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## CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

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"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law thou art not a doer of the law but a judge."

Dr. FRANKLIN said, with his characteristic wisdom and good feeling, that he was inclined to believe "there never was a good war nor a bad peace." If this may be true of the civil affairs of men, how much more applicable is it to their religious concerns!

All true christians, of all parties and sects, lament that difference of opinion should give rise to discord, strifes, uncharitableness, and evil speaking. If then they feel that religion is wronged—that its bond of love is severed—that their master is wounded in the house of his friends—that their wars and fightings must proceed from bad passions, how careful should they be to guard against the extension of the evil! And particularly how scrupulous should those be who have the guidance of young maids and affect-

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tions not to impart to them their own unfavorable judgment of others. All will admit that they are fallible—they may err in judging a brother—and if they do err how fearful the responsibility of communicating this false judgment—this *prejudice* to a young mind, which ought to be nurtured in the spirit of the Gospel! in love and charitableness.

The principle we wish to instil is illustrated in the following short story.

SARAH ANSON was sitting with her aunt one day, when she heard a good deal of conversation between her aunt and a lady, who was on a visit to her, about "the orthodox." When the visitor was gone, "Aunt Caroline," said Sarah, "you are always talking about 'orthodoxy,' and 'the orthodox.' I wish you would tell me what you mean by 'the orthodox?'"

"Why Sarah, I mean those who think they shall certainly be saved, and all the rest of the world will be condemned—that sort of people, that are for ever canting."

"Canting—what is canting, aunt?"

"Canting is talking about religion on all occasions, seasonable, and unseasonable, as the orthodox do."

Sarah was silent for a few moments, but not being enlightened by her aunt's replies, she was not satisfied, and she ventured to add—"Still, aunt, I do not know what you mean by the orthodox."

"How stupid you are, Sarah!—Have you ever lived in this city all your life, and don't know that Mr —'s and Mr —'s congregations are orthodox?"

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“No, aunt, I did not—I don’t remember,” she added with a sigh, “ever to have heard mamma speak the word orthodox—but now I hear you say so much about them, I should really like to know how they differ from other Christians.”

“Oh, they differ in every thing—they think all kinds of rational amusements a crying sin. They would have every body spend their whole lives in going to lectures and prayer-meetings, and always look solemn and dismal, and give every thing to missions.”

“Missions!” exclaimed Caroline—“there must be some missionaries that are not orthodox—that Mr. Stewart I was reading about to Lucy, could not be what you call orthodox, aunt Caroline.”

“Stewart—the missionary to the Sandwich Islands?—Oh yes, he was orthodox enough.”

Some one at this time called away her aunt, and Sarah was left revolving in her mind what she had said.

If Sarah had been like most children of eight years, she probably would have been quite satisfied with her aunt’s replies, and the seeds of prejudice, thus carelessly sown in her mind, might have taken root there; but Sarah’s mother had guarded her mind from prejudice, as a gardener would preserve his garden from the intrusion of poisonous weeds. She had not spoken to her of orthodoxy, but she had of prejudice. She had told her that very good people might be sadly prejudiced, as was Nathaniel the Israelite, in “whom there was no guile,” for he had said of Jesus “can any good come out of Naza-

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reth?” She had shown her how beautifully our Saviour had reprov’d the prejudice of the wicked Jews, by selecting, to illustrate the principle of true charity, not one of their own Pharisees who claimed preeminence in righteousness—not even one of their own nation, to whom they fancied the favour of the Father of all limited, but a Samaritan—a *good Samaritan*—one of a people most despised and hated by the Jews—a people who were the subjects of their national, and, as they believed, their just and authorized enmity.

Sarah’s mind, thus carefully guarded against the intrusion of uncharitable feeling, might be compared to that paradise which the flaming sword of the Cherubim defends from all bad spirits—and besides, happily, in the particular case of the orthodox, she had just taken an antidote against prejudice; she had been reading Stewart’s Journal to Lucy, an excellent young woman, who had been, till within a few weeks back, her attendant and nurse, and who was now rapidly declining with a consumption, the consequence, as was believed, of a too constant devotion to Sarah’s mother, who had recently died of the same fatal disease. Mr. Stewart’s beautiful description of his voyage, his apostolic devotion to the noblest enterprise of man,—the regeneration and reformation of his degraded fellow-beings,—had delighted Sarah, kindled her piety, and touched her heart to the very quick; and she was hurt and offended when her aunt spoke of him, and of the large class to which he belonged, with cold contempt.

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Little Sarah was one of the gentlest of human beings, and it seemed that to introduce any harsh feeling into her kind heart, was to break one of the strings of that fine instrument.

She determined now to appeal to Lucy for the information she had failed to obtain from her aunt. Accordingly, she went to her apartment, but when she found her friend looking much sicker than usual, she sat down on her bedside, mentally resolving not to trouble her with any questions, and after kissing her pale forehead, she took up a fan, and began fanning her, but she stopped often, fidgetted, and looked perplexed; and Lucy, who had been accustomed to watch her thoughts as they were expressed in her sweet open face, and who could read them there almost as plainly as if they were reflected in a mirror, said to her, "Something troubles you, Sarah—what are you thinking of, my child?"

Thus prompted, Sarah did not hesitate to say, "do *you* tell me, Lucy, what is the *real* meaning of orthodoxy."

"Orthodoxy," replied Lucy, with a faint smile; "certainly, I will as well as I know how; orthodoxy"—but here she paused, as she heard an approaching footstep, and then added, "wait a little while, Sarah—there is Mrs. Lumley; don't say any thing about it now, for she is orthodox."

"Is she orthodox?", exclaimed Sarah, her face brightening, for she knew Mrs. Lumley did not come within her aunt's description of the orthodox. She was a poor widow, whose life had been marked by

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severe and multiplied sorrows, and she had borne them all with a meek and resigned spirit, cheerfully submitting to the privations of her Father in heaven inflicted, as a good child will bear to be deprived by a beloved parent of some dear possession.

When Mrs. Lumley entered, Lucy expressed great pleasure at seeing her, but said she was afraid she had stayed away from lecture to come to her.

"And what if I have, Lucy? I should make a poor use of the privilege of going to lecture, if I did not learn my duty there: It is God's word, you know, 'be ye doers of the word and not hearers only,' and one of the first duties as well as a pleasure is it to do what I can for a sick friend. No, Lucy, I should not dare to enter my Father's house, if I neglected a sick brother or sister by the way. But I am afraid you are not so well to-night, your breathing is difficult.

"Yes—I feel it to be so, and I must expect it to be even worse."

"And yet, Lucy, you do not look frightened or troubled."

"I thank God I am not, Mrs. Lumley. There has been a time when I shrunk from the prospect of death, when I lay for hours awake in the silent watches of the night, my heart throbbing at the thought that I must be laid in the grave; but now I feel there is no death to those who believe in the resurrection and the life—and I *realize* that what we call death, is but a passage to a better life. I am in the valley of the shadow of death, and I fear no evil, and it is be-

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cause the rod and the staff of my God support and comfort me.”

Lucy spoke in her usual tone of voice; there was something in its calmness that expressed the assurance of her faith, while the glow that lit up her face with a celestial brightness, made her look as if she had already entered into the joy of her Lord. Mrs. Lumley brushed the tears from her eyes. “It is truly wonderful to me, Lucy,” she said, “to see one so young, and so happy as you have been, so willing to go; but in all our trials, of every kind, we find the grace of God sufficient for us. I can say that I never felt so rich toward him, as when I have been bereft of earthly comfort.”

Sarah listened intently—her eye moved quickly from her friend to the widow, and tear after tear dropped on Lucy’s feverish hand, which she held pressed in hers. The patient sufferers, in sick chambers and in the dark paths of affliction, are the most affecting witnesses to the goodness of God, for they prove that he never forsakes his children. Lucy listened to their testimony, and laid it up in her heart.

A little bustle was now heard in the outer room, and two persons entered, one an old colored woman, who meekly remained standing at the door, and the other a tall Irish woman, who pressed forward with characteristic eagerness, and pouring half a dozen beautiful oranges from a bandanna handkerchief—“There, Lucy, dear,” said she, “they are Havanas—every one of them—I had them from Patrick Moon-

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ey, and sure they are fresh, for Pat has just stepped a shore.”

“Oh Peggy, many, many thanks; but you are too generous—you could not afford to buy so many for me.”

“Sure honey, don’t be after saying that—would not I have given the apple of my eye for them, if I could not have had them chaper? That would I do for you, dear, that’s been saint-like to me and mine, as poor Rose, that’s gone such a little bit before you, has often said—God above make the eating of them as pleasant to you, as the getting of them has been to me.” Then stooping down and kissing Lucy’s hand, and murmuring a prayer, and crossing herself, she left the room.

Lucy was affected with the honest creature’s gratitude, and she covered her eyes with her hand, and did not look up till Sarah whispered, “there is old Amy at the door.”

“Amy, is that you?” she then said—“come and sit by me, Amy, and tell me how you are nowadays.”

“I am but poorly,” said she, humbly curtsying, “but how is Miss Lucy?”

“Thank you, Amy, I trust I may say in the language of that good book you so well understand, ‘it is well with me.’”

“Ah, Miss Lucy, you put me in mind of what Elder Eton said to day, ‘them that walk with the Lord through life; the Lord will not leave them to go alone through the valley of the shadow of death.’”

“No, Amy—he does not; and it is no longer a

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dark valley when it is enlightened by his presence. But how do you get on in your worldly matters, my good friend?”

“O Miss Lucy, I don’t want to complain, but I miss your goodness, and that dear child’s mother’s, every day.”

“Does not Tom provide for you?”

“Tom—poor boy, he has been gone to sea six weeks.”

“And Sally?”

“Sally is a lost creature, Miss Lucy; she does nothing for me; and I can do nothing for her but pray for her.”

“Do you suffer for necessaries, Amy?”

“Sometimes, Miss Lucy.”

“Do you ever go hungry?”

“I can’t say but I do; but it will be but a little while, and I don’t mean to murmur.”

“Truly.” said Lucy, raising her eyes devoutly, “tribulation worketh patience;” and then turning to Sarah, she added in a low voice, “when I am gone, remember poor old Amy—you are young for such a charge, but your mother’s disposition is in you. Now my good friends,” she added, “I believe you had best leave me: I am a little tired, but I shall sleep the better for your kind visits; good night—remember me in your prayers.” They both bade her good night, and Sarah, after lighting them down stairs, returned to Lucy, and again took her station at her bedside. “Now, my dear child,” said Lucy, “I will answer your question about orthodoxy.”

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“I remember when I was about your age, I was perplexed in the same way. I had lived two years with your mother, when I went to pay a visit to one of my aunts. She questioned me very closely about my place, and when she had found I had every reason to be satisfied and happy, she said, ‘But after all, Lucy, Mrs. Anson is a Unitarian, and your mother does very wrong to let you live with a Unitarian.’ I told her I did not know what she meant by a Unitarian, but if she meant anything that was not good, I was sure Mrs. Anson was not a Unitarian. ‘She is a Unitarian,’ she replied, ‘and it is a shame you are not put in an Orthodox family.’ When I returned home, I asked your mother what was the meaning of Unitarian and what of Orthodox. ‘You are not old enough yet, Lucy,’ she said to me, ‘to comprehend, if I were to endeavor to explain to you the differences of opinion from which different classes of Christians take their names, and I would not wish to have your attention turned to those matters wherein they disagree, but rather that you should fix it on those points where all who are named by the name of Christ agree; for among all sects, there are those who deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God. Consider all those Christians, who manifest a love to their Heavenly Father, and obedience to his well beloved Son, our Saviour; and of such do not ask if they be a

Presbyterian, Unitarian, Methodist or Catholic; but regard them as Christians, fellow-christians, servants, and friends of one Master, who has said—“by this ye shall know that ye are

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my disciples, that ye love one another.”” This was your dear mother’s instruction to me, Sarah, and I did not neglect it. You see by those good Christians, who have visited me this evening, that I have friends who bear very different names. Mrs. Lumley is Orthodox, a member of the Park street Church; Peggy is a good Catholic; Amy is a Baptist, and I, you know, am a Unitarian; but we are all, I humbly trust, heirs of that blessed country toward which I am hastening.”

“Now Sarah, give me my opiate, and then sing me one of the Hymns you and your mother used to sing together. The opiate will, I hope, give some rest to my poor sick body—and your voice, raised in a praise to God, is always a sweet cordial to my mind. Sarah prepared the medicine and then reseating herself, and taking Lucy’s hand, she sang the following hymn of Beddome:

“Let party names no more  
The Christian world o’erspread;  
Gentile, and Jew, and bond, and free,  
Are one in Christ their head.

Among the Saints on Earth  
Let mutual love be found  
Heirs of the same inheritance,  
With mutual blessings crowned.

Envy and strife be gone,  
And only kindness known,  
Where all one common Father have,  
One common Master own.

Thus will the church below  
Resemble that above;  
Where springs of purest pleasure rise,  
And every heart is love.”

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“May this spirit ever govern your heart,” said Lucy, as she folded her arms around Sarah and bade her goodnight. Sarah’s selection of this particular hymn had gratified her, for it proved that though she had not attempted to give her any explanation of the different names by which Christians are called, she made her feel that charity and love will bound over the barriers, that the

wicked passions or the false zeal of man has erected between different sects of Christians; that love is the essence of religion—love to God, and love to man.

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