

# MALICE

by Traverce Harrison

Malice is the author of envy and hatred, the beginner of secret sedition, and the perpetual tormentor of virtue. It laments over brotherly love and pines at the sight of health. Like death, it loves a shining mark: like the worm, it seeks the fairest fruits: like the cunning hound, it singles out the fattest deer in the flock.

*Malice is detestable.* It keeps no holiday, but is constantly working out its own disquiet. He whose heart is imbued with malice loseth much of the pleasures of life.

*Malice destroys one's own happiness.* It is deeply seated in the character of the individual, and certainly its effects are far reaching in his life. It is so base and detestable, so vile in its origin, that one can not adapt a mere suicidal course as far as his own happiness is concerned.

*Malice is cruel in pursuit.* It rests not till the grave closes over its victim. There is, in Grecian literature, the story of a malicious man who went forth in the stillness of the midnight hour to destroy a victor's statue. He was successful illustration of the effects of malice in the human heart. Malice grows in all hearts. It is not confined to any rank of men, or extent of fortune, but rages in the breast of those of every degree. Since, then, it keeps all sorts of company, and carries so much poison with it that it ruins any life in which it finds lodgment, it is worth our utmost care to dislodge it before it procures a shelter to conceal itself, and work to our confusion and shame.

*Malice grows by what it feeds upon.* If it were not nourished, it would die. A weed can not grow in a garden did we not give it place. Malice could not accomplish much in our hearts did we not give it place. It is an unappeasable thing. Like some hideous beast, it crouches at the door of the heart.

The surest protection against malice is to live in an atmosphere of good. Fill the heart with an overmastering love for Christ, and malice can not hold sway over it. Turn your thoughts toward heavenly things. Occupy your hands and your heart and your time with good, and thus starve malice out of your life.