

# Elegant Extracts:

(OR,

*useful and entertaining*

PASSAGES in PROSE,

Selected for the Improvement

of Young Persons:

*being similar in Design to*

ELEGANT EXTRACTS in POETRY.

*Shepherd Grisp.*



Studio fallente Laborem.

*Hor.*

L O N D O N:

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how it is with his neighbours. There is a much shorter cut from virtue to vice, than from vice to virtue. He is the happy man, not whom other men think, but who thinks himself to be so. Of sinful pleasures repentance only remains. He who hath much wants still more, and then more. The less a man sleeps the more he lives. He can never speak well who knows not when to hold his peace. The truest content is that which no man can deprive you of. The remembrance of wise and good men instructs as well as their presence. 'Tis wisdom, in a doubtful case, rather to take another man's judgment than our own. Wealth betrays the best resolved mind into one vice or other. We are usually the best men when we are worst in health. Learning is wealth to the poor, an honour to the rich, and a support and comfort to old age. Learning procures respect to good fortune, and helps out the bad. The master makes the house to be respected, not the house the master. The short and sure way to reputation, is to take care to be in truth what we would have others think us to be. A good reputation is a second, or half an estate. He is the better man who comes nearest to the best. A wrong judgment of things is the most mischievous thing in the world. The neglect or contempt of riches makes a man more truly great than the possession of them. That only is true honour which he gives who deserves it himself. Beauty and chastity have always a mortal quarrel between them. Look always upon life, and use it as a thing that is lent you. Civil offers are for all men, and good offices for our friends. Nothing in the world is stronger than a man but his own passions. When a man comes into troubles, money is one of his best friends. He only is the great learned man who knows enough to make him live well. An empty purse and a new house finished make a man wise, but 'tis somewhat too late.

§ 154. *The Way to Wealth, as clearly shewn in the Preface of an old Pennsylvanian Almanack, intitled, "Poor Richard improved."* Written by Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

Courteous Reader,

I have heard, that nothing gives an author so great pleasure, as to find his works, respectfully quoted by others. Judge, then, how much I must have been gra-

tified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse, lately, where a great number of people were collected at an auction of merchants goods. The hour of the sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times; and one of the company called to a plain, clean old man, with white locks, 'Pray, father Abraham, what think you of the times? Will not those heavy taxes quite ruin the country? how shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?'—Father Abraham stood up, and replied, 'If you would have my advice, I will give it you in short; "for a word to the wise is enough," as poor Richard says,' They joined in desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows \*:

'Friends,' says he, 'the taxes are, indeed, very heavy; and, if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; "God helps them that help themselves," as Poor Richard says.

I: 'It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their time to be employed in its service: but idleness taxes many of us much more; sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. "Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labour wears, while the used key is always bright," as Poor Richard says.—"But dost thou love life, then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of," as Poor Richard says.—How much more than is necessary do we

\* Dr. Franklin, wishing to collect into one piece all the sayings upon the following subjects, which he had dropped in the course of publishing the Almanacks called Poor Richard, introduces father Abraham for this purpose. Hence it is, that Poor Richard is so often quoted, and that, in the present title, he is said to be improved.—Notwithstanding the stroke of humour in the concluding paragraph of this address, Poor Richard (Saunders) and father Abraham have proved, in America, that they are no common preachers.—And shall we, brother Englishmen, refuse good sense and saving knowledge, because it comes from the other side of the water?

spend



spend in sleep! forgetting that "The sleeping fox catches no poultry, and that there will be sleeping enough in the grave," as Poor Richard says.

"If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be," as Poor Richard says, "the greatest prodigality;" since, as he elsewhere tells us, "Lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough always proves little enough." Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the purpose: so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity. "Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy; and he that riseth late, must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while laziness travels so slowly, that poverty soon overtakes him. Drive thy business, let not that drive thee; and early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise," as Poor Richard says.

"So what signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We may make these times better, if we bestir ourselves. "Industry need not wish, and he that lives upon hope will die fasting. There are no gains without pains; then help hands, for I have no lands," or, if I have, they are smartly taxed. "He that hath a trade, hath an estate; and he that hath a calling, hath an office of profit and honour," as Poor Richard says; but then the trade must be worked at, and the calling well followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes.—If we are industrious we shall never starve; for, "at the working man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter." Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter, for "industry pays debts, while despair increaseth them." What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy, "Diligence is the mother of good luck, and God gives all things to industry. Then plow deep, while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep." Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow. "One to-day is worth two to-morrows," as Poor Richard says; and farther, "Never leave that till to-morrow, which you can do to-day."—If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you then your own master? be ashamed to catch yourself idle, when there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your king. Handle your tools without mit-

tens: remember, that "The cat in gloves catches no mice," as Poor Richard says. It is true, there is much to be done, and, perhaps, you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for "Constant dropping wears away stones: and by diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable; and little strokes fell great oaks."

"Methinks I hear some of you say, "Must a man afford himself no leisure?" I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says; "Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure; and, since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour." Leisure is time for doing something useful; this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; for, "A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. Many, without labour, would live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock;" whereas industry gives comfort, and plenty, and respect. "Fly pleasures, and they will follow you. The diligent spinner has a large shift; and now I have a sheep and a cow, every body bids me good-morrow."

II. "But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes, and not trust too much to others; for, as Poor Richard says,

"I never saw an oft-removed tree,  
Nor yet an oft-removed family,  
That throve so well as those that settled be."

"And again, "Three removes is as bad as a fire:" and again, "Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;" and again, "If you would have your business done, go; if not, fend." And again,

"He that by the plough would thrive,  
Himself must either hold or drive."

"And again, "The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands:" and again, "Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge:" and again, "Not to oversee workmen, is to leave them your purse open." Trusting too much to others care is the ruin of many; for, "In the affairs of this world, men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it:" but a man's own care is profitable; for, "If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like,—serve yourself. A little neglect may breed great mischief; for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the



the rider was lost," being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for want of a little care about a horse-shoe nail.

III. 'So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, "keep his nose all his life to the grindstone, and die not worth a groat at last. A fat kitchen makes a lean will;" and,

"Many estates are spent in the getting,  
Since women for tea forsook spinning and  
Knitting,  
And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting."

"If you would be wealthy, think of saving, as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her out-goes are greater than her in-comes."

'Away, then, with your expensive follies, and you will not then have so much cause to complain of hard times, heavy taxes, and chargeable families; for

"Women and wine, game and deceit,  
Make the wealth small, and the want great."

And farther, "What maintains one vice, would bring up two children." You may think, perhaps, that a little tea, or a little punch now and then, diet a little more costily, cloaths a little finer, and a little entertainment now and then, can be no great matter; but remember, "Many a little makes a mickle." Beware of little expenses; "A small leak will sink a great ship," as Poor Richard says; and again, "Who dainties love, shall beggars prove;" and moreover, "Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them." Here you are all got together to this sale of fineries and nick-nacks. You call them goods; but, if you do not take care, they will prove evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and, perhaps, they may for less than they cost; but, if you have no occasion for them, they must be dear to you. Remember what Poor Richard says, "Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessities." And again, "At a great pennyworth pause a while:" he means, that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only, and not real; or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, "Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths." Again, "It is foolish to lay out money in

a purchase of repentance;" and yet this folly is practised every day at auctions, for want of minding the Almanack. Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, have gone with a hungry belly, and half starved their families; "Silks and satins, scarlet and velvets, put out the kitchen-fire," as Poor Richard says. These are not the necessities of life; they can scarcely be called the conveniences: and yet only because they look pretty, how many want to have them?—By these, and other extravagancies, the genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly, that "A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees," as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them, which they knew not the getting of; they think "It is day, and will never be night:" that a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding; but "Always taking out of the meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom," as Poor Richard says; and then, "When the well is dry, they know the worth of water." But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice. "If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some; for he that goes a borrowing, goes a sorrowing," as Poor Richard says; and, indeed, so does he that lends to such people, when he goes to get it in again. Poor Dick farther advises, and says,

"Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse,  
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse."

And again, "Pride is as loud a beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy." When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but Poor Dick says, "It is easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow it." And it is as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich, as for the frog to swell, in order to equal the ox.

"Vessels large may venture more,  
But little boats should keep near shore."

It is, however, a folly soon punished; for, as Poor Richard says, "Pride that dines on vanity, sups on contempt;—Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy." And, after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered!



suffered? It cannot promote health, nor ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person, it creates envy, it hastens misfortune.

‘But what madness it must be to run in debt for these superfluities? We are offered, by the terms of this sale, six months credit; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah! think what you do when you run in debt; you give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor pitiful sneaking excuses, and, by degrees, come to lose your veracity, and sink into base, downright lying; for, “The second vice is lying, the first is running in debt,” as Poor Richard says; and again, to the same purpose, “Lying rides upon Debt’s back:” whereas a free-born Englishman ought not to be ashamed nor afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. “It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright.”—What would you think of that prince, or of that government, who should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman or gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that you were free, have a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges, and such a government tyrannical? and yet you are about to put yourself under that tyranny, when you run in debt for such dress! Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty, by confining you in gaol for life, or by selling you for a servant, if you should not be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of payment; but, as Poor Richard says, “Creditors have better memories than debtors; creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times.” The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in mind, the term, which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short: Time will seem to have added wings to his heels as well as his shoulders. “Those have a short Lent, who owe money to be paid at Easter.” At present, perhaps, you may think yourselves in thriving circumstances, and that you can

bear a little extravagance without injury; but

“For age and want save while you may,  
No morning-sun lasts a whole day.”

‘Gain may be temporary and uncertain; but ever, while you live, expence is constant and certain; and “It is easier to build two chimneys, than to keep one in fuel,” as Poor Richard says: So, “Rather go to bed supperless, than rise in debt.”

Get what you can, and what you get hold,  
’Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into gold.”

And when you have got the philosopher’s stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad times, or the difficulty of paying taxes.

IV. ‘This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom: but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry, and frugality, and prudence, though excellent things; for they may all be blasted without the blessing of Heaven; and therefore, ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember, Job suffered, and was afterwards prosperous.

‘And now to conclude, “Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other,” as Poor Richard says, and scarce in that; for it is true, “We may give advice, but we cannot give conduct.” However, remember this, “They that will not be counselled cannot be helped;” and farther, that “If you will not hear Reason, she will surely rap your knuckles,” as Poor Richard says.’

Thus the old gentleman ended his harangue. The people heard it, and approved the doctrine, and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon; for the auction opened, and they began to buy extravagantly.—I found the good man had thoroughly studied my Almanacks, and digested all I had dropt on those topics during the course of twenty-five years. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired any one else; but my vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth part of the wisdom was my own, which he ascribed to me; but rather the gleanings that I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it; and though I had



I had at first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away, resolved to wear my old one a little longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same, thy profit will be as great as mine.—I am, as ever, thine to serve thee. RICHARD SAUNDERS.

§ 155. *In Praise of Virtue.*

Virtue is of intrinsic value and good desert, and of indispensable obligation; not the creature of will, but necessary and immutable: not local or temporary, but of equal extent and antiquity with the divine mind; not a mode of sensation, but everlasting truth; not dependent on power, but the guide of all power. Virtue is the foundation of honour and esteem, and the source of all beauty, order, and happiness, in nature. It is what confers value on all the other endowments and qualities of a reasonable being, to which they ought to be absolutely subservient, and without which the more eminent they are, the more hideous deformities and the greater curses they become. The use of it is not confined to any one stage of our existence, or to any particular situation we can be in, but reaches through all the periods and circumstances of our beings. Many of the endowments and talents we now possess, and of which we are too apt to be proud, will cease entirely with the present state; but this will be our ornament and dignity in every future state to which we may be removed. Beauty and wit will die, learning will vanish away, and all the arts of life be soon forgot; but virtue will remain for ever. This unites us to the whole rational creation, and fits us for conversing with any order of superior natures, and for a place in any part of God's works. It procures us the approbation and love of all wise and good beings, and renders them our allies and friends.—But what is of unspeakably greater consequence is, that it makes God our friend, assimilates and unites our minds to his, and engages his almighty power in our defence. Superior beings of all ranks are bound by it no less than ourselves. It has the same authority in all worlds that it has in this. The further any being is advanced in excellence and perfection, the greater is his attachment to it, and the more he is under its influence. To say no more, 'tis the law of the whole universe; it stands first in the estimation of the Deity; its original is his nature; and it is the very object that makes him lovely.

Such is the importance of virtue.—Of what consequence, therefore, is it that we

practise it!—There is no argument or motive, which is at all fitted to influence a reasonable mind, which does not call us to this. One virtuous disposition of soul is preferable to the greatest natural accomplishments and abilities, and of more value than all the treasures of the world. If you are wise, then, study virtue, and condemn every thing that can come in competition with it. Remember, that nothing else deserves one anxious thought or wish. Remember, that this alone is honour, glory, wealth, and happiness. Secure this, and you secure every thing; lose this, and all is lost. *Pride.*

§ 156. *On Cruelty to inferior Animals.*

Man is that link of the chain of universal existence, by which spiritual and corporeal beings are united: as the numbers and variety of the latter his inferiors are almost infinite, so probably are those of the former his superiors; and as we see that the lives and happiness of those below us are dependant on our wills, we may reasonably conclude, that our lives and happiness are equally dependant on the wills of those above us; accountable, like ourselves, for the use of this power, to the Supreme Creator and Governor of all things. Should this analogy be well founded, how criminal will our account appear, when laid before that just and impartial Judge! How will man, that sanguinary tyrant, be able to excuse himself from the charge of those innumerable cruelties inflicted on his unoffending subjects committed to his care, formed for his benefit, and placed under his authority by their common Father? whose mercy is over all his works, and who expects that his authority should be exercised not only with tenderness and mercy, but in conformity to the laws of justice and gratitude.

But to what horrid deviations from these benevolent intentions are we daily witnesses! no small part of mankind derive their chief amusements from the deaths and sufferings of inferior animals; a much greater, consider them only as engines of wood, or iron, useful in their several occupations. The carman drives his horse, and the carpenter his nail, by repeated blows; and so long as these produce the desired effect, and they both go, they neither reflect or care whether either of them have any sense of feeling. The butcher knocks down the stately ox, with no more compassion than the blacksmith hammers a horseshoe; and plunges his knife into the