

## THE DEATH OF A FATHER.

The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father, at which time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the house meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me.

I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battle-dore in my hand, and fell a beating the coffin, and calling papa; for, I know not how, I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother caught me in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her embraces; and told me in a flood of tears, "Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again." She was a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit, and there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport; which, methought, struck me with an instinct of sorrow, that before I was sensible of what it was to grieve, seized my very soul, and has made pity the weakness of my heart ever since. The mind in infancy is, methinks, like the body in embryo; and receives impressions so forcible, that they are as hard to be removed by reason, as any mark, with which a child is born, is to be taken away by any future application. Hence it is, that good nature in me is no merit; but having been so frequently overwhelmed with her tears before I knew the cause of my affliction, or could draw defences from my own judgment, I imbibed commiseration, remorse, and an unmanly gentleness of mind, which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities; from whence I can reap no advantage, except it be, that; in such a humor as I am now in, I can the better indulge myself in the softness of humanity, and enjoy that sweet anxiety which arises from the memory of past afflictions.—*Steele.*

## ALL CAN DO GOOD.

Every one of us may in something or other assist or instruct some of his fellow-creatures: for the best of human race is poor and needy, and all have a mutual dependence on one another: there is nobody that cannot do some good: and everybody is bound to do diligently all the good they can. It is by no means enough to be rightly disposed, to be serious, and religious in our closets: we must be useful too, and take care, that as we all reap numberless benefits from society, society may be the better for every one of us. It is a false, a faulty, and an indolent humility, that makes people sit still and do nothing, because they will not believe that they are capable of doing much: for everybody can do something. Everybody can set a good example, be it to many or to few. Everybody can in some degree encourage virtue and religion, and discountenance vice and folly. Everybody has some one or other whom they can advise, or instruct, or in some way help to guide through life. Those who are too poor to give alms, can yet give their time, their trouble, their assistance in preparing or forwarding the gifts of others; in considering and representing distressed cases to those who can relieve them; in visiting and comforting the sick and afflicted. Everybody can offer up their prayers for those who need them: which, if they do reverently and sincerely, they will never be wanting in giving them every other assistance that it should please God to put in their power.—*Talbot.*

## RULES OF IMPROVEMENT BY CONVERSATION.

1. If we would improve our minds by *conversation*, it is a great happiness to be acquainted with persons wiser than ourselves. It is a piece of useful advice, therefore, to get the favor of their conversation frequently, as far as circumstances will allow: and if they happen to be a little reserved,



use all obliging methods to draw out of them what may increase your own knowledge.

2. If you happen to be in company with a *merchant or a sailor, a farmer or a mechanic, a milkmaid or a spinster, lead them into a discourse of the matters of their own peculiar province or profession*; for every one knows, or should know, his own business best. In this sense a common mechanic is wiser than a philosopher. By this means you may gain some improvement in knowledge from every one you meet.

3. *Confine not yourself always to one sort of company*, or to persons of the same party or opinion, either in matters of learning, religion, or the civil life, lest if you should happen to be nursed up or educated in early mistake, you should be confirmed and established in the same mistake, by conversing only with persons of the same sentiments. A free and general conversation with men of very various countries and of different parties, opinions and practices (so far as it may be done safely), is of excellent use to undeceive us in many wrong judgments which we may have framed, and to lead us into juster thoughts.

4. *In mixed company, among acquaintance and strangers endeavor to learn something from all.* Be swift to hear, but be cautious of your tongue, lest you betray your ignorance, and perhaps offend some of those who are present too.

5. *Believe that it is possible to learn something from persons much below yourself.* We are all short-sighted creatures; our views are also narrow and limited; we often see but one side of a matter, and do not extend our sight far and wide enough to reach everything that has a connection with the thing we talk of: *we see but in part, and know but in part*, therefore it is no wonder we form not right conclusions, because we do not survey the whole of any subject or argument.

6. To make conversation more valuable and useful, whether it be in a designed or accidental visit, among

persons of the same or of different sexes, after the necessary salutations are finished, and the stream of common talk begins to hesitate, or runs flat and low, let some one person take a book which may be agreeable to the whole company, and by common consent let him read in it ten lines, or a paragraph or two, or a few pages, till some word or sentence gives an occasion for any of the company to offer a thought or two relating to that subject. Interruption of the reader should be no blame, for conversation is the business; whether it be to confirm what the author says, or to improve it; to enlarge upon or to correct it; to object against it, or to ask any question that is akin to it; and let every one that pleases add his opinion and promote the conversation. When the discourse sinks again, or diverts to trifles, let him that reads pursue the page, and read on further paragraphs or pages, till some occasion is given by a word or sentence for a new discourse to be started, and that with the utmost ease and freedom. Such a method as this would prevent the hours of a visit from running all to waste; and by this means, even among scholars, they will seldom find occasion for that too just and bitter reflection, *I have lost my time in the company of the learned.*

By such practice as this, young ladies may very honorably and agreeably improve their hours: while one applies herself to reading, the others employ their attention, even among the various artifices of the needle; but let all of them make their occasional remarks or inquiries. This will guard a great deal of that precious time from modish trifling impertinence or scandal, which might otherwise afford matter for painful repentance.

Observe this rule in general; whensoever it lies in your power to lead the conversation, *let it be directed to some profitable point of knowledge or practice*, so far as may be done with decency; and let not the discourse and the hours be suffered to run loose without aim or design: and when a subject is started, pass not hastily to another, before you



have brought the present theme or discourse to some tolerable issue, or a joint consent to drop it.

7. *Attend with sincere diligence while any one of the company is declaring his sense of the question proposed*; hear the argument with patience, though it differ ever so much from your sentiments, for you yourself are very desirous to be heard with patience by others who differ from you. Let not your thoughts be active and busy all the while to find out something to contradict, and by what means to oppose the speaker, especially in matters which are not brought to an issue. This is a frequent and unhappy temper and practice. You should rather be intent and solicitous to take up the mind and meaning of the speaker, zealous to seize and approve all that is true in his discourse; nor yet should you want courage to oppose where it is necessary; but let your modesty and patience, and a friendly temper, be as conspicuous as your zeal.

8. As you should carry about with you a constant and sincere sense of your own ignorance, *so you should not be afraid nor ashamed to confess this ignorance*, by taking all proper opportunities to ask and inquire for farther information; whether it be the meaning of a word, the nature of a thing, the reason of a proposition, or the custom of a nation. Never remain in ignorance for want of asking.

9. *Be not too forward*, especially in the younger part of life, *to determine any question in company with an infallible and peremptory sentence*, nor speak with assuming airs, and with a decisive tone of voice. A young man in the presence of his elders should rather hear and attend, and weigh the arguments which are brought for the proof or refutation of any doubtful proposition; and when it is your turn to speak, propose your thoughts rather in way of inquiry.

10. As you may sometimes raise inquiries for your own instruction and improvement, and draw out the learning, wisdom, and fine sentiments of your friends, who perhaps

may be too reserved or modest; so at other times, if you perceive a person unskilful in the matter of debate, you may, by questions aptly proposed in the Socratic method, lead him into a clearer knowledge of the subject: then you become his instructor, in such a manner as may not appear to make yourself his superior.

11. *Take heed of affecting always to shine in company above the rest*, and to display the riches of your own understanding or your oratory, as though you would render yourself admirable to all that are present. This is seldom well taken in polite company; much less should you use such forms of speech as would insinuate the ignorance or dullness of those with whom you converse.

12. *Banish utterly out of all conversation, and especially out of all learned and intellectual conference, every thing that tends to provoke passion, or raise a fire in the blood*. Let no sharp language, no noisy exclamation, no sarcasms or biting jests be heard among you; no perverse or invidious consequences be drawn from each other's opinions, and imputed to the person. All these things are enemies to friendship, and the ruin of free conversation. The impartial search of truth requires all calmness and serenity, all temper and candor; mutual instruction can never be attained in the midst of passion, pride, and clamor, unless we suppose, in the midst of such a scene, there is a loud and penetrating lecture read by both sides on the folly and shameful infirmities of human nature.—*Watts*.

#### FIRST LOVE.

I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is interwoven with the texture of French



manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content, with a small salary and laborious duty, in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy. In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal and even learned education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honorably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion; and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity: but on my return to England, I soon

discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle, I yielded to my fate: I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquility and cheerfulness of the lady herself; and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died; his stipend died with him; his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputation and a dignified behavior. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.—*Gibbon*.

#### DELICACY OF TASTE.

Nothing is so improving to the temper as the study of the beauties either of poetry, eloquence, music, or painting. They give a certain elegance of sentiment to which the rest of mankind are strangers. The emotions which they excite are soft and tender. They draw off the mind from the hurry of business and interest; cherish reflection; dispose to tranquility; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which, of all dispositions of the mind, is the best suited to love and friendship.



In the second place, a delicacy of taste is favorable to love and friendship, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and conversation of the greater part of men. You will seldom find that mere men of the world, whatever strong sense they may be endowed with, are very nice in distinguishing 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 pleasure and affairs with the same frankness that they would to another; 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 celebrated French author, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch where the most ordinary machine is sufficient to tell the hours, but the most elaborate alone can point out the minutes and seconds, and distinguish the smallest differences of time. One that 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 within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further than if they were more general and undistinguished. The gayety and frolic of a bottle companion improves with him into a solid friendship; and the ardors of a youthful appetite become an elegant passion.—*Hume*.

REPLY OF PITT TO WALPOLE, ON BEING TAUNTED  
ON ACCOUNT OF YOUTH.

Sir,—The atrocious crime of being a young man, which the honorable gentleman has, with such spirit and decency, charged upon me, I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny; but content myself with wishing that I may be one of

those whose follies may cease with their youth, and not of that number who are ignorant in spite of experience. Whether youth can be imputed to any man as a reproach, I will not, sir, assume the province of determining; but surely age may become justly contemptible, if the opportunities which it bring have passed away without improvement, and vice appears to prevail when the passions have subsided.

The wretch who, after having seen the consequences of a thousand errors, continues still to blunder, and whose age has only added obstinacy to stupidity, is surely the object either of abhorrence or contempt, and deserves not that his gray hairs should secure him from insult. Much more, sir, is *he* to be abhorred, who as he has advanced in age, has receded from virtue, and become more wicked with less temptation; who prostitutes himself for money which he cannot enjoy, and spends the remains of his life in the ruin of his country.

But youth, sir, is not my only crime; I have been accused of acting a theatrical part. A theatrical part may either imply some peculiarities of gesture, or a dissimulation of my real sentiments, and an adoption of the opinions and language of another man.

In the first sense, sir, the charge is too trifling to be confuted, and deserves only to be mentioned, that it may be despised. I am at liberty, like every other man, to use my own language; and though, perhaps, I may have some ambition to please this gentleman, I shall not lay myself under any restraint, nor very solicitously copy his diction or his mien, however matured by age, or modelled by experience.

But if any man shall, by charging me with theatrical behavior imply that I utter any sentiments but my own, I shall treat him as a calumniator and a villain; nor shall any protection shelter him from the treatment he deserves. I shall, on such an occasion, without scruple, trample upon all those forms with which wealth and dignity intrench



themselves; nor shall anything but age restrain my resentment—age, which always brings *one* privilege, that of being insolent and supercilious, without punishment.

But with regard, sir, to those whom I have offended, I am of opinion that if I had acted a borrowed part, I should have avoided their censure; the heat that offended them is the ardor of conviction, and that zeal for the service of my country which neither hope nor fear shall influence me to suppress. I will not sit unconcerned while my liberty is invaded, nor look in silence upon public robbery. I will exert my endeavors, at whatever hazard, to repel the aggressor, and drag the thief to justice, whoever may protect him in his villainy, and whoever may partake of his plunder.—  
*Lord Chatham.*

#### THE INDIAN CHIEF TO THE WHITE SETTLER.

Think of the country for which the Indians fought! Who can blame them? As Philip looked down from his seat on Mount Hope, that glorious eminence, that

———“throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,”—

as he looked down, and beheld the lovely scene which spread beneath, at a summer sunset, the distant hill-tops glittering as with fire, the slanting beams streaming across the waters, the broad plains, the island groups, the majestic forest—could he be blamed, if his heart burned within him, as he beheld it all passing, by no tardy process, from beneath his control, into the hands of the stranger?

As the river chieftains—the lords of the waterfalls and the mountains—ranged this lovely valley, can it be wondered at, if they beheld with bitterness the forest disappearing beneath the settler's axe—the fishing-place disturbed by his saw-mills? Can we not fancy the feelings with which some strong-minded savage, the chief of the Pocomtuck Indians,

who should have ascended the summit of the Sugar-loaf Mountain (rising as it does before us, at this moment, in all its loveliness and grandeur)—in company with a friendly settler—contemplating the progress already made by the white man, and marking the gigantic strides with which he was advancing into the wilderness, should fold his arms and say, “White man, there is eternal war between me and thee! I quit not the land of my fathers, but with my life. In those woods, where I bent my youthful bow, I will still hunt the deer; over yonder waters I will still glide, unrestrained, in my bark canoe. By those dashing waterfalls I will still lay up my winter's store of food; on these fertile meadows I will still plant my corn.

“Stranger, the land is mine! I understand not these paper rights. I gave not my consent, when, as thou sayest, these broad regions were purchased, for a few baubles, of my fathers. They could sell what was theirs, they could sell no more. How could my father sell that which the Great Spirit sent me into the world to live upon? They knew not what they did.

“The stranger came, a timid suppliant—few and feeble, and asked to lie down on the red man's bear-skin, and warm himself at the red man's fire, and have a little piece of land to raise corn for his women and children; and now he is become strong, and mighty, and bold, and spreads out his parchments over the whole, and says, ‘It is mine.’

“Stranger! there is not room for us both. The Great Spirit has not made us to live together. There is poison in the white man's cup; the white man's dog barks at the red man's heels. If I should leave the land of my fathers, whither shall I fly? Shall I go to the south, and dwell among the graves of the Pequots? Shall I wander to the west, the fierce Mohawk—the man-eater—is my foe. Shall I fly to the east, the great water is before me. No, stranger; here I have lived, and here will I die; and if here thou abidest, there is eternal war between me and thee.



"Thou hast taught me thy art of destruction; for that alone I thank thee. And now take heed to thy steps; the red man is thy foe. When thou goest forth by day, my bullet shall whistle past thee; when thou liest down by night, my knife is at thy throat. The noonday sun shall not discover thy enemy, and the darkness of midnight shall not protect thy rest. Thou shalt plant in terror, and I will reap in blood; thou shalt sow the earth with corn, and I will strew it with ashes; thou shalt go forth with the sickle, and I will follow after with the scalping-knife; thou shalt build, and I will burn—till the white man or the Indian perish from the land. Go thy way for this time in safety—but remember, stranger, *there is eternal war between me and thee.*"—*Edward Everett.*

#### EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

The fields on which I first looked, and the sands which were marked by my earliest footsteps, are completely lost to my memory; and of those ancient walls among which I began to breathe, I retain no recollection more clear than the outlines of a cloud in a moonless sky. But of L—, the village where I afterwards lived, I persuade myself that every line and hue is more deeply and accurately fixed than those of any spot I have since beheld, even though borne-in upon the heart by the association of the strongest feelings.

My home was built upon the slope of a hill, with a little orchard stretching down before it, and a garden rising behind. At a considerable distance beyond and beneath the orchard, a rivulet flowed through meadows and turned a mill; while, above the garden, the summit of the hill was crowned by a few gray rocks, from which a yew-tree grew, solitary and bare. Extending at each side of the orchard, toward the brook, two scattered patches of cottages lay nestled among their gardens; and beyond this streamlet and the little mill and bridge, another slight eminence arose, divided into green

fields, tufted and bordered with copsewood, and crested by a ruined castle, contemporary, as was said, with the Conquest. I know not whether these things in truth made-up a prospect of much beauty. Since I was eight years old, I have never seen them; but I well know that no landscape I have since beheld, no picture of Claude or Salvator, gave me half the impression of living, heartfelt, perfect beauty which fills my mind when I think of that green valley, that sparkling rivulet, that broken fortress of dark antiquity, and that hill with its aged yew and breezy summit, from which I have so often looked over the broad stretch of verdure beneath it, and the country-town, and church-tower, silent and white beyond.

In that little town there was, and I believe is, a school where the elements of human knowledge were communicated to me, for some hours of every day, during a considerable time. The path to it lay across the rivulet and past the mill; from which point we could either journey through the fields below the old castle, and the wood which surrounded it, or along a road at the other side of the ruin, close to the gateway of which it passed. The former track led through two or three beautiful fields, the sylvan domain of the keep on one hand, and the brook on the other; while an oak or two, like giant warders advanced from the wood, broke the sunshine of the green with a soft and graceful shadow. How often, on my way to school, have I stopped beneath the tree to collect the fallen acorns; how often run down to the stream to pluck a branch of the hawthorn which hung over the water! The road which passed the castle joined; beyond these fields, the path which traversed them. It took, I well remember, a certain solemn and mysterious interest from the ruin. The shadow of the archway, the discolorisations of time on all the walls, the dimness of the little thicket which encircled it, the traditions of its immeasurable age, made St. Quentin's Castle a wonderful and awful fabric in the imagination of a child; and long after I last saw its