

trifles, is likely to become an inveterate trifler, and a sore vexation to all who have the misfortune to act with him. But, to do good to others, in the faithful discharge of our duty, is no trifle. And he that is ardent in lesser duties is not like to be cold in greater.

Indeed, what is worth being done by a rational creature, should be done with a suitable earnestness. I am not afraid to say, that the youth, who is in earnest even in his innocent amusements, is not very likely to turn out the worst scholar in his class. Still, we cannot but remark, that your zeal should rise in its fervor in proportion to the importance of the duties. But to return: let no man deceive himself in thinking that he can act powerfully on his fellow-men *if his heart be cold to them*, and if he be indifferent to his subject. I say coldness of heart, for this is the evil which mars so much good, as it sufficiently accounts for that coldness of manner which spoils the *medium* betwixt mind and mind. It has often been matter of chagrin and astonishment to the accomplished speaker—accomplished in all respects but in one—how his elaborate and highly polished address produced no other effect than a cold compliment to his taste and scholarship. It could produce nothing more: it wanted earnestness—it touched not the heart. A wax figure may be perfect in all its parts, artistically an object of taste, but never can be an object of love; for it wants the warmth and beauty of life. But then, remember, it must be true natural life, not the galvanized life of an affected earnestness, which is even more hideous than the stiffness and coldness of death. And it might be well for certain persons to consider, that imitation, which has in it the vileness of falsehood, and has always a hard task to perform, has none harder than when it attempts to pass off the false for the true in earnestness. As this is not very difficult to detect, so it is peculiarly offensive. Nor is it unworthy of remark, that in the mysterious communion of mind with mind, all ordinary forms of language can but imperfectly, without the aid of earnestness, unfold the more subtle meanings, and the more exquisite feelings of the soul. This is indeed the grand interpreter of what lies deepest in the human heart; for it not only throws out nicer shades of meaning than mere words can utter, but starts in the bosoms of those you address, trains of thought and emotion beyond the power of a cold expression of language to awaken. It is not the mere words spoken by a General at the head of his army, *when the decisive moment has come*, but the burning earnestness of soul with which they are uttered, that touches as an electric spark ten thousand bosoms in a moment, and makes the most ordinary soldier an invincible hero. But this is just as true, although not so strikingly seen, in all the other relations of life in which the mind of one man is brought effectively to bear on the minds of others.