

## YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT.

JOHN RAYNER,—OR, PRESENCE OF MIND.

During the summer holidays, of 1800. I had a young friend, (a school-fellow,) staying with me and my younger brother Edward. His name was John Rayner, and he was then fifteen, two years older than myself. I was very much attached to him, not only from his being good-natured and obliging, but because with the same love of reading as myself, he was far more cheerful and lively, and always seemed to be able to tell us every thing at the very moment that it was wanted. Whether in our games, or in our school studies, he was generally appealed to by the boys. How he obtained so much information, I do not remember that we ever troubled ourselves to enquire; but my father, who liked John exceedingly, said, it was from his constant habit of observation. Certainly, numbers of things were observed and remembered by John, that other boys had not taken the least notice of, although enjoying the very same opportunities. Well, during the mid-summer holidays that I was speaking of, my mother and father were unexpectedly obliged to leave home to see a sick relation who lived at some distance.—The evening before their return, we three boys occupied ourselves with assisting our old gardener to put the garden in order. The garden sloped down to a broad river, which joined the sea at a few miles distance. While the gardener was arranging some flower-pots on a stand on the grass plot, and John and Edward were watering the flower-beds, I was sweeping the turf near the water's side. I was not so busy, but I looked up every now and then to watch the beautiful sunset sparkling on the water, or the passage boats and country barges that glided by at intervals. Suddenly I observed at a little distance, something that I could not well make out floating down the river. I called to the gardener, to ask him what he thought it could be.

"Oh it is nothing but a dead pig," answered the gardener, as he sauntered towards me.

"Are you sure of that?" I exclaimed, for I thought as it drew nearer, it looked like a child.

"I do not think it is a pig," said John Rayner, who had joined us, "I am sure it is not. It is the body of a boy!" and in a moment, to our great surprise, he flung off his jacket, and threw himself into the river."

"Oh papa," exclaimed Richard, "what did you and your brother do?"

"Neither of us knew what we were about," replied Mr. Bourne. "Edward exclaimed in terror, 'he will be drowned. He will be drowned, he will be drowned!' and placed his hands before his eyes. I would have dashed after the brave fellow, but the gardener who knew I could not swim, held me back. He called out to John not to fear, but to keep well up against the tide. This last advice was very necessary, for the current was strong, and John found himself drifting in the direction of the mouth of the river. Fortunately he was a good swimmer, and his courage never left him. He swam with all his strength towards the floating body, and seizing it by the hair with one hand, with the other he directed his course back to shore. The gardener, Edward, and I, watched him anxiously, and the moment he came within reach, assisted him to land, and in laying the body on the grass-plot."

"Was the body quite lifeless, papa?" said Richard, eagerly.

"We all thought so at the time, all at least except John. My brother Edward recognised the poor little fellow at once, as the son of a washer-woman that lived on the common. He had seen him playing at marbles but the day before, and he therefore felt more shocked than any of us. He burst into tears as he exclaimed, 'Poor, poor woman, she will never see her boy again!'"

"I remember how much we were astonished, when John replied in a hurried tone, 'She may see him again, if we use the right means to recover him. Let us lose no time. Edward, run quickly for a doctor, while we carry him into the house; and as you pass the kitchen tell Susan to get a bed warmed directly.' You may be sure we lost no time in obeying him."

"We had better hold the poor boy up by the heels," said the gardener, "to let the water that he has swallowed run out."

"No, no, no!" exclaimed John, by doing so, you will kill him, if he is not already dead. We must handle him as gently as possible. Run for the shutter of the tool-house, and we will place him upon it. When we had done so, and the body had been carried into the house, Susan and the gardener urged John to place it near the kitchen fire, saying 'that as the body was as cold as a piece of marble, there could be no better plan than to place it as near the fire as possible. After a little persuasion, however, they yielded to John's entreaty, and the body was carefully rubbed dry, and placed on a mattress on its right side, between hot blankets. I should tell you that while I was fetching the shutter, John had wiped the body gently with a handkerchief to remove as much of the water as he could at the time.

"There were no wet clothes to remove, for the boy had evidently been bethriving, and had most probably got out of his depth while amusing himself in the water. After the body had been laid in bed, John bound the head with flannel, and placed it high on the pillows. He then begged Susan to rub the body all over with hot flannels, which the gardener heated from time to time. I was told to fill four common bottles with hot water. These bottles, wrapped in flannel, were placed under the arm-pits and at the feet. John then took the kitchen bellows, and having carefully blown out all the dust that had collected within them, he directed me to close the mouth and one nostril, while he gently blew into the other nostril from the mouth of the bellows. When he saw the chest appear to rise as if filled with air, he put aside the bellows, and pressed the stomach upwards to force the air out. He repeated this process twenty or thirty times in a minute to imitate natural breathing.

"In the midst of his exertions, many of the poorer neighbours assembled, and made their way into the room. They expressed great sorrow for the sudden death of the child, and warm sympathy for the unfortunate parent. Not one of them, however, could offer us the least assistance, because they were quite ignorant that any means could restore a person apparently drowned. They watched us with curiosity and displeasure, and began to mutter among themselves that they should not like a son of theirs to be so treated, dead or alive. At last one woman declared 'that all that nonsense would never bring the dead back to life.'

"And did you turn the people out of the room, papa?" said Richard, "I am sure I would have done so."

"We did not think much about them at first," replied Mr. Bourne, "we were too much engaged in our occupation. But when John found that they crowded near the bed, and impeded the fresh air which is absolutely necessary to assist the recovery of a drowned person, he insisted upon their leaving the room, and as he spoke firmly although gently, they gave way. All this time the windows and doors were left wide open. At last Edward arrived, but the doctor was not with him. He was absent from home when Edward called, and a messenger was sent for him. Edward was anxious to be of service, but he could do little else than heat the flannels, or fill fresh bottles of water. We could not induce John to allow any of us to inflate the lungs. An hour and a half had now passed since the boy was taken from the water, and still no signs of life appeared. The gardener and Susan would have given up all further exertions as useless, and they urged John to think of his own health first, assuring him, that from standing so long in his wet clothes, he would certainly be ill, while he could no longer do any good. John, however, resolutely declared that he would not cease his attempts to recover the boy, till the doctor should declare them to be useless. The time seemed very long particularly to Edward, who was not employed so much as the rest of us. He had kept on the watch for John's orders, gazing alternately on the pale face of the apparently dead boy, and then straining his eyes from the open window, to catch first sight of the doctor. Another half hour passed, and at the end of that time, to the inexpressible delight of us all, the boy, opened his eyes and uttered a faint sigh."

"Oh my dear papa," said Richard, "what did John say?"

"He made no exclamation whatever, but he clasped his hands with exceeding joy. As for the rest of us, the surprise was so great, that I am ashamed to say we were quite bewildered: we ran backwards and forwards, entreating John to tell us what we were to do next. In a low voice he told us that the greatest stillness was necessary but that a small quantity of brandy and water might be given to him. After a few spoonfuls had been poured down the boy's throat, he opened his eyes again, and seemed to smile on his preserver."

"But papa," said Richard, "how did John Rayner know the proper means to recover a drowned person? If he had not known them beforehand, he would not, in spite of his courage, have been able to save the boy?"

"Certainly not, nor could we have saved him," replied Mr. Bourne, "for we were all ignorant. I will tell you how he acquired the knowledge. One day, the winter before, John, and several other boys, and myself, spent the day at a gentleman's house, where we amused ourselves with skating and sliding on some very large ponds. In the evening, John observed in the library a framed printed paper, the title of which struck his eye, 'Rules of the Humane Society for recovering persons apparently drowned.' He was much interested in reading these rules, because on the same paper there was an account of two thousand persons who had been saved by treating them according to the method described in the paper. Some few individuals, it was stated, had even been recovered after the means had been tried for two or three hours without the least appearance of life. John, quite astonished, wrote down these rules in a little pocket book that he happened to have in his pocket, and the act of copying must have impressed them upon his memory."

"What a good thing it was for the mother of this boy, that John Rayner had seen these rules!" exclaimed Richard.

"Better still, Richard, that he had taken pains to remember them. I and many other boys had seen them as well as he, and we were none the wiser for it. Hundreds of people who have read them in newspapers or books, have been quite unable, at the moment of need, to assist another. We forget quickly what we observe or read carelessly.—Parent's Cabinet.

## RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

## A MOTHER'S INSTRUCTION.

The following quotation from an address of the principal of the Flushing Institute, Rev. Dr. Muldenburgh, should be laid to the heart of every mother:—

"We are often asked, 'What kind of boys do you want?' To this question, too, the theory of our institution furnishes an answer. Give us such boys as have been blessed with the instructions of a pious mother. This is a qualification for which no substitute can be found on earth. Never would we despair of the child who has been used in infancy to hear the precepts of heavenly truth inculcated in the accents of maternal love. Truths thus instilled live forever in the memory. They are interwoven with all the sensibilities of the soul. They are the fortress of the conscience; not impregnable, it is true, but indelible. They furnish the mind with chords, which in later life seldom fail to vibrate to the touch of faithful exposition. They are an inextinguishable spark, which, after being smothered under a heap of corruption, may be fanned by the breath of friendly and spiritual counsel into the pure and genial flame of piety. The child of a mother's prayers, said St. Augustine, (and may we not believe it?) is never lost. It is those children who have been dedicated to their Maker under the auspices of a pious and vigilant mother, whose education we should esteem it a happy and useful vocation to continue. While, on the other hand, we should deem it an act of temerity equally hopeless and presumptuous, to become responsible for the youth in whose mind a mother's voice was connected with no other associations than those of apathy to religion, and devotedness to the character and civilities of the world.—Flushing Journal.