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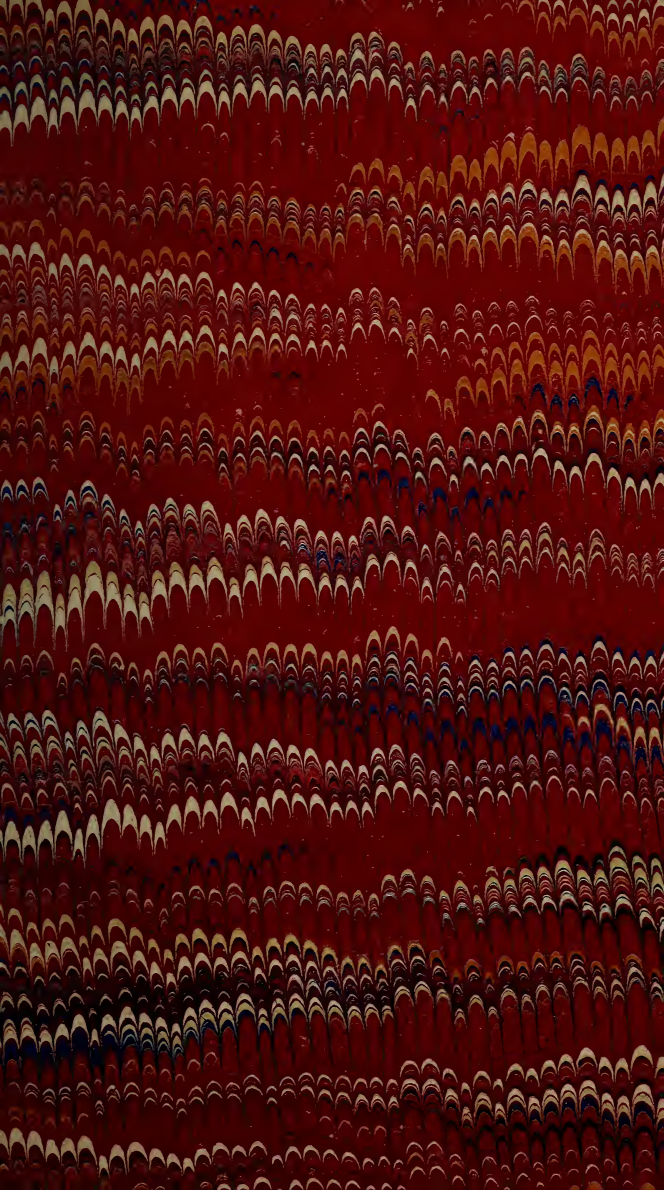
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A SYSTEM  
OF  
MORAL PHILOSOPHY,  
ADAPTED TO  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES,  
AND ESPECIALLY TO  
COMMON SCHOOLS.

26  
5485  
BY REV. D. STEELE,  
AND A FRIEND.



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TO  
THE CHILDREN  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES,  
THIS WORK  
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY  
THE AUTHORS.



## PREFACE.

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THE object of this work is to give a child, at the earliest age, a foundation on which it may build moral reasonings for itself. Children like to have reasons. The questions, "Why is this?" "Why should I not do this?" or "Why should I do that?" are constantly puzzling their little heads; and are frequently made, by them, to puzzle older ones also; and it was thought, that a simple, plain, easy work on Moral Philosophy, would be useful to them, and to the community at large.

But how to produce such a work? That seemed to be a question not easily answered. Moral Philosophy is generally considered as an abstruse and difficult science. Minds of the most powerful character have handled it, only to produce contradictory and clashing systems; and in our colleges, it is given to students only of the most advanced classes and matured intellects, as a kind of finishing-off to their education. It would seem, therefore, to be almost a mad undertaking, to endeavor to reverse this process; and to place Moral Philosophy in the hands of *a child*, at the earliest stages of his education, expecting him to understand and to use it. Yet, if such a thing could be done, it seemed most desirable. For it is important that the moral training of a child should commence with his earliest perceptions; and, particularly,

that it should keep pace with his intellectual advancement in schools. For, without good morals, intellectual power is only power for misery to its possessor, and for mischief to the community; and whenever we produce intellectual, without equal moral advancement, we furnish power without any security or certainty how it will be used. The probabilities are, that it will be used for harm, both to the individual himself and to others.

This is a subject well worthy of attention in a nation like ours, the very existence of which rests upon its tone of public sentiment; where sound morality is as essential to the community as the air we breathe is to the existence of our bodies.

The authors of this work, while feeling the difficulties of this undertaking, were encouraged to it by a full belief, that, what God has made it important to children to know, he has given children capacities to understand.

With this conviction they began their work. They are not ashamed to confess that, small as the book is, and simple as it appears to be, it has been produced only after long and laborious study, (not only of books, but of the heart and of life,) and after many changes of plans, and a greater consumption of ink and paper than would seem possible for such an occasion. The numerous friends of education, to whom they have submitted their manuscript, have encouraged them to hope that their labor has not been lost. If they have succeeded, they will consider it among the happiest events of their lives; if they have not, they trust some

other person may be stirred up by their act to accomplish that which they have here attempted to do.

They have, throughout, studied simplicity and unity; simplicity, in order that the child may understand the system; and unity, in order that he may retain it. God's laws for mind, as well as for matter, are, moreover, all simple,—sublime in their simplicity.

The language, in general, consists of easy words. Now and then a difficult word could not be avoided; and there, the teacher or a dictionary can be brought to the child's assistance. Where children are too young to understand the whole book, *the train of thought*, it is believed, may still be impressed upon them by the teacher or parent; the leading idea is so simple that this may be done at the earliest age, even at five or six years. It is very important to commence moral instruction at the earliest possible age.

The writers would recommend that in schools the work be interposed, as a reading book, so as to be gone over, at least once a month. Questions may then be put by the teacher. It is believed that the book will also be found to be useful in Sunday schools and families.

Although one of the authors is a member of the Methodist, and the other, of the Protestant Episcopal church, they have carefully, and they believe successfully, endeavored to avoid all topics of a sectarian nature. In some instances, for example, in speaking of the great law for spirit, in order to make the thought complete, they should have gone further, and have shown how this love may originate; but they passed this by, as a subject belonging to pulpit teachings, and not required

by their general plan. Their object was to produce a *small, plain, simple* work, with a system so easy of comprehension that the youngest child might understand it, and presented in such a way, that the child might love it also.

*Hagerstown, Md., August 29th, 1846.*



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## CHAPTER I.

### A SCHOOL.

1. WELL, my young friend, I am glad to find you here, engaged with books and study. I wish, now, to sit down by your side, and to have a little conversation about your school.

Suppose that every person attending here, were allowed to come or not, just as he pleases ; to come at any time of the day he pleases, and leave just when he thinks proper ; to study just what he might choose, or not to study at all, if he prefers it ; to say his lessons, or to omit them, as he thinks best ; and to have his choice, whether to talk or to be silent, to play, or to walk about, or to sit still, according to his fancy ; in short, to do just as he pleases ; — now what kind of a school would that be ?

I think you would soon have no school at all.

If all schools were attempted on this plan, people would grow up grossly ignorant and self-willed ; and a thousand frightful evils, — superstition, misrule, corruptions, contentions, would soon deluge our land with blood. Our country would perish ; and its end would be a frightful one.

2. Let us now take a look at schools as they are. You will see that, in a school, everything is governed by rule or law. There may, perhaps, be no *written* laws at all ; but still there *are* rules or laws. For instance, the school is opened at a certain time : that is one rule. Each scholar has his particular place, and his allotted study : there is rule in that. Every one has a time for saying his lesson, and is expected to know something about it : in that there is also rule or law. By a set and known rule you are also let out to play ; called in, again, to your lessons ; passed from one study to another ; and, finally, at a time fixed by rule, you are dismissed to your homes. In all this, as I said, there may not be any rule writ-

ten down : but the rules are as well understood and as well observed as if they were written.

And in this way, by the power of rule or law, we have a school, where are found order and quiet ; where children learn ; and where they grow up prepared to take their parts as good and useful citizens of our country. In this manner, by the power of a few simple laws working in the schoolhouses, all over the land, our country is made prosperous and happy. Law does it all.

3. I mean by this, however, law *supported*, or *enforced*: for suppose your teacher were simply to make a rule that every person should be quiet and orderly in school, and sit in the place appointed for him ; and should do nothing more in the matter ; what would be the result ? Why, one person would soon break the law, and then another, and then another : and the law would soon be like a rope of sand. It would soon be no law at all. To make it do any good, or to be more than a string of words, law must have

something to back it, or support it. Teachers effect this in a variety of ways : by corporeal punishment ; by talking to us till we are pained in our hearts ; by showing how disobedience must grieve parents and friends ; or by showing how it will, in after life, produce grief to ourselves. So that *the fear of suffering* is that which gives law its force. If suffering follow the breach of a law, then a law has force : if suffering do not follow the breach of a law, then it has no force. Is it not so?

So, my young friend, we have learned a little bit of philosophy about schools : have we not? And now, this will be sufficient for our first lesson in these matters.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WORLD.

1. COME, my little philosopher, let us have some further conversation : and, this time, we will talk about the world.

Now, the world, you know, is divided into a great many nations, having quite a



variety of languages: and each nation also has its different manners and modes of living. Some nations are large; some are quite small; and some are only tribes of a few hundred persons, as we see among our western Indians. But great or small, and however different in language and customs, they are all alike in one thing;—*they all have rules or laws.*

Indeed, not only is it impossible for a nation to exist without rules, but no two individuals can, anywhere, live together without some fixed modes or rules of conduct; for, without these, neither person would know what to expect from the other, or how to consult the other's comfort or advantage. So, wherever there is a nation, there must be laws; otherwise every man's actions would clash with every other man's; and there would be the wildest confusion, with strife and misery.

The nation would, at once, perish.

Consequently, in all nations, there are known rules or laws: the fewer and simpler the laws are, the better; but still the nation must have laws.

With us, a portion of the rules are written out, and form the civil laws of the land: a portion of them are not written out, but form what may be called the law of public opinion.

In this case, also, as in that of the school, the law cannot exist unless suffering follow the breach of it: for otherwise it soon ceases to be law at all, and will be found to be nothing but empty words.

2. And now, my young friend, having taken one step higher in our philosophy, you and I are going to take wings and fly to a far wider scene of operations than even our globe. But I want you to take notice of one or two things, before we go.

1st. You perceive that, while you are here in the school, the laws of the great world beyond your school-room, the laws of the nation, reach you and take you under their influence, while you are subject also to their penalties. So that you have two sets of laws resting and acting upon you, the laws of the school and the laws of the land.

2nd. Now, just in the same manner,

people who are out in the world, forming nations and tribes, feel that there are two sets of laws resting and acting upon them. One consists of the laws of the nation, about which we have just been conversing. With these, there is another set of laws upon them, which seem to come from a higher and wider state of things than is here in our world. And so they do. These are the *laws of God*, embracing the universe. These laws you feel to be upon you, also, here in your school.

---

## CHAPTER III.

## THE UNIVERSE.

1. THE universe is so vast that no human thought can reach its limits. Look up at night, my young friend, at the starry sky—a sight that we cannot gaze upon without a feeling of awe stealing over us. Silently the stars rest there, each in its place, just where they were thousands of years ago. All this is by the law of God. These stars look like mere specks to us ;

but each one of them, my young friend, is a great, great many times larger than the whole of our globe. Each one is a sun like our sun; and our sun is 1,384,462 times as large as our world. We can see several thousands with our naked eye; but with good telescopes, we can observe a great many more. By the help of the best telescopes we can get means for estimating, it is said, sixty millions of these stars or suns; who can tell how many more there are, lying beyond the reach of our telescopes? And our sun has thirty globes, some larger and some smaller, passing around it; and if each of the stars, or suns, noticed above, has as many as ours, it will make the amazing number of eighteen hundred millions of worlds, which we may, with some reason, suppose to be within the reach of our calculations. And this may be only the beginning, or the edge, of the mighty universe of God.

*Over all this there is law.* For, otherwise, there would not be order; but confusion and ruin would quickly follow.

2. Our own globe, we know, revolves, that is, passes in a circle, around the sun by fixed law; the moon revolves around our earth by a law that does not change; the other planets belonging to our sun have their laws; and the sun itself is also held fast by the unchanging law of God.

So over the universe of matter law prevails. There can be no doubt also that God's laws extend over the world of spirits, unseen by our mortal eyes; for so Scripture informs us: and we must perceive also that one mind can never know what to expect from another, or how to act for another, unless mind has also its laws, or rules, laid upon it by the Creator. Such is the universality and the excellence of law. A celebrated English writer says, "Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power: both angels and men, and creatures of whatever

condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE HIGHER LAW, OR LAW OF GOD, APPLIED TO MAN.

1. **O**VER all the universe, then, there is law. It comes from some high and mighty power, who is invisible to mortal eye, but one, yet, who has skill to form the law most wisely, and has ability to enforce it. All things give us proof of this. The law, in this case, too, is enforced by suffering; that is, if the law is broken, suffering follows. Thus is it sustained.

By the regular action of this law upon our globe, we know when to look for summer and winter, spring and autumn; we know what seeds to sow, and what will sustain life, and what will not sustain it. We know, that if a man sows

seed on the ocean wave and expects a harvest of grain, he will not get it. If a man says "I will sow in the water in preference to the earth," he breaks God's law, and he suffers. Thus is the law enforced. The law is that the earth is the place for producing grain, and the law is sustained. Man may, if he chooses, sow grain on the ocean, or on a naked rock; the law does not yield; man suffers, and he soon comes back to the law. Thus God supports his law.

Now, my young friend, you and I will look, a little while longer, at the operation of this law upon man; for it is a very interesting subject. First, we will observe it as regards man's body; then we will notice it as it regards the spirit in man; and see how, in both cases, it affects his well-being, or happiness.

2. Man's body, which is a kind of case, or house for the spirit within him, has a number of rules or laws for it; but we can notice only a few of them. The body was made to live and move upon the earth, not in the air, or in the water, or

in the fire. If a man should say, "Nonsense, there is no such law;" or, "I will not regard it," and should jump off from every high place he comes to, as if he thought he could float in the air; if he did not get killed at once, he would soon be covered with bruises; and, if this latter, it would continue, until he would come back to observe God's law. The law surely would not yield for him; he would suffer, and the law would thus be enforced. So, if, in defiance of the laws for body, or because he should take a fancy for it, he should say, "I will live in the water," he would soon find that he was made to live on the land; and perhaps he would be drowned in his mad attempt. If he should say, "I do not believe God's law about food; and I will live on hard rocks, or on the foam that the waves leave along the sea-shore;" he would quickly discover that his teeth were not made for the one, nor his body for the other; there would be suffering. Thus God's law would be enforced. God puts out no hand to prevent a man's doing



these things, if he is so determined; indeed, the whole world could go on and do them if so resolved: but the laws for man's body would not yield. Everywhere, these laws would move on, firm and unchanging; everywhere supported still, by suffering being a consequence of breaking them.

We are now going, my young friend, to take up a higher subject—the laws for man's spirit and its happiness. These we will enter upon in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

1. It is my purpose now, my young friend, to look at man's better nature—his spirit, or that which is, in him, different from matter.

Our body is matter; but we all know that we have something within us different from that; we will call it spirit, or soul.

2. This spirit has two kinds of facul-

ties, or powers: one kind by which we think, reason, judge, &c.; and another kind, by which we feel, as when we have joy, sorrow, hope, anger, jealousy, envy, love, kindness, etc.

I will, if you please, call the first of these our mind, or mental nature, or intellect; the other we will call our feelings, or our moral nature.

3. I am now going, my young friend, to say something which is very important, and I want you to give particular attention to it. It is this:—that, if we wish to be happy, the improvement of our moral faculties, *i. e.* our feelings, must advance equally with the improvement of our minds. A great many persons neglect this. They take great pains to improve their minds; but neglect the improvement of their moral feelings. Now, when this is the case, and where the feelings are wrong, every advance in the improvement of the mind gives people only so much more power for mischief; and, not only does society suffer in consequence of this, but the individual is also a sufferer.

We must be careful to improve our moral faculties just as fast as we improve our minds. If we do not attend to this, the more knowledge we get the more unhappy we shall be.

4. *The mind and the moral feelings act upon each other.* The person who loves what is good and right, and is determined to make them his, will understand what is good and right, quicker than one who does not love or care for them. A bad man will understand that 2 and 2 make 4, or that twice 5 are 10, just as soon as a good one; but in all matters of life, the man who loves the good and right, will have a clearer understanding of them, than one who does not love them.

If we love the good and right, in all things, we shall have a quicker perception and shall find them sooner, in consequence of this love for them; if, when we find them, we receive and love them, we shall have clearer sight for further search; and so it will go on through our life. Angels probably forever, grow both wiser and better, in this way; and, through eternity

will continually be rising higher and higher in the scale of existence.

5. So the love of evil has, evermore, a sinking process in the human soul. It darkens our minds : we try to blind and cheat our reason, and we succeed. We soon come to lose sight of nice differences between right and wrong ; between good and evil ; then we fail to see broader differences ; then we confound good and evil, right and wrong. And so the soul of man may go on, growing more dim in its perceptions, while the love of evil grows stronger and sinks it lower and lower, forever, in the scale of being.

6. You see, my young friend, what an important position you are now in. Here you commence the upward or the downward progress. Your course depends on the direction which you give to the moral feelings in connection with your improvement of the mind.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THIS LAW IN CONNECTION WITH MAN'S PURSUIT—HAPPINESS.

1. **EVERYBODY** wishes to be happy. Everybody is trying to be happy. This is the object of man's life.

Now, my young friend, suppose that a person wishing to enjoy good health and to have his body comfortable, should go and live all the time in the water, or all the time in an oven; or should eat only poisonous food; or when in an upper room, instead of going regularly down stairs, should jump from the window; you know, as we have already shown you, that this man would not have good health. He would soon have his limbs broken; or he would soon die from the poison. And why? Simply because God has made our bodies to live on the land, and in the pure air, and to be supported by good food; and it is one of his laws that we should go slowly, and not violently, down

from high places ; and if we do not that we shall be hurt.

Just so God has formed the soul for certain things, *and has given it laws* ; and to these laws we must accommodate ourselves, if we would be happy. The laws will not yield for us ; we must yield to the laws. All the labor and all the ingenuity in the world will not make us happy, or even comfortable, without this ; any more than all the labor and all the ingenuity in the world would make a man's body comfortable at the bottom of the sea or in a hot fire. All things in the universe are subject to law. Our souls are not neglected. There is law for them. God, who has formed them, and who alone understands the delicate yet powerful machinery of which they are composed, has given them laws, as he has to everything else.

2. What, then, are the laws for the spirit or soul ? Why, my young friend, if you or I, without any help, were to attempt to answer that question, we should be greatly puzzled ; for the spirit of man

is composed of so many parts, and is so hid within us, that it would be very difficult indeed for us to speak, with certainty, on this subject. Who can understand the soul of man, with its vast and varied powers ; some of its parts, apparently, too delicate for an angel's hand to touch, others of the hardest and most powerful character, and some grasping after eternity itself ? We know that there must be law for this spirit, as there is for all things else ; because this is necessary in order to keep its various parts from confusion and strife, and to bind them into order ; but who shall read this law to us, and particularly who shall declare this law, so that a little child may understand it ? God has done this. He who made the soul, and who alone can understand its nature so as not to mistake about it, has written the law down for us, and we all may read and comprehend it. *The law is, that we shall LOVE what is good.* But inasmuch as we might sometimes mistake about what is good ; and because, too, that active good-

ness is always more attractive to us than goodness not in action ; and because that when in action *for us*, it draws our hearts more than it would otherwise do ; therefore the law is that we love GOD, of whom there can be no doubt, who is always good, and whose goodness is ever active, and active for us. This is the law for the spirit : *we are to love God with all our hearts.* God, who has formed the spirit within us and has given to it a law, as he has to everything else, tells us that *this is the law.*

It is in vain for us to think of getting away from this law. We cannot escape from it. We cannot alter it. It is the law for the spirit, just as much as the law of living on the ground and not in mid-air, or in the sea, or in the fire, is the law of our bodies, and cannot be escaped from or altered.

How simple is this law, how easily understood, how beautiful, and how attractive ! A child can understand it ; a child can practise it ; and yet it is the great law for the soul ; the great law for the happiness of all human beings, and doubtless,



too, for all beings of the unseen spiritual world.

3. Springing out of this law, and like to it, is another, that of loving our neighbor, that is, all mankind; for so it is explained. All mankind are our neighbors, and we are told that we must love them as ourselves. But you ask, how can I love all mankind as I love myself? Can it be possible for me to do so; for some people are very bad?

Now listen, then, while I talk to you for a few moments, but you must listen attentively.

Suppose yourself having a friend whom, for good reasons, you love very much. He is a very good friend to you; loves you very greatly, and is very kind to you. You love him in return very truly; so much that it seems as if you loved him with all your heart. You are very, very fond of him; you love to be near him, to see him, to hear him, to feel his kindness to you, and to observe its exercise toward others. And this friend has a son, in whom he is very greatly interested. He is

trying in every way to do him good ; he loves that son very much. I think that, for the father's sake, you would take very great interest in that son, and would love him also. You would not love his bad qualities, or his bad conduct ; but you would love the son for his father's sake ; and take very great interest in him ; and you would join the father in trying to do him good. Am I not right in saying this ?

Now, *God is our friend*. We cannot ever understand fully what a good friend he has been to us. Our neighbor is his son ; all mankind are his children ; and for his sake, we should love them all. If we love him with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and remember too, that, God being our father, all mankind are our brothers and sisters of his family, we shall love all mankind very much.

And let me tell you, my young friend, that the more we come to love others the less we shall wish to love ourselves.

So, if we love God as we ought to do, we shall find it less difficult to love our neighbor as ourselves, than we may now

suppose it to be. How few people make the experiment!

Let us then, when we look abroad on the world, love all people, for God's sake. They are his children, and *he* is our best and kindest friend, and is, or should be, very dear to us. Our love for others will thus depend, not on any changing qualities in them, making it a changing love, but on love to God, who is ever the same; and, therefore, our affection to them will be constant, and will follow them, let them be or act as they may. In God's mighty love to us, and in the warming of our hearts to him, we shall find our reward. The bad qualities of men will not excite in us angry feelings toward the individuals or drive us away from them; for in our sight they will still be God's children, to whom he is ever trying to do good; and we shall try also, with him, to do them good.

4. This will be the action of this great law of love to God, and through him, of love to men. I will, in this book, hereafter, call both these laws, *the great law*

*for the spirit*: for they both may be said to form but one law, the law of love.

That this is the true law for the spirit, we have not only God's word, the Bible, for proof, but we have the fact, that all things act harmoniously with this law. This law once adopted, all things in life come and arrange themselves quietly under it; among all things and all acts there will be union and harmony; and in the heart there will be peace. Far more than that, in the heart there will be true happiness. We all have glimpses of this, at times, when we do each other good. How happy the heart is on such occasions! How our little experience confirms the declaration that *this is God's law for the soul or spirit of man!*

This law of love to our neighbor, does not prevent us from loving others also for their good qualities; good qualities in others are the reflection of God, and we may love all such things truly; but let us love *all mankind* for his sake; for he is our friend, and they are his children, all dear to him.

## CHAPTER VII.

### LOVE.

1. LOVE is a very simple feeling. Everybody knows what it is ; but, by some means or other, it has come to be greatly underrated in the world. It is sometimes thought to be, not only a soft, but almost an unmanly feeling. On the contrary, it is the loftiest, most noble, most energetic, and most life-giving, as well as the most delightful feeling of our nature. St. John was full of love. St. John was also the *bravest* of all the Apostles. He stood by Christ, when the others forsook him ; and was at the foot of the cross, not afraid to be known as a disciple, while the most deadly rage and the fiercest malice were venting themselves on the Saviour. The whole history of England does not present a more noble character than that of William Wilberforce, whose heart was full of love.

It was this feeling that led Howard to seek fearlessly for human sufferings, amid jail fevers and loathsome dungeons ; and this induced the late Mrs. Fry to visit the cells of wild maniacs, where the affection that breathed through her tones and manner, subdued the wildest of them. “ The angels,” one of them said to her, “ the angels have lent you their voices.” Love produces a buoyancy of character which nothing else can produce. We have an instance of this in St. Paul, whom no trials, no persecutions, no disappointments, no rage of man could beat down. His character was remarkable for buoyancy ; love was the cause of it.

We are told in the Scriptures, that God is love ; and it was, doubtless, love which caused him to create the mighty universe with its infinite wonders, full of wisdom, full of grandeur and sublimity. Love is powerful. Love is also full of self-sacrificing kindness ; for it led Christ Jesus to die on the cross for us.

That it is a delightful feeling, and that it opens to the heart a new life, all

who have ever tried it, have experienced. It is perhaps also the only feeling in us which does not cloy by indulgence, or grow wearied by exercise. Love is always fresh, and finds, in every one of its acts, new pleasures as well as increase of strength.

2. It is this feeling, so delightful in its exercise, so simple that every person in the world knows what it is, so comprehensive that it binds man's heart to the whole universe, and so powerful as to be death's triumphant conqueror, it is this which is given from heaven as the great law of the soul. *Thou shalt love* ; this is God's law. He formed the soul, and this is the law which He has given for it. Men may try to form other laws to take the place of this ; and they do try :— laws of hatred, and selfishness, and indifference ; but they try in vain. All such trials will ever fail. If we wish to be happy, we may as well begin, at once, at the right place. All other effort is only time and labor lost. God made the soul ; God knows it. He has given it a law ac-

commodated to it; and we may as well endeavor to raise grain for the sustenance of our bodies by ploughing a hard rock, as to endeavor to be happy except in following this law.

3. I was walking along Broadway in New York a few days since. The street was thronged with people hurrying to and fro. Every one was passing rapidly on his own way, and apparently absorbed in his own affairs. In such a crowd, where every person seems to be alone, there is more solitude than in a desert; and so it appeared to me. But, all at once, I thought of each of these individuals as the centre, at his home or among his friends, of affections all radiating towards him, and he giving affection back again; and to my eye the whole scene was altered. The solitude was gone.

Such is the power of love distantly viewed, and comparatively narrow in its influence. What would the scene be, should the heart of every individual be full of love towards the mighty Creator, the Supreme in excellence, and, through



him, to all mankind. Surely this is the soul's great law. If it were obeyed, how would happiness flash from soul to soul over all the earth!

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CHAPTER VIII.

MODES OF CULTIVATING THIS PRINCIPLE.

1. THEN, my young friend, will you begin life in the right way; or will you, like others, make life one constant succession of toilsome experiments with false laws, to result as they have done, from the beginning of the world, in disappointment, chagrin, and bitter complaints?

You feel disposed, perhaps, to answer wisely; and you ask me, how you are to cultivate this love to God and love to man? I answer, by feeling *that God is your friend*; and then, opening your heart to all the affections which this feeling produces. We have no difficulty in cultivating love towards an earthly friend, when we are satisfied that he is sincerely

attached to us ; that he is a person of excellent qualities ; that he can be depended upon in any trial, and any extremity ; that he is sincerely interested in our welfare, and ever ready to do us a kindness. Now, God is a far better friend, and more to be relied on, and is truer to our interests than any earthly friend has ever been. His affection for us is noble and true, in every feeling and in every act. He is very kind. Kindness from man always melts the human heart, and wins us over to it. God is kind ; every day witnesses his kind acts to us. His kindness is around us like an atmosphere ; we live in it, breathe in it.

He has left marks of his goodness and greatness, too, in every object which meets our eye ; and in every act of his, all the world over. Feel, then, that God, your friend, is always near you ; that no earthly kindness which you have ever known, will compare with the kindness which warms in *him* towards you ; and let your heart open to the influences of those feelings. Your heart will warm

under them : it will increase in love to God. And now, my young friend, remember that love always produces love back again. When a child is affectionate towards a parent, and gives proofs of it, the parent's heart warms, in an unusual degree, towards the child. So God will doubtless love, in a more than common manner, the person who truly loves him. Love is the most precious thing that the heart can bestow : all other gifts follow it freely and plentifully, for then it is the heart's best pleasure to give. See, then, the position of a person who loves God in an especial manner. He has the best treasure that Heaven itself can bestow, God's especial love ;\* and, with it, God will take pleasure in bestowing upon him every other good thing. So, also, with man's regards towards us. Love here also begets love. Show love to man,—manifest it in kindness, and in the peculiarly gentle and winning manner which affection only knows,—and it is not in the power of the human heart to resist it.

\* This is probably meant by the expression, "laying up treasures in heaven."

The heart will open to it, and give affection back again.

The person, then, who follows these commands, will go through life having the most precious things that heaven and earth can give,—the heart's love, love from God and love from man. He will also have great power too, —power upon God's affections; power upon man's heart. What a noble subject for the soul's lofty aspirings!

2. Another mode of cultivating love to God, is by cherishing a feeling of mutuality, if I may use so difficult a word. By this I mean, that we should feel that in every good act which we perform, God is acting with us; and that he is a sharer with us in the pleasure which such a good act communicates to the doer of it.

Where there is true love, there is great pleasure in mutuality. We love to work together with a friend; we love to feel that our labor is mutual, and the result mutual. True affection rejoices in mutuality, and *it* increases affection. The pleasures from mutuality are per-

haps one cause of God's employing angels as ministering spirits.

3. Another way of cultivating love is by *action*. This will apply more especially to our fellow-beings. I have shown how this love for our neighbor, that is, for all mankind, will commence in our hearts. If our love is the true love, it will not lie inactive. Indeed, if it could, it would soon cease to be love; it would die. True love cannot exist without action: it looks for it at once; and, in it, finds some of its highest pleasures. The opportunities for its exercise are all around us. We should not wait for occasions to do something great, letting all other occasions pass. When we love a person, we delight to show it in little, as well as in great things. Indeed, affection is best shown, and it reaches the heart of others most, when it is exercised in small matters. We know, then, that it is an ever-wakeful, watchful love, and therefore that it is true. Every person, and every event in life, gives us an opportunity for its exercise. We can show it in kind looks, in

the tone of our voice, in gentle and kind words, as well as in our doings. We need not wait a moment for occasions for showing this feeling. But especially can we manifest it towards the weak, the afflicted, and the unfortunate. It will be gentle to the failings of others, and will ever try to bring the erring back to the right paths.

“Thy brother hath fallen ;  
 O go to him now,  
 With love in thy bosom,  
 And smiles on thy brow ;

“Speak words of pure kindness,  
 And help him to rise  
 From error to virtue,  
 From earth to the skies.”

4. We must also guard against *pride* ; for pride is a very great enemy to love. Pride is a mischievous and dangerous thing. It drove angels out from heaven once, and will soon drive love from the human heart. Other bad qualities mostly show, at once, what they are, and have something hateful in their appearance ; but pride comes like a well-dressed gentleman, and, touching us on the elbow, says, “ Take care, my friend, your love is not returned ; your

love is not valued as it should be; you are forgetting your own proper dignity; your kind acts are not estimated as they deserve; do not throw them away; give only kindness for kindness; nay, try people a little by looking coldly at them, and see whether they will notice the change in you; and whether they will feel sorry for it at all." So says pride, and sometimes we listen to it; and love dies under its withering power, and we are unhappy. Many a person has been unhappy all through life, in consequence of listening, in this way, to pride.

When it comes, in this manner, do not listen to it at all; but love. You will feel a great deal happier in loving, than in listening to pride. Try the experiment, and you will find that I am right, in saying this.

5. I think, my young friend, that if you love God with all your heart, you will love also to speak to him, just as you would to any earthly friend to whom you are greatly attached; not seldom and coldly, but often, and with affection's warmth of

manner. This is prayer. Our thoughts will turn to him, just as a child's thoughts turn towards its parents, when it is in trouble, or when it wants advice, or when it wants help, or when it is glad. God is our father and friend; and the ear of no earthly friend or father has been so open to us as is his; nor has any heart ever been so affectionate toward us; no one has ever taken such a ready interest in our sorrows, or troubles, or joys, as he does; and surely no one is so able to help us, though he may not always do it exactly as we may wish; for he is a better judge of what is good for us than we are.

Then, all through life, when you are in trouble or doubt, say to him at once, "Father, help me; Father, direct me;" and assuredly he will do it. Very often, in the world, you will hardly know whom to trust, but you can always trust him. And, in your joys, feel that he is sharing them with you; and so, in all situations, no matter where you may be, or how employed, let your heart and your thoughts turn readily, and affectionately, and con-



fidently, toward him. Especially ask him to give you love to him, and to bring you in affection, nearer to him; every day, still nearer.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### LOVE TO PARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVES, AND FRIENDS.

WHILE this exercise of love is not only beautiful, but productive of happiness in all situations, there are none of an earthly nature where it is more attractive than in the family relations of parent and child, brothers and sisters.

It is a wise provision of our Creator that we should begin life under circumstances so well adapted to cultivate in us at once, an observance of the great law for spirit, the law of love. In our early childhood we love, love truly and strongly; and our early life is all bright in consequence of this. It is a pity that we forget the lesson so soon. There is nothing that, in our after life, we

look back to with so many agreeable remembrances and such fond regret, as to our childhood's love. But we do it without gaining from the lesson, or thinking that the law of the spirit has not changed, and that it is, now, as ready to shed its brightness over our manhood or old age. We begin life with the true philosophy, and are happy\* ; we desert the true philosophy as we grow older, and think that we grow wiser, and we are unhappy. This is the history of men.†

My young friend, love your parents and

\* Christ said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." By this, doubtless, was meant, that angels, like children, observe the soul's great law, its true philosophy,—love and confidence.

† *Note for grown people.* It is well worthy of remark, that those sects of Christians which have most preached up love to God and our neighbor, have spread fastest and widest. Their preachers have been, perhaps without knowing it, the true philosophers; hitting exactly the soul's true philosophy.

Doubtless, too, God himself, his character and actions, can best be studied in the human exercise of this affection; for this is the truest reflection of himself. Theologians often forget this; they mistake when they study Him only in the closet. If they wish to study him best, let them also go out into the world, and let their hearts love truly and warmly; let them watch the operation of such love in themselves and others; and they will be sure to find it an excellent book, in which to study their Creator, his character and his acts.

the other friends that cluster with you around the family hearth. Love springs up readily and freely in the youthful heart. Do not check it ; but cherish it, so that it may grow strong, and accompany you out into the world, to diffuse there its cheerful light over your existence. And value the love which you receive from parents and friends, in return. Love, as I have already said, is the best treasure that the universe can afford ; and from parents and friends it is always strongest and best. Trust it. You may not always be able to understand fully what your parents are designing or planning for you. Indeed, how can you ? For their judgment has had time and experience to enlighten and guide it, and yours has not ; therefore you cannot always understand what they design for you. And when their plans are the widest and largest for you, you will necessarily be able to understand them the least. But trust them ; for there is no earthly love like that which we meet with at home.

Do not grieve their affection. If you do anything now to hurt your parents' feelings, you will think of it with pain in all your future life. You will look back, and think how true and strong their love was for you; and you will compare it with the coldness and treachery of the world around you; and you will sorrow that you did anything to give pain to those who loved you so well.

There is a large empire, the empire of China, the largest and oldest in the world. It is composed of materials that seem to hang loosely together, and the government appears to have little power. Yet it has existed and has prospered for a great many hundred years; and this, apparently, chiefly because unusual pains are taken, in China, to instruct children in the duty of loving and honoring their parents. It is the subject of instruction in schools, and of lectures in public places; and every instance of disrespect is severely punished by the officers of justice. Afterwards, as children grow up, they are

taught to regard the emperor as the father of his people; and thus a feeling of reverence is attached to him. And in this manner the country is kept in a quiet and flourishing state. I do not, of course, intend to recommend everything in China; but this subject is well worthy of attention and remark.

Love, then, your parents, and brothers and sisters, and all your relations and friends. Love warmly and truly. It will be the best preparation that you can make for life, and the great object of life; for it will open the surest way to happiness. How beautiful, that God should have made this most important lesson so easy a one to learn; and should have made it the first in life that our heart turns to; and that he has spread around it so much that is bright and attractive! Learn now, and then go and practise the lesson through life; and life will all be bright and attractive.

## CHAPTER X.

### VARIOUS CASES APPLIED TO THIS GREAT LAW.

1. You will easily see, then, my young friend, that the soul, with all its nice and delicate powers, having been so made by its Creator that it can be happy and comfortable only while acting according to this great law of love, everything in life is to be judged by the effect it has upon us, with regard to this *law*. That which helps us to observe it, is desirable; that which does not so help us, is undesirable. I know that men generally, do not judge so in the world; but we know that there is a great deal of misery in the world, and it arises from man's misjudging in this matter. God has so formed his laws, and has formed the soul for them; and all misjudgment or misaction of men cannot alter the laws or the soul, and must only bring wretchedness on themselves.

All the work of all the men in the

world cannot make rocks or wind good food for the body ; and for this good reason, that the body was not made to feed on either. Such efforts would be labor lost. Just so it is with the spirit of man. We must act according to that for which it was made, and which was made for it, or our pains will all be thrown away. It is surely best to begin right at once.

2. Afflictions, such as sickness or infirmities, or losses of any kind, are, then, not evils ; but are the contrary, if they help us in the practice of these two laws. Poverty is not an evil, but a good to us, if it so helps us. Wealth, honors, power, are evils, if they hinder us in observing these laws. No power on earth can make them promote our happiness, if they so hinder us. They will, in that case, hinder our happiness. So God has made us. This is the true standard by which all things are to be judged.

3. As a consequence of all this, we must see clearly that any injury which we do to a fellow-being is, at the same time, a great injury to ourselves. It is

acting contrary to this law of love; and our souls cannot be happy in such contrary action. God has so formed the soul, and we cannot make it otherwise. True, for a while, we may have a kind of happiness from such an act; just as the body, if we take opium or ardent spirits, will, for a while, feel their influence. But then the body soon pays for this short-lived enjoyment; for the body was not made to thrive in the use of these, and cannot be made so to thrive. Just so it is with the spirit of man, when he injures others. There may be a short-lived pleasure, but the soul is not in its proper action, and soon suffers for it. No power in the world can prevent this from taking place. Do not, therefore, ever injure a person. *Love, love*; this is the law. There you will be happy, — only there.

4. We sometimes, through ignorance, or want of judgment, may do an injury to others, without intending it. In that case, if we have taken proper pains to inform ourselves, and to have a correct



judgment, we do not transgress the law of love. But, as soon as we discover our error, we should apologize for it, and set it right. If we do not act thus, we cannot be happy; we are transgressing this law of love. All the world cannot wipe off the unhappiness of this act from us. Let any one just try the experiment of confessing a fault, and rectifying it, and see how happy he will feel. He is acting according to the law of love.

5. If any one injures us knowingly, or, having injured us in ignorance, will not acknowledge, and rectify it, when he discovers that he has done us wrong, there is no occasion for us to get angry with him, and to take revenge. For the man is now suffering, or will soon suffer, for the act. God says to us, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay;" that is, God has so formed the soul, that he who thus injures us, cannot be happy for that act. It is impossible. He must be unhappy for it. The whole world, and all in it, cannot keep him from being unhappy.

Better, far, do him kindness in the true

spirit of love. You will be adding to your own happiness by this. If you do him harm, you break the law of love, and will be unhappy too. There is poor satisfaction in that. How well does the Scripture rule agree with our true happiness. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink"—"Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you."

6. I wish, however, my young friend, to state more particularly some cases of violating this great law, by injury to others.

Lying is an injury to others. When we lead another person to believe what is not true, we give him a cause for wrong action or wrong feeling, or a train of wrong thoughts, and are therefore injuring him. And we are doing an injury to society, too; for society is built upon the supposition that people will speak truth to each other; and, therefore, every untruth spoken by us, is an effort at loosening the foundations of society, and of, consequently, bringing misery upon others.

Therefore, all lying is a breach of this law for man's spirit—the law of love.

A little boy whom I knew, not long ago, told a lie; and nobody in the world but himself knew that it was an untruth. He thought himself perfectly safe, because nobody knew, or could know, that it was a lie, but himself. But now, suppose this little boy had gone all alone, where nobody could possibly see him, or ever know of the act, and had there, all alone, thrust his finger into a hot fire; would he not have been burnt? Would not his finger have been burnt, just as much as if all the world had been looking at him? Surely it would. And why? Why, because it is one of God's laws that fire shall burn a finger put into it, and this law operates in all places, and whether we put the finger into it publicly or in secret. Just so, my young friend, the law for the spirit, the great law of love, operates upon us, everywhere, whether alone or in public; and we can no more escape from it than we can escape from the law about the

fire burning us, by doing anything secretly. No matter how we tell an untruth—should the knowledge of it be forever confined to ourselves—still this law for the spirit is there upon us, in all the deep secrecy of our hearts, and the law will have its course, just as certainly as the laws for the body will have theirs.

Little John T—— came late to school, a few days ago. He had started from home early enough, but he played by the way; and when he got to school, and found himself late, he gave some false excuse for it. He told an untruth. He thought himself safe, because nobody knew, or probably would know, that it was an untruth, but himself. But in telling this untruth, he had done an injury to the teacher, to the school, and to the whole country; for, as I said just now, society is built upon the supposition that people will speak the truth to each other, and every untruth is consequently an effort at breaking up the foundations of society, and filling the country with confusion and misery. John, there-

fore, in this untruth, broke this great law for the spirit of man, the law of love. He thought himself safe, because nobody knew of the lie but himself; but is he safe? No, he is not; for this law goes down into our hearts, and reaches our thoughts and wishes and designs. Look at John, now, as he sits in his place in school. There is a load on his heart. Look in his face. The clear, open, happy expression of his eyes, and of his countenance, has left him. He is conscious of having done a wrong thing. He has fallen in his own estimation, and in his self-respect. He is filled with fears, lest his teacher or parents, or the other scholars, should discover what he has done. He starts with dread at every look of the teacher, fearing that he has at last got hold of the truth; and when he goes home, instead of loving to be with his parents, and to hear their kind voices, he will fear to be near them, lest they should question him about the school. There is a thorn in his heart; a serpent is stinging him. "A wounded spirit, who

can bear it ?” John is unhappy. He has broken the law of love.

But the mischief does not perhaps end here. If he succeeds in this lie, and is not discovered, very probably it will encourage him to tell another and greater one, and this may encourage him to tell a greater still, each lie bringing sufferings of spirit with it ; and thus, many a person has ended with being a confirmed rogue and nuisance to society, and, in his heart, a most wretched being, full of remorse, of self-contempt, and of self-loathing, and also full of new wickedness, all the effects of one secret lie at the beginning. He thought at the outset that he was safe, because nobody knew the lie but himself ; but he was not safe. There is no safety or happiness but in keeping the law of love.

Suppose now, at the outset, that little John, instead of telling the lie, or just after telling it, had gone to the teacher and told him just how the matter was, acknowledging all his fault. This would be acting according to the law of love,

Now, the teacher might punish him for his fault ; but I tell you, my young friend, John would sit down on his seat with a light and happy heart, in consequence of this last act of his. He would no longer have the load of the secret lie on his heart. He would no longer have any fears. His eye would be clear and bright ; his face would be open, and the happy expression of his countenance would show the happiness within his heart. He would be happy in school, happy in the approbation of his own feelings, happy in knowing that he had the approval of his teacher and the respect of the scholars ; and he would be happy, on going home, to meet again his parents and brothers and sisters. He would be acting now in agreement with the law of love, and the law would be taking care of him in return, and would be spreading its happy influences all through his heart.

Let no one think that he can escape from this law by doing a thing in secret. It reaches us everywhere ; and when our actions or our feelings are shut out

from every human eye, this law is just as much upon us, and just as much in exercise, as if the whole world were looking at us. We cannot escape from it, though we may escape all human observation. The law is everywhere; in the dark as well as in the light; in secret, as well as in public places; is in the depth of our hearts and through our whole being, and takes hold of all our acts and thoughts and feelings, however secret. No more, let me repeat it, can we expect to avoid its exercise, by flying to secrecy and concealment, than a person, who in a secret place should put his finger into the fire, would escape being burnt, because he is doing it secretly.

7. The same remark will apply to all acts of pilfering and stealing, however secretly and however cunningly they may be done. We may succeed in taking the property of another, in such a way that no human being but ourselves may have any knowledge of the deed. Yet, all this while, the law for the spirit of man is upon us in its strength and power.



There it rests upon our spirits, like the grip of a mighty man, and it speaks to us like the voice of a trumpet; and our secrecy and our cunning are nothing, after all. The spirit of the strongest and the most cunning man is all feebleness, while he is opposing this law; he will be thwarted in all that he undertakes, be his plans ever so deep, or so adroit, or though he should succeed in securing a treasure and no one know of it. His spirit will begin to writhe even in the very act that gives him success; for the strong, unyielding, eternal law of the spirit is on him, and will be on him forever.

This law is on the child who steals the smallest article, and there too its power is felt. The law says, love and do the deeds of love; and we are unhappy, and must be unhappy, in every act of injury to others, whether in their property or otherwise. Look at the face of a child who pilfers even an apple. Mark, even as he eats the apple, his self-condemned look, his fearful glancing about, his signs of distrust and dread. He is now *enjoy-*

ing his plunder ; but is this *enjoyment* ? Really, no. If this is his *enjoyment*, let us have none of it. If this is his enjoyment, what must his after hours of self-abasement, fears and sorrows be ?

My young friend, I need not counsel you to seek no such *enjoyment* as that. It is true that grown people, under such circumstances, sometimes put on the outward appearance of carousing and pleasure ; but this child's heart, which has not yet learned to put on such disguises, is only a fair sample of the disquiet and the wretchedness of theirs. They cannot but be unhappy. They are not acting according to the great law for man's spirit, and must meet, and do meet, the results.

8. There are some people who would scorn to steal or pilfer from a neighbor's property, and would be very angry if any person could suspect them capable of this ; and yet they will steal or pilfer from a neighbor's reputation, which is a far worse thing than the other. For if any one steals my property I can replace

it; but if he steals from my reputation, he takes that which it will require a long time and great labor to replace, while he, probably, is not at all benefited by the act. This kind of pilfering or stealing, then, is a very gross violation of the law of love, and we should be on our guard against it, for the temptations to it will be constantly occurring in the course of our lives. We break this law of love, whenever we say what is false about another, or say what is true, if it is of a nature to hurt his name or his feelings, and is not necessary. Shakspeare says,

“Who steals my purse steals trash, 't is something, nothing;  
 'T was mine; 't is his, and has been slave to thousands.  
 But he who filches from me my good name,  
 Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
 But makes me poor indeed.”

My young friend, guard carefully against this vice; for the temptation to it will be a strong one. Sometimes it will seem as if you can benefit or raise yourself in the world by taking from the merits of others; sometimes you will feel as if you can give a spice to conversation by doing

this ; sometimes you can get listeners to such remarks, when you cannot, so readily, in any other way : and the opinions of society will not so quickly condemn you for this mode of injuring another, as if you should steal his property. But beware ! you break the law of love, and all society cannot keep you from suffering the consequences. Society may even applaud your joke or your keen witicism at your neighbor's expense ; but, my young friend, while society smiles upon you, there will be evil at work in your heart. A bitter fountain will be opening there ; your soul will drink bitterness from it, perhaps forever. You will be violating God's great, unchangeable, eternal law ; and you will reap the fruits of this violation. You cannot escape such a result, any more than the man who walks on burning coals can escape being burnt. The law is as fixed in the one case as in the other. Every word against your neighbor is a poisoned dagger thrust also into your own soul ; and your soul will sicken and writhe under it. Is

the slanderer and detractor happy? No! Look at him, and see how, in his face, and in his stealthy manner, he carries marks of the bitterness, and the fears, and the misery, that have sprung up within his heart. O how much better is it to love! How much more attractive is love, with its open brow, its beaming looks, its gentle tones, its kind acts, and the heart within, where the bliss of love has full possession!

9. We are apt, when we see persons in higher stations than our own, or possessed of greater talents or splendor than ourselves, to perceive a feeling of envy rising in our hearts. Let us check this feeling, for "love envieth not." Rather let us, if these things bring happiness to our neighbors, rejoice in that happiness; and thus we shall make all our neighbor's possessions contribute to our enjoyment. With this disposition in us, we can say of all the events of life, what Goldsmith said of material things,—

"Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine."

While acting in agreement with the great law for spirit, the law of love, there is little, indeed, left for us to envy, in the conditions of other persons. For the heart, with this, has the true science, the true philosophy ; it has the noblest companionship, a close union with all that is grand and lofty and great in the universe ; it has the highest treasure, love, —love from God and angels, and men ; and it pours back the same treasure, which is accepted and valued by Him, who is King of kings and the Ruler of countless worlds. This is the condition of him who follows the great law of the soul ; and we can follow this, no matter what our situation in life may be. He who does not follow this law, though he be king, or nabob, or philosopher, is not happy and cannot be. A king, a nabob, and a philosopher, must follow the rules for the body, just as much as a beggar ; and so also must they follow the rules for the soul. Without these, there is no happiness for any one ; and the humble in life *can love* just as well as the great

of this world. Indeed, human greatness is very apt to act against this law of love, and must, therefore, be dangerous to our happiness.

10. There was a little boy once, whose thoughts and feelings all rested upon himself. He was what is called *selfish*. He cared little about others, or cared for them only so far as they could add to his own individual comfort or gratification. He always studied his own enjoyment, no matter whether it took from the enjoyment of others or not. He seldom or never studied their pleasure; and when theirs stood in the way of his, he gave no attention to them, but sought for his own enjoyments without regard to theirs.

And could this little boy be happy? He certainly could not. He was at variance with the great law of love; and a man might just as reasonably walk out in an Iceland winter, amid the keen winds and eternal ice, and expect to feel warm and comfortable, as such a person might expect to be happy. Our bodies were not made to be warm, in such a freezing

atmosphere, nor was such an atmosphere made to warm us. Nor, any more, was the soul made to be happy in selfishness, or selfishness adapted to make the soul happy. The soul has its laws as well as the body, and this is one of them.

We are not forbidden to love ourselves; for the very wording of the law "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," implies self-love; but this is a very different thing from selfishness. Selfishness seeks its own advantage without regard to others; this great law for the soul commands us to love others as ourselves, and in this love and the kind acts which flow from it, our happiness is to be found. This is the law. Selfishness is always hateful; this law, both in its nature and in its exercise, is always beautiful and attractive.

11. My young friend, I hope you do not swear. I hope you do not profane God's name. Indeed, I should be very sorry, if I thought you could do such a thing as that. Some boys think it manly; but, tell me, can it ever be manly, for any



person, young or grown up, to treat his own father with disrespect? Suppose a little boy, called William Perkins, to have a father who is, in every respect, a very superior man; a person of great excellence of character, of noble feelings, high mental acquirements, warmth of heart, and of great kindness towards his children. He is an excellent father, worthy the admiration, esteem, and love of every one. Now suppose this William Perkins, in play, in conversation, in joke, or in business, to use his father's name, continually, in such way as to bring it into disrespect with all around him. He uses it to ornament a rough jest; he uses it to swear by, often when the oath has no meaning, or no truth in it; he uses it to give venom to his anger; he uses it because he thinks it looks smart; and he encourages others so to use it, and to bandy it about from tongue to tongue. Now, what would you think of that boy?

Could you do that with *your* father's name? Could you encourage others to use *your* father's name in this way? or

could you stand by with patience while they would do so? Why, my young friend, your blood rises at the very thought of such a thing!

But now, tell me, is not God your Father? Is he not even nearer to you than your earthly father, in all the relations which ought to make you respect, and reverence, and love him? He has made you; he watches over you; he provides for you; he is very, very kind to you. He is your Father, nearer than an earthly father, and kinder and truer. O, do not use his name disrespectfully, or encourage others to do it. *It is your Father's name.* Do not profane it, and if others do so, and you cannot prevent it, get quickly away from their society.

Should any person be bold enough, or bad enough, to treat his earthly father's name so; you would, in your mind, draw several conclusions respecting him.—1st, you would think him a bad, unnatural son. 2dly, you would think that such conduct, persevered in, would soon destroy all good feeling in his heart, and

would lead him on to great wickedness and misery. 3dly, you would conclude that the father himself would be displeased, and could not love such a son, as he would love another; and that the father's displeasure would, after a while, show itself. Now, let us make the same reflections with regard to ourselves and our heavenly Father, whenever we feel disposed to profane his name; and I think it will hardly be in our hearts to commit so bad, so unnatural an act.

12. My young friend, there are a great many other things contrary to this law, which I might notice at length,—such as malice or ill-will, deceit, jealousy, peevishness, irritability, stubbornness, bad temper, vanity, caprice, unkindness, &c.; but your own mind will see how to classify and arrange them; your own heart will, at once, know that they are all opposed to the great law for the soul, the law of love.

When we indulge in any one of these, our own happiness suffers. This we have, no doubt, experienced. And should we try them again, we shall find that the law

respecting them, and respecting love, has not altered. It cannot alter. We may as well attempt to upset the Alleghany mountains, as to upset this law; for this it is which binds the universe together; and it will stand, whatever men may do. They may sneer, or disregard, or rebel, or scorn it; but it will continue, notwithstanding, and will have its course. It is heaven's great law, which makes heaven what it is, a bright and glorious place. Our earth may perish for disobedience; but this law will not perish. When it passes away, heaven itself will pass away. Therefore this law will stand.

13. "Sin" is said to be "the transgression of the law." How few persons there are who think of the supreme and entire *selfishness* of sin. The person who sins, can expect from it only a slight gratification, and that only for a little while. Yet, for the sake of this slight and short gratification, he is striking at the great laws on which the eternal peace, and order, and harmony of the universe depend.

You know, perhaps, my young friend, that there is a power called *the power of gravitation*. It is that power, which, when you throw a stone up, makes it fall to the earth again. This power keeps all bodies fast to the surface of our earth, and prevents them from flying off, to be seen no more. This power, or the law by which it is governed, keeps our earth, and the moon, and all the planets belonging to our sun, in their places. If this law of gravitation were weakened or broken, then all the planets would fly off from their present course, clashing against other planets or suns, and breaking into myriads of pieces; instantly, all people, and everything else on our globe, would dart off, and would be dashed against other things, and be destroyed; and our earth, also, would be broken into fragments, and lost; wild horror and certain destruction to everything would immediately follow.

Now, should any man be mad enough to wish, that, for the sake of an uncertain and a short gratification to himself,

this law of gravitation should be weakened or broken, why, would not the whole creation have a right to look with indignation upon him, as a monster of selfishness? He wishing that for himself, from which so much misery, such dire destruction, would follow to all things besides! and from which, indeed, instant destruction, to himself would also follow! We should be horror-struck at the possibility of such utter selfishness; we should think him mad.

Now when we, for the sake of a supposed short gratification, oppose ourselves to God's laws for spirit, we do an act of equal, nay, of far greater selfishness and madness; for, though in the case just spoken of, our earth and all that is upon it would perish miserably, still, heaven, the spirit's home, would remain; but he who strikes at God's laws for spirit, strikes at heaven itself; and would, if successful, draw eternal blackness and ruin over the spiritual world.

How utterly and disgustingly selfish, then, is every act of sin! How does the

man who transgresses the law for spirit, strike, in doing this, at the eternal peace and well-being of the universe; and this, in order that he may have, for his own single self, a short and uncertain enjoyment.

14. The enjoyment, indeed, will not even be uncertain. There may be excitement like that of a drunkard, or that of a madman; but there can be no true, heart-felt and heart-satisfying enjoyment. Such enjoyment is impossible, unless we accommodate ourselves to the law for spirit, the law of love. This law was made for us, and we are made for it; and there can be no certain and true happiness, except in accordance with it.

Then, my young friend, begin life in the right way at once. Do not spend your time, or any portion of it, in vain experiments against this law, and for other laws. Your time and labor will be thrown away. The act itself will be one of supreme selfishness, that must, and will, meet with rebuke. Love; that is the law.

Go, then, into the world, and go through

life, keeping the great law of love to God, and love to man. If you will do this, your comfort and happiness will be secure. *They will be a part of God's eternal law, and nothing can disturb them.* Be your condition in life what it may,—high or low, one of health or of sickness, one of admiration from men, or of neglect from men,—*love, and you will be happy.*



## RECOMMENDATIONS.

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*From S. S. Randall, Esq., Dep. Sup. of Common Schools in the State of New York.*

**State of New York, Secretary's Office.**

DEPARTMENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

ALBANY, SEPT. 16, 1846.

I have examined portions of the manuscript, and been favored with a general exposition of the plan of a work entitled "A System of Moral Philosophy, adapted to Children and Families, and especially to Common Schools, by the Rev. D. Steele, &c.," and am of opinion that it is well adapted to the object which it has in view — the elementary instruction of the young in the principles and practice of a sound and pure morality. Such a work is very much needed in our common schools; and, in my judgment, would be well received by the community generally.

S. S. RANDALL,  
*Dep. Sup. Common Schools.*

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*From Rev. President Day, of Yale College, in a letter to one of the authors.*

YALE COLLEGE, JULY 10, 1846.

REV. AND DEAR SIR: —

It is refreshing to receive even a few lines from one with whom I was once so happily associated, in official relation, and the endearments of friendship. The object and plan of the proposed work, which forms the subject of your letter of the 6th, I am much pleased with. How far it will meet with the at-

tention and favor which it deserves, from those who have the direction of our primary schools, when there is so much competition among authors and publishers for furnishing textbooks, I am not prepared to say. I consider the successful execution of such a work far more difficult, than one upon the same subject, for the use of *adults*. A distinguished writer has said, I think, that although he had an exalted opinion of Dr. Watts' genius and attainments, as manifested in his poetical and philosophical works, yet the composition of the hymns and catechism for *children* was beyond his comprehension.

But the danger of failure in similar attempts, enhances the value of success.

May the blessing of Heaven rest continually upon you and yours, and upon your benevolent efforts to do good.

With affectionate regard,

Your Friend,

J. DAY.

*From Professor Silliman, Yale College.*

YALE COLLEGE, SEPT. 7, 1846.

The manuscript of a small original work on Moral Philosophy, by the Rev. D. Steele, &c., having been committed to me, I have much satisfaction in adding, that this appears to me a very happy attempt to render Moral Philosophy *intelligible* and *interesting* to children.

Important truths are introduced in a skilful manner, and are illustrated in a style characterized both by simplicity and dignity. I trust that this unpretending volume will prove an effectual instruction to children of ten or twelve years, while it will be read with pleasure and approbation by persons of mature age.

B. SILLIMAN.

*From Rev. Dr. Bond, editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, New York.*

I have examined a manuscript entitled, "A System of Moral Philosophy, adapted to Children and Families, and es-

pecially to Common Schools ; by the Rev. David Steele and a Friend," and take great pleasure in commending it to the public.

We were, at first, startled a little at the proposition to adapt a system of Moral Philosophy to the minds of children. We could not but advert to the casuistry and metaphysical subtleties which are found in the works of many great men, who have handled this subject ; and feared it was hardly possible to bring such discussions down to the comprehension of children. But we have been mistaken.

In the manuscript to which we have referred, the whole subject is simplified, and presented in so clear a light as to be perfectly intelligible to a child ten years old. The authors base the whole system of morals on the one law of love, illustrating and applying this law to every feeling of the soul, and every relative duty of life. The code is complete ; the obligation to obey it, and the benefit of obedience, are clear, and are cogently enforced. And the necessary, unavoidable consequences of disobedience to this law are shown to be suffering — mental or corporeal — in all cases. They cannot be prevented or evaded.

We commend this work to all who have the care of children ; — and we may add, that we cannot see why this system of Moral Philosophy is not adapted to adults as well as to children.

THOMAS E. BOND, M. D.

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*From the Right Rev. Alonzo Potter, Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, in a letter to one of the authors.*

PHILADELPHIA, OCT. 14, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR : —

I learn with great pleasure, from your favor of the 6th inst., that you are engaged, in conjunction with a friend, in an attempt to render the first principles of Moral Philosophy intelligible and interesting to children. It is a noble undertaking, and I earnestly pray that it may meet with the encouragement

which it deserves. Nothing seems to me more needed in our age and country, than deep convictions on the part of the young in respect to the sacredness, supremacy and blessedness of *moral* as compared with *material* good.

I am, Dear Sir,

Sincerely your Friend and Brother,

ALONZO POTTER.

*From Rev. J. P. Durbin, D. D., late President of Dickinson College, in a letter to one of the authors.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR: —

I am glad I had the opportunity of hearing the greater part of a work on Moral Philosophy, designed for children. I am satisfied of its excellence. It clearly distinguishes and illustrates the two parts of our being, the body and the soul, and the system of laws which God has ordained for each, and demonstrates that the moral laws are as immutable as the physical, and that our happiness of mind depends upon our observing the former, as certainly as our health of body in a proper observance of the latter. You have well laid down the only foundation of the moral system, love to God and love to man; and these two great principles you have clearly illustrated and enforced.

Very Respectfully,

J. P. DURBIN.

*From George B. Emerson, Esq.*

[ In a note to the Publishers. ]

BOSTON, OCTOBER 12, 1846.

Mr. Emerson has examined the manuscript on "Moral Philosophy," and assures Messrs. Munroe & Company that he considers it well worth publishing.

*Deposited Febr. 19. 1847*  
*Recorded Vol. 22, Page 47*

A SYSTEM

*No. 60.*

OF

MORAL PHILOSOPHY,

ADAPTED TO

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES,

AND ESPECIALLY TO

COMMON SCHOOLS.

BY REV. D. STEELE,

AND A FRIEND.



BOSTON:  
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1847.

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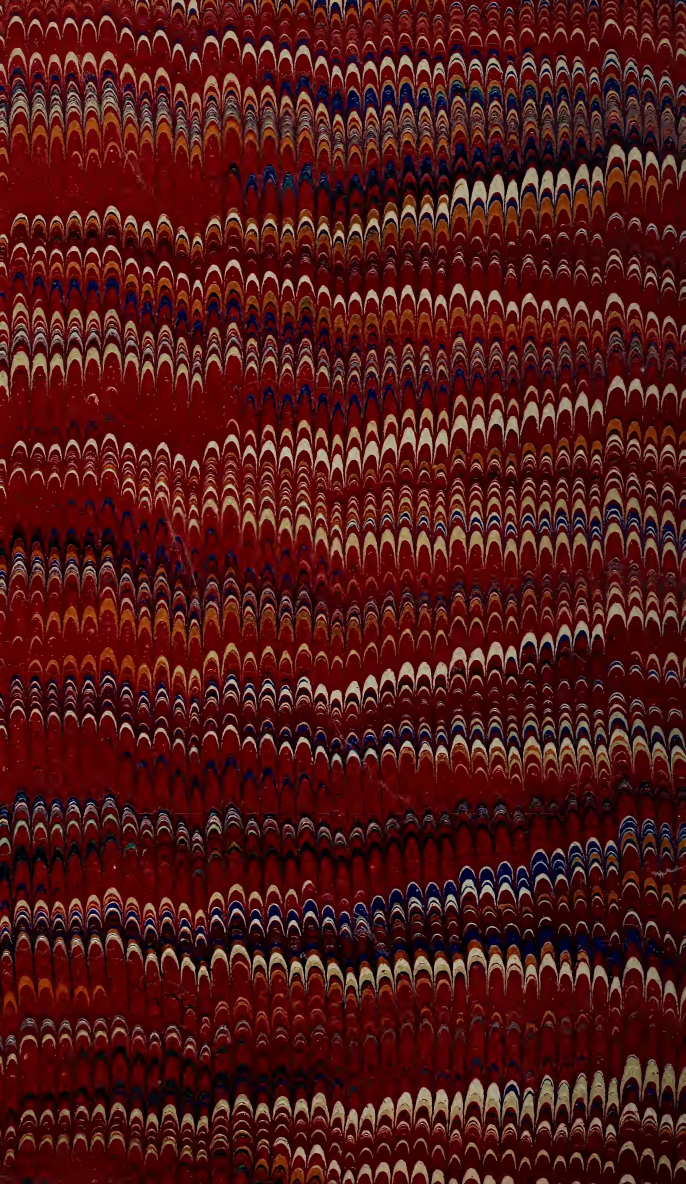


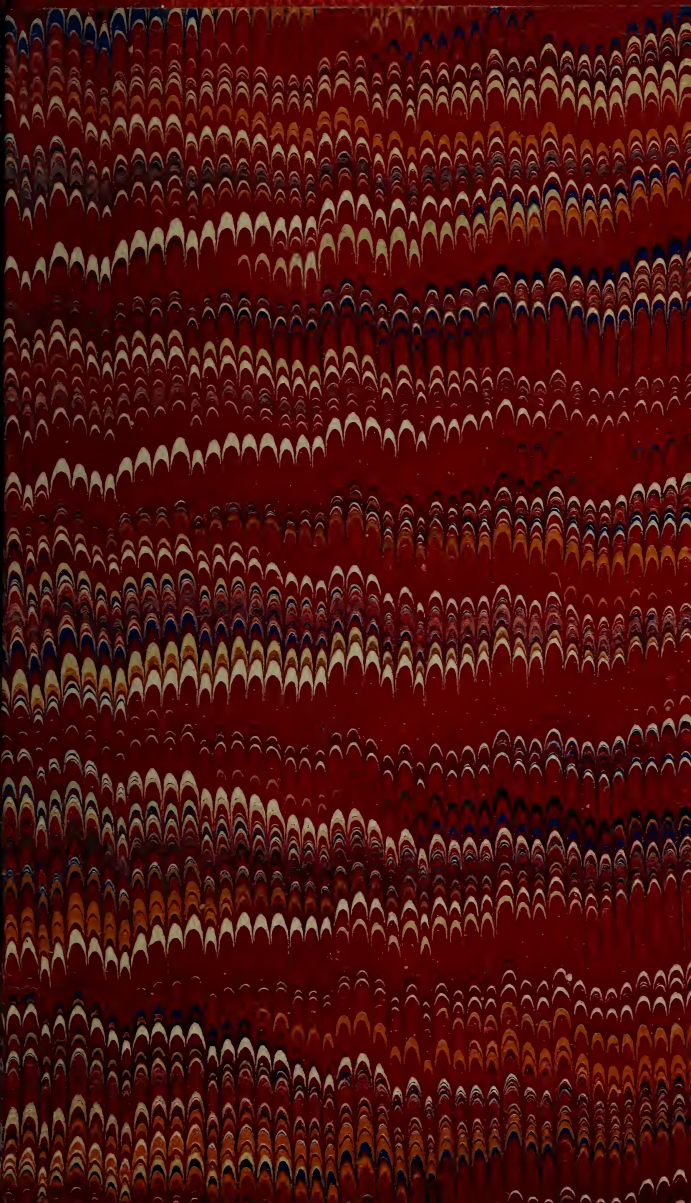
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