

Diligence calculated to ensure success:
Follies to destroy the character.

Ever since the fall of Adam, it has been the duty of mankind to earn his living by the sweat of the brow, and he is so constituted, that it greatly conduces to his happiness. The mind is not satisfied with present attainments, but is looking forward to something future. If this object, be riches, honour, or knowledge, his motto is, "diligence" "Without this, he has not the least probability of success; and he toils, and labours as if all his enjoyment, depended on the accomplishment, of his design.

It wonderfully sweetens his repose at night, which prepares him for the duties of the succeeding day, and ^{at} the close of the week to enjoy the Sabbath as a day of rest from bodily toil, and to engage in higher and nobler employments, even the worship of God and the salvation of the souls. Thus he passes on from week, to week with the same constancy, as the waters of the gentle rill till they mingle with the ocean.

Diligence is abundantly taught in the gospels. "It saith the hand of the diligent maketh rich"

"And this we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat. Christ inculcated it by his example, ⁱⁿ going about doing good. We have also admirable instances of it in the insects. The Bee

Improves each shining hour,
And gathers honey all the day,
From every opening flower.

The Ant, for one poor grain,
Labours, and toils, and tugs;

If revelation, and the creatures that God hath made declare this to be the duty and privilege of man surely, ^{it} is calculated to grant success.

On the other hand, idleness destroys the character. The mind is considered as always active, for good, or evil; if it ^{is} not stored with elevated ideas it will be with base ones.

"It destroys all energy of thought; all desire of benefiting himself or others; stupifies the understanding, and makes a wide inlet to the mind for the reception, of all manner of iniquity. It is justly expressed in the lines,

But Satan finds some mischief still,
For idle hands so doo

While not engaged in any pursuit, the mind is free for any temptation which the adversary of souls may suggest; evil companions are ever ready to lend their aid, and they are very likely to yield to them.

Idleness has a tendency to disregard the commands of God and this will eventually end, in the destruction of the character, and at the last, will bear ^{the} condemnation of the wicked and slothful servant, who hid his talents in the earth.

Margaret Houston.

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