

**THE READER: INTENDED TO
CONVEY
USEFUL FACTS, IN EARLY
THEMES FOR CHILDREN**

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The Reader: Intended to Convey Useful Facts, in Early Themes for Children by Cuthbert W. Johnson

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CUTHBERT W. JOHNSON

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USEFUL FACTS, IN EARLY THEMES
FOR CHILDREN.

BY

CUTHBERT W. JOHNSON, ESQ., F.R.S.,
AUTHOR OF "THE RURAL SPELLING-BOOK," ETC., ETC.

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P R E F A C E .

THE same objects which the author of this little work endeavoured to promote in "The Rural Spelling Book"* he has steadily aimed to pursue in the following pages; viz., to inculcate useful, every-day principles and facts, when teaching even very small words and sentences, keeping constantly in view the works of God in the phenomena of daily life, and of the animal and vegetable creation. The various notes dispersed through the following pages are chiefly intended for the use of the teachers of youth. The kindness with which they have received his former little efforts assures the author that they will readily aid him in so good a cause with valuable suggestions for its improvement.

14, *Gray's Inn Square.*

* Just Published, price 1s. 6d., bound in Cloth, the New Edition of

THE ENGLISH RURAL SPELLING-BOOK,

With Easy and Progressive Lessons; intended as an Introduction to the Spelling and Reading of the English Language, and to the First Principles of the Practical and Scientific Cultivation of the Soil.

By CUTHBERT W. JOHNSON, Esq., F.R.S.

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THE READER.

THE DUTIES OF LIFE.

OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAWS.

We cannot fulfil the duties of life without a constant reference to the will of God as revealed to us in the Bible. We are there taught that the duties of life are to obey His commands, to fear to do any wicked thing in His sight (and God sees us always, as well in the darkness as in the light); and to do to our neighbour as we would he should do to us. Good children, therefore, will not do any wicked thing, for they know God's eye is upon them; and they will not do any unkind or cruel act to any living creature, either man or beast, because they know they would not like any unkind act done to themselves.

The danger and ingratitude of disobeying the commands of our Heavenly Father is known to every virtuous and well-taught child, who will remember that by such conduct he is certain to bring down God's displeasure upon him, and that he will not only lose the happiness which always attends, even in this life, an exact obedience to the will of God; but that he is certain to reap hereafter the fruits of his disobedient conduct in that place provided by God for all wicked spirits and bad people.

Our ingratitude, by disobeying His commands, every child must feel, who thinks upon the blessings, both on earth and in heaven, which are promised to those who obey God's will. The joys of heaven, we are told, no eye hath seen and no tongue can tell. But the blessings given us here on earth we all can feel and all can understand. We cannot sit by our warm fireside, or walk abroad in the fields and meadows, without feeling the kindness and benevolence of our Father in heaven, who has created so many comforts for us. God, when he made the dreary season of winter, gave us fire and fuel to ward off its rigours; and when He made the beautiful summer season, He gave us seeds and plants to put into the earth, and He waters them from the clouds, and causes them to grow and to ripen for our food. Yet how few of us think of these things! how seldom do we reflect upon the condition we should be in without the blessings of fire and food! But God has not seen fit to impart these blessings to all alike: to some of us He has given far more than to others. Let those good and grateful children, therefore, who sit by their warm fireside, with every comfort round them, or when they eat a good and plentiful meal, remember that there are very, very many good, but poor children, who have not these blessings; let them do as they would be done by, and let them give a portion of their store to those who stand in need of help.

Then, again, in our walks in the fields, we should reflect that, if God had not regarded our happiness, we should not have a sweet balmy air to breathe—enjoyed the odour of the violet and the rose—the music of the birds—the delicious sweetness of ripe fruits—the brilliant colouring of thousands of flow-

ers of every hue, to delight our eyes. Let the good child think of these things; and, if he does so, he will on all occasions see reason to obey the commands, and bless and praise his good Father in heaven, from whom all blessings flow.*

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

Those children who wish to obey the commands of God, will ever be ready and anxious to obey the commands of their parents and teachers. By so doing they not only obey the written word of God, as revealed to us in the Holy Bible, but they by this means secure to themselves the blessings which he has promised to those who obey his commands. For it is foolish and vain to hope for any blessing, without an exact attention to the directions and instructions of those who love us, and who know by long experience what is for our good—what we

* The great Paley, on more than one occasion, dwelt with great eloquence upon the goodness and benevolence of God. "When God created the human species," he unanswerably remarks, "either he wished their happiness, or he wished their misery, or he was indifferent and unconcerned about either. If he had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment; or by placing us amid objects so ill suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted bitter, everything we saw loathsome, everything we touched a sting, every smell a stench, and every sound a discord. If he had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune (as all design by this supposition is excluded) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it. But either of these, and still more both of them, being too much to refer to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God, when he created the human species, wished their happiness, and made for them the provision he has made with that view and for that purpose."—*Nat. Theology*, chap. 26.