

the realities of time, his reason finds stability, satisfaction and rest, only in communion with the Eternal.

"All declare

For what the Eternal Maker, has ordained
The powers of man, we feel within ourselves
His energy divine. He tells the heart
He meant, He made us to behold and love
What he beholds and loves, the general orb
Of life and being; to be great like Him—
Beneficent and active."

Selfishness is one of the greatest impediments to personal and social improvement. Its history, coeval with the history of the world, would form one of its darkest pages; like a universal malady, it has visited all countries, and every tribe and tongue have furnished abundant professors of this vice. Under its deadly influence science languishes, arts decay, and progress is a word without meaning. Could we imagine a world peopled by intelligent beings, entirely divested of selfishness—beings purely beneficent, it would, in all that makes life desirable,—that constitutes existence a blessing—in all that is ameliorating and ennobling,—be so entirely dissimilar to our own, that to those who had mingled with the hoarding crowds which this world presents, it would be truly a Paradise.

It would not be difficult to prove that ignorance of nature and of God, and of the wants and relations of man, has been the great fosterer of this unlovely and destructive principle; and the just inference from such a premise would be,—that the enlargement of the intellect by a proper education, would have a powerful influence in extirpating this evil.

Apart from the direct influences of religion, we nowhere behold more noble instances of a lofty and self-sacrificing disinterestedness than among those who have enjoyed most extensively the benefits of a thorough intellectual training. The more knowledge which education imparts of the capacities of the mind for enjoyment, is of itself a powerful incentive to do good. The question will naturally arise in the reflective mind, Why were these capacities given? Why so universally imparted? We find them in all grades of society—the beggar—the outcast—the profane and vulgar are undoubtedly as susceptible of enjoyment—refined and exalted enjoyment—as the rough marble in the quarry is capable of the exquisite polish which glistens in the sunlight on the finished statue. Why is the material world, the earthly dwelling place of man, so "richly coloured with the hues of all glorious things?" Why the adaptation of external nature to the being who makes his temporary residence here? Why is the eye pleased with the cheerful and ever varying colours of the terrestrial landscape! the ear thrilled with the music echoing from a thousand strings! the olfactory nerve regaled with the fragrance borne on the evening breeze! These and many other such questions force themselves upon the opening mind of the student, and it were presuming on a moral impossibility, that an educated man could find himself a stoic, or be indifferent to the claims of others, amid such affecting displays of infinite goodness.

The man who finds himself placed amid such scenes, invested with such attributes, and furnished with such instrumentalities as a liberal education supply, may well ask, "who is sufficient for these things?" Yet a vigorous and courageous mind will not shrink from the work. All may not be public benefactors, but each, in his sphere of duty, may and should be, a centre of intelligence and usefulness. The aggregate of human happiness is made up, not so much of great deeds of philanthropy, as by the perennial acts of social life.

"It is a little thing

To give a cup of water, yet its draught
Of cool refreshment, drained by fevered lips,
May send a shock of pleasure to the soul,
More exquisite than when nectarious juice
Renews the life of joy in happiest hours."

Man is formed for society; or in the language of philosophy he is a social being. This law of our nature is founded upon our mutual dependence, and thus the well-being of society is promoted in proportion as the obligations and duties of this law are observed. Amid savage tribes, the safety of the horde subsists in the acknowledgement of this principle; and the motto of a more enlightened age is found equally applicable to all stages of civilization, "United we stand, divided we fall." Nor is the happiness of man less dependent upon the social state, consequently a due recognition of its obligations becomes an imperative duty. The educated man who launches forth into life merely to advance his own interests, to push his own claims, and to gratify his own selfishness, is but little more than a polished savage; and did all society act upon the same principle, every man's hand would be turned against his brother.

'The glory of a heathen State was, that Sparta was one family.' The present generation should be very jealous, lest the fraternal and social

habits of a remote and comparatively rude republic, rebuke our selfish indifference. The most cursory observer beholds sufficient around him to arouse his pity; ignorance throws its heavy pall over the large majority, and its attendant miseries are experienced to an extent sufficient to draw out the sympathies of those who have the means of relieving them. The artisan plods in the dark for want of the light an educated man could easily supply. The mechanic blunders over his clumsy work unable to discover his own errors. The husbandman, ignorant of the wondrous forces which surround him, and the elements of productivity with which the air and the earth term, which wait only the bid of enlightened culture to make the meadows bloom and the air redolent—for the want of a little knowledge, is not unfrequently found opposing nature.

Is there not reason to believe that were scientific knowledge universally diffused among the working classes, every department of the useful arts would proceed with a rapid progress to perfection, and new arts, and inventions hitherto unknown, would be introduced to increase the enjoyments of domestic society, and to embellish the face of nature. Almost every new discovery in nature lays the foundation of a new art; it is by seizing on these discoveries, and employing them in subserviency to his designs, that steam, galvanism, the atmospheric pressure, oxygen, hydrogen and other natural agents, formerly unnoticed or unknown, have enabled man to perform achievements, which the whole united force of mere animal strength could never have accomplished. And who shall dare to set boundaries to the range of scientific discoveries or to say that principles and powers of a still more wonderful and energetic nature shall not be discovered in the natural world calculated to perform achievements still more striking and magnificent. Much has of late been performed by the application of the combined mechanical and chemical powers, but much more we may confidently expect will be accomplished in generations yet to come, when the physical universe shall be more extensively explored, and the gates of the temple of knowledge thrown open to all. Future Watt's, Davy's, Arkwright's, and Ericson's will doubtless arise, with minds still more brilliantly illumined by science, and the splendid inventions of the present age be far surpassed in the future miracles of mechanic power. But in order to this wished for consummation it is requisite that the mass of mankind be aroused from their slumbers, that knowledge be universally diffused, and the light of education shed its influence on men of every nation, profession and rank. But if through apathy or avarice, or indulgence in sensual propensities, we refuse to lend our helping hand to this object, society may yet relapse into the darkness which enveloped the human mind during the middle ages, and the noble inventions of the past and present age, like the stately monuments of Grecian and Roman art, be lost amid the mists of ignorance, or blended with the ruins of Empires.

Another source of obligation arises from our indebtedness to our parents and benefactors. "All," says Horace Mann, "have derived benefits from their ancestors, and all are bound, as by an oath, to transmit those benefits even in an improved condition, to posterity. We may as well attempt to escape from our own personal identity, as to shake off the three-fold relation we bear to others. The relation of an associate with our contemporaries; of a beneficiary of our ancestors; and of a guardian of those who in the order of providence are to succeed us." That exact teacher of ethics, Wayland, says—"As we ourselves owe our intellectual happiness to the benevolence, either near or remote, of others, it would seem that an obligation was imposed upon us to manifest our gratitude by extending the blessings which we enjoy to those who are destitute of them. We frequently cannot requite our actual benefactors, but we may always benefit others, less happy than ourselves; and thus, in a more valuable manner promote the welfare of the whole race to which we belong."

Institutions of learning have been erected and furnished at considerable expense and sacrifice; the munificence of individuals in some cases, and in others the gifts and offerings of the many, have furnished succeeding generations with the means of obtaining a liberal education. In many instances great sacrifices have been made to establish seminaries or schools, the want of which these worthy persons have themselves deplored. Many a youth is maintained during his Academic or Collegiate course, by means carefully hoarded from a small income. While the son is sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, the mother plies the busy wheel, and the sister dutifully performs the office of housemaid, to husband the necessary expenses of his education. Would it, we ask, be consistent in us to reap the benefit of their sacrifices and labours without endeavouring to render back to society the debt of gratitude we owe to the memory and acts of our benevolent forefathers. If a rising colony perpetuates the memory of its founders by monuments and pillars, surely the educated of our own day, animated by a purer and nobler gratitude, should, by lives of usefulness, honour the memory and benevolence of their predecessors.

Some of you are probably entering the arena of active life. In a short time you will act for yourselves, your own judgment may possibly be to