

The principle which in the above observations I have endeavoured to develop, namely, that the emotions of the sublime and beautiful have their own proper objects, and that by the presentation of such to the mind, these emotions will be awakened, is one that would admit of many rich applications in its bearing on mental cultivation. Do you wish then to enjoy that intellectual treat which the domains of creation present in common to the peasant and to the philosopher?—those mild and innocent joys which the glorious forms in external nature are fitted to infuse into the spirit of man? I certainly would not have you seek assistance from the metaphysician speculating on the arcana of the mind, and attempting to discover there a standard of taste about which they have not to this day been able to agree. If books are to be used as helps at all, I would say, you should rather go to a class of writers who, without philosophizing upon the matter, are really in possession of the true philosophy—to those who have opened an unclouded eye upon creation, and described what they have seen with more or less of the eloquence of truth. I would have you peruse the writings of that class of observers who have “looked on nature with a poet’s eye”—and who may therefore be supposed apt teachers in pointing out forms and combinations which had escaped our duller organs. But a still better species of mental training than even this will be found in going to nature herself, and with organs unbedimmed by a vulgar familiarity on the one hand, or by the scepticism of philosophy on the other, peruse her bright and wondrous volume. In this way you will enjoy that rich entertainment,—may I not say those devotional feelings,—which such a pleasing exercise is fitted to call forth. This, gentlemen, is the true philosophy of our emotions; and in the language of a great English poet, it will enable you to

“Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.”