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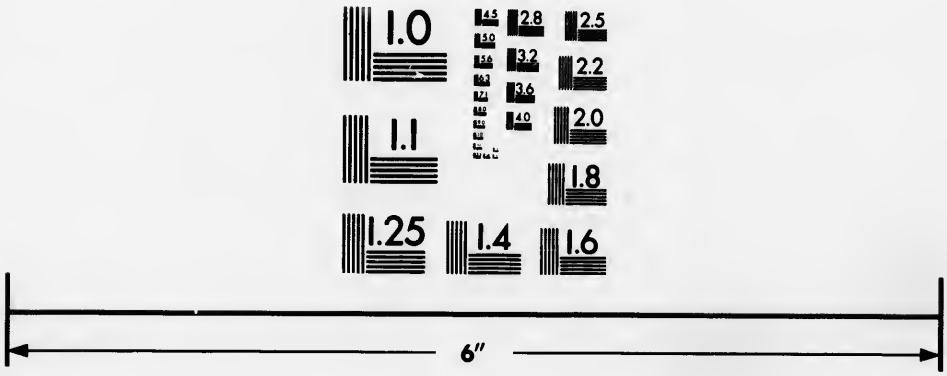

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LESSONS

FROM THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ROBERT SHIELDS;

BEING

A Hand-Book

FOR THE GUIDANCE OF YOUTHS GENERALLY, AND ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ENTER UPON COMMERCIAL PURSUITS.

With Selections from some of the Best Authors.

BY

G. W. GROTE.

FIRST SERIES.

TORONTO:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY HUNTER, ROSE & CO.
1880.

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PREFACE.

THIS little work is intended to assist in the formation of character.

It is hoped, therefore, that it may prove, in some measure, acceptable to parents, guardians, teachers and others, as a means whereby the moral and intellectual condition of the youths under their charge may be elevated. Although it is intended principally for those about entering upon commercial life, perhaps it may not be considered unworthy of the notice of those who, having fought their way up from poverty to affluence, from obscurity to pre-eminence, from weakness to positions of power and trust, have at length discovered that they are looked up to as exemplars and leaders in religion, in good manners, and in all those other elements of character, which constitute, in the best sense, "a man of business."

They will doubtless not consider it too great a condescension on their part, to look into these unpretending pages for *hints*, whereby they may be enabled to maintain and prove worthy of their reputation as arbiters in all matters pertaining to the formation of character.

Having disposed of the biographical part of the work, I have proceeded to the consideration of such questions pertaining to private life and success in business, as seemed of vital importance; and I trust that though there may be imperfections in the order of arrangement, and, perhaps, errors in judgment, the views I have advanced will meet with the general approval of those best able to form an opinion.

The latter part of the work is made up of selections and essays from some of the best authors.

And now as I send this little volume forth to the accomplishment of a difficult task, I bespeak for it that fair play, which the world, though sometimes cold, is, I trust, sufficiently generous to yield.

THE AUTHOR.

TORONTO, March, 1880.

CONTENTS.

LESSONS

FROM THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

ROBERT SHIELDS.

CHAPTER I.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

SOME fourteen miles from Edinburgh lies the ancient Burgh of Dunfermline, in Fifeshire, and to those versed in the legendary lore of Scotland. and who have had the pleasure of visiting the picturesque old town, I need say nothing in its praise; and as this volume is not to be a history of Dunfermline, but a biographical sketch of one of her staunchest sons, I will leave the kind reader to his

imagination on geographical and historic points, and go straight to the point.

There is a palpable advantage to be gained by the reader from the plan proposed. One concrete example, enforcing sound maxims of prudence and morality is worth any amount of jejune and abstract admonitions. Every young man, embarking upon the perilous voyage of active life, has, or ought to have, his ideal before him. To those destined to commercial pursuits, it is essential that they should not only embrace fixed principles, but also strive to find some embodiment of them in a living person. It is usual, therefore, to hold up before the youthful aspirant the lessons to be derived from the biographies of those who have been exceptionally successful. But all cannot be millionaires, although every intelligent, upright, and energetic youth may reckon upon a reasonable measure of success. It is for this purpose that a crucial instance is selected from the ranks of the middle class, to which young men may look, in the spirit of honest emulation, and without either extravagant hopes, or futile despair.

Mr. Robert Shields will commend himself to the reader as a type of business aptitude, so much the more because he is neither an Astor nor a Peabody. At Dunfermline flourished in the latter part of the eighteenth century, a worthy burgher, named John

Shields, a pious and industrious Presbyterian. Of his family of seven, two sons and a daughter emigrated to Canada, between 1850 and 1854. James came to Canada in 1850 and established himself in business successfully in this city. Associated with him at different times were the Messrs. Dodgson, and his nephew, Robert, the subject of this sketch. He died in 1873, deeply regretted by all who knew him.

His brother William married, and had seven sons and four daughters. It is unnecessary to follow the fortunes of the rest of the family, further than to say that several of them engaged in mercantile pursuits, in addition to Robert with whom we have properly to deal. In every business success there is something to be learned. There are lessons of essential value touching the prime virtues of trade—industry, frugality, veracity, fair-dealing, temperance, and punctuality. Unfortunately young men are often dazzled by success, without pondering upon the patience and toil by which it has been attained. If we select a solitary example, it is because more can be learned in this way than by any amount of abstract teaching. To that task we propose to address ourselves.

Still, before doing so, I must mention the name of George Shields, of Glasgow, who has long held an eminent position there, as a professor of music. His dance music has long been popular and favoured at Court, particularly his quadrilles—one or two of

which have met with much favour from their R. H. the Princesses Louise and Beatrice.

And now, to return to our hero. Robert Shields was born at Dunfermline, Fifeshire, Scotland, on the 28th of January, 1848, and came to Canada with his father at the age of four years; and consequently whatever Scotch there is in him (and he's all Scotch), is owing to "blood," and he may well be excused for being proud of his nationality, just as the Irishman from Sligo or Galway, glories in nothing more than that he's a "Connaught man."

And now, having referred to the Irishman, I may be excused for noticing briefly the questions of "Home Rule," and the Irish rent grievance. And I have only to say, with regard to the former, that I am fully convinced that a Provincial Legislature for Ireland, having jurisdiction over certain matters of local interest, would prove beneficial, not only to Ireland but also to England herself. The number of Irish representatives in the British Parliament could then be materially reduced, so that the policy of "obstruction" could no longer be practised, and the Irish members of the House of Commons would no more hold the balance of power. We should then look for contentment in Ireland, and a better feeling between the two countries, so that when the vexed rent problem shall have been solved, we may well look for

such harmonious reciprocity between the two countries as should properly exist between the several branches of any great and united nationality.

With regard to the rent question, I shall only say, that, it seems unfair to attribute to any respectable proportion of the population of Ireland a desire to avoid payment of rent. Let the payment be in kind, *i. e.* part of the actual product of the soil, or let it be in money—so long as the plan for securing payment be one that will admit of something more than a bare subsistence to a certain number of inhabitants to the square mile, such number to be ascertained by actual experiment, and to be corrected from time to time by proper regulation of a well matured emigration scheme—and I feel well assured that no better tenants could be desired than those, who, in a comparatively few years would be found tilling the soil, upon which to-day *exist* a brilliant and warm-hearted people, half-starved and clothed in rags.

But since there are those who do not agree with me, regarding the merits of the Irish rent question, I am wlling to quote the following opinions lately expressed by Messrs. Albert Pell, M.P., and C. S. Read, M.P., of the Commission appointed, I think, by the British Government, to inquire into the late trade depression :—

Mr. Pell says, "There is no dispute among Eng-

lish farmers about possession of the land, such as you find in Ireland," and Mr. Read says, "All talk about their looking for the abolition of the laws of primogeniture and the like is exaggerated. They themselves feel too deeply how much better their interests are subserved by long continuance under one family than by submission to precarious changes ever to concern themselves about primogeniture alterations," and Mr. Pell continues:—"I do not believe that Gladstone would ever attempt to hand over the land to the tenant. There are two people concerned in the ownership of the land. One is the owner of the land itself, and the other the man who owns the cows and pigs on it. This latter now wants to become a landed proprietor; well, say he succeeds. He will let it in turn and soon you will have the same state of things over again. There is a good deal of excitement over the land agitation now; but I fancy it is chiefly due to the newspapers which have raked it into life during the dull season of the year. Without doubt things are in an unsatisfactory condition in Ireland; but this time the objection is not against tyranny and extortion, but against RENT! They want a fair rent—now what is a fair rent to be? Who is to determine it? Now, there is nothing in the Irish character that I can see to justify this departure from honesty,

No doubt Ireland has suffered great injustice at times. Her industries were at one time dwarfed and her enterprise dulled, by putting heavy duties on her goods. That was unjustifiable. Of course Ireland has but little manufactures; at any rate except in the eastern portion and at Belfast, where linen and certain machinery are made, there are few mechanical industries. It is in the production of bacon, butter, and eggs that she most excels, and to these, I think, the chief attention should be turned.

So much for Ireland's "grievances;" but I fear if I do not return at once to the legitimate business of this work there will be—for the first time on record—a Scotch "grievance"—I say the first time on record, because I know of no "grievance" peculiar to Scotlar of the nature of that which is now agitating the Emerald Isle; for Scotland, somehow, has always had the pluck, resource, courage, stamina, or—call it what you will—to meet her difficulties fairly and squarely, and overcome them without such murmurings as have (whether rightly or wrongly I need not say) so frequently characterized the Irish. And, looking back at the centuries of hardship through which Scotland has plodded on, though there is but little wonder at her present powers of endurance as a nation, yet there is infinite praise due the Scotch nationality for the great

heroism displayed, not more at Stirling or Bannockburn, than in all those minor matters which as "grievances" have been overcome, chiefly through the patience, perseverance and thrift of a people, whose hardy sons in America will doubtless remember their own "Fatherland" with as much patriotic emotion as their own "mither tongue" expresses in the following stanzas composed by Andrew Wanless, whose little volume of "Poems and Songs" should find a place in the library of every Scotchman, be he "Highland" or "Lowland," rich or poor.

OUR MITHER TONGUE.

It's monie a day since first we left
  Auld Scotland's rugged hills—
Her heath'ry braes and gow'ny glens,
  Her bonny winding rills.
We lo'ed her in the by-gane time,
  When life and hope were young;
We lo'e her still wi' right guid will,
  And glory in her tongue!

Can we forget the simmer days
  Whan we gat leave frae schule,
How we gaed birrin' down the braes
  To daidle in the pool?
Or to the glen we'd slip awa'
  Where hazel clusters hung,
And wake the echoes o' the hills—
  Wi' our auld mither tongue,

Can we forget the lonesome kirk
  Where gloomy ivies creep?
Can we forget the auld kirk-yard
  Where our forefathers sleep?
We'll ne'er forget that glorious land
  Where Scott and Burns sung—
Their sangs are printed on our hearts
  In our auld mither tongue.

Auld Scotland! land o' mickle fame!
  The land where Wallace trod,
The land where heartfelt praise ascends,
  Up to the throne of God!
Land where the martyrs sleep in peace,
  Where infant freedom sprung,
Where Knox in tones of thunder spoke,
  In our auld mither tongue!

Now, Scotland, dinna ye be blate
  'Mang nations crousely craw,
Your callans are nae donnert sumphs,
  Your lasses bang them a'.
The glisks o' heaven will never fade,
  That hope around us flung
When first we breath'd the tale o' love
  In our auld mither tongue!

O! let us ne'er forget our hame,
  Auld Scotland's hills and cairns;
And let us a' where'er we be,
  Aye strive "to be guid bairns!"
And when we meet wi' want or age
  A-hirpling o'er a rung,
We'll tak' their part and cheer their heart
  Wi' our auld mither tongue!

CHAPTER II.

SUCCESS IN BUSINESS.

ROBERT SHIELDS is a bright example of what may be accomplished in business, by a proper combination of the several requirements which I purpose referring to in this chapter. Let the young man who contemplates a commercial life, begin with the idea that he must lay a proper foundation, and he may hope to succeed. But what, it may be asked, is the purport of this phrase, "laying a foundation?" What does it mean? Why the laying of the foundation simply consists in the advantage of proper business education, you say—yes, more than that; it includes something of infinitely greater weight and importance; it means the obtaining of a sound moral and religious training. Let every young man remember that, if he would succeed in business, he must start out with an honest determination to deal fairly, to "do unto others as he would wish to be done by." Let him not be ashamed of religion. I could point him to several great men in

Britain—great men, I say, though only merchants—who have had their regular religious service daily, for the benefit of their men. Take for example, the case of Samuel Budgett, whose immense establishment in Bristol is a monument which has for many years testified to the keen foresight, energy and, above all, great morality of its founder. Here, notwithstanding the energy with which business was pushed, and the systematic economizing of time that characterized every department, there was found sufficient time every day for "family worship."—What! you exclaim—*family* worship amongst a parcel of "hands." Yes, family worship; and it was usually conducted by Mr. Budgett himself, or one of his sons, or if none of the principals happened to be present at the appointed hour, some other person who had sufficient religious training would, by previous arrangement (for everything proceeded like clock-work; nothing was left to chance), take the lead and, though the service was of the simplest kind, and lasted but a half-hour, it had no inconsiderable influence in bringing about the general result—success. You see it was the moral and religious element that stood out in bold relief, as the principal factor, the corner-stone in the foundation of the commercial code of Samuel Budgett.

Young man, entering upon a business life, lay a

sound and reliable foundation, and you have made the most important step of your life. Build properly, and success is almost certain. In a word, let the God of all grace guide you in laying that foundation, and in building thereon :—" For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire: and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is "—1 Cor. iii. 11-13.

So much for the foundation; and how well did Robert Shields' case tally with that of Samuel Budgett. Robert had from his earliest years a religious turn of mind; he carried his religion with him wherever he went—into the warehouses, into the office, at home—everywhere. And his religion, or I might better say, charity, went hand in hand. His alms-giving was conducted like his business—upon a system; everything was marked by regularity. He had time for numerous charitable schemes and undertakings, notwithstanding the fact that for many years he had the whole weight and responsibility of his uncle's business on his shoulders. Seldom do we find a harder worked man, or a man of greater pluck and endurance. I have known him,

upon a Saturday afternoon work for hours at his books, when *tout le monde et sa femme* were off to the *matinée*, or otherwise seeking recreation.

I do not wish to discourage innocent amusement; for it must be admitted that there is a time for mirth, a time for relaxation, a time for enjoyment, in the popular acceptation of the term. But is it not of the very greatest importance to guard against irregular habits, which must lead to idleness and great loss of time? Depend upon it—"system" must always be regarded as necessary to success. Let the system be a right one, and accompanied by energy and morality, and success must follow.

Prominent among the requisites to business success, and as a part of the "system," is early rising—Be up with the lark, and remember that "it is the early bird that catches the worm."

I take it for granted that this maxim which I have just quoted will be taken aright, and that no youth will have the "cheek" to reply, as the young American did, that "it served the worm right—no business to be out so early!" You smile at the audacity of the boy who could make such a reply and keep a straight face—well, perhaps it was a negro or an Irishman, with his ready tongue, who made the reply—but, earnestly speaking, be out of bed in the morning, don't wait for the sun to rise!

Remember, "an hour in the morning is worth two in the afternoon," as the ward politicians say on election day.

But early rising is only a good beginning, and must be followed up by punctuality in the minutest details throughout the day. Commence by being ready in your place in the warehouse, or behind the counter, or in the office, wheresoever your duty calls you; and, having attained the habit of punctuality, let it be supplemented by all the other characteristics of a good and faithful servant, such as honesty, perseverance, intelligence; and I'll be bound to say the business will flourish, and as a consequence you—the future proprietor—will stand well for preferment. Above all, strive to make yourself honestly a necessity to your employers. I hope you, young reader, fully understand me. Don't loiter about, leaving the difficult task, the responsible part of the work, to others who know no more of what is to be done than you do; but grapple with the difficult parts of the business; see that important work which requires a nicety of handling, is properly done; and, my word for it, you will be depended upon by your employers, and the other clerks who have so unwittingly left the work for you will, some fine morning, wake up to the fact that you have made yourself a necessity—that you have been admitted

as a partner in the business, while they, poor drones, are compelled to do the bidding of their former fellow clerk. And do not hope to attain to such happy results without the constant exercise of those requisites which I have above pointed out, especially as to intelligence. Remember, your hope of becoming a partner in the business will be futile unless you constantly exercise all your faculties of perception, calculation, knowledge of human nature, sound judgment, and the like. Merit is the word I want to use. It is your own personal merit which will procure your preferment. Strive, then, to fit and prepare yourself in every respect for the post or position you occupy, and by close application and unswerving integrity the goal you are striving for will in due time be reached.

Let me particularly request my young friends who may in future chance to read these pages, to guard against that false and foolish notion, which is too prevalent in cities and towns, at all events, I mean, "keeping up appearances." Don't live beyond your means. You won't find a member of the Shields family committing this silly mistake. I have always found them more concerned about their credit at the bank than about their carriages, and at times, too, when, to judge from the balance to their credit, they had no need to be concerned. But, I mean, not exactly that they were concerned, but that they were

particular, careful and cautious. They do not mind going on foot and they can afford to smile at the simplicity of their neighbours, who drive out in a costly carriage which has not been paid for—and, perhaps, never will. Style is what kills a great many; they consider it of the utmost importance to "keep up appearances," and assuredly whoever travels far on that road will find it leads to ruin. Appearances! Why should one try to keep up appearances? Who is so foolish as to believe people blind enough to be incapable of drawing the dividing line between the reality and the "appearances"? He who lives according to his means is the man who will best succeed in keeping up appearances. A bright and gay exterior often hides a grim, hollow, heartless home life. He who would get happiness must learn to shun "keeping up appearances." Let him learn to restrain his desire to cope with his more wealthy neighbour.

Because the De Salaberrys give dinner parties is no reason why the Browns should; or because the Vivians and Stanleys belong to a fashionable club, and have their coats of arms or crest emblazoned on their coach doors, or harness, is no reason why the Joneses should vainly endeavour to emulate their example, and vie with them in extravagant display. Oh no, my dear Brown, take your friend Jones quietly

by the arm, and sauntering down some quiet and pleasant side street after business hours, remind him quietly "that the cobbler should stick to his last." Work diligently in your own sphere, and appear what you are, and your time willcome. Depend upon it the man who persistently clings to business, and looks carefully and prayerfully to his morals and religion, is the man who is most likely to "come out M.D. in the end," as poor Mr. Younghusband used to say.

The world is large enough for all kinds and conditions of men; and remember this, that your neighbours, who are in more affluent circumstances than yourself, are not going to trouble themselves by "looking down" on you, because you are not "keeping up appearances." They have, if they are sensible people, too much to do in an honest way for that; and if they are not sensible people, you need not fear their sneers or derision, because perchance the heels of your boots are bevelled off too much from constant wear, or because your wife is compelled to do with fewer dresses or scantier ribbons. Never mind the jewellery, so long as you can pay the rent on quarter-day. A man who can say "I owe no man anything" is the man who ought to be able to gladden the hearts of his wife and children, far more certainly than the man who keeps up appearances only by keeping up a line of discount at the Bank. The great lesson to

be learned on the threshold of life is this: that "contentment is better than riches," and that it is far more honourable and satisfying to be, than to seem. Half the miseries of existence to a man in an active business career may be traced to the eagerness with which many pursue wealth, and strive to jostle one another in the race to affluence and independence. The study of appearances is only one phase of this insatiable passion.

Whatever story "appearances" may tell, let honesty characterize every act; and in this connection I would say that the law with regard to bankruptcy is such as to give the really honest man an opportunity in a peculiar way, of proving his honesty. For example, suppose the certificated bankrupt afterwards succeeds in business. Although he may be able to pay the balance of his former liabilities, the law as it stands at present protects him. His bankruptcy has operated as a final settlement, although in reality his estate has paid, perhaps not more than fifty cents on the dollar of his liabilities. Here is his opportunity! He finds himself in affluence and ease while many of his former creditors who have been compelled to accept half in payment of the whole, are suffering from adversity. What must be the delight with which a man of honour and integrity contemplates a voluntary payment of that which is

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justly due his former creditors? I fancy I see him in the still quiet hours of the night planning his surprise party whereat he intends to hand a cheque for the proper amount to each of his creditors! But fudge, you say—what? Pay his former creditors after having taken advantage of the Insolvent Act? Impossible! So it might seem; but would you have proof that such things have happened! You shall have it. The case I refer to is that of John Shields—a cousin of Robert Shields—who had carried on business at Perth, Scotland, for many years with such share of success as the times—sometimes favourable, sometimes adverse—would admit, until misfortune, in spite of all that business ability and human foresight could do, compelled him to seek that relief which the Insolvent Act so justly brings to the man who fails honestly. John Shields was honest, and also was patient under the cloud which insolvency casts upon the good and bad alike. He strove hard to regain his lost position of credit and honour amongst his fellow townsmen, and at last he found himself in the possession of sufficient means to enable him to present each of his former creditors with a cheque for the balance which should have been paid had no insolvency occurred. The plan he adopted was to invite all his former creditors to dinner, and I am told that, as each guest sat down,

he discovered a 'marked' cheque under or near his plate for the full amount of the balance due him, together with interest. And what think you did the creditors do in return to express their appreciation of such sterling worth in this man ?

Why they gave him in turn a nice little surprise party in the shape of a beautiful carriage and magnificent pair of horses, together with a fine silver tea service, and this affair happened so recently as the year 1872, and I have my information on the very best authority—so much for HONESTY. And before leaving the insolvency question, I feel constrained to indulge in a word of reproof and warning. Whatever the principles may be upon which the insolvency laws are based, or their merits, be slow to take advantage of them, but if you are honestly compelled to surrender and haul down your colours, remember your fallen position !

Keep steadily in view the dread reality that you are not worthy of the same confidence as a business man, as you once were—at least in the eyes of the uncharitable world. And you should walk humbly and live in accordance with your altered circumstances, until you have proved your integrity by doing as John Shields did. How many there are who, having "failed" (perhaps, honestly enough), have not sufficient common sense or humanity to

curb their pride, and accordingly launch out into business anew—with a clean slate, and on an extensive scale, as though to show a cruel world that they are not to be despised or belittled on account of their former failure. But mark their course! They cannot go on very long—why? Simply because their credit having suffered, they have been compelled to pay higher prices for their goods and higher rates for their bank accommodation than their solvent neighbours pay, and consequently their grand display at "reduced prices," and "tremendous sacrifices,"—as their immense posters and columns of advertising have doubtless announced—must of necessity be short-lived. They flourish for a brief space, and suddenly their triumph has changed to disgrace. What matters it *then* whether their "taking advantage of the Insolvent Act" had been honest; they need scarcely expect any sympathy.

I know there is a notion, out in the Western States of America, that the man who has just come safely through the bankruptcy mill, is the best man to trust with goods, because he's smart; and, secondly, he's got a clean slate; he's a white man. Evidently smartness and a good coat of whitewash are two important ingredients in the constitution of the average man of business "out west."

A word in conclusion, to the young man who is anxious to succeed, and to avoid the necessity of falling back on the Insolvent Act. Be ever on the watch for those hidden influences which rule the market; exercise judgment as to the probabilities of rise and fall in the market. If you intend doing an export or import trade look beyond your nose! Spy out the unoccupied markets; strike firmly and act promptly. Bring all your powers to bear in the solution of your commercial problems. Compare statistics as to business in former years, as well your own business as that of the whole year in your particular line; and do not stop or content yourself by merely observing the fluctuations of trade in your own line, but watch the course of trade generally. If you live in Canada or America, watch the European markets, the amount of cost of production—watch the course of immigration. Be ever on the alert for new channels and new customers, and last, but not least, hold fast to all your customers if possible; and do not be afraid to add to your staff as you find your business increasing. Remember that your employés ought not to be asked to do more than a fair day's work, and if they are too frequently compelled to work extra hours, it will assuredly be to your loss in some shape. Either they will leave your employment at as short notice as possible, and

perhaps just at the beginning of the busy season, or they will strive on against hardship, poverty, and perhaps ill health until necessity compels them to become a charge upon any mutual assistance or benevolent fund you may have provided in your establishment. "Live and let live," is a good motto for you to adopt in this respect. Let the true principles of Christianity guide you in the treatment of your employés. And yet be vigilant and firm. Find out the thief. Be on the alert for leakages. Stop the gap by dismissing the man who is not thoroughly honest and reliable, no matter how clever, how good a man he may be in other respects; if you cannot thoroughly depend upon him, get rid of him.

And again—look sharply to it that no moment be allowed to go to waste. Institute a system either of reward or punishment by way of fine for the encouragement and enforcement of the most rigorous punctuality in time. Have your system *complete.* Have your hours regularly established for everything. Either fine every man for every time he comes late to business or offer a reward for punctuality. Cultivate a good feeling between yourself and your employés and rest assured you will not be the loser.

And now, in finishing this chapter, it remains but to say, that in all I have written I have had in view that grand success which for so many years attended

the business carried on by James and Robert Shields, at the corner of Yonge and Temperance Streets, in Toronto, Canada. In whatever I have said I have had in view the far-seeing wisdom of James Shields, the energy, perseverance, and correctness of Robert Shields; the regularity, punctuality and cheerfulness which always characterised the establishment; and I hope I may, by these few words of advice and encouragement be the means of enabling some one to adopt a course in business which shall in the future bring prosperity and happiness.

And just here I must not forget to notice the great importance and desirability of striving to cultivate a habit of punctual daily attendance to religious duties, and a dependence on, and trust in, God's assistance.

Do not run away with the idea that your success is mainly due to your superior judgment and good management—No, you owe all to the grace of God. Do not sneer. I know you, young man, are now smiling at what you, in your wisdom, honestly take to be my simplicity. But think! think before you decide that you can succeed alone, without the help of God. And I am well assured that, upon second thought, you will be willing, after contemplating a few out of the evidences of Christianity, by which

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CHAPTER III.

CASH VS. CREDIT.

THERE has been, and will, doubtless, continue to be much discussion regarding the necessity in commercial matters of giving a certain amount of credit. Merchants are divided in their views on this matter, it would seem, and although the great majority give credit and declare that a strictly cash business cannot be done; yet advocates of the other view are not wanting, and amongst them Robert Shields has always been counted upon as a strong advocate. It is not strictly true, however, to count him as a life-long advocate of the strictly cash system, for it was not until after many years of experience of the old credit system, that he was enabled in some measure to introduce his own system in the conduct of his uncle's business; and, to any person at all conversant with the difficulties that beset the path of the reformer in this respect, it will not be matter of surprise that Mr. Shields should find his work of reform one of slow growth. People, who have been in

business for a quarter of a century, shrug their shoulders when one declares it possible to do a cash business. They say: "Try it, and let us hear from you." They know very well the difficulties in the way of "trying it," and so they have generally come off "first best;" and their "try it" argument has, as a "clincher," been allowed to go unchallenged. But Mr. Shields was not the man to shrink from the difficult task. He believed in buying for "cash," and did so, always getting his goods in the best markets, and at the lowest rates. He was, therefore, in a position not only in his wholesale, but in his retail, trade to offer the very best goods at the very lowest prices—and for cash; and there are scores, aye thousands in Toronto, and all parts of Canada to-day (former customers of "Dodgson, Shields & Morton," "Dodgson, Shields & Co.," and "James Shields & Co.,"—the different firms, which, for the last, say 25 years, have carried on business at the old stand on Yonge street), who could testify to the superior quality of the goods kept by Shields & Co., and also to the low prices. And to the cash system may very fairly and properly be attributed the great success which has attended the Shields family. "Try it!" That "clincher" has long since been given up as an argument against the cash system; and if more people would only try it, they

would soon be able to have everything their own way. "A certain amount of credit" is always necessary—so say our opponents. I suppose they mean so long as any respectable portion of the community are unable to pay in cash. Of course; but I mean to say that there is not a particle of reason why a man should not pay for a thing when he gets it, provided everybody is alike compelled to act on the cash system. Take, for instance, the ordering of a chest of tea; our opponents say they must give credit, or lose their customers—Oho! This, then, is what it amounts to—lose their customers! That's what they're afraid of.

And why should they lose a customer? Simply because if they don't give him credit, some other merchant will; and so the credit system has existed for so many years, with no better *raison d'être* than simply because it is a necessary evil.

Now, if the wholesale dealers would *all* refuse the usual two months' (or four months') credit, what would be the result, supposing there were no cash buyers? Why, simply that the country customers would be compelled to go without tea for two or four months, as the case might be (and put up with kaoka, or annona, or even *sassafras*), and during the like period the tea dealers would have been "resting on their oars," brushing away the flies from

the sugar hogsheads, and taking things easy in general.

And then, when the days of credit had expired, the country merchants would come in with a rush and buy for cash. I see you smile incredulously. You ask me, from whence would the country merchants have got their ready cash during the two or four months of idleness, because idleness—you say—must be what it would have amounted to; and, you say, if they had not the tea to sell, they could not have received the money.

My answer is this: No doubt, many of the country merchants, on the first experiment, would find themselves with but very little ready cash—what of that? Would not the others of them, who were more fortunate, be all the more anxious to buy largely for cash, knowing that the local (country) trade would be so much the better for them, as there would be less competition. And then it must be remembered that cash trade, wherever properly introduced generally, and fairly tested, would be governed, like everything else, by a levelling tendency. I mean by this expression simply to say that those who had no capital, or very little, in their business, and so found it impossible to go on, would be compelled to sell out to their neighbours, and thus business could be carried on more smoothly,

and, of course, with little or no law costs to pay; and as the lawyers' occupation would, to a very large extent, have died a natural death, contemporaneously with the demise of "old credit" there would be a wholesome weeding out of third rate "Division Court" practitioners; and so society would be on better terms with itself, and people in business would breathe more easily; we should be rid, in fact, of an incubus—a great load. "Try it!"

I do not mean to say you will find by the cash system an end to all your troubles.

I do not say you will find no further use for your ledgers. No; but I do mean to say you will save money and time by it in many ways; you will save "bad debts"—you will save your money formerly paid to an extra clerk, whose time has in a great measure been occupied in looking after the accounts of daily customers who should have paid you cash, and who, in most cases, would have done so most cheerfully had that been your custom. You will save friends by the cash system. Customers who get credit are in the majority of cases too willing to extend their accounts beyond their ability to pay; and you, judging by "appearances," think them "perfectly good;" or, perhaps, from feelings of magnanimity or delicacy you delay the unpleasant task of "closing the account" until too late. You

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send your account for payment—you are met by promises—twenty trips may be made by your clerk in vain. You put the account in the hands of "your solicitor" for collection—result of all this: Loss of a customer—loss of a friend. Now, how much better would it not have been to have adopted the cash system?

Let me explain myself a little as to the mode of putting this system of cash payment into practice. Let it be granted that some of your customers live at a considerable distance from your particular town. How is a strictly cash business to be carried on with them? They telegraph you, for example, for such and such goods, are you to hang on to your goods until the cash arrives? No, this is one of the exceptions to the rule, and every rule is said to be proved by the exceptions. No, you need not necessarily fix a cast-iron rule. And now, I think, I cannot do better, by way of explaining this point, than by referring the reader to a little volume called the "Successful Merchant," being a biography of the late Samuel Budgett, before referred to. These are the words therein used:—"One thing which materially aided the Messrs. Budgett in their upward struggle was their system of selling for cash. That system was begun at the outset, and maintained throughout. Customers in the neighbour-

hood paid for all purchases immediately. This could not be carried out in the same form with customers at a distance. When they ordered goods, they could not, of course, be asked to pay for them till they had been received, and that, in many cases, would be days after the order was given, when no representative of the firm was on the spot. But a plan was adopted which came as near to prompt payment as possible. Each customer was waited upon by a traveller once in four weeks, and knew what day and what hour to expect the visit. If Mr. S—— had called on a tradesman in Hereford on Monday at 10 o'clock, that tradesman would expect Mr. S—— four weeks after, on Monday at 10 o'clock. If he had given Mr. S—— an order on his former visit, the cash would be expected now; if he had ordered any goods in the meantime, the cash for them also would be expected now: so that, up to that moment, Monday at 10 o'clock, the account would stand clear. If the tradesman was not at home, or had not prepared himself with his cash, the traveller did not call again; and no order was taken from one who had not discharged his account. Mr. Budgett regarded the maintenance of these rules as of the first importance. He would at any time lose customers, and sacrifice much prospective advantage, rather than diverge from them. His case was not

that of a house which waits till it has attained a commanding name for a particular article, and then imposes stricter terms of payment for that article. He began with his principle when he had everything to gain; he fought his way up with it, even though he found it continually blocking up his path, making him enemies and abridging his sales. He was persuaded of its excellence, and by it he would stand. Every new customer was clearly told what were the principles of the house; every man who bought did so with the clear understanding that he was not to pay in bills, but in cash. This being the case, anyone who endeavoured to evade the rule showed that he had not been honest on the previous understanding. It was not like a case of long credit, where one may be utterly deceived in his expectations from one term to another. Mr. Budgett, therefore, felt that he could not do a customer a more serious injury than to permit him to trifle with his engagements. He had known precisely on what terms he had received the goods, and if it proved that he had not been candid, then it seemed to Mr. Budgett as if indulgence were an encouragement in loose dealing, which must terminate ruinously. He considered it a clear case of foul play when a man concluded a bargain on certain well-understood terms, intending to evade those terms. He was willing to give

away money to any amount, or to lend, or to sacrifice custom; but he would not be imposed upon; he would not trade with any man who met him under false pretences; he would not for any plea relax those rules of business which he knew to be right, wise and good—good even for the man who, in his short-sightedness would rail at them or trifle with them; and he knew that if these rules were to be maintained at all they must be maintained invariably. Many thought it was hard of him not to give longer credit; he would have thought it as great an unkindness as to indulge a spoiled child with dainties which had already injured his health and were likely to destroy it. Many who had bought and had imagined they could do as they pleased with his rules thought it was abominably hard to hold them to their promises: he would have looked upon indulgence as destroying their only chance of getting upon a solid foundation, where they might succeed and be comfortable. Respecting a cash commerce, instead of a credit commerce his views were large and his convictions deep. He saw many a family wrecked under his eye, who had been tempted by credit into a trade to which their means were inadequate. He saw men suddenly reduced from ease to embarrassment just by a few return bills. They had industry, tact, and a growing connection; yet because a few large customers had

deceived them, their lawful profit of years is swept away. He saw when one such house fell, a whole circle of families shattered by the stroke; another circle of families linked with the former shattered too; then another circle and another of families which had known honour dashed down to shame, till the whole County was startled with the noise of ruin. Witnessing scenes like this no wonder that he wrote it on his heart that the system of credit was a system of curses: no wonder that in every establishment erected on a foundation of cash payments he saw a conquest from chaos and a step towards public repose, that in every facility to incur debts, he saw a decoy and a pitfall, that his ambition to set an example of success on a system of cash payments was strong, that he viewed it as a deed of right serviceable patriotism, a thankless but most substantial offering to mankind."

"If we begin with Holland, we find that bargains in that country were, in its better days, almost always made for ready money, or for so short a date as six weeks, or two months. Profits were small in their ratio, but the quickness of the returns made them, eventually, large. Failures were rare, even in so distressing an era as the occupation of their country by the French, which began in 1795, and involved, from the outset a stoppage of maritime in-

tercourse with all their possessions in India and America. The consequence of this stoppage was a decay of trade, a suspension of various undertakings, a scarcity of work, a miserable dulness in the 'sale of goods.'—all leading, in the first instance, to diminished income, and eventually to encroachment on capital. But amidst this distress, the failures were surprisingly few—fewer, indeed, than occur in Britain in an ordinary season. Another example, equally replete with instruction, was the state of France after the double invasion of 1814 and 1815. There prevailed, at that time, a general discouragement among the upper ranks, and a great deal of wretchedness among the lower, trade being at a stand, and stocks of goods lying unsold in shops or warehouses for years; still bankruptcy was exceedingly rare. All this shews what a satisfactory prospect we may anticipate when we adopt the plan of transacting the greater part of our business for ready money."

I have given the above quotation, in the hope that it may be read earnestly and carefully by merchants who have long advocated the credit system, —and in the hope that it may be of service in educating the people regarding the superiority of the cash system over the old credit system.

I trust that what I have said in this chapter may

lead some man of influence, some master spirit in the world of trade, to set about the planning of an organization amongst his fellow merchants, whereby the cash system may be fairly tested. I am convinced that if the system was adopted generally, so that all wholesale men and, in fact, retail dealers, as well, could start out on the same basis, within, say, six months from and after the completion of the organization, and the adoption of the necessary resolutions in the premises, the happy results I have above predicted would be very speedily realized—that is to say:—Bankruptcy would be far less prevalent; much time and money now needlessly squandered in looking after bad debt, would be saved; care, anxiety, vexation and disappointment would be avoided; and the door would be effectually closed to many cases of fraud and knavery. The honest merchant would not find himself in the difficult position of choosing between selling on credit to men of whose financial standing he had grave doubts, and allowing his goods to grow old while laying on the shelf, while he, unfortunate man, paid his rent, taxes, interest, insurances, wages, &c., &c. until, what with the hard times and the bankruptcy of one or two of his best customers, he was driven to desperation—to the wall!

No, the honest merchant would, under the cash

system, be the master of the situation, he could afford to do less business if it came to that, and would save his money; he would always know what to depend upon, his wife and children would always be provided for. But the cash system would not be the means of curtailing his business. Experience shews that the contrary would be the case. Merchants! give it your consideration! "Try it!"

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CHAPTER IV.

CHARACTER.

CHARACTER!—The word has "millions in it." From whatever standpoint, under what circumstances soever viewed, the word stands out in bold relief—a grand landmark of the lexicon. Let us consider the idea:—

First—What is character?

Secondly—How is it formed?

First, then, character is that whole whose parts make up the individual, such as his education, his ability, his activity, his temperament, his habits, his honesty, his politics, his nationality, and last, not least, his religion. "Education first, religion after," or, perhaps, to put the formula more correctly, and more in consonance with what I may be allowed to term "enlightened orthodoxy"—education and religion go hand-in-hand—at all events they should do so, for the advancement of each depends upon the assistance of the other.

However, as I have commenced with education

and finished with religion in the above classification, I may now proceed to consider the influence of education upon character.

Education may be classified thus:—

First—That which is obtained from the observation of things, that is the world around us, natural and artificial.

Secondly—That which is obtained from books and the like.

First, then, observation, and here what a vast expanse opens upon the view! Who can tell the thousandth part of the innumerable influences upon character, resulting from that—may I say—natural education derived from the constant observation of surrounding objects? And just here, and not to interfere with what I may have to note by and by regarding nationality, the observation of surrounding objects seems to lead one to consider whether or no some of the characteristics of nationality owe their origin to the character of the country, the kind of scenery, the character of the climate, the quality of the soil, &c.

Take the Scotchman, for example. It may be only a notion, but I think there is very much to be said in favour of the opinion that the Scotchman if we regard his courage, his industry, his honesty, and his Christianity, owes as much, nay, perhaps

more to the rugged, and yet withal sublime, scenery and vigour-inspiring climate of his native land, than to the combined influences of legend, history, and the teachings of John Knox.

I mention the Scotch nationality because, notwithstanding the "clannishness" of the canny Scotchman, he stands preëminent among all the nationalities of the civilized globe for fortitude, patience, perseverance and Christian zeal. But that climate and scenery have a very powerful effect in the formation of character may quite as readily be demonstrated in the case of the Irishman or the Swiss.

Observation, then, may be considered as a highly important element in the formation of character. But the topography of the country in which one lives from his infancy up to manhood, is not the only feature to be considered in connection with 'natural education." This branch of education, as I have said, is derived from the constant observation of surrounding objects; and it is in the constant observation of what might at first sight appear to be minor matters, that the individuality or character of a man is established. A child learns lessons of truthfulness, honesty, industry, punctuality, and amiability from its mother, simply by imitation, unconscious of the fact; or, on the other hand, if his parents or school companions are rude,

coarse, uncouth, wicked, he learns to imitate them—unconscious of the fact. And so I might go on and enumerate a thousand particulars in description of the great influence "natural education" has upon character. How very important then that these seemingly trivial matters should be strictly and closely attended to by parents in the training of their children. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."—Prov. xxii. 6.

Secondly—Education consists in that which is obtained from books. Here another vast field opens before us. Books! Where shall we begin? With the Bible? Alas! How little time we devote to the systematic study of the book of books? But we need not be discouraged about the prospect of rapid improvement and advancement in public opinion regarding the study of the Bible, especially in the Public Schools. It is now beginning to be felt necessary to have the Bible read in schools, and so long as "dogma" be left alone, I think there can be nothing better calculated to do good in the formation of character in education than the regular reading of a small portion of the Holy Scriptures. If properly understood, and properly conducted by the teacher or master, and with due solemnity, it must have the effect of implanting in the breast of

each child, a desire and a determination to shun evil, and aspire to that which is good and honourable.

I must not forget to say that I think the character of Robert Shields was largely formed by a careful study of the Bible, and hence the uprightness of the man. His early training was well directed, and as he grew up he was taught to love the study of the Bible, and to follow up its precepts. I have frequently met him on a Sunday afternoon wending his way to Sabbath school, and I can speak from my own knowledge in this respect.

I know his great charity. I know how he has given largely to charitable institutions in Toronto; but I know also something about his munificence in aid of his own Church. Many persons will remember with feelings of regret that good old church formerly known as Dr. Jennings' Church, on the south-east corner of Richmond and Bay Streets, Toronto. It was here that Robert Shields was wont to attend Divine Service; it was here, under the able and kindly teachings of that divine, Dr. Jennings, that Robert Shields learned to prize those Bible truths which by degrees, and almost imperceptibly, laid deep and broad the foundation of a noble Christian character. And it was upon this Church that his affection was placed. And I have only to add that he proved his liberality and Christ-

ian zeal by making a donation of some $4000 in liquidation of the debt upon the Church, and in payment of the outstanding interest.

But I must hasten now to consider the education from other books than the Bible; and to be brief, I will simply touch here and there, and leave the reader to follow such course as to him may seem best.

First I have to observe the change which seems to be taking place in our universities and colleges with regard to the quantity of "classics" necessary to the "completion of a liberal education." The move is certainly one in the right direction. Less classics and more "natural science," more "modern languages." And now, with the aid of rapid strides in modern invention, from the steam engine down to Edison's electric light, it seems that the world ought to move more smoothly and education ought to be attained more rapidly; I think, also, that education is becoming more general. The proportion of the population in civilized countries who can neither read nor write, is daily decreasing. If I may be allowed to touch upon the political questions of the day, I hope the "spirited foreign policy" of Lord Beaconsfield, whatever may be its faults, may have the happy result of extending the mighty influence of civilization and the Christian religion, not only among the dusky slaves of Cetewayo in Zululand, but amongst the Boers and many other savage or semi-barbarous

tribes in Africa, as well as amongst those so-called civilized, yet barbarous, nations of Asia, such as Afghanistan, where, thanks to the bravery of a handful of British soldiers, bloody treachery and barbarity, witness, the murder of the British embassy at Cabul, are at this moment meeting with their just and terrible punishment. It seems to me I may be excused, in passing, for expressing the opinion that whatever lack of moral foundation there may be to justify the British Government in its Eastern policy, great good will come out of it in the spread of the Gospel, and of civilization. The Eastern countries will be opened up to commerce; railroads and canals will be built; and the earth will have made another distinct and forward movement towards that grand event—the preaching of the Gospel to all nations—the conversion of the world to Christianity.

Books then have their part in the formation of character, and I need not take time to do more than merely notice the pernicious effect which "light literature" has had upon the character of the youth of most nations; suffice it to say, that great improvement has been made in this respect. There is not the same demand now for the "Dime Novel" which there once was. Dickens, Scott, Thackeray and others, whose writings in the past have proved so interesting, instructive and amusing, are now being read by the people with all the avidity

imaginable. Trashy literature, thank fortune, has had its day, and is no more. We may look forward to a generation of men whose character will bear close inspection.

As the minds of men are infinitely various, and as they are, therefore, influenced in the choice of conduct by different inducements, the moralist must omit no motive, however subordinate in its nature, while it appears likely to lead some among mankind to a laudable, or even a blameless, behaviour.

A regard to ease, to interest, and to success in the usual pursuits of wealth and ambition, may induce many to pursue an honest and honourable conduct, who would not have been influenced by purer motives; but who, after they have once perceived the intrinsic excellence and beauty of such a course of conduct, will probably persevere in it for its own sake, and upon higher considerations. And thus it is interesting to observe how, first from base motives, and afterwards from those more laudable, one may fashion his own character.

> "Shields of virtue doth possess
> Honour, truth and love most true;
> Is not the life of man most blest
> Those gifts of nature doth pursue?"
>
> FULTON.

To those who are to make their own way, either to wealth or honours, a good character is no less necessary than address and abilities. Though human

nature is degenerate, and corrupts itself still more by its own inventions, yet it usually retains to the last an esteem for excellence. But even if we have arrived at such an extreme degree of depravity as to have lost our native reverence for virtue, yet a regard for our own interest and safety, which we seldom lose, will lead us to apply for aid in all important transactions, to men whose integrity is unimpeachable.

When we choose an assistant or associate in a profession, a partner, or a servant, our first inquiry is concerning his character. When we have occasion for a counsellor or attorney, a physician or apothecary, whatever we may be ourselves, we always choose to trust our property and persons to men of the best character. When we fix on the tradesmen who are to supply us with necessaries, we are not determined by the outward sign of the lamb or the wolf, or the fox, nor by a shop fitted up in the most elegant taste, but by the fairest reputation. Look into a daily newspaper, and you will see, from the highest to the lowest rank, how important the characters of the employed appear to the employers. After the advertisement has enumerated the qualities required in the person wanted, there constantly follows, that none need apply who cannot bring an unexceptionable character. Offer yourself as a candidate for a seat in Parliament, or in any respect attract

the attention of mankind upon yourself, and if you are vulnerable in your character, you will be deeply wounded. This is a general testimony in favour of honesty, which no writing, and no malpractice can possibly refute. Young men, therefore, whose moral characters are yet unfixed, and who, consequently may render them just such as they wish, ought to pay great attention to the first steps which they take on their entrance upon life. They are usually careless and inattentive to this subject. They pursue their own plans with ardour and neglect the opinions which others entertain of them. By some thoughtless action or expression they suffer a mark to be impressed upon them which scarcely any subsequent merit can entirely erase. Every man will find some persons who, though they are not professed enemies, yet view him with an envious or a jealous eye, and who will gladly revive and aggravate any tale which malice has invented, or to which truth has given the slightest foundation.

Indeed all men are so much inclined to flatter their own pride by detracting from the reputation of others, that, even if we were able to maintain an immaculate course, it would still be difficult to preserve an immaculate character. But yet it is wisdom not to furnish this detracting spirit with real subjects for the exercise of its activity. While calumny is supported only by imagination, or by malice, we may

sometimes remove by contradicting it; but wherever folly or vice have supplied facts, we can seldom do more than aggravate the evil, by attempting a refutation. The malignity of some people is often highly gratified by the view of injured sensibility.

In this turbulent and confused scene, where our words and actions are often misunderstood, and oftener misrepresented, it is indeed difficult, even for innocence and integrity, to avoid reproach and even hatred. These not only hurt our interests and impede our advancement in life, but sorely afflict the feelings of tender and delicate minds. It is then the part of wisdom, first to do everything in our power to preserve an irreproachable character, and then to let our happiness depend chiefly on the approbation of our own consciences, and on the prospect of a world where liars will not be believed, and where slanderers will receive countenance from none but him who is so properly called by way of eminence Diabolus, or the calumniator.

INDIVIDUALITY OF CHARACTER.

There is a sacredness in individuality of character; each one born into this world is a fresh new soul intended by his Maker to develop himself in a new fresh way. We reach perfection not by copying, much less by aiming at originality, but by consist-

ently and steadily working out the life which is common to us all, according to the character which God has given us. And thus will the Church of God be one at last, will present a unity like that of Heaven. There is one universe in which each separate star differs from another in glory; one church in which a single spirit, the life of God, pervades each separate soul; and just in proportion as that life becomes exalted, does it enable every one to shine forth in the distinctness of his own separate individuality, like the stars of heaven.

F. W. ROBERTSON.

POLITICS.

"Some are born great, some achieve greatness,
And some have greatness thrust upon them."
—SHAKESPEARE.

Ought a business man to engage in politics? And if so to what extent? These are two very simple questions, and one would think there should be but little difficulty in answering them, and yet it is not the easiest thing in the world to satisfy every person on these two points. I know people who, either from a natural antipathy to politics or through a mean cowardice, would rather suffer all sorts of badgering than admit the complexion of their politics. They pretend to be above stoop-

ing to the doubtful imputation of partizanship. They declare themselves in favour of "measures" and the "best men"—whoever they may be. But mark these people; they take this course merely from fear of losing a customer in case they should happen to favour the opposite side in politics.

Then, on the other hand, there are men who are constantly dabbling in politics, and who have an unenviable reputation as "ward politicians," and as not being above doing any and all sorts of dirty work in furtherance of "the party." Their motto is, "with the party, by the party, and for the party."

Now it is difficult to say which of the above two classes of men is the more to be despised. Allowing the latter class to sink for the moment into oblivion, as being but little worthy of notice for the purposes of this volume, let us have a rap at our sneaking neighbours who are so much averse to politics, and who also, alas, are too numerous. Who are they? To what class in society do they belong?

Surely one would think that of all classes the commercial class ought not to contain a single man afraid of politics. But experience shows that it is just here where we find them most frequently—cowardly dogs! They would remain in blissful ignorance of the political history of their country all their lives rather than offend against the political

views of one of their customers. The loss of an account is what they are afraid of. Ask them a question regarding any of the great political events of their country, and they reply, "Oh, I leave all that sort of nonsense to the politicians," so that when any question of vital importance comes up to be dealt with by the people at the polls, these political cowards are compelled to cast their votes blindly—following the bidding of whomsoever chances to have most influence upon them. Take the question of a change in the "tariff"—they know nothing whatever of the merits of the question—and so with all questions of legislation.

Now to the young man about starting in business, let me offer a word of advice.

Do not take your stand on either side in politics until you have had time to consider the merits of the great principles upon which the parties differ, and the questions of the day. Look well to the past history of the parties and the men who happen to be the leaders. Study the political history of your country, and just so soon as you have absolutely determined in your own mind which party is most deserving of your confidence, make your choice known, quietly yet firmly; and though you had better let ward politics alone, yet be true to your principles; and while it is better to avoid political dis-

cussions as a general rule, yet keep yourself posted on the doings of the day, and be prepared to give your opponents an answer if necessary.

Do not change your politics out of spite to your neighbour, or because any one great man has happened to go astray. Remember your party is not necessarily black because forsooth any one member thereof, however eminent may have been his services, finds his acts disapproved and his honour tarnished. Hold steadily on; you will afterwards be glad you did not desert your party simply because your leader sometime or other (shortly before an election, let us suppose) found it necessary to send for "another $10,000," or to "make a big push."

And now, supposing you have chosen your side, watch carefully the course of your party leaders, and be prepared to exert an influence in the right direction according to the best of your judgment. In case your party show a tendency to introduce such measures as are calculated unduly to increase taxation, or to be otherwise injurious to the best interests of the country, be ready to urge your own views in a quiet way and in the proper quarter, rather than to fly to the other side. Remember you may possibly make the fatal mistake of "jumping out of the frying pan into the fire."

And above all things avoid extreme views; take

a middle course, and whenever you have a spare hour, look up some of the great questions which in the past history of your country have occupied the attention of the legislature. If you are an English merchant, study the history of John Bright, Richard Cobden, and the repeal of the corn laws; study the history of Lord Beaconsfield and his foreign policy.

If you are an American—master the great question of "States' Rights," "The Monroe Doctrine," "Mormonism," "Protection," and last, but not least, "The Constitution, and how to *count in* a President or a Legislature."

And now to Canadians,—for it is to you I am for the most part addressing myself,—study such questions as "Rep. by Pop.," "The Secularization of the Clergy Reserves," "The Abolition of the Seignorial Tenure," "The Reciprocity Treaty," "Confederation," "The Dismissal of Letellier," &c., &c.

And for information upon and fair treatment of these questions—except the two last mentioned which are of comparatively recent date—I will take the liberty of directing your attention to "McMullen's History of Canada," and if you will be good enough to turn to the chapter dealing with Lord Elgin's rule, you will find most of the above questions ably handled. I mention the name of Lord Elgin with the greater pleasure on account of the at-

tachment of the Shields family to that of the Elgins, and on account of the fact that the good old borough of Dunfermline, is the home of both families—the present Earl of Elgin having estates in Fifeshire, bordering on the Firth of Forth. It is a pleasing duty here to say that the popularity of the late Earl of Elgin amongst his tenantry and the neighbourhood was such, that invariably upon his return home from foreign parts, he met with a most enthusiastic reception—the people taking the horses from his carriage, and drawing it by ropes. Nor was his bravery less conspicuous than his popularity, as witness the bold stand he always took during his able administration in India, at a trying period in the history of that Empire—a period when, perhaps, no other man would have succeeded.

And now that I have mentioned the name of Lord Elgin—who, notwithstanding the Montreal riots, and the burning of the Parliament buildings and library, was, nevertheless, a popular and wise Governor—I may be permitted to direct your attention for a few moments to the "Clergy Reserves" question, which was finally settled in his time. And I do so principally for one reason, namely, to show how suicidal it is to mix religion with politics, as did the then Bishop of the Episcopal Church—the late Bishop Strachan. It is bad enough for laymen to be

guilty of extreme partizanship in politics, but infinitely worse in the head of the Church.

Read carefully and without prejudice the history of this question, and you will find it is best to keep religion and politics entirely separate from each other. And though the Roman Catholic clergy were more fortunate in the settlement of the burning question of such vital importance to them—I mean the Seignorial tenure question—yet that question, too, has its interesting points touching the relations of Church and State.

Learn, then, to keep your religion out of the question; you have no rights as a member of any particular denomination, against the State. The government has no right to recognise any man as more eligible for an office than another man, simply because the former is a *representative* man of a particular church. Too much nonsense of that sort has characterised "Cabinet making" in Canada, as well as elsewhere.

Such and such a man, it has been argued, ought to be in the ministry as a representative of his particular Church. What! do the members of that particular denomination mean to say, that without their man in the Cabinet, they are likely to fail in getting justice? I defy any Roman Catholic, or any Methodist, for that matter, to show a single instance in

the history of Canada, which proves unfairness towards his particular creed.

Advocate such measures as are calculated for the benefit of "the people," irrespective of race, colour, or creed, and so far as your politics are concerned, you will have done the greater part of your duty. And in conclusion, remember it is a duty you owe to society—to your country—to *yourself*, to keep pace with the times in these matters, so that as Reforms are needed, you may know how to perform your part as an enlightened citizen—for it is only the enlightened citizen who can be really called the good citizen. Rise, then, above the mere calculation of dollars and cents, and the counting of your gains. Emulate the lives of those about you who, having fought the political battles of your party, are dropping off one by one and giving way to younger men. Be ready for any emergency; you may some day—when you least expect it—be called upon to fill some important position of trust.

Have faith in yourself—in your own abilities—and rest assured your career will not be characterized simply and only as "The successful merchant."

> "Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime;
> And, departing, leave behind us,
> Footprints on the sands of time."

One word before leaving the subject of politics.

I simply wish to utter a note of warning to those young men who may fancy themselves destined to become party leaders, and who, without the necessary qualifications, and without due consideration of their own merit, may chance to aspire to becoming heads of Departments in some future Government. If such young men would only listen to the advice and warning of their true friends, they would either let politics alone altogether, or take more time and pains in preparing themselves for the work.

To become a statesman or even a diplomatist one must first have a liberal education, and after that undergo a thorough course of training; and such education and training, in my judgment, are quite as necessary for the head of a Department, though he may not lay claim to the rank of a statesman. But I look around me, and, without pointing to any particular Parliament or Legislature, I have in view more than one would-be party leader and head of Department, whose qualifications are only conspicuous by their absence: and I am not surprised at the amount of adverse criticism devoted to such men in the daily press.

It surely cannot be the most pleasant thing imaginable to such men to be continually lashed in the public prints by irresponsible editors, unless, perhaps, in the case of those of them who are really too

self-conceited and ignorant to distinguish between fulsome flattery on the one hand and that which, as Artemus Ward puts it, "is meant for sarcastic," on the other.

To those of my reader , then, who have sufficient common sense to know their own weakness, I would say this: if you have the requisite natural ability, a good memory, aptitude for debate, etc., and a determination to make yourselves party leaders, after finishing your mercantile pursuits, lose no time in completing the foundation, *i. e.*, a liberal education—to obtain which many boys lose from five to ten years of the best part of their lives—and having so aid the foundation, the superstructure, in the shape of a crough knowledge of the politics and constitutional history of your country, can be reared with little difficulty. You will then be in a position to hold your own where failures have been so common, and where so many fond but ill-founded hopes have been blighted. Take for your ideal a Beaconsfield or a Gladstone, and no matter how vast the distance may seem between yourselves on the one hand, and such bright luminaries on the other, there may chance, perhaps, to be one or two of you whose names will yet be handed down to posterity as examples of all that is good, honourable, and great in the statesman or politician.

CHAPTER V.

HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR A MERCANTILE LIFE.

IT is no wonder that many fail in their employments or professions when it is considered by what slender and childish motives they have often engaged in the pursuit which is to continue for life. One boy admires a red coat and a cockade, or a pair of trowsers and a jacket, and therefore he will be a soldier or a sailor. Another thinks it cannot but be a perpetual source of happiness to live amid a profusion of plums and sugar, and therefore he will be a grocer. An early and accidental association of ideas is formed, by which happiness is united with some peculiar mode of life, and a choice is made before reason or experience can possibly have suggested a cause for judicious preference.

The choice of boys at an early age is certainly too fickle to guide their parents in directing their

future mode of life. What success can be expected in a plan of conduct which originates in the whim of an infant? A parent, therefore, must study the disposition of his child, and endeavour to conform it to that profession or trade to which he has the best opportunity of introducing him with advantage.

The young mind may be moulded like wax, with a due degree of skill, to almost any figure.

In a commercial country, such as Great Britain or America, and perhaps Canada (for the latter is undoubtedly making rapid strides in commerce), trade must of necessity constitute the employment of a large proportion of the people. It is, therefore, of very great consequence that special instruction should be imparted to young persons whose lives are to be spent in the engagements of commerce. They are usually fixed at the desk and the counter at so early an age as almost to preclude all instruction but that which relates to the confined views of one particular occupation. Were I to offer advice to a young man intended for the commercial walk, I would address him in a manner somewhat similar to the following. It is impossible that what I say should be exactly accommodated to all circumstances and situations, but yet it may suggest to all, such hints as are capable of improvement and particular application.

"The wisdom of our English ancestors prescribed that seven years should be spent in learning the exercise of a trade or a mechanical art. This, like many other of their institutions, which the vanity of the present age is apt to despise, was founded on substantial reasons. Supposing you to begin at fourteen, seven years will bring you to the age of twenty-one, a period at which it is quite early enough to assume the liberty of manhood. Nor, indeed, can those habits be formed with certainty, which are to continue during life, in a shorter space.

"Seven years, however, it must be confessed, form a very considerable portion of life at any age, and particularly valuable in the vernal season, when the seeds of every amiable and useful quality are to be sown and cultivated. You will therefore be particularly careful to employ it in a constant application to useful pursuits.

"The knowledge of your particular business will claim, after your moral and religious duties, your first and most serious attention. Be not afraid of incurring, among your companions, the appellation of a dull cit or a spiritless plodder; such names are usually the poor consolations of those who envy the happiness which must attend the propriety of your conduct. Proceed, therefore, in the regular performance of your duties, animated by the approbation of

your own heart, and of your friends and superintendents, despising that ridicule which originates only in malice, although it has been sufficiently powerful to ruin many. I need not inform you that writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, and all the particular mysteries, as they are called, of your particular occupation, will leave you little time for inaction. The less, indeed, the better. Vice and misery are the almost certain consequences of your not knowing how to employ your time. Great cities where commerce is chiefly carried on, abound with temptations, and few are found more frequently in the haunts of debauchery and dissipation than clerks and apprentices.

"Since, however, it is impossible that you should not have some leisure, I very seriously recommend it to you to acquire a taste for good books: I say good books, for you may injure your mind and ruin your future by an indiscriminate and improper choice. The readers in your way of life seldom read anything but novels, plays and licentious productions, of every species. Besides having a tendency to corrupt the morals of young men in general, they exercise, usually, an influence peculiarly hurtful on the mind of the young trader, for they invariably represent the essential virtues of a trader such as honesty, sobriety, punctuality and industry,

as contemptible and ridiculous. The very name and character of a trader, in plays and novels, are low and vulgar. The hero held out as a model for imitation is usually some dissipated rake, who, with every vice and unfortunate failing which tend to make himself miserable, and to break a parent's heart, is described as a fine fellow, worthy of universal love and admiration.

"Let me entreat you to summon resolution enough to avoid such reading, until your judgment is matured, your passions are regulated, and your principles formed. If you have been fortunate enough to have acquired a little knowledge of the classics at your school, preserve and improve it. Read and reflect upon the histories of Greece and Rome and of your own country. There are books of morality in the English language as full of entertainment for a mind unvitiated as any novel.

"A taste for good books will have a happy influence on your temper, and will tend to secure your conduct, not only by filling up your time innocently, but by suggesting to your mind wise rules and useful maxims. Good books will teach you to know yourself and your situation, and to set a just value on those things which ignorant avarice and ambition pursue with restless avidity, and, at the same time, with little pure and solid enjoyment. They will

enlarge your views and give you a liberality of sentiment and manners. If you attend solely to the means of getting money, your mind will gradually become narrow, you will consider money as the only good, your eyes and your heart will be shut to all those other objects of delight which the God of nature has profusely adorned as the abode of humanity. This is an enlightened age, and the man of fortune, but of illiberal mind, will be pitied, if not despised and neglected. He will find few associates except amongst those who are as vulgar as himself, and whose riches, if they possess riches, cannot render them respectable.

"But moderation is necessary in that which is laudable; and while I recommend letters to your attention, I must remind you that they are only to form your recreation, and not your business. Be contented with reading. Beware of scribbling verses when you ought to be posting your accounts. A little applause bestowed on your rhymes may be your ruin. It may give your ambition a wrong direction, and lead you astray, like the dancing vapour of a misty evening. Be cautious of raising your ideas above your situation, dare seem what you really are; and if you think your situation and character require elevation and adornment, elevate and adorn them yourself by exemplary behaviour. If

you wish to become respectable, you will succeed in your wish by raising the sphere in which you are placed, but not by showing that you think it too humble for a person of your exalted ideas and *noble way of thinking.*

"You must beware of entertaining too early the fatal affectation of shining as a fine gentleman and a man of pleasure. To support these characters, supposing them consistent with innocence, a fund of money is absolutely necessary. Probably it can be procured only by importuning and offending a parent, by incurring debt, or by fraudulent practices; each of which methods is almost a certain source of ruin and infamy. Add to this, that he who is always adorning his person and frequenting theatres, assemblies and public gardens, will be so overrun with folly and vanity that no room will be left for the solid virtues of the sober citizen. His ambition will take a new turn. Before the expiration of his apprenticeship, he will probably grow sick of his trade, get an ensigncy or turn strolling player, and, at last, instead of becoming an alderman or a respectable private citizen, degenerate to an infamous swindler, or become at last a beggar.

"I consider the manner in which Sunday is spent in a great city, by the young men who are trained to trade and merchandise, as a matter of the

highest consequence to their happiness. The master and mistress of the family are then frequently at their country house, or engaged in some rural excursion; and there is no restraint, and no amusement at home. The apprentice or clerk is glad to make use of his liberty, and to fly from the solitude of a deserted house. Parties of pleasure are formed; improper and even vicious connections made, and the poor young man often dates his greatest misfortunes from that day, the institution of which was designed to increase the virtue and happiness of mankind. Sunday affords a fine opportunity for indulging an inclination for reading; and I have no doubt but that in a few hours spent in this becoming and profitable manner, there would be more pleasure than in galloping about the country, or driving to some place of amusement.

"I have been thus particular in suggesting advice to you for the conduct of an apprenticeship, because good conduct during that dangerous period is a very promising presage of future success. I make use of the word apprenticeship, though I know that many are introduced to the superior houses of merchandise without the form of indenture, and without a limited term of preparation. But whatever time is spent in preparation, and whether it is spent at the counter or at the desk, the hints which I have thrown out

may, I hope, be sometimes serviceable. If they save but one out of a thousand from ruin or injury, I shall be amply repaid for the trouble of my admonition.

"I will add but one more rule, and that shall be a general one. Learn to place a due value on the plain and homely qualities of common honesty, punctuality, diligence and economy. Were these pursued with half the ardour with which the graces are courted and the vices adopted there would be fewer bankrupts than there are notwithstanding the taxes. Bad times are indeed injurious to commerce and so also are bad habits in the conductors of it. When both are combined in a remarkable degree, it is not to be wondered at that there are complainings in our streets.

"With a mind enlightened and enlarged by proper education, and a heart furnished with sound principles if you have fair opportunities, you will not often fail. You will probably rise to the honourable position of an honest merchant who has acquired opulence with unimpeached credit, and who is able to enjoy and adorn it with a noble liberality."

CHAPTER VI.

ON SUPPORTING THE DIGNITY OF THE COMMERCIAL CHARACTER.

IN a country whose situation has rendered it naturally commercial, it is good policy to place the mercantile profession in an honourable light. It has not usually held a very high place in the esteem of the world; because, in most countries, it has been disgraced by covetousness and circumvention. Its primary object, the accumulation of money, has never appeared with any peculiar lustre to the eyes of those who have seen the beauty of disinterested patriotism and heroic generosity. But, at the same time, it is certain that a mercantile life affords scope for the display of many good qualities, and of virtues which, from their sublime and arduous nature, may constitute the merchant a practical philosopher. It affords an ample field for the exercise of commutative justice, and of self-denial in refusing to take

advantages which might be taken with impunity. Large and extensive commerce, instead of narrowing, has enlarged the sentiments; and British and American merchants have, for the last two centuries, joined to the most exemplary integrity the most liberal beneficence.

But it must be owned that mercantile men appeared most respectable when they least departed from their distinctive character. In the present age many of them have abandoned the simplicity of their ancestors, and, endeavouring to import the airs and manners of a court into a counting-house, have lost much of their independence and real dignity.

It has been said that, in order to preserve a political constitution in its original purity, it is necessary at certain intervals, to reduce it to its primary principles. Deviation from right and encroachment or error are the natural consequences of human infirmity in the progressive revolution of affairs. It is therefore as necessary in morals as in politics to return to principles and manners which have been insensibly forsaken in the pursuit of innovation; and the manners of our predecessors in the mercantile line, which we now despise as simple and unrefined, will be found, in many instances, more conducive to national and personal happiness than many

among the nominal improvements which have superseded them.

I will not dwell on theoretical observations, but deduce my remarks from real life.

I assert, then, that the merchants of the present time are often ashamed of the character of citizens. My proof is the fact that they desert the city.

No sooner have they accumulated a competent sum than the noble mansion in a venerable old street is forsaken for a smart house in a new built square.

The principal's presence is thus removed from the scene of action, and opportunities are afforded for every species of idleness and fraud in the inferior substitutes. Habits are contracted, and intimacies formed in the new region, directly opposed to the spirit of commerce. Late hours and irregular banquets are not at all conducive to that punctuality which constitutes one of the most valuable and necessary qualities of a respectable merchant.

Great wealth can indeed support any species of folly, but the misfortune is, that they who have their fortunes to make will emulate those who have already made them. To live at the next door to a millionaire is a temptation scarcely resistible. Add to this imitative whim of the merchant himself, that the ladies of the family feel new impulses of gentility, like inspiration, gradually come upon them as

they approach more nearly to the purlieus of the fashionable square.

It was not thus that Girard raised a fortune and a reputation equal to the most renowned personages of his time. It was by industry, temperance, regularity, close application; and by leaving those to follow fashion whose shallow intellects could not find a worthier object to pursue. It would have been an ill exchange to have given up the title of the first merchant in America for the petty vanity of residing in the circle of fashion. I would advise the merchant, who would live in solid prosperity, to make the city respectable, if he does not find it so, by displaying his worth in it.

Worthy conduct, with a noble fortune, will aggrandize any place. Adorn that situation in which it is your lot to live. *Spartam quam nactus es, orna.* Where, indeed, ought men to spend their opulence more readily than where it was amassed, where their characters are known, and their virtues valued?

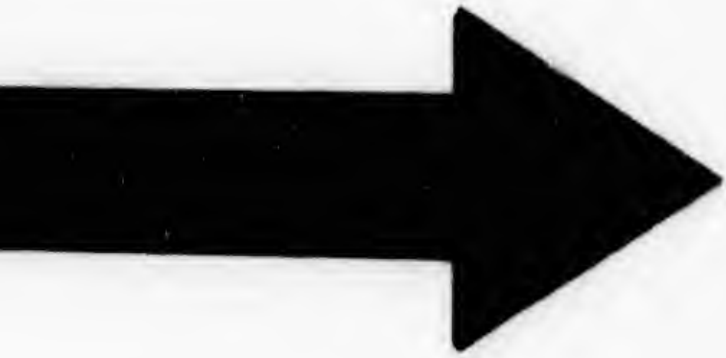
Many evils result from this general emigration from the counting-room. The influence of good example is lost amongst the numerous tribe of apprentices, clerks and journeymen, who are the rising generation of merchants; but whose morals are early tainted with the subtle infection, by running after

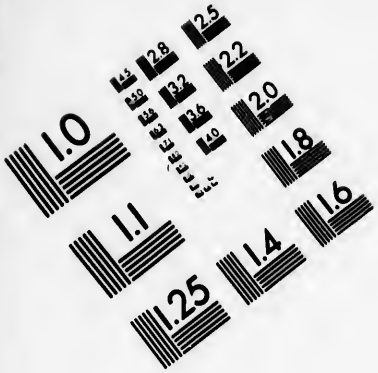
those vanities and pleasures which their superintendent appears so anxiously to pursue. They are led to despise the counting-room, as a place of contamination.

A time has been when merchants only retired to their villas when they had accumulated their fortunes. They now begin with a villa, as if it were as necessary as a warehouse; and end with bankruptcy as naturally, as unreluctantly, and as unblushingly as if it had been the honourable goal of their mercantile pursuits. Distress and difficulty excite meanness and artifice; fraud and injustice soon follow, and the dignity of the merchant is sunk in the scandalous appellation of a swindler.

The fall of an eminent trader involves many in the misfortune. His wife and children are reduced from a life of splendour and luxury to indigence and obscurity—to a state which they bear less patiently because they have been accustomed to indulge their vanity and pride without control. Vice and every species of misery are increased by this imprudent conduct in his own family; and poverty is brought into the houses of his inferior assistants or dependants, who have either intrusted him with their money, or find their labour unrepaid.

This is a picture drawn from life; what it represents often occurs; and the whole of it is occasioned





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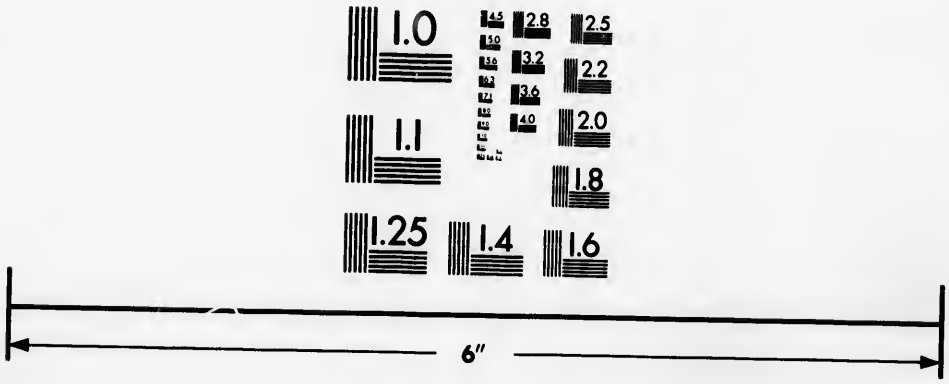

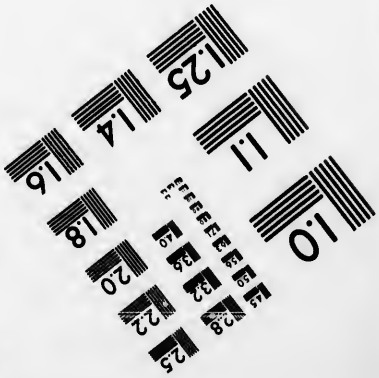

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by the merchant's departure from his natural and legitimate character.

In order to recover that character, let him consider what virtues his department of life particularly requires. He will find them to be industry, honesty and frugality. Let him seriously pursue them, nor ever be ashamed of them. Let him not dread the appellation of a dull cit, nor any of those jokes with which the envy and malice of witlings console them for another's superiority. Let him consider this, that the character of a man of integrity and benevolence is far more desirable than that of a man of pleasure or of fashion. The one is like solid gold, the other like tinsel; the one is like a venerable oak, the other like the gaudy and transitory tulip; the one is always blest and a blessing, the other frequently a curse. Dare to be what you are, is a rule which, if observed, would secure to men that happiness, of which the greater part never see anything but the phantom—embracing the cloud in the place of the goddess.

The great cause of mercantile miscarriage is, that the merchant usually begins a mode of life which should naturally follow a successful conclusion. He sets out as it has been before observed, with rural retreat, and with expensive relaxation; with those pleasures which should, in the regular course, be

reserved as the reward of his toils, and the comfort of his age, *ut in otia recedant.* He spends his active days in superfluous and unprofitable indulgence, and dooms the winter of life to want, to neglect, to a prison, or an alm-house. I believe it is true that at least as many bankrupts are made by some species of misconduct as by misfortune.

In a country abounding with merchants, some of these hints may be thought useful, and be adopted by a few in the rising generation; and the example of a few may, in time, be generally followed, and constitute at last a prevailing mode of mercantile life.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE SELFISHNESS OF MEN OF THE WORLD.

THE professed students of the art of pleasing, as taught in the Chesterfieldian system, usually possess some qualities which, when seen in their true light, and without the varnish of politeness, are peculiarly unpleasing, and extremely offensive. Indeed, the very motive which urges them to study this celebrated art, is in itself most odious, as it consists in a desire to serve themselves alone, at the expense of every virtue connected with sincerity, and by making those the dupes of their artifice, whose honesty has rendered them no less unsuspecting than amiable.

We all love ourselves, indeed, sufficiently well; but he who labours indiscriminately to please, by obsequiousness and plausibility, every one with whom he converses, however paradoxical the assertion may appear, is usually of all men the most

selfish. A sincerely good and benevolent man will study to serve and to gratify men in proportion as they may deserve his attention, and as they may be gratified and served consistently with truth and honesty. He will be the friend of individuals; but always more a friend to truth than to any particular man. He will study to please where he can do it without deceit, and without meanly sacrificing his liberty as a man, and accommodating his own views to the opinions of any company to which chance may introduce him.

But the mere man of this world has learned to consider truth and sincerity as words only, such, indeed, as may, on some occasions, facilitate the practice of his art, but must never injure what is superior, in his idea, to all other considerations, his own interest.

This sort of persons, whom I now stigmatize, is skilled in assuming the appearance of all the virtues and all good qualities; but their favourite mask is universal benevolence. And the reason why they prefer this disguise to all others is, that it tends effectually to conceal its opposite, which is, indeed, their true character, universal selfishness, or indifference to the happiness of all around them.

It is a maxim with them, that, as there is no individual who may not, in the vicissitudes of human

affairs, have an opportunity of serving or injuring them, there is none whose favour they ought not to court.

They are, therefore, universally and indiscriminately affable and obliging. So condescending are they, that one would almost imagine them to be totally exempt from pride; but after they have treated you with the most insinuating familiarity, should you happen to meet them in the company of your superiors, it is probable they will not know you; and if you venture to accost them, will beg the favour of your name. When they have any boon to ask of you, or are accidentally in company where you happen to be the principal person, they admire, flatter, and show you all possible attention; but meet them soon afterwards at a public place of resort, arm in arm with a great man, and they will pass close by and never see you. They either look straightforwards, or they are engaged in laughing at the great man's jest, or they really forget you. Whatever is the cause, their hats remain on their heads, and you endeavour to catch their eye in vain. You then begin to see that these prodigiously agreeable, affable, clever, obliging gentlemen are nothing but mean, unprincipled, selfish sycophants and parasites.

If you were to judge of them by their dress,

appearance, equipage and conversation, you would imagine these agreeable men to be generous as well as agreeable.

But in truth, their generosity extends only to themselves, and their expenses consist chiefly in providing matters of external ostentation. These they find conducive to the great end in view, which is to attract notice, and make advantageous connections. After all their boasts, they are usually hard and extortionate in their bargains with the honest tradesmen who supply necessaries. They seldom hesitate at any mode of getting or saving money while it can be kept clandestine; and, although they are profuse at a watering-place, they are often contemptibly penurious among their poorer neighbours, and remarkably frugal at their own tables. They play at cards, at which they are great adepts, and, therefore, prodigiously clever and agreeable men; but, though they declare the contrary, they play for gain rather than diversion. With all their vanity, love of show, love of pleasure, and love of dissipation, they are also most powerfully actuated by the love of money.

Self-regard, indeed, is evidently the principle of all their conduct. They appear in their own eyes as of vast magnitude, and consider the rest of mankind as instruments, which they may manage, with a little

cunning, so as to render them subservient to their own pleasure or their own profit. They do, indeed, too often succeed, and raise themselves to fortune and reputation by deluding the simple and inconsiderate. They are, therefore, often admired as truly wise, and not unfrequently pointed out as models for imitation. But I cannot help thinking that, however they are admired, and whatever success they may obtain, they are both despicable and unhappy. By servilely cringing to all, and especially to the great, without in the least attending to personal deserts and characters, they render themselves in effect absolute slaves, and their minds soon contract all the meanness and cowardice of slavery. Such meanness is certainly contemptible; nor can I conceive that such slavery, with any fortune or connections whatever, can, by any means, be capable of manly enjoyment. Liberty, independence and a consciousness of having acted uprightly, will render a state of indigence sweet, and the want of them must embitter the envied blessings of rank and opulence.

Providence has, indeed, so ordered it, for the sake of promoting the important ends of society, that they who live for self-interest and self-love, exclusively of all social regards, shall be disappointed in their purposes.

Immoderate selfishness, like every other greedy

disposition, sacrifices the present for the future enjoyment which never comes to mortal man.

But the selfishness of the mere man of the world has this aggravation, that it leads to the neglect of some of the most amiable virtues, and sometimes to the commission of crimes of the blackest dye. So that the character I have delineated is incompatible with a good conscience; and without a good conscience what a phantom is all human bliss!

After all the triumphs of worldly wisdom, and the contempt in which simplicity is held, I am convinced that it is far better to be deceived than to deceive.

At the same time it is certainly right to warn young men of the deceits of the world, and teach them not rashly to believe that those characters are the most excellent which appear the most specious and plausible.

I would briefly advise them, whenever they see a man remarkably studious of external appearances, devoted to the graces of dress and address, pretending great friendship and regard for persons he never saw before, promising liberally, perpetually smiling, and always agreeable—to beware of counterfeits, for such are abroad.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE VALUE OF AN HONEST MAN.

IT is the folly and misfortune of human nature to prefer the present to the future, the agreeable to the useful, the shining to the solid.

We admire wit, beauty, wealth, titles, and all that sparkles with the brilliancy of external lustre; and though we probably approve the plain and homely virtues which form the foundation of all real excellence, it is with the cold feelings of unimpassioned judgment. But in youth, when our choice in life is usually fixed we are much more disposed to pursue what we admire than what we simply approve; and the consequence is, that the greater number form the earliest and most durable attachment to vanity.

Sober maxims, rules of prudence, dictates of justice, plain truth, simplicity of manners, constancy in friendship, and regularity in business, appear to possess few charms in the eyes of him who pants after

the noble distinctions of being remarked at public places for his elegance of dress, admired for his splendid vehicle, celebrated for his wit at masquerade, smiled upon at court, and at length, perhaps, rewarded with a title, a riband and a star.

To obtain such distinction, far other qualifications are necessary than the antiquated virtues of one's grandfather.

The business must be done by dress, address, and, in short, complete devotion to the graces!

With respect to honesty, I have somewhere read that a man of honour, on hearing honesty attributed to his fashionable friend, expressed some degree of displeasure at the panegyric, and declared that such a compliment was only fit for his footman.

Our first question concerning a gentleman whose character we wish to learn, is seldom "Is he honest?" but "Is he rich?" "Is he a man of fashion, spirit, ton, or a *bon vivant?*"

Now, there have been at times many men of fashion totally destitute of moral honesty. They have possessed every personal grace, and every pleasing accomplishment. They could sing, dance, and play on musical instruments; they could converse with the grave and the gay, and adapt all their sentiments to the present company. They had that freedom which is called charming, and which

enabled them to push themselves into all companies, and accost men of rank and character by their surnames, and without any respectful addition. All this could not fail to excite the praise of the ladies and envy of the gentlemen; but in the end it has been, in several notorious instances, found that these charming men, with the appearance of whatever is good and agreeable, have been the first to overreach in a bargain, exceedingly successful in the profession of swindling, and particularly adroit at a forgery.

So despicable and detestable do the characters of such men appear on detection, that I cannot help thinking honesty is the best ornament as well as the best policy.

It is, indeed, a diamond of the first water; while all the showy, dazzling, unsubstantial qualities which the artful assume for the purpose are no more than French paste, or paltry glass, at once tawdry, brittle and vile.

I would recommend unfeigned honesty as ornamental; because, such is the present state of manners, it is infinitely more likely to be pursued and valued by the majority of mankind, when they think it will conciliate the love and admiration of each other, than when they view it merely as a moral excellence.

The man of reading, reflection, and a cultivated mind, will want no motives to pursue it but those which are suggested by his own conscience and the delicacy of his sentiments.

But to the mass of mankind, composed of all ages, all ranks, all tempers, all professions, all parties, and all religions, it is necessary to render any particular virtue which the moralist wishes to promote, both lovely and honourable.

Interest, passion and fancy must be taught, if possible, to second the decisions of reason. She is too often deposed by her refractory subjects, whose obedience indeed is seldom to be relied on, but when it is in some degree spontaneous.

It cannot surely be denied, that the quality which pervades every part of human life, and tends immediately to render it the most secure, comfortable and honourable that can be possessed by a human creature, is that uncelebrated virtue, plain, unassuming, moral honesty; without it society is a den of thieves, and men are to each other wolves and foxes.

Every day's experience evinces the justness of that representation in the Scriptures, in which it is said that the heart is deceitful above all things—who can know it?

In the most trifling intercourse, where neither pleasure nor profit is in view, the propensity to

deceit appears in the little promises, professions, compliments, which are mutually made, usually without any sincerity of regard, and often with real and inveterate aversion. But where interest is in view, the machinations made use of for the accomplishment of mean and mercenary purposes, are often such as might characterize an infernal agent.

Plausibility is, at the same time, worn as a cloak; and he who has a design on your purse, your life, or your country, will assume all the appearance of cordial friendship and unpolluted honour.

It is well known that the graces, the agreeable qualities, as they are called, and the appearance of the most amiable virtues, have been possessed in perfection by men who finished their lives in ignominy as victims of the law. Indeed, this common honesty, as it is termed, is far less common than our own pride is willing to admit; but if it could be introduced into all the employments of life, the golden age would be restored.

Happy state! but, alas, it is imaginary. It might, however, I am convinced, in some degrees be realized, if due care were taken in education to render the least tendency to deceit disgraceful, obnoxious, and liable to punishment, and every ingenuous, open, honest action, honourable, since honour is the nurse of the virtues as well as of the arts. Instead of

which, the writings of some modern instructors tend immediately to commend every species of deceit at that early age when a little evil sown in the bosom by the tutor cannot fail to root and grow to stupendous magnitude.

Early and late, by night and by day, in season and out of season, as the Scripture strongly expresses it, I would inculcate in the minds of young men the just remark of the moral poet, that an honest man is the noblest work of God. Let every young man who would live an honest, pure, and godly life, say with Bernard Barton—

> "I live for those who love me,
> For those who know me true;
> For the Heaven that smiles above me,
> And awaits my spirit too;
>
> "For the cause that lacks assistance,
> For the wrongs that need resistance,
> For the future in the distance,
> And the good that I can do."

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF FASHION.

THEY who are exempt, by their elevated condition, from the confinement of commercial and professional life, subject themselves to voluntary bondage by engaging in the service of the tyrant—Fashion. They are compelled to abstain from actions in themselves pleasing and innocent, however strong their inclination, because the caprice of some distinguished character has prohibited them by his example. Like the dullest of animals, they are driven round the same circle, from which once to deviate would lead to social ostracism. To be called profligate, extravagant, intemperate, or even wicked, might be tolerated with patience, but who could bear to live with the epithet of ungenteel?

People of fashion, once admitted within the charmed circle, form a little world of their own, and learn to look down upon all others as beings of a subordinate nature. Is it not, then, a natural ques-

tion—"In what does this superiority consist?" It does not arise from learning, for the most illiterate claim it, and are indulged in the claim; nor from virtue, for the most vicious are not excluded. Wealth, beauty, birth, and eloquence, are not the only qualifications for it, since many enjoy it who have no just pretension to either, and many are denied it who possess them all.

It seems to be a combination or a coterie under two or three leaders in high life, who agree to imitate each other, and to maintain, by the majority of voices, and the effrontery of pride, that all they do is proper, and all they say is sensible; that their dress is becoming, their manners polite, their houses tasteful, their furniture, their carriages, and all that pertains to them, the models and standards of refined taste. Those who come not within the pale of their jurisdiction, they condemn, with more than papal authority, to utter insignificance. They stigmatize them, in the aggregate, as people whom nobody knows, as the scum of the earth, as born only to minister to their pride, and to supply the wants of their luxury.

Groundless as are the pretensions of this confederacy, no pains are avoided to become an adopted member. For this the stripling squanders his patrimony, and destroys his constitution. For this the

virgin bloom of innocence and beauty is withered at the vigils of the card-table. For this the loss of integrity, with public infamy, is willingly incurred; and it is agreed by many that it were better to go out of the world than to be in it and be unfashionable. If this distinction be really valuable, and if the happiness or misery of life depends upon obtaining or losing it, then are the thousands who walk the private paths of life objects of the sincerest pity.

Some consolation there must be for the greater part of the community, who have never breathed the atmosphere of fashion, embarrassed their fortunes, or ruined their health in pursuit of this sinister elevation. Perhaps, on impartial review, it will appear that the latter are really possessed of that happiness which vanity would arrogate to itself, and yet only seems to attain.

The middle ranks of mankind are the most virtuous, the best accomplished, as well as the most capable of enjoying the pleasures and advantages which fall to the lot of human nature. It is not the least of these, that they are free from the necessity of attending to those formalities which engross the attention and waste the time of the higher classes without any adequate return of solid satisfaction. Horace, who was far less illustrious by his birth and station than by his elegance of manners, was wont

to congratulate himself that he could ride on a little mule to the remotest town in Italy without ridicule or molestation; while his patrons could hardly move a step but with the unwieldy pomp of an equipage and retinue. The single article of dress which, when splendid, requires the labour and attention of many hours, becomes a wretched task to those who wish to employ their time with honour, with mental and moral progress, with pleasure, and the possibility of a satisfactory retrospect.

Visits of form, of which every one complains, yet to which every one in some measure submits, are absolutely necessary, to keep up the union of the fashionable confederacy—the more numerous, the more honourable. To be permitted to spend five minutes, or to leave a card, at the houses of half the inhabitants of the politer streets, is a felicity which compensates for all the trouble of attendance and tedious preparation. To behold a train of coaches crowding to their door, and to hear the fulminations of a skilful footman, are joys of which the inhabitants of a rural retreat have little conception, but which delightfully affect the fine feelings of those who are made of purer clay, and honoured with the name of fashionable.

From this severe persecution the man who does not aspire to such honours is happily free. He visits

his friend and neighbour, because he entertains friendly feelings toward him, and is received with cordiality. The intervals of company he can devote to study, and to the pursuit of business and amusement; for his communications with his friends do not require the long, tedious, preparatory trouble of fashionable formality. In the unreserved pleasures of conversation, he looks with reciprocal pity on formal visitors in the squares of the metropolis, nor envies those who knock at a hundred doors in an evening, and who possess the glorious privilege of sitting half an hour in the company of those who must speak, look, and move by rule without reason.

The effects of fashion occasion, in the moral world, very wonderful phenomena. Fashion can transform deformity into beauty, and beauty into deformity. When we view the dresses in a picture gallery, we are tempted to ridicule the shocking tastes of our grandfathers and grandmothers; and yet there is not the least doubt but that they appeared beautiful and becoming when they were worn, and that the garb of the spectator who now laughs at them, would have seemed equally ridiculous then. During the short period of a life, the fluctuations of taste in dress are strikingly remarkable. A small buckle or a large buckle, a short coat or a long coat, a high or a low head-dress, appear one after the other in the

course of only a few years, extremely absurd. Manners, books, poetry, painting, building, and gardening, undergo similar vicissitudes. The prevailing fashion is at the time supposed to be in perfect taste; a few years revolve, and it is exploded as vulgar. A new one is adopted; that also is soon despised, and the old one, in the capricious movements of the innovating spirit, is once more revived, to repeat its revolution.

There is certainly a standard of rectitude in manners, decorum, and taste; but it is more easily discovered than preserved. The vanity of the great and opulent will ever be affecting new modes, in order to command that attention to which it thinks itself entitled. The lower ranks will imitate them so soon as they have discovered the change. Whether it be right or wrong, beautiful or deformed, in the essential nature of things, is of little moment. The pattern is set by a superior, and authority will at any time give its sanction to absurdity. A hat, a coat, a shoe, deemed fit to be worn only by a great-grandsire, is no sooner put on by a dictator of fashion, than it becomes graceful in the extreme, and is adopted by all, from the highest to the lowest.

It must be allowed, indeed, that while fashion exerts her arbitrary power in matters which tend not to the corruption of morals, or of taste in the

fine arts, she may be suffered to exercise her wayward fancy without limitation. But the misfortune is that, like other potentates, she will encroach on provinces where her jurisdiction is usurped. The variations she is continually introducing in dress are of service in promoting commerce. The whims of the rich feed the poor. The variety and the restlessness caused by change in the modes of external embellishment, contribute to please and employ those whose luxurious indolence and personal insignificance prevent them from finding more manly objects and more rational entertainment. But when the same caprice which gives law to the wardrobe extends itself to the library; when the legislature dictates in the schools, regulates religion, and directs education, it is time that reason should vindicate her rights against the encroachments of folly.

Yet so fascinating is the influence of general example that many who possess cultivated reason are known to follow fashion with blind obedience. The scholar and the philosopher are hurried away with the rapidity of the torrent. To be accounted singular, is to present a mark for the shafts of scorn and malevolence. For the sake of ease, therefore, men are induced to join the throng which they would probably resist without success, yet not without receiving injury in the conflict. Compliance is thought

to be wisdom, where opposition is likely to be inefficacious, and certain to give offence.

With respect to the distinction claimed by people of fashion, it is certain that they who are elevated by station, fortune, and an education corresponding, are often distinguished by a peculiar elegance of manners resulting from their culture and from society. But this ought not to inspire pride, or teach them to separate themselves from the rest of mankind. It should give them a spirit of benevolence, and lead them to promote the happiness of others, in return for the bountiful goodness of Providence in bestowing upon them superior advantages, without any original or natural merit of their own. They should endeavour to convince themselves that the warmest philanthropist is the truest gentleman, and that the most becoming fashion is to do all the good they can for individuals and for their country.

CHAPTER X.

A SHORT SYSTEM OF VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS.

I WILL suppose a virtuous young man, forming in his mind the principles of his future conduct, and uttering the result of his reflections in the following soliloquy :—

"At the age when I am approaching the maturity of reason, I perceive myself placed in a world abounding in external objects; and I also perceive within me faculties and passions formed to be powerfully excited and affected by them I am naturally tempted to ask myself, What am I? Whence came I? and whither am I going?

"With a view to satisfying my own inquiries, I reflect upon others who appear to be just like myself; I listen to the instruction of those who have obtained a reputatien for wisdom, and I examine, with serious attention, the volumes in which are written the words of the wise. The result of the whole inquiry is a sincere conviction that I am placed

here to perform many duties; that I owe my origin to a supreme Creator; and that I am proceeding in the journey of life, to accomplish some of His gracious purposes at the close of it, as well as in its progress. I divide my duty into three parts, according to the suggestions of my own reason, and the instruction of books. They consist of the obligations which I owe to myself, to others, and to Him in whose hands are both they and I—the great Lord of the universe. With respect to myself, as I consist of two parts, a body and a mind, my duty to myself separates itself again into two corresponding subdivisions. My body is a machine curiously organized, and easily deranged by excess and irregularity. When disturbed in its economy, it subjects me to pain, and cripples me for all necessary and salutary exertion. I owe it, therefore, to myself, to taste the cup, and partake the banquet, and gratify all my senses, no farther than those limits which are obviously prescribed by reason and experience. I further learn from the religion of my country, that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Viewed in this light, to pollute it with sensual sin, cannot but be blasphemy; to devote myself, then, to gluttony, drunkenness, and debauchery, is at once to deaden the growing energies of spiritual life, and to weaken and destroy the subordinate yet necessary

parts of me, my animal and material fabric. It is to shorten life, and to disable me from performing the duties of life, while life continues.

"But I have a mind as well as a body: a mind capable of rising to a high position by culture, and of sinking to a brutal stupidity by neglect. I will make use of all the advantages of education; I will devote my hours of leisure to reading and reflection. Elegant letters, as well as useful science, shall claim my attention; for all that tends to polish the mind tends also to sweeten the temper, and to mitigate what remains of natural brutishness. My mind, as well as my body, is greatly concerned in avoiding intemperance. Eating to excess clouds its brightness, blunts its edge, and drags it down to all the grossness of matter. Intemperate drinking not only reduces it at the time of its immediate influence to a state of brutality, but gradually destroys its vigour. The sensual indulgences in general, when they are inordinate and excessive, debase, corrupt, and brutalize the rational soul. Their delights are transient; their pains severe, and of long duration.

"Instead, then, of running into the danger of temptation during the ardour of my youth, I will fly from the conflict in which my own passions are sure to fight against me, and will probably betray me to the enemy. I see, indeed, thousands pursuing

pleasure, and professing to have found it in perfection in the haunts of debauchery. But I see them but for a little while. Like the silly insect that flutters with delight about the taper, they soon receive some fatal injury in their minds, their persons, or their fortunes, and drop into irrecoverable ruin. I am too much inclined to vice from the depravity of my nature and the violence of my passions. I will not add fuel to the fire nor increase the violence of that natural tempest within me, which is of itself sufficient to accomplish my destruction.

"But at the same time, I will not be a cynic. The world abounds in innocent enjoyments. The kind God of nature, it is evident, from their existence, and from the capacities which I possess, intended that I should taste them. But moderation is essential to true pleasure. My own experience, and the experience of mankind from the beginning, demonstrate that whenever pleasure exceeds the bounds of moderation, it is not only highly injurious, but soon becomes insipid. In order to enjoy pleasure I see the necessity of pursuing some business with attention. The change is necessary to excite an appetite and give a relish. Nay, the very performance of creditable and useful business, with skill and success, is attended with a delightful satisfaction, which few of the most boasted pleasures are able to confer.

While I take care of myself, of my health, of my improvement in morals and understanding, I will not harbour pride or look down with superciliousness or ill-nature on those who live, as it were, at random, and who acknowledge no other guide for their conduct but the sudden impulse of a temporary inclination. With all my efforts at improvement, I shall still feel imperfections enough to humble me. Candour and humility are two of the least fallible marks of sound sense and genuine virtue. I shall have sufficient employment in correcting myself; nor shall I presume to censure others, unless my profession or relative situation renders it a duty.

"My duty to myself is, indeed, intimately connected with my duty to others. By preserving the faculties of my mind and body, and by improving them to the utmost, I am enabled to exert them with effect in the service of society.

"I am connected with others by the ties of consanguinity and friendship, and by the common bond of the same humanity. As a son, I shall be tender and dutiful; as a brother, zealously and uniformly kind; as a husband, faithful, tender, and affectionate; as a father, gentle and provident; as a man, benevolent to men in whatever circumstances, and however separated from me by country, religion, or government.

"But universal benevolence must not be an inactive principle. If it proceed not to real beneficence, from sentiment to actions, I fear it will have more in it of ostentation than of sincerity. I will, then, prove its sincerity by doing good and removing evil of every kind, so far as my abilities allow me, as my influence extends and opportunities are offered.

"But before I lay claim to generosity, I will be strictly just. Truth shall regulate my words, and equity my actions. If I am engaged in a profession, I will discharge the duties of it; if in merchandise, I will take no advantage of the ignorant, and neither debase my character, nor wound my conscience, for the sake of lucre. In all my intercourse with society, I will keep in mind that Divine precept of doing to others as I wish they should do to me, and will endeavour to obey it. I may—I certainly shall—offend, from the violence of my passions, the weakness of my judgment, the perverseness of my will, and from mistake or misapprehension. But while I keep the evangelical rule in view, and sincerely labour to conform to it, I shall seldom commit such offences against others as will be either permanently or deeply injurious.

"With respect to my duty to my Creator, I derive an argument in favour of religion from the feelings of my own bosom, which are for me superior to

the most elaborate subtleties of human ingenuity. In the hour of distress, my heart as naturally flies for succour to the Deity, as when hungry and thirsty I seek for food and water, or when weary, repose. In religion I look for comfort, and in religion I always find it. Devotion supplies me with a pure and exalted pleasure. It elevates my soul and teaches me to look down with proper contempt upon many objects which are eagerly sought, but which end in misery. In this respect, and in many others, it effects, in the best and most commodious method, what has been in vain attempted by proud philosophy.

"And in selecting a mode or peculiar system of religion, I shall consider in what faith my father lived and died. I find it to have been the religion of Christ; I examine it with reverence; I encounter many difficulties; but, at the same time, I feel within me an internal evidence which, uniting its force with the external, forbids me to disbelieve. When involuntary doubts arise, I immediately silence their importunity by recollecting the weakness of my judgment and the vain presumption of hastily deciding on the most important of all subjects, against such powerful evidence, and against the major part of the best and wisest men in regions of the earth the most enlightened.

"I will learn humility of the humble Jesus, and

gratefully accept the beneficent doctrine and the glorious offers which his benign religion holds forth to all who sincerely seek him by prayer and penitence.

"In vain do the conceited philosophers, whom fashion and ignorance admire, attempt to weaken my belief, or undermine the principles of my morality. Without their aid I can be sufficiently wicked, and sufficiently miserable.

"Human life abounds with evil. I will seek balsams for the wounds of the heart in the sweets of innocence, and in the consolations of religion. Virtue, I am convinced, is the noblest ornament of humanity, and the source of the sublimest and the sweetest pleasures. It is piety which leads to that peace which the world and all that it possesses cannot bestow. Let others enjoy the pride and pleasure of being called philosophers, deists, scepticks; be mine, the real, unostentatious qualities of the honest, humble and charitable Christian. When the gaudy glories of fashion, and of vain philosophy shall have withered like a short-lived flower, sincere piety and approved honesty will flourish as the cedar of Lebanon.

"But I repress my triumphs. After all my improvements and all my desire of perfection, I shall still come far short of my duty; therefore, to whatever degree of excellence I advance, let me never forget to show to others that indulgence, which my

infirmities, my errors, and my voluntary misconduct will require both from them and from my, and their, Almighty and most Merciful Father."

PRAYER.

More things are wrought by prayer,
Than this world dreams of, wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain;
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

—TENNYSON.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PECULIAR PROPRIETY OF EXCITING PERSONAL MERIT AND MANLY VIRTUE IN A TIME OF PUBLIC DISTRESS AND DIFFICULTY.

THE dignity and rational happiness of human nature are always proportionate to its real elevation. Moral instruction can never be superfluous or unseasonable; for human virtue, like the stone of Sisyphus, has a continual tendency to roll down the hill, and requires to be forced up again by the never-ceasing efforts of succeeding moralists and divines. But with respect to the influence of virtue on the prosperity of a State it is certain that emergencies arise, when extraordinary degrees of it, throughout the whole body of the people, are peculiarly necessary. National adversity, like adversity in private life, prohibits the indulgence of a supine indolence, and calls for the most energetic activity. Virtues which have lain dormant, like arms in the arsenal, during the soft season of peace and plenty,

must be brought forth to be, if I may so express it, brightened and sharpened in the day of danger and distress. And perhaps no time can evoke them more effectually than when the nation is engaged in war with formidable powers and weakened by internal corruption.

The strength of an empire consists in the spirit of its members, and not altogether in its possessions or pecuniary resources. But how is that spirit to be roused or properly directed? The understanding must be enlightened, the ideas elevated, the heart enlarged. Ignorance, avarice and luxury, render men indifferent under what form of government, or in what state of society they live. They superinduce a weakness and a meanness which, for the sake of sensual gratification or sordid interest, rejoice in submission to the sceptre of tyranny. Liberty, without which we might almost venture to repine at our existence as a useless and baneful gift of God, cannot be understood or valued, and consequently will not be duly vindicated, without a competent share of elevation, moral and intellectual. The vain, the vicious, and the mercenary, seldom extend their cares beyond themselves; and the poor plebeian, though he may vociferate the word Liberty, knows not how to give it effectual support. What avails empty breath, opposed to the bayonet, or the bullet

of a despotic invader? Nothing but a steady, firm, systematic and unshaken opposition to the encroachments of those to whom fortune has given power, and nature an inclination to abuse it, can secure those blessings to our children for which a Hampden and a Sydney bled. Such great liberties as the right of trial by jury, a participation in the work of the legislature, the freedom of the press, and the privilege of speaking, acting, and thinking, without arbitrary control, serve to render our country, in comparison with some of the European nations, a terrestrial paradise; but yet they are advantages too remote to affect the sensual and self-interested, and too complicated to be completely understood, or rationally valued, by a crass and uncultivated understanding.

I venture, then, to assert, that the writer who effectually recommends pure morals, manly virtues, and the culture of the intellectual powers, by a liberal and virtuous education, not only serves the cause of learning, morality and religion, but effects political good of a kind the most permanent and substantial. His labours tend to advance all the members of society to such perfection as humanity is susceptible of. He enlightens their understandings, that they may see the great and solid objects of public good; and he emboldens their hearts to pur-

sue it like men. Like men,—not such as grovel on the earth in modern Greece and modern Italy—in Asia, Africa, South America; but such as opposed a Xerxes at Thermopylæ, waged war with a Philip, or put an end to the ambition of a Tarquin and a Cæsar.

The generous love of liberty which warmed the bosoms of Hampden and Sydney, was not the mean offspring of envy or malice, or of a proud and feverish opposition to the ruling powers, whatever they might be; but it was acquired in the schools of rigid discipline and a sublime political philosophy. It was accompanied by singular gravity of manners and dignity of sentiment. Now, let us suppose a nation in which those who have most influence in its government are become, through a general and prevalent depravity, addicted to sordid interest, to luxury, to vanity, to servility, for the sake of emolument. Can anything like the virtue of Leonidas or Brutus subsist in such men? Will they, in an extremity, be ready to sacrifice for the public their estates, their places, their pensions, their expectations, which furnish them their chief good,—selfish gratifications, the indulgence of voluptuousness or pride? Will they not rather rejoice to be dependent on a court which is able to gratify their vanity, supply their pleasures, and reward their meanest submission?

From the most impartial review of history, and from considerations on the nature of man, I am convinced that good morals and intellectual improvement are necessary to the existence of civil liberty, and to the continuance of national prosperity. At a time, then, when both liberty and prosperity are endangered, exhortations to virtue, and every excellence to which an ingenuous nature can aspire, are peculiarly seasonable. They brace the nerves and sinews of the body politic, and enable it to lift its arm in self-defence. with irresistible vigour. They add strength to the foundation of empire, so that the assaults of united nations shall not shake the noble fabric.

In this view, and under these circumstances, I cannot help thinking that the opinions I have thus imperfectly expressed, may be in some measure useful. My object has been to enlighten the understanding, and to stimulate my fellow subjects to greater exertion and care in ascertaining and vindicating their rights as men, and as members of society, and to teach them to pay implicit submission nowhere save to truth, reason, law, their conscience and their God.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE PROPRIETY OF ADORNING LIFE AND SERVING SOCIETY BY LAUDABLE EXERTION.

IN an age of opulence and luxury, when the native powers of the mind are weakened by vice, and general habits of indolence are superinduced by general indulgence, the moralist can seldom expect to see examples of that unwearied perseverance, and of that noble and disinterested exertion, which have sometimes appeared in the world, and have been called heroic virtues. Indeed it must be allowed that in the early periods of society there is greater occasion, as well as greater scope, for this exalted species of public spirit, than when all its real wants are supplied, and all its securities established, and the minds of men are enervated by luxury. Under these disadvantages there is, indeed, little opportunity for that uncommon heroism which leads an individual to desert his sphere, and to act in contradiction to the maxims of personal interest and safety, with a view

to reform the manners or to promote the honour and advantage of the community.

Patriotism, as it was understood and practised by a Brutus, a Curtius, a Scævola, or a Socrates, appears in modern times so eccentric a virtue, and so abhorrent from the dictates of common sense, that he who should initiate it would draw upon himself the ridicule of mankind, and incur the danger of being stigmatised as a madman. Moral and political heroism would now appear in scarcely a less ludicrous light than the extravagances of knight errantry.

But to do good in an effectual and extensive manner within the limits of professional influence, and by performing the business of a station, whatever it may be, not only with regular fidelity, but with warm and active diligence, is in the power, as it is the duty, of every individual who possesses the use of his faculties in a state of independence. It is surely an unsatisfactory idea to live and die without pursuing any other purpose than the low one of sensual gratification. A thousand pleasures and advantages we have received from the disinterested efforts of those who have gone before us; and it is incumbent on every generation to do something, not only for the benefit of contemporaries, but of those who are to follow. To be born, as Horace says, merely to consume the fruits of the earth, and to live, as Juvenal

observes of some of his countrymen, with no other purpose than to gratify the palate, though they may, in reality, be the sole end of many, are yet too inglorious and disgraceful to be avowed by the basest and meanest of mankind.

There is, however, little doubt but that many whose lives have glided away in a useless tenor would have been glad of opportunities, if they could have discovered them, for heroic exertion. It is certainly true, that to qualify for great and extraordinary efforts—whether political, military, literary, or patriotic—peculiar preparation, accomplishments, occasions, and fortuitous contingencies are necessary. Civil wisdom without civil employment, valour without an enemy, learning without opportunities for a display, the love of country without power, must terminate in abortive wishes, in designs merely chimerical. They who project great schemes and perform great exploits must, of necessity, be few. But the exertions which Christian charity points out are extended to a great compass, are infinitely varied in kind and degree, and consequently suited, in some mode or other, to the ability of every individual.

To the distinguished honour of our times, it must be asserted, that there is no species of redress admitting alleviation which is not relieved; nor charitable institution which is not encouraged with an

emulative ardour of liberality. No sooner is a proper object of beneficence presented to the public view, than subscriptions are raised by all ranks who crowd with impatience to the contribution. From the accumulated efforts of a community of philanthropists a sum of good is produced, far greater than any recorded of the heroes of antiquity, from Achilles down to Cæsar.

The motive of praise, though by no means the best, is a generous and powerful motive of all commendable conduct. He would do an injury to mankind who should succeed in stifling the love of fame. It has burnt with strong and steady heat in the bosoms of the most ingenuous. It has inspired enthusiasm in the cause of all that is good and great. Where patience must have failed, and perseverance been wearied, it has urged through troubles deemed impracticable, and stimulated through difficulties dreaded as insurmountable. Pain, penury, danger and death, have been cheerfully incurred in the service of mankind, with the expectation of no other recompense than an honourable distinction. And let not the frigidity of philosophical rigour damp this noble ardour, which excites delightful sensations in the heart that harbours it, and gives rise to all that is sublime in life and in the arts.

When we are so far refined and subdued as to act

merely from the slow suggestions of the reasoning faculty, we shall indeed seldom be involved in error; but we shall as seldom achieve any glorious enterprise, or snatch a virtue beyond the reach of prudence. The spirit of adventure, in literary undertakings, as well as in politics and commerce, must not be discouraged. If it produces that which is worthy of little notice, neglect is easy. There is a great probability, however, that it will often evolve something conducive to pleasure and improvement. But when every new attempt is checked by severity, or neglected without examination, learning stagnates, and the mind is depressed, till its productions so far degenerate as to justify disregard. Taste and literature are never long stationary. When they cease to advance they become retrograde. Every attempt to give a liberal entertainment is entitled to kindly excuse, though its execution should not have a claim to praise. For the sake of encouraging subsequent endeavours, lenity should be displayed where there is no appearance of incorrigible stupidity, of assuming ignorance, or of empty self-conceit. Severity chills the opening powers, as the frost nips the bud that would else have been a blossom. It is a blamable moroseness to censure those who really mean to please, and fail only from causes not at their own disposal. The praise, however, of well-meaning has

usually been allowed with a facility of concession which leads one to suspect that it is thought of little value. It has also been received with apparent mortification. This is surely the result of a perverted judgment; for intention is at the power of every man, though none can command ability.

CHAPTER XIII.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES NOT ONLY CONSISTENT WITH, BUT PROMOTIVE OF, TRUE POLITENESS AND THE ART OF PLEASING.

A PHILOSOPHER who, in the austerity of his virtue, should condemn the art of pleasing as unworthy of cultivation should deserve little attention from mankind, and might be dismissed to his solitary tub, like his brother Diogenes.

It is indeed a dictate of humanity that we should endeavour to render ourselves agreeable to those in whose company we are destined to travel in the journey of life.

It is our interest; it is the source of perpetual satisfaction; it is one of our most important duties as men, and particularly required in the professor of Christianity.

I have often lamented, therefore, that they who have taken the most pains to recommend attention to the art of pleasing have urged it only on the mean

motives of self-interest. In order to attain the power of pleasing, they have recommended flattery and deceit; and though they have required in their pupils the appearances of many good qualities, they have not insisted on any substantial and consistent virtue.

It is my wish to exalt this amiable talent of pleasing, to the rank of virtue, founded on principle, and on the best dispositions of human nature. I would separate it from those varnished qualities which, like whited sepulchres, are but a disguise for internal deformity. A student of the art of pleasing, as it is taught in the school of fashion, is all softness and plausibility; all benevolence and generosity; all attention and assiduity; all gracefulness and gentility. Such, at least, is the external appearance; but compare it with his private life, with those actions which pass unseen, and you will find them by no means correspondent to the precious outside.

You will usually find a hard heart, meanness, selfishness, avarice; and total want of those principles from which, alone, true benevolence, sincere friendship, and greatness of disposition can originate. You will indeed find even the appearances of friendship and benevolence proportioned to the supposed riches and rank of him whose favour and patronage are cultivated.

It is a favourite maxim with those who teach the art of pleasing, that if you desire to please you can scarcely fail to please. But what motive, according to their doctrine, is to excite this desire? A wish to render all with whom you converse subservient to your interested purposes of avarice or ambition.

It is a mean and despicable motive when made the sole and constant principle of conversation and behaviour.

If this life is the whole of our existence; if riches and honours are the chief good; if truth, honour and generosity are but names to adorn a declamation, then, indeed, they who practise the art of pleasing, according to the vulgar idea of it, or, in plain terms, according to the rules of Lord Chesterfield, are, after all, the truly and the only wise. But let us not deem so meanly of the world and its Creator; and if our favourable opinion of things be an error, it is not only pardonable but glorious; and a generous man will say, like the noble ancient, he had rather err with Socrates and Plato than be right with a Machiavel.

But, indeed, the virtues and the graces are much more nearly allied than they who are strangers to the virtues are willing to acknowledge. There is something extremely beautiful in all the moral virtues, clearly understood and properly reduced to

practice. Religion is also declared to be full of pleasantness, in that volume in which its nature is described with the greatest authenticity. It must, indeed, be allowed that he who is actuated in his desire of pleasing by morality and religion may very properly add all the embellishments of external gracefulness; and he may rest assured that the sincerity of his principles, and the goodness of his character will insure a degree of success in his attempts to please, which a false pretender, with all his duplicity, can never obtain or preserve.

If true politeness consists in yielding something of our pretensions to the self-love of others, in repressing our pride and arrogance, and in a gentleness of sentiment and conduct, surely nothing can be more conducive to it than a religion which everywhere recommends brotherly love, meekness, and humility. I know not how paradoxical my opinion might appear to the fashionable assemblies of St. James's, or to the professed men of the world, or to the proficient in what I call the insecure art of pleasing; but I cannot help thinking that a true Christian, one who thinks and acts, as far as the infirmity of his nature will permit, consistently with the principles of his religion, possesses qualities more capable of pleasing than any of those which are said so emi-

nently to have distinguished a Marlborough and a Bolingbroke.

They who study the art of pleasing will, probably, have recourse, as usual, to the many volumes written on the subject in the French language, or to the posthumous letters of a Frenchified Englishman, and perhaps they would smile if an instructor were to refer them for the best rules that have ever been given to the Sermon on the Mount.

It is, however, certain that the art of pleasing which is founded on sincere principles, derived from religion and morality, is as far superior to that base art which consists in simulation and dissimulation, as the pure brilliancy of the real diamond excels the lustre of French paste, or as the roseate hue on the cheek of Hebe, the painted visage of a haggard courtezan. The sincere art of pleasing resembles the inferior species of timber used by the cabinet-maker, which, in order to please the eye, requires the assistance of paint; but the art which is founded on sincerity is more like that which displays far greater beauty in the variety and richness of its own native veins and colour. A short time or a slight touch destroys the superficial beauty of one, while the other acquires new grace from the hand of time.

The rules and doctrines of morality and religion tend to correct all the malignant qualities of the heart; such as envy, malice, pride and resentment. In doing this, they cut off the very source of disagreeable behaviour. Morality and religion inculcate whatever is just, mild, moderate, candid and benevolent. In doing this, they effectually promote a system of manners which, without any sinister design in the person who possesses them, cannot fail of being agreeable. If to these substantial powers of pleasing, are added the last polish of a graceful deportment, the habits acquired in good company, an acquaintance with men and manners, a taste for polite arts and polite books, no other requisites will be wanting to perfect the art and form an all-accomplished character. Moreover, a man will be under no necessity of hurting his conscience and reputation in cultivating humility as well as politeness. He may be at once pleasing and humble, and grow in favour with men without offending God. It is one circumstance greatly in favour of that art of pleasing, which I recommend that, even if it should not always succeed in pleasing those with whom we converse, it will be sure to please our own hearts; it will be sure to satisfy our consciences with a sense of rectitude at the time we are acting under its direction, and to fur-

nish us with a tranquil delight, unalloyed by the remembrance of treachery and meanness. It reconciles man to himself, and brings peace at the last.

Then let your lives with virtue shine,
  Like radiant streamers in the sky ;
Be strong in hope, nor e'er repine
  At what your minds cannot descry.

Take hold then, with a master hand,
  And man your bark, though breakers roar ;
Nor furl the sail till near the strand,
  You can behold the golden shore.

G. Fish.

the re-
onciles

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE FEAR OF APPEARING SINGULAR.

FEW among mankind are able, and perhaps fewer are willing, to take the trouble of preserving, with consistency, a system of principles purely of their own selection. They separate themselves into large divisions, which, like the flock conducted by the sheep and bell, implicitly tread in the footsteps of some distinguished leader.

Thus is the pain of consulting the judgment in every emergency easily avoided. The road becomes a beaten and wide one, and each individual knows where to step, only by seeing the vestige of his predecessor.

But if the chosen leader be a treacherous or injudicious guide, the followers must inevitably be led into evil. Now, it unfortunately happens, that the leaders who are the most likely to attract the more numerous herds, are in many cases, the least likely to possess the more valuable qualities; for what is

it that chiefly attracts popular attention? Vanity and effrontery. But these qualities imply dispositions obviously inconsistent with an eminent and solid virtue, though always united with showy, superficial and deceitful ornaments. Thus it comes to pass that the fashionable modes of thinking and living, whatever modes in the vicissitudes of human affairs assume that name, will seldom bear the test of inquiry, without discovering that they are, on many occasions, futile and culpable. For who, indeed, was the great legislator, who established them? Some rich, gross, unphilosophical man, or some titled frivolous lady, distinguished for boldness, but not for excellence; vain, presumptuous and dictatorial, though qualified neither by nature, parts, nor education, to prescribe to others, and elevated to a transitory empire by a concurrence of favourable contingencies with their own upstart, usurping and importunate intrusion. Once seated on the throne, their edicts are arbitrary and irresistible. With the authority of their signature there is no deformity which will not assume the semblance of beauty; no vice which will not appear with all the confidence which naturally belongs to virtue, but which the delicacy of virtue is too apt to conceal.

The subjects of these self-erected tyrants are most truly slaves, though voluntary slaves; but as slavery

of any kind is unfavourable to human happiness and improvement, I will venture to offer a few suggestions, which may induce the subjugated tribes to revolt, and claim their invaluable birthright—their natural liberty.

To select a model for imitation is one of the best methods of facilitating the acquisition of any excellence. A living model not only shows what is to be done, but how. The imitation must not, however, be servile. A servile imitation is that which obeys the dictates of the master without venturing, at any time or under any circumstances, to inquire into the reason of it. The servile imitator paces in the same round, like the mill-horse, whose eyes are hoodwinked, that he may not be allured by intervening objects to deviate from the tedious circle into a pleasanter or safer path of his own selection.

It may not be improper to premise, that to one individual, his own natural rights and possessions, of whatever kind, are as valuable as those of another are to that other, however great, rich, or illustrious he may be. It is his own happiness which is concerned in his choice of principles and conduct. By these he is to stand, or by these to fall.

In making this important choice, then, let the sense of its importance lead him to assert the rights of man. These rights will justify him in acting and

thinking, as far as the laws of that community, whose protection he seeks, can allow, according to the suggestions of his own judgment. He will do right to avoid adopting any system of principles, or following any pattern of conduct, dictated by fashion only, which his judgment has not pronounced conducive to his happiness, and consistent with his duties; consistent with those duties which he owes to his God, to his neighbour, to himself, and to his community. Though the small circle with whom he is personally connected may think and act differently, and may even despise and ridicule his singularity, yet let him persevere. His duty, his freedom, his conscience and his happiness must appear to every thinking man superior to all considerations under heaven. Men act wrong scarcely less often from defect of courage than of knowledge and of prudence. Dare to be wise, said an ancient; in order to which it will first be necessary to dare to be singular.

But in this and every other effort of virtue no steps must be taken beyond the golden mean. The singularity which I recommend will be as distant from moroseness and misanthropy, and from ridiculous oddity, as it will from an unwomanly and pernicious obsequiousness to those who possess no reasonable right to take the lead, I mean the self-appointed dictates in the empire of fashion.

If the immoderate fear of appearing singular is injurious to health, to fortune, to peace of mind and to rational enjoyment, as perhaps on a farther consideration it will appear to be, I shall contribute something to promote happiness, by daring to be so singular as to recommend singularity.

Of the many who impair their constitutions by early excess and debauchery, a great part is instigated to irregularity by other motives than the impulses of passion. A young man just introduced into the company of his equals, entertains a natural and a laudable desire to recommend himself to their favour. If they indulge in wine to excess, or in any other intemperance, he thinks he must do so likewise, for he cannot bear to be singular.

He has, besides, received among his prudential rules that he is to do as the rest do, wherever he may be fixed; and who, indeed, will dare to disobey the precept which commands us, while we are at Rome to do as the Romans do? Thus is the favour of our temporary companions gained; but our health, which was designed to endure, and with proper management would have endured till the regular decay of nature, is greatly injured or totally destroyed. I will, then, venture to exhort the young man not to dread the imputation of singularity so much as to endanger the loss of that which can seldom be com-

pletely regained, and without which no favour, no applause, no popularity can give to life its natural sweetness.

With respect to that ruin which consists in the loss of fortune and the accumulation of debt, it is daily effected by the fear of singularity. However their finances may have declined, they who are whirled in the vortex of fashion cannot retrench. They must act as their equals act; they must, like others, dress, keep a table, equipage, and resort to public diversions. It is necessary, according to their ideas; and they tacitly acknowledge the obligation to be much greater than that of the moral duties. For who could bear to be odd people—to descend among the tribes of those whom nobody knows, and who, indeed, are distinguished only for the plain qualities of probity and decency? Indulgences and extravagances are thus allowed, not altogether for the pleasure they afford, but often from the horror of singularity. It is to be wished that the horror of a bankruptcy, a gaol, an elopement or a pistol possessed half the influence.

In destroying health and fortune, this conduct certainly destroys that peace of mind without which all external advantages whatever are but like music and paintings, banquets and perfumes, to him who has lost all powers of perception. But, supposing

health and fortune to be preserved, yet the fear of singularity may lead to omissions and commissions which will one day hurt a conscience not entirely insensible. Religion and duty enjoin many things which are real solecisms and downright barbarisms in the school of fashion.

When health, fortune, and peace are gone, it may be justly said, no arguments are necessary to prove that there can be no enjoyment. But supposing them not entirely lost, and that room were left for some degrees of happiness, even that little would be greatly lessened by a too scrupulous fear of deviating from the arbitrary standard of a fantastic mode. The taste, fancies, inclinations of other men, cannot please us like the genuine choice of our native feelings, directed by our own judgment properly informed. They may, indeed, be adopted, and even loved; but an adopted child seldom excites and soothes our sensibilities in a degree equal to that which is caused by our own offspring trained in the paths of wisdom, with the affectionate vigilance of paternal superintendence.

Upon the whole, I cannot help thinking that however pride may vaunt herself, and fashion assume airs of superior wisdom in her choice, it is singularly foolish, absurd and wicked to decline any practices and any habits, however unusual, which evidently tend to render a man singularly learned, singularly good, and singularly happy.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THAT KIND OF WISDOM WHICH CONSISTS IN ACCOMMODATION AND COMPLIANCE, WITHOUT ANY PRINCIPLES BUT THOSE OF SELFISHNESS.

THERE is a mean and sneaking kind of wisdom (I can allow it no better epithets) which marks the present times, and consists in a compliance in the inclinations, and an assent to the opinions, of those with whom we converse, however opposite they may be to our own, or to those we complied with, or assented to, in the last company in which we were engaged. And this cunning and cautious behaviour is honoured with the name of true politeness, good sense, and knowledge of the world; or, to speak in the technical language of fashion, taking the *ton* of our company. When it is closely examined, it appears to originate in timidity, in a mean and excessive regard to self-interest, and to be utterly inconsistent with the principles of honesty. "A person of discretion," says the sensible and satirical Collier, "will take care not to embarrass his life, nor expose

himself to calumny, nor let his conscience grow too strong for his interest; he never crosses a prevailing mistake, or opposes any mischief that has numbers and prescription on its side. His point is to steal upon the blind side, and apply to the affections; to flatter the vanity and play upon the weakness of those in power or interest, and to make his fortune out of the folly of his neighbours."

I venture to affirm, however, that he who adopts this conduct, however plausible his appearance, however oily his tongue and specious his professions, is no honest man. He would not for the world contradict you, or in any respect express his disapprobation of your taste or your choice. But why should he not?

Is it because he really thinks as you think, and feels as you feel? Impossible. For he will assent to opinions diametrically opposite, as soon as he goes from your door to your next neighbour. Is it because he is so abundantly good-natured as to fear lest he should give you pain by contradiction? Believe it not. It is true, indeed, that he fears to contradict you; but it is only lest he should lose your favour; and it is a maxim with him to court the favour of every individual, because he may one day want his assistance in accomplishing the objects of his covetousness or his ambition. While, therefore, he is entering into your views, approving your

taste, confirming your observations, what think you passes in his mind? Himself is the subject of his thoughts; and while you imagine that he is concurring with your opinion, and admiring your judgment, he is only meditating how he may most easily insinuate himself into your favour. Such cautious, timid, subtle men, are very uncommon in the world, and so are highwaymen and pickpockets.

It must be owned, with regret, that this deceitful intercourse is too often the mode of converse among those self-elevated beings who have separated themselves from the rest of mankind under the name of people of fashion. Among these empty dictators of external forms you must learn to take the tone of every body with whom you converse, except indeed, of the vulgar. With the grave you must be grave; with the gay you must be gay; with the vicious you must be vicious, and with the good and learned, as good and learned as the best of them—if you can; but if you are not quite adept enough for dissimulation to have attained this excellence, it is safest to keep out of their way, for they are apt to speak disagreeable truths, and to be quite insufferable *bêtes*. This versatility and duplicity of the *grand monde* may, indeed, constitute a man of the world; but let it be remembered, that a book of some authority classes the world, when spoken of in this sense, with the devil.

The over-cautious wise men of these times are very fond of getting into the company of an honest man, when, by throwing out leading ideas, or by asking insidious questions, they contrive to learn all his sentiments without uttering an opinion of their own. I have known some of these close gentlemen of the *volto sciolto*, and the *pensieri stretti*, so reserved and mysterious, and at the same time so inquisitive, that you would have imagined them commissioned spies of an enemy's country, or members of the Privy Council at home.

If, after you have opened yourself, you ask their opinion, they answer that really they do not know what to say, they have not quite made up their minds on the subject; some people, they find, think one way, and some another. With respect to themselves, they hint that though they were at first very doubtful, yet your arguments seem almost to have made them converts to your opinions; and whatever the event may be, you have fully proved that reason is of your side; or, if it is not, you have shown amazing ingenuity and abilities in saying so much on a side which cannot be defended. Then after having gained their point of sounding your sentiments, the conversation turns to the topics of the weather or the wind. They display a most outrageous affectation of candour. They are always ready to make allowances for the infirmities of human nature, ex-

cept when a rival, or an object of their hatred is to be injured; and then though it is not their disposition to be censorious, though it is well known they always palliate what they can, yet in this particular case, they will whisper what they would not speak aloud, nor have to go any farther; they will even whisper that they believe the report, however injurious, to be strictly true, and indeed, rather a favourable account, for if you knew as much as they do, they insinuate that you would be shocked indeed; but, however, they declare they will not in candour disclose what they know. So that we may conclude, as indeed is often the case, that badness of heart is united with pusillanimity. They are affectedly kind when their selfish views are to be promoted by kindness; but really and most implacably malevolent when the same purposes are more effectually served by malevolence, or when they have an opportunity of gratifying their envy or revenge.

Where compliance and assent, caution and candour, arise from a natural tenderness of disposition and softness of nature, they are amiable and respectable; but as the effects of artifice they must be despised. The persons who falsely pretend to them are indeed often themselves dupes of their own deceit, when they imagine others are deluded by it. For excessive art always betrays itself; and many who from motives of delicacy and tenderness do not openly

rebuke the deceiver, secretly deride and warmly resent his ineffectual subtlety. Cunning people are apt, as it has been well observed, to entertain too mean an opinion of the intellects of those with whom they converse, and to suppose that they can be moved like puppets by secret wires well managed behind the curtain. But the puppets are very often refractory, and the spectators on whom the awkward experiment of delusion has been tried, always displeased. Lucrative views are the usual motives which allure the sycophant to his mean submissions. But where lucrative views are greatly predominant, a truly respectable man is seldom found! Covetousness is so greedy a passion, that it not only attracts to itself its proper objects, but swallows up almost every other affection. Man, indeed, is naturally and properly attached to himself, in a certain degree; but a liberal education, united to good nature, corrects the excess of selfishness, and enables us to find enjoyment in many pursuits which are conducive to the good of society. But when all is made to centre in self and when the mind is so contracted as to see no good but lucre, it brings its proper punishment by a voluntary condemnation of itself to a slavish, a timid and anxious existence; so that the contemptible characters which I have been describing are, in truth, enemies to self even when they are exclusively devoted to it.

There are others who adopt the pusillanimity of mean compliance and servile assent, from a wish to pass quietly and smoothly through life, without the asperities or noise of opposition. This wish, however amiable and laudable, may certainly lead to excessive and unmanly obsequiousness. Every man is bound by his religion, and by his regard to himself, his family and his country, to seek peace. But it will not be secured by unmanly submissions. A proper degree of spirit and courage is as necessary to preserve tranquillity as a pacific disposition. Internal peace is infinitely more valuable than external; but he who is always afraid to avow his sentiments and is led into the mazes of deceit and duplicity will feel, amid his fears and his contrivances, that his bosom is agitated with emotions by no means tranquil and serene. Add to this, that the spiritless servility of a mean but fashionable time-server will often invite, as it will always deserve, contempt.

In truth, every sensible man must form opinions upon everything which presents itself; and every honest man dares to avow them, when there is no evident and honourable reason for their concealment. If a man has formed virtuous, religious and patriotic principles, he injures all those causes which he must wish to serve, by fearing to declare openly, on proper occasions, his inward convictions. It is, indeed, his duty to do so; for it is a part of virtue to add confi-

dence to the virtuous, by boldly professing a wish to be of the number, and by standing forward as their avowed auxiliary.

But that wisdom which consists in political compliance without regard to antiquated notions of moral fitness or unfitness, is no less visible in public than in private life. It is not always the honest and upright, whose heart is as open as his countenance, that is judged worthy of great offices and employments. It is more frequently the varnished character which, while it holds out the best professions, is capable of co-operating in all the mean artifices which are often, according to the narrow system of worldly politics, politically necessary.

In many employments of state, he who cannot meanly submit to time-serving will not be able to serve himself nor permitted to serve his country. In public measures, for instance, it is insinuated, that not what is strictly and morally right, or strictly and morally wrong, is to be considered, so much as what is seasonable, what the times and the present system of manners will conveniently bear. At one time popery is to be encouraged, because we are threatened with an invasion, and the papists are a numerous and rich body, capable of greatly assisting us as friends, or annoying us as enemies. At another time popery is to be discountenanced by writings, by laws, by axes, and by fagots. At one time Chris-

tianity is to be propagated by missionaries wherever we make a discovery; at another, we are to visit and revisit the Isles of the Southern Ocean, and not a wish to be expressed by the rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, for the conversion of the poor Otaheitans and Utieteans. Now who is it who makes the times what they are? Even those whose excessive caution and cowardly policy leave a doubt on the minds of the many, whether that zeal is not totally deficient which is the genuine result of sincerity.

I have no doubt but the civil departments of state would flourish more, if that conduct were followed, in their support, which shines openly in the eyes of mankind as the result of truth and honesty, than when those petty tricks and that temporizing management are pursued, which lead the governed to despise the persons, and to disobey the authority of the governor. Let legal authority openly dictate what is right when measured by the great standard of truth and justice, and then let legal power enforce the practice. The times would then be conformed to the rulers, not the rulers, by a strange perversion, to the obliquity of the times.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICS AS A SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION.

IT is a mark of the social and public spirit of a nation to see a great majority of its citizens devoting a very considerable portion of their time and thoughts in studying its political welfare, its interests and its honour.

Though this general taste for politics, from the highest to the lowest orders of the people, has some weak points, yet I cannot help considering it both a proof of uncommon liberality, and one of the firmest supports of civil liberty. It kindles and keeps alive an ardent love of freedom. It has hitherto preserved that glorious gift of God from the rude hand of tyranny, and tends, perhaps, more than any other cause, to communicate the noble fire of true patriotism to the bosom of posterity. While we watch vigilantly over every political measure, and communicate an alarm through the country with a speed almost equal to the shock of electricity, there will

be no danger that a government should establish despotism, even though it were to invade the rights of the people by force of arms. There would be many a Leonidas to stand at the gates of Thermopylæ.

But as zeal, without knowledge, is subversive of the purpose which it means to promote, it becomes a true friend of the country to endeavour to unite with the love of liberty, the love of knowledge. It unfortunately happens that political subjects are of so warm and animating a nature that they not only appear to interest in a very high degree, but engross the attention. The newspapers, corrupt as they now are, with many noble exceptions it is true, form the whole library of the politician; the coffee-house is his school; and he prefers an acrimonious pamphlet for or against the Ministry, to all that was ever written by a Homer, or discovered by a Newton.

To be a competent judge, either of political measures or events, it is necessary to possess an enlightened understanding and the liberal spirit of philosophy; it is necessary to have read history, and to have formed right ideas of the nature of men and of civil society. But I know not how it happens, the most ignorant and passionate are apt to be the most decisive in delivering their sentiments on the very complicated subjects of political controversy. A man, whose education never extended beyond writing and

the four rules, will determine at once, and with the most authoritative air, such questions as would perplex the wisest statesmen, adorned with all human learning, and assisted by the experience and advice of the most cultivated persons in the nation; even gentlemen, according to the common acceptation of that title, or those who have fortunes and have received the common instruction of the times, are seldom able to judge with propriety in politics, though they are usually inclined to dictate with passion. Is it possible that, from having learned only the first elements of Latin and French, and the arts of dancing, fencing and fiddling, a man should be qualified, I do not say, to sit as a member of Parliament, but to expatiate with sufficient judgment and intelligence, on the propriety and nature of important measures concerted by profound wisdom?

But even among persons whose minds are sufficiently improved to distinguish and pursue the good of man and of society, independently either of passion or of private advantage, the rage for politics often proceeds too far and absorbs all other objects. In vain does the hand of art present the picture or repeat the melody of music; for the eye is blind, the ear is deaf, to all but the news and the newspaper. Poetry, philology, elegant and polite letters, in all their ramifications, display their alluring charms in vain to him whose head and heart still vibrate with

the harsh and discordant sounds of a political dispute. Those books whose tendency is only to promote elegant pleasures or advance science, which flatter no party, and gratify no malignant passion, are suffered to fall into oblivion; while a pamphlet which exposes the cause of any political men or measures, however inconsiderable its literary merits, is extolled as one of the first productions of modern literature. But meagre is the food furnished to the mind of man by the declamation of a party bigot. From a taste for trash and a disrelish of the wholesome food of the mind, and from the consequent neglect of solid learning, mere politicians are prevented from receiving valuable improvement; and the community, together with literature, is at last deeply injured.

For when learning is little respected, it will naturally decline; and that the usual darkness consequent on its decline leads to the establishment of despotism, every one who has surveyed the pictures of mankind, as portrayed by the pencil of history, will immediately acknowledge. What did Athens and ancient Rome retain of their ancient dignity when their learning and their arts were no more?

That the light of learning should ever again be extinguished may appear a visionary idea to a Canadian, an Englishman or an American; but so it did to a Roman in the days of Cicero. Notwithstanding the multiplication of books by the art of print-

ing, both they, and all value for them, may vanish together with the power of understanding them, if the fury of politics should occasion a contempt for letters and for education and convert the leaders of a people, or the people themselve, into Goths and Vandals.

He who would add an elegance to politics, and distinguish his conversation on the subject from the vociferation of porters in an ale-house, should inspect the finished pieces of antiquity, and learn to view public acts and counsels in the light in which they appeared to philosophers, to those whom the world has long considered the best teachers of political wisdom. Let him study such authors as Thucydides and Xenophon, Polybius and Plutarch, Livy and Sallust. Politics will assume new grace by communication with history and philosophy; and political conversation, instead of a vague, passionate and declamatory effusion of undigested ideas, will become a most liberal exercise of the faculties and form a mental banquet at which the best and wisest of mankind might indulge their finer appetites with insatiable avidity. What can constitute a more rational object of contemplation than the noble fabric of society, civilized by arts, letters and religion? What can better employ our sagacity than to devise modes, with the liberality of a philosophical patriotism, for its improvement and preservation?

Not only the understanding, the taste, the temper of a people, but the spirit also, will be greatly improved by learning politics of the Greeks and Romans. No man of feeling ever yet read Livy without learning to detest meanness and slavery, and to glow with a love of liberty and emulation of public virtue. The Greek and Roman spirit cannot be too much encouraged by those who have a just idea of the dignity of their own nationality and a desire to maintain it. And let it be remembered that the Athenians, in their most glorious periods, were as much attached to politics and news as politicians of the present day are; but that they preserved, amidst the warmest contests, a refined taste and delicate passion for the politest learning and the profoundest philosophy.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE PECULIAR DANGER OF FALLING INTO INDOLENCE IN A LITERARY AND RETIRED LIFE.

IT is certain that as our ancestors were induced to found colleges by religious motives, so they chiefly intended them to answer the purposes of religion.

Those pious benefactors to mankind did not mean to establish seminaries, to prepare men for the world, but to teach them to despise it. But more enlightened periods than those in which these worthies lived have discovered that man best obeys his Maker when he takes an active part in the duties of society.

A long residence in a college is, perhaps, scarcely less unfavourable to devotion than to social activity. For devotion depends chiefly on lively affections, exercised and agitated by the vicissitudes of hope and fear in the various transactions and events of human intercourse.

He who is almost placed beyond the reach of fortune in the shelter of a cloister, may, indeed, be led

by the statutes of the institutions to attend his chapel and doze over his cushion, but he will not feel, in any peculiar manner, the impulse of devotional fervour.

The man who is engaged in the busy and honourable duties of active life flies from the world to the altar for comfort and refreshment; but the cloistered recluse pants, while he is kneeling, in all the formalities of religion, for the pleasures and enjoyments of that world from which he is separated. During several centuries, a great part of mankind was confined in monasteries, solely for the advancement of religion and learning; yet never was the earth more benighted, than in those periods, by bigotry and ignorance. Nor will any one assert that, in subsequent times, the improvements in knowledge and religion have been, in any degree, proportioned to the numbers of those who have been separated from the world to facilitate their cultivation. The truth seems to be, that when the common incentives to industry are removed, and all the natural wants supplied without the necessity of exertion, man degenerates, as the pure waters of the river stagnate and become putrid in the pool. At last the boasting possessor of reason contents himself with dreaming "the blank of life along," with no other proof of existence than the wants of animal nature. Take away love, ambition, and all the changes and chances of this mortal

life, and man will be contented to eat, drink, sleep, and die.

Not in colleges alone, though they may be considered as the temples of indolence, but in common life, also, the human mind becomes torpid as the necessity of exertion is diminished. He who, confiding in the possession of a fortune for his happiness, avoids the avocations of a profession, and what he calls the fatiguing parts of study, will soon lose those powers of intellectual activity which he has no resolution to employ. He may gradually degenerate to a level with the irrational creation. He already, in some respects, approaches to the vegetable. And, indeed, when the habits are irretrievably confirmed, it might, perhaps, be happy if his nature would permit him to become, at last, impassive and quiescent; but as spontaneous fermentation takes place in masses of putrefaction, so, in the mind which has ceased to be exercised by its own efforts, there will arise emotions and habits both offensive and dangerous. Pride and envy, conceit and obstinacy, selfishness and sensuality, are among the ugly daughters of indolence in the monastic retreat.

It may appear paradoxical, but it is certainly an opinion authorized by experience, that an active life is the most friendly to contemplation. The fire of the mind, like culinary fire, has burned with a clear and constant flame, when open and ventilated by

perpetual motion, as it has been smothered and extinguished in smoke, when suffered to remain long without disturbance. The best, and many of the most voluminous writers acted still more than they wrote. What could be more unlike the life of the cloister than the lives of Xenophon, Julius Cæsar, Erasmus, and a thousand others, whose days were so engaged in negotiation, in senates, in battles, in travelling, that it is not easy to conceive how they could find time even to pen so great a quantity as they certainly composed.

But such are the effects of assiduity, and of an uninterrupted accumulation of efforts that he who has been excited to restless activity by the spurs of honour, interest and generosity of nature, has frequently accomplished more by himself than a thousand of his fellow-creatures employed in the same sphere, and unfurnished by nature with equal abilities for improvement. A hackney writer of catch-penny compilations, the editor of a newspaper, the maker of a magazine, will perform in a few months a portion of literary labour which shall infinitely exceed that of whole colleges, inhabited by those who slumber in literary retirement.

But it avails little to point out the disorders of literary indolence, without endeavouring to suggest a remedy. It appears, then, to me, that those whom providence has blessed with leisure, and the oppor-

tunity of spending it in the pursuit of learning, and the liberal pleasures of retirement, too often languish in their pursuits from neglecting to render them the subjects of debate and conversation. It is the warmth of discussion, in free and social meetings, which invigorates solitary study, and sends the scholar back to his books with fresh energy. The hope of making a figure in a subsequent conversation, the fear of a shameful exposure, and of appearing inferior to those who are, in a natural and civil view, our equals, will stimulate all our powers, and engage all our attention, while we sit in those very libraries where we once nodded and slumbered over the pages of a Homer or a Cicero. Meetings should be established in all literary societies for the communication of remarks and the rehearsal of compositions. But the strictest rules should be prescribed and observed for the preservation of decorum, otherwise ridicule would gradually be introduced, and the feast of reason be converted either to a banquet of jollity or a tumult of noise and nonsense.

It is right, also, that contemplative men, however far removed from the necessity of employment by the favours of fortune, should communicate with mankind, not only in pleasures and amusements, but in real duties and active virtues, either conjugal, paternal, professional, or charitable. Something should be engaged in, with such obligations to performance

that an inclination to neglect should be over-ruled by legal compulsion, or the fear of certain loss and shame. The best method of avoiding the wretched state of not knowing what to do, is to involve oneself in such circumstances as shall force one to do something—something honourable and useful. The natural indolence of the human heart is found to escape every restraint but the iron arm of necessity. Such is our present condition, that we must be often chained down to our real happiness and our best enjoyment.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE BEAUTY AND HAPPINESS OF AN OPEN BEHAVIOUR AND AN INGENUOUS DISPOSITION.

MANY persons, if they cannot furnish themselves with the courage and generosity of the lion, think themselves equally happy and much wiser with the pitiful cunning of the fox. Every word they speak, however trivial the subject, is weighed before it is uttered. A disgustful silence is observed till somebody of authority has advanced an opinion, and then, with a civil leer, a doubtful and hesitating assent is given, such as may not preclude the opportunity of a subsequent retractation. If the conversation turn only on the common topics of the weather, the news, the play, the opera, they are no less reserved than if their lives and fortunes depended on the opinion they at last venture, with oracular dignity, to utter. Whatever may be their real idea on the subject, as truth is a trifle compared to the object of pleasing those with whom they converse, they generally contrive gently to agree with you, unless

it should appear to them, on mature consideration, that their opinion (if certain contingencies, to the number of at least ten thousand, should take place) may, at the distance of half a century, involve them in some small danger of giving a little offence, or of incurring a small embarrassment. They wear a constant smile on their countenances, and are all goodness and benevolence, if you will believe their professions. But beware. A man of this character *niger est*, as Horace says, and thou who justly claimest the title of an honest man, be upon thy guard when thine ill fortune introduces thee into his company. "*Hunc tu, Romane, caveto.*"

These crafty animals are even more reserved, cautious, timid, and serpentine in action than in conversation. They lay the deepest schemes, and no conclave of cardinals, no combination of conspirators, no confederacy of thieves, ever deliberated with more impenetrable secrecy. Connections are sought with the most painful solicitude. No arts or assiduities are neglected to obtain the favour of the great. Their hearts pant with the utmost anxiety to be introduced to a family of distinction and opulence, not only because the connection gratifies their pride, but also because, in the wonderful complications and vicissitudes of human affairs, it may one day promote their interest. Before that day arrives, their perpetual uneasiness has often put a period to their

ambition, by terminating their existence. But even if they gain their ends, after a youth and a manhood consumed in constant care and servitude, yet the pleasure is not adequate to the pain, nor the advantage to the labour. Every one is ready to complain of the shortness of life; to spend, therefore, the greater part of it in perpetual fear, caution, suspense, and solicitude, merely to accomplish an object of worldly ambition or avarice—what is it but the proverbial folly of him who loses a pound to save a penny? Give me, O ye powers! an ingenuous man would exclaim, give me health and liberty, with a competence, and I will compassionate the man of timid and servile soul, who has at last crept on hands and knees, through thick and thin, and seated his trembling limbs, after they have been palsied with care, on some painful eminence.

Indeed, the perpetual agitation of spirits, the tormenting fears, and the ardent hopes, which alternately disorder the bosom of the subtle and suspicious worldling, more than counterbalance all the riches and titular honours which successful cunning can obtain. What avail fortunes, mansion-houses, parks and equipages, when the poor pursuer of them has worn out his sensibility, ruined his nerves, lost his eyes, and perhaps stained his honour and wounded his conscience, in toilsome drudgery and abject servitude, from his youth up even to the age

of feebleness and decrepitude? When a man has a numerous offspring, it may, indeed, be generous to sacrifice his own ease and happiness to their advancement. He may feel a virtuous pleasure in his conduct, which may soothe him under every moment of disagreeable toil or painful submission. But it is obvious to observe that the most artful of men, and the greatest slaves to interest and ambition, are frequently unmarried men; and that they are unmarried, because their caution and timidity have never permitted them to take a step which cannot be retraced. Themselves however unamiable, they have been the only objects of their love; and the rest of mankind are made use of solely as the instruments of their mean purposes and selfish gratifications. But the rest of mankind need not envy them, for they inflict on themselves the punishment they deserve. They are always craving and never satisfied; they suffer a torment which is justly represented by the heathen mythologists as infernal, that of being perpetually reaching after blessings which they can never grasp, of being prohibited to taste the fruit whose colour appears so charming to the eye, and whose flavour is so delicious to the imagination. How lovely and how happy, on the other hand, an open and ingenuous behaviour! An honest, unsuspicious heart diffuses a serenity over life, like that of a summer evening, when no cloud conceals the blue

ether, and no blast ruffles the stillness of the air—a crafty and designing bosom, is all tumult and darkness, and may be said to resemble a misty and disordered atmosphere in the comfortless climate of the poor Highlander. The one raises a man almost to the rank of an angel of light; the other sinks him to a level with the powers of darkness. The one constitutes a terrestrial heaven in the breast; the other deforms and debases it till it becomes another Tartarus.

An open and ingenuous disposition is not only beautiful and greatly conducive to private happiness, but productive of many virtues essential to the welfare of society. What is society without confidence? But if the selfish and mean system, which is established and recommended among many whose advice and example have weight, should universally prevail, in whom, and in what shall we be able to confide? It is already shocking to a liberal mind to observe what a multitude of papers, parchments, oaths and solemn engagements, is required even in a trivial negotiation. On the contrary, how comfortable and honourable to human nature, if promises were bonds, and assertions affidavits! What pleasure and improvement would be derived from conversation, if every man would dare to speak his real sentiments, with modesty and decorum indeed, but without any unmanly fear of offending.

To please by honest means and from the pure motives of friendship and philanthropy, is a duty; but they who study the art of pleasing merely for their own sakes, are, of all characters, those which ought least to please and which appear, when the mask is removed, the most disgustful. Truth and simplicity of manners are not only essential to virtue and happiness, but as objects of taste, truly beautiful. Good minds will always be pleased with them, and bad minds we need not wish to please.

Since cunning and deceit are thus odious in themselves, and incompatible with real happiness and dignity, I cannot help thinking that those instructors of the rising generation, who have insisted on simulation and dissimulation, on the *pensieri stretti*, on the thousand bricks of worldly wisdom, are no less mistaken in their ideas, than mean, contracted, and illiberal. Listen not, ye generous young men whose hearts are yet untainted; listen not to the delusive advice of men so deluded or so base.

Have courage enough to avow the sentiments of your souls, and let your countenance and your tongue be the heralds of your hearts. Please, consistently with truth and honour; or be contented not to please. Let justice and benevolence fill your bosom, and they will shine spontaneously, like the real gem, without the aid of a foil, and with the most durable and captivating brilliancy.

CHAPTER XIX.

A LIFE OF LITERARY PURSUITS USUALLY A LIFE OF COMPARATIVE INNOCENCE.

IT is not the least among the happy effects of a studious life, that it withdraws the student from turbulent scenes and pursuits, in which it is scarcely less difficult to preserve innocence than tranquillity. Successful study requires so much attention and engrosses so much of the heart, that he who is deeply engaged in it, though he may indeed be liable to temporary lapses, will seldom contract an inveterate habit of immorality. There is in all books of character a reverence for virtue, and a tendency to inspire a laudable emulation. He who is early, long, and successfully conversant with them, will find his bosom filled with the love of truth, and affected with a delicate sense of honour. By constantly exercising his reason, his passions are gradually reduced to subjection; and his head and heart keep pace with each other in improvement. But when I assert that such are the consequences of literary pursuits, it is

necessary to distinguish between the real and pretended student; for there are many desultory readers, and volatile men of parts, who affect eccentricity, whose lives, if one may so express it, are uniformly irregular, and who consequently exhibit remarkable instances of misery and misfortune.

Folly and imprudence will produce moral and natural evils, their genuine offspring, in all situations and modes of life. The knowledge of arts and sciences cannot prevent the vices and the woes which arise from the want of knowing how to regulate our private and social conduct. But where prudence and virtue are not deficient, I believe few walks of life are pleasanter and safer than those which lead through the regions of literature.

Many among mankind are involved in perpetual tumult, so that when they feel an inclination to consider their duty, their nature, their truest happiness, they can scarcely find an opportunity. But he, whom Providence has blessed with an enlightened mind, and the command of his own time, is enabled to form his heart, and direct his choice, according to the dictates of the most improved intellects, and the example of the most accomplished characters. He is, indeed, a creature far superior to the common herd of men, and being acquainted with pure and exalted pleasures, lies not under the necessity of seeking delight in grosser gratifications. He considers not

property as the chief good; he is therefore free from temptations to violate his integrity. Disappointment in matters of interest will never render him uneasy or discontented; for his books have discovered to him a treasure more valuable, in his estimation, than the riches of Peru. Through all the vicissitudes of life he has a source of consolation in the retirement of his library, and in the principles and reflections of his own bosom. From his reading he will collect a just estimate of the world and of all around him; and, as he will cherish no unreasonable expectations, he will be exempted from severe disappointment.

The conversation of many abounds with slander and detraction, not originally and entirely derived from a malignity of nature, but also from ignorance, from a vacancy of intellect, and from an inability to expatiate on general and generous topics. But, whatever be the motive of them, it is certain that few crimes are more injurious to private happiness, and opposed to the spirit of our amiable religion than slander and detraction. The man of reading is under no temptation to calumniate his neighbour from the defect of ideas, or a want of taste for liberal and refined conversation. He interests himself in his neighbour's happiness, but does not pry into the affairs nor sit in judgment on the domestic arrangements of another's family. Most of the topics of scandal are too little and too low for him. He will

not stoop from his elevation low enough to pick the dirty trifles from the ground. His thoughts are engaged in elegant and refined subjects, far removed from all which tend to excite envy, jealousy, or malevolence.

The want of employment is one of the frequent causes of vice; but he who loves a book will never want employment. The pursuits of learning are boundless, and they present to the mind a delightful variety, which cannot be exhausted. No life is long enough to see all the beautiful pictures which the arts and sciences, or which history, poetry and eloquence are able to display. The man of letters possesses the power of calling up a succession of scenes to his view infinitely numerous and diversified. He is, therefore, secured from that unhappy state, which urges many to vice and dissipation, merely to fill a painful vacuity. Even though his pursuits should be trifling, and his discoveries unimportant, yet they are harmless to others, and useful to himself as preservations of his innocence. Let him not be ridiculed or condemned, even though he should spend his time in collecting and describing moths, mosses, shells, birds, weeds, or coins; for he who loves these things seldom sets his affections on pelf, or any of those objects which corrupt and divide human society. He who finds his pleasure in a museum or a library will not be often seen in the tavern, in the brothel, or at

the gaming table. He is pleased if he possesses a nondescript fossil, and envies not the wretched enjoyments of the intemperate, nor the ill-gotten wealth of the oppressor or extortioner. But his pursuits have usually a title to much greater praise than that of being inoffensive. Suppose him in any of the liberal professions. If a clergyman, for instance, he devotes his time and abilities to the preparation of dissuasives from vice, from folly, from misconduct, from infidelity—from all that contributes to aggravate the wretchedness of wretched human nature. Here the pleasures naturally resulting from literary occupation are improved by the sublime sensations of active benevolence, the comfortable consciousness of advancing the truest happiness of those among our poor fellow-creatures who have not enjoyed the advantages of education. In the performance of the godlike office of a true parish priest, there is a necessity of setting an example and of preserving decorum of character—a necessity which conduces much to the security of innocence and good conduct. It is often a great happiness to be placed in a rank where, to the restraints of conscience and morality, are added the fear of peculiar shame, loss, and disgrace, necessarily consequent on ill-behaviour. Human nature wants every support to keep it from lapsing into depravity. Even interest and solicitude for

reputation, when, in some thoughtless interval, the pillars of virtue begin to totter, may stop the fall. The possession of a valuable character, which may be lost, and of a dignity which must be supported, are often very useful auxiliaries in defending the citadel against the temporary assaults of passion and temptation. Since, then, the pursuit of letters is attended with many circumstances peculiarly favourable to innocence, and consequently to enjoyment of the purest and most permanent species, they who have been fixed in so desirable a life of learning ought to be grateful to Providence for their fortunate lot, and endeavour to make the best return in their power, by devoting their leisure, their abilities, and their acquirements, to performing the will of God and promoting the benefit of mankind.

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE FOLLY OF SACRIFICING COMFORT TO TASTE.

THERE are certain homely but sweet comforts and conveniences the absence of which no elegance can supply. But as they sometimes have nothing of external splendour, they are sometimes sacrificed to the gratification of vanity. We live too much in the eyes and minds of others, and too little to our own hearts, too little to our own consciences, and too little to our own satisfaction. We are more anxious to appear, than to be, happy. According to the present modes of living and ideas of propriety, an ostentatious appearance must be, at all events, and in all instances, supported. If we can preserve a glittering and glossy varnish, we disregard the interior materials and solid substance. Many show a disposition in every part of their conduct, similar to that of the Frenchman, who had rather go without a shirt than without ruffles; rather starve as a Count than enjoy affluence and independence as an honest merchant or manufacturer. Men idolize the great, and

the distinctions of fashionable life, with an idolatry so reverential and complete, that they seem to mistake it for their duty towards God. For, to use the words of the Catechism, do they not appear "to believe in them, to fear them, to love them with all their hearts, with all their minds, with all their souls, and with all their strength; to worship them, to give them thanks, to put their whole trust in them, to call upon them, to honour their names and their words, and to serve them truly all the days of their lives"?

As they worship false gods, their blessings are of the kind which corresponds with the nature of their duties. They are shadowy and unsubstantial dreams, bubbles, and meteors, which dance before their eyes, and often lead them to perdition.

It is really lamentable to behold families of a competent fortune, and respectable rank, who (while they deny themselves even the common pleasures of a plentiful table; while their kitchen is the cave of cold and famine; while their neighbours, relations and friends pity and despise as they pass the comfortless and inhospitable door) scruple not to be profusely expensive in dress, furniture, building, equipage, at public entertainments, in excursions to watering places.

To feed this fashionable extravagance, they rob

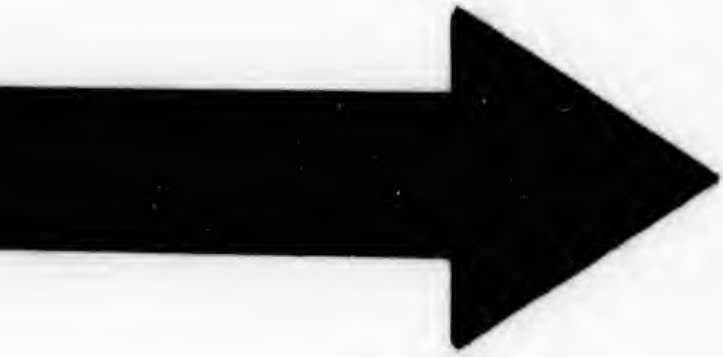
themselves of indulgences, which they know to be more truly satisfactory; for who among them returns from the midnight assembly, or from the summer excursion, without complaining of dulness, fatigue, ennui, and insipidity? They have shown themselves; they have seen many fine persons and many fine things; but have they felt the delicious pleasures of domestic peace, the tranquil delights of social intercourse among their neighbours and old friends, at their own towns and villages; the solid satisfactions of a cool collected mind; the comforts arising from a disembarrassed state of finances, and the love and respect of the vicinage in which they were born and bred, and where their family was once respected and beloved?

To run in debt, and be involved in danger of arrest and imprisonment, are, in this age, almost the objects of fashionable ambition. The poor imitator of splendid misery and little greatness risks his liberty and his last shilling to become a man of taste and fashion.

He boasts that he is a happy man, for he is a man of pleasure; he knows how to enjoy life; he professes the important science called the *savoir vivre*. Give him the distinction which, in the littleness and blindness of his soul, he considers as the source of happiness and honour. Allow him his claim to

taste; allow him the title of a man of pleasure, and since he insists upon it, allow him his pretentions to the *savoir vivre*. But, at the same time, he cannot deny that he is haunted by his creditors; that he is obliged to hide himself lest he should lose his liberty; that he is eating the bread and the meat and wearing the clothes of those whose children are crying for a morsel, and shivering in rags. If he has brought himself to such a state as to feel no uneasiness when he reflects on his embarrassment, and its consequence to others, he is a base, worthless, and degenerate wretch. But if he is uneasy, where is his happiness? where his exalted enjoyments? How much happier had been this boaster of happiness, this pretender to a life of pleasure, had he lived within the limits of reason, duty and his fortune; in love and duty with his own regular family, at his fireside, beloved, trusted, respected in his neighbourhood, afraid of no creditor or prosecution, nor of anything else but of doing wrong? He might not, indeed, have made a figure on the turf; he might not have had the honour of leading the fashion, but he would probably have had health, wealth, fame, and peace. Many a man who is seldom seen, and never heard of, enjoys, in the silence and security of privacy, all which this sublunary state can afford to sweeten the cup, and to lighten the

burden of life. In things of an inferior nature, and such as are not immediately connected with moral conduct, the same predilection for external appearance, and the same neglect of solid comfort, when placed in competition with the display of an affected taste, are found to prevail. Our houses are often rendered cold, small, and inconvenient, for the sake of preserving a regularity of external figure, or of copying the architecture of a warmer climate. Our carriages are made dangerous or incommodious, for the sake of attracting the passer's eye, by something new or singular in their shape, height, or fabric. Our dress is fashioned in uneasy forms, and with troublesome superfluities, or uncomfortable defects, just as the Proteus Fashion issues out the capricious edicts of a variable taste. We even eat and drink, see and hear, not according to our own appetite and senses, but as the prevalent taste happens to direct. In this refined age we are all persons of taste, from the hair-dresser and milliner to the senator. The question is not, what is right, prudent, pleasing, comfortable, but what is the *ton* and the taste. Hence beggarly finery, and lordly beggary.



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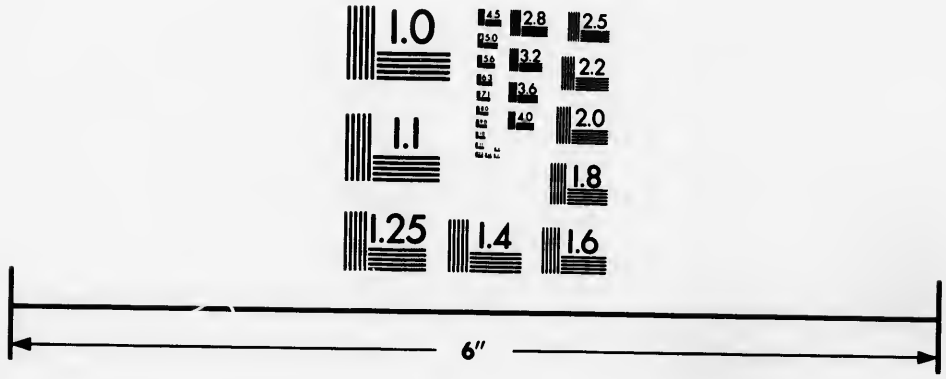

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CHAPTER XXI

ON THE SUPERIOR VALUE OF SOLID ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

CICERO.—Mistake me not; I know how to value the sweet courtesies of life. Affability, attention and decorum of behaviour, if they have not been ranked by philosophers among the virtues, are certainly related to them, and have a powerful influence in promoting social happiness. I have recommended them, as well as yourself. But I contend, and no sophistry shall prevail upon me to give up this point, that, to be truly amiable, they must proceed from goodness of heart. Assumed by the artful to serve the purposes of private interest, they degenerate to contemptible grimace, and detestable hypocrisy.

Chesterfield.—Excuse me, my dear Cicero; I cannot enter farther into the controversy at present. I have a hundred engagements at least; and see yonder my little elegant French Comtesse. I promised her and

myself the pleasure of a promenade. Pleasant walking enough in these Elysian groves. So much good company too, that if it were not that the *canaille* are apt to be troublesome, I should not much regret the distance from the Tuilleries—But adieu! *mon cher ami*, for I see Madame * * * * is joining the party. Adieu, adieu!

Cic.—Contemptible fop!

Chest. Ah! What do I hear? Recollect that I am a man of honour, unused to the pity or the insults of an upstart, a *novus homo*. But perhaps your exclamation was not meant of me; if so, why——

Cic.—I am as little inclined to insult, as to flatter you. Your levity excited my indignation; but my compassion for the degeneracy of human nature, exhibited in your instance, absorbs my contempt.

Chest.—I could be a little angry, but as *bienséance* forbids it, I will be a philosopher for once. *A propos*, pray how do you reconcile your—— what shall I call it——your unsmooth addresses to those rules of decorum, that gentleness of manners, of which you say you know and teach the propriety as well as myself?

Cic.—To confess the truth, I would not advance the external embellishment of manners to extreme refinement. Ornamental education, or an attention to the graces, has a connection with effeminacy. In

acquiring the gentleman, I would not lose the spirit of a man. There is a gracefulness in a manly character, a beauty in an open and ingenuous disposition, which all the professed teachers of the arts of pleasing know not how to communicate.

Chest.—You and I lived in a state of manners, as different as the periods at which we lived were distant. You Romans—pardon me, my dear, you Romans—had a little of the brute in you. Come, come, I must overlook it. You were obliged to court plebeians for their suffrages; and, if *similis simili gaudet*, it must be owned that the greatest of you were secure of their favour. Why, Beau Nash would have handed your Catos and Brutuses out of the ball-room, if they had shown their unma[illegible]ly heads in it; and my Lord Modish, animated [illegible] the conscious merit of the largest or smallest buckles in the room, according to the temporary *ton*, would have laughed Pompey the Great out of countenance. Oh, Cicero, had you lived in a modern European court, you would have caught a degree of that undescribable grace, which is not only the ornament, but may be the substitute of all those laboured attainments which fools call solid merit. But it was not your good fortune, and I make allowances.

Cic.—The vivacity you have acquired in studying the writings and the manners of the degenerate

Gauls, has led you to set too high a value on qualifications which dazzle the lively perceptions with a momentary blaze, and to depreciate that kind of worth which can neither be obtained nor understood without serious attention and sometimes painful efforts. But I will not contend with you on the propriety or impropriety of the outward modes which delight fops and coxcombs. I will not spend arguments in proving that gold is more valuable than tinsel, though it glitters less. But I must censure you, and with an asperity too, which, perhaps, your "graces" may not approve, for recommending vice as graceful, in your memorable letters to your son.

Chest.—That the great Cicero should know so little of the world, really surprises me. A little libertinism, my dear, that's all; how can one be a gentleman without a little libertinism?

Cic.—I ever thought that to be a gentleman, it was requisite to be a moral man. And surely you, who might have enjoyed the benefit of a light to direct you, which I wanted, were blameable in omitting religion and virtue in your system.

Chest.—What, superstitious too! You have not then conversed with your superior, the philosopher of Ferney. I thank Heaven, I was born in the same age with that great luminary. Prejudice had else, perhaps, chained me in the thraldom of my great grandmother. These are enlightened days; and I

find I have contributed something to the general illumination, by my posthumous letters.

Cic.—Boast not of them! Remember you were a father.

Chest.—And did I not endeavour most effectually to serve my son, by pointing out the qualifications necessary to a foreign ambassador, for which department I always designed him? Few fathers have taken more pains to accomplish a son than myself; there was nothing I did not condescend to point out to him.

Cic.—True; your condescension was great indeed. You were the pander of your son. You not only taught him the mean arts of dissimulation, the petty tricks which degrade nobility; but you corrupted his principles, fomented his passions, and even pointed out objects for their gratification. You might have left the task of teaching him fashionable vice to a vicious world. Example, and the corrupt affections of human nature, will ever be capable of accomplishing this unnatural purpose. But a parent, the guardian appointed by nature for an uninstructed offspring introduced into a dangerous world, who himself takes upon him the office of seduction, is a monster indeed. I also had a son, I was tenderly solicitous for the right conduct of his education. I entrusted him, indeed, to Cratippus, at Athens; but, like you, I could not help transmitting

instructions dictated by paternal love. Those instructions are contained in my book "Of Offices": a book which has ever been cited by the world as a proof to what a height the morality of the heathens was advanced without the light of revelation. I own I feel a conscious pride in it, not on account of the ability which it may display, but for the principles it teaches, and the good, I flatter myself, it has diffused. You did not, indeed, intend your instructions for the world; but, as you gave them to a son you loved, it may be concluded that you thought them true wisdom, and withheld them only because they were contrary to the professions of the unenlightened. They have been generally read, and tend to introduce the manners, vices and frivolous habits of the nation you admired—to your own manly nation, who, of all others, once approached to the noble simplicity of the Romans.

Chest.—Spare me, Cicero. I have never been accustomed to the rough conversation of an old Roman. I feel myself little in his company. I seem to shrink in his noble presence. I never felt my insignificance so forcibly as now. French courtiers and French philosophers, of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, have been my models; and amid the dissipations of pleasure, and the hurry of affected vivacity, I never considered the gracefulness of virtue, and the beauty of an open, sincere, and manly character.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DIFFICULTY OF CONQUERING HABIT.

THERE is nothing we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master, and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end, through all the obstructions that inconvenences or delights can put in his way. That this mistake should prevail for a time is very natural. When conviction is present, and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his own interest. What ought to be done, while it yet hangs in speculation, is so plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the

time of action comes, will be at last omitted. I believe most men may review all the lives that have passed within their observation, without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion, or an establishment of determination. Many, indeed, alter their conduct, and are not at fifty what they were at thirty; but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themselves, followed the train of external causes, and rather suffered reformation than made it. It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promise and performance, between profession and reality, upon deep-laid design and studied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocrisy in the world. We do not so often endeavour or wish to impose on others as ourselves; we resolve to do right; we hope to keep our resolutions; we declare them to confirm our own hopes, and fix our own inconstancy by calling witnesses of our actions; but at last habit prevails, and those whom we invited at our triumph, laugh at our defeat. Custom is commonly too strong for the most resolute resolver, though furnished for the assault with all the weapons of philosophy. "He that endeavours to free himself from an ill habit," says Bacon, "must not change too much at a time, lest he should be

discouraged by difficulty; nor too little, for then he will make but slow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto:

Pauci, quos æquus amarit
Jupiter, atque ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are sufficient to give hope, but not security; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory. Those who are in the power of evil habits must conquer them as they can, and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHASTITY A VALUABLE VIRTUE IN A MAN.

AS I am now talking to the world yet untainted, I will venture to recommend chastity as the noblest male qualification. It is, methinks, very unreasonable that the difficulty of attaining all other good habits is what makes them honourable; but in this case the very attempt is become very ridiculous; but in spite of all the raillery of the world, truth is still truth, and will have beauties inseparable from it. I should, upon this occasion, bring examples of heroic chastity, were I not afraid of having my paper thrown away by the modish part of the town, who go no further at best than the mere absence of ill, and are contented to be rather irreproachable than praiseworthy. In this particular, a gentleman in the court of Cyrus, reported to his Majesty the charms and beauty of Panthea; and ended his panegyric by telling him that since he was at leisure he would carry him to visit her. But that prince, who is a very great man to this day, answered the pimp, because he was a man of quality, without roughness, and said with a smile, "If I should visit her upon your introduction, now I have

leisure, I don't know but I might go again upon her own invitation, when I ought to be better employed. But when I cast about all the instances which I have met with in my reading, I find not one so generous, so honest, and so noble, as that of Joseph in Holy Writ. When his master had trusted him so unreservedly, to speak in the emphatical manner of the Scripture—"He knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat," he was so unhappy as to appear irresistibly beautiful to his mistress; but when this shameless woman proceeded to solicit him, how gallant is his answer—"Behold my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in the house than I, neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife." The same argument, which a base mind would have made to itself for committing the evil, was to this brave man the greatest motive for forbearing it, that he could do it with impunity. The malice and falsehood of the disappointed woman naturally arose on that occasion, and there is but a short step from the practice of virtue to the hatred of it. It would, therefore, be worthy of serious consideration in both sexes—and the matter is of importance enough to them—to ask themselves whether they would change lightness of heart, indolence of mind, cheerful meals, untroubled slumbers, and gen-

tle disposition, for a constant prurieney which shuts out all things that are great or indifferent, clouds the imagination with insensibility and prejudice to all manner of delights, but that which is common to all creatures that extend their species.

A loose behaviour and inattention to everything that is serious, flowing from some degree of this petulancy, is observable in the generality of the youth of both sexes in this age. It is the one common face of most public meetings, and breaks in upon the sobriety, I will not say severity, that we ought to exercise in churches. The pert boys and flippant girls are but faint followers of those in the same inclination at more advanced years. I know not who can oblige them to mend their manners; all that I pretend to is to enter my protest, that they are neither fine gentlemen nor fine ladies for this behaviour. As for the portraitures which I would propose as the images of agreeable men and women, if they are not imitated or regarded, I can only answer as I remember Dryden did on a like occasion, when a young fellow, just come from the play of Cleomenes, told him in raillery, and against the contineney of his principal character, "If I had been alone with a lady, I should not have passed my time like your Spartan;" "That may be," answered the bard, with a very grave face, "but give me leave to tell you, sir, you are no hero."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON GAMBLING.

THE whole tribe of gamesters may be ranked under two heads. Every man who makes carding, diceing, and betting a daily practice, or an occupation, is either a dupe or a sharper—two characters equally the objects of envy and admiration. The dupe is generally a person of great fortune and weak intellect,

> "Who will as tenderly be led by the nose
> As asses are."
>
> *Shakespeare.*

He plays, not that he has any delight in cards and dice, but because it is the fashion; and if whist or hazard be proposed, he will no more refuse to make one at the table than among a set of hard drinkers he would object to drink his glass in turn, because he is not dry.

There are some few instances of men of sense, as well as family and fortune, who have been dupes and bubbles. Such an unaccountable itch of play

has seized them, that they have sacrificed everything to it, and have seemed wedded to "seven's the main," and "the odd trick." There is not a more melancholy object than a gentleman of sense thus infatuated. He makes himself and family a prey to a gang of villains more infamous than highwaymen; and perhaps, when the ruin is completed, he is glad to join with the very scoundrels that destroyed him, and live upon the spoil of others, whom he can drag into the same follies that proved so fatal to himself.

Here we may take a survey of the character of a sharper; and that he may have no room to complain of foul play, let us begin with his excellencies. You will perhaps be startled, Mr. Town, when I mention the excellencies of a sharper; but a gamester who makes a decent figure in the world must be endued with many amiable qualities, which would undoubtedly appear with great lustre were they not eclipsed by the odious character affixed to his trade. In order to carry on the common business of his profession he must be a man of quick and lively parts, attended with a stoical calmness of temper, and a constant presence of mind. He must smile at the loss of thousands; and is not to be discomposed though ruin stares him in the face. As he is to live among the great, he must not want politeness and

affability; he must be submissive, but not servile; he must be master of an ingenuous, liberal air, and have a seeming openness of behaviour.

These must be the chief accomplishments of our hero; but lest I should be accused of giving too favourable a likeness of him, now we have seen his outside, let us take a view of his heart. There we shall find avarice the mainspring that moves the whole machine. Every gamester is eaten up with avarice; and when this passion is in full force, it is more strongly predominant than any other. It conquers even lust; and conquers it more effectually than age. At sixty we look at a fine woman with pleasure; but when cards and dice have engrossed our attention, women and all their charms are slighted at five-and-twenty. A thorough gamester renounces Venus and Cupid for Plutus and Ames-ace, and owns no mistress of his heart except the queen of trumps. His insatiable avarice can only be gratified by hypocrisy: so that all those specious virtues already mentioned, and which, if real, might be turned to the benefit of mankind, must be directed in a gamester towards the destruction of his fellow-creatures. His quick and lively parts serve only to instruct and assist him in the most dexterous method of packing the cards and cogging the dice; his fortitude, which enables him to lose thousands without

emotion, must often be practised against the stings and reproaches of his conscience, and his liberal deportment and affected openness is a specious veil to recommend and conceal the blackest villany.

It is now necessary to take a second survey of his heart; and as we have seen its vices, let us consider its miseries. The covetous man, who has not sufficient courage or inclination to increase his fortune by bets, cards or dice, but is contented to hoard up thousands by thefts less public, or by cheats less liable to uncertainty, lives in a state of perpetual suspicion and terror; but the avaricious fears of the gamester are infinitely greater. He is constantly to wear a mask; and, like Monsieur St. Croix, co-adjutor to that *empoisonneuse* Madame Brinvilliers, if his mask fall off, he runs the hazard of being suffocated by the stench of his own poisons. I have seen some examples of this sort, not many years ago, at White's. I am uncertain whether the wretches are still alive; but if they are still alive, they breathe like toads, under ground, crawling amidst old walls, and paths long since unfrequented.

But supposing that the sharper's hypocrisy remains undetected, in what state of mind must that man be, whose fortune depends on the insincerity of his heart, the disingenuosity of his behaviour, and the false bias of his dice? What sensations must be

suppress, when he is obliged to smile, although he is provoked; when he must look serene in the height of despair; and when he must act the Stoic without the consolation of one virtuous sentiment, or one moral principle? How unhappy must he be, even in that situation from which he hopes to reap most benefit: I mean amidst stars, garters, and the various herds of nobility! Their lordships are not always in a humour to play; they choose to laugh, they choose to joke; in the meantime our hero must patiently await the good hour, and must not only join in the laugh, and applaud the joke, but must humour every turn and caprice to which that set of spoiled children, called bucks of quality, are liable. Surely his brother Thicket's employment, of sauntering on horseback in the wind and rain till the Reading coach passes through Smallberry-green, is the more eligible, and no less honest occupation. The sharper has also frequently the mortification of being thwarted in his designs. Opportunities of fraud will not for ever present themselves. The false dice cannot be constantly produced, nor the packed cards always be placed upon the table. It is then our gamester is in the greatest danger. But even then, when he is in the power of fortune, and has nothing but mere luck and fair play on his side, he must stand the brunt, and perhaps give away his

last guinea, as coolly as he would lend a nobleman a shilling.

Our hero is now going off the stage, and his catastrophe is very tragical. The next news we hear of him is his death, achieved by his own hand, and with his own pistol. An inquest is bribed, he is buried at midnight—and forgotten before sunrise.

These two portraits of a sharper, wherein I have endeavoured to show different likenesses in the same man, put me in mind of an old print, which I remember at Oxford, of Count Guiscard. At first sight he was exhibited in a full-bottomed wig, a hat and feather, embroidered clothes, diamond buttons, and the full court dress of those days; but by pulling a string, the folds of the paper were shifted, the face only remained, a new body came forward, and Count Guiscard appeared to be a devil.

CHAPTER XXV.

CONVERSATION.

THERE is no part, perhaps, of social life which affords more real satisfaction than those hours which one passes in rational and unreserved conversation. That conversation, however, may answer the ends for which it was designed, the parties who are to join in it must come together with a determined resolution to please, and to be pleased. In the conduct of it, be not eager to interrupt others, or uneasy at being yourself interrupted; since you speak either to amuse or instruct the company, or to receive those benefits from it. Give all, therefore leave to speak in turn. Hear with patience, and answer with precision. Inattention is ill manners; it shows contempt; and contempt is never forgiven.

Trouble not the company with your own private concerns, as you do not love to be troubled with those of others. Yours are as little to them as theirs are to you. You will need no other rule

whereby to judge of this matter. Contrive, but with dexterity and propriety, that each person may have an opportunity of discoursing on the subject with which he is best acquainted. He will be pleased, and you will be informed. By observing this rule, every one has it in his power to assist in rendering conversation agreeable; since, though he may not choose, or be qualified, to say much himself, he can propose questions to those who are able to answer them. Avoid stories, unless short, pointed, and quite apropos. He who deals in them, says Swift, must either have a very large stock, or a good memory, or must often change his company. Some have a set of them strung together like onions; they take possession of the conversation by an early introduction of one, and then you must have the whole rope; and there is an end of everything else, perhaps, for that meeting, though you may have heard all twenty times before.

Talk often, but not long. The talent of haranguing private company is insupportable. Senators and barristers are apt to be guilty of this fault; and members who never harangue in the house, will often do it out of the house. If the majority of the company be naturally silent, or cautious, the conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them who can start new subjects. For-

bear, however, if possible, to broach a second before the first is out, lest your stock should not last, and you should be obliged to come back to the old barrel. There are those who will repeatedly cross upon and break into the conversation with a fresh topic, till they have touched upon all, and exhausted none. Economy here is necessary for most people.

Laugh not at your own wit and humour, leave that to the company. When the conversation is flowing in a serious and useful channel, never interrupt it by an illtimed jest. The stream is scattered, and cannot again be collected. Discourse not in a whisper, or half-voice, to your next neighbour. It is ill-breeding, and, in some degree, a fraud; conversation-stock being, as one has well observed, a joint and common property. In reflections on absent people, go no farther than you would go if they were present. "I resolve (says Bishop Beveridge) never to speak of a man's virtues to his face, nor of his faults behind his back." A golden rule! the observation of which would, at one stroke, banish flattery and defamation from the earth.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW TO PLEASE IN CONVERSATION.

NONE of the lessons dictated by vanity is more general, or less blameable than that of being distinguished for the arts of conversation. Other accomplishments may be possessed without opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without danger that the defect can often be remarked; but as no man can live otherwise than in a hermitage without hourly pleasure or vexation, from the fondness or neglect of those about him, the faculty of giving pleasure is of continual use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the power of forcing attention wherever they come, whose entrance is considered as a promise of felicity, and whose departure is lamented, like the recess of the sun from northern climates, as a privation of all that enlivens fancy and inspires gaiety.

It is apparent that to excellence in this valuable art, some peculiar qualifications are necessary;

for every man's experience will inform him that the pleasure which men are able to give in conversation holds no stated proportion to their knowledge or their virtue. Many find their way to the tables and parties of those who never consider them as of the least importance in any other place. We have all, at one time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem, and been persuaded to try the dangerous experiment of admitting him for a companion whom we know to be too ignorant for a counsellor, and too treacherous for a friend.

He that would please must rarely aim at such excellence as depresses his hearers in their own opinion, or debars them from the hope of contributing reciprocally to the entertainment of the company. Merriment extorted by sallies of imagination, sprightliness of remark, or quickness of reply, is too often what the Latins call the Sardinian laughter, a distortion of face without gladness of the heart.

For this reason no style of conversation is more extensively acceptable than the narrative. He who has stored his memory with slight anecdotes, private incidents, and personal peculiarities, seldom fails to find his audience favourable. Almost every man listens with eagerness to extemporary history; for almost every man has some real or imaginary con-

nection with a celebrated character, some desire to advance or oppose a rising name. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity. He that is a hearer in one place, qualifies himself to become a speaker in another; for though he cannot comprehend a series of arguments, or transport the volatile spirit of wit without evaporation, yet he thinks himself able to treasure up the various incidents of a story, and please his hopes with the information which he shall give to some inferior society.

Narratives are for the most part heard without envy, because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual qualities above the common rate. To be acquainted with facts not yet echoed by plebeian mouths, may happen to one man as well as to another, and to relate them when they are known, has in appearance so very little difficulty, that every one concludes himself equal to the task.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GOOD MANNERS.

GOOD manners, according to Swift, is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse. Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy, is the best bred in the company. As the best law is founded upon reason, so are the best manners. And as some lawyers have introduced unreasonable things into common law, so, likewise, many teachers have introduced absurd things into common good manners. One principal part of this art is to suit our behaviour to the three several degrees of men; our superiors, our equals, and those below us. For instance, to press either of the two former to eat or drink is a breach of manners; but inferiors must be thus treated, or else it will be difficult to persuade them that they are welcome. Pride, ill-nature, and want of sense, are the three great sources of ill-manners; without some of these defects no man will behave himself ill for want of experience; or of what, in

the language of fools, is called knowing the world. "I defy (proceeds our author) any one to assign an incident wherein reason will not direct us what we are to say or do in company, if we are not misled by pride or ill-nature. Therefore, I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners; but because the former is a gift which very few among mankind are possessed of, therefore all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules for common behaviour, best suited to their general customs, or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense to supply the defects of reason, without which, the gentlemanly part of dances would be perpetually at cuffs, as they seldom fail when they happen to be drunk, or engaged in squabbles about women or play. And, God be thanked, there hardly happeneth a duel in a year which may not be imputed to one of these three motives; upon which account I should be exceedingly sorry to find the Legislature make any new laws against the practice of duelling; because the methods are easy and many, for a wise man to avoid a quarrel with honour, or engage in it with innocence. And I can discover no political evil in suffering bullies, sharpers, and rakes, to rid the world of each other by a method of their own, where the law hath not been able to find an expedient. As the common forms of good manners were

intended for regulating the conduct of those who have weak understandings, so they have been corrupted by the persons for whose use they were contrived. For these people have fallen into a needless and endless way of multiplying ceremonies which have been extremely troublesome to those who practise them, and insupportable to everybody else; insomuch that wise men are often more uneasy at the over-civility of these refiners, than they could possibly be in the conversations of peasants or mechanics. The impertinences of this ceremonial behaviour are nowhere better seen than at those tables where ladies preside, who value themselves on account of their good breeding; where a man must reckon upon passing an hour without doing any one thing he hath a mind to, unless he will be so hardy as to break through all the settled decorum of the family. She determines what he loveth best and how much he shall eat; and if the master of the house happeneth to be of the same disposition, he proceedeth in the same tyrannical manner to prescribe in the drinking part; at the same time you are under the necessity of answering a thousand apologies for your entertainment. And although a good deal of this humour is pretty well worn off among many people of the best fashion, yet too much of it still remaineth, especially in the country; where

an honest gentleman assured me that, having been kept four days against his will at a friend's house, with all the circumstance of hiding his boots, locking up the stable, and other contrivances of the like nature, he could not remember, from the moment he came into the house to the moment he left it, any one thing wherein his inclination was not directly contradicted; as if the whole family had entered into a combination to torment him.

"But, besides all this, it would be endless to recount the many foolish and ridiculous accidents I have observed among these unfortunate proselytes to ceremony. I have seen a duchess fairly knocked down by the precipitancy of an officious coxcomb running to save her the trouble of opening a door. I remember, upon a birth-day at Court, a great lady was rendered utterly disconsolate by a dish of sauce let fall by a page directly upon her head-dress and brocade, while she gave a sudden turn to her elbow upon some point of ceremony with the person who sat next to her. Monsieur Buys, the Dutch envoy, whose politics and manners were much of a size, brought a son with him, about thirteen years old, to a great table at Court. The boy and his father, whatever they put on their plates, they first offered round in order, to every person in the company; so that we could not get a minute's quiet during the whole din-

ner. At last their plates happened to encounter, and with so much violence, that, being china, they broke in twenty pieces, and stained half the company with their sweet-meats and cream.

"There is a pedantry in manners, as in all arts and sciences, and sometimes in trades. Pedantry is properly the over-rating any kind of knowledge we pretend to. And if that kind of knowledge be a trifle in itself, the pedantry is the greater. For which reason I look upon fiddlers, dancing-masters, heralds, masters of the ceremony, etc., to be greater pedants than Lipsius, or the elder Scaliger. With these kind of pedants, the Court, while I knew it, was always plentifully stocked: I mean from the gentleman-usher (at least) inclusive, downward to the gentleman porter, who are, generally speaking, the most insignificant race of people that this island can afford, and with the smallest tincture of good manners, which is the only trade they possess; for, being wholly illiterate, conversing chiefly with each other, they reduce the whole system of breeding within the forms and circles of their several offices; and as they are below the notice of Ministers, they live and die in Court under all revolutions, with great obsequiousness to those who are in any degree of credit or favour, and with rudeness and insolence to everybody else. From whence I have long concluded that

good manners are not a plant of the Court growth; for if they were, those people who have understandings directly of a level for such acquirements, and who have served such long apprenticeships to nothing else, would certainly have picked them up. For as to the great officers who attend the Prince's person or councils, or preside in his family, they are a transient body, who have no better a title to good manners than their neighbours, nor will probably have recourse to gentlemanly ushers for instruction. So that I know little to be learned at Court on this head, except in the material circumstance of dress; wherein the authority of the maids of honour must, indeed, be allowed to be almost equal to that of a favourite actress.

"I remember a passage my Lord Bolingbroke told me: That going to receive Prince Eugène, of Savoy, at his landing, in order to conduct him immediately to the Queen, the Prince said he was much concerned that he could not see Her Majesty that night; for Monsieur Hoffman (who was then by) had assured his Highness, that he could not be admitted into her presence with a tied-up periwig; that his equipage was not arrived; and that he had endeavoured in vain to borrow a long one among all his valets and pages. My Lord turned the matter to a jest, and brought the Prince to Her Majesty;

for which he was highly censured by the whole tribe of gentlemen ushers; among whom Monsieur Hoffman, an old, dull resident of the Emperor's, had picked up this material point of ceremony; and which, I believe, was the best lesson he had learned in twenty-five years' residence.

"I make a difference between 'good manners' and 'good breeding,' although, in order to vary my impression, I am sometimes forced to confound them. By the first, I only understand the art of remembering, and applying, certain settled forms of general behaviour. But 'good breeding' is of a much larger extent; for, besides an uncommon degree of literature, sufficient to qualify a gentleman for reading a play, or a political pamphlet, it taketh in a great compass of knowledge; no less than that of dancing, fighting, gaming, making the circle of Italy, riding the great horse, and speaking French, not to mention some other secondary or subaltern accomplishments which are more easily acquired. So that the difference between good breeding and good manners lieth in this: That the former cannot be attained to by the best understandings without study and labour; whereas a tolerable degree of reason will instruct us in every part of good manners without other assistance.

"I can think of nothing more useful upon this

subject, than to point out some particulars wherein the very essentials of good manners are concerned, the neglect or perverting of which doth very much disturb the good commerce of the world, by introducing a traffic of a mutual uneasiness in most companies.

"First, a necessary part of good manners is a punctual observance of time at our own dwellings, or those of others, or at third places; whether upon matters of civility, business or diversion: which rule, though it be a plain dictate of common reason, yet the greatest minister I ever knew was the greatest trespasser against it; by which all his business doubled upon him, and placed him in a continual arrear. Upon which I often used to rally him, as deficient in point of good manners. I have known more than one ambassador and Secretary of State, with a very moderate portion of intellectuals, execute their office with great success and applause, by the mere force of exactness and regularity. If you duly observe time for the service of another, it doubles the obligation; if upon your own account, it would be manifest folly, as well as ingratitude, to neglect it; if both are concerned, to make your equal or inferior attend on you to his own disadvantage, is pride and injustice.

"Ignorance of forms cannot properly be styled

ill-manners, because forms are subject to frequent changes; and consequently, being not founded upon reason, are beneath a wise man's regard. Besides, they vary in every country, and after a short period of time vary frequently in the same; so that a man who travelleth, must needs be at first a stranger to them in every Court through which he passeth; and, perhaps, at his return, as much a stranger in his own; and, after all, they are easier to be remembered or forgotten than faces or names.

"Indeed, among the many impertinences that superficial young men bring with them from abroad, this bigotry of forms is one of the principal, and more predominant than the rest; who look upon them not only as if they were matters capable of admitting of choice, but as points of importance, and therefore are zealous upon all occasions to introduce and propagate the new forms and fashions they have brought back with them; so that, usually speaking, the worst-bred person in the company is a young traveller just arrived from abroad."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

POLITENESS.

POLITENESS means elegance of manners, or good breeding. Lord Chesterfield calls it the art of pleasing. It has also been called an artificial good nature; and, indeed, good nature is the foundation of true politeness, without which, art will make but a very indifferent figure, and generally defeat its own ends.

"Where compliance and assent, caution and candour," says an elegant essayist, "arise from a natural tenderness of disposition and softness of nature, as they sometimes do, they are almost amiable, and certainly excusable; but as the effects of artifice, they must be despised. The persons who possess them are, indeed, often themselves dupes of their own deceit, when they imagine others are deluded by it. For excessive art only betrays itself; and many who do not openly take notice of the deceiver, from motives of delicacy and tendernesss for his

character, secretly deride and warmly resent his ineffectual subtlety."

"True politeness," says another author, "is that continual attention which humanity inspires us with, both to please others and to avoid giving them offence. The surly plain-dealer exclaims loudly against this virtue, and prefers his own shocking bluntness and Gothic freedom. The courtier and fawning flatterer, on the contrary, substitute in its place insipid compliments, cringings, and a jargon of unmeaning sentences. The one blames politeness, because he takes it for a vice, and the other is the occasion of this, because that which he practises is really so."

Both these characters act from motives equally absurd, though not equally criminal. The conduct of the artful flatterer is guided by self-love, while that of the plain-dealer is the effect of ignorance; for nothing is more certain than that the desire of pleasing is founded on the mutual wants and the mutual wishes of mankind—on the pleasure which we wish to derive from society, and the character which we wish to acquire.

Men, having discovered that it was necessary and agreeable to unite for their common interests, have made laws to repress the wicked; they have settled the duties of social life, and connected the idea of

respectability with the practice of those duties, and having prescribed the regulations necessary to their common safety, they have endeavoured to render their commerce with one another agreeable, by establishing the rules of politeness and good breeding. Indeed, as an elegant author, already quoted, remarks, the philosopher who, in the austerity of his virtue, should condemn the art of pleasing as unworthy of cultivation, would deserve little attention from mankind, and might be dismissed to his solitary tub, like his brother Diogenes. It is the dictate of humanity, that we should endeavour to render ourselves agreeable to those in whose company we are destined to travel in the journey of life. It is our interest; it is the source of perpetual satisfaction; it is one of our most important duties as men, and particularly required in the professor of Christianity.

It is needless to particularize the motives which have induced men to practise the agreeable virtues; for, from whatever source the desire of pleasing proceeds, it has always increased in proportion to the general civilization of mankind. In a rude state of society, pleasure is limited in its sources and in its operations. When the wants of mankind, and the means of attaining them, are few, personal application is necessary to gratify them, and it is generally sufficient; by which means an individual be-

comes more independent than can possibly be the case in civilized life, and, of course, less disposed to give or receive assistance. Confined to the solitary wish of furnishing means for his own happiness, he is little intent on the pleasures of conversation and society. His desire of communication is equal to the extent of his knowledge. But as soon as the natural wants of life are filled up, we find unoccupied time, and we labour hard to make it pass in an agreeable manner. It is then we perceive the advantage of possessing the rational nature, and the delights of mutual intercourse. When we consider society in that state of perfection which enables a great part of the members of it to pursue at leisure the pleasures of conversation, we should expect, both from the ease of acquitting ourselves to the satisfaction of our associates, and from the advantages arising from this conduct, that the art of pleasing might be reduced to a few plain and simple rules, and that these might be derived from a slight attention to general manners. The art of pleasing, in our intercourse with mankind, is indeed so simple that it requires nothing more than the constant desire to please, in all our words and actions; and the practice of it can neither wound a man's self-love, nor be prejudicial to his interests in any possible situation.

But though this is certain, it is doubtless less attended to than in reason it ought to be. Each particular man is so jealous to promote his own ends, or his own pleasure, as to forget that his neighbour has claims equal to his own; that every man who enters into company gives up, for the time, a great many of his peculiar rights; and that he then forms part of an association, met together, not for the particular gratification of any one, but for the purpose of general satisfaction.

The qualities essential in the art of pleasing, are *virtue, knowledge*, and *manners*. All the virtues which form a good and respectable character, in a moral sense, are essential to the art of pleasing. This must be an established principle, because it depends on the wants and mutual relations of society. In all affairs of common business, we delight in transacting with men in whom we can place confidence, and in whom we find integrity; but truth is so naturally pleasing, and the common affairs of life are so interwoven with social intercourse, that we derive abundantly more satisfaction from an honest character than from specious manners. "Should you be suspected," says Chesterfield, "of injustice, malignity, perfidy, lying, &c., all the parts and knowledge of the world will never procure you esteem, friendship, and respect."

The first of virtues in our commerce with the world, and the chief in giving pleasure to those with whom we associate, is inviolable sincerity of heart.

We can never be too punctual in the most scrupulous tenderness to our moral character in this respect, nor too nicely affected in preserving our integrity.

The peculiar modes, even of the fashionable world, which are founded in dissimulation, and which, on this account, have induced several to recommend the practice, would not prevent a man of the highest integrity from being acceptable in the very best company.

Acknowledged sincerity gives the same ornament to character that modesty does to manners. It would abundantly atone for the want of ridiculous ceremony, or false and unmeaning professions; and it would in no respect diminish the lustre of a noble air, or the perfection of an elegant address.

If integrity be the foundation of that character which is most generally acceptable, or which, in other words, possesses the power of pleasing in the highest degree, humanity and modesty are its highest ornaments.

The whole art of pleasing, as far as the virtues are concerned, may be derived from the one or the other of these sources. Humanity comprehends the display of everything amiable to others; modesty

removes or suppresses every thing offensive in ourselves.

This modesty, however, is not inconsistent with firmness and dignity of character; it arises rather from the knowledge of our imperfection, compared with a certain standard, than from conscious ignorance of what we ought to know. We must therefore distinguish between this modesty and what the French call *mauvaise honte.* The one is the unaffected and the unassuming principle which leads us to give preference to the merit of others, the other is the awkward struggling of Nature over her own infirmities. The first gives an additional lustre to every good quality; while some people, from feeling the pain and inconvenience of the *mauvaise honte,* have rushed into the other extreme, and turned impudent, as cowards sometimes grow desperate from excess of danger. The medium between these two extremes marks out the well-bred man; he feels himself firm and easy in all companies, is modest without being bashful, and steady without being impudent.

A man possessing the amiable virtues is still farther prepared to please, by having in his own mind a perpetual fund of satisfaction and entertainment. He is put to no trouble in concealing thoughts which it would be disgraceful to avow, and he is not

anxious to display virtues which his daily conversation and his constant looks render visible. The next ingredient in the art of pleasing, is to possess a correct and enlightened understanding, and a fund of rational knowledge. With virtue and modesty we must be able to entertain and instruct those with whom we associate. The faculty of communicating ideas is peculiar to man, and the pleasure which he derives from the interchange alone, is one of the most important of his blessings. Mankind are formed with numberless wants, and with a mutual power of assisting each other. It is a beautiful and happy part of the same plan, that they are likewise formed to delight in each other's company, and in the mutual interchange of their thoughts. The different species of communication, in a highly polished eye, are as numerous as the different ranks, employments and occupations of men; and indeed the knowledge which men wish to communicate takes its tinge from their peculiar possessions or occupation. Thus commercial men delight to talk of their trade, and of the nature of public business; men of pleasure, who wish merely to vary or quicken their amusements, are in conversation light, trifling, and insincere; and the literati delight to dwell on new books, learned men, or important discoveries in science or in

arts. But as the different classes of men will frequently meet together, all parties must so contrive matters, as to combine the useful and agreeable together, so as to give the greatest delight at the time, and the greatest pleasure on reflection. An attention to these principles would make the man of pleasure and the man of learning meet together on equal terms, and derive mutual advantage from their different qualifications. With due attention to such ideas, we proceed to mention the kinds of knowledge which are most fitted for conversation. Those who wish to please should particularly endeavour to be informed in those points which most generally occur. An accurate or extensive knowledge on learned subjects is by no means sufficient; we must also have an accurate and extensive knowledge of the common occurrences of life. It is the knowledge of mankind, of governments, of history, of public characters, and of the springs which put the great and little actions of the world in motion, which give real pleasure and rational instruction. The knowledge which we communicate must in some shape be interesting to those to whom we communicate it; of that nature that the desire of receiving it may overbalance every kind of disgust, excited too often on the score of envy and self-love, against those who happen to possess superior en-

dowments, and at the same time of that importance, as to elevate the thoughts somewhat above the actions and the faults of the narrow circle formed in our own immediate neighbourhood. On this account it is recommended by an author who fully knew mankind, as a maxim of great importance in the art of pleasing, to be acquainted with the private characters of those men, who, from their station or their actions, are making a figure in the world. We naturally wish to see such men in their retired and undisguised moments; and he who can gratify us is highly acceptable. History of all kinds, fitly introduced, and occasionally embellished with pleasing anecdotes, is a chief part of our entertainment in the intercourse of life. This is receiving instruction, without exciting much envy; it depends on memory, and memory is one of those talents the possession of which we least grudge to our neighbours. Our knowledge of history, at the same time, must not appear in long and tedious details; but in apt and well-chosen allusions, calculated to illustrate the particular subject of conversation. But the knowledge most necessary is that of the human heart. This is acquired by constant observation on the manners and maxims of the world, connected with that which passes in our own minds. This leads us from the common details of conduct, from

slander and defamation, to the sources and principles of action, and enables us to enter into what may be called the philosophy of conversation. We may see both the practicability of this kind of discourse, and the nature of it, in the following lines of Horace:

> Sermo oritur, non de villis domibusve alienis;
> Nec male necne Lepos saltet: sed quod magis ad nos
> Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus: utrumne
> Divitiis homines, aut sint virtute beati?
> Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumne, trahat nos?
> Et quæ sit natura boni, summumque quid ejus? &c.

By this means constant materials are supplied for free, easy, and spirited communication. The restraints which are imposed on mankind, either from what their own character may suffer, or from the apprehension of giving offence to others, are entirely taken off, and they have a sufficient quantity of current coin for all the common purposes of life. In addition to virtue and knowledge, which are the chief ingredients in the art of pleasing, we have to consider graceful and easy manners.

Lord Chesterfield indeed considers these as the most essential and important part; as if the diamond received its whole value from the polish. But though he is unquestionably mistaken, there is yet a certain sweetness of manners which is particularly engaging in our commerce with the world. It is

that which constitutes the character which the French, under the appellation of *l'amiable*, so much talk of, and so justly value. This is not so easily described as felt. It is the compound result of different things: as complaisance, a flexibility, but not a servility, of manners, an air of softness in the countenance, gesture, and expression, equally whether you concur or differ with the person you converse with. This is particularly to be studied when we are obliged to refuse a favour asked of us, or to say what in itself cannot be very agreeable to the person to whom we say it. It is then the necessary gilding of a disagreeable pill. But this which may be called the *suaviter in modo* would degenerate and sink into a mean and timid complaisance and passiveness, if not supported by firmness and dignity of character. Hence the Latin sentence, *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, becomes a useful and important maxim in life.

Genuine, easy manners result from a constant attention to the relations of persons, things, times, and places. Were we to converse with one greatly our superior, we are to be as easy and unembarrassed as with our equals; but yet every look, word, and action should imply, without any kind of servile flattery, the greatest respect. In mixed companies, with our equals, greater ease and liberty are allowed;

but they, too, have their proper limits. There is a social respect necessary. Our words, gestures, and attitudes, have a greater degree of latitude, though not an unbounded one. That easiness of carriage and behaviour which is exceedingly engaging, widely differs from negligence and inattention, and by no means implies that one may do whatever he pleases; it only means that one is not to be stiff, formal, or embarrassed, disconcerted and ashamed; but it requires great attention to, and a scrupulous observation of, what the French call *les bienséances*; a word which implies "decorum, good breeding, and propriety." Whatever we ought to do, is to be done with ease and unconcern; whatever is improper, must not be done at all. In mixed companies, also, ages and sexes are to be differently addressed. Although we are to be perfectly easy with all, old age particularly requires to be treated with a degree of deference and regard. It is a good general rule to accustom ourselves to have a kind feeling to every thing connected with man; and when this is the case, we shall seldom err in the application. Another important point in the *bienséances* is, not to run our own present humour and disposition indiscriminately against everybody, but to observe and adopt theirs. And if we cannot command our present humour and disposition, it is necessary to

single out those to converse with who happen to be in the humour the nearest to our own. Peremptoriness and decision, especially in young people, is contrary to the *bienséances*: they should seldom seem to dissent, and always use some softening, mitigating expression. There is a *bienséance* also with regard to people of the lowest degree; a gentleman observes it with his footman, and even, indeed, with the beggar in the street. He considers them as objects of compassion, not of insult; he speaks to neither in a harsh tone, but corrects the one coolly, and refuses the other with humanity.

The following observations, perhaps, contain the sum of the art of pleasing:—

1. A fixed and habitual resolution of endeavouring to please, is a circumstance which will seldom fail of effect, and its effect will every day become more visible as this habit increases in strength.

2. This resolution must be regulated by a very considerable degree of good sense.

3. It is a maxim of almost general application, that what pleases us in another will also please others in us.

4. A constant and habitual attention to the different dispositions of mankind, to their ruling passions, and to their peculiar or occasional humours, is absolutely necessary.

5. A man who would please, must possess a firm, equal, and steady temper; and,

6. An easy and graceful manner, as distant from bashfulness on the one hand, as from impudence on the other. "He who thinks himself sure of pleasing," says Lord Chesterfield, "and he who despairs of it, are equally sure to fail." And he is undoubtedly in the right. The one, by his assuming vanity, is inattentive to the means of pleasing; and the other from fear, is rendered incapable of employing them.

A variety of excellent rules, for acquiring politeness, with strictures on particular kinds of impoliteness, may be found in the *Spectator*, *Rambler*, *Idler*, *Lounger*, *Mirror*, and other periodical works of that kind; and among Swift's works. Chesterfield's Art of Pleasing, and his Letters, are also worthy of perusal, provided the reader be on his guard against the insincerity and other vices which those books are calculated to infuse, and provided he always bears in mind what we have endeavoured to show in this article, that true politeness does not consist in specious manners and a dissimulating address, but that it must always be founded on real worth and intrinsic virtue.

CHAPTER XXIX.

NECESSITY OF CULTIVATING POLITENESS.

POLITENESS is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that, like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any error could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shows the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life. Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient without the supplemental laws of good-breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or

self-esteem from swelling into insolence; a thousand incivilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience, or reproach from reason. The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting must be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation; but, though it be the principle of a very small number to ravish and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind, though he should have no claim to higher distinction.

The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations is, *that no man shall give any preference to himself.*

A rule so comprehensive and certain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to imagine an incivility without supposing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place, some particular modes of the ceremonial parts of good-breeding, which being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of place and procedure. These, however, may be often violated with-

out offence, if it be sufficiently evident that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or the petulance of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, less real and rational complaisance than among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of fashionable courtesy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should pass before his visit is returned; but seldom extend their care beyond the exterior and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity and gratification, however expensive, to the quiet of another.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now prejudice all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disease, if not the abolition, of some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indif ference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances, which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery.

CHAPTER XXX.

GOOD-HUMOUR.

GOOD-HUMOUR may be defined as a habit of being pleased; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition, like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gaiety and unconcern; the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many that, whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to show the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on an eminence glittering

with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts in no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending. It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure, is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him; to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and oppress him. We see many who, by this act only, spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, generally be found such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore, in assemblies and places

of resort, it seldom fails to happen that, though at the entrance of some particular person, many faces brighten with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and only welcome to the company as one by whom all conceive themselves admired, and with whom one is at liberty to amuse himself, when he can find no other auditor or companion; as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs at every wit and yields to every disputer.

There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason to fear mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the labour of deserving it, in which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All, therefore, are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to please ourselves, will not be long without preference in our affection to

those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by Prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could have better spared a better man.* He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented; but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladded him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good-humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it.

But surely nothing can more evidently show the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellences, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE EFFECT OF MODERN RICHES UPON THE MANNERS.

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies than blossom into goodness. Many observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high and low stations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their desires, or as they are more or less restrained by human censures. Many vitiate their

principles into the acquisition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and excess?

Yet I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly uncommon, yet approaches not so nearly to universality, as some have asserted in the bitterness of resentment, or heat of declamation. Whoever rises above those who once pleased themselves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain sooner than others that which all pursue with the same ardour, and to which all imagine themselves entitled, will forever be a crime. When those who started with us in the race of life, leave us so far behind that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our disappointment by remarks on the arts of supplantation by which they gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they possess it. Of them whose rise we could not hinder, we solace ourselves by prognosticating the fall.

It is impossible for human purity not to betray to an eye thus sharpened by malignity, some stains which lay concealed and unregarded, while none thought it their interest to discover them; nor can the most circumspect attention, or steady rectitude, escape blame from censors who have no inclination

to approve. Riches therefore, perhaps, do not so often produce crimes as incite accusers.

The common charge against those who rise above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain that success naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendship, and a thousand causes, which concur in every event without human contrivance or interposition, the part which they may justly claim in his advancement. We rate ourselves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But captiousness and jealousy are likewise easily offended, and to him who studiously looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will supply it; freedom will be rudeness, and reserve sullenness; mirth will be negligence, and seriousness formality; when he is received with ceremony, distance and respect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himself insulted by condescensions. It must, however, be confessed, that as all sudden changes are dangerous, a quick transition from poverty to abundance can seldom be made with safety. He that has long lived within sight of pleasures which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation not to lose his reason in unbounded riot, when they are first put into his power.

Every possession is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by desire. It is difficult not to estimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impossible not to annex greater happiness to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reason, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune may be generally distinguished from those who are enriched in the common course of lineal descent, by his greater haste to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dress, the pomp of his equipage, the splendour of his furniture, and the luxury of his table. A thousand things which familiarity discovers to be of little value, have power for a time to seize the imagination. An Indian king, when the Europeans had fixed a lock on his door, was so delighted to find his subjects admitted or excluded with such facility, that it was from morning to evening his employment to turn the key. We, among whom locks and keys have been longer in use, are inclined to laugh at this amusement; yet I doubt whether this essay will have a single reader that may not apply the story to himself, and recollect some hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the transitory charms of trifling novelty. Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has suddenly transported into

new regions, where unaccustomed lustre dazzles his eyes, and untasted delicacies solicit his appetite. Let him not be considered as lost in hopeless degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himself and in the extravagance of his first raptures expects that his eye should regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as decisive, oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madness of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the sense of his insufficiency will soon return; he will remember that the co-operation of others is necessary to his happiness, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at least, one consideration which ought to alleviate our censures of the powerful and rich. To imagine them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is to be very little acquainted with the world.

> De l'absolu pouvoir vouz ignorez l'ivresse.
> Et du lâche flatteur la voix enchanteresse.
>
> Thou hast not known the giddy whirls of fate,
> Nor servile flatteries which enchant the great.
>
> Miss A. W.

He that can do much good or harm will not find many whom ambition or cowardice will suffer to be sincere. While we live upon the level with the rest

of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends and reproaches of enemies; but men who stand in the highest ranks of society, seldom hear of their faults; if, by any accident, an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction, and obtain remorse.

Favour is seldom gained but by conformity in vice. Virtue can stand without assistance, and considers herself as very little obliged by countenance and approbation; but vice, spiritless and timorous, seeks the shelter of crowds, and support of confederacy. The sycophant, therefore, neglects the good qualities of his patron, and employs all his art on his weakness and follies, regales of his reigning vanity, or stimulates his prevalent desires.

Virtue is sufficiently difficult with any circumstances, but the difficulty is increased when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reason and conscience have only the appetites and passions to encounter; but in higher stations they must oppose artifice and adulation. He, therefore, that yields to such temptations, cannot give those who look upon his miscarriage much reason for exultation, since few can justly presume that from the same snare they should have been able to escape.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUNCTUALITY.

BOYLE has observed, that the excellency of manufacture and the facility of labour would be much promoted, if the various expedients and contrivances which lie concealed in private hands, were by reciprocal communications made generally known; for there are few operations that are not performed by one or other with some peculiar advantages, which, though singly of little importance, would, by conjunction and concurrence, open new inlets to knowledge and give new powers to diligence.

There are, in like manner, several moral excellences distributed among the different classes of a community. It was said by Cujacius, that he never read more than one book by which he was not instructed; and he that shall enquire after virtue with ardour and attention will seldom find a man by whose example or sentiments he may not be improved.

Every profession has some essential and appropriate virtue, without which there can be no hope of honour or success, and which, as it is more or less cultivated, confers within its sphere of activity different degrees of merit and reputation. As the astrologers range the sub-divisions of mankind under the planets which they suppose to influence their lives, the moralist may distribute them according to the virtues which they necessarily practise, and consider them as distinguished by prudence or fortitude, diligence or patience.

So much are the modes of excellence settled by time and place, that men may be heard boasting in one street of that which they would anxiously conceal in another. The grounds of scorn and esteem, the topics of praise and satire, are varied according to the several virtues or vices which the course of life has disposed men to admire or abhor; but he who is solicitous for his own improvement, must not be limited by local reputation, but select from every tribe of mortals their characteristical virtues, and constellate in himself the scattered graces which shine singly in other men. The chief praise to which a trader aspires is that of punctuality, or an exact and rigorous observance of commercial engagements; nor is there any vice of which he so much dreads the imputation, as of negligence and instability.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HOW POLITENESS IS MANIFESTED.

TO correct such gross vices as lead us to commit a real injury to others, is the part of morals and the object of the most ordinary education. Where that is not attained to, in some degree, no human society can subsist. But in order to render conversation and the intercourse of minds more easy and agreeable, good manners have been invented, and have carried the matter somewhat farther. Wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of sentiments contrary to those which they naturally incline to. Thus, as we are naturally proud and selfish, and apt to assume the preference above others, a polite man is taught to behave with deference towards those with whom he converses, and to yield up the superiority to them

in all the common incidents of society. In like manner, wherever a person's situation may naturally beget any disagreeable suspicion in him, 'tis the part of good manners to prevent it, by a studied display of sentiments directly contrary to those of which he is apt to be jealous. Thus old men know their infirmities, and naturally dread contempt from youth; hence well-educated youth redouble their instances of respect and deference to their elders.

Strangers and foreigners are without protection; hence, in all polite countries they receive the highest civilities, and are entitled to the first place in every company. A man is lord in his own family, and his guests are, in a manner, subject to his authority; hence he is always the lowest person in the company; attentive to the wants of every one; and giving himself all the trouble in order to please, which may not betray too visible an affectation, or impose too much constraint on his guests. Gallantry is nothing but an instance of the same generous and refined attention. As nature has given man the superiority above woman, by endowing him with greater strength both of mind and body, 'tis his part to alleviate that superiority as much as possible, by the generosity of his behaviour, and by a studied deference and complaisance for all her inclinations and opinions. Barbarous nations display this superiority by re-

ducing their females to the most abject slavery; by confining them, by beating them, by selling them, by killing them. But the male sex among a polite people discover their authority in a more generous, though not a less evident, manner; by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and, in a word, by gallantry. In good company you need not ask, who is master of the feast? The man who sits in the lowest place, and who is always industrious in helping every one, is most certainly the person. We must either condemn all such instances of generosity as foppish and affected, or admit of gallantry among the rest. The ancient Muscovites wedded their wives with a whip instead of a wedding ring. The same people, in their own houses, took always the precedency above foreigners, even foreign ambassadors. These two instances of their generosity and politeness are much of a piece.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ENDEAVOUR TO PLEASE AND YOU CAN SCARCELY FAIL TO PLEASE.

THE means of pleasing vary according to time, place, and person; but the general rule is the trite one. Endeavour to please, and you will infallibly please to a certain degree; constantly show a desire to please, and you will engage people's self-love in your interest—a most powerful advocate. This, as indeed almost everything else, depends on attention. Be therefore attentive to the most trifling thing that passes where you are; have, as the vulgar phrase is, your eyes and your ears always about you. It is a very foolish, though a very common saying, "I really did not mind it," or "I was thinking of quite another thing at that time." The proper answer to such ingenious excuses, and which admits of no reply, is, Why did you not mind it? you were present when it was said or done. Oh! but you may say you were thinking of quite another thing;

if so, why were you not in quite another place proper for that important other thing, which you say you were thinking off? But you will say, perhaps, that the company was so silly that it did not deserve your attention: that, I am sure, is the saying of a silly man; for a man of sense knows that there is no company so silly, that some use may not be made of it by attention.

Let your address, when you first come into company, be modest, but without the least bashfulness or sheepishness; steady, without impudence, and unembarrassed, as if you were in your own room. This is a difficult point to hit, and therefore deserves great attention; nothing but a long usage in the world, and in the best company, can possibly give it.

A young man, without knowledge of the world, when he first goes into a fashionable company, where most are his superiors, is commonly either annihilated by bashfulness, or, if he rouses and lashes himself up to what he only thinks a modest assurance, he runs into impudence and absurdity, and consequently offends instead of pleasing. Have always, as much as you can, that gentleness of manners, which never fails to make favourable impressions, provided it be equally free from an insipid smile or a pert smirk.

Carefully avoid an argumentative and disputative

turn, which too many people have, and some even value themselves in the company; and, when your opinion differs from others, maintain it only with modesty, calmness, and gentleness; but never be eager, loud, or clamorous; and, when you find your antagonist beginning to grow warm, put an end to the dispute by some genteel stroke of good humour. For, take it for granted, if the two best friends in the world dispute with eagerness upon the most trifling subject imaginable, they will, for the time, find a momentary alienation from each other. Disputes upon any subject are a sort of trial of the understanding, and must end in the mortification of one or other of the disputants. On the other hand, I am far from meaning that you should give an universal assent to all that you hear said in company; such an assent would be mean, and in some cases criminal; but blame with indulgence, and correct with gentleness. Always look people in the face when you speak to them, the not doing it is thought to imply conscious guilt; besides that, you lose the advantage of observing by their countenances what impression your discourse makes upon them. In order to know people's real sentiments, I trust much more to my eyes than to my ears; for they can say whatever they have a mind that I should hear; but they can seldom help looking what they have no in-

tention that I should know. If you have not command enough over yourself to conquer your humours, as I am sure every rational creature may have, never go into company while the fit of ill-humour is upon you. Instead of company's diverting you in those moments, you will displease and probably shock them; and you will part worse friends than you met; but whenever you find in yourself a disposition to sullenness, contradiction, or testiness, it will be in vain to seek for a cure abroad. Stay at home, let your humour ferment and work itself off. Cheerfulness and good humour are of all qualifications the most amiable in company; for, though they do not necessarily imply good nature and good breeding, they represent them, at least, very well, and that is all that is required in mixed company.

I have, indeed, known some very ill-natured people who were very good-humoured in company; but I never knew any one generally ill-humoured in company who was not essentially ill-natured. When there is no malevolence in the heart, there is always a cheerfulness and ease in the countenance and manners. By good-humour and cheerfulness I am far from meaning noisy mirth and loud peals of laughter, which are the distinguishing characteristics of the vulgar and of the ill-bred, whose mirth is a kind of storm. Observe it, the vulgar often laugh,

but never smile; whereas well-bred people often smile but seldom laugh. A witty thing never excited laughter—it pleases only the mind and never distorts the countenance; a glaring absurdity, a blunder, a silly accident, and those things that are generally called comical, may excite a laugh, though never a loud nor a long one, among well-bred people. Sudden passion is called short-lived madness; it is a madness indeed, but the fits of it return so often in choleric people that it may well be called a continual madness. Should you happen to be of this unfortunate disposition, make it your constant study to subdue, or at least to check, it; when you find your choler rising, resolve neither to speak to nor answer the person who excites it, but stay till you find it subsiding, and then speak deliberately. Endeavour to be cool and steady upon all occasions—the advantages of such a calmness are innumerable, and would be tedious to relate. It may be acquired by care and reflection; if it could not, that reason which distinguishes men from brutes would be given us to very little purpose; as a proof of this I never saw, and scarcely ever heard of, a Quaker in a passion. In truth, there is in that sect a decorum and decency, and an amiable simplicity, that I know in no other.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WIT.

IF you have wit (which I am not sure that I wish you, unless you have at the same time at least an equal portion of judgment to keep it in good order) wear it like your sword, in the scabbard, and do not brandish it to the terror of the whole company. Wit is a shining quality that everybody admires; most people aim at it; all people fear it, and few love it, unless in themselves: a man must have a good share of wit himself to endure a great share in another. When wit exerts itself in satire, it is a most malignant distemper; wit, it is true, may be shown in satire, but satire does not constitute wit, as many imagine. A man of wit ought to find a a thousand better occasions of showing it.

Abstain, therefore, most carefully from satire, which, though it fall on no particular person in company and momentarily, from the malignancy of the human heart, pleases all, yet, upon reflection, it

frightens all too. Every one thinks it may be his turn next; and will hate you for what he finds you could say of him more than be obliged to you for what you do not say. Fear and hatred are next-door neighbours; the more wit you have the more good-nature and politeness you must show to induce people to pardon your superiority, for that is no easy matter. Appear to have rather less than more wit than you really have. A wise man will live at least as much within his wit as his income. Content yourself with good sense and reason, which, at the long run, are ever sure to please everybody who has either—if wit comes into the bargain welcome it, but never invite it. Bear this truth always in your mind, that you may be admired for your wit, if you have any, but that nothing but good sense and good qualities can make you be beloved. These are substantial every day's wear, whereas wit is a holiday suit, which people put on chiefly to be stared at.

There is a species of minor wit which is much used, and much more abused—I mean raillery. It is a most mischievous and dangerous weapon when in unskilful and clumsy hands; and it is much safer to let it quite alone than to play with it, and yet almost everybody plays with it, though they see daily the quarrels and heart-burnings that it occa-

sions. The injustice of a bad man is sooner forgiven than the insults of a witty one—the former only hurts one's liberty and property, but the latter hurts and mortifies that secret pride which no human breast is free from. I will allow that there is a sort of raillery which may not only be inoffensive but even flattering; as when, by a genteel irony, you accuse people of those imperfections which they are most notoriously free from, and consequently insinuate that they possess the contrary virtues. You may safely call Aristides a knave, or a very handsome woman an ugly one. Take care, however, that neither the man's character nor the lady's beauty be in the least doubtful. But this sort of raillery requires a very light and steady hand to administer it. A little too strong, it may be mistaken into an offence; and a little too smooth, it may be thought a sneer, which is a most odious thing.

There is another sort, I will not call it wit but merriment and buffoonery, which is mimicry. The most successful mimic in the world is always the most absurd fellow, and an ape is infinitely his superior. His profession is to imitate and ridicule those natural defects and deformities for which no man is in the least accountable, and in the imitation of which he makes himself, for the time, as disagreeable and shocking as those he mimics. But I will

say no more of these creatures, who only amuse the lowest rabble of mankind.

There is another sort of human animals, called wags, whose profession is to make the company laugh immoderately, and who always succeed—provided the company consist of fools; and who are equally disappointed in finding that they never can alter a muscle in the face of a man of sense. This is a most contemptible character, and never esteemed, even by those who are silly enough to be diverted by them. Be content for yourself with sound good sense and good manners, and let wit be thrown into the bargain where it is proper and inoffensive. Good sense will make you esteemed; good manners will make you beloved; and wit will give a lustre to both.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EGOTISM TO BE AVOIDED.

THE egotism is the most usual and favourite figure of most people's rhetoric, and which I hope you will never adopt, but, on the contrary, most scrupulously avoid. Nothing is more disagreeable or irksome to the company than to hear a man either praising or condemning himself; for both proceed from the same motive—vanity. I would allow no man to speak of himself unless in a court of justice, in his own defence, or as a witness. Shall a man speak in his own praise? No; the hero of his own little tale always puzzles and disgusts the company, who do not know what to say, or how to look. Shall he blame himself? No; vanity is as much the motive of his condemnation as of his panegyric.

I have known many persons to take shame to themselves, and, with a modest contrition, confess themselves guilty of most of the cardinal virtues. They have such a weakness in their nature that they

cannot help being too much moved with the misfortunes and miseries of their fellow-creatures; which they feel perhaps more, but at least as much as they do their own. Their generosity, they are sensible, is imprudence; for they are apt to carry it too far, from the weak, the irresistible beneficence of their nature. They are possibly too jealous of their honour, too irascible when they think it is touched; and this proceeds from their unhappy warm constitution, which makes them too sensible upon that point; and so, possibly, with respect to all the virtues. A poor trick, and a wretched instance of human vanity, and what defeats its own purpose. Do you be sure never to speak of yourself, for yourself, nor against yourself; but let your character speak for you: whatever that says will be believed, but whatever you say of it will not be believed, and only make you odious and ridiculous. I know that you are generous and benevolent in your nature, but that, though the principal point, is not enough; you must seem so too. I do not mean ostentatiously; but do not be ashamed, as too many young fellows are, of owning the laudable sentiments of good nature and humanity, which you really feel. I have known many young men, who desired to be reckoned men of spirit, affect a hardness and unfeelingness which in reality they never had; their conversation

is in the decisive and menacing tone, mixed with horrid and silly oaths; and all this to be thought men of spirit. Astonishing error this! which naturally reduces them to this dilemma. If they really mean what they say, they are brutes; and if they do not, they are fools for saying it. This, however, is a common character among young men. Carefully avoid this contagion, and content yourself with being calmly and mildly resolute and steady, when you are thoroughly convinced you are in the right; for this is true spirit

Observe the *à propos* in everything you say or do, In conversing with those who are much your superiors, however easy and familiar you may and ought to be with them, preserve the respect that is due to them. Converse with your equals with an easy familiarity, and, at the same time, great civility and decency; but too much familiarity, according to the old saying, often breeds contempt, and sometimes quarrels. I know nothing more difficult in common behaviour than to fix due bounds to familiarity; too little implies an unsocial reality, too much destroys social and friendly intercourse. The best rule I can give you to manage familiarity is, never to be more familiar with anybody than you would be willing, and even wish, that he should be with you. On the other hand, avoid that uncomfortable reserve

and coldness which is generally the shield of cunning or the protection of dulness. To your inferiors you should use a hearty benevolence in your words and actions, instead of a refined politeness, which would be apt to make them suspect that you rather laughed at them. Carefully avoid all affectation, either of body or of mind. It is a very true and a very trite observation, that no man is ridiculous for what he really is, but for affecting to be what he is not. No man is awkward by nature, but by affecting to be genteel. I have known many a man of common sense pass generally for a fool because he affected a degree of wit that nature had denied him. A plough man is by no means awkward in the exercise of his trade, but would be exceedingly ridiculous if he attempted the air and graces of a man of fashion. You learned to dance, but it was not for the sake of dancing; it was to bring your air and motions back to what they naturally would have been if they had had fair play, and had not been warped in youth by bad examples, and awkward imitations of other boys.

Nature may be cultivated and improved, both as to the body and the mind; but it is not to be extinguished by art, and all endeavours of that kind are absurd, and an inexpressible fund for ridicule. Your body and mind must be at ease to be agreeable; but

affectation is a particular restraint, under which no man can be genteel in his carriage, or pleasing in his conversation. Do you think your motions would be easy or graceful if you wore the clothes of another man much slenderer or taller than yourself? Certainly not. It is the same thing with the mind, if you affect a character that does not fit you, and that nature never intended for you. In fine, it may be laid down as a general rule, that a man who despairs of pleasing, will never please; a man that is sure that he shall always please wherever he goes, is a coxcomb; but the man who hopes and endeavours to please, will most infallibly please.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ENVY.

ENVY is almost the only vice which is practicable at all times, and in every place; the only passion which can never lie quiet for want of irritation; its effects, therefore, are everywhere discoverable, and its attempts always to be dreaded.

It is impossible to mention a name, which any advantageous distinction has made eminent, but some latent animosity will burst out. The wealthy trader, however he may abstract himself from public affairs, will never want those who hint with Shylock that ships are but boards, and that no man can properly be termed rich whose fortune is at the mercy of the winds.

The beauty adorned only with the unambitious graces of innocence and modesty, provokes, whenever she appears, a thousand murmurs of detraction, and whispers of suspicion. The genius, even when he endeavours only to entertain with pleasing

images of nature, or instruct by uncontested principles of science, yet suffers persecution from innumerable critics, whose acrimony is excited merely by the pain of seeing others pleased, of hearing applauses which another enjoys. The frequency of envy makes it so familiar that it escapes our notice; nor do we often reflect upon its turpitude or malignity, till we happen to feel its influence. When he that has given no provocation to malice, but by attempting to excel in some useful art, finds himself pursued by multitudes whom he never saw with implacability of personal resentment; when he perceives clamour and malice let loose upon him as a public enemy, and incited by every stratagem of defamation; when he hears the misfortunes of his family, or the follies of his youth, exposed to the world; and every failure of conduct, or defect of nature, aggravated and ridiculed; he then learns to abhor those artifices at which he only laughed before, and discovers how much the happiness of life would be advanced by the eradication of envy from the human heart.

Envy is, indeed, a stubborn weed of the mind, and seldom yields to the culture of philosophy. There are, however, considerations which, if carefully implanted, and diligently propagated, might in time overpower and suppress it, since no one can nurse it

for the sake of pleasure, as its effects are only shame, anguish, and perturbation.

It is, above all other vices, inconsistent with the character of a social being, because it sacrifices truth and kindness to very weak temptations. He that plunders a wealthy neighbour, gains as much as he takes away, and improves his own condition, in the same proportion as he impairs another's; but he that blasts a flourishing reputation, must be content with a small dividend of additional fame, so small as can afford very little consolation to balance the guilt by which it is obtained.

I have hitherto avoided mentioning that dangerous and empirical morality, which cures one vice by means of another. But envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its original, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be desired. It is one of those lawless enemies of society, against which the poisoned arrows may honestly be used. Let it, therefore, be constantly remembered, that whoever envies another, confesses his superiority, and let those be reformed by their pride, who have lost their virtue. It is no slight aggravation of the injuries which envy excites, that they are committed against those who have given no intentional provocation; and that the sufferer is marked out for ruin, not because

he has failed in any duty, but because he has dared to do more than was required. Almost every other crime is practised by the help of some quality which might have produced esteem or love, if it had been well employed; but envy is a more unmixed and genuine evil; it pursues a hateful end by despicable means, and desires not so much its own happiness as another's misery. To avoid depravity like this, it is not necessary that any one should aspire to heroism or sanctity; but only, that he should resolve not to quit the rank which nature assigns, and wish to maintain the dignity of a human being.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EXAMPLE, ITS PREVALENCE.

IS it not Pliny, my Lord, who says, that the gentlest, he should have added the most effectual, way of command, is by example, and tyranny itself becomes persuasive? What a pity it is that so few princes have learned this way of commanding! But again the force of example is not confined to those alone that pass immediately under our sight; the examples that memory suggests have the same effect in their degree, and an habit of recalling them will soon produce the habit of imitating them. In the same epistle from whence I cited a passage just now, Seneca says, that Cleanthes had never become so perfect a copy of Zeno, if he had not passed his life with him; that Plato, Aristotle, and the other philosophers of that school, profited more by the example than by the discourses of Socrates. (But here by the way Seneca mistook; Socrates died two years according to some, and four years according to others, be-

fore the birth of Aristotle; and his mistake might come from the inaccuracy of those who collected for him; as Erasmus observes, after Quintillian, in his judgment on Seneca.) But be this, which was scarce worth a parenthesis, as it will, he adds that Metrodorus, Hermachus, and Polyxenus, men of great note, were formed by living under the same roof with Epicurus, not by frequenting his school. These are instances of the force of immediate example. But your lordship knows citizens of Rome placed the images of their ancestors in the vestibules of their houses; so that whenever they went in or out, these venerable bustoes met their eyes, and recalled the glorious actions of the dead, to fire the living, to excite them to imitate and even emulate their great forefathers. The success answered the design. The virtue of one generation was transfused, by the magic of example, into several; and a spirit of heroism was maintained through many ages of that commonwealth.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DANGEROUS WHEN COPIED WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

PETER of Medicis had involved himself in great difficulties, when these wars and calamities began which Lewis Sforza first drew on and entailed on Italy, by flattering the ambition of Charles the Eighth, in order to gratify his own, and calling the French into that country. Peter owed his distress to his folly in departing from the general tenor of conduct his father Laurence had held, and hoped to relieve himself by imitating his father's example in one particular instance. At a time when the wars with the Pope and King of Naples had reduced Laurence to circumstances of great danger, he took the resolution of going to Ferdinand, and of treating in person with that Prince. The resolution appears in history imprudent, and almost desperate; were we informed of the secret reasons on which this great man acted, it would appear very possibly a wise and safe measure. It succeeded, and Laur-

ence brought back with him public peace and private security. When the French troops entered the dominions of Florence, Peter was struck with a panic terror, went to Charles the Eighth, put the port of Leghorn, the fortress of Pisa, and all the keys of the country, into this Prince's hand; whereby he disarmed the Florentine Commonwealth, and ruined himself. He was deprived of his authority, and driven out of the city, by the just indignation of the magistrates and people; and in the treaty which they made afterwards with the King of France, it was stipulated that he should not remain within a hundred miles of the state, nor his brothers within the same distance of the city of Florence. On this occasion Guicciardini observes how dangerous it is to govern ourselves by particular examples; since to have the same success, we must have the same prudence, and the same fortune; and since the example must not only answer the case before us in general, but in every minute circumstance.

CHAPTER XL.

THE LOVE OF FAME.

I CAN by no means agree with you in thinking that the love of fame is a passion, which either reason or religion condemns. I confess, indeed, there are some who have represented it as inconsistent with both; and I remember, in particular, the excellent author of "The Religion of Nature Delineated," has treated it as highly irrational and absurd. As the passage falls in so thoroughly with your own turn of thought, you will have no objection, I imagine, to my quoting it at large; and I give it you, at the same time, as a very great authority on your side. "In reality," says that writer, "the man is not known ever the more to posterity, because his name is transmitted to them: he doth not live because his name does. When it is said, Julius Cæsar subdued Gaul, conquered Pompey, &c., it is the same thing as to say, the conqueror of Pompey was Julius Cæsar, i. e. Cæsar and the conqueror of

Pompey is the same thing; Cæsar is as much known by one designation as by the other. The amount then is only this: that the conqueror of Pompey conquered Pompey; or rather, since Pompey is as little known now as Cæsar, somebody conquered somebody. Such a poor business is this boasted immortality! and such is the thing called glory among us! To discerning men this fame is mere air, and what they despise, if not shun."

But surely "'twere to consider too curiously," as Horatio says to Hamlet, "to consider thus." For though fame with posterity should be, in the strict analysis of it, no other than what it is here described, a mere uninteresting proposition, amounting to nothing more than that somebody acted meritoriously; yet it would not necessarily follow, that true philosophy would banish the desire of it from the human breast. For this passion may be (as most certainly it is) wisely implanted in our species, notwithstanding the corresponding object should in reality be very different from what it appears in imagination. Do not many of our most refined and even contemplative pleasures owe their existence to our mistakes? It is but extending (I will not say, improving) some of our senses to a higher degree of acuteness than we now possess them, to make the fairest views of nature, or the noblest productions of

art, appear horrid and deformed. To see things as they truly and in themselves are, would not always, perhaps, be of advantage to us in the intellectual world, any more than in the natural. But, after all, who shall certainly assure us, that the pleasure of virtuous fame dies with its possessor, and reaches not to a farther scene of existence? There is nothing, it should seem, either absurd or unphilosophical in supposing it possible, at least, that the praises of the good and the judicious, that sweetest music to an honest ear in this world, may be echoed back to the mansions of the next: that the poet's description of fame may be literally true, and though she walks upon earth, she may yet lift her head into heaven. But can it be reasonable to extinguish a passion which nature has universally lighted up in the human breast, and which we constantly find to burn with most strength and brightness in the noblest and best formed bosoms? Accordingly revelation is so far from endeavouring (as you suppose) to eradicate the seed which nature has thus deeply planted, that she rather seems, on the contrary, to cherish and forward its growth. To be *exalted with honour*, and to be *had in everlasting remembrance*, are in the number of those encouragements which the Jewish dispensation offered to the virtuous; as the person from whom the author of the Christian

system received his birth, is herself represented as rejoicing that *all generations should call her blessed.* To be convinced of the great advantage of cherishing this high regard to posterity, this noble desire of an after life in the breath of others, one need only look back upon the history of the ancient Greeks and Romans. What other principle was it, which produced that exalted strain of virtue in those days, that may well serve as a model to these? Was it not the *consentiens laus bonorum*, the *incorrupta vox bene judicantum* (as Tully calls it), the concurrent approbation of the good, the uncorrupted applause of the wise, that animated their most generous pursuits?

To confess the truth, I have been ever inclined to think it a very dangerous attempt, to endeavour to lessen the motives of right conduct, or to raise any suspicion concerning their solidity. The tempers and dispositions of mankind are so extremely different that it seems necessary they should be called into action by a variety of incitements. Thus, while some are willing to wed virtue for her personal charms, others are engaged to take her for the sake of her expected dowry; and since her followers and admirers have so little hopes from her in present, it were pity, methinks, to reason them out of any imagined advantage in reversion.

CHAPTER XLI.

DELICACY CONSTITUTIONAL, AND OFTEN DANGEROUS.

SOME people are subject to a certain delicacy of passion, which makes them extremely sensible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every prosperous event, as well as piercing grief when they meet with crosses and adversity. Favours and good offices easily engage their friendship, while the smallest injury provokes their resentment. Any honour or mark of distinction elevates them above measure; but they are as sensibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no doubt, much more lively enjoyments, as more pungent sorrows, than men of cool and sedate tempers; but I believe, when everything is balanced, there is no one who would not rather choose to be of the latter character, where he entirely master of his own disposition. Good or ill fortune is very little at our own disposal, and when a person who has this sensibility of temper meets with any misfor-

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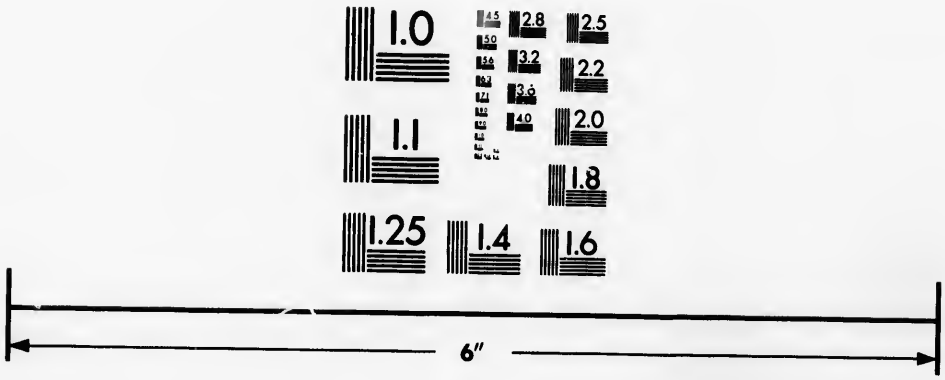

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tune, his sorrow or resentment takes entire possession of him, and deprives him of all relish in the common occurrences of life, the right enjoyment of which forms the greatest part of our happiness. Great pleasures are much less frequent than great pains, so that a sensible temper cannot meet with fewer trials in the former way than in the latter; not to mention that men of such lively passions are apt to be transported beyond all bounds of prudence and discretion, and to take false steps in the conduct of life, which are often irretrievable.

CHAPTER XLII.

DELICACY OF TASTE DESIRABLE.

THERE is a delicacy of taste observable in some men, which very much resembles this delicacy of passion, and produces the same sensibility to beauty and deformity of every kind as that does to prosperity and adversity, obligations and injuries. When you present a poem or a picture to a man possessed of this talent, the delicacy of his feelings makes him to be touched very sensibly with every part of it; nor are the masterly strokes perceived with more exquisite relish and satisfaction than the negligencies or absurdities with disgust and uneasiness. A polite and judicious conversation affords him the highest entertainment; rudeness or impertinence is as great a punishment to him. In short, delicacy of taste has the same effect as delicacy of passion: it enlarges the sphere both of our happiness and misery, and makes us sensible to pains as well as pleasures which escape the rest of mankind.

I believe, however, there is no one who will not agree with me that, notwithstanding this resemblance, a delicacy of taste is as much to be desired and cultivated as a delicacy of passion is to be lamented, and to be remedied if possible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our disposal, but we are pretty much masters of what books we shall read, what diversions we shall partake of, and what company we shall keep. Philosophers have endeavoured to render happiness entirely independent of everything external that is impossible to be attained; but every wise man will endeavour to place his happiness on such objects as depend most upon himself; and that is not to be attained so much by any other means as by this delicacy of sentiment. When a man is possessed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleases his taste than by what gratifies his appetites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reasoning than the most exquisite luxury can afford.

CHAPTER XLIII.

IT TEACHES US TO SELECT OUR COMPANY.

DELICACY of taste is favourable to love and friendship, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and conversation of the greatest part of men. You will very seldom find that mere men of the world, whatever strong sense they may be endowed with, are very nice in distinguishing of characters, or in marking those insensible differences and gradations which make one man preferable to another. Any one that has competent sense, is sufficient for their entertainment; they talk to him of their pleasures and affairs with the same frankness as they would to any other; and, finding many who are fit to supply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want in his absence. But, to make use of the allusion of a famous French author, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the ordinary machine is sufficient to tell the hours, but the most cla-

borate and artificial only can point the minutes and seconds, and distinguish the smallest difference of time. One who has well digested his knowledge both of books and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few select companions. He feels too sensibly how much all the rest of mankind fall short of the notions which he has entertained; and his affections being thus confined in a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them farther than if they were more general and undistinguished. The gaiety and frolic of a bottle companion improves with him into a solid friendship, and the ardours of a youthful appetite into an elegant passion.

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CHAPTER XLIV.

DETRACTION A DETESTABLE VICE.

IT has been remarked that men are generally kind in proportion as they are happy; and it is said, even of the devil, that he is good-humoured when he is pleased. Every act, therefore, by which another is injured, from whatever motive, contracts more guilt and expresses greater malignity, if it is committed in those seasons which are set apart to pleasantry and good humour, and brightened with enjoyments peculiar to rational and social beings. Detraction is among those vices which the most languid virtue has sufficient force to prevent; because by detraction, that is not gained which is taken away. "He who filches from me my good name," says Shakspeare, "enriches not himself, but makes me poor indeed." As nothing, therefore, degrades human nature more than detraction, nothing more disgraces conversation. The detractor, as he is the lowest moral character, reflects greater dishonour upon his

company than the hangman; and he, whose disposition is a scandal to his species, should be more diligently avoided than he who is scandalous only by his offence. But for this practice, however vile, some have dared to apologize, by contending that the report, by which they have injured an absent character, was true. This, however, amounts to no more than that they have not complicated malice with falsehood, and that there is some difference between detraction and slander. To relate all the ill that is true of the best man in the world would probably render him the object of suspicion and distrust; and were this practice universal, mutual confidence and esteem, the comforts of society, and the endearments of friendship. would be at an end.

There is something unspeakably more hateful in those species of villany by which the law is evaded, than those by which it is violated and defiled. Courage has sometimes preserved rapacity from abhorrence, as beauty has been thought to apologize for prostitution; but the injustice of cowardice is universally abhorred, and, like the lewdness of deformity, has no advocate. Thus hateful are the wretches who detract with caution, and while they perpetrate the wrong, are solicitous to avoid the reproach. They do not say that Chloe forfeited her honour to Lysander; but they say that such a report has been spread,

they know not how true. Those who propagate these reports frequently invent them; and it is no breach of charity to suppose this to be always the case; because no man who spreads detraction would have scrupled to produce it; and he who should diffuse poison in a book, would scarce be acquitted of a malicious design, though he should allege that he received it of another who is doing the same elsewhere. Whatever is incompatible with the highest dignity of our nature, should indeed be excluded from our conversation; as companions, not only that which we owe to ourselves but to others, is required of us; and they who can indulge any vice in the presence of each other, are become obdurate in guilt, and insensible to infamy.

CHAPTER XLV.

LEARNING SHOULD BE SOMETIMES APPLIED TO CULTIVATE OUR MORALS.

ENVY, curiosity, and our sense of the imperfection of our present state, incline us always to estimate the advantages which are in the possession of others above their real value. Every one must have remarked what powers and prerogatives the vulgar imagine to be conferred by learning.

A man of science is expected to excel the unlettered and unenlightened, even on occasions where literature is of no use, and among weak minds loses part of his reverence by discovering no superiority in those parts of life in which all are unavoidably equal; as when a monarch makes a progress to the remoter provinces, the rustics are said sometimes to wonder that they find him of the same size with themselves. These demands of prejudice and folly can never be satisfied, and therefore many of the imputations which learning suffers from disappointed

ignorance, are without reproach. Yet it cannot be denied, that there are some failures to which men of study are peculiarly exposed. Every condition has its disadvantages. The circle of knowledge is too wide for the most active and diligent intellect, and while science is pursued with ardour, other accomplishments of equal use are necessarily neglected; as a small garrison must leave one part of an extensive fortress naked, when an alarm calls them to another. The learned, however, might generally support their dignity with more success, if they suffered not themselves to be misled by superfluous attainments or qualifications which few can understand or value, and by skill which they may sink into the grave without any conspicuous opportunities of exerting. Raphael, in return to Adam's inquiries into the courses of the stars and the revolutions of heaven, counsels him to withdraw his mind from idle speculations, and, instead of watching motions which he has no power to regulate, to employ his faculties upon nearer and more interesting objects, the survey of his own life, the subjection of his passions, the knowledge of duties which must daily be performed, and the detection of dangers which must daily be incurred.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ITS PROGRESS.

IT has been observed by the ancients, that all the arts and sciences arose from free nations; and that the Persians and Egyptians, notwithstanding all their ease, opulence and luxury, made but faint efforts towards those finer pleasures, which were carried to such perfection by the Greeks, amidst continual wars, attended with poverty, and the greatest simplicity of life and manners. It had also been observed, that as soon as the Greeks lost their liberty, though they increased mightily in riches, by the means of the conquest of Alexander, yet the arts from that moment declined amongst them, and have never since been able to raise their head in that climate. Learning was transplanted to Rome, the only free nation at that time in the universe; and having met with so favourable a soil, it made prodigious shoots for above a century; till the decay of liberty produced also a decay of letters, and spread a total

barbarism over the world. From these two experiments, of which each was double in its kind, and showed the fall of learning in despotic governments, as well as its rise in popular ones, Longinus thought himself sufficiently justified in asserting that the arts and sciences could never flourish but in a free government; and in this opinion he has been followed by several eminent writers in our country, who either confined their view merely to ancient facts, or entertained too great a partiality in favour of that form of government which is established amongst us.

But what could these writers have said to the instances of modern Rome and Florence? Of which the former carried to perfection all the finer arts of sculpture, painting and music, as well as poetry, though they groaned under slavery, and under the slavery of priests: while the latter made the greatest progress in the arts and sciences, after they began to lose their liberty by the usurpations of the family of Medicis. Ariosto, Tasso, Galileo, no more than Raphael and Michael Angelo, were not born in republics. And though the Lombard school was famous as well as the Roman, yet the Venetians have had the smallest share in its honours, and seem rather inferior to the Italians in their genius for the arts and sciences. Rubens established his

school at Antwerp, not at Amsterdam; Dresden, not Hamburg, is the centre of politeness in Germany. But the most eminent instance of the flourishing state of learning in despotic Governments, is that of France, which scarce ever enjoyed an established liberty, and yet has carried the arts and sciences as near perfection as any other nation. The English are, perhaps, better philosophers; the Italians better painters and musicians: the Romans better orators; but the French are the only people, except the Greeks, who have been at once philosophers, poets, orators, historians, painters, architects, sculptors, and musicians. With regard to the stage, they have excelled even the Greeks, who have far excelled the English; and in common life they have in a great measure perfected that art, the most useful and agreeable of any, *l'art de vivre*, the art of society and conversation.

If we consider the state of the sciences and polite arts in our country, Horace's observation with regard to the Romans, may, in a great measure, be applied to the British:

> Sed in longum tamen ævum
> Manserunt, hodieque manent vestigia ruris.*

The elegance and propriety of style have been

* The traces of rusticity long remained, and even now remain among us.

very much neglected among us. We have no dictionary of our language, and scarce a tolerable grammar. The first polite prose we have was wrote by a man who is still alive. As to Sprat, Locke, and even Temple, they knew too little of the rules of art to be esteemed very elegant writers. The prose of Bacon, Harrington, and Milton, is altogether stiff and pedantic; though their sense be excellent. Men in this country have been so much occupied in the great disputes of religion, politics and philosophy, that they have no relish for the minute observations of grammar and criticism. And though this turn of thinking must have considerably improved our sense and our talent of reasoning beyond those of other nations, it must be confessed, that even in those sciences above mentioned, we have not any standard book which we can transmit to posterity: and the utmost we have to boast of, are a few essays towards a more just philosophy; which, indeed, promise very much, but have not, as yet, reached any degree of perfection.

CHAPTER XLVII.

USELESS WITHOUT TASTE.

A MAN may know exactly all the circles and ellipses of the Copernican system, and all the irregular spirals of the Ptolemaic, without perceiving that the former is more beautiful than the latter. Euclid has very fully explained every quality of the circle, but has not, in any proposition, said a word of its beauty. The reason is evident. Beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line, whose parts are all equally distant from a common centre. It is only the effect which that figure operates upon the mind, whose particular fabric or structure renders it susceptible of such sentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or seek it either by your senses, or by mathematical reasonings, in all the properties of that figure.

The mathematician, who took no other pleasure in reading Virgil but that of examining Æneas's

voyage by the map, might understand perfectly the meaning of every Latin word employed by that divine author, and consequently might have a distinct idea of the whole narration; he would even have a more distinct idea of it, than they could who have not studied so exactly the geography of the poem. He knew, therefore, everything in the poem. But he was ignorant of its beauty; because the beauty, properly speaking, lies not in the poem, but in the sentiment or taste of the reader. And where a man has no such delicacy of temper as to make him feel this sentiment, he must be ignorant of the beauty, though possessed of the science and understanding of an angel.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ON THE GUILT OF INCURRING DEBTS WITHOUT EITHER A PROSPECT OR AN INTENTION OF PAYMENT.

AMONG the various devices which young men have invented to involve themselves in difficulties and in ruin, none is more frequent than that of incurring debt at a very early age without any real necessity. No sooner is the aspiring youth emancipated from his school, or his guardian and superintendents, than he becomes, in his own idea, a man; and not only so, but a man of consequence, whom it behoves to dress, and make a figure. To accomplish the purpose of making a figure, some expensive vices are to be affected or practised. But as the stipends of young men just entering into life are usually inconsiderable, it is necessary to borrow on the most disadvantageous terms, or to purchase the various requisites of a pleasurable life on credit. The debt soon accumulates from small beginnings to a great sum. The young adventurer continues,

while his credit is good, in the same wild career; but adieu to real pleasure, to improvement, to honest industry, and to a quiet mind. His peace is wounded. A perpetual load seems to weigh him down; and though his feelings may, by length of time and habit, become too callous to be affected by the misery of his situation, yet he is lost to all sincere enjoyment; and if he fall not a victim of despair, survives only to gain a precarious existence at the gaming-table, to deceive the unwary, and to elude the researches of persecuting creditors. Even if he be enabled, by the death of his parents or rich relations, to pay the debts which his youthful folly has contracted, yet he has suffered long and much, and lost the beginning of life, the season of rational delight and solid improvement, in distress and fears, in fabricating excuses and pretences, and in flying from the eager pursuit of duns and bailiffs.

But this folly, however pregnant with misery, is entitled to pity, and may, in some degree, admit of those usual palliations,—youthful ardour, and want of experience. Thousands, and tens of thousands, have ruined their fortunes and their happiness by hastily running into debt before they knew the value of money, or the consequences of their embarrassment. We pity their misfortune; and, in the first part of their progress, we do not usually accuse them

of dishonesty; but the habit of incurring debt, though in the earlier periods of life it may originate in thoughtlessness, commonly leads to a crime most atrocious in itself, and injurious to society. He who prayed against poverty, lest he should be poor and steal, understood human nature. Difficulties and distresses have a natural tendency to lessen the restraints of conscience. The fortress of honour, when stormed by that sort of poverty which is occasioned by profligacy, and not defended with sound principles (such as men of the world do not often possess), has for the most part yielded at discretion. He, then, who began with incurring debt merely because he was strongly stimulated by passion or fancy, and was not able to pay for their gratification, proceeds, when the habit is confirmed, and the first scruples dismissed, to contract debt wherever unsuspecting confidence will afford him an opportunity.

If he possesses titles, distinctions, or any kind of eminence, he will not find it difficult to gain credit. Young tradesmen, desirous of making connections, are ready to run any risk; and hope that, if it is long before they receive their money, they shall not be without the great man's patronage or recommendation. But here also they are often deceived; for the great man, without principle, considers his creditors as his enemies, and never thinks of them but to

contrive methods to avoid and deceive them. If he happens to receive any money, he takes care to expend it among strangers, who have no other demand upon him but for the commodity which he pays for at the time of purchase. The world is wide; and when one set of credulous tradesmen are wearied with expectation and disappointment, the great man emigrates to another part of the town or country, and condescends to confer on some ambitious but unfortunate mortal the honour of dealing with him. Thus he goes on during the greater part of his life; and when the creditors are importunate, and the horrors of a gaol impend, he collects his property, and withdraws from the kingdom, or, living in disguise, enjoys his luxuries, and laughs at his deluded tradesmen. Indeed, as most ill qualities go together, his pride is so great, that he scarcely vouchsafes to bestow upon such low creatures as tradesmen a moment's consideration. But while the builder, the draper, the tailor, the butcher, the baker, and the chandler, remain unpaid, the jockey and the horse-dealer, the mistress and the brother-gamester, receive ready money with ostentatious profusion. Sharpers and prostitutes, with all the qualities of thievery, riot in those riches which ought to be paid to honest men, who, with their families, are reduced to a state of starving, by feeding, clothing, and accommodating

some hardened profligate and extravagant debauchee. Who but must feel indignation when he sees a man in high life, as it is called, eating a joint of meat of some poor tradesman, whose children are at the same moment begging of their parents a morsel of bread? Indeed, the pride and vanity of some persons, who value themselves on their birth, or their fashionable mode of life, induce them to look upon themselves as a superior order of beings, and to presume that they have a right to be still supported by their tradesmen in profusion and elegance, even after they are reduced in their circumstances, either by misfortune or misconduct. If an honest man makes his demand, he is impertinent; his insolence is not to be borne; he is dismissed, but not till he evidently shows that he will no longer supply the commodities in which he deals. On his dismission, some exception is taken to his account; a dispute ensues, and that dispute furnishes the fine gentleman or fine lady with a pretence for not paying the bill. In the meantime, card-parties, visitings, and all fashionable amusements, proceed as usual: for who would be so vulgar as to attend to the impertinence of the scum of the earth, or suffer one fashionable pleasure to be set aside by the clamorous importunity of a mean mechanic; though his meanness arises from his having spent his substance in supplying the person who

despises him with the instruments of luxury, or even the necessaries of life?

The profligacy, the vanity, the unceasing pursuit of pleasure, and the passion for external appearance, which characterize the present age, are necessarily productive of expense; expenses occasion distress, and distress, where principles are deficient, dishonesty. No wonder, then, that in no age have sharps, swindlers, and insolvent contractors of debt, so much abounded. There is hardly any mode of public life, especially in the metropolis, in which you can be engaged, without having your property exposed to the depredations of villains, who have made cheating a profession, and reduced the art of robbery to a regular system. Many of the persons who live on the substance of others, by borrowing, purchasing, or employing, without intending and without being able, to pay, make a splendid figure, and pass for gentlemen and men of honour. But, however they may felicitate themselves on their success, and in the gratification of their pride and vanity, I shall not hesitate to pronounce them more criminal and detestable than highwaymen and house-breakers, because to the crime of actual theft they add a most ungenerous breach of confidence.

CHAPTER XLIX.

ON THE FOLLY OF BEING ANXIOUSLY CURIOUS TO INQUIRE WHAT IS SAID OF US IN OUR ABSENCE.

THE best dispositions have usually the most sensibility. They have also that delicate regard for reputation which renders them sorely afflicted by the attacks of calumny. It is not unreasonable and excessive self-love, but a regard to that without which a feeling mind cannot be happy, which renders many of us attentive to every word which is whispered of us in our absence.

From whatever motive it arises, an anxious curiosity to know the reports concerning ourselves is an infallible cause of much uneasiness. No virtue, no prudence, no caution, no generosity can preserve us from misrepresentation. Our conduct must be misunderstood by weak intellects, and by those who see only a part of it, and hastily form a judgment of the whole. Every man of eminence has those in his vicinity who hate, who envy, and who affect to

despise him. These will see his actions with a jaundiced eye, and will represent them to others in the colours in which they themselves behold them. Many, from carelessness, wantonness, or from a desire to entertain their company, are inclined to sport with respectable characters, and love to display their ingenuity by the invention of a scandalous tale. Nothing renders a man more agreeable in many companies than his possessing a fund of delicious anecdotes. Calumny is a kind of salt which, more frequently than wit, seasons the feast of conversation. It is certain, then, that from weakness, wantonness, or malevolence, a man whose merit renders him a topic of conversation, will be misrepresented; and he who solicitously inquires what is said of him, will certainly hear something which will render him uneasy. His uneasiness will be increased, when he finds the poisoned arrow is shot in the dark; so that no abilities can repel the blow, and no innocence shield him from the assailant. Open attacks can be openly opposed; but the obscure insinuation proceeds without the possibility of resistance, like the worm, which penetrates the ship that has withstood the cannon. It is better, therefore, not to be too anxious to discover attacks which, when discovered, add to our torment, but cannot be successfully resisted. Indeed, we are apt to feel upon these occa-

sions more acutely than we ought. We are told by a menial servant, or some other of our spies, that a person whom we esteemed our friend has spoken slightingly of us, made a joke upon us, or cast a severe reflection. Immediately upon hearing the information, our blood boils within us. The indignity, we imagine, calls for our warmest resentment. Our friend is discarded, or suspected, as a treacherous wretch, unworthy of our love and confidence. This hasty ebullition of resentment is, I am ready to allow, very natural, and so are many other disorders of the passions. But if we were to study the case, and acquire a right idea of the ways of men in society, we should find that, in such instances, our resentment may not only be too violent, but causeless; for we should recollect, that a man, without absolutely relinquishing his principles, is often inclined, from the incidental influence of temper, of levity, of frolic, of intemperance, of precipitation, to speak inconsistently with them, and in a manner which the general tenor of his conduct uniformly contradicts. We should also recollect, that besides this temporary variableness of the mind, the tongue is unruly, and, when the spirits or the passions are high, utters almost spontaneously what the mind, which ought to hold the bridle, would, in more deliberate moments, willingly restrain. If we reflect

upon these things, and upon what has fallen under our experience, we may, perhaps, discover that real and worthy friends may speak unkindly of us, without any design to hurt us, or to violate the bonds of friendship. It is the infirmity of human nature which causes unintentional lapses in the duties of friendship, as well as in all other duties. By too eagerly listening to a casual censure uttered in a careless hour, we increase the evil, and cause a rupture where no real offence was intended.

A man who is constantly solicitous to hear the reports which are raised of him, of his family, and of his conduct, depends, in a great measure, for happiness upon his servants; upon those, whose ideas are narrow, and whose hearts too often ungrateful; who overhear a part of a conversation and supply the rest, when they repeat it, by invention; who love to entertain their visitors and acquaintance with the private affairs of the house in which they live, and are apt to blacken the characters of their supporters and protectors, in revenge for a reprimand, or from the natural malignity of a bad heart. The tongue, said Juvenal, is the worst part of a bad servant. But the master of a family who is always endeavouring to collect what is uttered by his humble friends, as servants have been called, will find himself subject to perpetual mortification. And it is a circum-

stance which renders his solitude peculiarly unwise, that, after all the idle stories which their garrulity or resentment may lead them to propagate, they may be as good servants as any others he might engage in their room, or as human nature, in its uncultivated state, is found in general to afford. Their foolish words, once uttered, vanish into air; and they return to their duties; and probably will serve their masters as usefully and as faithfully as if nothing had been said in their angry or unthinking moments. So little meaning and weight are there in the words of the weak and the passionate; and so inconsistent is it with wisdom to listen to that tale, which, while it sinks into the mind of him who hears that he is the subject of it, passes over the minds of others, as the shadow over the earth! Supposing it, however, to be noticed, remembered, and even capable of doing him an injury, yet he can only make it more mischievous by paying attention to it, and by giving it an importance not its own.

It will conduce, in a peculiar manner, to the peace of all persons who superintend large families, or large numbers of assistants, or of subordinate classes—such as the governors of schools and colleges, the generals of armies, the employers of manufacturers, and many others in similar situations—if they can habituate themselves to disregard

those calumnies which will certainly be poured upon them, though they should be far from meriting the least degree of ill-treatment. Their hearts will, indeed, be often wrung with grief, if they are sensible of every ill-natured whisper which makes its way, like the worm in the earth, and may at last corrode the worthiest bosom, if the breast-plate of reason and resolution is not previously applied. Whoever has many individuals under his direction, is exposed to the malice of them all; and as dispositions and tempers are often diametrically opposite, he can scarcely fail to offend as many as he pleases; for the very conduct which pleases one party will give offence to the other. Friends, as well as enemies, are liable to ill-humour and caprice; and every poisoned arrow is levelled at the superintendent, as at a conspicuous mark. A man who has many persons under him must not only not go in search of the darts which are thrown at him, but, even when he cannot avoid seeing them, must let them waste their force unregarded. If he adopt not this conduct, his life will be a perfect torment, and may possibly terminate in that which is the frequent death of good men,—a broken heart.

Perhaps we might be less inclined to inquire what is said of us in our absence, and less affected with it when discovered, if we considered how freely we

ourselves are apt to speak even of those we love. We censure and we ridicule others in the gaiety and thoughtlessness of conversation, and what has been said makes so little impression on ourselves, that we forget it; and, in the next hour, probably speak with honour of the same persons, and then and on all occasions, would be ready to serve them.

Beware of the man, says Horace, who backbites his friend, or who defends him not when attacked by others. But such is man's nature, that, in a fit of levity, he will speak of another, and hear him spoken of, in such terms, as in his serious moments he would deeply resent. Let any man ask himself whether he has not often said such things of others, without meaning to injure them, or even thinking seriously of what he was saying, as if he were to hear that they were said of himself, in any manner whatever, he would deeply resent? Let him, then, when he finds he has been carelessly censured, endeavour to see the case in the same light in which he saw it when he carelessly censured others. Indeed, it must be allowed, that a man of sensibility and honour cannot take too much pains to vindicate his character from an open and direct calumny; but the same spirit which leads him to that manly conduct, will induce him to leave the dirty dealers in scandal to themselves, and to the misery of their mean occupation. Though a delicate regard for character be virtuous and rational, yet it is really

true, that we commonly estimate our own value among others much higher than it is estimated by them. What is said of us seldom sinks so deeply into their minds, as, from a vain idea of our own importance, we are apt to imagine. We are occasionally talked of, it may be, in the course of common conversation, and serve for topics, together with the weather, the wind, and the news of the day; but he who thinks that he is the constant object of his neighbour's accurate and close inspection, is ignorant of human nature. Man's chief object of attention is himself; and though, to fill an idle hour, he may talk of others, it is carelessly and indifferently; and whether he speaks in praise or dispraise, he often means neither to serve nor to injure. From supposing ourselves of more consequence with others than we are, we suspect that they are conversing about us, when they really think not of us; and, when they are known by us to have spoken unkindly or contemptuously, we immediately consider them as declared enemies. Our suspicions are awakened when led to entertain bad opinions of mankind, and our good-humour is soured for ever. "But good-humour," says an elegant writer, "is the salt which gives a seasoning to the feast of life, and which, if it be wanting, renders the feast incomplete. Many causes contribute to impair this amiable quality; but nothing, perhaps, more than bad opinions of mankind." To avoid bad

opinions of mankind, much of their ill deeds and ill sayings must be attributed to thoughtlessness, and not to malignity alone; we must not always be on the watch to hear what is said against us in an unguarded hour; we must be humble, and consider whether we do not treat others just as we complain of being treated by them; and, while we complain of mankind, whether ourselves, and the dispositions which we entertain, do not furnish some of the justest causes of the complaint. Upon the whole, let it be our first object to do our duty, and not to be very anxious about any censure but that of conscience. Let the weak and the ill-natured enjoy the poor pleasure of whispering calumny and detraction, and let the man of sense and spirit display the wisdom and dignity of disregarding them. The dog bays at the moon, but the moon still shines on in all its beautiful serenity and lustre, and moves in its orbit with undisturbed regularity.

The Scriptures, among all their other recommendations, abound with passages which finely pourtray the human heart. I will cite one passage, which is very appropriate to the subject of this paper:—"Take no heed to all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee. For oftentimes, also, thine own heart knoweth, that thou thyself, likewise, hast cursed others." Bishop Hurd has an excellent sermon on this text, the perusal of which suggested some of the foregoing observations.

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CHAPTER L.

MISCELLANEOUS SELECTIONS.

Reading.

THIS is that which, I think, great readers are apt to be mistaken in. Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge: it is *thinking* makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us nourishment. There are, indeed, in some writers visible instances of deep thought, close and acute reasoning, and ideas well pursued. The light these would give would be of great use if their readers would observe and imitate them. All the rest, at best, are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge; but that can be done only by our own meditation and examining the reach, force and coherence of what is said; and then, as far as we apprehend and see the connection of ideas, so far it

is ours; without that, it is but so much loose matter floating in our brain. The memory may be stored, but the judgment is little better, and the stock of knowledge not increased by being able to repeat what others have said, or produce the arguments we have found in them. Such a knowledge as this is but a knowledge by hearsay; and the ostentation of it is at best but talking by rote, and very often upon weak and wrong principles. For all that is to be found in books is not built upon true foundations, nor always rightly deduced from the principles it is pretended to be built on.

Such an examen as is requisite to discover that, every reader's mind is not forward to make, especially in those who have given themselves up to a party, and only hunt for what they can scrape together that may favour and support the tenets of it. Such men wilfully exclude themselves from truth and from all true benefit to be received by reading. Others, of more indifference, often want attention and industry. The mind is backward in itself to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to see upon which basis it stands, and how firmly; but yet it is this that gives so much the advantage to one man more than another in reading.

The mind should, by severe rules, be tied down to this at first uneasy task; use and exercise will give it facility. So that those who are accustomed to it, readily, as it were with one cast of the eye, take

a view of the argument, and presently, in most cases, see where it bottoms. Those who have got this faculty, one may say, have got the true key to books, and the clue to lead them through the mizmaze of variety in opinions and authors to truth and certainty. This young beginners should be entered in and shown the use of, that they might profit by their reading. Those who are strangers to it will be apt to think it too great a clog in the way of men's studies; and they will suspect they shall make but small progress, if, in the books they read, they must stand to examine and unravel every argument, and follow it, step by step, up to its original.

—LOCKE.

Unselfishness.

It is only a poor sort of happiness that could ever come by caring very much about our own narrow pleasures. We can only have the highest happiness, such as goes along with being a great man, by having wide thoughts, and much feeling for the rest of the world as well as ourselves; and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it, that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we would choose before everything else, because our souls see it is good. There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world that no man can be great —he can hardly keep himself from wickedness—

unless he gives up thinking much about pleasures or rewards and gets strength to endure what is hard and painful.

—GEORGE ELIOT.

God in everything.

Oh, to what uses shall we put
  The wild-weed flower that simply blows ?
And is there any mortal shut
  Within the bosom of the rose ?
But any man that walks the mead,
  In bud or blade or bloom may find,
According as his humours lead,
  A meaning suited to his mind.

—TENNYSON.

Ambition.

Although imitation is one of the great instruments used by Providence in bringing our nature towards perfection, yet if men gave themselves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, and so on, in an eternal circle, it is easy to see that there never could be any improvement amongst them. Men must remain as brutes do, the same at the end that they are at this day, and that they were at the be ginning of the world.

To prevent this, God has planted in man a sense

of ambition, and a satisfaction arising from the contemplation of his excelling his fellows in something deemed valuable amongst them. It is this passion that drives men to all the ways we see in use in signalizing themelves, and that tends to make whatever excites in a man the idea of this distinction so very pleasant. It has been so strong as to make very miserable men take comfort that they were supreme in misery; and certain it is that where we cannot distinguish ourselves by something excellent, we begin to take a complacency in some singular infirmities, follies or defects of one kind or another. It is on this principle that flattery is so prevalent; for flattery is no more than what raises in a man's mind an idea of a preference which he has not. Now, whatever, either on good or upon bad grounds, tends to raise a man in his own opinion, produces a sort of swelling and triumph that is extremely grateful to the human mind; and this swelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when, without danger, we are conversant with terrible objects, the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. Hence proceeds what Longinus has observed of that glorying and sense of inward greatness that always fills the reader of such passages in poets and orators as are sublime; it is what every man must have felt in himself upon such occasions.

—BURKE.

CHAPTER LI.

ON AFFECTATIONS OF THE VICES AND FOLLIES OF MEN OF EMINENCE.

IT has frequently happened that men distinguished by their genius have, from an unsettled habit of life, from an affectation of singularity, or from uncommon warmth of constitution, neglected the rules of prudence, and plunged themselves into the miseries of vice and dissipation. They who are but slightly acquainted with the lives of our English writers can recollect many instances of men of the brightest parts, whose lives, after an uninterrupted course of misery, have terminated under the pressure of want, in the confinement of a gaol. They have been admired, and at the same time neglected; praised, and at the same time starved.

As the consequences of their imprudence are generally fatal, and generally known, a reasonable mind would scarcely believe that any should be found ambitious of treading in their footsteps when they err. Yet, such attraction has the brilliancy of liter-

ary reputation, that many a witling who pens a stanza while he should be engrossing a deed, looking upon himself as a genius of uncommon magnitude, thinks it necessary, in order to complete his character, to plunge into the excesses of drunkenness and debauchery. When his follies have thrown him out of his profession, ruined his health, and shut him up in a prison, he consoles himself with reflecting that he shares the same fate which the great wits, his predecessors, have shared before him. He is happy even to be wretched, with an Otway, a Dryden, or a Savage. This unfortunate conduct is owing to a mistaken opinion, too generally adopted, that vice is a mark of laudable spirit, and that spirit is the characteristic of genius. Prudence, caution, common sense are, in the idea of many, the concomitants of dulness. The phlegmatic disposition of a fool, say they, can guide him through life in the straight road of prudence; but the volatility of genius is continually tempted to turn out of the direct path to gather flowers on the sides, to view every pleasing prospect, and to discover new ways through unfrequented labyrinths. But it may be a reasonable question, whether this propensity to deviation be not a weakness, rather than a superior strength of mind; whether it be not sometimes the voluntary effect of pride and affectation; and whether not oftener caused by a restlessness of constitution, than by a mere energetic activity, or an

acuter perception. Sensibility of mind and fineness of feelings are always the attendants of true genius. These which, by themselves, constitute a good heart, when joined to a good head, naturally give a greater tendency to virtue than to vice; for they are charmed with beauty, and disgusted with every kind of deformity. Virtue, therefore, who is amiable in the eyes of her enemies, must have additional charms for those whose susceptibility of beauty is more delicate and refined; and Vice, who is loathsome in her nature, must appear uncommonly odious to those who are singularly shocked at all real turpitude.

Nor are there wanting instances to prove that men of the most exalted genius can be men of the most unspotted virtue. Addison, the glory of our nation, was equalled in his abilities only by his piety, by the purity of his morals, the integrity of his heart, and the prudence of his conduct. Pope was a man of exemplary piety and goodness. Gay, though licentious in his writings, is said to have been uncontaminated by the vices of the world; and though instances are numerous on the other side, yet these few are sufficient for the refutation of that prevalent notion that great genius is incompatible with steady prudence and consistent virtue. The folly of those who are only pretenders to genius, and who affect a vice as essential to the character they assume, is as pitiable as it is ridiculous. Their egregious vanity will probably render all addresses

to them useless; but they may take it as an infallible prediction, that dear-bought experience will soon induce them to wish they had altered their conduct, when it shall be too late to enjoy the benefits of an early amendment.

The fatal error of supposing vice the characteristic of spirit, has led many a parent to undo the child whose happiness he most wished to promote. The man of parts and fashion sends, indeed, his boy to school; but cannot bear that he should apply to books with any remarkable diligence, lest he should be mistaken for a plodder; nor that he should be singularly tractable and modest, lest he should be thought deficient in spirit; but ventures to form sanguine hopes of his future eminence, if he be the ringleader of every riot, and fortunate enough to gain at school the appellation of a Pickle.

Great writers have, indeed, indirectly patronized the cause of scepticism and immorality; but, if names are to have weight in this argument to a Rousseau and a Voltaire, we may confidently oppose an Addison and a Johnson, and many more in the retired walks of literary life, whom every virtue, as well as every Muse, is proud to claim as her deserving votary.

CHAPTER LII.

ON THE MEANS OF RENDERING OLD AGE HONOURABLE AND COMFORTABLE.

IT is a melancholy consideration that man, as he advances in life, degenerates in his nature, and gradually loses those tender feelings which constitute one of his highest excellences. The tear of sensibility, said Juvenal, is the most honourable characteristic of the human race.

Whatever real pain may sometimes be occasioned by sensibility is, in general, counterbalanced by agreeable sensations, which are not the less sincere and soothing because they do not excite the joy of thoughtless merriment. The anguish of the sympathetic heart is keen; but no less exalted are its gratifications. Notwithstanding all that has been said on the happiness of a stoical disposition, every one who has formed a true estimate of things will deprecate it as a curse that degrades his nature. It is the negative happiness of the dullest of quadrupeds, doomed to the vilest drudgery.

Who would wish to be a Bœotian, whose lot had fallen in Attica?

Wretched, however, as is the state, when the heart ceases to feel the quick vibrations of love and piety, we are all hastening to it by that law of our nature which obliges us, when arrived at a certain point of perfection, to recede with retrograde rapidity from all that gave us the power of pleasing or receiving pleasure. But if old age were attended only with the deprivation of amiable qualities, the loss of sensibility might often be esteemed a happiness to the individual, as it would prevent him from feeling one of the greatest of natural and undeserved calamities. But the truth is, the absence of all that is lovely is sometimes supplied by all that is odious; as in the season of winter, the verdure and music of the forest are not only no more, but are succeeded by the howling of the blast, and the dreary prospect of nakedness and horror. Old age, though dead to many pleasing sensations, is still feelingly alive to bodily pain. Of these evils, part is derived from nature, and is inevitable, and part from an erroneous conduct which may be regulated by reason and philosophy. When by age the body becomes debilitated, langour or pain must necessarily ensue. Bodily infirmities gradually impair the strength of the mind. Uneasy sensations, continued for a long time, sour the native sweetness of the temper. And the peevishness, the nervousness, and

the severity which characterize the last stage of life, however disgustful, are to be palliated, and no more deserve to be censured as voluntary faults than the aching of the joints. They are the natural result of mental pain, and follow from a wounded mind no less spontaneously or unavoidably than blood gushes from the incision of an artery. They disturb tranquillity, and poison convivial enjoyment; but they ought to be patiently borne with, if not from motives of humanity, yet from the consideration that the day is not far distant when we shall stand in need of the same indulgence.

And we may hereafter experimentally know how cutting to the heart are the impatient reproaches of those who are bound by the ties of conjugal, filial, and domestic duty, to soothe us under their pressure of calamity, and, as the pious poet expresses it, to rock the cradle of declining age.

But experience proves that old age is not always attended with natural infirmity. Original strength of constitution, or habitual temperance, often produces a green old age. In this case, the odious qualities usually attributed to that period are without excuse. Proportionate improvement should be the effect of long observation and experience. The vice of avarice, the characteristic distinction of the last stage of life, is then more than ever unreasonable. It is no less absurd, as it has often been said, than to provide a greater quantity of stores the

nearer the voyage approaches to its conclusion. It is also the source of many other detestable dispositions. It habituates the heart to suffer the sight of woe without commiseration; because pity prompts to relieve, and relief is attended with expense. Hardness of heart, like all its other tendencies, is increased by voluntary indulgence; and he who has long disregarded the happiness or misery of those who were allied to him by the common tie of humanity, will soon become unkind among his nearer connexions, cruel to his family and friends, and a self-tormentor.

Another quality which causes the old man to be avoided by those who are most capable of affording him amusement, is an unreasonable austerity of manners. A stranger to the feelings of youth, and forgetful that he once was young, he judges even the innocent sallies of lively spirits and a warm heart by the severest dictates of rigid prudence. His judgment, however, he finds is little attended to by those who are addressed on all sides by a more alluring voice. He becomes impatient and querulous. He condemns everything that is produced in the present times, and extols the fashions, the diversions, the dress, the manners, the learning, the taste, that prevailed in the days of his youth, and which appeared to him superior to those of the present times, solely because his powers of perception were then more lively and acute; the very reason why the

present appear with such irresistible charms in the eyes of his grandson.

For the natural evils of old age, relief is to be sought from the physician rather than the moralist. But philosophy can assuage the pain which it cannot cure. It can suggest reflections, which operate like balsam on the wounds of the mind. It can teach us to bear those evils which it cannot remove, and, by calling forth our powers of resistance, enable us to alleviate the load.

All, however, are not capable of receiving the benefits of philosophy. Few, but those whose understandings have been cultivated, and affections refined by liberal education, are able to understand or profit by the wise precepts of an Epictetus or a Cicero. Of still greater efficacy than the philosophy of these, or any other writers, religion steps in to infuse an ingredient into the bitter cup of life, which never fails to sweeten it, and which is adapted to the taste of every human creature.

Religion, indeed, is able of itself most effectually to dissipate the clouds, and to diffuse a sunshine on the evening of life. But to those who are conversant in literature, the celebrated treatise of Cicero 'On Old Age" may be collaterally recommended as affording solid consolation. Many moral treatises, however just and pleasing they may appear on the perusal, are of little use in the conduct of life, and terminate in speculative amusement. But the

treatise "On Old Age" prescribes rules, and suggests ideas, which, if permitted to influence practice, must render that period of life truly pleasing and honourable. Every old man who wishes to be wise and happy, and consequently an object of respect, should turn it over, as Horace advises the student to peruse the Greek volumes, by day and night. Nor can an ignorance of the Latin language be pleaded in excuse for the omission, since the elegant translation of Melmoth has preserved all the meaning of the original, together with a great share of its grace and spirit.

The indigent and the uninstructed cannot enjoy the additional benefit of pagan wisdom; but they have the comfort to know that evangelical philosophy is fully adequate to the cure of mental disease, and at the same time requires neither extraordinary abilities, nor the opportunities of learned leisure, nor the toil of study. An attendance upon the offices of religion, and on the duties of charity, at the same time that it fills up the vacant hours of superannuated life with that cheerfulness which ever attends laudable employment, tends to inspire ideas of patience and resignation. A devotional taste or spirit will afford the most lively enjoyments. The turbulent pleasures of youth may be succeeded by a religious fervour; by a gentle flame which is capable of warming the cold blood of age, and of affording satisfactions similar in degree to those of more

youthful passions, without their danger or criminality. Thus may the dignity of age be supported; and upon its dignity greatly depends its happiness. It is that alone which can repel the insolence of youth, too often instigated by the levity of thoughtless health, to forget the reverence which among the ancients was thought due to the hoary head. It is really lamentable to observe, in many families, the aged parent slighted and neglected, and, like an old-fashioned piece of furniture, or useless lumber, thrown aside with contempt. Such treatment is disgustingly unnatural; but it is not easily to be avoided where there is no personal merit,—no authority derived from superior wisdom,—no goodness of disposition to compensate the want of other attractive qualities. Tenderness and affection may be patient and assiduous; but who would not rather command the attention of respect, than excite the aid of pity? For the sake, however, of domestic happiness, it should be remembered that the authoritative air of wisdom must be tempered with a sweetness of manners; and it will be found that the reverence which does not exclude love is always the most desirable.

To preserve the sensibility of youth at an advanced period is difficult, because reason and philosophy, it is to be feared, can contribute little to its continuance. The loss of it is a natural consequence of decay. Much of the milk of human kindness, as it

is often called, flows from a fine contexture of the nerves; a contexture which is broken, and a subtilty which is destroyed, by long duration. Excess, however, precipitates the effects of time. Temperance in youth, together with the other advantages of that happy period, will protract its sensibility. And among the many arguments for early wisdom, this must have great weight,—that wisdom in youth is usually followed by happiness in age.

Perhaps nothing may contribute more to prolong the amiable dispositions of youth, than the retaining of a taste for its innocent amusements. We often grow old in our sentiments before we are stricken in years. We accustom ourselves to melancholy ideas of gradual decay, and before we are incapacitated for enjoyment, renounce the innocent satisfaction which we might partake. Pleasurable ideas, no less than painful, are caught by sympathy. He who frequents the circles of youth and cheerfulness, will find himself involuntarily inspired with gaiety; he will, for a while, forget his cares; his wrinkles will be smoothed, and his heart dilated. And though he will not experience the effect of Medea's cauldron in the renovation of his body, he will feel his mind, in a great measure, restored to its former vigour and activity. The books we read in age will have a great influence on the temper, as well as on the conduct and the understanding. After a certain period, many of us, from motives of mistaken pro-

priety, close our books of entertainment, and peruse nothing but those serious treatises, which, though proper at certain times, yet when perused without variety, induce a settled melancholy rather than a cheerful wisdom. Why should the imagination, that fertile source of all that is delightful, be left uncultivated at a time when pleasures become most deficient? Why should the works of a Horace, a Virgil, a Homer, be entirely laid aside for the gloomy meditations of a Seneca and Antoninus? The judicious mixture of books addressed to the fancy with those which enlighten the understanding, would increase the effect of both, at the same time that it would contribute to health and happiness by affording lively pleasure. Horace wished that he might not spend his old age without his lyre. Music is, indeed, a sweet companion in every stage of life; but to the last it is particularly adapted. It furnishes employment without painful exertion, and while it charms the sense, soothes the heart to repose. After all, to religion we must recur for the best ornament of the heavy head, for the firmest support and sweetest consolation of decaying nature.

CHAPTER LIII.

ON THE NECESSITY OF TEMPERANCE TO THE HEALTH OF THE MIND.

THE advantages which arise from regulating the several appetites to the health of the body, have been too repeatedly insisted upon to require any further animadversion. The present remarks shall be confined to temperance in diet, and to the advantages which accrue from it to the health of the mind.

How far the intellectual faculties are connected with the animal economy, is a disquisition which rather belongs to the natural philosopher than to the moralist. The experience of every individual must convince him of their alliance, so far as that the mind and body sympathize in all the modifications of pleasure or of pain. One would imagine, that the Stoical apathy was founded on a notion of the independence of the mind on the body. According to this philosophy, the mind may remain, as it were, an unconcerned spectator, while the body undergoes the most excruciating torments; but the moderns, however disposed to the Stoics, cannot help being

a little afflicted by a fit of the gout or stone. If the mind suffers with the body in the violence of pain and acuteness of disease, it is usually found to recover its wonted strength when the body is restored to health and vigour. But there is one kind of sympathy in which the mind continues to suffer even after the body is relieved. When the listless languor and the nauseous satiety of recent excess is gradually worn off, the mind still continues for a while to feel a burden which no efforts can remove, and to be surrounded with a cloud which time only can dissipate. Didactic authors, who have undertaken to prescribe rules for the student in his pursuit of knowledge, frequently insist on a regularity and abstinence in the articles of food and wine. It is, indeed, a fruitless labour to aim at increasing the stock of ideas, and improving the intellectual powers, without a strict observance of the laws of Temperance and Frugality. It has been remarked that the founders of colleges, who spared no expense in the embellishment of the buildings, were not so liberal in providing the indulgences of the table.

Perhaps those no less judicious than pious patrons of learning were sensible of the utility of frequent fasting and temperate meals, in promoting literary, as well as moral and religious improvement. Nature's wants they took care to satisfy; and nature, uncorrupted, wants but little.

Horace, in a satire in which he professedly enu-

merates the advantages of temperance, observes, with a beautiful energy of expression, "that the body, overcharged with the excess of yesterday, weighs down the mind together with itself, and fixes to the earth that particle of the divine spirit."

That Aurora is a friend to the Muses is almost proverbial, and, like all those aphorisms which are founded on experience, is a just remark; but, if an adequate cause were to be assigned for this effect, I know not whether it might not justly be attributed as much to fasting as to the refreshment of sleep. The emptiness of the stomach it is which tends to give to the understanding acuteness; to the imagination, vigour; and to the memory, retention.

But temperance must not be suffered to become unhealthy abstemiousness; for inanition is no less injurious to the mind and body than repletion. It is well known that the principal meal of the ancients was the supper; and it has been a matter of surprise that they, whose wisdom was so generally conspicuous in the several institutions of common life, should adopt a practice which is now universally esteemed injurious to health. It is, however, not unreasonable to suppose, that they were unwilling to clog their intellects by satisfying the cravings of hunger in the day-time, the season of business and deliberation, and chose rather to indulge themselves in the hour of natural festivity, when no care remained but to retire from the banquet to the pillow.

CHAPTER LIV.

ON THE VANITY AND FOLLY OF DEPARTING FROM OUR PROPER SPHERE TO BECOME AUTHORS AND ORATORS, WITHOUT PREVIOUS AND SUFFICIENT PREPARATION.

IT has been observed, that the writer who declaims against vanity is probably, at the same time, under its influence. He aims at glory by disclaiming against it. There are, however, some species of vanity which, in comparison with others, are not only excusable, but almost laudable. The vanity of wishing to appear in print, when the person who entertains it has been well educated, and is free from the necessity of attention to any particular business for his support, frequently operates as a stimulus to industry; and industry seldom fails of becoming, in some mode or other, beneficial. If he who is really a student by profession feels an ambition to become an author, though he should fail through the defect of his abilities, yet he cannot be said to have acted out of character; neither does it often happen that the time and attention which he has given to his work is ruinous to himself or family;

for study is his employment, and he has been labouring in his vocation. He has innocently amused, and perhaps improved himself, though unable to communicate with success either improvement or amusement to others. His vanity may be pardoned, though the fruits of it cannot be praised or admired.

But it is common in this age to find traders, and even manufacturers of a very subordinate rank, so fascinated with the brilliancy of literary fame, or so overrun with what has been called the itch of scribbling, that they devote that time and thought to tagging wretched rhymes, or penning paltry prose, which ought to be spent in providing food and clothing for themselves and their families.

The unfortunate man who has once contracted this lamentable distemper, immediately feels an aversion for his trade or manual employment. He considers himself as a great natural genius, who has been brought up by his injudicious parents to a business far beneath him, and for which he is totally unfit. He is too delicate for hard or disagreeable labour, and too volatile for the phlegmatic employment of a counter or a counting-house. But it is a certain truth, that we seldom succeed in the mode of life which we do not love; and distress of every kind is the certain consequence of relinquishing the service of Mercury, to pay court to the Muses. I wish the literary trader or mechanic to consider how

very much out of character a student by profession would appear, were he to invade the province of the work-shop, and to lay down the pen and the book for the chisel or the hammer, the last or the trowel. He would succeed but ill in his studies if he chose to spend his time at the counter and in the warehouse, instead of the library; and the trader and the mechanic may assure themselves, that notwithstanding the flattering suggestions of their own vanity, they usually appear no less absurd, and succeed no less unhappily, in writing verses, or composing orations, than the student would appear in making a shoe, or retailing cheese and haberdashery.

This unhappy rage for wasting paper is not only attended with the loss of fame, but of money. The materials necessary for printing, and the modes of announcing the important production to the public, are unavoidably attended with considerable expense; and, alas! the sale is usually so inconsiderable, as scarcely to pay for the wear of pens, and the consumption of ink. But it is really lamentable to see that money unnecessarily expended on paper and print, which ought to go to butchers, bakers, brewers and chandlers. I cannot help thinking it a benevolent action, when the periodical publications treat productions which originate from such authors as low tradesmen and mechanics, with sarcasm and ridicule. Though the lash of criticism may make

the simple culprit smart for a little while, it may have a most beneficial effect in saving himself from ridicule, or his family from starving.

A mercantile or mechanical author, swelled with fancied importance, and neglecting his business in pursuit of literary fame, would furnish no bad topic for theatrical derision. Indeed, any effectual method of exploding a folly which is so pregnant with misery in private life, is greatly desirable; and no treatment can be so effectual in suppressing what originates in vanity, as that which mortifies it most, —contempt and ridicule.

But this literary madness displays itself in various symptoms. If it produces many writers, I believe it produces more orators. They who cannot write, or, at least, cannot spell, are more inclined to let their genius evaporate by the volubility of the tongue than of the pen; by which method their defects in the science of orthography are concealed in elegance and pathos of elocution. If they can read, they derive political arguments from newspaper essays, and religious from Bolingbroke, Tindal, and the rest of that low and contemptible set of writers. If they cannot read, they succeed better still; for then the arguments must necessarily proceed from immediate inspiration.

Now, I wish I could prevail on those redoubtable rhetoricians to be hearers as well as speakers, and to listen to a very powerful and pathetic species of

oratory—the cries and distress of a family at home, reduced to a state of starving, while the orator, instead of mending soles and heel-pieces, or vending small-wares, is disgorging nonsense on an audience of fools, who must be more foolish than himself if they are able to listen to him with patience.

To all writers and orators who might be much more usefully and honourably employed at the anvil or the loom, in the shop or the counting-house, I will recommend the consideration of how many requisites are necessary to form a distinguished writer and a good orator. No man can communicate what is valuable to others, unless he has himself previously accumulated a plentiful store. A liberal education and much reading and reflection, superadded to a competent share of natural ability, can alone enable a writer to produce what may deserve the attention of a polished age. More leisure than can fall to the lot of those who live by mercantile or manual industry is necessary to attain an eminence in literature. And, with respect to the oratory which some of the lower orders are so fond of affecting, it is usually a habit of vain and noisy babbling, little dissimilar to the ravings of madness, and not unfrequently leading to it. I have myself seen the dreadful effects of enthusiasm. Many an honest tailor or shoemaker has turned preacher, and hurried himself and some of his hearers into absolute lunacy. And even that kind of speechifying which

some persons in the mercantile walks of life are so fond of displaying in clubs and committees, often tends to no other purpose but to waste time and fill the speaker with a self-conceit which sometimes terminates in his ruin, by giving his ambition a wrong direction. I am well assured that a misplaced attention to letters, and a foolish vanity in scribbling in newspapers and periodical repositories, have contributed greatly to increase the number of advertisements in the London *Gazette*. Nothing can be more laudable than that merchants, traders, and mechanics should fill up their intervals of leisure in reading books adapted to their various tastes, abilities, and previous improvements. But they must be cautious lest the charms of literary pursuits operate upon them in such a manner as to bring on that fatal distemper the scribbling itch, or the rage of oratory. The manuscripts which they should delight in composing should be day-books, ledgers, bills and letters to correspondents; and their rhetoric should chiefly be displayed behind the counter. The more of these the better; but when arithmetical figures give place to rhymes, and posting to prosing, then it is time to beware of a commission of bankruptcy.

The evil which I endeavour to remove is really a serious one. The poor scribbler or prater may be a very honest and good man; but his weakness, in this respect, will probably involve him in miseries

which weakness alone cannot deserve. His ill-success as an author, followed, as it will be, by slights, ridicule and censure, must be to him a perpetual source of vexation. Thus his favourite pursuit terminates in disappointment, and his necessary pursuit, his trade or employment, on which he depends for bread, fails to supply his wants because it is neglected. It is one of the best ornaments, as well as the surest means of success and happiness, in all the branches of the mercantile life, to be steady in an attention to what is called the main chance. Letters may form the amusement of the trader, but not his business. Letters, however, will soon be the business of his life if he devote himself to composition and learns to pant for literary fame. Letters, pursued within proper limits, will give his mind an elegance, and prevent it from being contracted by a constant attention to lucre; but cultivated with the ardour and constancy of a professed student, or author, or orator, they seldom fail of bringing on a complication of distress, to which their satisfaction cannot be a counterpoise. It would not be a bad rule if merchants, shopkeepers, and manufacturers who feel an inclination to poetry and other literary amusements, were always to make a point of providing for their wives and daughters before they think of devoting themselves entirely to those fantastic and extravagant mistresses, Thalia, Melpomene and their seven sisters.

CHAPTER LV.

ON FORMING CONNEXIONS WITHOUT FRIENDSHIP.

ONE can never sufficiently admire the liberal spirit of the great philosopher and orator of Rome, who, in his fine treatise "On Friendship," has exploded the idea, that the prospect of advantage is the foundation of this virtuous union; and asserted that it owes its origin to a conviction of mutual excellence in morals and disposition. This generous opinion appears still greater and more amiable when it is contrasted with the precepts and the practices of later ages, and particularly of the present. It is now one of the first admonitions given to a young man who is entering on the career of life, that he must at all events make connexions. And instead of informing him that he is to be directed in his choice of them by the appearance of moral and mental excellence, according to the sublime ideas of the noble Roman, his sagacious monitors suggest to him, that he is to be solely guided by the prospect of his interest and advancement in the road of avarice and ambition. Let a poor man

of approved character, learning and genius, and a rich man of fashion, with no pretensions to either, be introduced to a sensible and prudent youth, initiated in what is called the knowledge of the world, and you will see that, while the rich man is viewed with submission, complacence, and treated with almost idolatrous attention, the poor man stands by unnoticed and probably despised. On the slight acquaintance of a first introduction, the young proficient in worldly wisdom will not fail to call at the rich man's house, and leave a card with most respectful compliments; he would not come into the neighbourhood without paying that respect on any account whatever. He is not half so scrupulous about going to church, and paying his court to his Maker; but at the very time that he is bowing at the threshold of the rich man, the philosopher shall pass by, and because he possesses only a competency without superfluity, and without influence, he shall not be honoured with the common civility of a salutation. For it is a maxim with mere worldly minds, that, as it is an honour to know and be known by persons of fortune and title, so it is a disgrace to acknowledge the slightest intimacy with those who have nothing to recommend them but honour, spirit, learning and virtue. The formation of connexions is considered as so important, that it becomes, in effect, the principal object in the mean Chesterfieldian system of education. The boy's parents who

are professed people of the world, would not, on any account, fail to place him at a school to which the sons of the nobility are often sent; though they are ready to confess that little learning and great profligacy are the usual acquisitions in it. If the boy has grown intimate with the son of a rich man, his parents are better pleased with him than if he had learned by heart all Horace, Virgil and Homer. There is no submission so unmanly, and no attention so servile, but he is ready to pay them with alacrity, in accomplishing the important object of forming connexions. The mind is rendered, by these means, low and abject; and though the boy may afterwards rise to the honour of being a nobleman's chaplain, or his travelling companion, yet he will retain through life, and after he is promoted to the highest stations by his patron, the sentiments and spirit of his lordship's footman or *valet de chambre*. A man unacquainted with the world might suppose that the readiest road to preferment, in several of the professions, is to acquire the knowledge and accomplishments which are necessary to a skilful practice of them. But this is really not the case. The surest and most compendious method pointed out by the wise men of this world is to form connexions. Accordingly, we observe many persons in the professions who aim at distinction and advancement, by no means confining themselves, or growing pale over their professional pursuits, but studying the graces of dress

and address, and the arts of simulation and dissimulation. We see them frequenting all public places, giving and receiving invitations to dinners and suppers, and evidently spending so much time in dissipation, as to leave scarcely an hour in a day for reading and study.

But would you forbid a young man the formation of connexions by which so many have availed themselves, and risen to real and deserved grandeur? By no means; I would only teach him to preserve a just reverence for himself, and to despise all riches and all honours which must be purchased at the expense of truth, virtue, and manly spirit. I would, like others, advise every young man (and it is chiefly to the young that I presume to suggest admonitions), to form connexions, or rather friendships; but to be guided in his choice of them by personal merit and approved character. I do not say, for it would be unnatural and unwise, that he should neglect interest, or despise advancement, when it can be procured consistently with the spirit and integrity of an honest and delicate mind.

If preferment comes unlooked for, and unsought by servile compliance, it is an honour as well as an advantage, and is doubly welcome. But if I must sacrifice my reason and my conscience, my honour and my freedom, in forming connexions and pursuing preferment, I relinquish the chase, and eagerly retire to competency, contentment and liberty.

CHAPTER LVI.

MORAL MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS TO BE OBSERVED.

TEMPERANCE preserves the soul unclouded, and the body in health. It is one of the chief auxiliaries to independence and fortune, and the true guide to old age. *Non esse emacem est vectigal*, cannot be too often repeated to the young and inexperienced. Some are continually squandering away their money for what they do not want. Dress, frippery, pleasures without taste, and society without friendship, absorb more than would be sufficient to enjoy every rational delight, and at the same time to allow beneficence to the poor. To husband well a small income is the best proof of good sense, good morals, and attention to duty. A man who has but little, and yet makes that little do, can neither be a drunkard nor a gambler, nor fond of indulging in vicious or expensive pleasures. "I like society, but I detest company"—said a certain person; and his taste was right. Without the charms of society, and an unreserved intercourse

with those whom we can love or esteem, life is a melancholy blank; but a confused mixture of people, or company, as it is generally called, who have no common tie of union, no joint interest or pleasure in their association, presents to a wise man more to disgust than to charm. Be cautious in forming friendships, but when once you have fixed with prudence, let not the tongue of malevolence or of guile separate you from such as are worthy of esteem. The more intimate you are with any person, the more likely it is that you should be well acquainted with all his virtues and all his weaknesses. How absurd, then, to be influenced in your opinion by those who, perhaps, scarcely know him!

Next to moral goodness, study the happy art of making yourself agreeable to others, by affability and pleasing manners. They who neglect paying that complaisance which they owe to others, will be sure to be neglected in their turn. Civility, in the first instance, is like putting out so much principal, which will duly be repaid with interest.

There are persons of such an unamiable temper, so totally divested of all that can do honour to humanity, that it is no more possible to love them than to cherish a rattlesnake; yet they never fail to resent the slightest appearance of indifference, though their conduct might even justify aversion. It might be supposed no one would be proud of such an unlovely disposition—their own curse and that

of all their connexions; but there is a pride in baseness, as well as a pride in worth. There is a manifest distinction between good nature and good humour, though they are frequently confounded. The one is born with us, the other is the effect of education or reflection, and may be acquired. Good nature frequently savours of folly; but good humour is founded on principle, and will always be consistent.

Aim at perfection yourself, but expect not to find it in others; and let no slight defects or casual misunderstandings estrange you from your relatives and friends.

Be good, be virtuous for your own sake, without depending too much on any temporal recompense. An equal retribution, according to our deserts, belongs to another state, and is only to be found beyond the grave. In every thing regard the end. Before passion has gained an ascendency, bring its suggestions to the test of reason. Let no fleeting pleasure reduce you into imprudence; no temporary good lead you from a permanent one, nor any difficulty deter you, when convinced that it is your duty to persevere.

CHAPTER LVII.

MAXIMS AND PRACTICES OF THE WORLD—TO BE SHUNNED.

LET the amassing of money be your only study; and to this sacrifice the feelings of the heart, the ties of nature, and the laws of honour. Never notice a poor person, whatever merit he may possess; nor neglect to show respect to a rich one, though he may have as many vices as the hairs of his head.

When you see a worthy man run down, take a pelt at him with the rest, instead of defending or protecting him. If he is unfortunate, he cannot turn again; and it will show you possess spirit as well as your neighbours. If you know a secret, keep it till it will answer your purpose to divulge it, and no longer. Every thing should be turned to interest; and honour and friendship are merely names.

If you suspect any of your friends of foibles, accuse them loudly of crimes; for it is the modern way of reformation. Think and speak as ill as possible of every one save yourself; and if they are

not bad already, you are likely to have the satisfaction of making them so, when you deprive them of reputation.

It may suit you to be frugal and virtuous in reality, but not to appear so. Affect the rake and the spendthrift, in order to gain credit with the worthless. Though it may be inconvenient and disagreeable to be quite ignorant, never study to be learned. Half the world will call you pedantic if you never break Priscian's head, and the other half will spite you for your superior knowledge.

If you receive good advice, never follow it, for it savours of arrogance to direct you; and it shows spirit to act as you think proper yourself.

It is better to beg your bread than to submit in the slightest degree to those who have a right and the ability to advise you. Obstinacy is a glorious character. When you suffer for it, think yourself a martyr.

Believe those only who flatter you, and study to mislead you; a real friend is often a disagreeable monitor. He will not favour your prejudices, nor praise you when you are injuring yourself, which you have an undoubted right to do.

Make yourself as odious as you can to those who will not humour you in every thing. Affection may be forced by resistance; and you will become loved, in proportion as you deserve to be hated.

If you know any more respected than yourself,

never try to imitate the good qualities which gain them good-will and esteem; but exert yourself to blacken their reputation, and to make them appear as unamiable as yourself. If you cannot have everything just to your wish, even if you should not deserve the comforts you may command, be quite miserable; and throw the blame on your friends and connexions, not on your own temper and conduct. Let your own reason be the standard of right, and alone direct you what to do, or to leave undone. Who should know better than yourself what is prudent and expedient? Besides, when you please yourself, you have no one to blame, whatever may happen—a consolation of the highest importance to secure.

Be reserved to your friends, and confidential only with your enemies. Make a mystery of every thing to fret and torment those who wish you well; and if you can make one feeling and honest heart unhappy, think you have not lived or acted in vain.

By following these maxims and practices, you have the glory of being detested by every good and virtuous mind; and perhaps the notoriety of infamy is dearer in your estimation, than the silent consciousness of desert!

CHAPTER LVIII.

ON FORMING A TASTE FOR SIMPLE PLEASURES.

TO argue against pleasure in general is absurd. It is the law of nature that every animal should prefer the agreeable sensations to the disagreeable. But it is incumbent on the moralist to explode those pleasures which, though they are transient and unsatisfactory in themselves, are yet found ultimately to occasion permanent pain and real injury. Perhaps the most effectual mode of accomplishing this purpose is, not to arraign pleasure in general, but to substitute other pleasures in the place of those which are hurtful. Man must be amused and delighted; and pernicious amusements and promised delights will be pursued if others cease to be obvious.

It is certain that nature has interspersed a great number of objects capable of affording the liveliest delight, without danger of future pain, and even with the probability of deriving improvement and additional pleasure by reflecting on the past enjoyment.

Such, indeed, are those innocent pleasures which we follow in early youth with cheerful ardour, and which we enjoy with sincere delight, before we are vitiated and hardened by a long intercourse with a depraved world; before the qualities of the lamb and dove are exchanged for the less amiable wisdom of the wolf and the serpent.

Amidst all the improvements which we make in a state of high civilization, we lose some natural tastes and propensities which were favourable to virtue. We acquire wants and notions which disturb our repose, and cause a feverish anxiety, ever thirsting, and never satisfied. The simple and innocent satisfactions of nature are usually within our reach; and, as they excite no violent perturbation in the pursuit, so are they enjoyed without tumult, and relinquished without long or painful regret. It will, then, render essential service both to happiness and morality, if we can persuade men in general to taste and to contract an habitual relish for the genuine satisfactions of uncorrupted nature.

One of the first affections which the heart perceives is filial piety. As years increase, this affection dilates, and extends itself to brothers and sisters, relatives and domestics. The child loves and is beloved by all around him. Amidst the conversation, the events, the endearments and tender duties of a family, he finds full play for all his faculties and propensities, and is often, by his own subsequent

confession, happier at this early age than in any period which succeeds it.

I say then, that were a taste for this simple pleasure retained; were men at a mature age led to seek their happiness in domestic life, and in the exercise of the mild virtues of family offices, their enjoyments, though less brilliant and noisy, would be purer and more substantial.

But, on the contrary, we see them no sooner arrived at maturity, than they eagerly leave the nest, and wander, in search of an untried and an imaginary bliss, through all the wilds of dissipation. In the precipitate pursuit, innocence is often lost; and whatever progress is made in refinement, little is added to solid happiness. Our interest, as we falsely call it, and our honour, become the idols whom we devoutly worship, and on whose altars we sacrifice health, truth, peace and liberty. We are, indeed, so deeply engaged in our objects, that we cannot advert to the beauties of nature, those fertile sources of unadulterated pleasure. The young mind is always delighted with rural scenery. The earliest poetry was pastoral, and every juvenile poet of the present day delights to indulge in the luxuriance of a rural description. A taste for these pleasures will render the morning walk at least as delightful as the evening assembly. The various forms which nature assumes in the vicissitudes of the seasons, constitute a source of complacency which can never be exhausted.

How grateful to the senses the freshness of the herbage, the fragrancy of the flowers, and all those simple delights of the field, which the poets have, from the earliest age, no less justly than exuberantly described!

"It is all mere fiction," exclaims the man of the world—"the painting of a visionary enthusiast." He feels not, he cannot feel, their truth. He sees no charms in herbs and blossoms; the melody of the grove is no music to his ear; and this happens, because he has lost, by his own fault those tender sensibilities which nature had bestowed. They are still daily perceived in all their perfection by the ingenuous and innocent, and they have been most truly described by feeling poets, as contributing to pure, real, and exalted delight.

Yet the possessor of extensive lands, if he is a man of fashion and spirit, forsakes the sweet scenes of rural nature, and shuts himself up in a coffee-house, at a gaming-table, in a fetid assembly; and leaves that liberal air which breathes over his lawns, and agitates his forests, to be inhaled by his menial rustics. He perverts the designs of nature, and despises the hereditary blessings of Providence; and he receives the adequate punishment in a restless life, perpetually seeking and never finding satisfaction. But the employments of agriculture, independently of their profit, are most congenial and pleasing to human nature. An uncorrupted mind sees

in the progress of vegetation, and in the manners and excellences of those animals which are destined to our immediate service, such charms and beauties as art can seldom produce. Husbandry may be superintended by an elegant mind; nor is it by any means necessary that they who engage in it should contract a coarseness of manners or a vulgarity of sentiment. It is most favourable to health, to plenty, to repose, and to innocence; and great, indeed, must be the objects which justify a reasonable creature in relinquishing these. Are plays, and balls, and nocturnal assemblies of whatever denomination; are debaucheries in all their modifications which tend to rob us of sleep, to lessen our patrimony, to injure our health, to render us selfish, vicious, thoughtless, and useless, equivalent to these? Reason replies in the negative; yet the almost universal departure from innocence and simplicity will leave the affirmative established by a corrupt majority.

It is not without a sigh that a thinking man can pass by a lordly mansion, some sweet retreat, deserted by its falsely-refined possessor, who is stupidly carousing in the taverns of a polluted city. When he sees the chimney without smoke in the venerable house, where all the country was once welcomed to partake of princely hospitality, he cannot help lamenting that progress of refinement, which, in rendering the descendants of the great,

fine gentlemen, has left them something less than men, through the defect of manly virtues.

The superintendence of a garden might of itself occupy a life elegantly and pleasurably. Nothing is better able to gratify the inherent love of novelty, for Nature is always renewing her variegated appearance. She is infinite in her productions, and the life of man may come to its close before he has seen half the pictures which she is able to display. The taste for gardening in our country is at present pure. Nature is restored to her throne, and reigns majestically beautiful in rude magnificence. The country abounds with cultivated tracts truly paradisiacal. But as the contemplative observer roams over the lawn, and enjoys the shade of the weeping willow, he is often led to inquire, "Where is now the owner of this wilderness of sweets? Happy man!" he exclaims, "to possess such a spot as this, and to be able at all times to taste the pleasure which I feel springing in my bosom." But, alas! the owner is engaged in other scenes. He is rattling over the streets of the metropolis, and pursuing all the sophisticated joys which succeed to supply the place where Nature is relinquished. If he condescends to pay an annual visit to the retreat, he brings with him all his acquired inclinations; and while he sits at the card-table or at the banquet, and thinks of little else than promoting his interest at the next

election, he leaves the shrub to blossom, and the rose to diffuse its sweets in unobserved solitude.

Can it be believed that Nature bestowed beauty on the foliage of a flower but with a view to please? The fruit might be produced, in the same process, without any richness and diversity of colour.

No other animals are sensible of their grace but the human; and yet the austere man of business, or the vain man of pleasure, will arraign another with a face of importance for his admiration of a flower. He calls the taste trifling and useless. But is not a refusal to be pleased with such appearances, like the malignant unthankfulness of a sullen guest who refuses to taste the most delicious dainties prepared for his entertainment?

Fine weather is the source of a very sensible pleasure; but he who is engrossed by vice, or by business, will live half a life without admiring the beauties of a blue sky, basking in the vernal sunshine, or inhaling, with any consciousness of delight, the balsam of a western gale.

A fondness for the pleasing animals which Nature has placed around us, is another source of natural, and pure, and innocent amusement. The plumage and song of the bird were, doubtless, intended to delight the ear and the eye. Who can behold the playful lamb without complacency? The fidelity

of the dog, the generosity of the horse, and the characteristic qualities, as well as shape and beauty, of all animated nature, are admirably adapted to charm the heart which is yet unspoiled.

But in a proper intercourse and behaviour among our fellow-creatures is found to consist our principal and most constant delight. To do good, and to prevent evil, as far as the sphere of our influence or activity extends, is an infallible method of deriving to ourselves pleasurable emotions. And if we consult what passes in our bosoms before our youthful sensibilities are blanked, we shall find that nature has taught us to feel the sweetest pleasure in relieving distress, and in communicating happiness.

The cunning and the crafty, of whom consists a great part of the busy crowd, who derive an unnatural influence from the possession of riches, will deem the simplicity which I have recommended, folly. Such men will deem truth also folly. They consider virtue and truth as words invented to delude the simple ones; but, indeed, to retain through life something of the simplicity of the infant, will render the improved and cultivated man truly wise. For, after all the refinements of false philosophy, and the lower arts of worldly cunning, honesty is our truest interest, and innocence our best wisdom.

CHAPTER LIX.

A CULTIVATED MIND NECESSARY TO RENDER RETIREMENT AGREEABLE.

FEW are able to bear solitude; and, though retirement is the ostensible object of the greater part, yet when they are enabled by success to retire, they feel themselves unhappy. Peculiar powers and elegance of mind are necessary to enable us to draw all our resources from ourselves. In a remote and solitary village the mind must be internally active in a great degree, or it will be miserable for want of employment. But in great and populous cities, even while it is passive, it will be constantly amused. It is impossible to walk the streets without finding the attention powerfully solicited on every side. Exertion is scarcely necessary. Objects pour themselves into the senses, and it would be difficult to prevent their admittance. But, in retirement, there must be a spirit of philosophy and a store of learning, or else the fancied scenes of bliss will vanish like the colours of the rainbow. Poor

Cowley might be said to be melancholy mad. He languished for solitude, and wished to hide himself in the wilds of Africa. But, alas! he was not able to support the solitude of a country village within a few miles of the metropolis!

I lately paid a visit to a friend who has withdrawn from the hurry of business to enjoy the sweets of a rural retirement in the country. His house is situated on an eminence which commands a beautiful prospect. At the bottom of the garden, which is laid out in a taste peculiar to himself, yet entirely conformable to nature, runs a small river, remarkable for the smoothness of its surface and the clearness of its water; but, though the house is perfectly agreeable in situation, some have thought that the freshness of the air, the beauty of the scenery, and the silence of retirement, can by no means compensate the want of a neighbourhood; for, to say the truth, there is not a single house to be seen within a mile of the little solitary villa, except one poor cottage inhabited by the gardener.

Though I was at first, like the rest, much disposed to disapprove the solitude of my friend's habitation, yet when I had resided with him a little while, and had enjoyed the calm and rational pleasure of philosophic ease, I became enthusiastically fond of sequestered life. It must, indeed, be confessed, that Hilario possesses some peculiar qualities which seem calculated to render solitude agreeable.

He has a natural sweetness of temper, a refined taste for literature and music, and, at the same time, some relish for the common diversions of the country. But, though he spends the greater part of his leisure hours in the alternate amusements of his books, his harpsichord, his dogs, and his horses, yet he is never so happy as in the enjoyment of the conversation of a friend whose manners and sentiments are congenial with his own. It must not be forgotten that he derives much of his pleasure from a knowledge of botany and natural philosophy, which he acquired in the former part of his life. His acquaintance with these sciences enables him to make great improvements in the cultivation of his garden, where almost every plant which is curious, useful, or beautiful, is brought to its highest perfection.

It might, perhaps, be supposed, from the seclusion of his life, that he is utterly unacquainted with the living world. He takes care, however, to inform himself of the topics of the day, by attending to periodical publications of repute and authenticity; and he is allowed to make most pertinent observations on the taste, manners, and politics of the present times. His remarks have always this peculiar excellence, derived, perhaps, from his distance from parties, that they savour of that liberal spirit which marks the true gentleman, and the citizen of the world. The great evil of solitude is, that reason becomes weak for want of exercise, while the powers

of imagination are invigorated by indulgence. Fanaticism and bigotry, melancholy and despair, have usually been produced in the cave and the convent. Happy in a mind furnished with ideas of every kind, Hilario is never at a loss for occasions to exert the powers of his reason; and can at all times divert his imagination from the horrors of the spleen, by the pleasing employments of literary pursuits. The avocations of an active life shortened a visit which I would gladly have protracted. I return to the engagements of the world, supported by the soothing expectation that a time will come when I shall be able to spend the evening of life in a sweet retreat, like that of Hilario.

With a virtuous and cheerful family, with a few faithful and good-humoured friends, with a well-chosen collection of elegant books, and with a competence, one may enjoy comfort even in the deserted village, which the city, with all its diversions, cannot supply.

CHAPTER LX.

ON AN EXCESSIVE AND INDISCRIMINATE LOVE OF COMPANY, AND AN ABHORRENCE OF OCCASIONAL SOLITUDE.

THERE are few conditions less desirable than that of the man who has no resources in himself, and who is totally dependent on others for his daily amusement. Yet there are great numbers who consider solitude as synonymous with misery, and who are ready to associate with any company rather than be left alone. This weakness, for a great weakness it is, renders the mind base and mean enough to submit to any neglect, coolness, or contempt, in order to be admitted into a party, or not to be excluded from a dinner. It is the cause and the consequence of a feverish and restless state, totally inconsistent with solid comfort and rational enjoyment.

The love of company and of social pleasures is, indeed, natural, and attended with some of the sweetest satisfactions of human life; but, like every other love, when it proceeds beyond the limits of modera-

tion, it ceases to produce its natural effects, and terminates in disgusting satiety. The foundation-stone and the pillar on which we build the fabric of our felicity must be laid in our hearts. Amusement, mirth, agreeable variety, and even improvement, may be sometimes sought in the gaiety of mixed company; but, if we place our whole happiness on these, we shall do little more than raise castles in the air, or build houses on the sand.

To derive the proper pleasure and improvement from company, it ought to be select, and to consist of persons of character, respectable both from their morals and their understandings. Mixed and undistinguished society tends only to dissipate our ideas, and induce a laxity of principles and practice. The pleasure it affords is coarse and vulgar. Indeed, it commonly ends in weariness and disgust, as even they are ready to confess who yet constantly pursue it as if their chief good consisted in living in a crowd, amidst noise without mirth, and feasting without friendship.

Among those, indeed, who are exempted by their circumstances from professional and official employments, and who professedly devote themselves to a life of pleasure, little else seems to constitute the idea of it, but an unceasing succession of company, public or private. The dress, and other circumstances preparatory to the enjoyment of this pleasure, scarcely leave a moment for reflection. Day after

day is spent in the same toilsome round, till a habit is formed which renders dissipation necessary to existence. One week without it would probably induce a lowness of spirits, which might terminate in despair and suicide. When the mind has no anchor, it will suffer a kind of shipwreck; it will be dashed on rocks, or sunk in whirlpools. What, indeed, is life or its enjoyments, without settled principles, laudable purposes, mental exertions, and internal comfort? It is merely a vapour, a state of torment, since it possesses a restless power of action productive of little else but weariness and vexation.

I very seriously recommend, therefore, to all who wish to enjoy their existence (and who entertains not that wish?) that they should acquire not only a power of bearing, but of taking a pleasure in, temporary solitude. Every one must, indeed, sometimes be alone. Let him not repine when he is alone, but learn to set a value on the golden moments. It is then that he is enabled to study himself and the world around him. It is then that he has an opportunity of seeing things as they are, and of removing the deceitful veil which almost everything assumes in the busy scene of worldly employments. The soul in solitude is enabled to retire into herself, and to exert those energies which are always attended with sublime pleasure. She is enabled to see the dependent, frail, and wretched state of man, as the

child of nature; and, incited by her discovery, to implore grace and protection from the Lord of the universe. They, indeed, who constantly fly from solitude, can seldom be religious; for religion requires meditation. They may be said to live without God in the world; not, it is true, from atheistical principles, but from a carelessness of disposition; a truly deplorable state, the consciousness of which could not fail to cloud the gaiety of those halcyon beings who sport in the sunshine of what they deem unremitted pleasure.

I may, I believe, assert that the love of pleasure, the follies of fashion, and the extravagances of dissipation, are greater enemies to religion than all the writers who have endeavoured to attract notice by questioning the truth of Christianity. Many, it is to be feared, have lived and died in the regions of gaiety, without ever having felt a sense of religion. Prayers, sermons, churches, the clergy, and the Gospel—the external instruments of piety, were things which never struck them, and from which they received no more impression than a blind man from the exhibition of a pageant. To feel the fine sensibilities of devotion, it is necessary to commune with our own hearts upon our beds, and to be still. If we had but courage to withdraw ourselves from the world, we should often find in our study, and on our knees, such pleasures as the world cannot give.

I may also add, that few will be found to display prudence or consistency of conduct who do not sometimes step aside from the tumult of the throng to consider coolly their circumstances and situation. Life cannot proceed fortuitously without incurring momentary danger. Plans of conduct must be formed, precautions taken, errors retrieved, and the probabilities of futurity considered. But all this requires thought, and thought, retirement. Not only religion, virtue, and prudence will be promoted by occasional solitude, but a relish will be given to the rational enjoyments of a pleasurable life. Vicissitude is essential to every state of durable gratification. He who has spent a little part of his time in his closet, or his groves, will partake of the gaieties of the assembly with fresh delight; as a man, when he is hungry, finds an additional flavour in his daily food.

But it must be remembered that in recommending solitude, I mean only occasional solitude. There is no doubt but that man was made for action, and that his duties and pleasures are often most numerous and most important amidst the busy hum of men. Many vices, and many corrupt dispositions, have been fostered in a solitary life. Monkery is not favourable to human nature nor to human happiness; neither is unlimited dissipation. But cautions and remedies must always be applied where the greatest danger appears. And I think it will admit

no dispute, but that, in this age and nation, men are much more likely to be injured by too constant an intercourse with the world, than by too much retirement and seclusion.

But nothing without moderation is durable or wise. Therefore, let there be a sweet interchange of solitude and association, of repose and activity. A few hours spent every day by the votaries of pleasure in serious meditation, would render their pleasure pure, and more unmixed with misery. It would give them knowledge, so that they would see how far they might advance in their pursuit without danger; and resolution, so that they might retreat when danger approached. It would teach them how to live; a knowledge which, indeed, they think they possess already; and it would also teach them—what they are often too little solicitous to learn—how to die.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE PLEASURES OF A GARDEN.

NOT he alone is to be esteemed a benefactor to mankind who makes an useful discovery, but he also who can point out and effectually recommend an innocent and obvious pleasure. Of this kind are all the pleasures arising from the observation of nature, and they are highly agreeable to every taste uncorrupted by vicious indulgence.

There will always be many in a rich and civilized country who, as they are born to the enjoyment of competent estates, engage not in business, either civil or professional. But the restless mind must either find or make an object. Pleasure, therefore, becomes to the unemployed a serious pursuit. Whatever is its essence, and whatever the declaimer may urge against it, pleasure will be sought by all who possess the liberty of election. It becomes, then, incumbent on the moralist, not only to urge the performance of duty, but to recommend objects that please without enervating the mind, and gratify desire without corrupting the principles.

Rural scenes of almost every kind are delight-

ful to the mind of man. The verdant plain, the flowery mead, the meandering stream, the playful lamb, the warbling of birds, are all capable of exciting emotions gently agreeable. But the misfortune is, that the great part are hurried on in the career of life with too great rapidity to be able to give attention to that which solicits no passion. The darkest habitation in the dirtiest street of the metropolis, where money can be earned, has greater charms, with many, than the groves of Hagley.

Yet the patron of refined pleasure, the elegant Epicurus, fixed the seat of his enjoyment in a garden. He was of opinion that a tranquil spot, furnished with the united sweets of art and nature, was the best adapted to delicate repose. And even the severe philosophers of antiquity were wont to discourse with peculiar delight in the shade of a spreading tree in some cultivated plantation.

It is obvious, on intuition, that nature often intended solely to please the eye in her vegetable productions. She decorates the floweret that springs beneath our feet in all the perfection of external beauty. She has clothed the garden with a constant succession of various hues. Even the leaves of the tree undergo a pleasing vicissitude. The fresh verdure which they exhibit in the spring, the various shades which they assume in summer, the yellow and russet tinge of autumn, and the nakedness of winter, afford a constant pleasure to a lively imagi-

nation. From the snow-drop to the moss-rose, the flower-garden displays an infinite variety of shape and colour. The taste of the florist has been ridiculed as trifling; yet, surely, without reason. Did nature bring forth the tulip and the lily, the rose and the honeysuckle, to be neglected by the haughty pretender to superior reason? To omit a single social duty for the cultivation of a polyanthus, were ridiculous as well as criminal; but to pass by the beauties lavished before us without observing them is no less ingratitude than stupidity. A bad heart finds little amusement but in a communication with the ambitious world, where scope is given for the indulgence of selfish passions; but an amiable disposition is commonly known by a taste for the beauties of the animal and vegetable creation.

The northern countries of Europe are by no means well adapted to the true enjoyment of rural scenery. Our vernal seasons, which the poets celebrate in all the luxuriousness of description, are commonly rendered cold and uncomfortable by the long continuance of an easterly wind. Our poets borrowed their ideas of a spring from the poets of Italy, who collected theirs from nature in their climate. A genial day in April is among us the subject of general congratulation. And while the lilac blossoms, and the laburnum drops its golden clusters, the shivering possessor of them is constrained to seek warmth at the side of his chimney. Yet from the

temperature of our climate we derive a beauty unknown in the gardens of a warmer country. Few objects are more pleasing than the smooth lawn; but the soft verdure which constitutes its beauty is not to be found in more southern climates. It is certainly true, that the rarity of our truly vernal weather, like that of other delights, increases the pleasure of it; and it is probable, for this reason, that an Englishman, notwithstanding his complaints against his atmosphere, enjoys the pleasures of his garden in their full perfection. A fine day, says Sir William Temple, is a kind of sensual pleasure; but surely it would cease to be such if every day were fine.

A practical attention to a garden is by some esteemed a degrading employment. It is true, indeed, that pastoral and agricultural manners, if we may form a judgment from the dignified descriptions of Virgil, are greatly degenerated. The employments of shepherds and husbandmen are now become mean and sordid. The work of the garden is usually left to a peasant. Nor is it unreasonable to assign the labour which wearies without amusement to those who are sufficiently amused by the prospect of their wages. But the operations of grafting, or inoculating, of pruning, of transplanting, are curious experiments in natural philosophy; and that they are pleasing as well as curious, those can testify who remember what they felt on seeing their attempts in the amusement of practical gardening attended with success.

Among the employments suitable to old age, Cicero has enumerated the superintendence of a garden. It requires no great exertion of mind or body; and its satisfactions are of that kind which please without violent agitation. Its beneficial influence on health is an additional reason for an attention to it at an age when infirmities abound. In almost every description of the seats of the blessed, ideas of a garden seem to have predominated. The word Paradise itself is synonymous with garden. The fields of Elysium, that sweet region of poesy, are adorned with all that imagination can conceive to be delightful. Some of the most pleasing passages of Milton are those in which he represents the happy pair engaged in cultivating their blissful abode, the garden of Eden. Poets have always been delighted with the beauties of a garden. Lucan is represented by Juvenal as reposing in his garden. Virgil's Georgics prove him to have been captivated with rural scenes; though, to the surprise of his readers, he has not assigned a book to the subject of a garden. Our Shenstone made it his study; but, with all his taste and fondness for it, he, it must be confessed, was not happy in it. The captivating scenes which he created at the Leasowes afforded him, it is said, little pleasure in the absence of spectators. The truth is, he made the embellishment of his grounds, which should have been the amusement of his life, the business of it; and involved himself in such troubles by the ex-

penses it occasioned, as necessarily excluded the tranquil enjoyment of a scene which nature and art had combined to render delightful.

It is the lot of few, in comparison, to possess territories like his, extensive and sufficiently well adapted to constitute an ornamental farm. Still fewer are capable of supporting the expense of preserving it in good condition.[1] But let not the rich suppose they have appropriated the pleasures of a garden. The possessor of an acre, or a smaller portion, may receive a real pleasure from observing the progress of vegetation, even in a plantation of culinary plants. A very limited tract, properly attended to, will furnish ample employment for an individual. Nor let it be thought a mean care; for the same hand that raised the cedar formed the hyssop on the wall. Even the orchard, cultivated solely for advantage, exhibits beauties unequalled in the shrubbery; nor can the green-house produce an appearance to exceed the blossom of the apple and the almond.

Amusement reigns, says Dr. Young, man's great demand. Happy were it, if the amusement of a garden were more generally relished. It would surely be more conducive to health, and the preservation of our faculties to extreme old age, were that time which is now devoted to the dice and to the card-table, spent in the open air, and in active employment, amidst the beauties of cultivated nature.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE PLEASURES OF REFLECTION.

THAT the enjoyments of the understanding exceed the pleasure of sense, is a truth confessed by all who are capable of exerting the faculties of thinking in their full vigour. But by these pleasures are generally understood sublime contemplations on subjects of science and abstruse disquisition; contemplation which can only be the result of uncommon powers and extraordinary efforts. But there are intellectual pleasures of another kind, to the enjoyment of which neither great abilities nor learning are required. These are no other than the pleasures of reflection, which are open to the illiterate mechanic as well as to the sage philosopher, and afford to a good mind some of the sweetest satisfactions of human life.

There are few who have not felt pleasing sensations arising from a retrospective view of the first period of their lives. To recollect the puerile amusements, the petty anxieties, and the eager pursuits of childhood, is a task in which all delight. It

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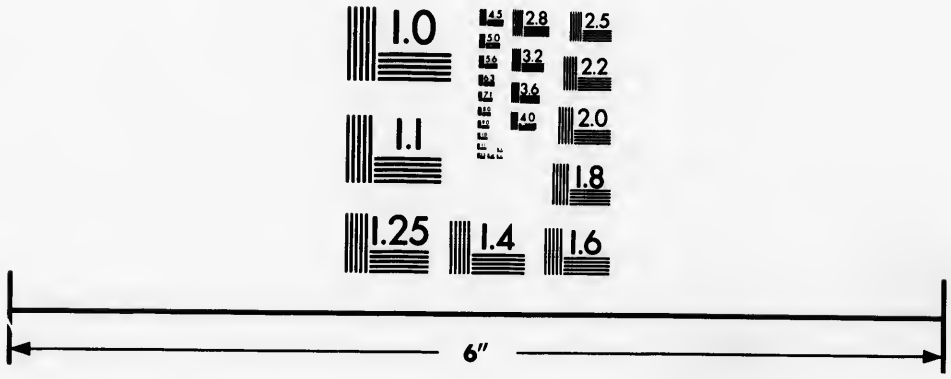

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is common to observe, that on no subject do men dwell with such pleasure as the boyish tricks and wanton pranks which they practised at school. The hoary head looks back with a smile of complacency, mixed with regret, on the season when health glowed on the cheek, when lively spirits warmed the heart, and when toil strung the nerves with vigour.

Cicero has remarked, that events the most disagreeable during their immediate influence, give an exquisite satisfaction when their consequences have ceased; and Æneas solaces his companions under the hardships they endured with the consideration, that the remembrance of their sufferings would one day give them satisfaction. That these sentiments are just, is well known to those who have enjoyed the conversation of the soldier. Battles, skirmishes, and sieges, at which, perhaps, he trembled during the action, furnish him with topics of conversation and sources of pleasure for the remainder of his life.

Reflection is the properest employment, and the sweetest satisfaction, in a rational old age. Destitute of strength and vigour necessary for bodily exertions, and furnished with observations by experience, the old man finds his greatest pleasure to consist in wandering in imagination over past scenes of delight, recounting the adventures of his youth, the vicissitudes of human life, and the public events to which he is proud of having been an eye-witness.

Of so exalted a nature are these enjoyments, that theologists have not hesitated to assert that to recollect a well-spent life is to anticipate the bliss of a future existence. The professors of philosophy, who will be acknowledged to have understood the nature of true and substantial pleasure better than the busy, the gay, and the dissipated, have ever shown a predilection for privacy and solitude.

No other cause have they assigned for their conduct in forsaking society, than that the noise and hurry of the world are incompatible with the exertion of calm reason and dispassionate reflection. The apothegm of that ancient who said, "he was never less alone than when by himself," is not to be considered merely as an epigrammatic turn. In vain was it to pursue philosophy in the Suburra; she was to be courted with success only in the sequestered shade of rural retirement.

Were the powers of reflection cultivated by habit, mankind would at all times be able to derive a pleasure from their own breasts as rational as it is exalted. To the attainment of this happiness, a strict adherence to the rules of virtue is necessary; for let it be remembered, that none can feel the pleasures of reflection who do not enjoy the peace of innocence.

CHAPTER LXIII.

TASTE FOR THE CULTIVATION OF FLOWERS, AND OF BEAUTIFUL SHRUBS AND TREES.

BEAUTY of every kind is formed to allure; and there is this peculiar advantage in contemplating the beauties of vegetable nature, that we may permit our hea[illegible] to be captivated by them, without apprehension [illegible]y dangerous or dishonourable servitude. A taste for the beauties of vegetation is the mark of a pure and innocent mind, and, at the same time, one of the best preservations of purity and innocence. It diverts the attention from the turbulent scenes of folly, and superinduces a placid tranquillity highly favourable to the gentle virtues, and to the permanency of our most refined enjoyments. I have often been surprised to find those who possessed a very acute susceptibility of artificial or literary grace, and were powerfully affected by the beauties of a poem, a piece of sculpture, or a painting, not at all more sensible of the charms of a tree or a floweret than a common and inelegant spectator. They have dwelt with

rapture on a fine description of the Vale of Tempe, they have entered into all the delight which a Shakspeare or a Milton meant to communicate in their enchanting pictures of flowery and sylvan scenes, and yet can walk through a wood, or tread on a bed of violets and primroses, without appearing to be affected with any peculiar pleasure. This is certainly the effect of a superficial judgment; for there is no truth of which philosophers have been longer convinced, than that the realities of nature infinitely surpass the most perfect productions of imitation.

The beauty of colour, though justly esteemed subordinate to that of shape, is yet formed to delight the eye more immediately and more universally. When colour and shape are united in the works of nature, he that can view them with insensibility must resign all pretensions to delicacy of perception. Such a union has been usually effected by nature in the formation of a flower.

There is scarcely a single object, in all the vegetable world, in which so many agreeable qualities are combined as in the queen of flowers,—the rose. Nature certainly meant to regale the senses of her favourite with an object which presents to him at once freshness, fragrance, colour, and shape. The very soul seems to be refreshed on the bare recollection of the pleasures which the senses receive in contemplating, on a fine vernal morning, the charms

of the pink, the violet, the honeysuckle, the hyacinth, the narcissus, the jonquil, the rocket, the tulip, and a thousand others, in every variety of figure, scent, and hue. Nature is no less remarkable for the accuracy and beauty of her works, than for variety and profusion. Defects are always discovered in the works of art when they are examined with a microscope; but a close examination of a leaf of a flower is like taking off the veil from the face of beauty. The finest needle ever polished, and pointed by the most ingenious artist, appears, when it is viewed by the solar microscope, quite obtuse; while the sting of a bee, however magnified, still retains all its original acuteness of termination. The serrated border in the petal of a flower, and the fringe on the wing of a fly, display an accuracy which no pencil ever yet could rival. The taste of the florist has not, indeed, been generally aspired at in the circles of fashion; while that of the connoisseur in painting is considered as a mark of elegance of character, and an honourable distinction. Yet surely it is an inconsistency to be transported with the workmanship of a poor mortal, and to feel no raptures in surveying those highly finished pictures, in which it is easy to trace the finger of Omnipotence.

The poets have given us most luxuriant descriptions of gardens and of rural scenery; and, though they are thought by some to have exceeded reality,

they have indeed scarcely equalled it. Enter a modern shrubbery formed of a selection of the most agreeable flowering shrubs, and consider, whether there is anything in the garden of Alcinous, in the fields of Elysium, in Milton's Paradise, to be compared with the intermixture of the lilac, the syringa, the laburnum, the double-blossomed cherry, peach, and almond; with the rubinia, the jessamine, the moss-rose, the magnolia, and a great number of others, less common, but not of greater though perhaps of equal beauty. As we walk under clusters of flowers white as snow, tinged with gold, purple as the grape, blue as the expanse of heaven, and blushing like the cheek of youth, we are led to imagine ourselves in a fairy land, or in another and better world, where every delicate sense is delighted, and all around breathes fragrance and expands beauty, while the heart seems to participate in the joy of laughing nature. Groves and gardens have, indeed, been always supposed to soothe the mind into a placid temper particularly favourable to the indulgence of contemplation. The excellent taste which now prevails in gardening usually combines the shrubbery and the grove. The tall trees of the forest constitute the back-ground in the living landscape, and the shrubs, beneath and before them, form the underwood, in a delightful resemblance to the natural coppice and the uncultivated forest.

The plane tree is one of the first beauties among

those which are now most frequently planted in our gardens; its large leaf and permanent verdure render it peculiarly fitted to afford a shade. I always consider it as a classical tree, for the ancient writers often mention it; and some of the finest philosophical dialogues of antiquity passed under the cool retreat of its broad and vivid foliage. Socrates sought no other theatre than the turf that grew under the plane-tree, on the banks of the Ilyssus. The weeping willow that droops over the babbling stream, constitutes one of those fine beauties which partake of the melancholy and romantic. Such, indeed, are the charms of its luxuriant branches, that, when properly situated, it is, of itself, an enchanting image. Beautiful as are all the features of the modern garden, I should not hesitate to allot the first place, in an estimate of horticultural graces, to the weeping willow. The pendant birch is at all times pleasing, and a most delightful object in winter. Observe yonder tall stem, rising from the interstices of a craggy rock, covered with a rind, white and glossy like silver, and drooping with ten thousand fine twigs, so attenuated as to appear papillary. View it when sprinkled with hoar frost, or with snow, and if you have a soul capable of being charmed with natural beauty, you will be sensibly affected at the sight with a sweet complacency. An old oak is not often found in our gardens, because of its tardy vegetation; but whenever it appears

in them, it produces all the effect of graceful majesty, and one may contemplate it for hours with still new delight. The delicate acacia, the conical poplar of Lombardy, the flowery chestnut, the soft lime, the elegant mountain ash, the aspiring fir, the glossy laurel—these all form so various and delightful pictures, that, while I am permitted to expatiate over the lawn, and penetrate the mazes of the wood and garden, I shall not repine that the distance of my rural retreat may prevent me from sauntering in the picture-galleries of a palace. Nature shall be my painter, and yonder hill my picture-gallery.

The taste for plantation prevails greatly in this country, and it ought to be encouraged, as it is a never-failing source of pleasure to the planter, and of improvement to the community. But it is to be hoped, that, while we plant the tree for ornament, we shall not forget to drop the acorn into the bosom of the earth, and raise that heart of oak, which bears an analogy to the bravery of the people, and has ever been to this land both a bulwark and a beauty.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE HAPPINESS OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

AN active life is exposed to many evils which cannot reach a state of retirement; but it is found by the uniform experience of mankind, to be, upon the whole, productive of the most happiness. All are desirous of avoiding the listlessness of an unemployed condition. With neither the incentives of ambition, of fame, of interest, nor of emulation, men eagerly rush upon hazardous and painful enterprises. There is a quick succession of ideas, a warm flow of spirits, an animated sensation, consequent on exertion, which amply compensate the fatigue of attention and the chagrin of disappointment. One of the most useful effects of action is, that it renders repose agreeable. Perpetual rest is pain of the most intolerable kind. But a judicious interchange of rest and motion, of indolent enjoyment and strenuous efforts, gives a true relish of life which, when too tranquil, is insipid; when too much agitated, wearisome and disgustful. This sweet repose, which is necessary to restore all the vigour by relaxing the overstrained

tone of the mind, has been sought for by the wisest and greatest of men at their own fireside. Senators and heroes have shut out the acclamations of an applauding world, to enjoy the prattling of their little ones, and to partake the endearments of the family circle. They know that even their best friends, in the common intercourse of life, were, in some degree, actuated by interested motives in displaying their affection; that many of their followers applauded them in hopes of reward; and that the giddy multitude, however zealous, were not always judicious in their approbation. But the attentions paid them at their fireside, the smiles which exhilarated their own table, were the genuine result of undissembled love, and home was the only secure haven in the tempestuous voyage of life. The nursery has often alleviated the fatigues of the bar and the senate-house. Nothing contributes more to raise the gently pleasing emotions than the view of infant innocence enjoying the raptures of a game at play. All the sentiments of uncontrolled nature display themselves to the view, and furnish matter for agreeable reflection to the mind of the good-natured and philosophical observer. To partake with the children in their little pleasures, is by no means unmanly. It is one of the purest sources of mirth. It has an influence in amending the heart, which necessarily takes a tincture from the company that surrounds us. Innocence, as well as guilt, is communicated and increased

by the contagion of example. And the great Author of evangelical philosophy has taught us to emulate the simplicity of the infantile age. He seems Himself to have been delighted with young children, and found in them what He in vain sought among those who judged themselves their superiors—unpolluted purity of heart.

Among the great variety of pictures which the vivid imagination of Homer has displayed throughout the Iliad, there is not one more pleasing than the family-piece which represents the parting interview between Hector and Andromache. It deeply interests the heart, while it delights the admiration. The hero ceases to be terrible, that he may become amiable. We admire him while he stands completely armed in the field of battle; but we love him more while he is taking off his helmet, that he may not frighten his little boy with its nodding plumes. We are refreshed with the tender scene of domestic love, while all around breathes rage and discord. We are pleased to see the arm, which is shortly to deal death and destruction among a host of foes, employed in caressing an infant son with the embraces of paternal love. A professed critic would attribute the pleasing effect entirely to contrast; but the heart has declared previously to the enquiries of criticism, that it is chiefly derived from the satisfaction which we naturally take in beholding great characters engaged in tender and amiable employments.

But after all that is said of the purity and the solidity of domestic pleasures, they unfortunately appear, to a great part of mankind, insipid, unmanly, and capable of satisfying none but the weak, the spiritless, the inexperienced, and the effeminate. The pretenders to modern philosophy are often found to renounce the best and most natural feelings of the human heart, and while they affect a superior liberality, to regulate their lives by the most selfish principles. Whatever appears to have little tendency to promote their own personal pleasure and advantage, they leave to be performed by those simple individuals, who are dull enough, as they say, to pursue the journey of life by the dull road of common sense. It is true, they will allow that the world must be replenished by a perpetual succession; and it is no less true, that an offspring once introduced into the world requires all the care of painful attention. But let the task be reserved for meaner spirits. If the passions can be gratified without the painful consequences of supporting a family, they eagerly seize the indulgence. But the toil of education, the maintenance of a progeny, they leave to those whom they deem fools enough to take pleasure in it. There will always be a sufficient number, say they, whose folly will lead them, for the sake of a silly passion called virtuous love, to engage in a life of perpetual anxiety. The fool's paradise, they add with derision, will never be deserted.

Presumptuous as are all such pretenders to newly-invented systems of life and conduct, it is not to be supposed they will think themselves superior to Cicero. Yet Cicero, with all his liberality of mind, felt the tenderness of conjugal and fraternal attachment, and acknowledged that at one time he received no satisfaction in any company but that of his wife, his little daughter, and, to use his own epithet, his honied young Cicero. The great Sir Thomas More, whom nobody will suspect of narrowness of mind, who, by a very singular treatise, evinced that he was capable of thinking and of choosing for himself, has left it on record, that he devoted a great share of his time, from the united motives of duty and delight, to the amusement of his children. It will be objected by those who pretend to have formed their ideas of life from actual observation, that domestic happiness, however pleasing in description, like many a poetic dream, is but an alluring picture, designed by a good heart and painted in glowing colours by a lively fancy. The constant company, they urge, even of those we love, occasions an insipidity. Insipidity grows into disgust. Disgust, long continued, sours the temper. Peevishness is the natural consequence. The domestic circle becomes the scene of dispute. Mutual antipathy is ingenious in devising mutual torment. Sullen silence or malignant remarks fill up every hour, till the arrival of a stranger causes a temporary restraint,

and excites that good humour which ought to be displayed among those whom the bonds of affection and blood have already united. Experience, indeed, proves that these remarks are sometimes verified. But that there is much domestic misery, is no argument that there is no domestic happiness, or that the evil may not be removed.

Natural stupidity, natural ill-temper, acquired ill habits, want of education, illiberal manners, and a neglect of the common rules of discretion, will render every species of intercourse disagreeable. When those are united by connubial ties, who were separated by natural and inherent diversity, no wonder if that degreee of happiness which can only result from a proper union is unknown. In the forced alliance, which the poet of Venusium mentions, of the serpent with the dove, of the tiger with the lamb, there can be no true love. When we expatiate on the happiness of the domestic group, we presuppose that all who compose it are originally assimilated by affection, and are still kept in union by discreet friendship, goodness of heart, and a sense of duty. Where this is not the case, the censure must fall on the discordant disposition of the parties, and not on the essential nature and regular tendency of family intercourse.

To form, under the direction of prudence, and by the impulse of virtuous love, an early conjugal attachment, is one of the best securities of virtue, as

well as the most probable means of happiness. The duties which are powerfully called forth by the relations of husband and father, are of that tender kind which inspires goodness and humanity. He who beholds a woman he loves, and an helpless infant looking up to him for support, will not easily be induced to indulge in unbecoming extravagance or devote himself to indolence or folly. He who has a rising family to introduce into a vicious world, will be cautious of setting a bad example, the contagion of which, when it proceeds from paternal authority, must be irresistibly malignant. Thus, many who, in their individual and unconnected state, would probably have spent a life not only useless to others, but profligate and careless in itself, have become valuable members of the community, and have arrived at a degree of moral improvement to which they would not otherwise have attained. The contempt in which domestic pleasures have sometimes been held, is a mark of profligacy. It is also a proof of prevailing ignorance of real enjoyment. It argues a defect in taste and judgment, as well as in morals. For the general voice of the experienced has in all ages declared, that the truest happiness is to be found at home.

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CHAPTER LXV.

A CONCLUDING ESSAY.

WE have endeavoured, throughout the whole series of these essays, to warn those who are entering into life,—and to them our admonitions are chiefly addressed,—against those fashionable examples which often militate against all that is decent, regular, virtuous, and learned.

Unless we are taught in our youth to be on our guard against their destructive influences, we shall certainly incur imminent danger of corrupting our principles and practice by a blind and bigoted imitation. Experience daily evinces that, without this precaution, all the advantages of a virtuous and learned education, all the precautions of paternal care, all prudential, moral, and religious restraints may be totally frustrated. The rich and great may be considered as beacons on a promontory; and if they hang out deceitful lights, they who will allow no other signal to direct them (and the number of these is infinite) will probably be misguided in the

voyage of their lives, till they are dashed on rocks or sunk in whirlpools.

In adopting modes of address and external behaviour, the study of which appears to engross the attention of many, we have advised the young man to begin his work at the foundation; to correct his heart and temper, that the graces of his appearance may proceed from that copious and infallible source of whatever is pleasing, a disposition truly virtuous and unaffectedly amiable. We have exhorted him to avoid servility, adulation, preferment-hunting, and meanness of every kind; to endeavour, indeed, to please those with whom he converses, but to let the endeavour arise from benevolent motives, from a humane and Christian desire of diffusing ease and happiness among the children of one Almighty Father, and the partakers of the same imperfect nature. We have advised him to be firm, yet gentle—manly, yet polite; to cultivate every ornamental accomplishment which leads not to effeminacy, and to study to be as agreeable as possible, while he can be at the same time sincere; to despise, and most studiously avoid, that common but base character, which with motives peculiarly selfish and contracted, pretends to uncommon good nature, friendship, benevolence, and generosity, whose assiduities are proportioned to the rank or fortune of the persons who are courted without the least regard to virtue or attainments; whose politeness is that of a valet or French danc-

ing-master, and whose objects, after all its professions and pretences to liberality, are no less interested than those of a Jew usurer. We have advised him to value the approbation of his own heart, and the comforts of a clear conscience, above the smiles, the applause and the rewards of a vain, a wicked, a deceitful, and a transitory, world.

In literature, we have recommended the union of taste with science, and of science with taste; a selection of the best authors on all the subjects which claim his particular attention; a love of originals, and a due distrust of translation, a constant effort to obtain depth and solidity; a persevering, regular, indefatigable industry, especially in the earlier periods of a studious course, not only because no distinguished excellence can be obtained without it, but also because a close attention to study, and an ardent love of letters in the juvenile age, is a great preservative of innocence, and conduces much to the diversion or extinction of passions and tendencies which cannot be habitually indulged without sin, shame, and misery.

Upon the whole, and after all the subtle disquisitions of proud philosophy; all the inventions which owe their origin to malice, vanity, or ingenuity; all the whimsical modes of living and thinking which fashion dictates for the employment of her idle hours, or for the gratification of her full-blown pride; the plain virtues, as they are understood by plain men of

honest hearts and good qualities, improved by a competent education, are the best security for comfort under all the circumstances, and in all situations of human life. Sedentary and recluse persons may amuse themselves, in the reveries of inactivity, with speculative refinement and sceptical subtleties; but they who are really wise, and earnestly wish to obtain the happiness of which they are capable in this sublunary state, must descend from the elevated regions of sophistry, and labour to acquire, with the assistance of common sense and common honesty, the virtues of faith, humility, piety, and benevolence.

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