

heathenism, he concludes,—“But, my friends, we cannot know what things are true unless it be revealed to us by a God.”

To render their religious or philosophical principles practically useful to society was an obvious duty to the earnest social leaders among the Greeks and other classic nations, and they necessarily recognized the desirability of implanting those principles in the minds of the young. In youth a man learns what he should do; in manhood he is expected to remember and act under his early teachings. Or to quote the words of a great writer on Christian ethics,—“The former part of life is to be considered as an important opportunity which nature puts into our hands, and which, when lost, is not to be recovered. And our being placed in a state of discipline throughout this life for another world, is a providential disposition of things, exactly of the same kind as our being placed in a state of discipline during childhood, for mature age, our condition in both respects is uniform and of a piece, and comprehended under one and the same general law of nature.”* Amongst the Athenians, who are here selected because they conceived and practised systems for state, social, and individual government, which always will be considered models of excellence, when a youth could read with fluency, he was set to learn by heart passages selected from the best poets, in which *moral precepts and examples of virtuous conduct* were inculcated and exhibited. At the age of eighteen or twenty the sons of the more wealthy citizens attended the classes of the rhetors and sophists, who gave their lectures in the Lycæum, Academy, or other similar institution; a course somewhat analagous to entering a university in our own times. Here the young man studied rhetoric and philosophy, under which heads were included mathematics, astronomy, dialectics, oratory, criticism and *morals*.†

It will be observed that, throughout his entire course of instruction, the young Athenian was taught morality, or, in other words, the religion of his day. Sparta alone, of all the Grecian communities, adopted what may be termed a general system of education under the special control of the State, but, throughout the whole of Greece and in Rome, the instruction of children generally claimed the attention of the leading minds. It would be tedious to investigate the systems of instruction pursued among the various

* Butler's Analogy, Cap. V., Part I., Sec. 3.

† History of Greece, by William Smith, LL.B., pp. 387-388.