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A PROPER EARLY TRAINING

AND

ITS PRICELESS VALUE.

A Discourse

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE

GREENSBORO' FEMALE COLLEGE,

JUNE 23^D, 1853,

BY

SAMUEL K. TALMAGE, D.D.,

PRESIDENT OF OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Greensboro', June 24th, 1853.

DEAR SIR,—

The undersigned, a committee in behalf of the Trustees of the Greensboro' Female College, are instructed to return the thanks of the Board to you, for the very able, appropriate, and eloquent Address delivered by you on commencement day,—and we are instructed also to ask of you a copy for publication. We assure you it will give us pleasure to be gratified in this respect.

We have the honour to be,

Most respectfully,

W. W. D. WEAVER,

W. C. DAWSON,

H. H. KING,

J. L. BROWN,

Committee.

REV. S. K. TALMAGE, D. D.

Oglethorpe University, June 27th, 1853.

GENTLEMEN,—

Your very kind note is before me, asking for a copy of my Address at your late commencement; I will forward the Address to you so soon as I shall have leisure to write it out.

I am sensible that if there is any merit in the sentiments I uttered, it is not that they are *novel*, but that they are *old*—as old as humanity—and founded in the elements and necessities of our fallen nature.

Whilst I am no believer in the dogma of human perfectibility, I have an unwavering faith in the powerful and felicitous influence of a judicious early training.

With respect, &c.,

SAMUEL K. TALMAGE.

W. W. D. WEAVER,

W. C. DAWSON,

H. H. KING,

J. L. BROWN,

} *Committee.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE substance of the following address, with the exception of the paragraphs on female education, was originally delivered in a Baccalaureate discourse to the graduating class of 1851, in Oglethorpe University.

It was lately repeated, in the course of ministerial visits, to the churches of Eatonton, Putnam county, and Perry, Houston county, and requested, in flattering terms, for publication, by leading gentlemen of those communities, who represent various denominational and secular interests.

I would be glad to give the weight of the testimony of these respected names to the truth and importance of the views presented. But having made additions on female education, to which I have no right to commit them, I withhold their names and correspondence. I have little doubt, however, from their full endorsement of the principal views I expressed on the subject of education in general, that they will give the verdict of their approval to what they will find added.

S. K. T.

DISCOURSE.

Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees,—Members of the Board of Instruction,—Pupils, Patrons, and Friends of the Greensboro' Female College:

I had selected for consideration a topic connected with modern science and literature, but I have laid it aside for an old and trite theme, which, in my judgment, calls for renewed agitation. My subject is, an inquiry into *what constitutes a proper early training, and its incalculable value.*

I am led to this discussion from the state of things in Georgia. Georgia is like a young giant, bursting the bands of his youthful apparel, and rapidly rising to a powerful manhood. The opulence of our extended territory, its soil, climate, productions agricultural and mineral, and position, are not all that calls for our attention. The elements of rising humanity claim a still more sedulous care. These very physical materials which God has strewed around us with so lavish a hand, only call the more loudly for an enlightened generation to develope and mould them. The character of our population is a happy blending of the enterprise of the New Englander with the frankness and ardour of the South. May Georgia be able to look above and beyond the bounties of her physical position, and pointing with an honest pride to her sons and daughters, say, "These are my jewels." But, in order to accomplish this result, the work of education, and that of the right kind, and in the right direction, must be pursued with the most sleepless vigilance.

I stand here to-day to plead the claims of a right early training, in its influence over all coming time.

In building a massive structure, especially one on which

it is designed to lavish precious expenditure, skilful architects always dig a deep foundation. Months of labour are often expended beneath the surface before the casual visitor witnesses any progress—and years of time are often required before the fluted column, and gorgeous capital, and costly architrave stand out in their beauty and grandeur to the admiring gaze. It requires solid and well seasoned material to receive a lasting polish. All this pre-eminently holds good in relation to the moulding of the human material—heart and intellect.

Mine be the task of dealing with the foundations—of casting a stone beneath the surface—of aiding to lay the basis of a structure that may in its order arise, *massive, strong, permanent, beautiful*—“That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.” (Ps. cxliv. 12.)

In Georgia, we have four colleges for young men, containing about five hundred pupils within their walls; one of them supported with commendable liberality by the state, and three sustained by three leading denominations, who never will, and never ought to abandon their care.

We have some fifteen chartered female colleges, containing on their catalogues not far short of two thousand pupils. I deeply regret that the term *college* has been transferred to our female institutions, as it almost necessarily tends to serious practical errors. In carrying out the idea of a college with its commencements and public exhibitions, we are in danger of forgetting that females are not to be educated to become men; that domestic, and not public life, is their destined theatre of action, and that exposure to public gaze and display may create habits and feelings that will cruelly unfit them for their future scene of labour.

Now if we look forward twenty years, and ask ourselves what will be the embodied influence of these two thousand five hundred youth, male and female, in controlling the physical and moral resources of the state, or in giving a type to

those who are to become the master spirits of the day, the question swells into a matter of fearful concernment. And in the outset of my discussion, let me call your attention to two facts which are too much overlooked in our speculations on education.

Regarding man as a fallen creature, inheriting a corrupt nature, and prone to evil, there are two considerations in the arrangements of Providence respecting him, which strikingly illustrate and magnify the divine benevolencé. The one is the fact that he is ushered into life in a dependent state, under the control of parents and guardians, and that his long season of dependence prepares him to learn obedience. Did he come into the world fully developed in body and mind, with all his unsubdued passions about him, each clamorous for the mastery—full-armed, like the fabled Minerva from the brain of Jove—how intractable, how indomitable would he be! No sense of dependence—no habits of obedience—no tender association of heart with benefits conferred—to curb his headlong passions and selfish feelings. What a race of savages we would be!

The other fact is found in the *family economy*, established and ordained of God. Did each man stand isolated and alone in this cold, unfeeling, selfish world—were there no mother's love—no father's pride in his boy—no sister's affection—no family bond—no tie of early reminiscence to bind the family and associations of related family circle together, it is exceedingly doubtful if society could be held together—doubtful whether wild anarchy would not sweep over the earth with devastating tread, to prostrate all that is pure and lovely, and to blast every thing bright and fair.

The family compact is the eldest-born and most important organized social institution in the world. It is the oldest in the nature of things, and it must be the most enduring from the continued necessities of a rising offspring.

The family God has ordained as much as he has the church or the state, and on its integrity they both depend for their prosperity and success. It is worthy of remark that not only

is obedience to parents expressly inculcated in the fifth commandment, but the family relation and its influence for good or evil are recognized in three other of the ten commandments, viz. the second, the fourth, and the tenth, so that four of the ten commandments, which cover the whole duty of man, allude to this ordinance of the family obligations.

Infidelity and vice seem ever to have conspired against the family union. Infidelity has found its strongest opponent in the family bulwarks; and fashionable vice encounters its most formidable enemy in the purity, and peace, and quietude, and rational happiness of a happy home.

When *Socialism*, and *Communism*, and miserable *Mormonism*, shall carry the day, then the family union, with all its hallowed influences, must go by the board.

The command and promise of Sacred Writ, uttered by the voice of the inspired Solomon, (and upon this I shall conduct the discussion,) is, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." This assertion is based on the moulding influence of which childhood is susceptible. The command is given primarily to parents, and they are often mentioned in Scripture as principal administrators in connection with this duty. But the command also binds the church, and it binds the state in a very important sense. The *church*, by the covenant promises which she holds out by divine direction to the true believer and his offspring, and the solemn obligations which she imposes on them, recognizes her tender and endearing relation to the young. The command of Christ to his apostle, and through him to the whole church, and every office-bearer within its consecrated walls is, "Feed my lambs."

The state has a very deep interest in the proper education of her youth, as they are a highly important portion of her population; and as all her future prospects are inseparably connected, nay identified with, their training.

The history of nations strongly illustrates the power of civil arrangements, usages, and laws, in moulding the national character of the young. Witness the patient and methodical

life of the ancient Persians, as recorded by Xenophon, from the rigid training of the young—the warlike and cunning Spartans gathering their habits from boyhood—the restless and fiery Athenians, with their “fierce democratic principles,” and the stoical indifference to pain of many of the Indian tribes of America. The laws and usages were expressly framed for the very qualities that were stereotyped upon the public mind by the youthful training.

Every enlightened patriot, philanthropist, scholar, Christian, well wisher of society, feels an interest in the education of the young. In a republican government especially, where the vote of the rudest peasant is as potent in turning the scale, as that of a Washington or a Franklin; and must feel that the virtue, independence and intelligence of every freeman is a matter of no little import. Each child is but a voter or a ruler in embryo; if badly trained, probably a disturber of the peace, endangering the lives and property of the community, against whom the police officer must be armed, or the tenant of a prison for whose support we must be taxed.

It seems to me that the grand, prominent, prime business of each generation,—parents, philosophers, legislators, statesmen, Christians, is the right training of the generation to follow them. And had the whole of one generation the capacity and inclination to do their whole duty in this respect, their successors would be a blessed generation indeed.

The proposition of the wise man contains a strong assertion, worthy of being seriously pondered: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Here every word is significant, and suggestive of prolific thought. *Train a child*—train him *up*—train him *up rightly*, and the reward is certain, it never fails: according to the reading of the text, he *will not depart from the right path*.

The proper meaning of the term educate, or train up a child, embraces two departments, *discipline* and *instruction*, the former being quite as important as the latter, and in early life more so.

The *material* on which these influences are to act are three-fold; the *physical*, the *intellectual*, and the *moral or religious*. It is a just remark, that "man is less physical than he is intellectual, and less intellectual than he is spiritual" in his nature.

The physical man must, however, by no means be neglected. The temple that enshrines the immortal mind gains a dignity and a worth from its companion, and it must not be desecrated. This matter has been sometimes fearfully overlooked. There is an intimate, though mysterious, relation between the body and the mind; and the disposition, the power of thought, the capacity for mental or physical endurance, even the comfortable exercise of piety, all bear an intimate relation to the state of the bodily health.

Neglect of proper attention to the rules of health, and the proper development of the physical constitution, during the early years, lays the foundation for innumerable ills, physical, mental, and moral, in after life; and in no department of early training is the reward more in proportion to the early culture. The mind should not be too severely taxed in children, nor the body too much confined, for the brain is then greatly liable to chronic injury that may never be removed. Hence precocious geniuses generally sink into a premature decline. They are hot-house plants that have been forced into an unnatural, an unsubstantial, and an unsymmetrical growth. Still an early love of letters is desirable, as far as it can be made agreeable to the child, and as is compatible with health. The disposition is intimately connected with the state of the health, and in fostering the bodily powers we are so far aiding the *intellectual* and the *moral* man.

The exercise of Christian graces is wonderfully related to the state of the health. The spiritual distresses of the melancholic patient are often to be relieved more by the *materia medica*, and the prescriptions of the physician, than by the counsels of the pastor.

In dyspepsia and other bodily diseases, Christians become gloomy, depressed; cannot be influenced by the presentation

of spiritual motives; imagine they have sinned away their day of grace. You cannot reason with them. When disease relaxes its hold, and retires, the mind reverts to its former state. The influence of a disordered constitution on the diseases of the mind is a chapter not yet fully written. It is a subject to be commended to the earnest consideration of intelligent clergymen, physicians and jurists. Hence the duty and necessity of training the body, inuring it to wholesome exposure, and a proper degree of exercise.

The defect in this particular is most lamentably manifested, especially in the early training of the females of this nation, who are above the necessities of personal support. Their physical frailty, in many cases the result of an effeminating, because almost exclusive in-door training, added to the assumption, to an alarming extent, of the premature responsibilities and burdens of married life, whilst it finds them withered and declining at an early age, when the women of other nations are still in all their bloom and vigour, entails also on their posterity their own physical ills, and, perhaps, often a mental imbecility. Let the body then be trained in childhood, and let physical education receive its due attention. And as to the rearing of females, let us learn from nature and from heathenism itself, as it breathes and speaks from the classic statue of the Venus de Medicis, in its rounded form and expanded waist, that woman was never designed by the Creator to be a bare entomological specimen.

But it is the training of the *heart* and *mind* to which the wise man mainly refers, when he says, "Train up a child," the bodily rearing being altogether ancillary and subordinate to the former. And the process of moral and mental training, and especially of the former, begins early, far more so than we are disposed to think. The heart puts forth its tendrils, almost with its first pulsations, and through the first dawning of the senses gains its moral impressions.

The disposition, forbearance, obedience to parents, benevolence, duty to God, &c., are emotions and habits that are

taking their type already in the cradle and on the mother's lap. Whilst the spirit is in its pliable form, is the seed time that cannot be neglected with impunity. Prompt and cheerful obedience to parents must now be learned, or there is no security for after life. Let affection now do its whole work in discipline; but if it fail to accomplish all, splice on to the end of it a little of the rod; for the wise man informs us, "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

The *affections* must be drawn forth in childhood, or they will become stunted. Dr. Scott, the pious commentator, informs us in his memoirs, that having been exiled from the parental roof when at six years of age, for education, and having been kept for five long years without interval from the domestic circle, he never could recall that affection for his parents and other relatives which his judgment demanded. The heart would not yield, for habitual absence had sealed the fountain.

Many men remain essentially vulgar all their lives long, from some serious defect in the early training. Not all possible after-advantages lavished on them; not associations in subsequent life with a refined circle; not even piety of heart itself, can wipe away the *ill-breeding* of early life.

On the other hand, in the humblest walks of life, a family is sometimes found, possessing lofty magnanimity and true refinement, and standing forth from the vulgar herd around, like a sweet bed of flowers in a wide waste of thorns.

An early *religious training* is a matter of inexpressible moment. The affections of the heart flow out even with the very buddings of life, and it is all-important that they be taught at once to climb heaven-ward, where alone can be found firm and stable support.

Some deprecate teaching religion too early. It will give, say they, a bigoted, sectarian bias, that will preclude an impartial decision in future life. But the objector does not consider, or overlooks the fact, that sin and Satan and a wicked heart are in the field and at their work long before

the religious teacher takes his place. The danger of prejudice and forestalled opinion is all the other way.

The moral faculties are developed long before the intellectual attain their vigour. Hence the moral affections call for prompt attention. Domestic and moral obligations are soon learned. The discipline of subordination to parental authority is best secured, whilst a strong sense of helplessness and dependence on others is felt, and before the habit of resistance is acquired, or the physical power to exercise it obtained.

The selfish propensities can be greatly checked in the youth, by teaching him the beauty of doing acts of kindness, and the luxury of relieving distress.

Religion can be more successfully inculcated in early life than ever after. The tenderness of the heart, freedom from confirmed habits of sin, and from the engrossing cares of life, make youth the golden season to secure the favour of God. Hence the exhortation, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," &c., and the promise, "They that seek me early shall find me."

"Train up a child."—There are a thousand influences which go to modify the youthful training, which make it an arduous work to fulfil the condition upon which God's positive and absolute promise is predicated, that "when he is old he will not depart from it." It is not only father, mother, brother, sister, that are educating the child; neighbour, school-master, servant, associate, accidental interviews, surrounding scenery, every thing and person that comes in contact with the child, is doing its part. Hence the place of residence, associations formed, the place of education, become matters of momentous concernment with the wise parent. Halyburton, in his inimitable autobiography, states an instructive and impressive fact. His sedulous mother always selected pious teachers for him, and not content with this, invariably attended him to his place of education, that she might be present to watch over his conduct. And still, al-

though he was environed, as he informs us, by a kind of holy conspiracy, he found sin leaking out at every pore.

All the best-designed and arranged instruction and discipline of the parent, may be lost and worse than lost, if there is yet an exposure to adverse influences perpetually operating to counteract.

Hence the vast disadvantage of having families of young children much from home, or of leaving them in large public houses, where children lose domestic restraint. A single tour in a promiscuous crowd has sometimes undone in a few weeks all the labours of many months of discipline. The maxim of a heathen poet, referring to the danger to the young from exposure to corrupting influences, is full of meaning, "Let the child be viewed with awe." And parents, and those deeply interested in the child, feel the need of keeping from its presence all that tends to corrupt, while the stranger or common acquaintance does not realize the cruelty and wickedness of vexing and teasing the infant spirit, and thus increasing the necessity of discipline.

The sickness of a child is often a greater calamity by far to its disposition, by the indulgence received, than it is to the suffering body.

It is truly amazing how little regard many parents manifest in relation to the influences brought to bear upon the formation of the character of their children—teachers, associates, places of residence, seem often to be selected without the least reference to their moral bearing. And yet the youthful mind, like the tendrils of the roots of plants, is seeking for sustenance from all the substances around, be they wholesome or poisonous.

The planter, for instance, after his fields have become worn, often, very inconsiderately, overlooks the whole question of the education of his children, in selecting a settlement of fertile soil where his money-bag may be replenished,—as though money was the only desideratum in human existence. He gives up the church, the school-house, smooth highways, a civilized and refined society, well-trying friends: not to men-

tion the dangers of an untried climate, liability to the loss of health and life, there is often in his new home, a fearful work of education going on that will introduce sorrow into his household; for man is a social being, and you cannot cut the young off from such society as is within their reach. So Lot, when separating from Abraham, lifted up his eyes, and saw the beautiful plain of Sodom, "well watered, like the garden of the Lord," and in an unguarded hour, unmindful of its society, chose it as his place of residence, and as the place in which to rear his family. Unhappy man! Disastrous choice! He lost his wife, his children, and his property too, in the overthrow of an ungodly city, and had to escape for his own life, and that of his two unmarried daughters, from Heaven's vengeance.

The work of training is not done in a day, and though the early right impressions are strong, and give a lever of power, yet, the "line upon line, and precept upon precept," must be employed, for it is, "train *up* a child."

The education from home is often a season of dreadful exposure. The youth is in all the ardour of his age—the strength of his passions—the weakness of inexperience—and he is often, without any choice of his own, thrown into circles and associations of the very worst complexion, and yet of the most intimate kind. Still, the promise of success to the educator is only on condition of *training up*, and therefore there must be a long, protracted, and constant supervision.

And here comes in, not only the propriety, but also the imperative obligation and duty of the *Christian church*, to come to the aid and relief of the solicitous Christian parent, and to procure those teachers and educational organizations, that will guaranty the mingling of religious with mental culture. The whole man cannot be symmetrically developed unless the heart and conscience, as well as the head, are trained. It were strange that the works of nature and our duties to men should be taught, and yet our duty to God, and the claims of his law, be overlooked; that time and its evanescent interests should claim our attention, and yet the

endless eternity before us be comparatively left out of view—Every religious denomination should, at least, look after the educational wants of its own offspring, and find elevated mental appliances for their culture. This would exalt education, and give dignity, importance, and permanency to the work. And religion is the great balance-wheel that must regulate and give equal motion to all the faculties of the man. Like that compensating arrangement in time-pieces which adjusts the metals of the machinery to the expanding and contractile powers of heat and cold, true religion elevates and yet humbles, stimulates and yet restrains the man along the arduous pathway of life.

A proper moral education exerts the happiest influence upon the physical and mental development. It sustains every thing in its proper place. And it is not so much *outward* advantages, as it is the *inward* preparation—the disposition and capacity to study, that constitute the best means of advancement. What avail the largest library—the most costly and ample apparatus—the most learned and profound teachers, if the pupil is under strong temptation to idleness and dissipation? Hence, Cambridge and Oxford Universities in England, with all their munificent endowments, are doing far less for the cause of education, and the development of mental power, than the colleges of Scotland, of inferior name.

In the mental training, the great object is to teach the pupil to think. In this utilitarian age, when the paramount consideration seems to be reduced to the simple, shall I not say the ignoble question of dollars and cents, (for the avarice of the day deserves to be branded,) there is far too much tendency to discard entirely, in the course of education, every study that has not a directly practical bearing. Besides the positive enjoyment resulting from cultivating a taste for the beautiful and the true for their own intrinsic worth, independent of pecuniary considerations, there is such a thing as invigorating and liberalizing the mind, by pursuing sciences that will never be called into practice—as we take exercise to relax and invigorate the bodily powers, with no immediate

reference to any practical results at the end of the walk or ride. The judgment, the taste, the imagination are to be cultivated, as well as the mind to be stored. And just here, in attempts to simplify science, there is often more lost than is gained, by taking away inducements to vigorous mental effort. By a kind of conspiracy between certain booksellers, parents, and teachers, as a heartless matter of speculation, there are alterations going on in text-book making, which needlessly increase the expense of the parent, perplex the student, and greatly diminish the value of the book.

The world is not growing wise as fast as many suppose. It is by no means every innovation that is an improvement; and it is seriously to be questioned, whether our scholars of the present day, with all their advantages, are as thoroughly trained in mental vigour as they were a generation ago. We have more of them, with a greater variety of superficial learning, but it is doubtful whether they are so thoroughly taught. Many of the text books of the day, with all their flaming recommendations, and boasted improvements, act upon the mind like effeminating nurses, who never allow the child to exercise his own limbs.

This is a grave subject, worthy of a national convention of the friends of sound education. It might with great propriety be commended to the directors of the Smithsonian Institute, and their accomplished Secretary. From their independent national position, they might greatly improve the state of things, by putting their *imprimatur* on meritorious works. They would be above the influence of fear or favour.

The most invaluable legacy that a parent can leave his child consists in a consistent example, wise counsels, prayers of faith, a disciplined and enlightened mind.

The principal ingredients that constitute a training in the way one should go, are intelligence, honesty, and truthfulness, punctuality, industry, modesty, benevolence, and beyond and above all, early piety. The want of any of these is a serious defect of character. The attainment of these in

early life, is a strong guarantee of a confirmed life of virtue; for the divine promise to such a training is, "He will not depart from it." This confirmation in the ways of virtue is founded in the nature of things, the power of habit, and the promise of God; and it is verified by the observation and experience of society. We notice weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, in a man or family. We say in common language, that man or family has a "kink in the brain." Traced to its origin, it is generally found to arise from a defect in the early training, that has destroyed the symmetry of the character.

There may be constitutional evil tendencies, natural infirmities, peculiar to the blood. But a proper education from the start would have eradicated the error, and regulated the whole man.

We talk of good and bad blood in families, and there is abundant foundation in society for this distinction; but farther and more accurate observation would prove that it was the good or bad education of the successive generations of that family, that lay at the foundation of that good or that bad blood.

If there is any special virtue in the Anglo-Saxon blood, it is attributable solely to its Protestant Christianity, and its open Bible. Nor was the Celtic blood of France one whit inferior to the former, so long as it flowed in the veins of the pious Huguenots. The Scotch, and the Scotch-Irish blood, must have virtue in it, for it gave us an Andrew Jackson, a John C. Calhoun, a Daniel Webster. Did the virtue of that blood flow out of the maxim that John Knox introduced among the Scotch, to "place the schule by the side of the kirk," or in modern language to form an inseparable connection between learning and religion in the training of the young?

In individuals, families, nations, it is the system of education employed that creates the difference; although the process must be extended through successive generations of parents and children, to eradicate many evils, and to show the full force of a right training. Seldom will you find a man

who has been improperly trained in childhood, who has not some glaring defect of character. He may be a man of great virtues and worth, but there is still something left to mar the picture. Seldom, on the other hand, will you find a man who has been properly trained from his youth up, who is not a reliable man, and an honourable member of society.

That eminent benefactor of his race, Dr. Moses Waddell, who laid the foundation of the education of more distinguished men in South Carolina and Georgia, than any other man, and whose name I never recall, but with the profoundest reverence, used to remark, "If you want to make a truly great and good man, you must begin with childhood. Give him the knowledge of the Bible, and the religious catechism, and train him from the start. Other men," said he, "may become good men—great men, but they are not always to be depended on in times of exigency. They are like a badly broken horse, who is too fast, or too slow, or stops altogether, and refuses to draw when you come to a hard pull. But the man religiously trained, and rightly disciplined from his youth, is always there—because he acts from principle, and not from impulse."

An intelligent, accomplished, properly trained, and truly pious family, is one of the most touching sights, and one of the richest blessings a community can enjoy. See the daughters of that household, patterns of refinement, modesty, simplicity, industry, benevolence. They are no tattlers, busybodies, slanderers. The afflicted and the suffering rise to do them honour wherever they move, and the benisons and prayers of the poor follow them. It is not in the circle of the gay that they shine most brilliantly—it is where tears are to be chased from the eye, and sorrows to be banished from the heart. They are the Dorcases, over whose corses the widows and the orphans shall bend, and weep whilst they show the coats and the garments their benefactresses made whilst they were with them. Noble, God-like work, to live for the good of society!

Witness the sons of that household, as they go forth to

meet the respectful salutations of their neighbours. Their work is not to hoard, to drive a hard bargain, to oppress the poor, to extort from necessity its last crumb, and thus alienate the community; but it is to aid and relieve, to promote public enlightenment, to spread science and religion, to lead to whatever will exalt the community, and enhance its prosperity.

It is difficult to over-estimate a judicious early training: its value is above all price. The youthful mind is an instrument delicately strung. You may evoke the sweetest music from its strings, or you may teach them to utter the harshest and most discordant strains. A painter who had long been busied upon a favourite work, when asked by his friends why he had so long denied them a sight of his picture, replied, "I am working for immortality." So he who is dealing with the youthful heart and mind is doing immortal work.

This subject, then, makes its strong and united appeal to parents, to the church, to the civil government. They are not rivals, but co-operators in the great work of rearing the rising generation, and all their combined labours are needed.

Domestic discipline and instruction is the great fundamental, conservative principle of a nation, and especially of a republic. The family is the nursery of the church and of the nation. The combined, harmonious, earnest efforts of all, are required to make a people what they are capable of becoming.

In relation to female education, I am prepared to go as far as the farthest in the advocacy of an extended and a thorough course of instruction. For though the woman is not like man to be trained for public life, hers is the responsible work of giving the first impulse to the human character, of touching the springs of life, and communicating impressions that will never cease to act. A more extended course of study for both sexes, would exert a happy influence in filling up that gap—that "craving void" between childhood and manhood which our children are learning to skip over, and which must

be filled up, or the result will be a dwarfed and crippled manhood. I would have females instructed in nearly all the departments of science, except, perhaps, some of the higher branches, and the substitute for these should be those external accomplishments and adornments more peculiarly appropriate to their sex.

As regards the organization, and mode of conducting the public exercises of female institutions, I feel called upon to lift up an earnest note of remonstrance and warning against some of the tendencies of the day. As woman is destined to move in the calm and sequestered scenes of domestic and social life, so she should never in any stage of her education be entirely exiled from the family circle and its influences. The monastic system employed in many of our colleges for young men, with their "public commons," is ill-adapted to female education. A quiet village, with an intelligent and religious population is the proper place for a female school; where the pupils are distributed, a few together, in private families. Here the best substitute for a mother, that natural and almost indispensable guide for a daughter, is to be found in one who is the judicious mother of other daughters.

As to public examinations before a promiscuous crowd, and especially public exhibitions of girls, I regard them as of more than doubtful tendency. They must result, if generally adopted, in a sad deterioration of the female character. It may require a whole generation to unfold all their bitter fruits. The prominent exhibition of a young female before a crowd, tends to foster vanity, extravagance of dress, and an inordinate love of display; and it weakens that delicate sensibility which God has impressed on woman's heart. It is unnatural, unreasonable, and in its tendency unscriptural. The Bible declaration, "it is a shame for women to speak in the church;" (1 Cor. xiv. 35,) has a wide meaning, and it comes from that God who framed our nature, and whose laws can never be violated, or evaded with impunity. Modesty and delicacy constitute at once the charm and the defence of woman. They are the moss on the rose, the delicate tint on

the floweret. They are her ornament and protection. They are indispensable, and there is no substitute.

Self-possession is pleaded as the argument in favour of parading girls publicly on the stage. It is true a modest self-possession is desirable, but if ease of manner is to be purchased at the expense of forwardness and rudeness, and the boldness of an actress, then let us have bashfulness, and blushes to the forehead, rather than impair that modest shrinking of the true woman, which requires a veil to be placed between her and the rude public gaze. The line that interposes between these extremes is a delicate one. It is a profane hand that would remove it one hair's breadth beyond the proper bound that environs the side of delicacy.

The men who organize and conduct female education are engaged in a delicate work, which touches the vital interests of society; and they must not be allowed rashly to obtrude crude views and usages upon the community.

The public exhibition of females cruelly distresses the modest, whilst it emboldens the forward and gives them an undue advantage. Take two girls of a graduating class, and place them prominently on the stage before the promiscuous crowd; the one shall blush and weep, and inaccurately utter a few sentences, and then sit down under a sense of disgrace to herself, and mortification to her friends. The other, with a clear, ringing voice, and a brave countenance, shall read a political harangue, that some gentleman has composed for her, and then take her seat, amid the plaudits of the auditors. Now, inquire into the standing of the two, respectively. The former was at the head of her class—she composed her own piece—and it sparkled with gems of thought and imagination. But the sensibility and intellect that conceived the composition, disqualified her to parade her accomplishments. The other was at the foot of the class—and had the one grand qualification for the occasion. Her only accomplishment was, she had plenty of—*assurance*.

It will be found that the love of admiration, fostered by parading girls before a crowd, will be followed by an utter

disrelish for, and dissatisfaction with, the retired and quiet, but hallowed scenes of domestic life. We must never so far unsex woman, as to disqualify her to blush, or we rob society of its brightest charms.

Zeuxis, the Grecian painter, in painting his Helen, sought to embody in the face the ideal of perfect beauty. To accomplish this, he sent to Crotona, famous for its handsome women, for six maidens, from the combination of whose charms, he hoped to secure perfection of feature and expression. One of the six could not be prevailed upon to unveil her face, for she could not endure the scrutinizing gaze of a stranger. When the picture was finished, and exhibited before the public, it had electric power. The air was rent with the shouts of the people. The painter was the only dissatisfied spectator. He felt that one charm was wanting to his picture, and he exclaimed, "Oh for the blush of the sixth maiden!"

Whilst I rejoice in common with my fellow citizens, that such an impulse is given in Georgia to female education, and whilst I wish hearty success to every effort, I have great fears that we are making, with them, some dangerous experiments.

It is true public sentiment may finally correct these evils, but untold injury may be done before the evils are fully seen. and it may require a whole generation of time to eradicate them.

Greensboro' was selected by the Synod of Georgia as the seat of one of its two High Schools, mainly, I believe, on account of its excellent female society.

I am gratified that no young lady of the school has been seen to-day on the stage. Whilst the committee from the Board of Visitors and Faculty were reading the compositions, I could tell the writer, as she sat among her class-mates, by her modest blush; as she was sufficiently shocked by the bare mention of her name before the assembly, without being seen. This is well.

I charge this Board of Trustees to guard the modesty of their pupils. You may temporarily suffer by the absence of

the scenic effect, and theatrical display of your pupils, but judicious parents, and a discriminating public, will not long withhold the award of their approval and patronage.

Will any of you tell me that you cannot succeed without falling into the current of promiscuous examinations and public exhibitions? To such an objector, were there such, I have two replies. In the first place, I have yet to learn that the public, on reflection, will give their countenance and patronage to the shows with which we are endangered. In the second place, I would say, that, taking it for granted that the public taste has become permanently too vitiated to admit of reform, is it not better to benefit the few, than to injure the many? But it will be found that the masses of the people in Georgia abound in shrewd observation, and strong common sense, and they may be safely trusted in the support of plans which prove to be the wisest and the best.

Go on, then, gentlemen. But so train these girls, and establish such a standard of modesty and refinement, that it would evidently shock their delicacy, and that of the audience too, to require one of them to be seen standing alone on this stage, playing the part of an orator, and receiving exactly that training adapted to prepare her to act her part right gallantly in some future "Woman's Rights Convention."

And let me press on you in the close, the momentous consideration, that no blessing will descend on any enterprise without Heaven's smiles. Without the blessing of God, and the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, sealing the blood of Christ on the heart, all the wisest and best appointed measures will be fruitless. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in vain." (Ps. cxxvii. 1.)

THE END.