

wood work at the back and sides, and spread over with clean straw mats. It over hung a clear stream, running from the Birket il Ibrahim, crowded with playful fish, and was capable of accommodating fifty persons, who might sit here at their ease to watch the current of the brook. On the opposite side was a garden, so thickly planted with trees, that the lofty and rumed walls of the castle could be but here and there perceived through their openings, though appearing, from its elevated site, to be almost right above our heads. A beautiful weeping willow, the trunk of which reared itself from the banks of the stream, within a few feet of where we sat, spread its falling branches over the waters, and completely shaded us from the heat of the sun, while the scarlet blossom of the pomegranate, and the finest combinations of summer green in the various trees that vied in richness and beauty with each other, delighted the eye, and helped to complete the charm of this lovely spot.

Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia.

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ON YOUTH.

"Youth is a period which presents the fewest obstacles to the practice of godliness, whether we consider our external circumstances, our nature, powers, or moral habits."

What a delightful period of life is youth! Who can contemplate it without feelings of the deepest interest: For it is "the spring of life," by which "will be determined the glory of summer, the abundance of autumn, and the provision of winter." Who does not feel peculiarly anxious, that this time so advantageous to the cultivation of religion, should not be neglected.

Youthful reader! let me crave your serious attention whilst I endeavour to urge upon you an improvement of the present period of your life.

I shall first point out some of those ADVANTAGES which you possess, in reference to religion and its duties. The first of these advantages is, that your mind is now unoccupied, and therefore ready to exercise itself upon any subject that is presented to it. None of the cares of the world have yet come upon it to fill it with anxieties. None of the troubles of life, which are incident to advanced age, have yet overtaken it, to oppress with anguish and sorrow. There is nothing to disturb the peaceful, calm, and happy smile which dwells upon the blooming cheek. All is unruffled. This then is the time to attend to your spiritual concerns. This then is the time to seek pardon of your sins through a crucified Redeemer, that you may have the consolations of religion to support you, when the cares of the world bear down your spirits. Improve the time, therefore; let your mind be occupied with thoughts of your own sinfulness, and of the love of Christ, let your soul be given up to Him, and your whole life consecrated to His service. Look up to the Lord for His protecting care to be over you, that you may be kept from swerving from the narrow path, which leads to heaven, that the world and its allurements and vices, may not take hold of your mind, but that you may be preserved from its snares, and be enabled to say in the language of filial confidence, "My Father, be thou the guide of my youth."

Youth is also the period of susceptibility, when the mind is apt to take impressions. How important then, that it should be impressed with that sacred principle of love to Christ, which will lead you to yield up yourself, body, soul, and spirit to Him; and if it be not early impressed with love to the Saviour, it will most undoubtedly be impressed with hatred to Him, for the world, with its alluring charms, is ever ready to present itself to your mind, and tempt you to drink of its poisonous cup. The cup may taste sweet, but there is a deadly poison at the bottom. Seek the assistance of the Spirit of God, to enable you to forego the trifles and pleasures of the world, which yield satisfaction only for the moment; but cause bitter reflections, and reproaches of conscience, in after life, and attend to the instructions of the wise man: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days

come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

A third advantage incident to youth, is a retentive memory, an aptitude to retain what you hear, and what you read. This makes youth the fittest time for learning. Seek then, to store your memory with those things that are solid and durable, which will be of lasting benefit to you. For this purpose, let the Scriptures form an important part of your study. Here you will find a mine of inexhaustible treasure, and the deeper you dig in it, the greater treasures will you discover.

If you have opportunity, use your utmost endeavours to become acquainted with the Scriptures in their original language. This will enable you to enter more into the true meaning of the word of God. Sufficient to this has been given, at different times, in this Magazine, and if you begin with a pure desire of examining the Scriptures, there is very little doubt but you will proceed.

The following remarks appear in a Sermon by Dr. Bennett, on the "duty and advantage of searching the Scriptures." "It is deeply to be deplored, that our country has in this department of knowledge, fallen far below its former eminence. To the disgrace of London, its University, cannot obtain a Hebrew class, nor has the whole united empire any celebrity in a language that is the master of all others, and the honored vehicle, in which God first spake by the lips of men." And I entreat you to follow his advice, when he exclaims: "O for the day, when our talented youths shall give their powers, not to piquant novels, and misdeed verse, but the sacred fountain of revealed truth, the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament!"

Shall I add as a fourth advantage which you possess, leisure, and opportunity? I am aware that this is greater with some than with others. But there are very few who have not a little leisure, and in most cases, the time and opportunity which youth enjoy are greater than of those, upon who devolve the more active duties of life. If you have little, seek to improve it to the greatest advantage. If you have much, remember that much is required of you—improve it accordingly. Never let your leisure moments pass unimproved, or be only occupied in reading some trifling volume,—which will yield you no permanent good. It would be perhaps advisable, to lay out a plan for the employment of each day, and adhere as strictly to it as possible. This must, of course, be suited to your circumstances and engagements, but let the study of the Scriptures, & private prayer and meditation, form an important part of your plan, for this if pursued in a devout frame of mind, will render every thing else a blessing to you.

Remember, that you were not sent into the world merely for your own improvement but to render assistance to others. And you must not rest contented with the thought that you yourself are religious, but seek to make others so too. "To do good, and to communicate, forget not." You must not only be good, but do good. There are many ways in which you may do this.

To these advantages, may be added many others, the health and vigour of mind and body, the ardent imagination, expectation, and zeal, and the warmth of affection, which youth possess; all are favorable to the reception of religion. Added to this, are the numerous invitations given in the Scriptures, by Christ himself.

See that you neglect not these advantages, and let the prime of life pass away unimproved, and old age creep upon you, and deprive you of them all. Then when nature decays, and is scarcely able to support the tottering frame, what bitter reflections will agitate the breast. Improve your youthful days therefore, by the cultivation of religious habits, that when nature sinks within you, and the world vanishes from your sight, a blissful eternity may appear in the prospect, to cheer you in your passage through "the valley of the shadow of death," and that you may then be able to commit your soul into the hands of the Redeemer, and to enter into that rest which remains for the people of God.

My dear young friends, let me entreat you, 'not to neglect it, but to seize the present opportunity of obtaining pardon of your sins, remembering that "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

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EVILS OF IDLENESS.

Charles Lifeless—A Sketch.—"The busy person," says Steele, "like the bird upon the wing, escapes many of those snares to which the indolent are exposed

It is hardly possible that a person should continue absolutely unemployed for any long time; and he that is not doing what he ought, will be doing what he ought not: the destroyer of souls can hardly wish for a safer mark, at which to direct his temptations, than an idle person. The sloth of Sodom is represented as one cause of its wickedness; and David's awful conduct seems to have been preceded by the same indisposition. But an honest diligence subdues the pride, lust, and sensuality, which are cherished by sloth and indolence; and, I am not at leisure, is sometimes a more powerful restraint from evil, than, it is not lawful. What numbers have been cut off in the midst of life, or had their being rendered uncomfortable while they lived by the great variety of diseases which sloth and inactivity bring upon the human frame; (as dropsies, consumptions, melancholy, and the like) which, according to all human views, might have been prevented by human activity.

"It was from a conviction that idleness was injurious to the constitution and morals of men, and very unjust and mischievous to society, that the ancient Greeks and Romans appointed magistrates to see that no persons spent their time in sloth, and severely punished these who thus offended. It was the general custom of the Jews to bring up their children to manual labour, how plentiful soever their circumstances were or how polite soever their education was designed to be. On this account the apostle Paul, who had a learned education under the greatest of the rabbies, wrought as a tent-maker. The same custom is continued in other countries to this day."

The youthful mind, especially, requires to be constantly employed; for,

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

And it is earnestly recommended to our juvenile friends to cultivate the talents with which God has entrusted them, and to avail themselves of the ample opportunities accorded them, for adding constantly to their stock of learning and knowledge. What rich stores of science invite their attention! What pleasing and instructive details does history furnish! How greatly may their mental powers be enlarged by mathematical pursuits! There is in fact, not even an apology for idleness. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." It has been well and truly said, that "Idleness will cover a man with rags;" and history and observation confirm the maxim.

Charles Lifeless was placed at an excellent school at the age of eight years. At that period he could scarcely read a verse in the New Testament. His tutor did, all that could be done to advance him in learning—but, alas, Charles was slothful. He never applied himself—his books were mislaid—his work was too hard—he could not recollect his lesson—and he quitted school with the character of "an indolent stupid boy." He was placed with a worthy tradesman as an apprentice—but the same disposition accompanied him. He could not awake in the morning—the shop was never opened in time—he was never ready to attend the customers—he took no pains to acquire a knowledge of the business—and, at the expiration of his apprenticeship, he had all to learn! His father resolved however upon giving him one trial more, and embraced the offer of a friend to give up a very prosperous concern in favor of his son, upon condition of receiving a certain sum; and, accordingly, Charles became a nominal tradesman. Instead of displaying any diligence to retain the customers who had formerly frequented the shop, he so entirely neglected the business, that, at length, the shop was deserted; Charles Lifeless having preferred his pleasures to his gain, and the company of some thoughtless companions, to "troublesome visits" of his customers, idleness brought him to penury, and clothed him with rags.

How important is diligence in the concerns of the soul! It will ensure present comfort and eternal felicity; but idleness and neglect of God, will clothe the sinner with everlasting shame.

There is no vice nor failing of man that doth so much unprincipled humanity as ingratitude; since he who is guilty of it lives unworthy of his soul, that hath not virtue enough to be obliged, nor to acknowledge the merits of the obliger.