

THE
Man of Education :

OR,

Beauties of Lord CHESTERFIELD.

BEING

Selections from that Author, of Pieces the most

VALUABLE AND UNEXCEPTIONABLE,

ON

EDUCATION, MANNERS,

AND THE

General Conduct of Life.

Ornamented with an handsome Frontispiece.—And Copyright secured.

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1801.

PREFACE.

THAT the Letters of Lord Chesterfield to his Son exhibit a specimen of elegant refinement of Taste—That they excel peculiarly in the Epistolary style—That they display a profound knowledge of Life, of Men, and of Manners; and that they are particularly calculated to form the Gentleman, and give that exterior polish, by which the Child, the Scholar, and the Man of Education and Virtue, is rendered doubly amiable and respectable, is, it is presumed, fully conceded.

But, however valuable the work is deemed for the School and the Library, it has not issued from the Press in its original garb, without some exceptionable parts. Sensible of this, and of its general utility, if carefully revised and amended, the Rev. Dr. Gregory has lately undertaken the task. He has freed it from those parts which Religion, Virtue, and Morality would disapprove, and adapted it particularly for Schools, Academies, &c.

*The abridgment now offered to the American Public, is not only sanctioned with the inspection and approbation of Dr. Gregory, but it has the additional value of being carefully revised, corrected, and approved, by a gentleman of well-known literary talents and celebrity in the American World.**

J. B.

Boston, March, 1801.

* REV. DR. MORE.

LETTER LXIII.

Of Style in Writing...Advantages of a good Style...Examples of a bad Style...Cicero and Quintilian.

DEAR BOY,

London, November the 24th.

EVERY rational being (I take it for granted) proposes to himself some object more important than mere respiration, and obscure animal existence. He desires to distinguish himself among his fellow-creatures; and, *alicui negotio intentus, præclari facinoris, aut artis bonæ, famam querit* *. Cæsar, when embarking in a storm, said, that it was not necessary he should live; but that it was absolutely necessary that he should get to the place to which he was going. And Pliny leaves mankind this only alternative; either of doing what deserves to be written, or of writing what deserves to be read. As for those who do neither, *eorum vitam mortemque juxta æstimo; quoniam de utraque fitetur* †. You have, I am convinced, one or both of these objects in view; but you must know, and use the necessary means, or your pursuit will be vain and frivolous. In either case, *sapere est principium et fons* ‡; but it is by no means all. That knowledge must be adorned, it must have lustre as well as weight, or it will be oftener taken for lead than for gold. Knowledge you have, and will have: I am easy upon that article. But my business, as your friend, is not to compliment you upon what you have, but to tell you with freedom what you want; and I must tell you plainly, that I fear you want every thing but knowledge.

I have written to you, so often, of late, upon good-breeding, address, *les manieres liantes* *, the graces, &c. that I shall confine this letter to another subject, pretty

* Intent on some object, expects same from a great action, or a liberal art.

† I account their life and their death of equal importance, since nothing is to be said of either.

‡ To be wise is the principal and the source.

§ Engaging manners.

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near akin to them, and which, I am sure, you are full as deficient in—I mean, style.

Style is the dress of thoughts ; and let them be ever so just, if your style is homely, coarse, and vulgar, they will appear to as much disadvantage, and be as ill received, as your person, though ever so well proportioned, would, if dressed in rags, dirt, and tatters. It is not every understanding that can judge of matter ; but every ear can and does judge, more or less, of style : and were I either to speak or write to the public, I should prefer moderate matter, adorned with all the beauties and elegancies of style, to the strongest matter in the world, ill-worded, and ill-delivered. Your business is, negotiation abroad, and oratory in the House of Commons at home. What figure can you make in either case, if your style be inelegant, I do not say bad ? Imagine yourself writing an office-letter to a secretary of state, which letter is to be read by the whole Cabinet Council, and, very possibly, afterwards laid before Parliament ; any one barbarism, solecism, or vulgarism in it, would, in a very few days, circulate through the whole kingdom, to your disgrace and ridicule. For instance, I will suppose you had written the following letter from the Hague, to the secretary of state at London ; and leave you to suppose the consequences of it.

MY LORD,

I had, last night, the honour of your lordship's letter, of the 24th ; and will set about doing the orders contained therein ; and if so be that I can get that affair done by the next post, I will not fail for to give your lordship an account of it by next post. I have told the French minister, as how, that if that affair be not soon concluded, your lordship would think it all long of him ; and that he must have neglected for to have wrote to his court about it. I must beg leave to put your lordship in mind as how, that I am now full three quarters in arrear ; and if so be that I do not very soon receive at least one half year, I shall cut a very bad figure ; for this liere place is very dear. I shall be vastly beholden to your lordship for

style

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