

the hardest work and most simple offices, to the more delicate arts of housekeeping, including needle-work. This practice would not only insure more good servants than there now are; but, young girls so trained would, by the force of hourly tuition and good example, imbibe a right sense of duty, and acquire good habits, before they could have had time to become vicious or unmanageable.

When ladies take the trouble to teach the poor to read and write, they mean well, no doubt, and think they are doing the best they can for their pupils. But teaching industry is more to the purpose; for when learning has been found insufficient to preserve the morals of princes, nobles, and gentry, how can it be supposed that it will preserve those of their dependents? The supposition is, in fact, injurious to the cause of true learning, since the system founded upon it has been attended by no moral improvement. Our well-being is best secured by an early habit of earning our bread by honest labour; and

“Not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure, and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us in things that most concern,
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.”

A country girl, the daughter of a labourer, would, by making herself in some way practically useful to society, and gaining a respectable livelihood, be more profitably employed than in going through that long course of literary exercise which has, of late, been so generally bestowed on the children of poor people, but which, I fear, has not generally imparted to them much of what MILTON styles “the prime wisdom.” It should also be considered, that the literary education of the poor, such as it is, cannot be much more than half completed at the age when the children cease to receive lessons from their charitable instructors. They are taught to read, to write a little, and perhaps something of the elements of arithmetic. The reading, however, is the principal attainment; and in this, they generally become well enough schooled before they are eleven, or, at most, twelve years of age. But alas! have they at that age, or at the age of thirteen or fourteen,