THE
Schoole of Skill,
OR
The rule of a reformed
Life:

Digested into three sententious
sequences of the A, B, C:
wherein the weake haue their full
measure of pure milke, and the
strong their iust weight of sound meat:

By Abraham Fleming

Matth.7.12
Whatsoeuer ye would that men should
Do to you, euen so do ye to them
for this is the law and the prophets.

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A preface to the true Christian Reader.

It is the custome of parents, disposed to traine vp their children[n] in learning and knowledge of tongues, arts and sciences: first in their infancie to commit them to some honest Schoolmaister, vnder whome they might be taught the principles of their owne natuall tongue, and afterwards in tract of time, as their capacitie increaseth the rudiments of forraine speeches. For hee that determineth to erecte and build a dwelling house, beginneth not at the roofe, but at the foundation: otherwise, as it were a prospererous kinde of attempt, so all the world would judge it fond & ridiculous.

Again, we see and experience teacheth no lesse, that the expertest and valiantest Captaine that euer fought in field, was not a perfect warriour borne, though peradventure there was in him some vehement inclination to martiall policie and prowes: but first he had his slender beginnings, and and simple trainings vp, fit and conuenient for the nature of his age: which training vp in militarie knowledge and war-like actiuitie continued, the learner becommeth more skilfull & courageous, and at last, by frequenting the field, and enuring himselfe to trials of valiantnes, proueth a passing souilder.

Euen so wee, whome nature in-deede hath adorned with a goodlie likenes, with amiablenesse of countenance, and with apt proportion of bodie, but yet thrust out into the world with polluted soules, if we bee desirous to please God, and not to aoofend man, we must endeouer our selues to lead a life agreeable to the written worde of the Lord.
waies, and meanes to attaine here-\vnto, doo stand vpon certaine principles, or positions, whereof some being affirmatiue and some nega-
tiue, doo ioyntlie teach vs what wee ought to followe and what to eschew.

These principles or rules leading vs to the knowledge and practise of a godlie and vpright life I haue thought good to call the Schoole of Skill. For as to neglect the due ob-
seruation of such precepts, and vterlie to conteemne the vse of so wholesome counsels, is a manifest reason and argument of folli: so, to esteeme of them, as of acceptable treasures, and to order the course of life according to their prescription and platforme, is an evidente signe and token of good skill.

Now the schoolemaster, whose School I intitle this to be, is such a one in deed, as being taught by the holy Ghost from aboue, hath had the vse and practise of a godlie and blamelesse life: the commoditie whereof, and incomparable sweete-
nesse issuing from thence, when hee had tasted, and sawe that the end of the same was reward for eternall life, he pitied the miserable state of men walking in blindnesse, igno-
rance, and destruction: and to re-
woke them, or rather instruct and teach them knowledge, that there-
by they might amend their inordi-
nate trade of life, he professed him-
selxe a teacher in this Schoole, to the end that others, as well as hee, might perceiue what aduantage a well disposed life affordeth.

This Schoolemaster we must pre-
suppose to be such a one, whose hart the finger of the Lord had touched, and into whose understanding the sunne of sanctification had shined. He was not one that walked in car-
nall libertie, neither in the concu-
piscence of the eye, neither in the vanitie of the mind, for then should there be a repugnancie and dissen-
tion between his conversation and profession, which ought to agree like musicall concords. Take him therefore to be such a one, as being renewed in the spirit of the inner man, is able to teach, to instrucr, to rebuke, and to informe, that the man of God might be made perfect in all righteousnesse. But now entering into this Schoole of Skill, let vs like good schollers with full purpose (Gods grace being our gouernour) to profite and go forward in that we professe, learne by hart our A, B, C, in this Schoole, and according to our lessons frame the course of our life.

Abraham Fleming.

To the Reader

The starkest foole if well he marke
This skilfull Schoole, proues greatest clarke:
Come therefore you that wise would be,
And learne anew,
this A, B, C.
The Schoole of Skill, or the rule of a reformed life.

The first sententious sequence of the A, B, C, deliuering diuers doctrines of vertue and vice to be followed and avoided:

A    A wise man shal heare and increase in learning, and a man of understanding shall attain vnto wise counsels.

B    Bee not wise in thine owne eies, but sfcare the Lorde, and depart from euill.

C    Commit thy workes vnto the Lord, and thy thoughtes shall be directed.

D    Death and life are in the power of the toong, and they that loue it, shall eat the fruit thereof.

E    Euen a foole, when he holdeth his peace is counted wise: and hee that stoppeth his lips, prudent.

F    Fauour is deceiptfull, and beauty is vanitie: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

G    Giue yee strong drinke vnto him that is ready to perish, and wine vnto them that haue greete of heart.

H    Hee that turneth awaie his eare from hearing the lawe, euen his praier shall be abhominable.

I    In the transgression of an euill man is his snare, but the righteous doth sing and reioise.

K    Keepe thine heart with all di-
ligence, for there out commeth life.

L  Let thine eyes beholde the Right, and let thine eyelids di-
Rect thy way before thee.

M  Manie reuerence the face of the prince, and euerie man is a friend,

N  Northerne windes driue a-
way the raine, so doth an angry countenance the slandering
tongue.

O  Obey thy father that hath be-
gotten thee, and despise not thy mother when shee is old.

P  Pride goeth before before destruction, and an high minde before the fall.

Q  Quietnes in a poore cottage,
is better than strife in a Prin-
ces palace.

R  Riches gather manie friends,
but the poore is separated from his neighbour.

S  Smite a scorners and the foo-
lish will beware: reprove the prudent, and hee will vnder-
stand knowledge.

T  The foolishness of man per-
ueresth his way, and his heart fretteth against the land.

V  Valiantnes in a king is l
ike the stre[n]ghth of a Lion, his lookes shall fray his foes.

W  Wisedome is high to a foole,
therefore hee cannot open his mouth in the gate.

Y  Youth is woorthie to be reue-
renced, if it be adorned with dis-
cretion and continencie.

Z  Zeale without knowledge is foolishness, loue without hone-
stie is lewdnesse, and friendship
without faith is flatterie.

_The second sententious sequence of the A, B, C, deliuering diverse doctrines of vertue and vice, to be followed and avoided._

**A**  Apply thine hart to instruction, and thine eares to the words of knowledge.

**A**  A man that wandreth out of the way of wisedome, shall remaine in the congregation of the dead.

**B**  Be not light of credit, but lay thine care open to truth and honestie, so shalt thou bee worshipfull.

**B**  Be not thou enuious against euill men, neither desire to bee with them.

**C**  Count nothing thine owne, whiles thou liuest in this worlde, for euerie man hath his talent but lent.

**C**  Cast out the scorner, and the seditious man, so shall contention and reproach cease.

**D**  Do good to thine enemy to the uttermost of thy might, so shalt thou fulfiel the law of charitie.

**D**  Drawe towards the wise to learne wisedome, so shalt thou be had in reputation.

**E**  Eate thou not the breade of him that hath an euill eie, neyther desire his daintie meates.

**E**  Euen in laughing the heart is sorrowfull, and the ende of that mirth is heauinesse.

**F**  Foolishnesse is ioy to him that is destitute of vnderstanding wal-
Flatterie is like vnto the weeping of a Crocodile, and when he talketh most friendlie, he meaneth least honestie.

God ouerthroweth the wicked, and they are not, but the house of the righteous shall stand.

Give no eare to the report of a slanderer, for in his his tongue lieth deadly poison.

Hee that keepeth his tongue, keepeth his life: but he that openeth his lippes, destruction shall be to him.

He shall be sore vexed that is suretie for a stranger: and hee that hateth suretiship is sure.

Intend nothing that may turne to the harme of thy neighbour, for hee is as thine owne selfe.

Justice and truth are in such as feare God, as for the wicked, they abhore vertue.

Keepe not company with drun-kards, nor with gluttons: for the feete of such go to death.

Know him well whom thou maketh of thy counsel, least hee bewraie thy secrets.

Looke not vppon the wine when it is redde, and when it sheweth his colour in the cup, or goeth out pleasantlie.

Let not thine heart bee enui-ous against sinners, but let it be in the feare of the Lord continuallie.

Mercy and truth do preserue the king, for his throne shall
be established with mercy.

M Make no friendship with an angrie man, neither go with the furious man.

N Notorious liars flee from, as from a Scorpion: for they are the verie frie of Sathan.

N Neuer giue thy consent in a thing that is wicked, for God rewardeth both with shame.

O Opprobrious wordes defile the soule of him from whome they proceed, and wound to the death.

O Of thine encrease, spare somewhat to the poore, that God may blesse thy store.

P Pitie the case of such as bee succourlesse, and shut not thine eies against the naked.

P Patience is a souereigne vertue, and bringeth the soule of the iust to euerlasting comfort.

Q Quicken thy heart with honest mirth, least too much heauines ouerthrowe thy health.

Q Quietlie tarrie the Lordes leasure in the time of thy trouble: for so to doo is wisedome.

R Rob not the poore, because hee is poore: neither oppresse the afflicted in judgement.

R Righteous lips are the kings delight, and hee loueth them that speake right thinges.

S Set not thy minde vpon vanitye, for therein consisteth nothing that is sound.

S Submit thy necke to the yoke of obedience, so shalt thou be praised among the people.
The wrath of a King, is as the messenger of death: but a wise man will pacifie him.

The heart of a man purposeth this way, but the Lorde doth direct his steps.

Violence and tyranny are the ruine of a Realme, but mercie upholdeth the kings throne.

Vpbraid not thy better with contumelious talke, least thou heape hot coles vpon thine own head.

Without counsel thoughtes come to naught: but in the multitude of counsellors is stedfastnesse.

Wisedome resteth in the heart of him that hath vnderstanding and is vnknowne in the minds of fooles.

Yeeld to the magistrate dutifullness, and with thine equall vse courtesie.

Young or olde, rich or poore, strong or weake, thou art not thine owne, but Gods who made thee.

Zacheus the Publican, offering to make restitution if he had done anie man wrong, teacheth the rich of this worde what their duties should be.

Zerubbabell shall laie the highest stone of the spirituall temple, his hands haue laid the foundation of the same.

A sound heart is the life of
the flesh but enuie is the rot-
ting of the bones.

A  A faithfull witness deliuereth soules, but a deceiuer speaketh lies

A  An angrie man stirreth vp strife: but he that is slowe to wrath appeaseth strife.

B  Better is a dinner of greene herbes where loue is than a stalled oxe & hatred therewith.

B  Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.

B  Better is a drie morsel, if peace bee with it, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.

C  Childrens children are the crowne of the Elders, and the glorie of the children are their fathers.

C  Conteinne not anie that is in authoritie, for that is the rea-die waie to runne into Gods wrath.

C  Chasten thy sonne whiles there is hope, and let not thy soule spare for his murmu-rings.

D  Diuerse weights are an ab-homination vnto the Lord, and deceitfull Ballances are not good.

D  Depart from the foolish man when thou perceiuest not in him the lips of knowledge.

D  Destruction shall light vpon them that imagine euill, but to such as thinke on good things shall be mercie and truth.

E  Enter not into lawe with a rich man, for it is in him to per-uert equitie and right.
E  Exercise thy selfe in that
which is honest, so shal no shame
follow thereupon.

E  Exempt thy selfe from the
companie of wanton woman,
for they leade thee the waie to
hell.

F  Foolishnesse is bound in the
heart of a childe, but the rod of
correction shall driue it away.

F  Frowardnesse is the token of
a foole, and inconstancie is a
signe of a little trust.

F  Followe not the counsel of
the wicked, least thou be a parta-
ker of their punishment.

G  Giue admonition to the wise,
and hee will be the wiser: teach
a righteous man, and hee will
increase in learning.

G  Good vnderstanding maketh
Acceptable, but the waie of the
disobedient s hated.

G  Grudge not to giue of thine
abundance to him that is nee-
die, lest God be angrie.

H  Hee that mocketh the poore,
reproacheth him that made
him: and hee that reioiceth at
destruction, shall not escape vn-
punished.

H  Hee that is slow vnto anger
is better than the mightie
man: and hee that ruleth his
owne minde, is better than hee
that winneth a citie.

H  How much better is it to get
wisedome than golde? and to
get vnderstanding, is more to
be desired than siluer.

I  In the mouth of the foolish
is the boasting of pride, but the
lips of the wise will beware of
such.

I It is a great abomination when Kings are wicked, for a Kings seate should bee vpholden with righteousnesse.

I If thou smitest a scornfull person, the ignorant shall take better heed: and if thou reprovest one that hath understanding he will be wiser.

K Keepe thy selfe from strife, for therein consisteth a mans honour: but they that haue pleasure in braulig, are fooles euerie one.

K Kings ought to be feared, as the roaring of a Lion: who so prouokest him to anger, offendeth against his owne soule.

K Kindle not contention betweene neighbour and neighbour, for the Lord wil roote such out of the land.

L Lay no priuie waite wickedlie vpon the house of the righteous, and disquiet not his resting place.

L Let not thy wrath and jealousie moue thee to followe the wicked and vngodly.

L Like as the cold of snow in the hearuest, so is a faithfull messenger to them that send him: for he redresheth his masters mind.

M Make not thy boast of to morrow, for thou knowest not what may happen to day.

M Many there be that seeke the Princes fauour, but euerie mans iudgemente commeth fro[m] the Lord.

M Mercie in a King, is like a pearle of great value in a gol-
den Crowne: O happie is the land that hath such a king!

N Nurture thy sonne with correction, and thou shalt be at rest: yea, he shall do thee good at thine heart.

N Neuer trust a flatterer with anie secret: for such a one cannot keepe counsel.

N Notwithstanding thou bee poore, and yet hast wisdom, thou shalt be had in reuerence.

O One poore man oppressing another by violence, is lie a continuall raine that destroieith the fruit.

O Oppresse not the fatherlesse and widow, for the Lorde himself will take vengeance.

O Overcome euill with good, so shall the Lord blesse thee in all thy proceedings.

P Put thou nothing vnto the word of the Lorde, least hee reproue thee, and thou be found a liar.

P Plentie bringeth loathsomenes, and forgetfulness of God: O wel is he that keepeth measure!

P Pitch not thy tentes among the wicked, least thou bee overthrowne in the destruction.

Q Queenes and kings are to be feared of their subjectes, O well is he whose heart is obedient!

Q Quench the wrath of thine aduersarie with patience, so shall his anger asswage.

Q Quicklie reforme thy selfe, if thou haue offended: and excuse not the thing wherein thou hast
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done amiss.

R  Riches and honour waite vpon wisedome: yea, excellent goodes and righteousnesse.

R  Receiue knowledge before siluer, and vnderstanding before the finest gold.

R  Remooue from thee all malice and enuie: for the hearte of the forward is a tormenting hell.

S  Some men are rich. Thou they haue nothing: againe, some men are poore hauing great riches.

S  Seeke wisdome in thy youth, so shalt thou bee honoured in thine age.

S  Set aside all slouthfulnesse, and walke vprightlie in thy vocation and calling.

T  The law is a well of life vn-to the wise, that it may keepe him from the snares of death.

T  The righteous eateth and is satisfied, but the bellie of the vngodlie hath neuer inough.

T  The poore is hated, euen of his owne neighbours, but the rich hath many friends.

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V  Visit thy friend in the time of his aduersitie, so shalt thou shew thy faithfulnesse.

V  Vaine are all things vnder the Sunne, onelie the word of God lasteth forewer.

V  Vnto the counsel of the wise let thine eares be open, but flee the conuersation of the wicked.

W  When it goeth well with the righteous, the citie is merrie: and when the vngodlie perish, there is gladnesse.
W Weepe ouer the sinnes which thou hast committed, and pray to God penitentlie for pardon.

W Where pride is, there is shame and confusion: but where low-lines is, there is wisedome.

Y Yrke and loath the follies of the flesh, for the end of them is euerlasting.

Y Yealde not thy selfe into the handes of thine enemies, for they seeke nothing but to sucke thy bloud.

Y Youthfull array is vnseemlie for the aged, but grauitie maketh youth louely and gra-tious.

Z Zealouslie maintaine the truth, yea before a Iudge, for truth will preuaile and get the victorie.

Z Zeale in a good cause is commendable and praiseworthy, O happie is he that hath such a Zeale!

Z Zealouslie to follow the commandements of God tru-lie to loue his lawe, is life euer-lasting.

FINIS