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BLAIR

ON THE DUTIES OF THE YOUNG.

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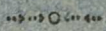
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Influenced by the cordial reception of this work, the editors will proceed in it with proportionate industry; and, to render the LITERARY MISCELLANY still more pleasing and acceptable, biographical sketches will be given, and the title-pages embellished with correct likenesses, or with vignettes from new designs.



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ON THE DUTIES OF THE YOUNG,

by Dr. Hugh Blair.

ON THE DUTIES OF SCHOOL-BOYS,

from Rollin.



Manchester,

Printed at the Office of G. Nicholson, No. 9, Spring-gardens.
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Anno 1798.

PUBLIC
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TORONTO

ON THE DUTIES OF THE YOUNG.

The uncertainty of the enjoyments of human life checks presumption; the multiplicity of its dangers demands perpetual caution. Moderation, vigilance, and self-government, are duties incumbent on all; but especially on such as are beginning the journey of life. The scenes which present themselves, at our entering upon the world, are commonly flattering. Whatever they be in themselves, the lively spirits of the young gild every opening prospect. The field of hope appears to stretch wide before them. Pleasure seems to put forth its blossoms on every side. Impelled by desire, forward they rush with inconsiderate ardour: Prompt to decide, and to chuse; averse to hesitate, or to inquire; credulous, because untaught by experience; rash, because unacquainted with danger; headstrong, because unsubdued by disappointment. As soon as you are capable of reflection, you must perceive that there is a right and a wrong in human actions. You see that those who are born with the same advantages of fortune, are not all equally prosperous in the course of life. While some of them, by wise and steady conduct, attain distinction in the world, and pass their days with comfort and honour; others, of the same rank, by mean and vicious behaviour, forfeit the advantages of their birth, involve themselves in much misery, and end in being a disgrace to their friends, and a burden on society. Early, then, you

may learn, that it is not on the external condition in which you find yourselves placed, but on the part which you are to act, that your welfare or unhappiness, your honour or infamy, depend. Now, when beginning to act that part, what can be of greater moment, than to regulate your plan of conduct with the most serious attention, before you have yet committed any fatal or irretrievable errors? If, instead of exerting reflection, for this valuable purpose, you deliver yourselves up at so critical a time, to sloth and pleasure; if you refuse to listen to any counsellor but humour, or to attend to any pursuit except that of amusement; if you allow yourselves to float loose and careless on the tide of life, ready to receive any direction which the current of fashion may chance to give you, what can you expect to follow from such beginnings? While so many around you are undergoing the sad consequences of a like indiscretion, for what reason shall not those consequences extend to you? Shall you attain success without that preparation, and escape dangers without that precaution, which is required of others? Shall happiness grow up to you, of its own accord, and solicit your acceptance, when, to the rest of mankind, it is the fruit of long cultivation, and the acquisition of labour and care?—Deceive not yourselves with such arrogant hopes. Whatever be your rank, Providence will not, for your sake, reverse its established order. The author of your being hath enjoined you *to take heed to your ways; to ponder the paths of your feet; to remember your Creator in the days of your youth.* He hath decreed, that they only *who seek after wisdom shall find it; that fools shall be afflicted because of their transgressions; and that whoso refuseth instruc-*

tion shall destroy his own soul. By listening to these admonitions, and tempering the vivacity of youth with a proper mixture of serious thought, you may ensure cheerfulness for the rest of life; but by delivering yourselves up at present to giddiness and levity, you lay the foundation of lasting heaviness of heart.

When you look forward to those plans of life, which either your circumstances have suggested, or your friends have proposed, you will not hesitate to acknowledge that, in order to pursue them with advantage, some previous discipline is requisite. Be assured, that whatever is to be your profession, no education is more necessary to your success, than the acquirement of virtuous dispositions and habits. This is the universal preparation for every character, and every station in life. Bad as the world is, respect is always paid to virtue. In the usual course of human affairs, it will be found, that a plain understanding joined with acknowledged worth, contributes more to prosperity, than the brightest parts without probity or honour. Whether science, or business, or public life be your aim, virtue still enters for a principal share, into all those great departments of society. It is connected with eminence in every liberal art; with reputation, in every branch of fair and useful business; with distinction, in every public station. The vigour which it gives the mind, and the weight which it adds to character; the generous sentiments which it breathes, the undaunted spirit which it inspires, the ardour of diligence which it quickens, the freedom which it procures from pernicious and dishonourable avocations, are the foundations of all that is high in fame, or great in success among men.

Whatever ornamental or engaging endowments you

now possess, virtue is a necessary requisite, in order to their shining with proper lustre. Feeble are the attractions of the fairest form, if it be suspected that nothing within corresponds to the pleasing appearance without. Short are the triumphs of wit, when it is supposed to be the vehicle of malice. By whatever arts you may at first attract the attention, you can hold the esteem, and secure the hearts of others, only by amiable dispositions, and the accomplishments of the mind. These are the qualities whose influence will last, when the lustre of all that once sparkled and dazzled has passed away. Let not then the season of youth be barren of improvements so essential to your future felicity and honour. Now is the seed-time of life; and according to *what you sow, you shall reap*. Your character is now, under Divine assistance, of your own forming; your fate is, in some measure, put into your own hands. Your nature is, as yet, pliant and soft. Habits have not established their dominion. Prejudices have not pre-occupied your understanding. The world has not had time to contract and debase your affections. All your powers are more vigorous, disembarassed, and free, than they will be at any future period. Whatever impulse you now give to your desires and passions, the direction is likely to continue. It will form the channel in which your life is to run; nay, it may determine its everlasting issue. Consider then the employment of this important period as the highest trust which shall ever be committed to you; as, in a great measure, decisive of your happiness, in time, and in eternity. As in the succession of the seasons, each, by the invariable laws of nature, affects the productions of what is next in course; so, in



human life, every period of our age, according as it is well or ill spent, influences the happiness of that which is to follow. Virtuous youth gradually brings forward accomplished and flourishing manhood; and such manhood passes of itself, without uneasiness, into respectable and tranquil old age. But when nature is turned out of its regular course, disorder takes place in the moral, just as in the vegetable world. If the spring put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit. So, if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible, and old age miserable. If the beginnings of life have been *vanity*, its latter end can be no other than *vexation of spirit*.

Piety to God is the foundation of good morals, and is a disposition particularly graceful and becoming in youth. To be void of it, argues a cold heart destitute of some of the best affections which belong to that age. Youth is the season of warm and generous emotions. The heart should then, spontaneously, rise into the admiration of what is great, glow with the love of what is fair and excellent, and melt at the discovery of tenderness and goodness. Where can any object be found, so proper to kindle those affections, as the Father of the universe, and the Author of all felicity? Unmoved by veneration, can you contemplate that grandeur and majesty, which his works every where display? Untouched by gratitude, can you view that profusion of good, which, in this pleasing season of life his beneficent hand pours around you? Happy in the love and affection of those with whom you are connected, look up to the Supreme Being, as the inspirer of all the friendship which has ever been shewn you

by others; himself, your best and your first friend; formerly, the supporter of your infancy, and the guide of your childhood; now, the guardian of your youth, and the hope of your coming years. View religious homage, as a natural expression of gratitude to him for all his goodness. Connected with so many tender sensibilities of soul, let religion be with you, not the cold and barren offspring of speculation, but the warm and vigorous dictate of the heart. But though piety chiefly belongs to the heart, yet the aid of the understanding is requisite, to give a proper direction to the devout affections. You must endeavour therefore to acquire just views, both of the great principles of natural religion, and of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel. For this end study the sacred scriptures. Consult the word of God, more than the systems of men, if you would know the truth in its native purity. When, upon rational and sober inquiry, you have established your principles, suffer them not to be shaken by the scoffs of the licentious, or the cavils of the sceptical. Remember, that in the examination of every great and comprehensive plan, such as that of Christianity, difficulties may be expected to occur; and that reasonable evidence is not to be rejected because the nature of our present state allows us only to *know in part, and to see through a glass darkly.* Impress your minds with reverence for all that is sacred. Let no wantonness of youthly spirits, no compliance with the intemperate mirth of others, ever betray you into prophane sallies. Besides the guilt which is thereby incurred, nothing gives a more odious appearance of petulance and presumption to youth, than the affect-

tation of treating religion with levity. Instead of being an evidence of superior understanding, it discovers a pert and shallow mind; which, vain of the first smatterings of knowledge, presumes to make light of what the rest of mankind revere.

At the same time you are not to imagine, that when exhorted to be religious you are called upon to become more formal and solemn in your manners than others of the same years, or to erect yourselves into supercilious reprovers of those around you. The spirit of true religion breathes gentleness and affability. It gives a native, unaffected ease to the behaviour. It is social, kind, and cheerful; far removed from that gloomy and illiberal superstition which clouds the brow, sharpens the temper, dejects the spirits, and teaches men to fit themselves for another world, by neglecting the concerns of this. Let your religion, on the contrary, connect preparation for heaven, with an honourable discharge of the duties of active life. Let it be associated in your imagination, with all that is manly and useful; *with whatsoever things are true, are just, are pure, are lovely, are of good report*, wherever there is any *virtue*, and wherever there is *any praise*. Of such religion discover, on every proper occasion, that you are not ashamed; but avoid making any unnecessary ostentation of it before the world.

To piety join modesty and docility, reverence of your parents, and submission to those who are your superiors in knowledge, in station, and in years. Dependence and obedience belong to youth. Modesty is one of its chief ornaments; and has ever been esteemed a presage of rising merit. When entering on the career of life, it is your part, not to assume the

reigns as yet into your hands; but to commit yourselves to the guidance of the more experienced, and to become wise by the wisdom of those who have gone before you.

Of all the follies incident to youth, there are none which either deform its present appearance, or blast the prospect of its future prosperity, more than self-conceit, presumption, and obstinacy. By checking its natural progress in improvement, they fix it in long immaturity; and frequently produce mischiefs, which can never be repaired. Yet these are vices too commonly found among the young. Big with enterprise, and elated by hope, they resolve to trust for success to none but themselves. Full of their own abilities, they deride the admonitions which are given them by their friends, as the timorous suggestions of age. Too wise to learn, too impatient to deliberate, too forward to be restrained, they plunge, with precipitant indiscretion, into the midst of all the dangers with which life abounds. *Seest thou a young man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.*

—Positive as you now are in your opinions, and confident in your assertions, be assured, that the time approaches when both men and things will appear to you in a different light. Many characters which you now admire, will, by and by, sink in your esteem; and many opinions, of which you are at present most tenacious, will alter as you advance in years. Distrust, therefore, that glare of youthful presumption, which dazzles your eyes. Abound not in your own sense. Put not yourselves forward with too much eagerness; nor imagine, that by the impetuosity of juvenile ardour, you can overturn systems which have been long established, and change the face of the world. *Learn*



not to think more highly of yourselves than you ought, but to think soberly. By patient and gradual progression in improvement, you may, in due time, command lasting esteem. But by assuming, at present, a tone of superiority, to which you have no title, you will disgust those whose approbation it is most important to gain. Forward vivacity may fit you to be the companions of an idle hour. More solid qualities must recommend you to the wise, and mark you out for importance and consideration in subsequent life.

It is necessary to recommend to you, sincerity and truth. This is the basis of every virtue. That darkness of character where we can see no heart; those foldings of art, through which no native affection is allowed to penetrate, present an object, unamiable in every season of life, but particularly odious in youth. If, at an age when the heart is warm, when the emotions are strong, and when nature is expected to shew itself free and open, you can already smile and deceive, what are we to look for, when you shall be longer hackneyed in the ways of men; when interest shall have completed the obduration of your heart, and experience shall have improved you in all the arts of guile? Dissimulation in youth, is the fore-runner of perfidy in old age. Its first appearance is the fatal omen of growing depravity, and future shame. It degrades parts and learning; obscures the lustre of every accomplishment; and sinks you into contempt with God and men. As you value, therefore, the approbation of heaven, or the esteem of the world, cultivate the love of truth. In all your proceedings be direct and consistent. Ingenuity and candour possess the most powerful charm; they bespeak universal fa-

vour, and carry an apology for almost every failing. *The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment.* The path of truth, is a plain and a safe path; that of falsehood, is a perplexing maze. After the first departure from sincerity, it is not in your power to stop. One artifice unavoidably leads on to another; till, as the intricacy of the labyrinth increases, you are left entangled in your own snare. Deceit discovers a little mind, which stops at temporary expedients, without rising to comprehensive views of conduct. It betrays, at the same time, a dastardly spirit. It is the resource of one who wants courage to avow his designs, or to rest upon himself. Whereas, openness of character displays that generous boldness which ought to distinguish youth. To set out in the world with no other principle than a crafty attention to interest, betokens one who is destined for creeping through the inferior walks of life. But to give an early preference to honour above gain, when they stand in competition; to despise every advantage, which cannot be attained without dishonest arts; to brook no meanness, and to stoop to no dissimulation; are the indications of a great mind, the presages of future eminence and distinction in life. At the same time, this virtuous sincerity is perfectly consistent with the most prudent vigilance and caution. It is opposed to cunning, not to true wisdom. It is not the simplicity of a weak and improvident, but the candour of an enlarged and noble mind; of one who scorns deceit, because he accounts it both base and unprofitable; and who seeks no disguise, because he needs none to hide him.

Youth is the proper season of cultivating the be-

nevolent and humane affections. As a great part of your happiness is to depend on the connections which you form with others, it is of high importance that you acquire, betimes, the temper and the manners which will render such connections comfortable. Let a sense of justice be the foundation of all your social qualities. In your most early intercourse with the world, and even in your youthful amusements, let no unfairness be found. Engrave on your mind that sacred rule, of *doing all things to others according as you wish that they should do unto you*. For this end, impress yourselves with a deep sense of the original and natural equality of men. Whatever advantages of birth or fortune you possess, never display them with an ostentatious superiority. Leave the subordinations of rank, to regulate the intercourse of more advanced years. At present, it becomes you to act among your companions, as man with man. Remember how unknown to you are the vicissitudes of the world; and how often they, on whom ignorant and contemptuous young men once looked down with scorn, have risen to be their superiors in future years. Compassion is an emotion of which you ought never to be ashamed. Graceful in youth is the tear of sympathy and the heart that melts at the tale of woe. Let not ease and indulgence contract your affections, and wrap you up in selfish enjoyments. But go sometimes to the *house of mourning*, as well as to the *house of feasting*. Accustom yourselves to think of the distresses of human life; of the solitary cottage, the dying parent, and the weeping orphan. Never sport with pain and distress, in any of your amusements; nor treat even the meanest insect with wanton cruelty. In

young minds there is commonly a strong propensity to particular intimacies and friendships. Youth indeed, is the season when friendships are sometimes formed, which not only continue through succeeding life, but which glow to the last, with a tenderness unknown to the connections begun in cooler years. The propensity therefore is not to be discouraged; though at the same time it must be regulated with much circumspection and care. Too many of the pretended friendships of youth, are mere combinations in pleasure. They are often founded on capricious likings; suddenly contracted, and as suddenly dissolved. Sometimes they are the effect of interested complaisance and flattery on the one side, and of credulous fondness on the other. Beware of such rash and dangerous connections, which may afterwards load you with dishonour. Remember that by the character of those whom you choose for your friends, your own is likely to be formed, and will certainly be judged of by the world. Be slow, therefore, and cautious in contracting intimacy; but when a virtuous friendship is once established, consider it as a sacred engagement. Expose not yourselves to the reproach of lightness and inconstancy, which always bespeak, either a trifling, or a base mind. Reveal none of the secrets of your friend. Be faithful to his interests. Forsake him not in danger. Abhor the thought of acquiring any advantage by his prejudice or hurt. In order to render yourselves amiable in society, correct every appearance of harshness in behaviour. Let that courtesy distinguish your demeanor, which springs, not so much from studied politeness, as from a mild and gentle heart. Follow the customs of the

world in matters indifferent; but stop when they become sinful. Let your manners be simple and natural; and of course they will be engaging. Affectation is certain deformity. By forming themselves on fantastic models, and vying with one another in every reigning folly, the young begin with being ridiculous, and end in being vicious and immoral.

The love of pleasure, natural to man in every period of his life, glows at this age with excessive ardour. Novelty adds fresh charms, as yet, to every gratification. The world appears to spread a continual feast; and health, vigour, and high spirits, invite them to partake of it without restraint. In vain we warn them of latent dangers. Religion is accused of insufferable severity, in prohibiting enjoyment, and the old, when they offer their admonitions, are upbraided with having forgot that they once were young.—And yet, my friends, to what do the restraints of religion, and the counsels of age, with respect to pleasure, amount? They may all be comprized in few words, not to hurt yourselves, and not to hurt others, by your pursuit of pleasure. Within these bounds pleasure is lawful; beyond them, it becomes criminal, because it is ruinous. Are these restraints any other than what a wise man would choose to impose on himself? We call you not to renounce pleasure, but to enjoy it in safety. Instead of abridging it, we exhort you to pursue it on an extensive plan. We propose measures for securing its possession, and for prolonging its duration. Consult your whole nature. Consider yourselves not only as sensitive, but as rational beings; not only as rational, but social; not only as social, but immortal. Whatever violates

your nature in any of these respects, cannot afford true pleasure; any more than that which undermines an essential part of the vital system can promote health. For the truth of this conclusion, we appeal not merely to the authority of religion, nor to the testimony of the aged, but to yourselves and your own experience. We ask, Whether you have not found, that in a course of criminal excess, your pleasure was more than compensated by succeeding pain? Whether, if not from every particular instance, yet from every habit, at least, of unlawful gratification, there did not spring some thorn to wound you, there did not arise some consequence to make you repent of it in the issue? If you have any consideration or any firmness left, avoid temptations, for which you have found yourselves unequal, with as much care, as you would shun pestilential infection. Break off all connections with the loose and profligate. *When sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Look not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup; for at the last, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Remove thy way from the strange woman, and come not near the door of her house. Let not thine heart decline to her ways; for her house is the way to hell. Thou goest after her as a bird hasteth to the snare; and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

By these unhappy excesses of irregular pleasure in youth, how many amiable dispositions are corrupted or destroyed! How many rising capacities and powers are suppressed! How many flattering hopes of parents and friends are totally extinguished! Who but must drop a tear over human nature, when he beholds that morning which arose so bright, overcast with such untimely darkness; that



good humour which once captivated all hearts, that vivacity which sparkled in every company, those abilities which were fitted for adorning the highest station, all sacrificed at the shrine of low sensuality; and one who was formed for running the fair career of life in the midst of public esteem, cut off by his vices at the beginning of his course, or sunk for the whole of it, into insignificancy and contempt!—These, O sinful Pleasure! are thy trophies. It is thus that, co-operating with the foe of God and man, thou degrades human honour and blastest the opening prospects of human felicity.

Diligence, industry, and proper improvement of time are material duties of the young. To no purpose are they endowed with the best abilities, if they want activity for exerting them. Unavailing, in this case, will be every direction that can be given them, either for their temporal or spiritual welfare. In youth the habits of industry are most easily acquired. In youth, the incentives to it are strongest, from ambition and from duty, from emulation and hope, from all the prospects which the beginning of life affords. If, dead to these calls, you already languish in slothful inaction, what will be able to quicken the more sluggish current of advancing years? Industry is not only the instrument of improvement, but the foundation of pleasure. Nothing is so opposite to the true enjoyment of life, as the relaxed and feeble state of an indolent mind. He who is a stranger to industry, may possess, but he cannot enjoy. For it is labour only which gives the relish to pleasure. It is the appointed vehicle of every good to man. It is the indispensable condition of our possessing a sound

mind in a sound body. Sloth is so inconsistent with both, that it is hard to determine whether it be a greater foe to virtue, or to health and happiness. Inactive as it is in itself, its effects are fatally powerful. Though it appear a slowly flowing stream, yet it undermines all that is stable and flourishing. It not only saps the foundation of every virtue, but pours upon you a deluge of crimes and evils. It is like water which first petrifies by stagnation, and then sends up noxious vapours, and fills the atmosphere with death.

Fly, therefore, from idleness, as the certain parent both of guilt and of ruin. And under idleness I include, not mere inaction only, but all that circle of trifling occupations, in which too many saunter away their youth; perpetually engaged in frivolous society, or public amusements; in the labours of dress, or the ostentation of their persons.—Is this the foundation which you lay for future usefulness and esteem? By such accomplishments, do you hope to recommend yourselves to the thinking part of the world, and to answer the expectations of your friends and your country?—Amusements, youth requires. It were vain, it were cruel to prohibit them. But though allowable as the relaxation, they are most culpable as the business of the young. For they then become the gulph of time, and the poison of the mind. They foment bad passions. They weaken the manly powers. They sink the native vigour of youth, into contemptible effeminacy.

Redeeming your time from such dangerous waste, seek to fill it with employments which you may review with satisfaction. The acquisition of knowledge is one of the most honourable occupations of youth. The desire



If it discovers a liberal mind, and is connected with many accomplishments, and many virtues. But tho' your train of life should not lead you to study, the course of education always furnishes proper employments to a well-disposed mind. Whatever you pursue be emulous to excel. Generous ambition, and sensibility to praise, are, especially at your age, among the marks of virtue. Think not, that any affluence of fortune, or any elevation of rank, exempts you from the duties of application and industry. Industry is the law of our being; it is the demand of nature, of reason, and of God. Remember always, that the years which now pass over your heads, leave permanent memorials behind them. From your thoughtless minds they may escape; but they remain in the remembrance of God. They form an important part of the register of your life. They will hereafter bear testimony, either for or against you, at that day when for all your actions, but particularly for the employments of youth, you must give an account to God.

Thus I have set before you some of the chief qualifications which belong to a virtuous and religious character; piety, modesty, truth, benevolence, temperance, and industry. Whether your future course is destined to be long or short, after this manner it should commence; and, if it continue to be thus conducted, its conclusion, at what time soever it arrives, will not be inglorious or unhappy.

Let your attention be recalled to that dependence on the blessing of heaven, which, amidst all your endeavours after improvement, you ought continually to preserve. It is too common with the young, even when they resolve to tread the path of virtue and



honour, to set out with presumptuous confidence in themselves. Trusting to their own abilities for carrying them successfully through life, they are careless of applying to God, or of deriving any assistance from what they are apt to reckon the gloomy discipline of religion. Alas! how little do they know the dangers which await them? Neither human wisdom, nor human virtue, unsupported by religion, are equal to the trying situations which often occur in life. By the shock of temptation, how frequently have the most virtuous intentions been overthrown? Under the pressure of disaster, how often has the greatest constancy sunk? *Every good and every perfect gift, is from above. Wisdom and virtue, as well as riches and honour, come from God.* Destitute of his favour, you are in no better situation, with all your boasted abilities, than orphans left to wander in a trackless desert, without any guide to conduct them, or any shelter to cover them from the gathering storm. Correct then this ill-founded arrogance. Expect not, that your happiness can be independent of him who made you. By faith and repentance apply to the Redeemer of the world. By piety and prayer, seek the protection of the God of heaven. In fine, remember the solemn words, in which a great Prince delivered his dying charge to his son; words which every young person ought to consider as addressed to himself, and to engrave deeply on his heart: *Thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers; and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

From Dr. Blair's Sermons.

ON THE DUTIES OF SCHOOL BOYS.

FROM ROLLIN.

Quintilian says, that he has included almost all the duty of scholars in this one piece of advice which he gives them, to love those who teach them, as they love the sciences which they learn of them; and to look upon them as fathers, from whom they derive not the life of the body, but that instruction which is in a manner the life of the soul. Indeed this sentiment of affection and respect suffices to make them apt to learn during the time of their studies, and full of gratitude all the rest of their lives. It seems to me to include a great part of what is to be expected from them.

Docility, which consists in submitting to directions, in readily receiving the instructions of their masters, and reducing them to practice, is properly the virtue of scholars, as that of masters is to teach well. The one can do nothing without the other; and as it is not sufficient for a labourer to sow the seed, unless the earth, after having opened its bosom to receive it, in a manner hatches, warms, and moistens it; so likewise the whole fruit of instruction depends upon a good correspondence between the masters and the scholars.

Gratitude for those who have laboured in our education, is the character of an honest man, and the mark of a good heart. Who is there among us, says Cicero, that has been instructed with any care, that is not highly delighted with the sight, or even the bare remembrance of his preceptors, masters, and the place where he was taught and brought up?

Seneca exhorts young men to preserve always a great respect for their masters, to whose care they are indebted for the amendment of their faults, and for having imbibed sentiments of honour and probity. Their exactness and severity displease sometimes at an age when we are not in a condition to judge of the obligations we owe to them; but when years have ripened our understanding and judgment, we then discern that what made us dislike them, I mean admonitions, reprimands, and a severe exactness in restraining the passions of an imprudent and inconsiderate age, is expressly the very thing which should make us esteem and love them. Thus we see that Marcus Aurelius, one of the wisest and most illustrious emperors that Rome ever had, thanked the gods for two things especially—for his having had excellent tutors himself, and that he had found the like for his children.

Quinctilian, after having noted the different characters of the mind in children, draws, in a few words, the image of what he judged to be a perfect scholar; and certainly it is a very amiable one: "For my part," says he, "I like a child who is encouraged by commendation, is animated by a sense of glory, and weeps when he is outdone. A noble emulation will always keep him in exercise, a reprimand will touch him to the quick, and honour will serve instead of a spur. We need not fear that such a scholar will ever give himself up to sullenness." *Mihi ille detur puer, quem laus excitet, quem gloria juvet, qui virtus fleat. Hic erit alendus ambitu: hunc mordebit objurgatio: hunc honor excitabit: in hoc desidiam nunquam verebor.* How great a value soever Quinctilian sets upon the talents of the

mind, he esteems those of the heart far beyond them, and looks upon the others as of no value without them. In the same chapter from whence I took the preceding words, he declares, he should never have a good opinion of a child, who placed his study in occasioning laughter, by mimicking the behaviour, mien, and faults of others; and he presently gives an admirable reason for it: "A child," says he, "cannot be truly ingenious, in my opinion, unless he be good and virtuous; otherwise, I should rather choose to have him dull and heavy than of a bad disposition." Non dabit spem bonæ indolis, qui hoc imitandi studio petit, ut rideatur. Nam probus quoque imprimis erit ille vere ingeniosus: alioqui non pejus duxerim tardi esse ingenii, quam mali.

He displays to us all these talents in the eldest of his two children, whose character he draws, and whose death he laments in so eloquent and pathetic a strain, in the beautiful preface to his sixth book. I shall beg leave to insert here a small extract of it, which will not be useless to the boys, as they will find it a model which suits well with their age and condition.

After having mentioned his younger son, who died at five years old, and described the graces and beauties of his countenance, the prettiness of his expressions, the vivacity of his understanding, which began to shine through the veil of childhood; "I had still left me," says he, "my son Quinctilian, in whom I placed all my pleasure and all my hopes, and comfort enough I might have found in him: for having now entered into his tenth year, he did not produce only blossoms like his younger brother, but fruits already formed, and beyond the power of disappointment.—I have much ex-

perience; but I never saw in any child, I do not say only so many excellent dispositions for the sciences, nor so much taste, as his masters know, but so much probity, sweetness, good-nature, gentleness, and inclination to please, and oblige, as I discerned in him.

“ Besides this, he had all the advantages of nature, a charming voice, a pleasing countenance, and a surprising facility in pronouncing well the two languages, as if he had been equally born for both of them.

“ But all this was no more than hopes. I set a greater value upon his admirable virtues, his equality of temper, his resolution, the courage with which he bore up against fear and pain; for, how were his physicians astonished at his patience under a distemper of eight months continuance, when at the point of death he comforted me himself, and bade me not to weep for him! and delirious as he sometimes was at his last moments, his tongue ran of nothing else but learning and the sciences: O vain and deceitful hopes!” &c.

Are there many boys amongst us, of whom we can truly say so much to their advantage, as Quintilian says here of his son? What a shame would it be for them, if, born and brought up in a Christian country, they had not even the virtues of Pagan children! I make no scruple to repeat them here again—docility, obedience, respect for their masters, or rather a degree of affection, and the source of an eternal gratitude; zeal for study, and a wonderful thirst after the sciences, joined to an abhorrence of vice and irregularity; an admirable fund of probity, goodness, gentleness, civility, and liberality; as also patience, courage, and greatness of soul in the course of a long sickness. What then was wanting to all

these virtues?—That, which alone could render them truly worthy the name, and must be in a manner the soul of them, and constitute their whole value, the precious gift of faith and piety; the saving knowledge of a Mediator; a sincere desire of pleasing God, and referring all our actions to him.



THE HONOUR AND ADVANTAGE OF A
CONSTANT ADHERENCE TO TRUTH.

Petrarch, a celebrated Italian Poet, who flourished about four hundred years ago, recommended himself to the confidence and affection of Cardinal Colonna, in whose family he resided, by his candour and strict regard to truth. A violent quarrel occurred in the household of this nobleman, which was carried so far, that recourse was had to arms. The Cardinal wished to know the foundation of this affair; and that he might be able to decide with justice, he assembled all his people, and obliged them to bind themselves, by a most solemn oath on the Gospels, to declare the whole truth. Every one, without exception, submitted to this determination; even the Bishop of Luna, brother to the Cardinal, was not excused. Petrarch, in his turn, presenting himself to take the oath, the Cardinal closed the book, and said, "*As to you, Petrarch, your word is sufficient.*"* A story similar to this is related of Zenocrates, an Athenian Philosopher, who lived three hundred years before Christ, and was educated in the school of Plato. The people of Athens entertained so high an opinion of his probity, that one day when he approached the altar, to confirm by an oath the truth of what he had asserted, the judges unanimously declared his word to be sufficient evidence.

*From "A Father's Instructions," &c.
by Dr. Percival.*

* See the life of Petrarch, elegantly translated by Mrs. Dobson.

IDLENESS AND IRRESOLUTION.

Horace, a celebrated Roman poet, relates, that a country-man, who wanted to pass a river, stood loitering on the banks of it, in the foolish expectation that a current so rapid, would soon discharge its waters. But the stream still flowed; increased, perhaps, by fresh torrents from the mountains; and it must for ever flow, because the sources from which it is derived are inexhaustible.

Thus the *idle and irresolute youth* trifles over his books, or wastes in play his precious moments; deferring the task of improvement, which at first is easy to be accomplished, but which will become more and more difficult the longer it is neglected.

Ibid.



AFFECTION TO PARENTS.

An amiable youth was lamenting, in terms of the sincerest grief, the death of a most affectionate parent. His companion endeavoured to console him by the reflection, that he had always behaved to the deceased with duty, tenderness, and respect. So I thought, replied the youth, whilst my parent was living: but now I recollect, with pain and sorrow, many instances of disobedience and neglect, for which, alas! it is too late to make atonement.

Ibid.



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