

Sixth
Reading
Book



SIXTH
READING BOOK.

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SIXTH READING BOOK.

EDUCATION COMPARED TO SCULPTURE.

I CONSIDER a human soul without education like marble in the quarry, which shows none of its inherent beauties, until the skill of the polisher fetches out the colours, makes the surface shine, and discovers every ornamental cloud, spot, and vein that runs through the body of it. Education, after the same manner, when it works upon a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection, which without such helps are never able to make their appearance.

I shall make use of the same instance to illustrate the force of education which Aristotle has brought to explain his doctrine of substantial forms, when he tells us that a statue lies hid in a block of marble, and that the art of the statuary only clears away the superfluous matter, and removes the rubbish. The figure is in the stone, the sculptor only finds it. What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, or the hero, the wise, the good, or the great man, very often lies hid and concealed in a plebeian, which a proper education might have disinterred, and have brought to light. I am, therefore, much delighted with reading the accounts of savage nations, and with contemplating those virtues which are wild and uncultivated; to see courage exerting itself in fierceness, resolution in obstinacy, wisdom in cunning, patience in sullenness and despair.

Men's passions operate variously, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or less rectified and swayed by reason. When one hears of negroes, who upon the death of their masters, or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful a manner?

What might not that savage greatness of soul which appears in these poor wretches on many occasions, be raised to, were it rightly cultivated?

It is therefore an unspeakable blessing to be born in those parts of the world where wisdom and knowledge flourish; though it must be confessed there are, even in these parts, several poor uninstructed persons, who are but little above the inhabitants of those nations of which I have been here speaking; as those who have had the advantages of a more liberal education rise above one another by several different degrees of perfection. For, to return to our statue in the block of marble, we see it sometimes only begun to be chipped, sometimes rough-hewn, and but just sketched into a human figure; sometimes we see the man appearing distinctly in all his limbs and features; sometimes we find the figure wrought up to a great elegance, but seldom meet with any to which the hand of a Phidias or Praxiteles could not give several nice touches and finishings.

Addison.

THE CASTLE.

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone:
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates, where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seem'd forms of giant height:
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flash'd back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.
Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray,
Less bright, and less, was hung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
So heavily it hung.

The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barr'd;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The Warder kept his guard;
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border-gathering song.

A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill a plump of spears,
Beneath a pennon gay;
A horseman, darting from the crowd,
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,

Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade,
That closed the Castle barricade,
His bugle horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warn'd the Captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call,
To sewer, squire, and seneschal:

"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;

Lord Marmion waits below!"
Then to the Castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparr'd
And let the drawbridge fall.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,

His helm hung at the saddlebow ;
 Well by his visage you might know
 He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
 And had in many a battle been ;
 The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd
 A token true of Bosworth field ;
 His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
 Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire ;
 Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
 Did deep design and counsel speak.
 His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
 His thick moustache, and curly hair,
 Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
 But more through toil than age ;
 His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,
 Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,
 But in close fight a champion grim,
 In camps a leader sage.

Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
 In mail and plate of Milan steel ;
 But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
 Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd ;
 Amid the plumage of the crest,
 A falcon hover'd on her nest,
 With wings outspread, and forward breast ;
 E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
 Soar'd sable in an azure field :
 The golden legend bore aright,
 " Who checks at me, to death is dight."
 Blue was the charger's broider'd rein ;
 Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane ;
 The knightly housing's ample fold
 Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
 Of noble name, and knightly sires ;
 They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim ;
 For well could each a war-horse tame,
 Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
 And lightly bear the ring away ;

Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
 Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
 And frame love-ditties passing rare,
 And sing them to a lady fair.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
 With halbert, bill, and battle-axe ;
 They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
 And led his sumpter-mules along,
 And ambling palfrey, when at need
 Him list'd ease his battle-steed.
 The last and trustiest of the four,
 On high his forky pennon bore ;
 Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
 Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,
 Where, blazon'd sable, as before,
 The towering falcon seem'd to soar.
 Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,
 In hosen black, and jerkins blue,
 With falcons broider'd on each breast,
 Attended on their lord's behest.
 Each, chosen for an archer good,
 Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood ;
 Each one a six-foot bow could bend ;
 And far a cloth-yard shaft could send ;
 Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
 And at their belts their quivers rung.
 Their dusty palfreys, and array,
 Show'd they had march'd a weary way.
From "Marmion," by Sir Walter Scott.

BOOKS.

BUT what strange art, what magic can dispose
 The troubled mind to change its native woes ?
 Or lead us willing from ourselves, to see
 Others more wretched, more undone than we ?
 This books can do ;—nor this alone ; they give
 New views to life, and teach us how to live ;
 They soothe the grieved, the stubborn they chastise,
 Fools they admonish, and confirm the wise

Their aid they yield to all : they never shun
 The man of sorrow, nor the wretch undone :
 Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,
 They fly not sullen from the suppliant crowd ;
 Nor tell to various people various things,
 But show to subjects what they show to kings.
 Come, child of care ! to make thy soul serene,
 Approach the treasures of this tranquil scene ;
 Survey the dome, and, as the doors unfold,
 The soul's best cure, in all her cares, behold
 Where mental wealth the poor in thought may find,
 And mental physic the diseased in mind ;
 See here the balms that passion's wounds assuage ;
 See coolers here, that damp the fire of rage ;
 Here alt'ratives, by slow degrees control
 The chronic habits of the sickly soul !
 And round the heart and o'er the aching head,
 Mild opiates here their sober influence shed.
 Now bid thy soul man's busy scenes exclude,
 And view composed this silent multitude :—
 Silent they are—but though deprived of sound,
 Here all the living languages abound ;
 Here all that live no more ; preserved they lie,
 In tombs that open to the curious eye.

Blest be the gracious Power, who taught mankind
 To stamp a lasting image of the mind !
 Beasts may convey, and tuneful birds may sing,
 Their mutual feelings, in the opening spring ;
 But man alone has skill and power to send
 The heart's warm dictates to the distant friend ;
 'Tis his alone to please, instruct, advise
 Ages remote, and nations yet to rise. *Crabbe.*

THE STORY OF LE FEVRE.

PART I.

Uncle Toby, who is alluded to in the following lesson, was a brave, simple-minded old gentleman, who had served in the wars waged by the English and Dutch against Louis XIV. A wound having rendered him unfit for active service, he retired to a cottage in a country village. There he and his faithful servant, Trim, also an old disabled soldier, amused themselves by going through, with due gravity and attention to the science of military engineering, a

miniature imitation of the siege of such places as the English forces in the field were actually before. The scene of operations was a retired bowling-green at the end of the garden; here trenches, scarps, and counterscarps were thrown up by Trim under the direction of his master, and, when these preparations were complete, the artillery opened fire; it was represented by clouds of smoke which Trim blew against the beleaguered fortress, with evident relish, from tubes connected with half a dozen small cannon loaded with tobacco. It will please the reader to learn that Uncle Toby acted the part of a father to young Le Fevre, and educated him, till 1717, when he joined the army of Prince Eugene, who was then on the Danube, fighting against the Turks. The wistful look cast by the dying lieutenant, first towards the warm-hearted veteran and then on the orphaned boy, proved a ligament, which though fine, was indeed never broken.

It was some time in the summer of that year in which Dendermond was taken by the allies,—which was about seven years before my father came into the country,—when my Uncle Toby was one evening getting his supper, with Trim sitting behind him at a small sideboard—I say sitting—for, in consideration of the corporal's lame knee (which sometimes gave him exquisite pain)—when my Uncle Toby dined or supped, he would never suffer the corporal to stand; and the poor fellow's veneration for his master was such that with a proper artillery, my Uncle Toby could have taken Dendermond itself, with less trouble than he was able to gain this point over him; for, many a time when my Uncle Toby supposed the corporal's leg was at rest, he would look back, and detect him standing behind him with the most dutiful respect: this bred more little squabbles betwixt them, than all other causes for five-and-twenty years together.—But this is neither here nor there—Why do I mention it?—Ask my pen,—it governs me,—I govern not it.

He was one evening sitting thus at his supper, when the landlord of a little inn in the village came into the parlour with an empty phial in his hand, to beg a glass or two of sack—'Tis for a poor gentleman—I think, of the army, said the landlord, who has been taken ill at my house four days ago, and has never held up his head since, or had a desire to taste anything, till just now, that he has a fancy for a glass

of sack and a thin toast—I think, says he, taking his hand from his forehead, *it would comfort me.*—

If I could neither beg, borrow, or buy such a thing,—added the landlord,—I would almost steal it for the poor gentleman, he is so ill.—I hope he will still mend, continued he;—we are all of us concerned for him.

Thou art a good-natured soul, I will answer for thee, cried my Uncle Toby; and thou shalt drink the poor gentleman's health in a glass of sack thyself,—and take a couple of bottles with my service, and tell him he is heartily welcome to them, and to a dozen more if they will do him good.

Though I am persuaded, said my Uncle Toby, as the landlord shut the door, he is a very compassionate fellow—Trim,—yet I cannot help entertaining a high opinion of his guest too; there must be something more than common in him, that in so short a time should win so much upon the affections of his host.—And of his whole family added the corporal, for they are all concerned for him.—Step after him, said my Uncle Toby,—do, Trim,—and ask if he knows his name.

I have quite forgot it truly, said the landlord, coming back into the parlour with the corporal,—but I can ask his son again.—Has he a son with him then? said my Uncle Toby.—A boy, replied the landlord, of about eleven or twelve years of age;—but the poor creature has tasted almost as little as his father; he does nothing but mourn and lament for him night and day;—he has not stirred from the bed-side these two days.

My Uncle Toby laid down his knife and fork, and thrust his plate from before him, as the landlord gave him the account; and Trim, without being ordered, took away, without saying one word, and in a few minutes after brought him his pipe and tobacco.

Stay in the room a little, said my Uncle Toby.

Trim!—said my Uncle Toby, after he lighted his pipe, and smoked about a dozen whiffs—Trim came in front of his master, and made his bow;—my Uncle Toby smoked on and said no more.—Corporal! said

my Uncle Toby—the corporal made his bow.—My Uncle Toby proceeded no farther, but finished his pipe.

Trim! said my Uncle Toby, I have a project in my head, as it is a bad night, of wrapping myself up warm in my roquelaure, and paying a visit to this poor gentleman.—Your honour's roquelaure, replied the corporal, has not once been on, since the night before your honour received your wound, when we mounted guard in the trenches before the gate of St. Nicholas;—and besides, it is so cold and rainy a night, that what with the roquelaure, and what with the weather, 'twill be enough to give your honour your death. I fear so, replied my Uncle Toby; but I am not at rest in my mind, Trim, since the account the landlord has given me—I wish I had not known so much of this affair,—added my Uncle Toby,—or that I had known more of it.—How shall we manage it?—Leave it, an't please your honour, to me, quoth the corporal;—I'll take my hat and stick, and go to the house and reconnoitre, and act accordingly; and I will bring your honour a full account in an hour.—Thou shalt go, Trim, said my Uncle Toby; and here's a shilling for thee to drink with his servant.—I shall get it all out of him, said the corporal, shutting the door.

Sterna.

THE STORY OF LE FEVRE.

PART II.

It was not till my Uncle Toby had knocked the ashes out of his third pipe, that Corporal Trim returned from the inn, and gave him the following account.

I despaired, at first, said the corporal, of being able to bring back your honour any kind of intelligence concerning the poor sick lieutenant—Is he in the army, then? said my Uncle Toby—He is, said the corporal—And in what regiment? said my Uncle Toby—I'll tell your honour, replied the corporal, every