

## PREFACE.

That this collection may also serve the purpose of promoting piety and virtue, the Compiler has introduced many extracts, which place religion in the most amiable light; and which recommend a great variety of moral duties, by the excellence of their nature, and the happy effects they produce. These subjects are exhibited in a style and manner which are calculated to arrest the attention of youth; and to make strong and durable impressions on their minds.\*

The Compiler has been careful to avoid every expression and sentiment that might gratify a corrupt mind, or, in the least degree, offend the eye or ear of innocence. This he conceives to be peculiarly incumbent on every person who writes for the benefit of youth. It would indeed be a great and happy improvement in education, if no writings were allowed to come under their notice, but such as are perfectly innocent; and if on all proper occasions, they were encouraged to peruse those which tend to inspire a due reverence for virtue, and an abhorrence of vice, as well as to animate them with sentiments of piety and goodness. Such impressions deeply engraven on their minds, and connected with all their attainments, could scarcely fail of attending them through life, and of producing a solidity of principle and character, that would be able to resist the danger arising from future intercourse with the world.

The Author has endeavoured to relieve the grave and serious parts of his collection, by the occasional admission of pieces which amuse as well as instruct. If, however, any of his readers should think it contains too great a proportion of the former, it may be some apology to observe, that in the existing publications designed for the perusal of young persons, the preponderance is greatly on the side of gay and amusing productions. Too much attention may be paid to this medium of improvement. When the imagination of youth especially, is much entertained, the sober dictates of the understanding are regarded with indifference; and the influence of good affections is either feeble, or transient. A temperate use of such entertainment seems therefore requisite, to afford proper scope for the operations of the understanding and the heart.

The reader will perceive that the Compiler has been solicitous to recommend to young persons, the perusal of the sacred Scriptures, by interspersing through his work some of the most beautiful and interesting passages of those invaluable writings. To excite an early taste and veneration for this great rule of life, is a point of so high importance, as to warrant the attempt to promote it on every proper occasion.

To improve the young mind, and to afford some assistance to tutors, in the arduous and important work of education, were the motives which led to this production. If the Author should be so successful as to accomplish these ends, even in a small degree, he will think that his time and pains have been well employed, and will deem himself amply rewarded.

\* In some of the pieces, the Compiler has made a few alterations, chiefly verbal, to adapt them the better to the design of his work.

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