

NATURAL VIRTUE CONSISTENT WITH NATIVE DEPRAVITY.

The following extract is from Chalmers' Institutes of Theology a work which ministers, theological students, and intelligent Christians generally will be inclined to study. The passage quoted meets a difficulty which has been felt by many minds. The author is treating of "the moral state of man as found by observation."

"But there are certain stern theologians who speak of this degeneracy, not only as universal, that is, extending to one and all of the human family, but as total or complete, inasmuch that not one virtue or grace of character is to be found among the sons and daughters of our race which is worthy of the name. Now, as at present, we are in quest only of what is experimentally true upon this argument, we are bound to confess, not that the dogmata of our theological system, but that at least the sayings of certain of our theological writers on the subject of human depravity are not at one with the findings of observation. And we make this admission with all the less fear, that we believe the correction of the language which we deem to be exceptionable, does not weaken, but rather serves to confirm and strengthen the foundations of orthodoxy. Surely then it is rash and fitted to mislead into a hurtful and wrong impression—as if theology and observation were not at one—when told in a style of sweeping invective, by certain defenders of the faith, that humanity out and out is one mass of moral putrefaction, and that nought of the just or the pure or the lovely or the virtuous, is any where to be found in it. Surely, apart from Christianity, anterior to and distinct from its influence upon men, there are, we do not say in all, but in some, nay, in many, a native integrity and honor, a generous sensibility to the wants and wretchedness of others, a delight in the courtesies of benevolent and agreeable fellowship, an utter detestation of falsehood and cruelty, a heart-felt admiration of what is right, a noble and high-toned indignancy at all which is fraudulent and base; these are undoubted phenomena of human character in the world, and that notwithstanding the evasion attempted by those who would fain ascribe them to hypocrisy, or the love of popularity and applause.

Virtue, in thousands of instances, is not a semblance put on for the sake of admiration. It exists as a substantive reality in the hearts and habits of many an individual who does what is right because of a spontaneous preference which impels him to it, and avoids what is wrong because of an unconquerable repugnance, and the moral discomfort which would attend its perpetration. There is a natural virtue upon earth, and without which states and commonwealths would go into dissolution; a social morality without which, society would soon fall to pieces; a scale of character, along which the good and the better and the best ascend in upward progression, till on its loftiest summit where Socrates, and Scipio, and Epaminondas, and Cyrus stand forth to the admiration of the world, we behold the bright examples of unfeigned worth and honour and patriotism.

Now, all this might be admitted, and without prejudice to the cause of orthodoxy. To refuse it, were a violence done to experimental truth, and so as to revolt alike the judgments as well as the tastes of men."

A \$mile.—Who can tell the value of a smile? It costs the giver nothing, but is beyond price to the erring and relenting, the sad and cheerless, the lost and forsaken. It disarms malice—subdues temper—turns hatred to love—revenge to kindness, and paves the darkest paths with gems of sunlight. A smile on the brow betrays a kind heart, a pleasant friend, an affectionate brother, a dutiful son, and a happy husband. It adds charms to beauty, decorates the face of the angel, and makes lovely women resemble the defaced of Paradise. Who then will refuse to smile.

THE OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE FEMALE SEX.

Let me urge upon you, my sisters, especially those who are in youth, the importance of taking loftier and better views of life than those taught by the vain world.

It is a sad thing to see so many of the young and fair, whose life is almost a blank—I will not say a blot—whose keen susceptibilities, whose noble powers, whose deep affections, whose precious time are lavished only upon dress, and gaiety, and fashionable visiting; who wear the bright apparel of the butterfly, and are as light and graceful, and as useless too; whose conversation finds no higher or more improving subject than the idle gossip of the day, the last party, or the never-fading topic—dress; whose reading is the miserable trash which is inundating every community, and enervating and dissipating the minds of our youth; whose whole life seems to be aimless and frivolous, and who, as they sit by us on their airy wings, provoke the inquiry, "For what were these pretty creatures made?" I pray you, take loftier views of life than these. While I would not draw you from the rational pleasures of society, or bring one gloomy cloud upon your youthful sky, I still plead for some serious hours, some industrious moments, some time apportioned to the careful culture of the mind, the enriching of the memory with stores of useful knowledge. I would plead that the capacities and aspirations of the immortal part receive some ministration, and that the moral faculties be cultivated and stimulated, and the generous impulse of the soul be expanded in labours for the best good of those around you.

Be assured there is no beauty like the beauty of goodness—there is no power like that of virtue; personal beauty may attract the admiration of the passing hour, but it is the richer beauty of moral worth, the loveliness of the soul, that commands the deepest reverence, and secures the most enduring affection. Even men who have no religion themselves, but who are men of judgment, and whose opinion is worth the most respect, admire a lady most who displays in her character "the beauty of holiness." If there is one sight more than any other in this world of sin and sorrow, which combines all the elements of beauty, of nobleness, and of worth, it is that of a young and lovely female, whose youth and beauty, whose refinement of thought and feeling, whose depth and richness of affection, and whose powerful influence on human hearts, are all consecrated to the cause of truth and holiness laid as an humble offering a the Saviour's feet!

Such a being is indeed worthy of the reverence and admiration of every true and noble heart, and she will command it even when the light of her loveliness is faded. But if there is a sad, heart-breaking sight on earth, it is that of one gifted with all the charms which nature lavishes upon her daughters, prostituting them upon the altar of vanity or fashion, and starving the soul on the unmeaning flattery of a vain and hollow-hearted world; running a giddy round of gaiety, frivolity and dissipation; laying up in the future a cheerless and forsaken old age, and a miserable, remorseless eternity.

—*Evangelical Repository.* EMILY.

POLITENESS AT HOME.—Nothing sits so gracefully upon children, and nothing makes them so lovely, as habitual respect and dutiful deportment towards their parents and superiors. It makes the plainest face beautiful, and gives to every common action a nameless but peculiar charm.

DANCING.—It was a true and forcible remark made of dancing, that "it does sometimes make us more graceful," it much more frequently makes us graceless."

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.—As Noah's dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot, so the Spirit of God can find no residence in that heart which is deluged in sin.

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