

THOUGHTS

ON

HABIT AND DISCIPLINE.

BY

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"Since Custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavour to obtain good customs."—*Lord Bacon.*

"The present world is peculiarly fit to be a STATE OF DISCIPLINE, for our improvement in virtue and piety."—*Bishop Butler.*



PHILADELPHIA:
HENRY LONGSTRETH.
No. 347 MARKET STREET.
1857.

PREFACE.

AMIDST many more serious avocations, the composition of the present work has been the pleasant occupation of occasional leisure hours. Little as it is laboured, and capable as it is of much improvement, I am induced to publish it, in the hope that it may be of *some* use to the lately risen, and now rising generation.

It consists of three divisions. The **FIRST** contains general remarks on the nature and operation of **HABIT** and **DISCIPLINE**; it is the philosophy of the subject, though in a low sense of the term, and in a very familiar guise. The **SECOND** relates to **BAD HABIT**—that grand instrument in the hand of Satan, for enslaving, enchaining, and finally destroying mankind: the **THIRD**, to **GOOD HABIT**, which is the appointed means, under the natural and moral government of God, and in connexion with a providential scheme of **DISCIPLINE**, for our improvement in ability, knowledge, wisdom, and virtue.

GOOD HABIT is considered in its application, *first*, to the movements and uses of the body; *secondly*, to art—that useful result of the joint exercise of body and mind; *thirdly*, to intellectual capacities and pursuits; *fourthly*, to morals; and *fifthly*, to religion.

Heartily do I desire that those who are now in the early vigour of their bodily and mental powers, may become subject, in all things, to the salutary power of **GOOD HABIT**. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which can alone change and sanctify the heart of man, they will find in the friendly sway of this “magistrate of man’s life” —this genial nurse and mistress of our faculties— a preparation for all that is useful and honourable in time, and for all that is pure and joyous in eternity.

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