

driving a quiet Pair of Oxen. In turning a corner, the wheel had rais'd on a tree. I found in an instant it would overset. I was seated on the upperside of the cart. Two hopes of escape only remain'd. To clear the Cart by springing forward, or to fall into the body, & let it pass over me. In springing if I could not clear the Cart, I must have been hurt perhaps have perish'd. I felt this & fell into the body. It turn'd entirely upside down, & the Cattle pass'd quietly on. I saw stars plenty on getting up, but was not seriously hurt. I could hardly have escap'd serious injury, but for the presence of mind I preserv'd.

In a later instance with an assistant, I was putting a young horse to work, that was very refractory, though coupled with a very tractible one. I became entangled in the Lines, & felt the danger of being dragg'd by a vicious animal. I call'd to the man, to cut the Line. I believe he was too inefficient to have done it, but in some motions of the animal I got clear, but for this, to have cut the line, was my only hope of escape. True courage, consists in meeting danger with presence of mind, not with insensibility. It is thus that personal resolution, is much more common, than moral firmness.

→ When somewhat turn'd of my 16th year, I was to enter my apprenticeship. My father gave his parting admonitions, which were more judicious than tender. He told me it would be the greatest shock that I had ever felt, but he did not prepare me to meet it, nor did I retain a sufficiently vivid impression, of his counsel. I did many giddy things, & some indiscreet ones. I escap'd however without painful errors. It was a fearful experiment, which I have felt unwilling my sons, to subject you to.

On the 5th of November in the year 1788, I set out for Mr. Evan's, accompanied by brother Mathew. It was about fifteen miles, in part a new route. I did not feel very serious till we got to Evans', & Mathew, was about to return. I felt very tender and sorrowful, but believe I shed no tears. I truly found it a vital shock. In a little while I became tranquil, new incidents engag'd my attention, & labour fill'd up my time. It was a gratification to the Evans', that I was under their care, & I made it my concern to conciliate their esteem. It was not hard to me to be attentive to duty, nor to make progress in the attainment of the Art I was to acquire. My father however had never liv'd in the scene I was in, & could have little conception of the hazards, besetting such a situation. Habit, or constitution, or sense of propriety made me averse to low scenes, & low company. I had a fellow apprentice older

in time & years, than myself that gave me much trouble. He was idle & wished me to be so too, to cover his delinquency. He was not bad temper'd, but there were those who strove to awaken his jealousy. He was at intervals a source of great disquietude. In his intercourse, I had no share. I was only his fellow at home. This man, never met me after we parted at the termination of my time. I sought the company of those who were more cultivated, & enlighten'd than myself. The neighborhood I was in, was better than the one I had come from. The Evans' enjoy'd the intercourse of it more perhaps from my being with them. They were Renters of George Thomas, who had married Sarah Roberts my second Cousin. This valuable man took interest in me. He was a gentleman of reading & thought, about middle aged. In his youth he had been deemed a wild Quaker, but had become a serious friend. Not so much so but that he could permit some youthful licence, & make himself an agreeable companion. His conversation often turn'd on his reading, & his memory retain'd much that he had read. It was a find of profit to me, that cost me only to listen. I had a birth-right among friends, & used to attend meeting, on First days of the week. Mr. Thomas often walk'd & our ways laid together. He appear'd to meet me with pleasure, & I met him with profound respect, and delight. He retain'd some taste for literature, & what sanctimonious folks call worldly knowledge. He liv'd retir'd & I often spent the afternoon at his house, without other company. There was little of austerity in his piety. He seem'd to have learn'd more of the world, in the field of experience, than my father had. It now appears to me evident, that he had form'd higher hopes of me than my mind had then conceiv'd of. I was oppress'd with awkward bashfulness. My raising and associations had confirm'd in me, a timidity & shyness of female intercourse. The old Baronet had not allow'd the boys and Girls, to mix in their seats or in their play. My intercourse with the Ladies had been limited to my mother & sisters. This as I grew up made me rather formal, & distant. I had no habit nor taste for saying small things, & what was then term'd Ladies talk. I was now of man's size, with more of intellect, & thought, than youths of the age I then was, generally display. I was particularly shy of young Ladies, & affected to mock at the attachment call'd love, & even denied its existence. Not a few thought I was constitutionally not form'd to feel those tender emotions planted in the human breast, for the wisest & best of purposes. Not so thought my venerable friend.

He esteem'd it an error, I was fostering too much, & on many occasions turn'd our conversation, to awaken more correct, & softer impressions. These I am sure were not the train of his thoughts, except when he had laudible purposes in view. It was impossible that he could have purposed to weaken my true delicacy, but my professions were what he must have seen unlikely to make me so useful & virtuous, as some parts of my character, gave promise. Mr. Thomas had a large family of daughters, the eldest of whom were in tender youth, a very few years younger than I was. He held no reserve as to a parent's concern, in the event of their settlement in life. I wholly acquit him of any views beyond good-will, in his civilities to me. In the exercise of a sublime benevolence, he was willing to assist in preparing me to fill my proper station. Subsequent time has convinc'd me that he judg'd correctly, that I was form'd to feel, & exercise the duties, & enjoyments of the tenderest of domestic relations, that of a husband, and parent. Mr. Thomas' daughters especially the eldest were very pretty, & possess'd of merits, & intelligence. Mrs. T. was my second cousin then I think not in the forbidden degrees by the discipline of friends. There was no impediment to my feeling, & indulging, tenderness for her daughters. My time of, & condition in life, forbid me to think of choosing a female favorite. I had imbib'd a strong dislike to the intermarriage of kindred, even in remote degrees. I was thus in no great danger, of being led to form a closer tie with my worthy friend. Of his six daughters only two have married, & one of them too late to have a family. Five of them are still living, the eldest a widow & the others Maidens and esteem'd very rich withal.

It was among the fortunate events of my life, to meet with such a man as Mr. Thomas, when no longer under the eye of a father in the season of youth. I have understood Mr. Thomas' temper was originally high, and untractible. His habit was now subdued, and amiable. He was better qualified to give lessons, to soften and refine than my father. Of the young men in the neighborhood, were Richard Trimble a sister's son, of Mr. Thomas, and Samuel Haines, the former a little older, & the latter about my own age. Trimble had his father's Mill, & Haines was left early an orphan, & repos'd on the guardianship & liberality of his old uncle, Rudolph the Apple tree maker. He kept a nursery. They were reading men, & had means to get books. Their conversation interested me. For the first time they check'd my con-

fidence, in the estimation I had held my redoubtable ancients. They laugh'd with something like triumph, at my blind partiality. It must be allow'd however, that in all time, no greater men have appear'd, nor greater actions been perform'd, nor truer wisdom, nor sublimer genius, been display'd; than ancient Greece can boast. I never thought the Romans, in any degree their rivals. There were many incidents, in my intercourse with Trimble, for which I feel unfading gratitude. He was at much pains and trouble, to oblige me, where the purpose alone merits my highest praise. He was a man above the common order, improv'd & of a goodly ambition. I remember nothing of him that shew'd littleness of mind. I hardly think I made his civilities, a suitable return. I had too little experience. I recollect however having given him the most unreserv'd assurances of my regard, & sense of his merits. I recollect he receiv'd them modestly but kindly.

Marriage often fixes a man's destiny, & Mr. T. was an instance, that a union with even a worthy woman, may divorce a man from his books, & the leadings of a generous ambition. He still lives, happy and respectable, but his married life, has been one of a mere Miller. He lives now retir'd from business but I can discover little trace of that mental activity, that distinguish'd his early manhood. He married Mrs. Thomas' youngest Sister, a respectable though not an intellectual woman. Hains a man of less strong, & less generous mind, was possess'd of literary taste, & distinguish'd Mechanical ingenuity. He has long been City surveyor for Philadelphia, & in more than forty years, I have seen him but once.

I was at all points an associate for my preceptor, and was generally treated as an equal companion; though I was studious not to step out of my place. When ask'd to go, I never allow'd myself, to be stimulated to make haste. I studied to be as flexible, to his service as if he had been my father. I was not always so tractable with Mrs. E., though her good sense, led her to excuse my untowardness. We never had an open rupture, & but few times were our good feelings jeopardiz'd.

I may now pause on my feelings after leaving, my paternal roof. I felt serious regret at being separated from intercourse with my father & thought how much happier was brother's lot. After an absence of some four or six weeks, I made a visit home. What a change had been effected, in my mind. I had forgotten the old dog, and some of the domestics, as if I had never known them. I was receiv'd

with kindness by all, by none with more than Sister Sarah. She remark'd that in a short time, I had conversed more with father, than my brother had done in all my absence. I return'd next day to my service, without repining, but as a duty not from choice, nor even indifference. I always felt the value of the blessings of a paternal home, & at the end of my three years service, return'd to it as the seat of all my hoped for comforts.

While with Mr. E. my father cloth'd me, my service to him was a good speculation. I was industrious, and attentive, & soon took the lead of my older fellow apprentices in skill and industry. It cost the poor fellow little to make this concession. I was at some times so intent on my business, that I could feel the loss of a moment's interruption, in comparing the labor of one day, with another. I was absorb'd in my work, & thought of nothing else. It is very desirable to feel this engagement, in what one is doing. I have often felt it in the course of my life. In business, as well as in my public engagements. To this faculty of application, I owe any success I have ever had. We can effect most, where our whole attention is concentrated. A leading object is always desirable. Omit no care to do well whatever is done, whether of business, or mental pursuits. In early life, I often thought that I had before me no model. I had no wish to be what surrounded me. The usual course of young men, to seek company, to ride a good horse well comparison'd, & to dress tastily, never presented to me any attraction. Seclusion was unfavorable, to my early attainment of gentleness, and Grace of manners. I had some susceptibility of polish, as experience has taught me. Early facilities of this kind, are an invaluable acquisition. In the exercise of kindness, good will and gentleness to all, who do not forfeit the right to it, will obtain much, without trenching upon sincerity. I regret wanting something of this quality, as much as any want, of my early life.

It is not necessary to give annals, of the three years of apprenticeship. They pass'd with patient endurance. I extracted some sweets. I gain'd some experience, home could not have given. I committed some errors, I encounter'd more hazards. I had upon the whole conciliated the E.'s. They were pleas'd to know that I had liv'd with them, & form'd pressages, that I was to make something more than a mechanic. So the good Lady told Sister Sarah, & she was careful to tell me. This communication, was made after I had left them. The time had now arriv'd, when my service was to terminate. I was to

take up my certificate of membership among friends, & on going to meeting, for that purpose, I fell in with my friend, Thomas, who was on foot. He saluted me with that line from Pope, When the brisk mind pants for twenty one. But said I, that is not my age. A! said he it is much like it. I feel no anxiety said I to anticipate mature age. I was not particularly joy'd, at the termination of my service, though it would relieve me from some painful restraints; & allow me to return home, the seat of all comfort. Mr. T. was sensible, that I had nothing to regret in my release, but he could hardly have estimated, how little I was qualified to have work'd my way at that age through the world. If my father's house had not been open for me, I should have been distress'd. I was no way prepar'd to have made my way, under self government. I had acquired a trade; I relish'd labor, but my mind was hungry for knowledge that did not immediately, pertain to getting a living, much less looking to a settlement in life. The time of Apprenticeship was not lost, but it is not certain that it was put to the best use. During these years, I felt an ardent desire for school instruction, I had never felt it in earlier life. My time was then another's, & though I improv'd every moment in some engagement; retirement was seldom to be had, & my means were very Limited in books. As to mental improvement; it was something like a blank. I could work any where duty requir'd, to the fields and rural labors my taste led me. My whole experience tends to convince me, I am deficient in what is necessary to success in business, as a buyer & seller, or as extracting from the labor of others, large gains. I always lov'd labor, & rural labor was ever my first choice. In that however, I was more form'd to live, than grow rich. The trade I learn'd has done little toward my subsistence, it might have been well acquir'd, connected with a due improvement of my understanding.

On my first visit home as recounted Sister Sarah express'd her wishes, to us; how much she desired us to make men of figure. She recounted to us how the wife of Phocian valued her husband's glory, more than Pearls & Gold & how Cornelia the Daughter of the great Scipio had stimulated her sons, whom she call'd her jewels, by telling them, "I am every where call'd the Mother-in-law of Emilius, & not the mother of the Gracchii." I felt the appeal, without hope of reaching the little distinction that has been since my lot. It was a satisfaction to me, that Sister liv'd to see my entrance on public service. My mother also liv'd to see it. My debut was not very splendid, as will

hereafter appear. It was a dawn however that neither presaged, nor forewent a day of more success. My youngest Sister Anna whose worth I had imperfectly learn'd, when I lost her, alone of those who most lov'd me, was not allow'd to see my entrance on my public career. She died 1799 in May, & I was elected to the Assembly in October, in the great election of that year.

I was now return'd home. My mother had become too infirm to ride on horse back. My father assigned to me as my first duties, to build her a Sleigh, and construct her a Carriage. The first I soon effected, that latter was a task of more difficulty, and magnitude. To be any thing involved the exercise of more skill, than waggon making required. With Sister Sarah's advice, and assistance, the carriage was built in a style, quite respectable for that day. Sister Sarah had much more Mechanical turn than I had. She helped me to trim it, & while we were engag'd at it, she remarked she felt as though we were erecting a temple to filial piety. It was gratifying to me, that it convey'd her to her married home at Birdsborough.

It was appointed that I should work at my trade, but I ever held myself ready to obey the calls of my father, which were frequent & which I met with alacrity. This continued some five years. To me it was an Uphill business, I never could have liv'd by it. I did not seek to enlarge my concern. I had my board &c as one of the family. The money I receiv'd I retain'd & applied it as I thought proper. My mind was still hungry for knowledge. Some portions of every twenty-four hours were devoted to study, not a moment was lost. These studies were varied, and imperfect. In my 21st year I seriously took up the subject of forming a Style. I wrote essays, I form'd correspondence, and pursued my object with a steady perseverance. I follow'd no model, I had no instruction, and at last I have not reached the point I aim'd to attain. On the 10th of January, 1795 I shar'd in the organization of a debating Club. It consisted of some twenty-five members. It compris'd a portion form'd only to look on. But several enter'd for the purpose of improvement. Our meetings were every fortnight & excited interest. They lasted for about a year. Our active men were thin'd by death, & the withdrawal of others, to distant avocations of life. Few of us tried extempore efforts, nor do I think such efforts can be fruitful, until a style be form'd & the mind stor'd with ideas, on the subject we are to speak. I composed, & deliver'd from memory some twenty orations, on different topics. They are still in existence, but I

have not been flatter'd on subsequent perusal. They are stiff, & display too much effort at ornament, which I am sure had better be avoided in beginners.

Father foreseeing that much paper was to be stain'd, procur'd a load of Rags, & went to Mill & brought a Ream of paper. The most of it perhaps all & more than all, was consum'd. Brother Mathew us'd some, I distrust however if he ever finish'd a speech on paper. He made some of our most respectable extempore efforts. My efforts were the most fruitful, but several others emulated my diligence, & kept my faculties at full tension. I alone, spoke three orations at one meeting. This was on the 9th of May, 1796. The meeting was held to gratify the public, & especially the Ladies. It met in the Baptist meeting house & the main question was "Is the intellectual faculties of Women, equal to those of men." On this question I took the negative, with two coadjutors. H. G. Jones now Parson Jones with two assistants spoke in the affirmative. I can now imperfectly judge our performance. It was decreed, that our argument was the best, but in this decision, there was most likely some pique, & prejudice. To me the Society offer'd a profitable course of exercise, not so much in fitting me for public debate, as in improving my style, awakening inquiry, & filling my memory. I acquir'd the habit of public speaking much later.

I had now become active in political controversy, & the Democratic party with whom I acted, began to assume consequence. In 1789 the French Revolution came to a crisis. Paine wrote his memorable reply, to Burke's reflections on that event. My father sent it to me. I was then about eighteen. It's perusal broke up every tolerance for Kings, & old political institutions. There remain'd in the country, a strong leaven of partiality for a policy of casts, and classes. The rights of man (so Paine call'd his Book) had not less effect, in turning the popular feelings towards a free representative government, than his Common sense, had in severing those ties, that bound us to the English Crown. There was some contrariety of feeling in the Club, but it produced no collision. In the close of our society (which arose out of the unsettl'd state of young men) a proposition was started, to form a library. This was in 1796. The move was seconded by older men. The scheme took effect. This was a happy succedamum to the Society. It gave me access to Dobson Encyclopedia & many of the standard authors of Ancient, & modern times, not otherwise attainable. I rioted in this new aliment. Brother M. & I had each a share,