

SAMPSON REED
Primary Source Material
for Emerson Studies

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SWEDENBORG STUDIES / No. 1
Monographs of the Swedenborg Foundation
New York City and West Chester, Pennsylvania

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Compiled by George F. Dole
with a Preface by Sylvia Shaw

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* *Landscape with a Lake*. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Korolik Collection.

◆ PREFACE ◆



Sampson Reed was a talented and prolific writer who left his mark on American literature yet faded into near oblivion. He published over a hundred essays in his life time and authored a book in 1826 that influenced a whole literary movement. *Observations on the Growth of the Mind* was Reed's definitive study of aesthetics—a synthesis of religion science and the arts. It became the backbone of New England Transcendentalism.¹ Emerson read it as a young man and was transformed by it; his journal entry on September 10, 1826, reveals his sense of awe:

Our American press does not often issue such productions as Sampson Reed's *Growth of the Mind*, a book of such a character as I am conscious betrays some pretensions even to praise. It has to my mind the aspect of a revelation such is the wealth and such is the novelty of the truth unfolded in it.²

Emerson turned *Growth of the Mind* into a manifesto for himself, deriving from it the philosophic perspective that would permeate all his writing—the Swedenborgian concept of the correspondence between nature and spirit. As Clarence Hotson and other researchers have demonstrated, *Growth of the Mind* was pivotal to Emerson, providing his celebrated “Nature” with its content and even with its form.³ Yet until recently Reed and his masterpiece were little more than a footnote in Emersonian scholarship.

From 1929 to the present, a series of studies has progressively led literary scholars to the awareness that Sampson Reed had a tremendous influence not only on Emerson and the Transcendentalists, but also on Walt Whitman and modern poetry.⁴ Furthermore, apart from his ideological contribution to American literature, Sampson Reed merits rediscovery and publication for the high calibre of his own writing.

The anthology before you is a modest compilation, but the most comprehensive to date, of representative works by Reed. We have included the previously unpublished “Dissertation,” a religious treatise that laid the groundwork for his aesthetic theory; “Oration on Genius,” a vibrant speech which is probably America's earliest Romantic manifesto; *Observations on the Growth of the Mind*, the aesthetic theory embraced by Emerson and the New England transcendentalists; and Reed's Preface to the 1838 edition of *Growth of the Mind*.

The Preface is an impassioned indictment of Transcendentalism, the very

movement Reed had inspired. It signals an ideological parting of the ways between Emerson and Reed, Transcendentalism and Swedenborgianism. For Reed the Preface was an act of conscience—the open avowal of his religion, which in effect ended his literary career.⁵

Who *was* Sampson Reed? And how did his religion limit his career in a country that prided itself even then on its religious tolerance?

Sampson Reed was born on June 10, 1800, in Bridgewater Massachusetts.⁶ He descended from a long line of Calvinist ministers. His father, however, had broken from the Calvinist church over the issue of predestination, and served for fifty years in the more liberal Unitarian pulpit. Sampson enrolled at the Harvard Divinity School at the age of fourteen, intent on following in his father's footsteps. And he would have, for he soon became the school's prize student, but Reed chanced to room with Thomas Worcester and that altered his life-plan dramatically.⁷

In the summer of 1815, Worcester heard about some unusual books known collectively as "the Writings" of Emanuel Swedenborg. The Writings gave a new interpretation of the Bible and described the afterlife in vivid detail. They also made the startling claim that the Second Coming of Christ had occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century, not as a physical return of Christ, but as a spiritual rejuvenation that was ongoing. Intrigued, Worcester set out to find these rare tomes in the Harvard library. After an exhaustive search, he and the librarian found them in a small room known as the 'museum,' a cramped space choked with dust, rubbish, and such oddities as stuffed crocodiles. Hidden away under a shelf were volumes of the *Arcana Coelestia* and several other works by Swedenborg. Some bore the inscription, "Emanuel Swedenborg, Servant of the Lord."⁸

Worcester was struck by the fact that of the more than 50,000 volumes that Harvard boasted in 1815, these alone had been banished from circulation. He had to obtain special permission from the president of the college before he could carry the books off to his room. Then he and Reed, along with several other classmates, began an inner journey that would change their lives. In the end they would all forfeit their intended careers, such was the prejudice of the times against Swedenborgian theology.⁹

When in 1985 I first began research on Reed, I had the good fortune to stumble upon the 1820 Dissertation, which he had written as a graduate student at Harvard. For me the discovery was reminiscent of Worcester's search in the Harvard Library in that I felt I had happened upon a forgotten treasure. Marian Kirven, librarian of the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Massachusetts, allowed me to access first editions of Reed's work from the vault. It was

there that we found a researcher's dream: an unpublished manuscript yellowed with age and penned by the author himself. It turned out to be Sampson Reed's earliest known work.

I eagerly set to work transcribing the manuscript. Professor George Dole has further refined that transcription for this anthology. What has emerged is a treatise that lays the theological groundwork for Reed's theory of aesthetics, the theory which Emerson would secularize in "The Poet" and which Walt Whitman would subsequently apply so brilliantly to poetry.¹⁰

At first glance the Dissertation seems to have a misleading title, "On the Evidence from the Light of Nature of a Future Retribution." It focuses neither on nature nor on retribution, but on truth. Without mentioning Swedenborg by name, Reed gives what is clearly a Swedenborgian explication of the Bible as the highest source of truth.

He argues that Christian theologians have tended to interpret the Bible from 'the light of nature,' by which he means from man's own nature, and since that nature is no longer united to God's, they have evolved twisted notions about the Creator and the afterlife. In describing God as a wrathful deity who condemns most of his children to the tortures of hell, who cruelly sacrifices his son as atonement for mankind, and who punishes and favors arbitrarily, theologians have merely ascribed their own evils to God. They have created God in their own image by reducing the spiritual to the natural, instead of elevating the natural to the spiritual.

Having stated that the Christian Church is riddled with false notions, Reed then poses the question: if the Church bases its dogma on the Word of God, how then can errors crop up? He answers with another Swedenborgian concept: that the Bible can be read on different levels, each accommodated by God to correspond with mankind's varying natural and spiritual states of mind. Since a man's ability to perceive truth depends on his character, he will only find it in God's Word to the degree that he is himself a form of truth.

In another instance, Reed uses the classic Swedenborgian description of God as the unison of two things: Love and Wisdom, or what is the same, Love and Truth. God is love, and truth the manifestation of love. Therefore one is prior to the other, in a cause and effect relationship. If God made the world from love, then creation is the effect of that love, or what is the same, creation is truth—truth clothed in nature—the central idea Emerson would reiterate in 1836 in "Nature." Above all, the Dissertation expresses the critical concept which eventually alienated Reed from Emerson: the primacy of Divine Revelation over natural observation; of Scriptural truth over human reason:

The perfection of religion is indeed the union of nature and revelation. But this can never be effected by bringing down revelation to nature but by raising nature to revelation.¹¹

Jonathan Edwards, that quintessential Puritan theologian who predates Reed by a hundred years, would have agreed wholeheartedly with his insistence on the supremacy of Revelation over all other forms of truth. It should be noted too that Reed was not the first New England writer to explore the correspondence between the natural and the spiritual. Puritan theologians, probably none so much as Jonathan Edwards, had also sought out a connection between spirit and nature, cause and effect. *Images or Shadows of Divine Things* records Edwards' quest for correspondences, which he finds sometimes in the Bible, other times speculatively.¹²

The writings of Emanuel Swedenborg describe correspondences with far greater detail, in a staggering thirty volumes, and assert that they are not the speculative conclusions of the human mind but the tangible workings of the Divine Mind as revealed to Swedenborg. Sampson Reed derived his aesthetic theory from his study of Swedenborg. It is therefore helpful to understand at least key Swedenborgian ideas. The Dissertation explains these in masked terms in a standard nineteenth century theological prose: logical in its argumentation, conventional in most of its imagery. However, even here a youthful vigor shines at times through the formal rhetoric, hinting of the vibrant Oration that was to come.

A year after Reed wrote the Dissertation, he graduated with a master's degree in theology and was chosen to give the baccalaureate, a speech he entitled "Oration on Genius."¹³ When he spoke to the class of 1821 on the subject of genius, by which he meant greatness, he delivered one of the most unusual speeches in American letters. It presented Swedenborgian theology in the clothing of Romanticism.

"Oration on Genius" is one of America's earliest romantic manifestoes, if not the first: early in that it anticipated the literary movement that would sweep over from its stronghold in Europe, and romantic in that it exalts individualism, nature, and intuitive perception. It does this from a uniquely Swedenborgian perspective, tempering the excesses of romanticism with theology.

Throughout the Oration, Reed combines romantic diction with biblical imagery. He draws largely on the Dissertation of the previous year, expanding portions of it. In the Dissertation he hints that love is far more than mere romance but adds nothing further. With the Oration he begins with an analysis of love:

[T]here is something which gives activity to the mind in all ages,

countries and worlds. This principle of activity is love: it may be love of good or of evil; it may manifest itself in saving life or in killing; but it is love.

Such an all-encompassing use of the word, 'love,' is a distinctly Swedenborgian one. It expands the term to incorporate the very life beat behind all things:

Man knows that love exists, but not what it is. . . . He is absolutely unaware that it is his very life; not merely the general life of his whole body, and of his every thought, but of every particular of them.¹⁴

Having explained love in this context, Reed makes the first of his seemingly romantic assertions about individualism. Like the Romantics, he exalts the uniqueness of self; unlike them he adds a moral imperative: that the self, which constitutes a vital part of the created universe, strive to serve the interests of the whole. With a series of vibrant metaphors and enigmatic statements, he goes on to reject Lockian metaphysics, points to a new intellectual and spiritual optimism, and hints strongly at nature's spiritual role. Again, with his Swedenborgian perspective, Reed does not exalt nature for its own sake, but for what it teaches about spirit. Comments such as the following must have ignited Emerson's imagination:

There is a unison of spirit and nature. The genius of the mind will descend, and unite with the genius of the rivers, the lakes, and the woods. Thoughts fall to the earth with power, and make a language out of nature.

Fusing romanticism with Swedenborgianism, Sampson Reed glories in the emotions of introspection, but only to the degree that such emotions spring up from the depths of a true, religious sensibility. He exhorts his listeners to achieve true genius (greatness) by first cultivating moral and spiritual virtue from within. Then, he asserts, the arts ". . . will spring in full-grown beauty from Him who is the source of beauty."

His audience was enthralled by the Oration. As Perry Miller notes in *The Transcendentalists*, "It excited the expectation of a new day, and it did so in an oracular, cryptic style, such as had not been heard in New England before, no accent of which was lost on the delighted eighteen-year-old Waldo Emerson."¹⁵ William Ellery Channing, chief spokesman then for New England Unitarianism, also marveled as he listened to the young orator. Twenty-six years later when Elizabeth Peabody published the Oration in *Aesthetic Papers*, Channing would comment, "Never had I heard on college boards anything so utterly original and full of life."¹⁶

Few suspected the source from which Reed derived his principal ideas; Puritan/Unitarian New England regarded Swedenborg with marked suspicion. Therefore Reed prudently chose to convey his religious convictions in ecumenical or secular terms, veiling them with metaphors and epigrammatic statements. The result was a stunning work of oratory.

Sampson Reed left Harvard with the applause of his audience ringing in his ears. His oratorical success, however, was soon eclipsed by the trial that awaited him after graduation. In leaving the safety of academia, Reed had to confront the dilemma he had been postponing. As his views grew increasingly Swedenborgian, he realized he would not be allowed to pursue his intended career in the Unitarian ministry. Thomas Worcester and eleven other people were in the process of establishing the first Swedenborgian church in New England, with Worcester as its minister. Their church was far too small at that time to also offer Reed a pulpit. He would have to earn a living in some other way. Reed gives the following description of the predicament he and his Swedenborgian classmates faced:

We had expected to become ministers, but now all prospect of this was cut off. We therefore seemed to be qualified for nothing but school teaching; but such was the prejudice against our religion, that this occupation was not open to us. For example, Mr. Wilkins wished to obtain a public school at the North End, but was opposed and prevented from obtaining it by Dr. Charles Lowell, one of the best ministers among those who delight in calling themselves Liberal Christians. Mr. Hayward also had engaged a school in Concord, Mass.; but this could not be allowed to go into effect; for Dr. Ripley, another venerable minister of the same denomination, interposed, and broke up the contract.¹⁷

Financial necessity forced Reed to settle for an apprenticeship in the shop of a Boston apothecary, a position far beneath his expectations.¹⁸ Even as he applied himself to learning a trade, he began to formulate his theory of aesthetics. For a concise statement of it, one has only to read a letter which he wrote to Theophilus Parsons, a fellow Swedenborgian and Harvard classmate. Dated May 31, 1823, it stands at the halfway point between the Dissertation and *Growth of the Mind*. The letter summarizes the central ideas in both:

If you keep the Word of God before you as essential poetry, I think you must know where to look for every thing else, as instinctively as animals know the point of compass. The different kinds of poetry as they have been classified by writers on the subject, are something that

I know very little about but I should think that the natural mind had made divisions here as elsewhere, many of which would disappear before a single view of goodness and truth united. Whether Lyric, Pastoral, Heroic or what not, poetry can have but one essence, love, but one form, nature. There may be infinite variety in the time, but they all require articulation and sound. I can see no rhymes in nature, and hardly blank verse, but a happy assemblage of living objects, not in straight lines and at fixed distance, but springing up in God's own order, which by its apparent want of design, leaves on the heart an image of its essential innocence and humility.¹⁹

In a remarkable departure from the norm, Reed repudiates rhyme and versification as artificial restrictions. For a more detailed explanation, and the one that Emerson read and used, we turn to *Observations on the Growth of the Mind*, Reed's definitive study on aesthetics. Reed worked on the book during free moments at the apothecary shop and completed it while in the midst of starting his own business. Both prospered. Sampson Reed went on to become New England's leading wholesale druggist. *Observations on the Growth of the Mind* went through ten successful editions in England and the United States, from 1826 to 1886. Expanding on the Dissertation and on the Oration, Sampson Reed advances the following propositions:

1. Each and every object of the physical world corresponds to a specific object of the spiritual world. Nature, therefore, is a language of spirit.
2. Poetry is the human analog of divine creation, illustrating truth by natural imagery. When the poet uses a language—not of words but of things, he achieves a union of the natural with the spiritual.
3. Since true poetry expresses truths through natural imagery and corresponds on the finite level to God's truths as given in His Word, the poet serves a very high function.
4. And since the poet's art derives its form directly from nature and from Revelation, it should not be shackled by artificial restrictions of meter or of any conventions that run counter to the truths found in nature. Music abounds in nature. Therefore, while rhyme is an artificial restriction man has imposed on the art, rhythm remains essential to verse, for it accords with the musicality of the cosmos.

Emerson read *Growth of the Mind* many times over the years. A letter to his aunt Mary Moody Emerson records his admiration for it from the first:

Can anything be more greatly, more wisely writ? Has any modern hand touched the harp of great nature so rarely? Has any looked so shrewdly

into the subtle and concealed connexion of man and nature; of earth and heaven?²⁰

Emerson advanced Sampson Reed's aesthetics throughout his writings. Through him, New England Transcendentalism derived its key doctrine of correspondence; the poet's function took on a heightened dignity and a moral significance, and he was encouraged to liberate himself from any restrictions of convention that might impede him in his task to present truth. Nowhere is Reed's direct influence more obvious than in Emerson's 1844 essay, "The Poet." Emerson minimizes Reed's religious slant but maintains the moral injunction to the poet. Without citing his source, he expounds on the same themes: correspondences, the moral function of the poet, and the repudiation of metre.

Emerson attempted to apply Reed's unconventional concepts to his own poetry without much success.²¹ Fortunately for modern poetry, "The Poet" prompted Walt Whitman to take up the challenge and liberate the art form. Whitman imbibed every word of Emerson's essay and ultimately applied Reed's theory with stunning results.²²

Sampson Reed was much admired by the Transcendentalists and by Emerson in particular. Sadly, the Emerson-Reed friendship was headed toward an inevitable collision, inevitable because of a critical difference in their perceptions, not only of Swedenborg, but of Biblical revelation itself.

Emerson considered Swedenborg the ultimate poet, an artist who expressed truths symbolically by using natural imagery. Reed, on the other hand, revered Swedenborg's works as being God's promised revelation to mankind, the spiritual rejuvenation which he believed constituted the Second Coming of Christ. For Emerson, Swedenborg's truths had an abstract, subjective, poetic quality;²³ for Reed they were concrete, objective, and divinely inspired. The conflict finally came to a head with Reed's Preface to the 1838 edition of *Growth of the Mind*.

By then both Emerson and Reed were enjoying a good measure of literary success. Each had made free use of Swedenborgian ideas without avowing them to the public. They had in effect pioneered application of Swedenborg's theology to American literature. Both writers understood the damaging consequences such a disclosure would inflict upon their literary success, so neither credited Swedenborg as their source. By 1838 Reed had come to regard it a man's duty to speak the truth rather than to please an audience or protect a career. He therefore openly acknowledged Swedenborg's writings as the source of his philosophical ideas. His comments in the 1838 Preface seem aimed at Emerson, not by direct indictment, but implicitly:

So far as an author duly feels in whose presence he stands, it can be no

source of gratification to attract personal admiration or praise. He must regard himself as only a medium of truth. . . . It is painful to see how little willingness there is to acknowledge the source of truth; and how often a man seems to think that it has answered its legitimate purpose, when he has bedecked his own person therewith, so as to command the admiration of the multitude.²⁴

More importantly, he believed that Emerson's transcendentalism was taking a dangerous turn, its doctrine of self-reliance leading men away from revelation into the pitfalls of self-love. Emerson's Divinity School Address of a few months later confirmed Reed's objections. The doctrine of Self-Reliance had led Emerson to advocate the rejection of Christ's divinity and of the Bible as divine revelation. The very phraseology of the Bible which Reed studied with such reverence, linking it through correspondences to natural and spiritual phenomena, Emerson rejected outright as being 'old rubbish:'

Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. . . . When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish.²⁵

In the Dissertation of his student days Reed had charged Christian theologians with the tendency to reduce the spiritual to the natural level, instead of elevating the natural to the spiritual. By 1838 he believed that the Transcendentalists had fallen into the same old trap and were dragging others into it. He took them to task with rhetoric that was surprisingly abrasive and unyielding:

Transcendentalism is the parasite of sensualism; and when it shall have done its work, it will be found to be itself a worm, and the offspring of a worm.²⁶

Needless to say, Sampson Reed's popularity with the transcendentalists died then and there. Until recent studies, literary criticism has tended to view him as a zealot as a result of the fiery preface. But scholars who have researched Reed with any depth take a more sympathetic view to him, recognizing the religious sensibility behind his concerns, and admiring his moral courage.

After 1838 Reed was limited to Swedenborgian publications—the *New Jerusalem Magazine* and the *Children's New Church Magazine*, both of which he edited for many years. He wrote prodigiously on an astonishing array of subjects. These journals of a small church on the fringes of social acceptance had a limited readership. Therefore Sampson Reed faded as a literary figure, but not as a public

one. He devoted much of his energy to civic matters, serving on the Boston School Committee, the Board of Aldermen, and the State House of Representatives.²⁷ Writing, however, remained his passion. When he was eighty and as blind as his biblical namesake, he was still writing with the vigor that characterizes his prose.

Sampson Reed died on July 8, 1880, well known and respected in his community, and not entirely forgotten as a writer. One local paper, the *Waltham Free Press*, gave the following summation of Reed's life:

Deeply religious in his nature, and strongly imbued with the faith he possessed, and of which his entire life was an exemplification, he loved best to serve the Church, and through its instrumentalities his fellow men, and upon its altar, from his youth, he laid the gifts of a richly cultivated mind. . . . *The Growth of the Mind*, a little volume written by him a few years after leaving college . . . exhibits a profundity of thought and a clearness of perception which stamped his mind as of no ordinary cast, and the promise it gave of future usefulness as a writer, has been well fulfilled.²⁸

One can speculate that had Reed continued to veil his Swedenborgian ideas as did Emerson in those critical years, he might be read today as one of the most original of the transcendentalists. He had been the first among them to advocate that men stop looking to the past, that they look ahead and mold their own times. In his eloquent "Oration on Genius" he had aroused high expectations for a new age. Perhaps if he had not espoused so unorthodox a theology, or if he had chosen to secularize it, he could have gone on proclaiming the dawning of a new age from a purely romantic or Transcendental point of view, and literary criticism would have hailed him as a prophet of American optimism. But Sampson Reed took a moral stand and paid the price.

Emerson's journals indicate that he continued to feel a personal and an ideological regard for Reed over the years despite their dispute.²⁹ When the times grew more tolerant, Emerson admitted his admiration for Swedenborg in *Representative Men*. It would be left to literary scholars, however, to discover the full extent of his indebtedness to Swedenborg and above all to Sampson Reed. We invite you to discover through these representative works the writer of whom Emerson wrote with awe:

Has any modern hand touched the harp of great nature so rarely? Has any looked so shrewdly into the subtle and concealed connection of man and nature; of earth and heaven?

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A Dissertation

On the Evidence from the Light of Nature of a Future Retribution



Nothing, I think, can be more revolting to the truly religious mind, than the ideas which are often annexed to the words, natural and revealed truth. By natural truth, men mean whatever has its foundation in the nature of things—whatever seems reasonable—in fine, whatever is true. By revealed truth, they mean so much of revelation as seems to them dark, mysterious, without reason, or absurd. But there is no such thing. This is the worst of plagiarism—plagiarism from God. It is the worst of sacrilege—the theft of truth. Yet why do I say the theft of truth: for truths perish as things are torn from the Word of God, like branches cleft by lightning from the tree of life. It is necessary in order to constitute truth, that it have relation to God—that it regard him as its centre, as light regards the sun. But this is the case with no natural truth: or in other words, there is no natural truth.

All the errors which have deluged, and still deluge the world, might be traced to the separation of truth and goodness; “What God has united, let not man put asunder.” The will has been cut asunder from the understanding;—thought has been made the essence of the soul, and selfishness the basis of morality. Evil is the source of error, for God is the source of truth.

A revelation supposes the separation of truth and goodness. For had men never ceased to do the will of God, they never could have ceased “to know of the doctrines.” Who cannot see that God does every thing from the love of being useful; and that the manner in which he acts is truth? Consequently, that truth proceeds from love. A description of this world, for instance, is truth. But if God made this world as it is from love, then truth proceeds from love. So with man—his thoughts rise from his feelings: and when there is any thing besides goodness, or the love of being useful, in his will, it is natural that there should be something besides truth in his understanding. So men call those sentiments natural, which are in agreement with the natural condition of their minds. There are no parts of the Bible which are not natural to some states of mind: but since

all the parts in the literal sense are natural to no one state of mind, we readily perceive the origin of the distinction between natural and revealed truth. It is evident that all men's errors are from what they call the light of nature. And so much of the Bible is apparently, though not really, the light of nature as coincides with the state of a man's mind. Thus for instance, the light of nature would have taught the Jew, if he were not too sensual to reason, some such propositions as these. God is full of wrath against the wicked—sacrifice will appease his anger—he loves the sons of Jacob, and hates the heathen. Whereas, to a person in a different state of mind, these things appear to be peculiar to revelation: and permitted in the literal sense, because men were so depraved, that it was necessary to meliorate their condition, by things in themselves false, rather than by any positive truths.

So the Christian often calls what relates to the subject of redemption, revealed religion: because in his state of mind it seems to be something out of the common course of nature. Whereas, if other truths had produced their proper effect on his mind, he might see how God here, as in every other instance, acts from the love of being useful to mankind: he might see distinctly what obstacles were in the way of the salvation of men, and how these were removed in a manner as naturally as any cause produces its corresponding effect.

The Word of God presents a mirror, which reflects the human mind in its several stages of improvement: though always in one degree more perfect than it really is. Or in other words, the sentiments taught, and the commandments given, invariably have a tendency to elevate—or are of a higher order than would be obtained if the mind were left to itself. Thus we find that that holy people, the Jews, who are so celebrated for preserving the knowledge of the one true God, had an almost irresistible tendency to worship a golden calf, and had it not been for their heaven and earthly Canaan, they would most assuredly have had none at all. So Christians in the New Testament have been presented to them under the grossest possible form, that is, "fire and brimstone." For even this representation is preferable to what the light of nature would have taught them: that is, to nothing.

Nor has the human mind now attained to an eminence, from which it is able to look down upon the Word of God, to form its own laws, and discover its own truth. We have not the least reason to suppose that the mind is naturally what it should be: and so far as it is not, so far it is incapacitated for the discovery of religious truth. There is a fall—a rational, but a serious fall. Look at the savage and doubt it. He flees like the beast of the field from all signs of cultivation, as if naturally desirous of finding some spot which shall present an appearance corresponding with the state of his own mind. He finds that spot only in the

desert. Look at Christianity, and doubt it. Most surely "the Word has a vesture dipped in blood." "From the beginning it was not so." God did not create men savages, as if to ascertain by experiment whether they could extricate themselves from their condition. Nor are those external rites and ceremonies, which hang round the human mind in its most sensual and depraved state, entirely its own productions. Here is not the beginning, but the end, of religion. Here are not the first energies of the infant intellect, reaching with its tendrils to the tree of knowledge; but the distorted form & skeleton of what once had life. Here the philosophy of the mind ceases to be cultivated. Consciousness seems almost lost in thought, and thought in sensation. The human soul can no longer give any account of itself: for it has not light enough to make its darkness visible.

Could we draw the laws of mind from a being in a savage state, how extremely limited must be their application. It is but a short period since our fathers emerged from a condition like this; and are we not liable to draw from our own souls, laws which God never imposed? The modern philosophy of the human mind can be nothing more than an account of its present condition. How far that condition is what it once was, and what it should be, is yet to be determined. Could the Saxons have philosophized, they might have concluded, from the state of their minds, that heaven and hell did not exist—that the soul was material, and expired with the body. Modern philosophers conclude from theirs that the soul is "without form & void"; and profess to believe its immortality, after they have given it the death-blow of annihilation. So Priestly undoubtedly speaks the sentiments of all who are disposed to treat the Word of God as he did, when with all the grossness of one who has lived on the surface of matter, he defends the doctrine of materialism. There is nothing strange in it. For if as his friends acknowledge, "there was no part of the Bible which he wanted not to strike out if it came in the way of his system," it is absolutely impossible in the nature of things that his system should be true. In fine, if that was his disposition, the circumstance that he believed such and such religious sentiments, is proof absolute that they were false.

Thus it is that mercy and wisdom have provided, that what is evil in the will should be united with what is false in the understanding; and what is good in the will, with what is true in the understanding—or that a man's ability to perceive truth should ever depend on his character. Nor does the Lord permit what men call reason to divide what he has united: for, were it not for this provision, "all would be over with men."

God having, as was said, from the love of being useful, created all things, men, attempting to discover the manner of his creation under the influence of self love, fell into the grossest errors. Thus, for instance, God, making this material system

for use, put the sun in the centre; men, in whom self love was most interior, contriving it for themselves, put the earth in the centre. So selfishness in man has even ascribed the beauties of creation to selfishness in God. Men have struggled with their maker at every pass. There is no truth that has not been falsified; no, not one. Thus, too, self-love was the origin of the erroneous theories in ancient philosophy. But modern philosophers, learning something from experience, and probably taking something from their ambition, instead of having recourse to the Word of God, that their hearts might be purified, and thus become mediums of truth instead of error, have often professed, and undoubtedly sincerely endeavored, to put their hearts out of the question: and to be governed exclusively by their reason. Hence they profess to be conversant merely with effects—to discover no cause—to invent no theory. A phenomenon is explained by referring it to a class of phenomena. Thus the tendency of the moon to the earth is accounted for, by referring it to gravitation. One thing is explained by classing it with some thing, with which we are so familiar that it seems to need no explanation. This is effected principally by means of association; and that to which reference is made is usually somewhat with which we were familiar at a period too early to ask its cause.

The mind of the child is not accustomed to look beyond the ultimate fact. It is satisfied with the effect. It is impossible to determine how early it discovers that every effect requires a cause—and before this period, it must rest with a degree of security and satisfaction on a phenomenon, to which it must ever afterwards be a stranger. It is the tendency of this philosophy to transfer those feelings with which we view facts in our infancy, to such as are discovered in later periods of life: and thus, since it professes to give no cause, it explains the fact by exterminating from the mind the desire of an explanation. In this manner, it sometimes gives rise to real errors.

Some theologians, thinking this a goodly contrivance, by which they can discover truth and save their sins, are fain to be introducing it into religion. But this can never be effected. In religion, reason has ever been, and ever will be in subjection to higher principles. A man's reason is here useful, so far as and no further, than he obeys in his heart the commandments of God. For what is the reason of Devils useful, but to confirm themselves in atheism? Who does not know that the conclusion is ever first in the mind: and of course is suggested by something above reason? Hence it is that the theories now existing in Christianity, are more numerous, more absurd, and more pernicious, than those of any previous time. It may be remarked further, that reasoning under the influence of self love in religion, is of the most dangerous and fatal tendency. It increases men's pride & ambition; for they say, "the river is mine, and I have made it,"—and

this closes the interiors of their mind to the perception of truth,—it consumes that living principle of truth, humility. It resembles the flame occasioned by a conflagration on the earth: it may cast some lustre on surrounding objects, and your children may rejoice in the light; but it throws a death-like glare over the regions of the sky, and the birds of heaven fall into it and are consumed.

There are two states of mind in which reasoning is not necessary. So far as men do the will of God, so far they will perceive truth as it is. So far as a man is obedient to the commandments, so far truth becomes a part of him: and has only to compare a proposition with himself, to see whether it be of the same, or of an opposite character. “Let your conversation be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: For whatever is more than these cometh of evil.” The sentiments of the savage also, are the unrestrained productions of his heart. Revelation here finds men naked as they were naked in the garden of Eden; but it is not the nakedness of innocence, but the nakedness of guilt. As it contains truths which oppose their life, it excites their doubts, and sets them to reasoning; and the conclusions established they have ever been calling the light of nature.

Thus it is that there are no sentiments whatever, notwithstanding reason, which are not natural, and which will not exist in some states of the mind. The Word of God can alone produce that state in which truth will be natural. It would not be difficult to trace the mind and its natural sentiments, from the state in which it uses an orrery in religion, if I may be allowed the expression, to its present condition. There is one state that believes that the burning of incense will appease the anger of God—Another that hopes that the prayers of Mary, or the saints, or themselves, may change his intentions. Some have believed in transubstantiation; others in regeneration by baptism. Some have expected that the happiness of heaven would consist in drinking liquor from the skulls of their enemies—others looked for theirs from a view of their own condition in relation to that of the non-elect. Some have looked for hell in the bowells of the burning mountains: others in the conflagration of the world. Some have expected to travel on the rainbow to heaven: others have looked for only a temporary elevation into the clouds, till the wicked should be burned up with the earth. I had rather have the sentiment written on my tombstone, than impressed on my heart. Religion has sometimes driven men into the ground, and sometimes raised them into the clouds. It has sent some, pilgrims to the holy land, and others to the tomb of Mahomet. It will produce some effect; and that effect has ever been moulded by the peculiarities of the mind. If the proper current be clogged, the stream will find out another.

For myself, I am sick of the light of nature, and turn with eagerness to that of God. The Bible is the Word of God and must be holy—it is the inspiration of the

Almighty, and will give us understanding. When God becomes an author, what are we to expect? Sure, not merely that there is nothing false or erroneous in his revelation. We might look for that from the pen of a child. We are not to suppose that he made only a few additions or alterations to the efforts of genius,—it is not for infinite wisdom merely to examine the proof sheet. We are not to look for a revelation calculated principally to exercise our ingenuity in accounting for its existence—or to impose new difficulties in the discovery of truth. We are to suppose that God will infuse his spirit into his Word,—that it will be the form of his love, which is wisdom,—that it will be, what it professes to be, God,—that it will be as much superior to human composition, as nature is to art,—that it shall contain truths which shall lay open and make bare the soul to its very centre, for the soul needs opening to its centre,—that it shall open the communications with heaven, which can be clogged by nothing but what is evil in the will, or false in the understanding.

We cannot read the writings of a man without being acquainted with the feelings of the author. What powers of resistance—what hardihood of feeling—what energy of selfishness must he possess, who is not touched with the Word of God! Yet some, when the Word has raised them so far above the earth that they are able to see it, ask no further assistance. It seems as if some would draw the laws of divine wisdom from the spot of ground they stand on, and the worms that crawl in it, rather than come to the Lord, who would “gently lead them by fountains of living waters.” To some truth seems to derive its distinguishing features from the circumstance of its being their own invention. But, such persons do not know what truth is. They are not permitted thus to pollute its purity. It is not truth they are embracing—they are hugging the forms of their own selfishness. (To be continued)

They who set any limits to the commandment, “if ye will do the will of God, ye shall know the doctrines”—That is, who suppose there is any state of mind, where, by a more full compliance with the divine will, higher degrees of truth may not appear, which before seemed obscure, or looked like error, stumble on the very threshold of knowledge. And that man can have made comparatively no advances in truth, who does not feel conscious that he has no security for the maintenance of his sentiments, but the strictest guard over his character and life. Thus it is, that all creation divine and human, I mean all order and all disorder, conspires to demonstrate that there is but one foundation for truth. What that is, the light of nature never taught. That the light of nature never taught this, the circumstance that miracles have been wrought, is standing evidence; for when men are aware of the connection between truth and goodness, miracles are worse than useless. Had not man first wrought a miracle in himself, God would never

have permitted one in nature. That harmony which once existed, and which ought to exist, in order to the discernment of truth, between what is spiritual and natural, where it cannot be produced by restoring order in the former, has been sometimes effected by permitting disorder in the latter. And here I cannot but remark the constant accommodation of the divine laws, to the condition of the human mind. When men become more external, God's laws still continue to operate, but in a manner adapted to their character. So that you may find marks of moral and intellectual design, even in the most depraved mind like beams of light falling to the ground through the thick clusters of leaves in the desert.

But what is, or has been, known of a future retribution? Some of the ancients might have suspected it. This suspicion was undoubtedly from a previous revelation. While popery prevailed, the sale of indulgences, and the arbitrary power of the Pope, excluded all knowledge from the subject in question. Heaven and Hell were at the disposal of a man. And where this is supposed to be the case, no matter by what name that man be called, nothing can be known of a future state, for nothing can be known of the divine order. Sins were thought to be forgiven by the successor of the Apostle. The selfish and worldly passions of men had involved themselves in a system, which seemed to the time to cover their nakedness. Where was the light of nature, when the human mind converted Christianity into idolatry? Some might endeavour to account for the existence of these sentiments by supposing that errors were so intimately connected with truths, that being unable to separate them, they admitted the former, rather than reject the later. But truth and error will fall asunder, as soon as they touch a well regulated mind. So far as men were evil, filled with lusts, selfish & worldly, so far they were in love with what was false, and so far error was natural to them. Those must know very little of the nature of truth, who suppose that it can derive life or existence from any thing but the love of God. And those must know but very little of the state of the world at that period, who suppose that this love predominated. The doctrines of election, special grace, necessity, atonement, annihilate all knowledge of the subject in question. And these must be from the light of nature, for most surely there is no such light in revelation. There are some who even suppose God to have been the origin of evil; for they ascribe to Adam a degree of purity which they deny to their maker, and thus suppose good and evil, happiness and misery to be effected by God, merely with a view to his own glory. What is here known of Heaven and Hell?

We cannot but recur with joy to that time, for the time will come, when such sentiments as have been named shall have faded from the world—when God only shall be worshipped, our Saviour, our Redeemer, our Regenerator—when a person need give no better evidence of his acquaintance with antiquity, than

the suggestion of a single idea of those that were mentioned—such doctrines serving merely as beacons to guide the antiquary to the full extent of the regress of our moral and intellectual attainments. There are many, who, since others acknowledge that God has the power to save, say rightly that he has the will, and profess the doctrine of universal salvation. If a future retribution be from the light of nature, why is it not universal? Who has been able, except God, to point out in the human mind that great gulph between Heaven and Hell? Of man's failure here the following quotation from Blackburne is sufficient evidence. Speaking of the numerous followers of Descartes, Clarke, & Baxter, "When they speak of the happiness of separate souls", he observes, "they make a tolerable case, and flourish on the spiritual joys of a thinking substance, with great edification to those who are in love with mystick rapture and ecstasy. But when they come to dispose of the souls of the wicked, they are totally at a loss. Some of them are obliged to have them asleep: others talk of punishment by charity of reason, and of thus suffering "nobody knows what, or how." The fear of death, which is so universally prevalent—and which was probably never more prevalent, than it is now in Christendom—demonstrates but too clearly the obscurity which hangs over it. The doubt which sometimes amounts to a denial of the separate existence of the soul—a strange expectation of a strange resurrection of a material body, and a confused idea of an arbitrary Judgment, often stand miserable witnesses of the miserable weakness of human reason, where revelation is silent, or has clothed itself in correspondences which appear to be true to one state of mind (p. 401, s. Vol. xxviii. 35, Myrick). So far as men are from believing in their hearts that goodness, that is, love to God and man, is the essence of happiness; so far are they from knowing any thing of the nature of Heaven & Hell. Of course, if the light of nature can regenerate a man, it may teach him something on the subject.

It might be expected, from the manner in which the New Testament is left, that nothing would be known of heaven and hell, but their existence: and this is taught from Revelation, not from the light of nature. For the light of nature would not teach this without some thing more. We cannot infer from the imperfection of a revelation the all sufficiency of men's natural powers, but their great tendency to perversion. So far as men were fit to receive, so far God saw fit to communicate. And when we see how miserably what has been revealed, has been and is distorted by the selfish and worldly passions of men, we need not wonder that more was withheld, or suspect that we have made any real additions to the stock of revealed truth. God, who is infinitely wise, must, from his nature, communicate such truths as are best adapted to those by whom they are received. And it is folly to expect any new discoveries from the human mind, till it has ceased to pervert that, which, from the character of the giver, must be least exposed to

perversion. That men have ceased to pervert, we have not the least reason to suspect. The infinite variety of doctrines, since "those who do the will of God shall know of the doctrines", proves that there is some where a strange deficiency. Men have not ceased to press prophecy into politicks. Ambition has found what our Saviour never could have predicted; for "his kingdom is not of this world". Men in their religious speculations seem to take into view the compass only of a few years and a few miles; they forget that God, in all his dealings with mankind, has respect to immensity and eternity. I mean, that he regards neither time nor space—but the state of the human mind. The correspondence, as was observed, by which hell is represented, I mean "fire, brimstone," the punishments apparently arbitrary and unnecessary, besides other circumstances, prove that God was yet mindful that he was speaking to men, who "must be born again before they could see the kingdom of heaven." So far, indeed, were they from discovering of themselves any thing of a future state, that they were utterly unfit to receive any correct sentiments on the subject; and the silence of our Saviour on this, as well as other topicks, proves that "he had many things to tell them, but they could not bear them then".

Thus it is, that the world has ever had enough of what appeared to be true; but that there long has been, and still is, a most wretched scarcity of real truth, will be found by those, and by those only, "who will do the will of God with all their hearts".

Men have never been wanting in what they have been calling the light of nature: but that this has been an appearance of light, will be found by those, and those only, who apply with all their hearts to the Word of God. The Word of God is continually changing the aspect of the human mind, and thus giving rise to new discoveries in moral and intellectual philosophy. Truths being perceived by the understanding, producing a change in the will, all a man's sentiments are changed of course. A change in the will is like changing the position from which a view is taken, and raising a man from "the valley of dry bones" to the mountain whose top is above the clouds.

Some are ready to imagine that all difficulties will vanish before religious liberty. But woe to that man whose freedom of enquiry is not the effect of his moral improvement. It is evil within which "binds men hand and foot, and casts them into outer darkness;" and if we would remove the effect, we must go to the Word of God for the removal of the cause. Nothing can be more evident, than that truth must from its very nature come from God. Nothing is more evident from the history of God's treatment of man, than that he has been a mere draw-back in its discovery. It has been administered to him like medicine to a sick infant. We must have truth before we can have liberty.

The perfection of religion is indeed the unison of nature and revelation. But this can never be effected by bringing down revelation to nature, but by raising nature to revelation. The latter was given to change, and not to be changed.

The word of God is immutable, as he is; and all its apparent changes are only the motion of the human mind. Human theology has indeed, in all ages, and all places, from savage ignorance to Christian perversion, cast its own vileness on our maker. It was the intention of the Word to restore to man the image of God. Human systems have brought down God to the image of man. But the word still remains unchanged. It is not a matter of indifference, if revelation and nature are united, which be brought to the other. There is as much difference between the two methods, as between light and darkness—Heaven and Hell. In the one case, spiritual things will be explained by natural,—in the other, natural things will be seen from spiritual. In the one case, they will see God only as he is reflected from his works; in the other, they will see his works only as they exist from him—In the one case, the other world seems brought down to this; & men live in fear of ghosts: in the other, men will be raised to that state which is heaven, and feel that they are in company with angels. In the one case, the mind throws its own filthiness over the pure light of revealed truth; in the other, “the Word of God prospers in the work whereunto he sent it.”

When the Word of God shall have thus restored the human mind to divine order, it will no longer be obliged to believe where it does not understand—and will no longer strain itself to admit what it cannot comprehend. But being enabled—by constantly shunning all evils as sins, even to the minutest thought and feeling—to see in religion the end and cause in the effect, a truth will become its own demonstration. For every such truth is an image of God. All that is arbitrary, shall have passed away. “Heaven and earth shall have passed away—but the Word of the Lord shall endure forever”. It will then be seen that the Word was given to preserve and restore what the light of nature once was, when men constantly acknowledged themselves recipients of love and wisdom from God. At a period long before the Word, love became most fit for romance, or selfishness was proved to be the basis of morality—long before hypocrisy separated the will from the understanding, and gave the one to the moralist, and the other to the metaphysician, long before those who were set apart for religion began to clothe themselves in the colour of their hearses and coffins and palls, and to come to the house of their God as to a funeral. It will then be seen how beautifully the natural world derives its existence from God through the spiritual. And since they both subsist from the same being, how particularly the one must correspond to the other. Truth will then become the touchstone of the heart. The manner in which a man has treated and understood the Bible, will be the sure test of his character;

and theologians who have written from pride and ambition, will only have written their epitaphs. Many theories which have been permitted to walk this earth by night, will then cease to be palpable,—and many sentiments which men have buried under their selfish and worldly passions, “rising from their graves, will come into the holy city.” Faith alone, [with its v]arious forms and serpentine [win]dings, shall be torn away. I do not say, for instance, that men will act with reference to a future state; but that time will never so much as in thought, be separated from eternity. I do not say that metaphysics will then be useful in religion, but that men will see that metaphysics and religion are absolutely one and the same thing. By metaphysics I mean the philosophy of the mind, not of the understanding. And by metaphysics and religion being the same thing, I mean that religion will become so identified with the human mind, that to take away its truth and goodness, that is, its religion, will be to annihilate the man. I do not say that the light of nature will then prove a future retribution; but that men will see, that there absolutely is no future retribution. What [. . .] heaven if we attain it let it result from a change on our part, not on God’s—that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and it is our business to find it—that so far as our wills coincide with God’s will, so far, and no farther, is it in the reach of his omnipotence to make us happy. I will not pray to our Heavenly Father to hasten the time: for I know that his essence is love, and that his love displays itself in wisdom: and he must hasten, or change his nature.

Oration on Genius



The world was always busy; the human heart has always had love of some kind; there has always been fire on the earth. There is something in the inmost principles of an individual, when he begins to exist, which urges him onward; there is something in the centre of the character of a nation, to which the people aspire; there is something which gives activity to the mind in all ages, countries, and worlds. This principle of activity is love: it may be the love of good or of evil; it may manifest itself in saving life or in killing; but it is love.

The difference in the strength and direction of the affections creates the distinctions in society. Every man has a form of mind peculiar to himself. The mind of the infant contains within itself the first rudiments of all that will be hereafter, and needs nothing but expansion; as the leaves and branches and fruit of a tree are said to exist in the seed from which it springs. He is bent in a particular direction; and as some objects are of more value than others, distinctions must exist. What it is that makes a man great depends upon the state of society: with the savage, it is physical strength; with the civilized, the arts and sciences; in heaven, the perception that love and wisdom are from the Divine.

There prevails an idea in the world, that its great men are more like God than others. This sentiment carries in its bosom sufficient evil to bar the gates of heaven. So far as a person possesses it, either with respect to himself or others, he has no connection with his Maker, no love for his neighbor, no truth in his understanding. This was at the root of heathen idolatry: it was this that made men worship saints and images. It contains within itself the seeds of atheism, and will ultimately make every man insane by whom it is cherished. The life which circulates in the body is found to commence in the head; but unless it be traced through the soul up to God, it is merely corporeal, like that of the brutes.

Man has often ascribed to his own power the effects of the secret operations of divine truth. When the world is immersed in darkness, this is a judgment of the Most High; but the light is the effect of the innate strength of the human intellect.

When the powers of man begin to decay, and approach an apparent dissolution, who cannot see the Divinity? But what foreign aid wants the man who is full of his own strength? God sends the lightning that blasts the tree; but what

credulity would ascribe to him the sap that feeds its branches? The sight of idiotism leads to a train of religious reflections; but the face that is marked with lines of intelligence is admired for its own inherent beauty. The hand of the Almighty is visible to all in the stroke of death; but few see his face in the smiles of the new-born babe.

The intellectual eye of man is formed to see the light, not to make it; and it is time that, when the causes that cloud the spiritual world are removed, man should rejoice in the truth itself, and not that he has found it. More than once, when nothing was required but for a person to stand on this world with his eyes open, has the truth been seized upon as a thing of his own making. When the power of divine truth begins to dispel the darkness, the objects that are first disclosed to our view—whether men of strong understanding, or of exquisite taste, or of deep learning—are called geniuses. Luther, Shakespeare, Milton, Newton, stand with the bright side toward us.

There is something which is called genius, that carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. There is an ambition which hurries a man after truth, and takes away the power of attaining it. There is a desire which is null, a lust which is impotence. There is no understanding so powerful, that ambition may not in time bereave it of its last truth, even that two and two are four. Know, then, that genius is divine, not when the man thinks that he is God, but when he acknowledges that his powers are from God. Here is the link of the finite with the infinite, of the divine with the human: this is the humility which exalts.

The arts have been taken from nature by human invention; and, as the mind returns to its God, they are in a measure swallowed up in the source from which they came. We see, as they vanish, the standard to which we should refer them. They are not arbitrary, having no foundation except in taste: they are only modified by taste, which varies according to the state of the human mind. Had we a history of music, from the warsong of the savage to the song of angels, it would be a history of the affections that have held dominion over the human heart. Had we a history of architecture, from the first building erected by man to the house not made with hands, we might trace the variation of the beautiful and the grand, alloyed by human contrivance, to where they are lost in beauty and grandeur. Had we a history of poetry, from the first rude effusions to where words make one with things, and language is lost in nature, we should see the state of man in the language of licentious passion, in the songs of chivalry, in the descriptions of heroic valor, in the mysterious wildness of Ossian; till the beauties of nature fall on the heart, as softly as the clouds on the summer's water. The mind, as it wanders from heaven, moulds the arts into its own form, and covers its nakedness. Feelings of all kinds will discover themselves in music, in painting,

in poetry; but it is only when the heart is purified from every selfish and worldly passion, that they are created in real beauty; for in their origin they are divine.

Science is more fixed. It consists of the laws according to which natural things exist; and these must be either true or false. It is the natural world in the abstract, not in the concrete. But the laws according to which things exist, are from the things themselves, not the opposite. Matter has solidity: solidity makes no part of matter. If, then, the natural world is from God, the abstract properties, as dissected and combined, are from him also. If, then, science be from Him who gave the ten commandments, must not a life according to the latter facilitate the acquirement of the former? Can he love the works of God who does not love his commandments? It is only necessary that the heart be purified, to have science like poetry its spontaneous growth. Self-love has given rise to many false theories, because a selfish man is disposed to make things differently from what God has made them. Because God is love, nature exists; because God is love, the Bible is poetry. If, then, the love of God creates the scenery of nature, must not he whose mind is most open to this love be most sensible of natural beauties? But in nature both the sciences and the arts exist embodied.

Science may be learned from ambition; but it must be by the sweat of the brow. The filthy and polluted mind may carve beauties from nature, with which it has no allegiance: the rose is blasted in the gathering. The olive and the vine had rather live with God, than crown the head of him whose love for them is a lust for glory. The man is cursed who would rob nature of her graces, that he may use them to allure the innocent virgin to destruction.

Men say there is an inspiration in genius. The genius of the ancients was the good or evil spirit that attended the man. The moderns speak of the magic touch of the pencil, and of the inspiration of poetry. But this inspiration has been esteemed so unlike religion, that the existence of the one almost supposes the absence of the other. The spirit of God is thought to be a very different thing when poetry is written, from what it is when the heart is sanctified. What has the inspiration of genius in common with that of the cloister? The one courts the zephyrs; the other flies them. The one is cheerful; the other, sad. The one dies; the other writes the epitaph. Would the Muses take the veil? Would they exchange Parnassus for a nunnery? Yet there has been learning, and even poetry, under ground. The yew loves the graveyard; but other trees have grown there.

It needs no uncommon eye to see, that the finger of death has rested on the church. Religion and death have in the human mind been connected with the same train of associations. The churchyard is the graveyard. The bell which calls men to worship is to toll at their funerals, and the garments of the priests are of the color of the hearse and the coffin. Whether we view her in the strange

melancholy that sits on her face, in her mad reasonings about truth, or in the occasional convulsions that agitate her limbs, there are symptoms, not of life, but of disease and death. It is not strange, then, that genius, such as could exist on the earth, should take its flight to the mountains. It may be said, that great men are good men. But what I mean is, that, in the human mind, greatness is one thing, and goodness another; that philosophy is divorced from religion; that truth is separated from its source; that that which is called goodness is sad, and that which is called genius is proud. Since things are so, let men take care that the life which is received be genuine. Let the glow on the cheek spring from the warmth of the heart, and the brightness of the eyes beam from the light of heaven. Let ambition and the love of the world be plucked by their roots. How can he love his neighbor, who desires to be above him? He may love him for a slave; but that is all. Let not the shrouds of death be removed, till the living principle has entered. It was not till Lazarus was raised from the dead, and had received the breath of life, that the Lord said, "Loose him, and let him go."

When the heart is purified from all selfish and worldly affection, then may genius find its seat in the church. As the human mind is cleansed of its lusts, truth will permit and invoke its approach, as the coyness of the virgin subsides into the tender love of the wife. The arts will spring in full-grown beauty from Him who is the source of beauty. The harps which have hung on the willows will sound as sweetly as the first breath of heaven that moved the leaves in the garden of Eden. Cannot a man paint better when he knows that the picture ought not to be worshipped?

Here is no sickly aspiring after fame,—no filthy lust after philosophy, whose very origin is an eternal barrier to the truth. But sentiments will flow from the heart warm as its blood, and speak eloquently; for eloquence is the language of love. There is a unison of spirit and nature. The genius of the mind will descend, and unite with the genius of the rivers, the lakes, and the woods. Thoughts fall to the earth with power, and make a language out of nature.

Adam and Eve knew no language but their garden. They had nothing to communicate by words, for they had not the power of concealment. The sun of the spiritual world shone bright on their hearts, and their senses were open with delight to natural objects. In the eye were the beauties of paradise; in the ear was the music of birds; in the nose was the fragrance of the freshness of nature; in the taste was the fruit of the garden; in the touch, the seal of their eternal union. What had they to say?

The people of the golden age have left us no monuments of genius, no splendid columns, no paintings, no poetry. They possessed nothing which evil passions might not obliterate; and, when their "heavens were rolled together as a scroll,"

the curtain dropped between the world and their existence.

Science will be full of life, as nature is full of God. She will wring from her locks the dew which was gathered in the wilderness. By science, I mean natural science. The science of the human mind must change with its subject. Locke's mind will not always be the standard of metaphysics. Had we a description of it in its present state, it would make a very different book from "Locke on the Human Understanding."

The time is not far distant. The cock has crowed. I hear the distant lowing of the cattle which are grazing on the mountains. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman saith, The morning cometh."

Observations on the Growth of the Mind



Nothing is a more common subject of remark than the changed condition of the world. There is a more extensive intercourse of thought, and a more powerful action of mind upon mind than formerly. The good and the wise of all nations are brought nearer together, and begin to exert a power, which, though yet feeble as infancy, is felt throughout the globe. Public opinion, that helm which directs the progress of events by which the world is guided to its ultimate destination, has received a new direction. The mind has attained an upward and onward look, and is shaking off the errors and prejudices of the past. The structure of the feudal ages, the ornament of the desert, has been exposed to the light of heaven; and continues to be gazed at for its ugliness, as it ceases to be admired for its antiquity. The world is deriving vigor, not from that which is gone by, but from that which is coming; not from the unhealthy moisture of the evening, but from the nameless influences of the morning. The loud call on the past to instruct us, as it falls on the rock of ages, comes back in echo from the future. Both mankind, and the laws and principles by which they are governed, seem about to be redeemed from slavery. The moral and intellectual character of man has undergone, and is undergoing, a change; and as this is effected, it must change the aspect of all things, as when the position-point is altered from which a landscape is viewed. We appear to be approaching an age which will be the silent pause of merely physical force before the powers of the mind; the timid, subdued, awed condition of the brute, gazing on the erect and godlike form of man.

These remarks with respect to the present era are believed to be just, when it is viewed on the bright side. They are not made by one who is insensible to its evils. Least of all, are they intended to countenance that feeling of self-admiration, which carries with it the seeds of premature disease and deformity; for to be proud of the truth is to cease to possess it. Since the fall of man, nothing has been more difficult for him than to know his real condition, since every departure from divine order is attended with a loss of the knowledge of what it is. When our first parents left the garden of Eden, they took with them no means by which they might measure the depths of degradation to which they fell; no chart by which they might determine their moral longitude. Most of our knowledge implies

relation and comparison. It is not difficult for one age, or one individual, to be compared with another; but this determines only their relative condition. The actual condition of man can be seen only from the relation in which he stands to his immutable Creator; and this relation is discovered from the light of revelation, so far as, by conforming to the precepts of revelation, it is permitted to exist according to the laws of divine order. It is not sufficient that the letter of the Bible is in the world. This may be, and still mankind continue in ignorance of themselves. It must be obeyed from the heart to the hand. The book must be eat, and constitute the living flesh. When only the relative condition of the world is regarded, we are apt to exult over other ages and other men, as if we ourselves were a different order of beings, till at length we are enveloped in the very mists from which we are proud of being cleared. But when the relative state of the world is justly viewed from the real state of the individual, the scene is lighted from the point of the beholder with the chaste light of humility which never deceives; it is not forgotten that the way lies forward; the cries of exultation cease to be heard in the march of progression, and the mind, in whatever it learns of the past and the present, finds food for improvement, and not for vain-glory.

As all the changes which are taking place in the world originate in the mind, it might be naturally expected that nothing would change more than the mind itself, and whatever is connected with a description of it. While men have been speculating concerning their own powers, the sure but secret influence of revelation has been gradually changing the moral and intellectual character of the world, and the ground on which they were standing has passed from under them, almost while their words were in their mouths. The powers of the mind are most intimately connected with the subjects by which they are occupied. We cannot think of the will without feeling, of the understanding without thought, or of the imagination without something like poetry. The mind is visible when it is active; and as the subjects on which it is engaged are changed, the powers themselves present a different aspect. New classifications arise, and new names are given. What was considered simple, is thought to consist of distinct parts, till at length the philosopher hardly knows whether the African be of the same or a different species; and though the soul is thought to continue after death, angels are universally considered a distinct class of intellectual beings. Thus it is that there is nothing fixed in the philosophy of the mind; it is said to be a science which is not demonstrative; and though now thought to be brought to a state of great perfection, another century, under the providence of God, and nothing will be found in the structure which has cost so much labor, but the voice "he is not here, but is risen."

Is then everything that relates to the immortal part of man fleeting and

evanescent, while the laws of physical nature remain unaltered? Do things become changeable as we approach the immutable and the eternal? Far otherwise. The laws of the mind are in themselves as fixed and perfect as the laws of matter; but they are laws from which we have wandered. There is a philosophy of the mind, founded not on the aspect it presents in any part or in any period of the world, but on its immutable relations to its first cause; a philosophy equally applicable to man, before or after he has passed the valley of the shadow of death; not dependent on time or place, but immortal as its subject. The light of this philosophy has begun to beam faintly on the world, and mankind will yet see their own moral and intellectual nature by the light of revelation, as it shines through the moral and intellectual character it shall have itself created. It may be remarked, also, that the changes in the sciences and the arts are entirely the effect of revelation. To revelation it is to be ascribed, that the genius which has taught the laws of the heavenly bodies and analyzed the material world, did not spend itself in drawing the bow or in throwing the lance, in the chase or in war; and that the vast powers of Handel did not burst forth in the wild notes of the war-song. It is the tendency of revelation to give a right direction to every power of every mind; and when this is effected, inventions and discoveries will follow of course, all things assume a different aspect, and the world itself again become a paradise.

It is the object of the following pages not to be influenced by views of a temporal or local nature, but to look at the mind as far as possible in its essential revealed character, and, beginning with its powers of acquiring and retaining truth, to trace summarily that development which is required, in order to render it truly useful and happy.

It is said, the powers of acquiring and retaining truth, because truth is not retained without some continued exertion of the same powers by which it is acquired. There is the most intimate connection of the memory with the affections. This connection is obvious from many familiar expressions; such as remember me to anyone, by which is signified a desire to be borne in his or her affections—do not forget me, by which is meant do not cease to love me—get by heart, which means commit to memory. It is also obvious from observation of our own minds; from the constant recurrence of those subjects which we most love, and the extreme difficulty of detaching our own minds or the minds of others from a favorite pursuit. It is obvious from the power of attention on which the memory principally depends, which, if the subject have a place in our affections, requires no effort; if it have not, the effort consists principally in giving it a real or artificial hold of our feelings, as it is possible, if we do not love a subject, to attend to it, because it may add to our fame or our wealth. It is obvious from the never-fading freshness retained by the scenes of childhood, when the feelings

are strong and vivid, through the later periods of life. As the old man looks back on the road of his pilgrimage, many years of active life lie unseen in the valley, as his eye rests on the rising ground of his younger days; presenting a beautiful illustration of the manner in which the human mind, when revelation shall have accomplished its work, shall no longer regard the scene of sin and misery behind, but having completed the circle, shall rest, as next to the present moment, on the golden age, the infancy of the world. The connection of the memory with the affections is also obvious from the association of ideas; since the train of thoughts suggested by any scene or event in any individual, depends on his own peculiar and prevailing feelings; as whatever enters into the animal system, wherever it may arise, seems first to be recognised as a part of the man, when it has found its way to the heart, and received from that its impulse. It is but a few years, (how strange to tell!) since man discovered that the blood circulated through the human body. We have, perhaps, hardly learned the true nature of that intellectual circulation, which gives life and health to the human mind. The affections are to the soul, what the heart is to the body. They send forth their treasures with a vigor not less powerful, though not material, throughout the intellectual man, strengthening and nourishing; and again receive those treasures to themselves, enlarged by the effect of their own operation.

Memory is the effect of learning, through whatever avenue it may have entered the mind. It is said, the effect; because the man who has read a volume, and can perhaps tell you nothing of its contents, but simply express his own views on the same subject with more clearness and precision, may as truly be said to have remembered, as he that can repeat the very words. In the one case, the powers of the mind have received new tone; in the other, they are encumbered with a useless burthen—in the one, they are made stronger; in the other, they are more oppressed with weight—in the one, the food is absorbed and becomes a part of the man; in the other, it lies on the stomach in a state of crude indigestion.

There is no power more various in different individuals, than the memory. This may be ascribed to two reasons. First, this partakes of every power of the mind, since every mental exertion is a subject of memory, and may therefore be said to indicate all the difference that actually exists. Secondly, this power varies in its character as it has more or less to do with time. Simple divine truth has nothing to do with time. It is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. The memory of this is simply the development of the mind. But we are so surrounded by facts of a local and temporal nature; the place where, and the time when, make so great a part of what is presented to our consideration, that the attribute is mistaken for the subject; and this power sometimes appears to have exclusive reference to time, though, strictly speaking, it has no relation to it. There is a

power of growth in the spiritual man, and if in his progress we be able to mark, as in the grain of the oak, the number of the years, this is only a circumstance, and all that is gained would be as real if no such lines existed. The mind ought not to be limited by the short period of its own duration in the body, with a beginning and end comprising a few years; it should be poised on its own immortality, and what is learned, should be learned with a view to that real adaptation of knowledge to the mind which results from the harmony of creation; and whenever or wherever we exist, it will be useful to us. The memory has, in reality, nothing to do with time, any more than the eye has with space. As the latter learns by experience to measure the distance of objects, so the consciousness of the present existence of states of mind, is referred to particular periods of the past. But when the soul has entered on its eternal state, there is reason to believe that the past and the future will be swallowed up in the present; that memory and anticipation will be lost in consciousness; that everything of the past will be comprehended in the present, without any reference to time, and everything of the future will exist in the divine effort of progression.

What is time? There is perhaps no question that would suggest such a variety of answers. It is represented to us from our infancy as producing such important changes, both in destroying some, and in healing the wounds it has inflicted on others, that people generally imagine, if not an actual person, it is at least a real existence. We begin with the Primer, and end with reasoning about the foreknowledge of God. What is time? The difficulty of answering the question, (and there are few questions more difficult,) arises principally from our having ascribed so many important effects to that which has no real existence. It is true that all things in the natural world are subject to change. But however these changes may be connected in our minds with time, it requires but a moment's reflection to see that time has no agency in them. They are the effects of chemical, or more properly, perhaps, of natural decompositions and reorganizations. Time, or rather our idea of it, so far from having produced anything, is itself the effect of changes. There are certain operations in nature, which, depending on fixed laws, are in themselves perfectly regular; if all things were equally so, the question how long? might never be asked. We should never speak of a late season, or of premature old age; but everything passing on in an invariable order, all the idea of time that would remain with respect to any object, would be a sort of instinctive sense of its condition, its progress or decay. But most of the phenomena in the natural world are exceedingly irregular; for though the same combination of causes would invariably produce the same effect, the same combination very rarely occurs. Hence, in almost every change, as we are conversant with nothing but changes, we are assisted in ascertaining its nature and extent, by referring it

to something in itself perfectly regular. We find this regularity in the apparent motions of the sun and moon. It is difficult to tell how much our idea of time is the effect of artificial means of keeping it, and what would be our feelings on the subject, if left to the simple operations of nature—but they would probably be little else than a reference of all natural phenomena to that on which they principally depend, the relative situation of the sun and earth; and the idea of an actual succession of moments would be, in a measure, resolved into that of cause and effect.

Eternity is to the mind what time is to nature. We attain a perception of it, by regarding all the operations in the world within us, as they exist in relation to their first cause; for in doing this, they are seen to partake somewhat of the nature of that Being on whom they depend. We make no approaches to a conception of it, by heaping day upon day or year upon year. This is merely an accumulation of time; and we might as well attempt to convey an idea of mental greatness by that of actual space, as to communicate a conception of eternity by years or thousands of years. Mind and matter are not more distinct from each other than their properties; and by an attempt to embrace all time, we are actually farther from an approach to eternity than when we confine ourselves to a single instant; because we merely collect the largest possible amount of natural changes, whereas that which is eternal approaches that which is immutable. This resembles the attempt to ascend to heaven by means of the tower of Babel, in which they were removed by their pride from that which they would have approached, precisely in proportion to their apparent progress. It is impossible to conceive of either time or space without matter. The reason is, they are the effect of matter; and as it is by creating matter that they are produced, so it is by thinking of it that they are conceived of. It need not be said how exceedingly improper it is to apply the usual ideas of time and space to the Divine Being; making him subject to that which he creates.

Still our conceptions of time, of hours, days, or years, are among the most vivid we possess, and we neither wish nor find it easy to call them in question. We are satisfied with the fact, that time is indicated on the face of the watch, without seeking for it among the wheels and machinery. But what is the idea of a year? Every natural change that comes under our observation leaves a corresponding impression on the mind; and the sum of the changes which come under a single revolution of the earth round the sun, conveys the impression of a year. Accordingly, we find that our idea of a year is continually changing, as the mind becomes conversant with different objects, and is susceptible of different impression; and the days of the old man, as they draw near their close, seem to gather rapidity from their approach to the other world. We have all experienced the effect of

pleasure and pain in accelerating and retarding the passing moments; and since our feelings are constantly changing, we have no reason to doubt that they constantly produce a similar effect, though it may not be often noticed. The divisions of time, then, however real they may seem to be, and however well they may serve the common purposes of conversation, cannot be supposed to convey the same impression to any two minds, nor to any one mind in different periods of its existence. Indeed, unless this were the fact, all artificial modes of keeping it would be unnecessary. Time, then, is nothing real so far as it exists in our own minds.

Nor do we find a nearer approach to reality by any analysis of nature. Everything, as was said, is subject to change, and one change prepares the way for another; by which there is growth and decay. There are also motions of bodies, both in nature and art, which in their operation observe fixed laws; and here we end. The more we enter into an analysis of things, the farther we are from finding anything that answers to the distinctness and reality which are usually attached to a conception of time, and there is reason to believe that when this distinctness and reality are most deeply rooted, (whatever may be the theory,) they are uniformly attended with a practical belief of the actual motion of the sun, and are indeed the effect of it. Let us then continue to talk of time, as we talk of the rising and setting of the sun; but let us think rather of those changes in their origin and effect, from which a sense of time is produced. This will carry us one degree nearer the actual condition of things; it will admit us one step further into the temple of creation—no longer a temple created six thousand years ago, and deserted by him who formed it; but a temple with the hand of the builder resting upon it, perpetually renewing, perpetually creating—and as we bow ourselves to worship the “I AM,” “Him who liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein,” we may hear in accents of divine love the voice that proclaims “that there shall be time no longer.”

It is not the living productions of nature, by which the strongest impression of time is produced. The oak, over which may have passed a hundred years, seems to drive from our minds the impression of time, by the same power by which it supports its own life, and resist every tendency to decay. It is that which is decayed, though it may have been the offspring of an hour; it is the ruined castle mouldering into dust, still more, if the contrast be strengthened by its being covered with the living productions of nature; it is the half consumed remains of some animal once strong and vigorous, the discoveries of the undertaker, or the filthy relics of the catacomb, by which the strongest impression of time is conveyed. So it is with the possessions of the mind. It is that which is not used,

which seems farthest in the memory, and which is held by the most doubtful tenure; that which is suffered to waste and decay because it wants the life of our own affections; that which we are about to lose, because it does not properly belong to us: whereas that truth, which is applied to the use and service of mankind, acquires a higher polish the more it is employed, like the angels of heaven, who forever approximate to a state of perfect youth, beauty, and innocence. It is not a useless task, then, to remove from our minds the usual ideas of time, and cultivate a memory of things. It is to leave the mind in the healthy, vigorous and active possession of all its attainments, and exercise of all its powers; it is to remove from it, that only which contains the seeds of decay and putrefaction; to separate the living from the dead; to take from it the veil by which it would avoid the direct presence of Jehovah, and preserve its own possessions without using them.

Truth, all truth, is practical. It is impossible, from its nature and origin, that it should be otherwise. Whether its effect be directly to change the conduct, or it simply leave an impression on the heart, it is in the strictest sense practical. It should rather be our desire to use what we learn, than to remember it. If we desire to use it, we shall remember it of course; if we wish merely to remember, it is possible we may never use it. It is the tendency of all truth to effect some object. If we look at this object, it will form a distinct and permanent image on the mind; if we look merely at the truth, it will vanish away, like rays of light falling into vacancy.

Keeping in view what has been said on the subject of time, then, the mind is presented to us, as not merely active in the acquirement of truth, but active in its possession. The memory is the fire of the vestal virgins, sending forth perpetual light; not the grave which preserves simply because annihilation is impossible. The reservoir of knowledge should be seated in the affections, sending forth its influence throughout the mind, and terminating in word and deed, if I may be allowed the expression, merely because its channels and outlets are situated below the watermark. There prevails a most erroneous sentiment, that the mind is originally vacant, and requires only to be filled up; and there is reason to believe, that this opinion is most intimately connected with false conceptions of time. The mind is originally a most delicate germ, whose husk is the body; planted in this world, that the light and heat of heaven may fall upon it with a gentle radiance, and call forth its energies. The process of learning is not by synthesis, or analysis. It is the most perfect illustration of both. As subjects are presented to the operation of the mind, they are decomposed and reorganized in a manner peculiar to itself, and not easily explained.

Another object of the preceding remarks upon time, is that we may be im-

pressed with the immediate presence and agency of God, without which a correct understanding of mind or matter can never be attained; that we may be able to read on every power of the mind, and on every particle of matter, the language of our Lord, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." We usually put the Divine Being to an immense distance, by supposing that the world was created many years ago, and subjected to certain laws, by which it has since been governed. We find ourselves capable of constructing machines, which move on without our assistance, and imagine that the world was constructed in the same way. We forget that the motions of our machines depend on the uniform operation of what we call the laws of nature; and that there can be nothing beyond, on which these depend, unless it be the agency of that Being from whom they exist. The pendulum of the clock continues to move from the uniform operation of gravitation. It is no explanation, to say that it is a law of our machinery that the pendulum should move. We simply place things in a situation to be acted upon by an all-pervading power; but what all-pervading power is there by which gravitation is itself produced, unless it be the power of God?

The tendency of bodies to the earth, is something with which from our childhood we have been so familiar; something which we have regarded so much as a cause, since, in a certain sense, it is the cause of all the motions with which we are acquainted; that it is not agreeable to our habits of thinking, to look at it as an effect. Even the motions of the heavenly bodies seem completely accounted for, by simply extending to these phenomena, the feelings with which we have been accustomed to regard the tendency of bodies to the earth; whereas, if the two things were communicated at the same period of life, they would appear equally wonderful. An event appears to be explained, when it is brought within the pale of those youthful feelings and associations, which in their simplicity do not ask the reason of things. There is formed in the mind of the child, from his most familiar observations, however imperfect they may be, as it were a little nucleus, which serves as the basis for future progress. This usually comprises a large proportion of those natural appearances, which the philosopher in later periods of life finds it most difficult to explain. The child grows up in his Father's house, and collects and arranges the most familiar operations and events. Into this collection he afterwards receives whatever history or science may communicate, and still feels at home; a feeling with which wonder is never associated.

This is not altogether as it should be. It is natural for the mature mind to ask the cause of things. It is unsatisfied when it does not find one, and can hardly exclude the thought of that Being, from whom all things exist. When therefore we have gone beyond the circle of youthful knowledge, and found a phenomenon in nature, which in its insulated state fills us with the admiration of God; let us

beware how we quench this feeling. Let us rather transfer something of this admiration to those phenomena of the same class, which have not hitherto directed our minds beyond the fact of their actual existence. As the mind extends the boundaries of its knowledge, let a holy reference to God descend into its youthful treasures. That light which in the distance seemed to be a miraculous blaze, as it falls on our own native hills may still seem divine, but will not surprise us; and a sense of the constant presence of God will be happily blended with the most perfect freedom.

Till the time of Newton, the motion of the heavenly bodies was indeed a miracle. It was an event which stood alone, and was probably regarded with peculiar reference to the Divine Being. The feeling of worship with which they had previously been regarded, had subsided into a feeling of wonder; till at length they were received into the family of our most familiar associations. There is one step further. It is to regard gravitation, wherever it maybe found, as an effect of the constant agency of the Divine Being, and from a consciousness of his presence and cooperation in every step we take, literally, "to walk humbly with our God." It is agreeable to the laws of moral and intellectual progression, that all phenomena, whether of matter or mind, should become gradually classified; till at length all things, wherever they are found; all events, whether of history or experience, of mind or matter; shall at once conspire to form one stupendous miracle, and cease to be such. They will form a miracle, in that they are seen to depend constantly and equally on the power of the Lord; and they will cease to be a miracle, in that the power which pervades them, is so constant, so uniform, and so mild in its operation, that it produces nothing of fear, nothing of surprise. From whatever point we contemplate the scene, we feel that we are still in our Father's house; go where we will, the paternal roof, the broad canopy of heaven, is extended over us.

It is agreeable to our nature, that the mind should be particularly determined to one object. The eye appears to be the point at which the united rays of the sun within and the sun without, converge to an expression of unity; and accordingly the understanding can be conscious of but one idea or image at a time. Still there is another and a different kind of consciousness which pervades the mind, which is co-extensive with everything it actually possesses. There is but one object in nature on which the eye looks directly, but the whole body is pervaded with nerves which convey perpetual information of the existence and condition of every part. So it is with the possessions of the mind; and when an object ceases to be the subject of this kind of consciousness, it ceases to be remembered. The memory therefore, as was said, is not a dormant, but an active power. It is rather the possession than the retention of truth. It is a consciousness of the will; a

consciousness of character; a consciousness which is produced by the mind's preserving in effort, whatever it actually possesses. It is the power which the mind has of preserving truth, without actually making it the subject of thought; bearing a relation to thought, analogous to what this bears to the actual perception of the senses, or to language. Thus we remember a distant object without actually thinking of it, in the same way that we think of it, without actually seeing it.

The memory is not limited, because to the affections, viewed simply as such, number is not applicable. They become distinct and are classified, when connected with truths, or, from being developed, are applied to their proper objects. Love may be increased, but not multiplied. A man may feel intensely, and the quantity and quality of his feeling may affect the character of his thought, but still it preserves its unity. This most ardent love is not attended with more than one idea, but on the contrary has a tendency to confine the mind to a single object. Every one must have remarked, that a peculiar state of feeling belongs to every exercise of the understanding; unless somewhat of this feeling remained after the thought had passed away, there would be nothing whereby the latter could be recalled. The impression thus left, exists continually in the mind; though, as different objects engage the attention, it may become less vivid. These impressions go to comprise the character of an individual; especially when they have acquired a reality and fixedness, in consequence of the feelings in which they originated, having resulted in the actions to which they tend. They enter into every subject about which we are thinking, and the particular modification they receive from that subject gives them the appearance of individuality; while they leave on the subject itself, the image of that character which they constitute. When a man has become acquainted with any science, that state of the affections which properly belongs to this science, (whatever direction his mind may take afterwards,) still maintains a certain influence; and this influence is the creative power by which his knowledge on the subject is reproduced. Such impressions are to the mind, what logarithms are in numbers; preserving our knowledge in its fulness indeed, but before it has expanded into an infinite variety of thoughts. Brown remarks, "we will the existence of certain ideas, it is said, and they arise in consequence of our volition; though assuredly to will any idea is to know that we will, and therefore to be conscious of that very idea, which we surely need not desire to know, when we already know it so well as to will its actual existence." The author does not discriminate between looking at an object and thence desiring it, and simply that condition of feeling between which and certain thoughts there is an established relation, so that the former cannot exist to any considerable degree without producing the latter. Of this exertion of the will, every one must have been conscious in his efforts of recollection. Of this exertion

of the will, the priest must be conscious, when, (if he be sincere,) by the simple prostration of his heart before his Maker, his mind is crowded with the thoughts and language of prayer. Of this exertion of the will, the poet must be conscious, when he makes bare his bosom for the reception of nature, and presents her breathing with his own life and soul. But it is needless to illustrate that of which every one must be sensible.

It follows, from these views of the subject, that the true way to store the memory is to develop [sic] the affections. The mind must grow, not from external accretion, but from an internal principle. Much may be done by others in aid of its development; but in all that is done, it should not be forgotten, that even from its earliest infancy, it possesses a character and a principle of freedom, which should be respected, and cannot be destroyed. Its peculiar propensities may be discerned, and proper nutriment and culture supplied; but the infant plant, not less than the aged tree, must be permitted, with its own organs of absorption, to separate that which is peculiarly adapted to itself; otherwise it will be cast off as a foreign substance, or produce nothing but rottenness and deformity.

The science of the mind itself will be the effect of its own development. This is merely an attendant consciousness, which the mind possesses, of the growth of its own powers; and therefore, it would seem, need not be made a distinct object of study. Thus the power of reason may be imperceptibly developed by the study of the demonstrative sciences. As it is developed, the pupil becomes conscious of its existence and its use. This is enough. He can in fact learn nothing more on the subject. If he learns to use his reason, what more is desired? Surely it were useless, and worse than useless, to shut up the door of the senses, and live in indolent and laborious contemplation of one's own powers; when, if anything is learned truly, it must be what these powers are, and therefore that they ought not to be thus employed. The best affections we possess will find their home in the objects around us, and, as it were, enter into and animate the whole rational, animal, and vegetable world. If the eye were turned inward to a direct contemplation of these affections, it would find them bereft of all their loveliness; for when they are active, it is not of them we are thinking, but of the objects on which they rest. The science of the mind, then, will be the effect of all the other sciences. Can the child grow up in active usefulness, and not be conscious of the possession and use of his own limbs? The body and the mind should grow together, and form the sound and perfect man, whose understanding may be almost measured by his stature. The mind will see itself in what it loves and is able to accomplish. Its own works will be its mirror; and when it is present in the natural world, feeling the same spirit which gives life to every object by which it is surrounded, in its very union with nature it will catch a glimpse of itself, like that of pristine beauty united with

innocence, at her own native fountain.

What then is that development which the nature of the human mind requires? What is that education which has heaven for its object, and such a heaven as will be the effect of the orderly growth of the spiritual man?

As all minds possess that in common which makes them human, they require to a certain extent the same general development, by which will be brought to view the same powers, however distinct and varied they may be found in different individuals; and as every mind possesses something peculiar, to which it owes its character and its effect, it requires a particular development by which may be produced a full, sincere, and humble expression of its natural features, and the most vigorous and efficient exertion of its natural powers. These make one, so far as regards the individual.

Those sciences which exist embodied in the natural world, appear to have been designed to occupy the first place in the development of all minds, or in that which might be called the general development of the mind. These comprise the laws of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms. The human mind, being as it were planted in nature by its heavenly Father, was designed to enter into matter, and detect knowledge, for its own purposes of growth and nutrition. This gives us a true idea of memory, or rather of what memory should be. We no longer think of a truth as being laid up in a mind for which it has no affinity, and by which it is perhaps never to be used; but the latent affections, as they expand under proper culture, absolutely require the truth to receive them, and its first use is the very nutriment it affords. It is not more difficult for the tree to return to the seed from which it sprung, than for the man who has learned thus, to cease to remember. The natural sciences are the basis of all useful knowledge, alike important to man in whatever time, place or condition he is found. They are coeval with our race, and must continue so long as the sun, moon and stars endure. Before there were facts for the pen of history to record, or vices for the arm of the law to restrain, or nations for the exhibition of institutions for the government of themselves and intercourse with each other, at the very creation, these were pronounced good in the general benediction; and when history shall have finished her tale of sin and woe, and law shall have punished her millions of offenders, and civil society shall have assumed every possible form, they will remain the same as when presented in living characters to the first parents of the human race.

Natural philosophy seems almost essential to an enlightened independence of thought and action. A man may lean upon others, and be so well supported by an equal pressure in all directions, as to be apparently dependent on no one; but his independence is apt to degenerate into obstinacy, or betray itself in weakness,

unless his mind is fixed on this unchanging basis. A knowledge of *the world* may give currency to his sentiments, and plausibility to his manners; but it is more frequently a knowledge of the world that gives light to the path, and stability to the purposes. By the one he may learn what coin is current, by the other what possesses intrinsic value. The natural world was precisely and perfectly adapted to invigorate and strengthen the intellectual and moral man. Its first and highest use was not to support the vegetables which adorn, or the animals which cover, its surface; nor yet to give sustenance to the human body;—it has a higher and holier object, in the attainment of which these are only means. It was intended to draw forth and mature the latent energies of the soul; to impart to them its own verdure and freshness; to initiate them into its own mysteries; and by its silent and humble dependence on its Creator, to leave on them, when it is withdrawn by death, the full impression of his likeness.

It was the design of Providence, that the infant mind should possess the germ of every science. If it were not so, they could hardly be learned. The care of God provides for the flower of the field a place wherein it may grow, regale with its fragrance, and delight with its beauty. Is his providence less active over those to whom this flower offers its incense? No. The soil which produces the vine is not better adapted to the end, than the world we inhabit to draw forth the latent energies of the soul, and fill them with life and vigor. As well might the eye see without light, or the ear hear without sound, as the human mind be healthy and athletic without descending into the natural world and breathing the mountain air. Is there aught in eloquence, which warms the heart? She draws her fire from natural imagery. Is there aught in poetry to enliven the imagination? There is the secret of all her power. Is there aught in science to add strength and dignity to the human mind? The natural world is only the body, of which she is the soul. In books science is presented to the eye of the pupil, as it were in a dried and preserved state; the time may come when the instructor [sic] will take him by the hand, and lead him by the running streams, and teach him all the principles of science as she comes from her Maker, as he would smell the fragrance of the rose without gathering it.

This love of nature, this adaptation of man to the place assigned him by his heavenly Father, this fulness of the mind as it descends into the works of God, is something which has been felt by every one, though to an imperfect degree; and therefore needs no explanation. It is the part of science, that this be no longer a blind affection; but that the mind be opened to a just perception of what it is which it loves. The affection which the lover first feels for his future wife, may be attended only by a general sense of her external beauty; but his mind gradually opens to a perception of the peculiar features of the soul, of which the external

appearance is only an image. So it is with nature. Do we love to gaze on the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets? This affection contains in its bosom the whole science of astronomy, as the seed contains the future tree. It is the office of the instructor [sic] to give it an existence and a name, by making known the laws which govern the motions of the heavenly bodies, the relation of these bodies to each other, and their uses. Have we felt delight in beholding the animal creation, in watching their pastimes and their labors? It is the office of the instructor [sic] to give birth to this affection, by teaching the different classes of animals, with their peculiar characteristics, which inhabit the earth, air, and sea. Have we known the inexpressible pleasure of beholding the beauties of the vegetable world? This affection can only expand in the science of botany. Thus it is that the love of nature in the mass, may become the love of all the sciences, and the mind will grow and bring forth fruit from its own inherent power of development. Thus it is that memory refers to the growth and expansion of the mind; and what is thus, as it were, incorporated into its substance, can be forgotten only by a change in the direction of the affections, or the course of conduct of the individual analogous to that in his physical man, by which his very flesh and bones are exchanged for those of a different texture; nor does he then entirely cease to remember, inasmuch as he preserves a sense of his own identity.

It is in this way the continual endeavor of Providence, that the natural sciences should be the spontaneous production of the human mind. To these should certainly be added, poetry and music; for when we study the works of God as we should, we cannot disregard that inherent beauty and harmony in which these arts originate. These occasion in the mind its first glow of delight, like the taste of food, as it is offered to the mouth; and the pleasure they afford, is a pledge of the strength and manhood afterwards imparted by the sciences.

By poetry is meant all those illustrations of truth by natural imagery, which spring from the fact, that this world is the mirror of Him who made it. Strictly speaking, nothing has less to do with fiction than poetry. The day will come, and it may not be far distant, when this art will have another test of merit than mere versification, or the invention of strange stories; when the laws by which poetry is tested will be as fixed and immutable as the laws of science; when a change will be introduced into taste corresponding to that which Bacon introduced into philosophy, by which both will be confined within the limits of things as they actually exist. It would seem that genius would be cramped; that the powers of invention would be destroyed; by confining the human mind, as it were, at home, within the bounds which nature has assigned. But what wider scope need it have? It reaches the throne of God; it rests on his footstool. All things spiritual and natural are before it. There is as much that is true as false; and truth presented in

natural imagery, is only dressed in the garments which God has given it.

The imagination was permitted for ages to involve the world in darkness, by putting theory in the place of fact; till at length the greatest man revealed the simplest truth, that our researches must be governed by actual observation. God is the source of all truth. Creation (and what truth does not result from creation?) is the effect of the Divine Love and Wisdom. Simply to will and to think, with the Divine Being, result in creating; in actually producing those realities, which form the groundwork of the thoughts and affections of man. But for the philosopher to desire a thing, and to think that it existed, produced nothing but his own theory. Hence it was necessary that he should bring his mind into coincidence with things as they exist, or, in other words, with the truth.

Fiction in poetry must fall with theory in science, for they depend equally on the words of creation. The word fiction, however, is not intended to be used in its most literal sense; but to embrace whatever is not in exact agreement with the creative spirit of God. It belongs to the true poet to feel this spirit, and to be governed by it; to be raised above the senses; to live and breathe in the inward efforts of things; to feel the power of creation, even before he sees the effect; to witness the innocence and smiles of nature's infancy, not by extending the imagination back to chaos, but by raising the soul to nature's origin. The true poetic spirit, so far from misleading any, is the strongest bulwark against deception. It is the soul of science. Without it, the latter is a cheerless, heartless study, distrusting even the presence and power of Him to whom it owes its existence. Of all the poetry which exists, that only possesses the seal of immortality, which presents the image of God which is stamped on nature. Could the poetry which now prevails be viewed from the future, when all partialities and antipathies shall have passed away, and things are left to rest on their own foundations; when good works shall have dwindled into insignificance, from the mass of useless matter that may have fallen from them, and bad ones shall have ceased to allure with false beauty; we might catch a glimpse of the rudiments of this divine art amid the weight of extraneous matter by which it is now protected, and which it is destined to throw off. The imagination will be refined into a chaste and sober view of unveiled nature. It will be confined within the bounds of reality. It will no longer lead the way to insanity and madness, by transcending the works of creation, and, as it were, wandering where God has no power to protect it; but finding a resting-place in every created object, it will enter into it and explore its hidden treasures, the relation in which it stands to mind, and reveal the love it bears to its Creator.

The state of poetry has always indicated the state of science and religion. The gods are hardly missed more, when removed from the temples of the ancients,

than they are when taken from their poetry; or than theory is when taken from their philosophy. Fiction ceases to be pleasing when it ceases to gain credence; and what they admired in itself, commands much of its admiration now, as a relic of antiquity. The painting which in a darkened room only impressed us with the reality, as the sun rises upon it discovers the marks of the pencil; and that shade of the mind can never again return, which gave to ancient poetry its vividness and its power. Of this we may be sensible, by only considering how entirely powerless it would be, if poetry in all respects similar were produced at the present day. A man's religious sentiments, and his knowledge of the sciences, are so entirely interwoven with all his associations; they shed such light throughout every region of the mind; that nothing can please which is directly opposed to them;—and though the forms which poetry may offer may sometimes be presented where this light begins to sink into obscurity, they should serve, like the sky and the clouds, as a relief to the eye, and not, like some unnatural body protruding on the horizon, disturb the quiet they are intended to produce. When there shall be a religion which shall see God in every thing, and at all times; and the natural sciences, not less than nature itself, shall be regarded in connection with Him; the fire of poetry will begin to be kindled in its immortal part, and will burn without consuming. The inspiration so often feigned, will become real, and the mind of the poet will feel the spark which passes from God to nature. The veil will be withdrawn, and beauty and innocence displayed to the eye; for which the lasciviousness of the imagination and the wantonness of desire may seek in vain.

There is a language, not of words, but of things. When this language shall have been made apparent, that which is human will have answered its end; and being as it were resolved into its original elements, will lose itself in nature. The use of language is the expression of our feelings and desires—the manifestation of the mind. But everything which is, whether animal or vegetable, is full of the expression of that use for which it is designed, as of its own existence. If we did but understand its language, what could our words add to its meaning? It is because we are unwilling to hear, that we find it necessary to say so much; and we drown the voice of nature with the discordant jargon of ten thousand dialects. Let a man's language be confined to the expression of that which actually belongs to his own mind; and let him respect the smallest blade which grows, and permit it to speak for itself. Then may there be poetry, which may not be written perhaps, but which may be felt as a part of our being. Everything which surrounds us is full of the utterance of one word, completely expressive of its nature. This word is its name; for God, even now, could we but see it, is creating all things, and giving a name to every work of his love, in its perfect adaptation to that for which

it is designed. But man has abused his power, and has become insensible to the real character of the brute creation; still more so to that of inanimate nature, because, in his selfishness, he is disposed to reduce them to slavery. Therefore he is deaf. We find the animal world either in a state of savage wildness, or enslaved submission. It is possible, that, as the character of man is changed, they may attain a midway condition equally removed from both. As the mind of man acknowledges its dependence on the Divine Mind, brutes may add to their instinct submission to human reason; preserving an unbroken chain from our Father in Heaven, to the most inanimate parts of creation. Such may be supposed to have been the condition of the animal on which the King of Zion rode into Jerusalem; at once free and subject to the will of the rider. Everything will seem to be conscious of its use; and man will become conscious of the use of everything.

It may be peculiar, and is said with deference to the opinions of others, but to my ear, rhymes add nothing to poetry, but rather detract from its beauty. They possess too strongly the marks of art; and produce a sameness which tires, and sometimes disgusts. We seek for them in vain in nature, and may therefore reasonably presume that they spring out of the peculiar state of the public taste, without possessing any real foundation in the mind itself; that they are rather the fashion of the dress than any essential part. In the natural world we find nothing which answers to them, or feels like them, but a happy assemblage of living objects springing up, not in straight lines and at fixed distance, but in God's own order, which by its apparent want of design, conveys the impression of perfect innocence and humility. It is not for that which is human to be completely divested of the marks of art; but every approach toward this end, must be an approach towards perfection. The poet should be free and unshackled as the eagle; whose wings, as he soars in the air, seem merely to serve the office of a helm, while he moves on simply by the agency of the will.

By music is meant not merely that which exists in the rational world, whether in the song of angels or men; not merely the singing of birds and the lowing of cattle, by which the animal world express their affections and their wants—but that harmony which pervades also all orders of creation; the music of the harp of universal nature, which is touched by the rays of the sun, and whose song is the morning, the evening and the seasons. Music is the voice of God, and poetry his language, both in his Word and works. The one is to the ear, what the other is to the eye. Every child of nature must feel their influence. There was a time, when the human mind was in more perfect harmony with the Divine Mind, than the lower orders of creation; and the tale of the harp of Orpheus, to which the brutes, the vegetables, and the rocks listened, is not altogether unfounded in reality; but when the selfish and worldly passions usurped the place of love to our God and

our neighbor, the mind of man began to be mute in its praise. The original order was reversed. The very stones cry out, and we do well to listen to them.

There is a most intimate and almost inseparable connection between poetry and music. This is indicated by the fact that they are always united. Nothing is sung which has not some pretensions to poetry; and nothing has any pretensions to poetry in which there is not something of music. A good ear is essential to rhythm; and rhythm is essential to verse. It is the perfection of poetry, that it addresses two senses at once, the ear and the eye; that it prepares the affections for the object before it is presented; that it sends light through the understanding, by forming a communication between the heart of man and the works of God. The character of music must have always harmonized with that of poetry. It is essential to the former that it should be in agreement with our feelings; for it is from this circumstance that it derives its power. That music which is in unison with the Divine Mind, alone deserves the name. So various is it found in the different conditions of man, that it is hardly recognized as the same thing. There is music in the war-song of the savage, and in the sound for battle. Alas! how unlike that music, which proclaimed peace on earth and good will towards men. Poetry and music, like virtuous females in disguise, have followed our race into the darkest scenes to which the fall has brought them. We find them in the haunts of dissipation and vice; in the song of revelry and lewdness. We meet them again, kindling the fire of devotion at the altar of God; and find them more and more perfect as we approach their divine origin.

There prevail at present two kinds of music, as diverse as their origins—profane and religious. The one is the result of the free, unrestrained expression of natural feelings; the other, of a kind which indicates that these feelings are placed under restraint. In the one, there is often something of sensuality; in the other, of sadness. There is a point in moral improvement, in which the sensual will be subdued, and the sorrowful disappear; which will combine the pleasure of the one, with the sanctity of the other. When a sense of the presence of God shall be co-extensive with the thoughts of the mind, and all religion shall consecrate every word and action of our lives, the song of Zion will be no longer sung in a strange land. The Divine Love, the soul and essence of music, will descend, not in the thunders of Sinai, but will seem to acquire volume, as it tunes the heart in unison with itself, and the tongue in unison with the heart. The changes on the character of our music, which may be the effect of the gradual regeneration of the world, are hardly within the reach of conjecture.

Enough has been said to illustrate generally the influence of the natural world in the development of the mind. The actual condition of society operates to produce the same effect, with hardly less power. In this are comprised the

religious and civil institutions of one's own country; that peculiar character in which they originate; and a knowledge of the past, as, by disclosing the origin and progress of things, it throws light on the prospect actually before us. As the philosophy connected with the natural world is that in which the mind may take root, by which it may possess an independence worthy a being whose eternal destiny is in his own hands—so the moral and civil institutions, the actual condition of society, is the atmosphere which surrounds and protects it; in which it sends forth its branches, and bears fruit. The spiritual part of man is as really a substance, as the material; and is as capable of acting upon spirit, as matter is upon matter. It is not from words of instruction and advice, that the mind of the infant derives its first impetus; it gathers strength from the warmth of those affections which over-shadow it, and is nourished by a mother's love, even before it has attained the power of thought. It is the natural tendency of things, that an individual should be brought into a situation, in which the external condition of the place, and the circle of society in which he is, are particularly adapted to bring forth to view his hereditary character. The actual condition of the human mind is, as it were, the solid substance, in which the laws of moral and intellectual philosophy and political economy (whatever may be their quality) exist embodied, as the natural sciences do in the material world. A knowledge of those laws, such as they exist, is the natural consequence of the development of the affections by which a child is connected with those that surround him. The connection of mind is not less powerful or universal than that of matter. All minds, whatever may be their condition, are not unconnected with God; and, consequently, not unconnected with each other. All nations, under whatever system of government, and in whatever state of civilization, are under the Divine Providence surely, but almost imperceptibly, advancing to a moral and political order, such as the world has not yet seen. They are guided by the same hand, and with a view to the same destiny. Much remains to be done, and more to be suffered; but the end is certain. The humblest individual may, nay, must, aid in the accomplishment of this consummation. It is not for time or space to set limits to the effects of the life of a single man. Let then the child be so initiated into a knowledge of the condition of mankind, that the love at first indulged in the circle of his father's family shall gradually subside into a chaste and sober love of his country; and of his country, not as opposed to other countries, but as aiding them in the same great object. Let the young mind be warmed and cherished by whatever is chaste and generous in the mind of the public; and be borne on to a knowledge of our institutions, by the rich current of the disposition to preserve them.

Thus it is that the child is no sooner brought into this world, than the actual condition, both of the world itself, and of society, acts powerfully to draw forth

the energies of his mind. If mankind had retained that order in which they were created, this influence, in co-operation with the Divine, would have been sufficient, as it was designed to have been, for all the purposes of God. Nature, the very image of divine loveliness, and the purest affections of the heart, which approach still nearer the same origin, acting together on the infant mind; it would seem as if the effect would be almost as certain as any process of growth which is witnessed among the productions of the natural world. But man is fallen; and the operation of this influence, in different conditions of society, may produce different results; but in none is sufficient to capacitate him for that life of usefulness and happiness, for which he was designed. The influence of society cannot be sufficient, since this cannot raise a man above its own level; and the society of earth is no longer the society of heaven. This influence may bring forward all the warlike energies of the young savage, and direct them in their utmost vigor to the destruction of his enemies and of the beasts of the forest; and he may look onward with rapture to the happy hunting grounds beyond the grave. What disappointment awaits him in the other world, all of us may easily imagine. This influence may bring forth and gratify the unchaste and beastly passions of the Turk; and he may look forward, with his Koran in his hand, to a heaven of sensuality and crime. It need not be said how widely different will be found the reality. Christians generally are standing in expectation of a happiness as boundless in extent, as it is undefined in its nature; and with an infinite variety of passions, in whose gratification alone they have experienced delight, are expecting a heaven in which simple useless enjoyment will rise like a flood and immerse the mind. The result must, of necessity, be as various as the condition of the individuals by whom it is anticipated. Still there is a society yet in its coming, unseen though not unseeing, shrouded from the rest of the world by the very brilliancy of its own light, which would resist the impulse of every evil affection, and look for heaven simply in the delight of that which is chaste, pure, and holy; which, by removing that which renders duty undelightful, would draw nigh to the only Source of real enjoyment; which would find its happiness and its God in the very commandments which have been the terror of the world; to which the effect is no longer doubtful, since it is made acquainted with the cause, and which, as it anticipates no reward, will meet with no disappointment. When this society shall be fully established on the earth, the voice of the Lord will be no longer obstructed as it descends from above the heavens;—"Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

The influence of the natural world, however beneficial it may prove, is not such as it was designed to have been. Man has ever sought a condition in nature, which should correspond with the state of his own mind. The savage would pine and

droop, if too suddenly removed to scenes of civilization, like grass which had grown in rank luxuriance under the shade of the oak, if the branches were cleft, and it was at once exposed to the power of the sun. The character of all the lower orders of creation has suffered a change in consequence of that in the condition of man, the extent of which cannot be measured. That the sun was darkened at the crucifixion of our Lord, was no miracle. It was as much the natural consequence of that event, as its present lustre is of His glory. It is not then for these, the objects of nature, to restore to us that moral order, the want of which has wrought such changes on themselves.

There is then another power which is necessary to the orderly development of the mind—the power of the Word of God. This indeed has been implied in all the preceding remarks. No possessions and no efforts of the mind are unconnected with it, whatever may be the appearance. Revelation so mingles with everything which meets us, that it is not easy for us to measure the degree to which our condition is affected by it. Its effects appear miraculous at first, but after they have become established, the mind, as in the ordinary operations of nature, is apt to become unconscious of the power by which they are produced. All growth or development is effected from within, outward. It is so with animals; it is so with vegetables; it is so with the body; it is so with the mind. Were it not for a power within the soul, as the soul is within the body, it could have no possibility of subsistence. That the growth of the material part depends on the presence of that which is spiritual, is obvious from the fact, that at death the former falls to decay. If it were possible for God to be detached from our spiritual part, this should decay likewise. The doctrine, then, of the immortality of the soul is, simply, “I in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” It is the union of the Divine with the human—of that from which all things are, and on which they depend, the Divine Will, with man through the connecting medium of Divine Truth. It is the tendency of the Bible to effect this union, and of course to restore a consciousness of it. It is a union which God desires with all, therefore even the wicked who reject it partake of his immortality, though not of his happiness. When, in the process of regeneration, this union is accomplished, the fear of dissolution will be as impossible in this world as in the other; and before this is effected, the fear of dissolution may exist there as well as here. It is not the place where a person is, but the condition of mind, which is to be regarded; and there is no antidote against the fear of death, but the consciousness of being united with the Fountain of life. But it is asked, how can the fear of death exist after it has actually taken place? The separation of the spiritual and material part, so far as the nature of their connection is understood, can produce no fear. Were it not for evil in ourselves, it would rather wear the appearance of a state of uncommon quiet. There is upon

no subject a more powerful tendency to instinctive knowledge, than upon that of death. The darkness with which it is veiled, presents but a lamentable picture of our present condition. It is its own dissolution of which the mind is afraid; and that want of conjunction with God which renders this fear possible here, may render it possible anywhere. It is the sole object of the Bible to conjoin the soul with God; and, as this is effected, it may be understood in what way the Holy Spirit operates interiorly to produce its development. It is not a mere metaphor, it is a plain and simple fact that the Spirit of God is as necessary to the development of the mind, as the power of the natural sun to the growth of vegetables, and in the same way. But let us remember, that, as in nature the heat and light may be converted into the most noxious poison; so the Spirit of God, in itself perfectly pure and holy, may be converted into passions the most opposite to its nature. It is left to us to open our hearts to its influence, by obeying the commandments. "If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;" and he will become conscious of living and growing from God.

It is not consistent with the nature of things that the full practical effect of a subject should be at once revealed to the mind. The child is led on to a knowledge of his letters by a thousand little enticements, and by the tender coercion of parental authority, while he is yet ignorant of the treasures mysteriously concealed in their combinations. The arts have been courted merely for the transient gratification they afford. Their connection with religion and with the sciences is beginning to be discovered; and they are yet to yield a powerful influence in imparting to the mind its moral harmony and proportions. The sciences themselves have been studied principally as subjects of speculation and amusement. They have been sought for the gratification they afford, and for the artificial standing they give in society, by the line of distinction which is drawn between the learned and the vulgar. The discovery of their connection with the actual condition of man, is of later origin; and though their application to use is yet in its infancy, they are beginning to throw a light on almost every department of labor, hitherto unexampled in the annals of the world. Religion, too, has been a subject of speculation, something evanescent, a theory, a prayer, a hope. It remains for this also to become practical, by the actual accomplishment of that which it promises. It remains for the promise of reward to be swallowed up in the work of salvation. It remains for the soul to be restored to its union with God—to heaven. Christianity is the tree of life again planted in the world; and, by its own vital power, it has been, year after year, casting off the opinions of men, like the external bark which partakes not of its life. It remains for the human mind to

become conformed to its spirit, that its principles may possess the durability of their origin.

Such are the effects to be anticipated from the Bible in the development of the mind. It has begun the work, and will perfect it in each individual, so far as, by a life according to the commandments, he becomes willing that it should. There is within it a secret power, which exerts an influence on the moral and intellectual world, like that of the sun on the physical; and, however long and successfully it may be resisted by some, not the less certain in its effect on the ultimate condition of society. I am aware that, in these remarks, I am ascribing to the spirit of God, to the spirit of the Word, a power which some may be unwilling to allow to it. The Bible is thought to resemble other books, and to be subject to the same laws of criticism; and we may be sometimes in danger of becoming insensible to its internal power, from the very mass of human learning with which it is encumbered. "Is not this the carpenter's son?"

There is one law of criticism, the most important to the thorough understanding of any work, which seems not to have been brought sufficiently into view in the study of the Bible. It is that by which we should be led by a continued exercise of those powers which are most clearly demonstrated in an author; by continued habits of mind and action; to approximate to that intellectual and moral condition, in which the work originated. If it were desired to make a child thoroughly acquainted with the work of a genuine poet, I would not put the poem and lexicon in his hand, and bid him study and learn—I would rather make him familiar with whatever was calculated to call forth the power of poetry in himself; since it requires the exercise of the same powers to understand, that it does to produce. I would point him to that source from which the author himself had caught his inspiration, and, as I led him to the baptismal fount of nature, I would consecrate his powers to that Being from whom nature exists. I would cultivate a sense of the constant presence and agency of God, and direct him inward to the presence-chamber of the Most High, that his mind might become imbued with His spirit. I would endeavor, by the whole course of his education, to make him a living poem, that, when he read the poetry of others, it might be effulgent with the light of his own mind. The poet stands on the mountain, with the face of nature before him, calm and placid. If we would enter into his views, we must go where he is. We must catch the direction of his eye, and yield ourselves up to the instinctive guidance of his will, that we may have a secret foretaste of his meaning—that we may be conscious of the image in its first conception—that we may perceive its beginnings and gradual growth, till at length it becomes distinctly depicted on the retina of the mind. Without this, we may take the dictionary in our hands and settle the definition of every word, and still know as little of the lofty conceptions

of the author, as the weary traveller, who passes round in the farthest verge which is visible from the mountain, knows of the scenery which is seen from its summit. It has been truly said, that Johnson was incapable of conceiving the beauties of Milton. Yet Johnson was himself a living dictionary of Milton's language. The true poet, when his mind is full, fills his language to overflowing; and it is left to the reader to preserve what the words cannot contain. It is that part which cannot be defined; that which is too delicate to endure the unrestrained gaze; that which shrinks instinctively from the approach of anything less chaste than itself, and though present, like the inhabitants of the other world, is unperceived by flesh and blood, which is worth all the rest. This acknowledges no dwelling-place but the mind. Stamp the living light on the extended face of nature, beyond the power of darkness at the setting of the sun, and you may preserve such light as this, when the mind rises not to meet it in its coming.

If it were desired to make an individual acquainted with a work in one of the abstract sciences, this might be best effected by leading him gradually to whatever conduces to the growth of those powers, on which a knowledge of these sciences depends; by cultivating a principle of dependence on the Divine Being, a purity and chastity of the affections, which will produce a tranquil condition, of all things the most favorable to clear perceptions; by leading him to an habitual observation of the relations of things, and to such continued exertion of the understanding, as, calling into use its full powers without inducing fatigue, may impart the strength of the laborer, without the degradation of the slave; in a word, by forming a penetrating, mathematical mind, rather than by communicating mathematical information. The whole character and complexion of the mind will be gradually changed; till at length it will become, (chemically speaking) in its very nature, an active solvent of these subjects. They fall to pieces as soon as they come in contact with it, and assume an arrangement agreeable to that of the mind itself, with all the precision of crystallization. They are then understood; for the most perfect understanding of a subject is simply a perception of harmony existing between the subject and the mind itself. Indeed, the understanding which any individual possesses of a subject might be mathematically defined:

the subject proposed

the actual character of his mind

and there is a constant struggle for the divisor and dividend to become the same by a change in the one or the other, that the result may be unity, and the understanding perfect.

There is an analogy, (such as may exist between things human and things divine,) between that discipline which is required in order to understand a

production of taste or science, and that which is necessary to a clear perception of the truths of the Bible. As it is requisite to a full sense of the beauties of poetry, that the individual should be himself a poet, and to a thorough knowledge of a work of science, that he should not merely have scientific information, but a scientific mind; so it is necessary to a knowledge of the Bible, that the mind should be formed in the image and likeness of God. An understanding of the Word is the effect of a life according to its precepts. It requires, not the obedience of the rich man who went away sorrowful, but the obedience of him who hold every other possession, whether it consist in the acquirements of the mind or in earthly property, in subjection to the Holy Spirit within him. "If ye will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine," is a law of exegesis, before which false sentiments will melt away, like frost before the rising sun. There is within the mind the golden vein of duty, which, if followed aright, will lead to an increasing brightness, before which the proudest monuments of human criticism will present an appearance like that of the dark disk of this world, as the eye of the dying man opens on the scenes of the other.

The world is beginning to be changed from what it was. Physical power, instead of boasting of its deeds of prowess, and pointing with the tomahawk or the lance to the bloody testimonies of its strength, is beginning to leave its image on the rugged face of nature, and to feel the living evidence of its achievements, in the happy circle of domestic life. It remains for intellectual strength to lose the consciousness of its existence in the passions subdued, and to reap the reward of its labors, not in the spoils of an enemy, but in the fruits of honest industry. It remains for us to become more thoroughly acquainted with the laws of moral mechanism. Instead of making unnecessary and ineffectual exertions in the direct attainment of truth, it remains for us to make equal efforts to cleanse our own minds and to do good to others; and what was before unattainable will become easy, as the rock which untutored strength cannot move, may be raised by a touch of the finger.

The Bible differs from other books, as our Lord differed from men. He was born of a woman, but His Spirit was the everlasting Father. It is humble in its appearance, as nature is when compared to art; and some parts which Providence has permitted to remain within the same cover have often attracted more attention than that which is really divine. From the very nature of perfect innocence its presence is unnoticed, save by him by whom it is loved. Divine Love, in its perfect thoughtlessness of itself, enters the atheistical heart, unperceived. Such an one thinks meanly of those who think humbly of themselves, and with perfect humility the last vestige of reality disappears. To him, both nature and the Word are like a deserted building, through which, as he passes, he is conscious of

nothing but the sound of his own footsteps; but to him whose heart opens to the Divine Influence, this building appears to assume, from the internal cause of its creation, the symmetry of perfect proportions, till at length, as he becomes more and more conscious of the presence with which it is filled, he sees no temple, "for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple." The Word resembles the Hebrew language, in which much of it is written. To him who knows not its spirit, it is an empty form without sound or vowel; but to him who is alive to the Divine Influence, it is filled with the living voice of God.

The Bible can never be fully understood, either by making it subservient to natural reason, or by blindly adopting what reason would reject; but by that illumination of the understanding and enlargement of the reason which will result from a gradual conformity to its precepts. Reason now is something very different from what it was a few centuries past. We are in the habit of thinking that the mode of reasoning has changed; but this appears to be merely an indication of a change which has taken place in the character of the mind itself. Syllogistic reasoning is passing away. It has left no permanent demonstration but that of its own worthlessness. It amounts to nothing but the discernment and expression of the particulars which go to comprise something more general; and, as the human mind permits things to assume a proper arrangement from their own inherent power of attraction, it is no longer necessary to bind them together with syllogisms. Few minds can now endure the tediousness of being led blind-fold to a conclusion, and of being satisfied with the result merely from the recollection of having been satisfied on the way to it. The mind requires to view the parts of a subject, not only separately, but together; and the understanding, in the exercise of those powers of arrangement, by which a subject is presented in its just relations to other things, takes the name of reason. We appear to be approaching that condition which requires the union of reason and eloquence, and will be satisfied with neither without the other. We neither wish to see an anatomical plate of bare muscles, nor the gaudy daubings of finery; but a happy mixture of strength and beauty. We desire language neither extravagant nor cold, but blood-warm. Reason is beginning to learn the necessity of simply tracing the relations which exist between created things, and of not even touching what it examines, lest it disturb the arrangement in the cabinet of creation—and as, in the progress of moral improvement, the imagination (which is called the creative power of man) shall coincide with the actively creative will of God, reason will be clothed with eloquence, as nature is with verdure.

Reason is said to be a power given to man for his protection and safety. Let us not be deceived by words. If this were the particular design, it should be found in equal perfection in every condition of the mind; for all are in equal need of

such a power. It is the office of the eye to discern the objects of nature, and it may protect the body from any impending injury; and the understanding may be useful in a similar way to the spiritual man. Reason is partly a natural and partly an acquired power. The understanding is the eye, with simply the power of discerning the light; but reason is the eye, whose powers have been enlarged by exercise and experience, which measures the distance of objects, compares their magnitudes, discerns their colors, and selects and arranges them according to the relation they bear to each other. In the progress of moral improvement no power of the mind, or rather no mode of exercising the understanding, undergoes a more thorough and decisive change than this. It is like the change from chaos to creation; since it requires a similar exercise of the understanding in man to comprehend creation, to what it does in God to produce it; and every approach to Him, by bringing us nearer the origin of things, enables us to discover analogies in what was before chaotic. This is a change which it is the grand design of revelation to accomplish; reason should therefore come to revelation in the spirit of prayer, and not in that of judgment. Nothing can be more intimately and necessarily connected with the moral character of an individual than his rational powers, since it is his moral character which is the grand cause of that peculiar classification and arrangement which characterizes his mind; hence revelation, in changing the former, must change the latter also.

The insufficiency of reason to judge of the Bible, is obvious on the very fact of revelation from its miracles. The laws of Divine Operation are perfectly uniform and harmonious; and a miracle is a particular instance of Divine Power, which, for want of a more interior and extended knowledge of the ways of God, appearing to stand alone, and to have been the result of an unusual exertion of the Divine Will, creates in the minds of men, what its name implies, a sensation of wonder. That there are miracles in the Bible, proves that there are laws of the Divine Operation and of the Divine Government, which are not embraced within the utmost limits of that classification and arrangement, which is the result of natural reason. While, therefore, human reason professes to be convinced of the reality of revelation from its miracles, let it humble itself before them. Let it bow itself to the earth, that it may be exalted to a more intimate acquaintance with these heavenly strangers. Let it follow the Lord in the regeneration, till the wonderful disappear in the paternal. Miracles are like angels who have sometimes been visible to men, who would much more willingly have introduced them to an acquaintance with the laws and society of heaven, than have filled them with fear and consternation. They are insulated examples of laws as boundless as the universe, and by the manner in which we are affected by them, prove how much we have to learn, and how utterly incompetent we are to judge

of the ways of God, from that reason which is founded on our own limited and fallacious observation. The resurrection of our Lord must have been a very different miracle to the angels at the sepulchre, from what it was to Mary. They saw it from the other side of the grave, with a knowledge of the nature of that death which they had themselves experienced; she saw an insulated fact, not at all coincident with her views on the subject of which it was an illustration. They saw the use and design of that which had been accomplished; she saw the sepulchre and the linen clothes lying. As they gazed intensely at the same subject, the veil of heaven was withdrawn, and they beheld each other, face to face. She was filled with fear; they with love and compassion. If Mary were to persist in judging of this subject from her own reason; from a knowledge of those laws with which she was previously acquainted; how could her views ever become angelic? How could the dark cloud of admiration be ever filled with the rich light of the rising sun?

Man alone, of all created things, appears on his own account to want the full measure of his happiness; because he alone has left the order of his creation. He stands, even at the present period, half convinced of the reality of the future state. It is the design of revelation to restore to him that moral condition in which he will possess as necessarily the consciousness of immortality, as the brute does that of existence; for a consciousness of existence, together with that of union with God, is a consciousness of eternal life. Let us come to the Bible, then, with no hopes of arbitrary reward, and no fears of arbitrary punishment; but let us come to it, as to that which, if followed aright, will produce a condition of mind of which happiness will be the natural and necessary consequence.

It is often said that the Bible has nothing to do with metaphysics or the sciences. An individual, whatever be his condition, always retains, to a certain extent, a consciousness of his moral and intellectual character; and the more this character is exalted, the more minute and discriminating will be this consciousness. Who is it that formed the human mind, and who is here endeavoring to restore it to its true order? The Bible has the mind for its subject, that condition of mind which is heaven for its object, and the Father of mind for its author. Has it nothing to do with metaphysics? It has indeed nothing to do with that metaphysics which we shall leave with our bodies in the graves; but of that, which will shine with more and more brilliancy, as the passage is opened, not through distant regions of space, but through the secret part of our own souls to the presence of God, it is the very life and being. Can omniscience contemplate the happiness of the mind, without regard to its nature? Were we disposed to improve the condition of the savage, what course should we pursue? Should we not endeavor to change his habits of mind and body, by teaching him the arts of civilization, instructing him

in the sciences, and gradually introducing him to that portion of social order which is here attained? And are not all these most intimately connected with our own condition of mind? Are they not merely the expression of its countenance? In the same way is it the endeavor of the Divine Mind in the Bible to restore all to his own image and likeness; and to say that the Bible has nothing to do with metaphysics, is to say that the present condition of the mind has nothing to do with what it should be, and that the present metaphysics have nothing to do with religion. It is said that the Bible has nothing to do with the sciences. It is true that it does not teach them directly; but it is gradually unfolding a condition of mind, out of which the sciences will spring as naturally, as the leaves and blossoms from the tree that bears them. It is the same power which acts simultaneously to develop the soul itself, and to develop nature—to form the mind and the mould which is destined to receive it. As we behold the external face of the world, our souls will hold communion with its spirit; and we shall seem to extend our consciousness beyond the narrow limits of our own bodies, to the living objects that surround us. The mind will enter into nature by the secret path of him who forms her; and can be no longer ignorant of her laws, when it is a witness of her creation.

I have endeavored to illustrate, generally, in what way the natural sciences, the actual condition of society, and the Word of God, are necessary to the development of all minds, in a manner analogous to that in which the earth, the atmosphere and the sun combine to bring forth the productions of nature. I shall say but a few words with respect to that particular development which is requisite to the full manifestation of the peculiar powers possessed by any individual.

It is well known that at a certain period of life the character of a man begins to be more distinctly marked. He appears to become separated from that which surrounds him—to stand in a measure aloof from his associates—to raise his head above the shadow of any earthly object into the light of heaven, and to walk with a more determined step on the earth beneath. This is the manifestation of a character which has always existed, and which has, as it were, been accumulating by little and little, till at length it has attained its full stature.

When a man has become his own master, it is left to himself to complete his own education. "He has one Father, God." For the formation of his character, thus far, he is not in the strictest sense accountable; that is, his character is not as yet so fixed, but that it is yielding and pliable. It is left to himself to decide, how far it shall remain in its present form. This is indeed a period of deep responsibility. He has taken the guidance of a human being, and is not the less accountable, that this being is himself. The ligament is now cut asunder by which his mind was

bound to its earthly guardian, and he is placed on his own feet, exposed to the bleak winds and refreshing breezes, the clouds and the sunshine of this world, fully accountable to God and man for his conduct. Let him not be made dizzy from a sense of his own liberty, nor faint under his own weight; but let him remember that the eye of God is now fixed full, it might almost be said anxiously, upon him.

It is with the human mind, as with the human body. All our race have those limbs and features, and that general aspect, from which they are denominated men. But, on a nearer view, we find them divided into nations possessed of peculiar appearance and habits, and these subdivided into families and individuals, in all of which there is something peculiarly their own. The human mind (speaking in the most general sense) requires to be instructed in the same sciences, and needs the same general development, and is destined to make one common and universal effort for its own emancipation. But the several nations of the earth also will, at a future period, stand forth with a distinctness of character which cannot now be conceived of. The part which each is to perform in the regeneration of the world, will become more and more distinctly marked and universally acknowledged; and every nation will be found to possess resources in its own moral and intellectual character, and its own natural productions, which will render it essential to the well-being and happiness of the whole. Every government must find that the real good of its own people precisely harmonizes with that of others; and standing armies must be converted into willing laborers for the promotion of the same object. Then will the nations of the earth resemble the well-organized parts of the same body, and no longer convert that light which is given them for the benefit of their brethren, into an instrument by which they are degraded and enslaved.

But we stop not here. Every individual also possesses peculiar powers, which should be brought to bear on society in the duties best fitted to receive them. The highest degree of cultivation of which the mind of any one is capable, consists in the most perfect development of that peculiar organization, which as really exists in infancy as in maturer years. The seed which is planted is said to possess in miniature, the trunk, branches, leaves and fruit of the future tree. So it is with the mind; and the most that can possibly be done, is to afford facilities by which its development may be effected with the same order. In the process of the formation of our minds there exists the spirit of prophecy; and no advancement can create surprise, because we have always been conscious of that from which it is produced. We must not seek to make one hair white or black. It is vain for us to attempt to add one cubit to our stature. All adventitious or assumed importance should be cast off, as a filthy garment. We should seek an employment for the

mind, in which all its energies may be warmed into existence; which (if I may be allowed the expression) may bring every muscle into action. There is something which every one can do better than any one else; and it is the tendency, and must be the end, of human events, to assign to each his true calling. Kings will be hurled from their thrones, and peasants exalted to the highest stations, by this irresistible tendency of mind to its true level. These effects may not be fully disclosed in the short period of this life; but even the most incredulous must be ultimately convinced that truth is no respecter of persons, by learning the simple fact, that a man cannot be other than what he is. Not that endless progression in moral goodness and in wisdom are not within the reach of any one; but that the state will never arrive, when he may not look back to the first rudiments, the original stamina of his own mind, and be almost able to say, I possessed all at the time of my birth. The more a person lives in singleness of heart, in simplicity, and sincerity, the more will this be apparent.

It becomes us, then, to seek and to cherish this peculium of our own minds, as the patrimony which is left us by our Father in heaven—as that by which the branch is united to the vine—as the forming power within us, which gives to our persons that by which they are distinguished from others; and, by a life entirely governed by the commandments of God, to leave on the duties we are called to perform the full impress of our real characters. Let a man's ambition to be great disappear in a willingness to be what he is; then may he fill a high place without pride, or a low one without dejection. As our desires become more and more concentrated to those objects which correspond to the peculiar organization of our minds, we shall have a foretaste of that which is coming, in those internal tendencies of which we are conscious. As we perform with alacrity whatever duty presents itself before us, we shall perceive in our own hearts a kind of preparation for every external event or occurrence of our lives, even the most trivial, springing from the all-pervading tendency of the Providence of God, to present the opportunity of being useful wherever there is the disposition.

Living in a country whose peculiar characteristic is said to be a love of equal liberty, let it be written on our hearts, that the end of all education is a life of active usefulness. We want no education which shall raise a man out of the reach of the understanding, of the sympathies of any of his species. We are disgusted with that kind of dignity which the possessor is himself obliged to guard; but venerate that, which, having its origin in the actual character of the man, can receive no increase from the countenance of power, and suffer no diminution from the approach of weakness—that dignity in which the individual appears to live rather in the consciousness of the light which shines from above, than in that of his own shadow beneath. There is a spiritual atmosphere about such an one,

which is at once its own protection, and the protection of him with whom it is connected—which, while it is free as air alike to the most powerful and the most humble, conveys a tacit warning that too near an approach is not permitted. We acknowledge the invisible chain which binds together all classes of society, and would apply to it the electric spark of knowledge with the hand of tenderness and caution. We acknowledge the healthy union of mental and bodily exercise, and would rather see all men industrious and enlightened, than to see one half of mankind slaves to the other, and these slaves to their passions. We acknowledge that the natural world is one vast mine of wisdom, and for this reason it is the scene of the labors of man; and that in seeing this wisdom, there is philosophy, and in loving it, there is religion. Most sensibly do we feel, that as the true end of instruction is to prepare a man for some particular sphere of usefulness; that when he has found this sphere, his education has then truly commenced, and the finger of God is pointing to the very page of the book of his oracles, from which he may draw the profoundest wisdom. It was the design of Providence that there should be enough of science connected with the calling of each for the highest and holiest purposes of heaven. It is the natural world from which the philosopher draws his knowledge; it is the natural world in which the slave toils for his bread. Alas! when will they be one? When we are willing to practise what we learn, and religion makes our duty our delight. The mass of mankind must always labor; hence it is supposed that they must be always ignorant. Thus has the pride of man converted that discipline into an occasion of darkness and misery, which was intended only to give reality to knowledge, and to make happiness eternal. Truth is the way in which we should act; and then only is a man truly wise when the body performs what the mind perceives. In this way, flesh and blood are made to partake of the wisdom of the spiritual man; and the palms of our hands will become the book of our life, on which is inscribed all the love and all the wisdom which we possess. It is the light which directs a man to his duty; it is by doing his duty that he is enlightened—thus does he become identified with his own acts of usefulness, and his own vocation is the silken chord which directs to his heart the knowledge and the blessings of all mankind.

Preface to the 1838 Edition of
Observations on the Growth of the Mind with
Remarks on Some Other Subjects by Sampson
Reed



“The Growth of the Mind” has now been through two editions in this country, and one in England. It has been received with a degree of favor, though not great, yet sufficient to make me sometimes distrustful of its merit; and frequently apprehensive that its meaning was not fully understood and received. That this has sometimes been the case, I have known to be the fact.

So far as an author duly feels in whose presence he stands, it can be no source of gratification to him to attract personal admiration or praise. He must regard himself as only a medium of truth from the one only Source of truth, and the forms in which he has been permitted to present it, as useful only so far as they are suitable vessels to contain and to communicate it. Truth itself—simple—unadorned—divine—is at the present day revealed, yet noticed and loved by few. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords is standing in the midst of us; “but he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” The spiritual sense of the Sacred Scripture is opened; “yet it is despised and rejected of men.”

The present age is characterized by the love of pleasing, as opposed to the love of truth. Fashionable education, as it is often pursued, may almost be defined [as] the cultivation of the art of pleasing. This is but too frequently the end for which so much labor is bestowed, by which a wardrobe of accomplishments is provided, which may be used as occasion requires. When the disposition to please takes the first place, it is obvious that truth must be sought only as it is subservient to this object. “How can ye believe who seek honor one of another, and seek not that honor which cometh from God only.” The Love of pleasing is opposed to the love of truth, when a person desires to please others, in order that he may gain an influence over them, for the sake of promoting his own private ends or personal advantage. The love of pleasing is consistent with the love of truth, when a person

desires to please, for the sake of promoting the good of others, and the cause of truth itself.

The New Church can discern, in almost every moral or religious writer of any acknowledged merit at the present day, some out-breakings of its own power; while its principles are pressing into the natural sciences, like so many gushing fountains from an inexhaustible fountain above them. It is painful to see how little willingness there is to acknowledge the source of truth; and how often a man seems to think that it has answered its legitimate purpose, when he has bedecked his own person therewith, so as to command the admiration of the multitude.

But the time is approaching when the claims of the New Church on the public attention may not be easily set aside. There is a problem to solve, to which those who reject the claims of this Church, will find it difficult to furnish a solution; and the misrepresentations and ignorance which have often prevailed in regard to it, will, before many years, be seen to be neither consistent with good manners nor good scholarship. The writings of Swedenborg are so pure in their character and influence, that the moral sense of the community will bear testimony that there is no wilful imposture; and they are so perfect in their method and logic, that the rationality of the community will bear testimony that there is no insanity. The voice of these two witnesses cannot be silenced; and the day is approaching, when the assertion that these writings are not of sufficient importance to command the attention of the public, will not be hazarded by any one, who either is a man of intelligence or seeks to be so esteemed.

Still the natural mind is ever backward to receive revealed truth, both from the character of this truth itself, and from the fact of its being revealed—from the character of the truth, because it is opposed to the affections and principles of the natural mind, and calculated to reform and regenerate them—from the fact of its being revealed, because it leaves no place for the pride of discovery. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” The water of life is really as free as natural water; and this we all know is the common gift of Providence to man and beast. But the condition is, that we should will to receive it—that we should acknowledge it to be the water of life, and endeavor to live from it—that we should seek to be purified and regenerated by its influence. And alas! how few are disposed to comply with these conditions, and how much do these find in themselves which requires to be subdued and put away!

From these causes it is not to be expected that the truths of the spiritual sense of the Sacred Scripture, which the Lord has now revealed through his servant Emanuel Swedenborg, will find a very ready reception. Transcendentalism* will rather be caressed. This is the product of man’s own brain; and when the human

mind has been compelled to relax its grasp on sensualism, and the philosophy based on the senses, it may be expected first to take refuge here. Transcendentalism, even now, offers indications of an approaching popularity in this country. It may be something gained, when the idolater no longer literally worships the work of his own hands; even though he be in heart an idolater still, and worship the creations of his own intellect. So it may be a step forwards from sensualism to transcendentalism. It may be a necessary step in the progress of the human mind. But they still lie near each other—almost in contact. There is among insects a class called parasites. Their instinct leads them to deposit their eggs in the bodies of other insects, where, when the young is hatched, it has only to open its mouth and eat up its brother. It would seem to be in a way analogous to this, that Providence often permits one falsity to be removed by another. Transcendentalism is the parasite of sensualism; and when it shall have done its work, it will be found to be itself a worm, and the offspring of a worm.

The sacred Scripture is the only door through which we can enter into life, or receive living truths; and all who would climb up any other way are thieves and robbers. Imagining themselves spiritual, it is possible that they should be even the lowest of the sensual—for they may only give to their sensuality wings, by which it may gain an apparent elevation without any real change in its nature—superadding to its inherent properties that of monstrosity—becoming a winged serpent—the monstrous offspring of the infernal influence and a vain imagination. “On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life,” is with the serpent the law of its nature; and any attempt to transcend this law must rather debase than elevate it. If it presume to raise itself into the air, and live on the nectar of flowers, its real quality will become the more apparent and disgusting—it will only defile what can afford it no nutriment, and all the birds of heaven will instinctively shun its company. Let every one know, therefore, that his real faith in the Sacred Scripture and humble dependence upon it for life and light, are the only measure of his spirituality—that whatever seems to abound more than these, is nothing, or worse than nothing. Such “sons of the morning” may be expected in these latter times—for the morning has indeed come, and, with the beginning of a brighter day than the world has yet seen, are awakened into life forms as monstrous as those of the dark ages.

In conclusion, I would dedicate this volume to the New Church and to those who are approaching it. By the approbation of that Church I shall always be strengthened, and encouraged by the approbation of those who are not of the Church, so far as it affords indications that they are drawing near to it. I have

*By transcendentalism, I mean such transcendentalism as we now find, without any reference to its origin, or to the original meaning of the word.

been cheered by a knowlege [sic] of the fact, that in some instances, at least, this book has been instrumental in directing the feet of the reader to the "New Jerusalem, which is descending from God out of heaven."

—S. R.
Boston, February 28, 1838