighbours the rest of their lives. Guard against a censorious spirit.

Nor is it remembered that he ever engaged in the active defence of a teacher. In some cases he would doubtless have done so. But he did not suppose the foolish remarks of discontented pupils needed any reply. No sensible teacher regards such remarks. No sensible teacher wishes a worthy pupil to make himself enemies on his account. Avoid all unnecessary strife, dear James. At school or college, to oppose a teacher is gene-

rally wrong and injurious; to defend a teacher is generally unnecessary and imprudent.

He always spoke of his teachers in terms of high respect. This was partly owing, perhaps, to the fact, that he had never heard them censured or ridiculed at home. A child once said of his teacher, "I know he is a fool, I have heard my father say so many a time." If the child quoted truly, his father himself was far from being wise. Your father honours your teachers by committing you to their care. You honour your father by showing them every token of respect.

He did not complain to his teachers of ill-usage from his companions. He had no occasion to do so, for

through his kindness and prudence he was uniformly well used. Such a complaint, however, is sometimes necessary. But he would have suffered much, it is believed, before he would have resorted to it. If you cannot keep out of difficulties, settle them, if possible, in such a manner as not to make them public. This is a good rule for all future time.

He went to his teachers with no information against his school-fellows. Indeed he rarely saw any misconduct, for he chose the most virtuous as his companions. But with his nice sense of propriety, he never could have been a voluntary informer, except in the case of some great crime. Never consent to con-

ceal a great crime. Never volunteer to reveal ordinary offences. I can think of no better general rules. But by all means, my dear James, act conscientiously. If, in some extraordinary case, you see it is your duty to make disclosures, do it without ill-will, and do it fearlessly.

Thomas never for a moment appeared displeased with his teachers. He turned not hastily from them in anger. He never remained sullenly silent when questioned. No resentment lowered in his countenance. From such conduct he was as free in their presence, as he was free from all terms of reproach and ridicule in their absence.

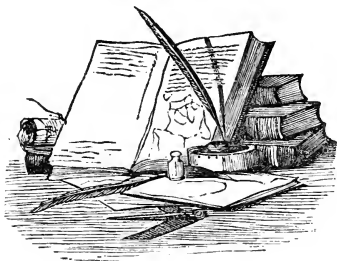
He delighted to confer favours on

his teachers. He made them small presents. Sometimes he gave them fruit and other luxuries sufficient for themselves and for all his fellow students. Indeed, his disposition to oblige others was a very conspicuous trait of his character.

He aided his teachers by his example. By his respectful manner, by his friendly attentions, by his persevering industry, by his solemnity at the hour of worship, by cheerfully adopting all their plans, and by constantly avoiding all the faults which have been named, he exerted a happy influence over many minds.

He was consequently highly esteemed by his teachers. While he was yet in health, one of them re-

marked, "I have never known a pupil so exemplary as Thomas Paul." Six of his teachers were present and voted for the resolutions which were published after his death. I will send you a copy of them. No part of his character is brighter than his virtues as a pupil.



LETTER XII.

THOMAS WITH HIS FATHER.

MY DEAR JAMES,—The father of Thomas, busily employed with his own extensive operations and with the affairs of the church, very gladly and very confidently surrendered him, in a great degree, to the guidance of his devoted mother. But he was always ready to render any assistance with his counsel, and habitually careful to make such observations as tended to enlarge the understanding of a child, to improve his heart, and to give him correct views of his duty to God and man.

This he did in so affectionate a manner, that his son took great pleasure in his company.

Thomas often wished that he could be more with his father. But many of the best men in the world have but little time to spend with their families. As mothers frequently and naturally have so exclusive a control of the first and most important years of their children's lives, how exceedingly desirable is it, that they should be very judicious, intelligent, and pious! Hence we derive a very strong argument for their early Christian education.

But he was with his father twice a day in most interesting circumstances. I allude to morning and

evening worship in the family. What a happy influence did it exert on his tender mind to see his father, whatever might be his cares or pursuits, spending the beginning and close of every day in religious exercises! How much of his best knowledge, how many of his best resolutions were derived from these occasions, and from the pious conversation which often immediately succeeded!

I hope, dear James, that you will never absent yourself from family worship. It is intimated in the Bible that the fury of the Lord will be poured out upon families that call not upon His name. How great then must be the sin of a child who, blessed with a pious father, is reluctant to kneel by his side in the

worship of God! It is not recollected that Thomas was ever absent at time of prayer without good cause. I believe his duty was his pleasure.

As a general thing, he had the most frequent and familiar conversations with his father at the table. If he differed from him in opinion, he was encouraged to say so. Then he assigned his reasons in a modest and childlike manner. I never heard that he was at all rude in argument, or that he refused to yield when he found that he was in the wrong. But as long as he thought he was in the right, he dearly loved to defend his opinion.

Thomas appeared to have been greatly influenced in the formation

of his habits by witnessing the methodical manner in which his father transacted business. All his lessons had their fixed hours. His love of order appeared in every thing. His desk, his books and other articles, were all in their appropriate places.

I will here remark, my dear young friend, that industry without method is nothing but a busy idleness. A farmer sows industriously, but he sows out of season. He toils at repairing a fence, but not till a crop has been half destroyed. He spends hours in sunning sheaves; in half the time he could have housed them before the rain. He fails, and talks of his misfortunes. His neighbour is no more industrious, but does every thing in time and order: he

finds reason to bless God for his prosperity.

As a father ordinarily spends but little time with his young children, he has it in his power, by overlooking their faults and by constant indulgences, to make them feel that he is kinder than their devoted and more watchful mother. This is very inconsiderate. Let the father take especial pains to honour the mother. Mr. Paul's course may be learned from the following incident. Thomas was once asked which he loved the most, his father or mother, "My mother," said he, "in obedience to my father's wishes."

Thomas loved his father tenderly. He once went to Boston to wait his arrival from Europe. When he first

saw him on the deck of the ship, it is said, he leaped in ecstasy, exclaiming, "I see my father! It is my father!" But this love was never more gratified than during his extreme illness. He had his father with him then, a great portion of the time. It was delightful to witness the relief he seemed to find in his affectionate attentions.

The influence of a father's pious conversation is beautifully illustrated in the case of Richard Baxter, who was one of the greatest, best, and most fearless ministers of England in the seventeenth century, when many of the servants of God, and he among the number, were cruelly persecuted. His father directed his attention to the historical

portions of the Bible. Young Richard became deeply interested. This interest, by the grace of God, led to a desire to read the whole volume.

I do not know whether Baxter or Thomas Paul sufficiently appreciated these attentions of their fathers at the time they received them. But Baxter in his old age spoke very tenderly of his father, and indeed of both his parents. One day he was so filled with a sense of God's goodness in giving him pious parents, that he sat down and wrote some lines expressive of his thankfulness. I will copy two of them :

“Their early precepts so possessed my heart,
That, taking root, they did not thence depart.”

While Richard Baxter attributes so much to the instrumentality of his pious parents, it is remarkable that Edward Gibbon, the infidel historian, who has written many severe and unjust things against Christianity, calls his aunt, Mrs. Porten, who had the care of him when he was young, and who had erroneous views of religion, "the mother of his mind." She permitted him to read very improper books. I will give a short quotation from his own pen. I regard it as an explanation of the probable origin of his bitter infidelity.

"My grandfather's flight unlocked the door of a tolerable library. Where a title attracted my eye, without fear or awe I snatched the

volume from the shelf, and Mrs. Porten, who indulged herself in moral and religious speculations, was more prone to encourage than to check a curiosity above the strength of a boy. This year, the twelfth of my age, I shall note as the most propitious to the growth of my intellectual stature." Was not this year most unfortunate, both to himself and to all who have been misled by his writings?

But Thomas was blessed with parents who knew how easily the mind of a child might be poisoned with ruinous sentiments. Do not, my young friend, read any book which is generally condemned by

good men. The Divine command is, "Cease, my son, to hear the instructions that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."



LETTER XIII.

THOMAS AND HIS MOTHER.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Dr. Doddridge, Sir William Jones, Dr. Timothy Dwight, and many other great and eminent men, have acknowledged that they were deeply indebted, (under God,) for their attainments, to the direction given to their tender minds, by their pious and attentive mothers. Like them, Thomas felt, young as he was, his indebtedness to maternal care; and several times, when praised, made use of expressions like these: “I merit little praise; I ought to be

better than I am, in view of the pains which have been taken with me from my infancy.”

He was very young to utter such sentiments. Had he survived his mother, and lived to old age, he would, doubtless, have felt his indebtedness to her attentions, even more sensibly. The great and good John Newton, who, like yourself, dear James, was an only son, and who was bereaved of his mother when he was seven years old, was trained during this short period, much in the same manner as Thomas Paul and yourself. He has left the following record of his grateful feelings:

“My mother was a pious, experienced Christian. She made it the

chief business and pleasure of her life to instruct me, and bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. To her I owe that bent and bias to religion, which, with the co-operating grace of God, hath at length brought me back to those paths of peace, from which I might have otherwise been in danger of deviating for ever."

Mrs. Paul had been led, by some observations which she had made, to embrace the opinion, that sons of pious people are often injured in their morals, in consequence of being too little with their parents. She therefore determined to keep Thomas with her while young, precisely as if he had been a daughter. She found no difficulty in accom-

plishing her purpose. I am confident that no mother of an only son, pursuing her course, will have reason to say, "I cannot keep my child at home. He distresses me with his rudeness. He is always bent on mischief."

As it is believed that his mother had more to do with the formation of his character than all the world besides, I think you will be interested in learning something of the course which she pursued with him. She aimed to make home pleasant to him. She procured for him a variety of interesting books and other amusing presents. She encouraged him in all his innocent and proper sports.

She was his companion. When

he told her with a light heart of his success and enjoyment, she listened and smiled. When he urged her to see his operations, she looked and admired. In such happy moments she found no difficulty in directing his attention to the goodness of God in furnishing us with so many means of enjoyment, notwithstanding our sinfulness.

When he was disappointed, or sick, or distressed in any way, he usually went directly to her, and was soothed by those looks of sympathy, tender tones and kind remarks, which are so generally agreeable to the sad and suffering. Sometimes she allayed his grief by turning his attention to pleasing objects; more frequently by remark-

ing on the greater afflictions of others, especially of our Saviour, or of some distinguished saint; or by bringing up to his remembrance some consoling text of Scripture.

On the other hand, when he saw his mother troubled, he uniformly attempted to comfort her. Several occurrences, as pleasing as the following, took place. One morning when she was ill, he went to her bed and said, "My mother, I had better stay from school to-day, to keep you company." Now he disliked exceedingly to fall behind his class. She told him it was not necessary. So he went to school. During the recess, he left his companions and hastened home to spend a few moments with her. As soon

as he found time, he purchased some nice fruit and brought it to her.

His mother read much to him when he was very young, and conversed upon what she read. She formed his taste first for the historical parts of the Bible. In listening to her he never seemed weary. He asked many questions, showing his interest in the subject, and his sagacity.

When he had learned to read with ease, he read for her. Still the questions were put, and the answers and reflections and suggestions were made. When he had learned to write, he took great delight in answering a note for her as she would dictate. At length, when she gave

him the principal ideas which she wished to communicate, he wrote them out in his own style and language. These exercises, early commenced and long continued, will, in part, account for his great proficiency.

In his last years he did much towards repaying her for these early attentions. With a most agreeable manner he performed a thousand little kind offices for her, sometimes asking the privilege, and often before a word was said. When he could do no more, he begged his mother not to grieve immoderately over his early death. What admirable considerateness in one so young. She once remarked, "He was, in his last illness, my comforter."

I will send you an extract from a letter written by his father. In it you will see Thomas at home. This beautiful picture corresponds with all that I saw or heard of his conduct. What carefulness to give no offence to his mother! What cheerful submission to her will! What gratitude for her unwearied pains in training him!

“You ask me to make you acquainted with the faults of character to which Thomas was constitutionally inclined, and by what means these were corrected. Mrs. Paul and I have been thinking over this inquiry, and have tasked our memories to recall what faults he had, and we find it difficult to remember any thing which could be truly de-

nominated a fault, for if he at any time did any thing which his mother did not approve, she had only to speak once, never twice, in an affectionate manner, and the act was not repeated.

“If at any time he asked permission to do any thing which she thought proper to refuse, it was always submitted to at once, he saying, ‘Well, my mother, if you do not wish me to do so, I will not ask it,’ or words to that effect. Frequently injudicious friends would praise him, he being present, for his goodness, attainments, and the like; when he would say, ‘I don’t deserve any credit for what I am. My mother always reasoned with me, and treated me as a companion, not

as children are often treated by their parents, in a harsh, forbidding manner.' ”

This grateful acknowledgment of his indebtedness to his mother's instructions, reminds me of a letter which Lord Eldon, a Chancellor of England, wrote to his mother. As soon as he was made a peer by the king, and his name was changed from Sir John Scott to Lord Eldon, he hastened to inform his aged parent, that she might rejoice with him. I will give you a brief extract from the letter. It adds additional lustre to his fame.

“My dear mother:—I cannot act under any other feeling than that you should be the first to whom I write after changing my name. I

feel that, under the blessing of Providence, I owe this, (I hope, I may say, I owe this,) to a life spent in conformity with those principles of virtue which the kindness of my father and mother early inculcated.”



LETTER XIV.

HIS REGARD FOR THE POOR.

MY DEAR JAMES, — Thomas had early learned the important lesson, which cannot be taught us too soon, that we are to esteem and honour persons according to their real excellencies, and not according to their outward circumstances. The value of gold lies in its purity and weight, and not in its outside brilliancy and wide-spread surface. Especially had he been carefully trained, from his very infancy, to cherish in his bosom a tender regard for the destitute and afflicted.

He was taken to the humble cottages of the suffering poor, in visits of charity. He was thus impressively taught the lofty principle of Christian sympathy. He beheld the relief that kindness imparted. He saw the clouds of gloom pass away, and the eye of grief once more beam brightly with joy. He heard the thanks which relieved and grateful hearts, in tones of tenderness, sincerely expressed.

In his own breast, thrilling with happiness in view of scenes so affecting, he felt the blessedness of giving,—the elevated pleasure of doing good. As soon as he was old enough to go alone on an errand of sympathy, he was often sent by his mother, and sometimes went of his

own accord, to call upon the needy and suffering, and to make inquiries respecting their welfare and wants. The poor have remarked, with thankfulness and admiration, upon the great delicacy of feeling, and true politeness of manner, with which he approached them in their sickness and destitution.

He would then return home to procure the articles desirable for their comfort. In several instances he purchased them with his own money, which he had saved by denying himself little indulgences. How often would youth, whose parents are in good circumstances, or decidedly wealthy, meet with aid and encouragement if they would generously pursue a similar course.

I have no doubt, my dear James, that you yourself are kind to the poor. You have relieved their sufferings. By affording happiness to others, your own happiness has been increased. But the matter did not end there. The remembrance of it is pleasant. In addition to this, there is a reward. "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

When Thomas had not money sufficient to supply the wants of some needy person, he has been known to effect the object by proposing to some friend to unite with him, saying, "I will bear half of the expense." Many a friend of humanity, by his example and persuasions, accomplishes more than by his own limited resources. His

influence is as a "little leaven, that leaveneth the whole lump." He takes the lead himself, and as he waves a beckoning hand, others gladly follow.

One thing is worthy of notice. Thomas was very choice in selecting his intimate friends. But he seemed to look for real merit alone, for a virtuous life, a kind disposition, and a cultivated intellect. Several of his choicest and most beloved associates were of embarrassed families. One of them, I remember, was a poor but excellent orphan.

It often happens that a poor child is greatly imposed on by thoughtless lads, both at school and elsewhere. His sufferings from fear and ridicule are very great; greater, no doubt,

than those who tease and distress him imagine. The only time, it is believed, that Thomas was known to be in danger of a violent quarrel, was upon his stepping forward to protect a friendless boy.

I have now, dear James, described the general principles which governed him in his conduct towards the poor. In my next letter I will mention a few particular incidents which greatly interested my mind. Perhaps this may have been partly owing to a vivid recollection of the engaging manner and tenderness of expression with which he habitually conferred his obliging favours.

LETTER XV.

PARTICULAR ACTS OF KINDNESS TO THE
POOR.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Thomas heard of the severe illness of a very poor man, who lived about a mile from his father's residence. He went to see him. He selected appropriate hymns, and read them. He then bought some rice for him, with his own pocket money.

The poor man's sunken eye beamed with gratitude and admiration. He was heard to say, "Surely he is a little angel." Now who can suppose that any course of worldly pleasure can possibly afford so pure,

so exalted an enjoyment, as he realized from the frequent exercise of such benevolent feelings?

Several facts like the following are remembered by his friends. He proposed to some one to unite with him in purchasing a cheap calico dress for a worthy poor woman. He accomplished his object. She expressed her thanks in the tones and terms of a delighted heart. But probably, "as it is more blessed to give than to receive," he was, of the two, by far the happier.

On his way to Baltimore, on one occasion, he became deeply interested in a poor sailor, who, with all a seaman's characteristic kindness to youthful passengers, had shown him pleasing attentions. He pro-

cured for him a Bible, his favourite present. To his bitter disappointment, the sailor, owing to some circumstances, never received it. On one of its blank leaves I find these lines written:

“Presented by Thomas Cooke Paul, to his sailor-friend, William Spencer, with the sincere request, that at all leisure moments, in whatever clime he may be, he will devote them to the study of the truths contained herein. And that he may enjoy a rich reward, in time and eternity, is the prayer of his youthful friend.”

To a poor person who is not actually suffering, the present of a

religious book may do more service than any other gift. It has often resulted in a change of life, and a preparation for eternity. Perhaps, my dear James, in the providence of God, this Bible did not reach its destination in order that the above lines might influence you and other youth to act a similar part in the same spirit.

On a cold day, two years before his death, a poor boy, thinly clad, came on some errand to see his mother. Thomas requested permission to give him his overcoat, which was but little worn. "Let me give it to him, if you please," said he, "and I will buy a cheap one for myself." She assented. He then bought for himself one of an

inferior quality, and for half the price.

Three winters after, the boy being seen thinly clad again, was asked if he had worn out that coat; "O no," said he, "I keep it to wear to Sunday-school." What youth, whose wants have always been supplied, can realize the comfort which has been derived from that gift? Who can compute the possible influence of that Sabbath-school on his young and susceptible mind?

How delightful would it be if all our youths who have good homes and kind parents would feel thus for destitute orphan children! How much suffering would be relieved! How many drooping hearts would

be cheered! What lasting benefits would be conferred!

During his last sickness, he requested his mother to buy a pair of shoes for a poor woman on whom he had previously bestowed acts of kindness. When she came to see him, he surprised her by saying, "Here is a pair of shoes for you. I hope they will not let you suffer when I am gone. Trust in the Lord. He will take care of you."



LETTER XVI.

HIS INTERCOURSE WITH THE YOUNG.

MY DEAR JAMES, — Thomas was companionable. Never neglectful of his studies, he was ready, at all proper hours, to engage in innocent amusements. Then his laugh was joyous and free. He would strive for victory with emulous perseverance, bear a defeat with becoming grace, and enjoy success without boisterous and disagreeable exultation.

This shining point in his character, this uniform calmness when excelled or excelling, is, my dear

James, particularly worthy of notice. To be much disturbed by disappointment, and to be too much elated by success, are two very common failings. These great defects in character usually go together. Let me entreat you to strive, while you are young, to form the habit of composure in all circumstances.

His manner was gentle, affectionate, and decidedly engaging. Respectful to his seniors, social with his equals, and uniformly kind to every human being with whom he had intercourse, he made it apparent that his politeness, free from affectation and selfish aims, was firmly based on the substantial excellencies of a good and feeling heart. His whole intercourse was

marked with three important principles which every youth should cultivate,—affection, sincerity, and constancy. From these pure fountains, his delightful attentions flowed in clear and refreshing streams.

In childhood he had been judiciously kept from mingling promiscuously with vicious children in the streets. As he had not been accustomed to this ill-timed indulgence, he did not regard the restraint as disagreeable. The difficulty which many parents in our cities and towns experience in controlling their children, has its origin, generally, in early liberties inconsiderately granted.

The good effects of a proper restraint will appear from the follow-

ing incident. In his eleventh or twelfth year he requested permission to play in the streets with certain companions. He returned home at the appointed time. On another day he easily obtained a similar favour, but came back in a few minutes, and upon being asked the reason, said, "I cannot play in the streets without associating with boys who use profane and vulgar language. They will join in our sports. So I have made up my mind to stay at home." Month after month he kept his determination. He had a remarkably quiet, silent, unoffending way of withdrawing from improper company.

On one occasion, in Norfolk, he was invited to a party of young

persons. No one enjoyed it for a while more than himself. At length the amusement took a turn which did not meet his approbation. He expressed no dissent, but, unobserved, withdrew. When missed, he was sent for, and entreated to return, with an assurance that he should not again have any reason to complain. He went back and spent the evening to his entire satisfaction.

Here it must be observed that he never showed an aversion to any associates merely because their parents were poor. On the contrary, some of his most valued friends were of this class. He doubtless considered that in this world of changes, he himself might yet be

in want. He certainly knew that many of the best and most distinguished men had sprung from poor parents. But the vicious, whether rich or poor, he carefully shunned. No advantage of wealth or birth could make the profane, vulgar, or deceitful, in his estimation, respectable. Let this sentiment be early embraced. It is lamentable to see so many of the most favoured youth end their lives, shortened by vice, in disgrace and wretchedness.

Many who are not guilty of grossly vulgar language, still make use of coarse expressions, which, through a great mistake, they regard as witty. This makes them appear very ridiculous in the eyes of all judicious

persons. From this fault no one was more free than Thomas. Among his companions he always expressed his ideas in as plain, good English as he would have used in the presence of his parents.

“He that hath friends,” as well as he that would have friends, “must show himself friendly.” He was friendly and had friends. Day after day, for some time during his long illness, some one of his fellow-students went to his father’s house to inquire after the state of his health, and then hastened back with the news. According to the nature of this information, which was communicated at the hour of worship, more than a hundred countenances were brightened with joy, or over-

cast with gloom. When his death was at length announced, several were seen to weep. Every tear flowed from some tender recollection of his past life, so marked with consistency and kindness.



LETTER XVII.

THOMAS AND THE SERVANTS.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Many children, neglected by their parents, hear from servants frightful tales of ghosts, and of other terrific things, which do not exist. They are often made timid by these foolish stories whilst they are young. They sometimes continue to suffer from them for many years. Thomas's mother requested the servants never to tell him any horrible tales. She gave him the more exquisite pleasure of hearing true and profitable narrations from the Bible. Truth, to a

sound mind, is more delightful than fiction.

Had he been much with the servants, he would have conversed in their style. Children always converse like their constant associates. If they hear from infancy pure and grammatical language, their language will be likewise pure and grammatical. If at any time he had caught an improper word or expression from the servants, his parents corrected his speech immediately. By being thus trained, he was kept from a worse fault than rude, ungrammatical language; he was kept from loving low, vulgar expressions.

But there is a third and much greater evil which many children,

through the neglect of their parents, suffer from the servants. This evil is the injury of their morals. They sometimes learn from them to be deceitful, cruel, profane, and otherwise vicious. Whilst in many a kitchen, some children of wealthy parents were taught by servants their first steps in the way to ruin, Thomas was receiving from his parents the best of instruction. Can you, my dear James, be sufficiently thankful that you have been trained in a similar manner?

I must not hold out the idea that all servants would corrupt children. Many of them are very moral, and some very pious. Let such be esteemed, as they should be esteemed, very highly. Do you re-

member to have read the beautiful tract, "Henry and his Bearer?" That bearer was a pious servant. I know that Thomas, with his correct views of religion, would rather have been that servant, than to have been a wicked king. But as one vicious servant may ruin a child, his parents took the wisest course by keeping him so much with themselves.

When you see the means which were used by his parents, and blessed of God in the formation of his character, your reason is exercised, and your judgment improved. Doubtless he never would have been what he was, if he had not been kept, when young, from evil and from thoughtless servants, as well

as from ill-bred and vicious children. I will now write you an account of his intercourse with them at a later period.

He was trained never to speak to servants in a haughty, commanding tone. This manner is most disgusting in a young person, no matter how wealthy or great his father may be. It may arise from a want of sense, or from a proud heart, or from a tyrannical disposition, or from the whole combined. In his intercourse with them, Thomas made his requests mildly, and was attended to cheerfully.

He made no complaints of the servants. At least it was not his habit to complain. If he ever did, their faults must have been very

great. Once he was sitting out upon the seat of the carriage driver, who, being intoxicated, drove rapidly within a few inches of a curbstone. Had the wheel struck it, the accident might have been serious. He made no complaint to his parents upon reaching home. But he begged the servant (and if my memory is correct, induced him) to join the temperance society.

He was regardful of the happiness of servants. He certainly was so, if we consider his age. Most young people do not sufficiently bear in mind that servants may be weary, or weak, or sick. Queen Charlotte, of England, asked one of her daughters to read aloud to her. Every time she paused, the Queen

said, "Read on, if you please." At length, exhausted, she burst into tears. "This was intentional, my daughter," said the Queen, "to teach you to have more feeling for your maids, and not to exact too much of them."

His kindness to servants was very remarkable. He made them many presents. When they were sick he would visit them, and make friendly inquiries. Sabbath after Sabbath he read the Scriptures to them. He had a pleasant manner in reading. They were glad to hear him. In his last illness they did all they could do for him. They expressed great concern. When all hope was gone, they wept as if he had been a relative.

His efforts to be useful at home were like the youthful efforts of the celebrated Dr. Cotton Mather, who was born in Boston in 1663. "He commenced," says his biographer, "a life of the most active beneficence when very young; and at the age of sixteen adopted as a maxim, that a power and an opportunity to do good, not only gives the right of doing it, but makes it a positive duty.

"On this maxim he determined to act, and continued to do so during the remainder of his days. Accordingly he began in his father's family, by doing all the good in his power to his brothers and sisters, and to the servants." I hope, my dear James, that you will always, in

like manner, aim to promote the happiness and piety of all around you, including the domestics.



LETTER XVIII.

THOMAS AT SCHOOL.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Thomas went to school cheerfully. He knew that education was necessary. What must be done ought to be done with a good grace. Bear this in mind, dear James. If you live long, you will be called upon to do ten thousand things against your inclination. He that does his duty reluctantly, is unhappy at the time. He that neglects his duty wholly, is unhappy afterwards. He that does his duty promptly, is happy in the performance and happy in the result.

Thomas went to school regularly.

This was owing partly to the habits of order to which he had been trained; partly to a desire of keeping up with his class; and partly, perhaps, to a conviction that knowledge is a rich reward for perseverance. I never knew a pupil who often stayed from school without cause, to love his books, or to make good progress. It is strange that so many parents never reflect that a day's absence throws a child out of his course, and thus makes the path of knowledge more steep and disagreeable. I am happy to know that you love your school. If you did not, I would say, go daily, and go manfully, and you will love it. Habit brings contentment to the young.

At school he had no quarrels. This resulted from his unwillingness either to give offence, or to take offence. This is a happy disposition. Cultivate it by all means. You will then rarely be molested even by the most envious and troublesome. Be kind to all, and keep out of the way of harm. You will then have, as Thomas had, so many friends, that the quarrelsome will let you alone. I will give you another important rule. Carefully observe the conduct of those persons who constantly live in peace with all around them.

At school he played no tricks. He always, from a child, regarded that species of amusement as contemptible. At a proper time, he

loved open, vigorous play, exceedingly. But he despised a sly action, especially an action that would give another pain. He could not seek his pleasure in another's distress. Much less would he join in a crowd to tease and torment the helpless.

At school he practised no manner of deceit. He had no improper object to require it. He had done nothing amiss to conceal. He never pretended to know a lesson which he had not learned. He had an utter abhorrence of all falsehood, and of every other species of deceit, even for the purpose of amusement. His teachers will all testify that they never knew him in any way to encourage others to indulge in this propensity. When you see one

trifle with truth for sport, you have reason to suspect that he may yet trifle with truth in earnest.

Thomas made no complaint against his school. He once said to his mother, when he was very young, "I would like my school better, if it were less disorderly." But in his latter years he appeared warmly attached to every one of his schools. If he saw faults, he made allowance for them; at least he passed them by in silence. Some, if you take their word for it, are always sent to miserable schools. The rules are too strict or too lax; the lessons too few or too many. I fear every thing will be wrong with them as long as they live. Ask yourself, "Is this my disposition?"

He obeyed the rules of his school. He did not trouble himself to inquire whether the regulations were the best that could be adopted. He simply asked, "What are they?" So conscientiously did he observe them, that, it is believed, he was never reproved, much less punished. One of his teachers once said, "I could superintend five hundred pupils, if they were all as considerate and as obedient and as apt as Thomas Paul." With this dignity of character, contrast the waywardness of many. How frivolous does their conduct appear!

He went to school to learn. He made it an invariable rule to acquire a thorough knowledge of all his lessons. No amusement,

however tempting, no companion, however much beloved, no interesting news, no fascinating book could draw him from an assigned task, till he had thoroughly mastered it. Such perseverance is talent, and the most uniformly profitable talent. Quickness of apprehension, a remarkable memory, a lively imagination, may be called more brilliant, but they are frequently united to a fickleness of disposition destructive of all success.

He distinguished himself at school. He was uniformly among the very first in his class in all the ordinary English branches; in the Mathematics, in the Latin, Greek, and French. He appeared to make the same rapid progress in all his

studies, because he took them all up with the same unyielding determination. He excelled more particularly in debate and declamation. But his noblest distinction was to be found in his high moral excellencies.



LETTER XIX.

HIS NEATNESS.

MY DEAR JAMES,—“Cleanliness is next to godliness.” This is a remark, or a quotation of the great and good John Wesley, who carefully weighed his words. Now great as this excellence is, and neat as Thomas was, I hesitated awhile before I decided to write the following particulars. At last I concluded that it might possibly confirm you in your present good habits, or at least amuse you, to be made more minutely acquainted with one who was brought up some hundred miles distant.

He made a very free and very frequent use of water, in washing. Formerly it was said, (perhaps not without cause,) that, in this respect, we, as a nation, fell behind some of the European nations. This observation was never true of a large portion of our families. But latterly the bath, I am happy to believe, is more universally resorted to by people of every condition in life. Frequent application of water is beneficial to health, and absolutely indispensable to all personal neatness.

He was not neglectful of his hands. There is a Latin proverb, "He is a gentleman to the very nail," meaning that his nails showed no want of attention. Persons engaged

in some kinds of manual labour cannot, of course, always preserve so neat an appearance of their hands. But all people of any sense will make due allowance for these cases.

Thomas was attentive to his hair. All who knew him well, cannot fail to remember that it was habitually well brushed, nicely parted, smooth and glossy. The hair is greatly preserved and improved by attention. Does not this seem to indicate, that it was our Creator's design that it should not be neglected? But he never wore his hair in any unusual or fantastic manner. That would have shown great weakness.

He was very careful of his teeth. Apart from personal comfort and

appearance, the frequent use of the tooth-brush preserves the teeth from decay, and the gums in a healthful state. The whiteness of his teeth indicated this habit. Many who have neglected their teeth in early life have deeply regretted it when regrets were unavailing. If this hint, my dear James, should make you more careful of yours, I am sure you will be thankful for it, in future years, should it please God to prolong your life.

His dress was always neat. I saw him daily for a long period, and I never saw him when he did not appear well enough to be seen in a public assembly. His collar was unsoiled. His clothes were all in good condition and well adjusted.

But he never seemed to pride himself upon such things. A sloven thinks nothing of dress. A fop thinks every thing of dress. But he was neither a sloven nor a fop.

His writing was neat. It was likewise plain. His copy-book, letters and essays, were free from blots, and for the most part free from mistakes, which required erasures and interlining. This habit of writing neatly, without mistakes, requires in early life a great deal of close attention. Plainness in writing is desirable, that our correspondents may not be perplexed; and neatness that they may not be disgusted.

He was neat in the use of books. He left no prints of fingers on them,

for reasons already explained. He never laid them down in improper places. He had not the bad habit of turning down a leaf to keep the place. He had not the worse habit of turning an open book over on a table to keep the place. Be particularly careful, dear James, of your own, but especially of your friend's book, for you know not how much he may prize it.

Perhaps, in order to describe him as he was, it may not be amiss to tell you that he did not violate the three following rules of "the boy of few words." This boy was the son of a good man in the mountains, who wrote rules for children. One day the boy tried his hand and said,

"Father, I think some of your long

rules can be shortened. For your Rule First: Eat carefully. Spread your napkin out on your lap. Do not soil the table-cloth, &c., I would write: EAT GENTEELLY."

"Excellent," said the father, "if everybody knew what genteelly means."

"For your Rule Second; Bathe your feet every day in cold or warm water. Change your stockings frequently. See that your shoes are well cleaned. Beware where you step. Make good use of the scraper and mat at the door, &c., I would write, KEEP YOUR SHOES CLEAN AND ALL WITHIN THEM."

"Admirable," replied the father.

"For your Rule Third; Never increase the rapidly decreasing class

of persons who spit on the floor, on the hearth, in the church, &c., I would write: NEVER SPIT."

"But, my son, there is no chewing tobacco, without it."

"It is a strong argument, my father, against the weed."

"To keep your rule, my child, I must for ever lay down my tobacco-box."

"To keep my rule, father, I will never take it up."



LETTER XX.

HIS POLITENESS.

MY DEAR JAMES, — A thousand youth, perhaps, could have been found to equal Thomas in politeness; but it would have been difficult to find one to excel him. Now, as genuine politeness is the result of many excellencies, I think it is a part of his character which may be profitably considered. I saw his politeness. I felt it. Real politeness, like the sun, is always felt, if seen. It cheers and warms the heart.

Nothing is more universally ad-

mired by persons of all ages, principles, habits and conditions, than true politeness. The dullest feel its influence. The most hardened are softened by it. It has a word for all, a smile for all, an obliging act for all. I saw so much of his manner that I can well imagine that he was spoken of in the following terms. I will suppose some conversations which I believe will represent him to you just as he was.

“Mother,” says some little child, “I am glad that Thomas Paul has come. Will you let me go and see him? No matter how many are in the room, he always says something to me.” Another interrupts him, saying, “That is nothing strange.

He always says something to me too; and to everybody. When he was here before, while he was talking to mother, he took hold of my hand. I am as glad that he has come as you are." "You may both go and see him a little while; but let me tell you first, if you would be truly polite, you must do as he does, you must notice every one present."

An aged man remarks, "I found the house crowded. But while I was standing at the door, Thomas Paul beckoned me to come and take his seat. How much that was like him. One day he saw me trying to open a gate. He ran up, opened it, and held it till I passed through. When I thanked him, he said, 'It is

a pleasure,' and passed on. I wish that all young people would take pleasure in showing little kind attentions to an old man like myself. It is one of the best signs of good breeding."

A lady observes, "I was very much amused in seeing Thomas Paul in an argument with some of his companions. He was interrupted several times. But he was too polite to interrupt any of them. At one time, some advantage was apparently gained over him, and a loud laugh followed. He took it good-naturedly, and said, 'A laugh is no argument.' He added, 'While you are laughing, I will find the very page to prove what I said.' He opened the history, and in a

very earnest manner read a few sentences, which settled the question in his favour. I never saw him appear to so great an advantage as he did at that moment. He did not exult in the least, but, shutting up the book, he opened another full of engravings, and, in a pleasant manner, changed the conversation."

Another lady says, "What I admire in him exceedingly is, his attentiveness to all around him. His mother dropped her scissors. He stepped round and picked them up immediately. One remarked, 'It is very warm.' 'Will you have the other window raised?' said he. I never saw any one of his age more mindful of the comfort of others."

A friend replies, "While you were thinking of his obliging spirit, I was observing his easy manner. It all appears natural in him. He does not forget himself so as to act awkwardly. He does not think of himself so as to act affectedly. He seems to have a desire to please, and to know what will please. This desire and this knowledge give a graceful air to all his conduct."

A companion remarks, "He was never known to tease any one. If a play-fellow fell, he would ask, 'Are you hurt?' So far from inventing nick-names, he would not repeat them after others. 'Don't call him by that name,' he would say, 'for I am certain it will hurt his feelings.' He never addressed any of us in a

rough, boisterous, rude manner. He always spoke politely, even when most excited."

A minister writes, "Thomas Paul could assign reasons for his opinions with admirable ease and clearness. But I observed, in all my conversations with him, that he appeared more anxious to listen than to talk. Indeed, I think I never saw a youth more invariably disposed to listen. His manner of asking for information was so polite, that I almost forgot he was but thirteen."

I am very confident, my dear James, that the politeness of Thomas C. Paul fully corresponded with the above sketch. That you may see in what estimation great and

good men hold true politeness, I will copy a few lines written by the celebrated William Penn: "I love sweetness mixed with gravity, and cheerfulness tempered with sobriety. Religion in the heart leads into this true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and courteous in their behaviour, an accomplishment worthy indeed of praise."



LETTER XXI.

HIS DEVOTION TO THE CAUSE OF TEMPERANCE.

MY DEAR JAMES, — Thomas had from his earliest years steadfastly refused to partake of spirituous stimulants. But in this age, when so many of our lovely youth firmly withstand every temptation to this dangerous indulgence, he may be regarded, in this respect, as one of a very numerous class, rather than as a singular instance. A single generation ago, his course would have appeared very remarkable.

But now he has left behind him happy crowds of determined youth,

who never touch the intoxicating cup. By persevering in this course, they will be saved from countless ills. But others, who tarry long at the wine, which "at last biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," will have wo, and sorrow, and contentions, and babblings, and wounds without cause, and redness of eyes.

Let it be deeply impressed on your mind, my dear James, that the calamities resulting from intemperance are indescribably awful; and that any youth who allows himself to drink any alcoholic beverage is in very great danger of utter ruin. On the other hand, this band, freely pledged to safe principles, as far as these evils are

concerned, resembles a clear mountain rill of sparkling water. In their onward progress they touch no corrupting mixture, to deprive them of their native brightness.

Beloved and admired as he was by the coloured people, Thomas knew, that, notwithstanding his early age, he might hope to interest them in the cause of temperance. He argued with them. He read to them extracts from documents. He repeated to them remarks from addresses. Several yielded to his persevering solicitation. If any one violated the pledge, he earnestly entreated him to make a second trial.

So benevolent an effort to instruct the ignorant, prosecuted for years,

must necessarily have improved him in many respects, especially in the use of language. His remarkable fluency of speech and readiness in argument resulted in part, no doubt, from these continued exercises. In teaching others we instruct ourselves. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

In my next letter I will give you an extract from a temperance address which he delivered before his fellow-students, on a public occasion. I will here say a few things respecting his style of speaking. It was so remarkably eloquent, so uniformly happy, that he had previously been elected a member of a debating society, of which he continued to be, up to his death, by far

the youngest member, and, it is believed, one of the most esteemed disputants.

The youthfulness of his appearance, his graceful form and natural gestures, his kindling animation, his sparkling bright eye and great self-possession, and the softness and compass of his well-modulated, flowing voice, threw a charm around ideas, which, pronounced indifferently by one of mature years, might not have appeared to possess any rare excellence.

And now, dear James, let me exhort you wholly to abstain from all intoxicating liquors. It is the only safe course. I lately saw a young man who had been brought up in circumstances similar to your

own, evidently under the influence of ardent spirits. He has already injured his character, and wasted the greatest portion of a large estate. And yet I heard him say, he hoped to be saved, in answer to his mother's prayers. Still he drinks. What infatuation! From so low a degradation, you may be saved, in the good providence of God, by total abstinence from all that can intoxicate.



LETTER XXII.

AN EXTRACT FROM HIS ADDRESS ON TEMPERANCE.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Here is the promised extract from Thomas's speech. "That the debased drunkard should join the total abstinence society, will not be denied by any one, because by total abstinence alone can he be reclaimed, and restored to reputation, health and happiness. But that the moderate drinker, and those who, perhaps, do not drink at all, should join it, many deny.

"To the moderate drinker, we would remark, that the drunkard

was once like himself. He took his glass a day, and when warned of his danger, would laugh and say, that he could restrain his appetite for liquor if he chose. But, alas! he tampered with temptation; and in his full confidence of safety fell.

“Where is he now? Go to the gutter, and see him covered with rags and pollution, scoffed and jeered at by the thoughtless and unfeeling.

“Go to his home, if home he has, and see him there. His children crouch and tremble at his approach. His sorrow-stricken, heart-broken wife gives vent to her overcharged feelings by a flood of tears.

“Now it is possible, by embrac-

ing the principles of total abstinence, this degraded and miserable creature may be fortunately rescued. It is likewise possible, that, by neglecting these principles, the moderate drinker, who has never regarded himself in the slightest danger, may become equally abandoned.

“Let us look at a case in point. A little more than three years ago, on an extremely cold night, shivering in a grog-shop in Cincinnati, sat a young man about twenty-five years of age, but apparently much older. He was evidently a victim of a depraved appetite.

“At length an acquaintance of his, by the name of Simmons, entered. After looking at him a moment, he said to the bar-keeper,

‘Brown, why do you let this loafer sit here, to the annoyance of respectable people?’

“‘I have often told him to keep away from this place,’ replied the barkeeper. ‘The next time he comes here drunk, I will send him head and heels into the street.’ This insulting question and the harshness of the answer cut poor William H. to the quick.

“Though he was degraded, he had one virtue left, and that was decision. He arose to go; he knew not whither. The God of mercy, against whom he had so outrageously sinned, was his guide. Two years passed away. William H. had become a reformed man and a respectable member of society.

“One morning he took up a daily newspaper, and his eyes fell upon the words, ‘Coroner’s inquest.’ To his astonishment and grief, he read that George Simmons, this moderate drinker, who spoke so scornfully of his presence, had died in an alms-house, from the effects of intemperance!

“So much for temperate drinking. Now the man who does not drink spirits at all, is certainly in no danger, if he will determinately persevere in his present course. Possibly by joining a total abstinence society, his steadfastness may be rendered more absolutely certain.

“But he should take this step, for the sake of his influence. In

union is strength. Every virtuous man should strive to make and preserve others virtuous. We should not labour for ourselves alone. Why should he not join the society if he never drinks aught that can intoxicate? Certainly no harm can grow out of it, and great good may be the result."

Such, my dear James, were his sentiments. Such was his manner of presenting them. But, as you have already been informed, he did not recommend one course and pursue another. Happy himself, in being free from all desire of the intoxicating cup, he wished that all others might share in the same rich blessing.

LETTER XXIII.

HIS LAST ILLNESS.

MY DEAR JAMES, — Thomas's last illness was long and painful. Early in the spring of 1845, after a winter of much affliction, his disease was regarded as decidedly dangerous. An abscess had formed in his back. No applications could remove it. A severe surgical operation was necessary. "I will bear it," he said, "as well as I can."

I have heard his physician say, that he never saw any one exhibit more fortitude than he exhibited on that trying occasion. Considering

the age of his patient, he spoke of it as very remarkable; indeed, almost incredible. A Christian can serve God by suffering his will with resignation, as well as by doing his will with fidelity. As we are yet "in the flesh," we know not what is before us. But God can always support us.

The dressing of the abscess was, for a long time, very painful. He submitted to it without a murmur, merely requesting that it might be done by his mother. He fancied, (and it was a very natural fancy in a sick child,) that no one could attend to him so gently as his fond mother. Besides, it soothed him to hear her expressions of sympathy and encouragement.

It is pleasant to consider his heroic manliness in enduring so much acute pain. But some can bear great afflictions with fortitude, who give way to discontent and peevishness, when tried by months of weakness and confinement. You will be gratified to learn, that, week after week, he never showed the least impatience. On one occasion, and I believe it was the only occasion for a long period, he wept. "What is the matter, Thomas?" said his mother. "I was thinking, my mother," he replied, "that if I live, I shall always be a cripple."

He was not only patient, but for the greater portion of the time very cheerful. He frequently uttered expressions like this: "I have every

thing that I desire!" How many who murmur at their lot would be more than barely contented, if they bore in mind the blessings with which they are favoured, and the evils from which they are exempt.

As long as he was able to read, he read much, particularly in the Bible. He also conversed freely. When he became weaker, he took much pleasure in listening to others. He was very fond of hearing hymns sung. In this exercise he would take part, so far as he had strength to do so.

During his illness he appears to have had very clear evidence of the favour of God. He firmly believed that he was pardoned and accepted of God through repentance and faith

in Jesus Christ. On one occasion he said, "I do believe that God has heard my prayer." Can a youth, my dear James, have a more delightful reflection than that the great and glorious God of the universe has heard his supplication?

At times his joy seemed to be inexpressibly great. He heard a Christian, who had recovered from a dangerous illness, say, "The nearer I thought myself to death, the happier I felt." "That," said he, "is just my experience." Once he remarked, upon seeing how sad his relatives were whenever he was worse, "When you are the most gloomy, I am the most happy." He repeatedly expressed his thankful-

ness to God, and his reliance on His grace in these two lines :

“ I'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.”

How clearly do we see, in his experience, the loveliness of early piety ! Here was a youth, exhausted with a wasting illness, in an ecstasy of grateful emotions, feeling that he was blessed with all that was necessary to his happiness ; while many, doubtless, of his own age, were at that very hour miserable, under the influence of pride, envy, revenge, or some other guilty passion.

He often repeated hymns, or quoted passages from the Bible, in a sweet, well-modulated voice, while a serene contentment was indicated by the placid features of his pale,

expressive countenance. The last hymn he ever sang through, contained this stanza :

“ Though troubles assail, and dangers affright,
Though friends should all fail, and foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
The promise assures us, the Lord will provide.”

After singing the words, “the Lord will provide,” he said, with great solemnity, “Yes, mother, I hope so.”

One day he said, “My sufferings are severe, but my pain of body is not so great as my grief in hearing my mother’s sighs, and in witnessing her distress.” His frequent remarks, of a similar nature, and his constant conduct, clearly evinced that he was less thoughtful of his own than of his mother’s sufferings.

What a beautiful, and sublime, and touching picture of filial gratitude and love! He saw all his youthful hopes of earthly happiness cut down like flowers prematurely to wither: he saw his own fair form bereft of much comeliness, and hastening to decay. He felt, in his once active limbs, all the weakness of extreme old age. He was, in a great measure, deprived of the delightful and long-indulged pleasure of reading. He was no longer permitted to mingle in the active scenes of the town; to see nature in her sweet variety of fields and forests, streams, valleys and mountains. He was no longer able to receive many of his friends and companions. Yet under all these deprivations, and with

much intense pain, he again and again strove to comfort his mother, and in his efforts felt that his deep sympathy with her, in the anguish of anticipated bereavement, was the greatest part of his distress.

About a week before his death, he requested that they would sing for him the hymn commencing with

“I would not live away,” &c.

While singing the words,

“I would not live away, no, welcome the tomb,

Since Jesus has lain there, I dread not its gloom,”

he looked up to his mother, who was standing close to his bed, and smiling, said, “My mother, there is no gloom there for me.”

LETTER XXIV.

AN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION.

MY DEAR JAMES,—A conversation most important in its results will now be related. One day his mother and himself were alone. As his life was despaired of, some allusion was made to his approaching end. Now many a mother would have regarded it a kindness to persuade her child that his life was in little danger. Many a child would have shunned so awful a subject. To him it was not painful. To both it was a subject of most intense interest.

She said to him, "My son, is there any thing on your mind that you wish me to attend to for you?"

He replied, "Yes, my mother." He then requested that she would give his watch to his sister-in-law; his gun to a school-fellow to whom he was much attached; his new Latin Lexicon to a young friend, the son of a widow who was in straitened circumstances; and other articles as she might think proper.

"Is there," said she, "nothing else, my son?"

He had frequently been with his mother in the narrow disagreeable lanes of the poor. He had heard dialogues between her and ragged, sorrowful children, like this:

"Have you no better clothes?"

“No.”

“Can you spell and read?”

“No.”

“Where do you live?”

“I am here now, but I do not know where I shall be.”

“Who is your mother?”

“My mother is dead.”

He had himself gone to the wretched rooms of the poor to supply their wants. He knew the worst feature in the condition of such children is the want of instruction, and their exposure to vice. On the Sabbath-morning no kind hand led them to church.

He had seen another side of the picture. He had seen orphan children, who had been taken into an asylum. They were well clad. Their

manners were improved. They were daily receiving important knowledge. Their cheerful and animated countenances seemed to answer the above questions thus: "We can all spell, madam, and read too. We have other nice clothes. It is true we have all lost our affectionate mothers, but we have here found a dear good mother. Besides, all the ladies who come to see us speak kindly and smile. We have good beds, good rooms, good food and light hearts."

He had heard his mother frequently express a desire to have such an asylum established in the town. He had been silently reflecting upon the subject, that he might be the instrument, even on his death-bed, of gratifying her

whom he dearly loved; and also of doing a vast amount of good to friendless and houseless orphans.

With these thoughts, which had taken possession of his mind, he said,—in answer to his mother's second question, "Is there nothing else, my son?"—

"My mother, I want you to ask father to buy a lot, out of the portion of his estate which would have fallen to my share, and to establish upon it an Orphan Asylum."

I need not say that his father was surprised and delighted with this request. Indeed, it is affecting even to a stranger to see a pale, suffering youth, forgetting himself, and planning for the poor: not un-

mindful of his few days, but more mindful of coming generations.

“It shall be done,” said his father. Nineteen months afterwards, the asylum was opened and received a company of needy children!

This conversation, by its result, has reminded me of a public meeting held at York, in England. It was a meeting of noblemen and others, to devise a monument for William Wilberforce, one of the best and greatest of men. The Chancellor of England, Lord Brougham, was in the chair. One arose and said, that he could think of no better monument for Mr. Wilberforce than an asylum for blind children, to be called by his name. The sugges-

tion was adopted, and immense sums were subscribed for it.

They procured a part of the old Abbey of Saint Mary, which king Henry the Eighth, more than three hundred years before, converted into a palace. Being in York last summer, I saw, on the Sabbath, more than thirty blind boys going to church with their teacher. A boy who could see, led them by a long cord, which, two by two, about a yard apart, they all held. Then followed the blind girls in the same manner. Should you ever be in York, go to the old palace and see them. It will do your heart good. I found more than sixty pupils. They appeared very happy. A class in Arithmetic was before the teacher.

It would have amused you to see their mode of ciphering. A little boy was called up to read for me. He laid his fingers on the letters and read delightfully. And should you ever be in Petersburg, (Virginia,) inquire for this orphan asylum. There you will see bright faces, and hear happy voices. Both institutions will doubtless last for ages upon ages. Did ever a man have a better monument than William Wilberforce? Did ever a youth have a better monument than Thomas C. Paul? Yet I am confident that neither aimed at a monument. "He builds too low who builds beneath the skies."



LETTER XXV.

“THE THOMAS C. PAUL FEMALE ORPHAN ASYLUM.”

MY DEAR JAMES, — In my last letter I informed you that Thomas, on his death-bed, aided by his mother, secured the establishment of a Female Orphan Asylum, which went into operation on the first day of January, 1847. The Legislature of Virginia incorporated it under the name and style of “The Thomas C. Paul Female Orphan Asylum.”

This tribute of respect paid to his name, under the sanction of the State Legislature, may do much

good. It will certainly make a deed, worthy of remembrance and full of interest, more extensively known. It may lead many a youth to inquire into his manner of life, and to emulate his virtues. It may result in correct views and good resolutions. Correct views and good resolutions, early embraced, must greatly affect the whole life.

A child born to wealth may say, "Father, what does 'The Thomas C. Paul Female Orphan Asylum' mean?" When it is all explained, and his little heart is warmed with an account of poor orphans made happy, he may add, "Father, if I die as young as Thomas C. Paul died, I wish you would build an asylum for poor orphan boys, or in

some other way do good to the poor and suffering." The child of poor parents may say, "Mother, if I ever get to be a rich man, I will build a large house, and fill it with motherless children, and give them all new clothes and every thing good." In such kind and generous feelings they may first taste the luxury of benevolence. Ever after they may befriend the orphan and all who are in distress.

I will, my dear James, give you some account of the asylum itself. It is under the efficient direction and control of a first and second directress, and twelve other ladies, who constitute a board of managers. Divided into committees, they visit the asylum three times

a month, and hold quarterly and special meetings. Their term of office is for one year.

It is the duty of the matron, to whom the children are committed, to provide plain and wholesome food for their meals; to be faithful, tender, and diligent in the care of their health and morals; to preserve order and decorum in their conduct; to train them up in habits of industry and usefulness, and to read the Scriptures, and hold family prayer with them, morning and evening. They are taught spelling, reading, writing, and the five common rules of arithmetic; also sewing, marking, knitting, washing, ironing, kitchen and household work.

I will give you an extract from

a letter written by a gentleman who lately saw these orphans. "The present number," he writes, "is sixteen. A happier or more healthy parcel of children, I have rarely seen. This, I believe, is the general remark of those who visit the asylum—I mean, of strangers and all who are unconnected with it." My dear James, is it not delightful to think of this large, contented, peaceful family in their well-furnished, comfortable dwelling, with its pleasant lot attached, where they can all breathe the fresh air undisturbed? Will they not love one another as sisters, and the kind ladies who watch over them as mothers?

In nineteen months after the death of Thomas, this cheerful fami-

ly of children was organized. That winter, they numbered, if I mistake not, fourteen. They were collected from their uncomfortable abodes at a very opportune time. Soon the measles prevailed, and proved fatal to many children. The inmates of the asylum found, during their illness, many comforts and attentions which they would not have received, if the disease had overtaken them a few weeks before.

They found themselves in pleasant rooms. A good physician was promptly called in to their aid. Benevolent ladies were with them, day and night, for some of them were very ill. Can the girls who survived, forget the kindness which they then received? Do they not

thank God? Are they not grateful to their benefactors? I hope so truly. Many are the unthankful. But there is much genuine gratitude in the world. Ingratitude is hateful in the eyes of God and man.

You will be sorry to learn that two of the orphans died of the measles. But during their short residence in their new home, they had been taught to worship God. May we not hope their prayers were answered? In the providence of God, may not the early death of Thomas C. Paul result in a long life to some, and in eternal life to many? The thought has occurred to my mind, that these two spirits may have met in heaven, and have

been already recognised as the first fruits of this great enterprise.

When ages shall have slowly rolled away, this asylum will probably be in successful operation. Then his birth-day may be observed by orphans, and even by families made happy, under God, through his piety and forethought. Then one may say, "My mother was educated in the asylum;" another may add, "So was my grandmother." Then may one with a trembling voice remark, "I am one of the very few who live to extreme old age. My children, my grandchildren, and their children, are nearly one hundred. They are mostly virtuous. Many of them are very pious. All this we owe to the good providence

of God, who by his servants led me from a miserable lane, where I was exposed to all manner of evil, to the Thomas C. Paul Female Orphan Asylum in Petersburg.”



LETTER XXVI.

HIS DEATH.

MY DEAR JAMES,—It was a matter of great consolation to the relatives of Thomas, that God was pleased to favour him with a perfect command of all his faculties up to the last moment of his life. His reason never for an instant left him. Death approached so surely, that all hope of recovery was given up by his friends and himself. Death approached so slowly, that, for several days, the general inquiry was, “Is he alive?”

When Job was overwhelmed with all his calamities, and his wife

urged him "to curse God and die," he exclaimed, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And it is added, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." So in these slow hours of pain and perfect prostration, there fell not from the lips of Thomas a single word unworthy of a dying Christian. Truly, "Great peace have they that keep the law of the Lord."

One morning, three or four days before his departure, when his mother entered the room, she perceived that he had some thought to communicate. "My mother," said he, in a faint voice, "I want you to be willing to give me up. The Lord's will must be done. He knows best.

I have two little brothers in heaven. It is better that I should go to them." He added, "I wish to be resigned." He paused, and said emphatically, "I AM resigned to the will of the Lord."

About this period he quoted these words to his mother: "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth unto himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." This was certainly a very remarkable quotation, whether we consider his years, or his death resulting in the establishment of an orphan asylum.

He laid hold of such divine promises as these: "Fear not, for I

have redeemed thee. Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." He realized these promises, and could say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Among other lines, it is remembered that he repeated these:

"My suffering time shall soon be o'er,
Then shall I sigh and weep no more;
My ransomed soul shall soar away,
To sing God's praise in endless day."

Perhaps you remember, dear

James, the beautiful and affecting verses in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, beginning with these words: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." How confidently did he look forward to the speedy fulfilment of this sustaining promise!

He was evidently happy in the belief that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned his sins, and graciously favoured him with the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness with his spirit, and filling his soul "with joy unspeakable." Several times he remarked,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

On the evening before he expired, he appeared unconscious. His mother said, "My child, speak to your mother; is Jesus with you?" He made no reply. His father said, "He will never speak again;" and then requested his brother, Mr. William Paul, to commend him to God in prayer. Soon after, when some members of the family wept aloud, he opened his eyes, as from a sleep, and said, "Don't do so. Go to your rooms and compose yourselves."

Late in the last night of his life, when every hour seemed to be his last, he said, with that considerateness which was one of the most striking features of his character, "Now, my mother, go and take your rest. Others can do every

thing that is necessary." Just before he expired, he tried to speak, but his tongue had become for ever silent. His mother leaned over him and said, "My child, it is your own dear mother." He sweetly smiled. It was the last effort of nature. It was a rainbow on life's last cloud. Said one, who in tears witnessed that closing interview between the mother and the child who had been so constantly together for thirteen years, "I would not have missed seeing that smile on any account." Tell me, my dear James, is it not worth a life of self-denial, to smile in death?

LETTER XXVII.

HIS UNCLE'S LETTER.

MY DEAR JAMES,—To give you an idea of the estimation in which Thomas was held by his relatives, the following extract is taken from a letter written by his uncle, Mr. William Paul, a merchant of Portadown, in Ireland, whom I mentioned in my last letter. This uncle saw him for the first time during his last illness, which was both protracted and painful.

Thomas had anticipated this visit with a pleasure which he fully realized. He had often read letters

from this esteemed relative. He had for years been fully acquainted with the depth of his piety, the warmth of his affections, and his engaging manners. Nothing could surpass the tenderness of their intercourse. With a difference of about forty years in their ages, they conversed with all the freedom and familiarity of two confiding friends, who had grown up in habits of the closest intimacy from their very childhood.

Thomas had so cultivated his mind as to make himself interesting as a companion to the most intelligent. Mr. Paul, amid all the cares and excitement of a busy life, had preserved his social feelings in all their youthful freshness. But

their religious views and hopes, more than any thing else, united their hearts in delightful fellowship.

On one occasion, when his uncle was about to read to him, he said, "If you have not made selection of a hymn, please turn to the one beginning with

‘Vain, delusive world, adieu.’”

As usual on such occasions, his soul seemed wholly occupied with pious and pleasing reflections. As soon as he was left alone with his mother, he exclaimed, while his eye was beaming with rapturous animation, "Could any one ever be weary of hearing my uncle converse and pray?"

Mr. Paul, on his return to Ire-

land, a few weeks after the death of this affectionate nephew, wrote thus to the bereaved father: "My first feeling was to tell you of my safe arrival, and then to talk over your recent bereavement. I hardly know what to say. I saw the wreck only of your precious boy. But I am very thankful that I saw what I did.

"I have been dwelling on his whole character, his patience and resignation, his well-instructed mind, his benevolent heart, his charity and love. Hundreds of times since I left you, have I dwelt on all I saw and heard; and yet, all I knew was but little of his varied excellencies.

"I have dwelt on the demon-

stration of public feeling, the inquiries while he was living, the sympathy, the affection, the tears, when he was no more; your church at the funeral sermon, the funeral itself, and all. I have been thinking of all, and have been telling my friends all. I have said to them, 'I never saw such a lad before, and I shall never again see his equal in this world.' While telling them this tale, the chord which vibrated in my heart influenced theirs also.

"Since I saw and felt as I did and do feel, and others who never saw him feel as they do at your loss, what must be the emotions of his mother and yourself, who have watched over him month after month, in all his advancement in wisdom

and knowledge, in all his devoted attachment to her and yourself, and who have looked to his future prospects, when he would be to you and to his friends, to his town and his country, an inestimable blessing?

“What must be your feelings? I can enter into them a little, and but a little. I can only sympathize and pray. Your wound can be healed by that hand alone which was nailed to the cross. I have told my friends here how you committed your cause and his to your heavenly Father, and how he sustained you in that dreadful hour.

“As I was talking to one of our mutual friends, he remarked that such a lad as I told him of, if spared to manhood, would have out-

stripped us all, and would have had no compeers or associates.”

Such were the sentiments of this observing and conscientious uncle, who had every qualification and opportunity necessary to form a just estimate of his character.

Being lately in Ireland, I visited Mr. Paul, and heard him give a very interesting account of his conversations with Thomas. He admired his intelligence, his judgment, his easy, gentle manners, and his sweet, obliging disposition. But I observed he spoke particularly of his fervent piety and entire resignation to the will of God. Never did a nephew endear himself more to an uncle in so short a time.

LETTER XXVIII.

REMARKS BY HIS PHYSICIAN.

MY DEAR JAMES,—Dr. William J. Mickie attended Thomas in his last illness. He found his youthful patient possessed of a social, affectionate and confiding disposition, inclined to make, and ready to answer inquiries. It was a great relief to his anxious mind to find his young friend so well prepared for the worst and most probable issue. Soon after the funeral, he wrote the following letter:

“During the early part of Thomas C. Paul’s last illness, in which it

was my lot to attend him, he spent much of his time in reading. History, I think, was his favourite study; particularly sacred history, from his knowledge of which, many a man of intelligence might have derived much useful instruction.

“His fortitude and patience during his long and painful affliction, surpassed any thing I have ever witnessed. When his kind and affectionate parents, whom he so tenderly loved, would bend over his rapidly wasting frame, or even enter the room with desponding looks, he would, though suffering much himself, cheer them with his sprightly voice.

“Often, very often, have I heard

him say to his fond mother, 'My mother, don't look so sad. I am no worse.' Truly may it be said, that though but a child in years, and on his death-bed, yet was he the constant comforter of his distressed parents and friends.

"During his illness, the time arrived when his father's business usually called him to the North. Thomas knew it. And though it was evident that it would cause him a great struggle to be separated from that dear father whose presence never failed to cause the smile to play upon his pale countenance, yet, strange as it may appear, he insisted upon his going, saying, that duty must not be sacrificed to pleasure, that his hea-

venly Father and his mother would take care of him during his absence.

“His medicines, however nauseous, were taken without a murmur. But such was his abhorrence of ardent spirits, from which he had always abstained, that when, from his rapidly declining strength, it was thought advisable to prescribe it, he at first positively refused to take it, saying, that he would take any thing else. He finally yielded to the urgent entreaties of his parents and friends.

“The necessary pain attending the dressing of his abscess, he bore with fortitude far beyond his years; particularly when that task, as was generally the case, was performed

by the tender hands of his beloved mother. When finally he was told, that in all human probability he had not long to live, so far from being depressed, he became more cheerful than usual.

“One morning, in the passage, I met his father, who told me that he had just communicated to his son the sad intelligence. What was my astonishment on entering his room, a few moments after, to find him in the most calm and cheerful mood. In a sweet and almost heavenly tone, he repeated to me what his father had said, and asked me if I thought so too.

“Not answering him immediately, he entreated me not to be afraid to tell him, saying, that death and the

grave had no terrors for him, save that of a momentary separation from his parents and friends. When I told him that I feared his father's communication was but too true, he spoke in the most beautiful strains, and with perfect composure, of the mercies of a redeeming Saviour, and of the joys of that sweet heaven where he would soon again meet his father and mother, and all those who love God.

“He repeated several most appropriate passages of Scripture in confirmation of Christ's love for those who seek him early. From that time he spoke much of death, of a future state, and of a full assurance that he would dwell for ever with Jesus and the angels.

For some eight or ten days previous to his death, I was unavoidably separated from him.”



LETTER XXIX.

REMARKS UPON HIS CHARACTER BY HIS
PASTOR.

MY DEAR JAMES,—From his earliest years Thomas frequently saw ministers of the gospel in his father's family. He was remarkably attentive to their instructions. How often since the days of the Shunamite, who provided the little chamber on the wall for Elisha, has the blessing of God descended upon the children of those who have entertained His servants. His pastor, the Rev. H. B. Cowles, in kindly furnishing the following testimony, may be regarded as expressing the

common sentiments of many clergymen :—

“This lovely and most interesting youth bore his painful afflictions, of fourteen weeks’ continuance, with that patience which would have been becoming in a matured Christian. For several weeks preceding his death, he was entirely satisfied of his acceptance with God, and the evidence which he gave of a change of heart was conclusive to his parents, and to those friends who heard his conversation, and witnessed his patient resignation.

“About two weeks before his departure, when he was supposed to be dying, his father knelt at his bed-side and asked, “My son, does your heavenly Father accept you?”

Being unable to speak, he promptly nodded assent, and, sweetly smiling, gave assurance that all was well.

“At another time he said, he did not desire to recover; that he read in the Bible that, when king Hezekiah was sick, he prayed to be raised up, and the Lord answered his prayer, and added to his life fifteen years; that, after this, he departed from the Lord; and that, if the Lord were to raise him up, he might do so too.

“He was deeply impressed that he was not his own, but that he was bought with the precious blood of Jesus. His favourite passage of Scripture was Rom. xiv. 8: ‘Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the

Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.' When informed that he would die, he spoke of the happiness which he would realize in meeting in heaven with his two little brothers, who had died some years before.

“He frequently told his friends, and especially his afflicted mother, not to weep for him. Thomas was certainly a most remarkable youth. No one who ever visited his father's house could be otherwise than impressed with his manly intelligence and dignified bearing; for though but a child in years, he would often engage in conversation on serious and important subjects, and sustain himself in a manner that would

have been creditable to one of mature age.

“He was fond of books, and devoted to his studies, and thereby enriched his mind with useful information. He greatly delighted in administering to the wants of the poor and distressed. His zeal in the cause of missions was remarkable, and merits the highest commendation. He heard the gospel preached with great attention, and was admired for his obedience to his parents.

“He was indeed the joy of the happy family circle and the delight of his numerous friends. Fond hopes had been cherished of his future usefulness, but God has seen fit to take him to himself; and

while the hearts of afflicted parents and endeared relatives and friends bleed, it becomes all, in submission to the Divine will, to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' "

You will perceive, my dear James, how this general view of his character corresponds with all the accounts which you have heretofore received. Owing to the absence of his pastor at the time of his death, another minister preached his funeral sermon. Unavoidably absent myself also, I learned with pleasure that his life was commented on, to an unusual concourse of sad and sympathizing citizens, in very impressive and appropriate terms.

LETTER XXX.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT HIS DEATH.

MY DEAR JAMES,—It has already been mentioned that Thomas was the youngest member of a debating association, called “The United Fraternity.” In that society, the benevolence of his heart, his powers in argument, and his pleasing manners had appeared to great advantage. Soon after his death was announced, the society met, and in all the solemnity of so mournful an occasion, paid the following tribute to his memory.

“At a meeting of the United

Fraternity Debating Association, held for the purpose of taking in consideration the death of the late Thomas C. Paul, a member of the society, and a student of the Petersburg Classical Institute, it was unanimously

“Resolved, That it is with profound sorrow we view the dispensation of God’s providence, which has deprived our body of an interesting and highly valued member, and which has removed from the bosom of the community an individual in whom were so eminently united the qualities and capacities which dignify and adorn the social sphere.

“Resolved, That it becomes us, as rational and immortal beings, to bow with humble resignation, in

view of this afflicting dispensation of Divine providence, and relying on the promises of his word, and the hopes it inspires, devoutly to say, 'Thy will, O Lord, be done.'

“Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with the afflicted family of the deceased; and that we earnestly and unitedly trust, that in their distressing bereavement they may be sustained by the rich and endearing consolations of the gospel; and be enabled, by the Spirit of all grace, to yield an humble and filial submission to the Divine will.

“Resolved, That in testimony of our affection for the deceased, and in tribute of respect for his memory, we will wear the usual badge of mourning, for thirty days.

“Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased, and to each of the editors in Petersburg, for publication.”

The above resolutions, after being adopted by the society, were read to the assembled members of the Institute, and unanimously adopted by them, and then published in the newspapers of the town. They were the spontaneous effusions of more than one hundred associates, many of whom had known him intimately for several years.

Some of them were seen to weep at his funeral; and all beheld, with unfeigned sorrow, his mortal remains sink into their narrow resting-place. Above that sacred spot

stands a marble monument, and on its side the device of an open Bible, with an appropriate quotation from its sacred page.

But these, his youthful friends, will need no sculptor's aid to remember through life that his symmetrical character was moulded under the influence of Divine grace, by the holy precepts of the Bible. Many of them will probably speak of him, in future years, as having been, of all their acquaintances, the most remarkable instance of early excellence, as having been singularly kind, obliging and exemplary.

I will close this letter, my dear James, with two observations. I do not remember to have read of any one under fourteen years of age,

to whose memory so much respect was universally paid by his companions. The youth that would have such friends must show himself friendly.







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