

THOUGHTS OF A PARENT ON EDUCATION

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Thoughts of a Parent on Education by Richard Trench

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RICHARD TRENCH

**THOUGHTS OF A
PARENT ON
EDUCATION**

THOUGHTS OF A PARENT

OR

EDUCATION.

BY THE LATE

MRS. RICHARD TRENCH.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH

A PREFACE AND NOTES BY THE EDITOR.

LONDON:

JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XXXVII.

205.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE valuable and interesting little work now offered to the public, fell into the Editor's hands a short time ago, during her residence in Ireland; and anxious to be the means of diffusing more widely, thoughts so just, so pure, and intelligent, she has obtained permission to reprint them.

It was originally her desire to have appended a slight sketch of the lamented Author's life, which is said to have been eventful and interesting; but this wish has been readily relinquished, under the expectation that a memoir, with collected

remains in prose and verse, will shortly be published, by a member of Mrs. Trench's own family.

The work has been republished without any alteration in the text. The Editor is, therefore, answerable for the notes alone; in one or two of which she has ventured to express a difference of opinion from the gifted Author; in others, to confirm or develop her views more fully.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

HAD not a few copies of the following Thoughts been printed, and privately circulated, some years since, I could myself have almost believed that I had insensibly borrowed the greatest part of them from a more important work on the same subject, which I have only just seen. However, as I have sometimes presented the same truths in a different dress, I am not deterred from offering to young mothers this slighter attempt.

I may be thought to refrain from giving the title of the work I allude to, lest I

should seem to challenge a comparison unfavourable to mine. I do refrain from it, lest some readers might erroneously suspect that I intend to convey an accusation, when I only wish to offer an excuse.

THOUGHTS OF A PARENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE AIM OF EDUCATION USUALLY CONTRACTED TO MINOR INTERESTS AND ADVANTAGES.

THE first object of education is to train up an immortal soul. The second (but second at an immeasurable distance) is, to do this in a manner most conducive to human happiness; never sacrificing either the interests of the future world to those of the present, or the welfare of the man to the inclinations of the child: errors not dissimilar in complexion, though so awfully different in the importance of their results.

This simple position seems so evident, as to require neither repetition nor enforcement; yet experience proves how little it is acted upon in education: and among those who do act upon it, how many discover a strange species of false *shame* in confessing their motive.

When a mother boasted to Lucinda, in a confidential moment, of her daughter's accomplishments, the latter, a sincere and clear-sighted person, observing how exclusively the embellishments of life had superseded all else in her friend's estimation, ventured to hint that such acquirements ought not to be the great object of education.

"I know what you mean," replied the careful matron: "the great object is, her marrying advantageously."

"Not exactly," replied Lucinda: "so many of the unmarried are eminently useful in walks where wives and mothers can seldom tread, and the balance of happiness so equal, that nothing is more surprising than the prevalent solicitude to ensure the marriage of young women."

"How stupid I am!" replied mamma. "You mean, by *the great object*, living in the best company?"

Lucinda shook her head.

"Oh! then you mean the power of amusing herself at home."

In short, when Lucinda explained, by hinting *somewhat of that religious instruction*—that