

Letter 1.

Importance of forming just views of life.
My dear Sister—

Since we have been so widely separated, your image has constantly recurred to my mind, and with it, the desire to be useful to you by every means in my power through the medium of a correspondence. You will, on hearing this, imagine the gratification afforded me by the receipt of your last letter, in which you earnestly express the wish that I would endeavor as far as possible to supply the place of your beloved Mother. You desire me to write to you "freely, upon subjects connected with your improvement, in religious, mental and domestic duties, as on those little propinquities of life, which tend to form a valuable female character."

The field, which you, my dear E., have thus laid open before me, is very extended; and yet there is no part of it which, as your friend, I would wish to leave unexplored. I can only hope to compass the whole in a concise manner, by a systematic arrangement of our subject into various heads.

Before commencing these letters, which are designed to be friendly hints to you on the subject of Female Education, I wish you first, my dear E., distinctly to understand, what meaning I attach to the term education, which word is widely used and misused in the world.

I consider that our heavenly Parent, in the formation of

all his creatures, designed ^{for} for a particular station; that, having this ^{supreme} end in view to be attained, he with the most common sense wisdom, adapted the nature, dispositions, and qualifications, of each for its accomplishment; and, likewise, that he placed the several species in circumstances the most favorable for its acquisition.

What was God's design in creating man, is not left to conjecture, since he expressly declares, "I have created him for my glory." Our first parents, having been created free from sin, were placed to glorify their Maker by lives of pure and holy obedience. They fell, and involved us, their posterity, in the sad consequence of their fall. We are created under different ~~circumstances~~ ^{circumstances}, indeed, but equally to manifest the glory of God, not by sinless obedience, which is out of our power, but by a diligent entering into the mode and means of restoration to the favor of God, which he has graciously unfolded to us in that Revelation of his will entrusted to us. This Holy Word of God assures us, that we have been placed in this world, not for the whole term of our being, but as probationers for a life eternal and holy in the presence of God. This not only implies that we are in a state of trial with respect to this to the present and the future world, which trial must arise from something in the circumstances in which we are placed, as well as from our nature; but also that we are now under a course of education ^{discipline} or ~~discipline~~ by which our moral character is to be trained and fitted for another and wider sphere. Now when we desire to fit an instrument to accomplish a given end, we shall

not only clearly understand what that end is to be, but also the process to be employed in fitting the instrument to effect it. After reading these observations, you will understand that I consider the work of education much more arduous and extensive than it is supposed to be by many; namely, that its design is no other than to fit and qualify a fallen and corrupt creature, living "its residence" in this world, its only time of probation, for an eternal holy and glorious existence.

Such being as I conceive the design of our education, the period allotted to it, is of proportionate extent, since it is to be measured only by the term of life assigned to each individual; it commences with the first dawning of moral consciousness, and terminates only with the closing scene of life. As the great lesson assigned us to learn in this world, is to prepare for heaven, and awaiting our entry to regard but as The messenger sent by our Lord and Master to conduct us through a narrow and dark passage, into the extended blessedness of eternity, so the preciousness of those lessons can never be fully realized, unless we have met the realization of a dying hour, and entered upon another state of being.

