

Gazette of the United States.

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THE TABLET.

No. LXXXII.

"The importance of female education is evident from the influence that women have over the manners of civilized society."

IT may perhaps gratify the reader to be informed that the following Essay is supposed to be the production of a female pen. The editor received it without a signature, or any remarks that lead him to conjecture who is the author. As the hand writing appears to be that of a woman, and as the sentiments are sprightly and delicate, he imagines it is a favor from a fair correspondent.

For the TABLET.

THE defects and failings in the conduct of mankind, both with regard to themselves and others, are so numerous, and concealed in such a manner, by affectation, and a specious appearance of virtue, that it is difficult to represent, or even to discover them all in their true light. There are many instances of misconduct in people, the bad effects of which are too flagrant to escape the notice of the most careless and inattentive; yet there are errors little attended to by mankind, or at least, are so far disregarded, as to be censured by few. Among instances of this kind, the neglect of female education may perhaps be justly ranked, a fault, which tho common is by no means to be justified. This neglect arises not so much from a want of inclination, or genius in this sex, as from the negligence of those who have the care of their instruction; who may be so far biased by a wrong judgment, and the common consent of mankind, as to imagine that learning is unnecessary, or at most, of little importance for those, whose business is wholly domestic, and extends no farther than the narrow limits of a single family. But we should not, in matters, in which the happiness of any of our fellow creatures is concerned, suffer the suggestions of fancy, or the caprice of custom to gain the ascendant over us, and have the greatest share in the regulation of our conduct. Those who suffer themselves to be guided by custom, must be guilty of the most criminal indifference; and to imagine that education is not necessary for females, discovers the most careless inattention to the advantages of it, and betrays an imbecility of mind unworthy the character and genius of enlightened Americans. If we consider a family as resembling a kingdom, over which the mistress presides as Queen, the necessity and advantages of education will appear conspicuous to every person; for the affairs of this little state, tho not equally great and interesting with those of kingdoms, in themselves are of the utmost importance, and on their wise regulation depends the interest and happiness of that society.

Tho ignorance is very unhappy for parents, and unfavorable to the interest of society, yet its worst effects are seen in that chain of calamities it entails upon posterity to whom it is handed down by their parents as an hereditary right. But a good education removes that cloud of darkness which ignorance imposes upon the understanding, impies the mind with virtuous principles, which contribute greatly to the interest of their children as well as their own personal happiness. It increases and adorns natural accomplishments, and furnishes every qualification by which either sex ennobles and distinguishes themselves. It is remarkable, that in the history of so many illustrious persons in all ages of the world, who have been famous for their learning and writings, little mention is made of the female sex. This general silence of history concerning them must be attributed, in a great measure, to the universal neglect of their instruction, which deprives them of those means, by which so many of the other sex have immortalized their names. But we still find a few of this sex, who have made great proficiency in knowledge, and distinguished themselves by their excellent writings, both in prose and verse: These rare instances of female greatness exhibit to the world an incontestible evidence of the advantages of education, and prove the criminal inattention of those, who countenance the neglect of it. In the younger part of life, instruction is very necessary for this sex, as it tends to promote their own security and happiness. At a time of life, when their passions are so strong, and their minds so roving and unsettled, ignorance is very unhappy for them, and affords the sycophant a very favorable opportunity to practise his artifices, and with the greater facility to flatter and decoy them into vices, which veil their good qualities, sully their reputation and render them rather the objects of contempt than delight. The temptations and allurements to

vice are so numerous, and arise from so many different objects, that to discover and resist them require an uncommon degree of circumspection and self-denial in any person; but more especially in this sex, who, besides the vices that mankind in general are exposed to from their inclinations, are rendered a more easy prey to temptations by their own natural fickleness and inconstancy. But education in some measure supplies what nature has left deficient. It raises them superior to the natural credulity of their sex, defends them against the artful insinuations of pretended friends, as well as the more open attempts of their enemies, to violate their innocence and depreciate their character. This noble accomplishment teaches them in what true excellence consists, and how little she is to be esteemed by the sensible part of mankind, whose highest ambition is employed in gaining admirers by the gaudy appendages of dress. It furnishes them likewise with all those excellent qualities which adorn and embellish the mind, adds splendor to outward ornaments, and new graces to that decent, agreeable behavior, which is the leading characteristic of female perfection.

FROM THE NORFOLK CHRONICLE.

THE OLD YEAR.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire Luna.—HOR.

SHOOK by the storms, chas'd by the hail and snow,
The pale old year, with fainting steps and slow
Shrinks from the wil', un pitying blasts that bear,
Its scatter'd honors, through the blust'ring air.
Its Autumn Leaves are shed, dead are its Christmas Fires,
But ere the Sage, with tardy steps retires,
To sleep with other years and rust with age,
He writes this ANNAL, on time's sacred page.

"I've seen dread war, with hasty, slaughtering stride,
"Step from the Danube, to the Wolga's tide,
"Tread o'er the Hungarian lands, or in Potemkin's form,
"Mount the high wall and drive the fiery storm.
"I've seen great GEORGE, in Lear's mad disguise,
"With scepter'd phrenzy dare the threat'ning skies,
"Whilst angel PITT, with temp'ring skill has known,
"To quell the Prince, and guard his Monarch's throne.
"From GEORGE's brain, the madd'ning fury hastes,
"Its black wings brush the REGENT, as they pass,
"A BOSTON's white cliff, for GALLIA's coast she leaves,
"And tures to madmen a whole land of slaves.
"Poor LEWIS dozing in the Chair of State,
"Finds when the Sov'reign nods, the people wake.
"See from his hand, the sacred sceptre fall,
"And madnefs universal, rage o'er all!
"Empire's fleet courfers, run without a guide,
"Loose on their necks, the purple trappings slide:
"The light CAR whirls along with crazy bound,
"Its scatter'd fragments glitter on the ground;
"CONFUSION goads the starting steeds along,
"Old Anarch glares abroad, and frights the trembling throng.
"But let not this our admiration move;
"ORDER, first born of Heaven! Child of its Love!
"Was absent—Her white, her peaceful wing was spread
"(Wing, where each plume, with gentlest grace was laid)
"The sun her guide, the ey'd his evening ray,
"And far to Western climes the wing'd her way.
"ORDER alighting on COLUMBIA's land,
"With steady look and all subduing hand,
"Loosens the many checks and chains that bound
"The wheels of empire, rusting to the ground.
"Winds through each maze, arranges, clears, defines,
"All forms new models, through each gloom she shines;
"On her fair forehead beams the FEDERAL STAR,
"Its bright'ning glories, lighten from afar;
"She points its rays at GEORGE's honor'd head;
"The robe of power, she o'er his shoulders spread:
"His strong right hand, the word of justice wields,
"His left, Columbia's prostrate credit shields:
"Protected thus, credit and honor rise,
"Raise their fall'n heads and greet the clearer skies.
"With joyous step these brothers trip along,
"Their fav'ring presence cheers the labourer's song.
"PLENTY comes dancing on the flying wind,
"And purse proud WEALTH moves puffing on behind;
"These nerve the sinews of supreme command,
"And as their footsteps press the happy land,
"The war-burnt towns, with loftier spires ascend,
"With richer fruits, the spreading branches bend:
"More copious harvests deck my smiling year,
"And wild with mirth, my Christmas Soons appear.
"JOY seiz'd the FEDERAL TRUMP, and blew so strong
"The white-top'd hills, with the wild music rung;
"The Western Waters heard the wakening peal,
"COLUMBIA's woods bow to the joyous gale;
"O'er the rough Lakes, th'inspiring Echo flies,
"And the gay notes, have warm'd their wintry skies."

Let others then, ungrateful as they are,
Pay all their homage to the new born Year,
My patriot verse, whene'er that ease and wine
Inspire the song, shall chant old Eighty-Nine.

A YANKEE.

NORFOLK, December 31, 1789.

FREE SCHOOLS.

THE number of Free Schools in Massachusetts is said to be more than 1000—In Connecticut there are 500. These institutions are the best calculated
"To civilize the rude, unpolished world,
"To lay it under the restraint of Laws—
"And make man mild and sociable to man."

And their beneficial effects are known and celebrated throughout the world. That establishments of this kind may continue to increase, must be the wish of every friend to freedom.

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

PERCEIVING that the Essays I have sent you under the signature of the letter H, have been well received here, and also re-published (tho without any acknowledgment to you for them) by some of the Southern Printers, I am encouraged to send you another production of the same pen. It is entitled A REVERIE, and will afford pleasure to all those of your readers, who are not insensible to the charms of genius—equally distinguished by a refinement of taste, and brilliancy of imagination.

M.

A REVERIE.

UPON reading some passages in the fourth book of Virgil, in which he paints the diltress of Dido, upon her being deserted by Æneas, I could not help revolving in my mind with a good deal of uneasiness, the miseries of Love. My reflections threw me into a Reverie, which presented to my mind an imaginary train of circumstances, which I shall now relate, hoping they may tend to cherish that virtuous sensibility which is the ornament of our nature. My fancy naturally carried me into the times of heathenish superstition, which I hope will be my apology for mentioning Gods and Goddesses. I imagined that the power of love had occasioned great discontent, and that the different orders of men had entered into an agreement to petition Jupiter for her removal.

I thought, that at the head of these complainants, stood the men of learning and science; they lamented with vehemence the inroads of love, and that it often betrayed them from the paths of knowledge, into perplexity and intrigue. They alledged, that it extinguished in the bosom of the young, all thirst after laudable improvement, and planted in its stead, frivolous and tormenting desires. That the pursuit of truth called for a tranquil and serene state of mind, whilst love was constantly attended with tumult and alarms. Whatever turn she takes, say they, she will ever be an enemy to labor: her smiles are too gay, and her disappointments too melancholy for any serious application. They were grieved to see that so trifling a passion should occupy so much time and attention, and that man who was formed to contemplate the Heavens and the Earth, should spend half his life in gaining the good graces of the weaker and more inconsiderable part of his species. I thought I perceived that this turn for love and gallantry gave particular offence to the whole tribe of Astronomers and profound Philosophers. They saw with indignation that many of our youth are more anxious to explain a look, than to solve a problem, and that they would often be playing with a fan, when they should be handling a quadrant. It infatuates every one, said they, who is so unhappy as to be touched with it. He is often more attentive to every change of countenance in a celebrated beauty, than to the phases of the moon, and is more anxious to be acquainted with all her manœuvres, than with the motion of the whole planetary system. One in particular affirmed upon his knowledge, that he had been acquainted with students in Anatomy, who looked with more curiosity into the countenance of a young beauty, than upon the dissection of a bullock's eye. Some who pretend to see much farther than the vulgar, considered every thing relative to love, as capricious and visionary. Since we are all formed of the same materials, it seemed to them very unreasonable, that a little difference of form and colour should raise such violent emotions. Beauty, they said, was but a superficial covering, and every thing at the bottom was alike. Upon this principle they looked upon it as the height of philosophy to view with indifference what has always given mankind the greatest pleasure. This humour they carried so far, that they lamented they could not strip nature herself of her delusions as they termed them, by taking off those agreeable colourings of light and shade, which lie upon the objects that surround us, and give them all their richness and beauty. They would have been glad to have turned the creation into a colourless and dreary waste, that they might have wandered up and down and taken a closer survey of it.

The next class of petitioners I observed, were the men of business; they set out with remarking, that they did not join in the complaints that were made against love upon their own account; for tho they had been weak enough in the younger part of their lives, to fall under its influence, it was many years since they had felt the slightest impression of it. They had in view the welfare of their children, and this being neither more or less than their affluence, they were led to consider love chiefly in the light of an expensive passion. Its little tenderesses and endearments appeared to them inexpressibly ridiculous, and they