

A FINISHED EDUCATION.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN EDWARD & HENRY.

(RECITATION.)

SCENE.—HENRY alone in his study. Enter EDWARD, with a cigar in his hand.

Edward. Hurrah! this winds up school-days. Now for life.

Henry. Heigho! you appear to have steam up this morning.

E. Yes, sir, and *something's* got to move. But what are you moping over books for? Come, put away the rubbish, and take a turn with me.

H. Not so fast, my fly away! Suppose you throw away *your* rubbish; I mean that cigar you are making such a flourish with, and let's have a little chat. You're getting into such a fume, I shouldn't like to trust myself to go with you just now.

E. Oh, nonsense! you're a natural born old fogey, and you'll never know anything about life. I suppose you mean to grub away at your books until you get to be as wise and as stupid as Professor Brown, who is always in a brown study, and don't know enough to tie a cravat.

H. You talk a good deal about life, perhaps there's more in that word than you think of.

E. Yes, sir, I know there is. I'm like a bird that's been shut up these ten years in a cage of a school-room. How could I know anything about life? But now the door's open, and I'm bound to have my liberty.

H. Liberty to do what?

E. Why, whatever comes into my head. I can smoke when I like, I can go out nights, and come in when I please; I can have a jolly spree with the boys, and have good times generally, without any old Brown to do me *brown* for it.

H. According to your own story, you have merely chosen a new master, or rather, many masters, in place of Professor Brown. You expect to obey whatever notion comes into your head. Your fancy or your appetite will say "smoke," and you'll smoke. Your companions will say, "Let's have a jolly spree"—that is, "Let's drink wine until we are half crazy and can enjoy acting uprearious and silly," and you'll obey them and make a fool of yourself. Professor Brown never required anything half so unreasonable.

E. But you know a young fellow must sow his wild oats!

H. I don't know any *must* of the kind. I have determined to see life, too, and to have my liberty, and there shall be no *must* like that over me.

E. You're a queer fellow; you never would do like the rest of us; but I can't help liking you.

H. Thank you for your friendship. I wish I might use it for your benefit. Edward, you have never really thought what life is. Look at yourself a moment; you can think soundly if you'll only hold still long enough. You're a natural repre-

bate you sometimes seem. You have a body and a soul. They are for you to improve or ruin. - You can put them under training that will make them stronger, better, and happier, or you can suffer them to be made weak, mean, and miserable. Now, which course is true life?

E. But you would cut off all a fellow's fun.

H. No, but I would stop his folly. Don't I enjoy sport as well as you? I don't want to brag, but I'll ask who was the best skater on the pond, yesterday? Who has been the captain of your ball-club, and the leader on the academy playground?

E. You, of course; that's why I like you, in spite of your preaching.

H. Isn't the preaching, as you call it, true? Don't quarrel with the truth. I want to have the best part of me—the soul—as healthy and vigorous as the body, and both of them as noble as they can be made. That's *my* idea of life.

E. [Throws away his cigar.] I know you're right, and if I could always be with you, I shouldn't get so wild.

H. There's your weakness, and hence your danger in choosing foolish company. You are too ready to join in with every one you meet. Set yourself to be a man after your own ideas of right. You've a better right to lead others in a good way than they have to lead you wrong; and the true way to become a leader is to rule yourself. But come, now we've had a long talk, and as I've seen you've thrown away your sign of weakness, I'll take a walk with you.

WRITING COMPOSITIONS.

Write about what interests you. That rule will guide you to the choice of a good subject for your first efforts. By-and-by, after much practice, you will learn that one of the best ways to *become* interested in a subject is to try to express thoughts upon it; but I wish now particularly to help the beginner.

What were you doing after school hours yesterday? Flying your kite? Playing tag, or "hide-and-go-seek," or at some other fine sport? Or did you take a walk to the woods to look for winter-greens, or to see if any crocuses and violets were yet peeping out to ask if spring had indeed come? Or, perhaps, there was work to be done: the kindling-wood to split, the coal to bring in, the cows to milk, or other "chores" to attend to. Some of the girls, perhaps, were having a good slide on the pond, or were busy helping mother clear up the house, or getting tea ready, or sewing patchwork, or mending their brothers' shirts and stockings. Whatever it was, particularly if you were interested in it, will furnish a good subject for a composition, provided you will write your own thoughts, and not what you suppose some one else would say about

it. "What!" says Susan, "write a composition about washing dishes, and tell just what I thought?" Yes, just that. Let us see how it might read:

"I wish we didn't have to wash dishes every day. It isn't pleasant work. Sometimes the water is so hot it burns my fingers, and sometimes the dishes fall, and get broken, and I get a scolding. But if the water isn't hot, they won't look so nice. I wonder why hot water makes them cleaner than cold! I wish somebody would invent a machine for washing dishes; they have machines to do almost everything now-a-days."

There, isn't that the way your thoughts run?

"But you don't call that a good composition!" say you.

Who expects you to write a *good* composition at first? I only wish to show you that it is easier to begin the exercise than you may have supposed, and to encourage you to make the trial. If you do not commence until you know how to write a good composition, you will be like the boy who resolved never to go into the water until he knew how to swim. To become an accomplished writer requires much thought, study, and practice. The great difficulty lies at the very commencement, in making up your mind that you can do it, and surely few boys and girls will confess that they could not equal Susan's supposed essay on washing dishes.

Your teacher will kindly point out faults to be avoided, and suggest how improvements can be made, and by attending to their instructions you will advance step by step, until composition will be a delight and not a task.

From the very first, resolve that you will try to *express your own thoughts*, and then endeavour to observe and think and act, so that you may have good thoughts, and you will find your whole life benefited by the attempt.

A GOOD YOUNG PRINCE.

"As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined."

The Duchess of C—, a lady as distinguished for her mental qualities as for her goodness of heart, was celebrating her birthday in the palace of a small German capital, where she had resided since she was left a widow, and laboured so lovingly in the relief of the poor and afflicted, that a clever English nobleman said, and said truly, of her, "Benevolence is her synonyme."

The court of congratulation was just over. Exhausted by the tedious and troublesome ceremony, the lady had retired from the reception-room to her boudoir, when she heard light, hurried footsteps coming up the stairs.

"Ah! ah!" she said to herself, "those are my grandsons coming to congratulate me."

So it was. Two healthy growing lads of ten and eleven years of age came in