

fair sex, I believe, if the question could be left to their decision this moment, that the majority would prefer Intellect though clothed in rags, to Ignorance in wealth. Now having, I hope, shown that our success in courtship depends as much, if not more, upon our intellectual capabilities, than it does upon worldly wealth or external appearance, I think I have almost said enough to make a diligent and an aspiring student of the dullest blockhead in the universe. The history of some of our great men has forcibly shewn the influence their superior minds exercised over the fair sex, both in matters of courtship and in a general acquaintance; and a similar influence, in a proportional degree, has doubtless been experienced by every man of education. However, I will take the liberty to relate a little anecdote in point, which happened to Tyrone Power. Well, Power had a very plain countenance, to which was added the disagreeable marks of the small pox. While he was at one time in a room amidst a company of fashionables, a lady among them, who had not seen Power before, expressed her surprise at the coarseness of his countenance, and wondered how other ladies could therefore express so much admiration of his company. That same evening Power was, it is said, introduced to this lady,—a few minutes after she was likewise heard expressing to a friend, the pleasure with which she had listened to Power's conversation; and lo! a short time from this, this very lady became his wife. Let us for instance watch an educated man in the social circle; we shall find him to be there, the pole star of attraction, that his words carry with them a greater force, and that his actions make a stronger impression upon those around him, than those of a less educated person. What lord or lady, while in company with Pope, could think his humped back a deformity—or would despise Johnson's conversation because of his coarse features, or his dirty hands—or that would listen with less pleasure to Goldsmith because he stammered? No, for the beauty of the mind is so great, and its influence is so powerful, that it spreads around the most ugly features or the most ungainly limb of the man of genius, a halo of symmetry and of beauty!

Having now briefly shewn the influence of conversation, when fed by knowledge, I shall next endeavour to show you to what advantage it may be cultivated in the Debating Club. It is practice, we know, which makes us perfect in almost all things, and so we should find it would in preparing ourselves to discuss a question chosen for debate. For to debate well on any subject we must first know it

well. At first we would very likely find a little difficulty to acquire freely, words expressive of our ideas, and also some trouble to connect those ideas together in a proper and in an intelligible form; but those obstructions would be sure to vanish away gradually with the exercise. I have known some young men that were unable to utter scarcely two sentences intelligibly, but after a connexion of two or three months with a Debating Club, and occasionally participating in the debates, they were able to express their ideas both lucidly and logically. Mr. Young, in his "Colonial Literature," says: "The Debating Club is an admirable school of tuition, and some of the first orators who have adorned the history of eloquence have made their *first essays* in assemblies of this kind. Sir James Mackintosh and Sir Samuel Romilly attended them for years, and if evidence were wanting to prove the *advantage* and *necessity* of such institutions, it would be easy to condense in their favor a long array of the testimony of men of the first eminence." Burns, the peasant poet, without any scholastic opportunity to acquire a polished and graceful style of conversation, was yet, we find, very remarkable for his skill in it. Dr. Currie, in his life, says: "A Scottish lady accustomed to the best society, declared with characteristic *naïveté*, that no man's conversation threw her so completely off her feet as that of Burns; and an English lady, familiarly acquainted with the most distinguished characters of those times, assured Dr. Currie, that in the happiest of his social hours, there was a charm about Burns which she had never seen equalled." This skill of Burns, in conversing, Mr. Lockhart attributed principally to his connection with a Debating Club at Tarbolton and at Mauchline, of which I shall speak more by and by.

And while married, the wife would be equally benefitted by those acquirements; she would assuredly feel a pleasure in participating in her husband's intellectual riches, and be able more or less to appreciate their value. What an unbounded, and what a noble field would be thus opened for their exercise and examination; and what a preventative also it would be to the broils and bickerings which unhappily too often darken the domestic hearth. Those advantages would extend likewise to the children. The great secret in training the child is in placing good examples before it; and let the child but once see his father occupy his evenings in reading and conversing upon moral and instructive topics, and I conceive that no surer means could be adopted to make that child imitate his father. The Debating Club has thus a stronger claim upon the attention