

On the importance of sound principles in the young.
The great importance of sound principles in the young is obvious, if they are not sound, they resemble the weak and unstable foundations of a building which ~~will~~ are very apt to bring destruction on the inmates. — These principles are the foundation of our happiness, our character through future life, and consequently it is upon them that our happiness and reputation depend, we well know, that the giddy and frivolous amusements, of fashionable life, are often more attended to, than other useful branches of education & indeed often entirely supersede them, that they do not long continue, to give that pleasure, or to afford that happiness — I should better say that substitute for happiness which they do to the minds of the young, when the mind comes to maturity, has acquired a settled cast, become more grave and sedate, such entertainments for it as those just mentioned, become loathsome and disgusting, and if nothing but these follies have been laid up in the mind, that mind will truly be miserable, — But if on the other hand, at an early period of life, useful knowledge has been instilled into our understandings, it will find in this knowledge an ~~un~~ failing inexhaustible fund of pleasure and amusement.

Though the ignorance of the human mind is great, even in the minds of the most learned, still we are capable of knowing more than we have any hope ever to attain,

It is true, that the knowledge of Physical Philosophy is not necessary for means eternal happiness, - for there have I have no hesitation in saying, been many men ignorant of the most simple and generally known facts of that branch of science, who have obtained an happiness far superior to that which many who have made these things their sole study during life, many men have lived happily and died happily who never knew whether the earth revolved around the sun or the sun around it, who never knew whether the earth was a large globe or only a plain extending perhaps in his ideas no further than the horizon which bounds his view,

For ~~common~~ ^{the great} people, to know these physical truths, is of little importance, there are however other truths of a moral kind, which influence his conduct both with respect to himself and to others, which all should attend to.

We are all naturally depraved, and it is of the greatest importance that this depraved nature should be corrected, unless principles of Honour, truth benevolence, &c be instilled at an early period into the minds of youth, deceit cruelty, harsh baseness will take their place,

Let these principles be well inculcated, and they will

afford happiness not only in youth, but an happiness
which will continue throughout life, an happiness which
none of the vicissitudes of fortune can destroy, how poor
that man may be aimed, who places his happiness
in wealth, or he who places it in fame,
one day may see him great and powerful, the next
disgraced and despised, but he whose happiness is
in his understanding, and has within him a "mens
caneva recte" never ^{can} lose it throughout life. —

~~These are the principles it is both for the~~
~~and future that our first principles should be sound.~~

And, at what time should this character be formed?

It might be thought that it would be early enough to
attend to when the mind can find no pleasure, in
youthful amusements, but this will not do, The time
for forming it is in early life, and, it is then alone
The force of habit is so great that the mind will ~~take~~
~~and~~ retain the bend which has been given it in
youth.

Oh tempus a. mures —

Old Compositions

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Wmth Pa.

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W. Blancey Pres.

Early papers of
George Washington

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