

hand--and in all respects as innocent in regard to practical efficacy as a theory on dreaming—I am willing to admit that there is really some ground for that aversion which not a few cherish to discussions of a metaphysical kind, and which have led to an undue depreciation of their importance. This is the unsatisfactory nature of the conclusions to which metaphysicians have come in their discussions, and originating, as I apprehend, from a desire of being esteemed philosophical, when their highest ambition should have been to be wise.

There are few subjects on which a greater amount of logomachy has been manifested than on this which I have chosen as the subject of Lecture—namely, the Emotions of the Sublime and Beautiful. It has been discussed with not a little of the keenness of partizanship, being intimately connected with the question, whether there is a standard of taste—a question which the literary men of a certain school imagine to be of peculiar importance in upholding their influence. Now, that there is such a power in the human mind, is manifest from the appeals we constantly hear made to it—what do you think of this poem, of this painting, of this scene, of this description, or the like? First of all then, I commence by observing, that man is not purely an intellectual or reasoning being: I mean, he is not a being whose single faculty is engaged in tracing out the connection between causes and their consequences.—We have indeed heard of men who approximated to such a character. We have heard of men who kept themselves in seclusion from the joys of life, and whose single object was the solution of difficult problems in mathematics or in science, and who looked with contempt on every occupation except their own. Men of this sort approximate to the mental character which we have referred to—that is, of beings who have no sympathy with aught save abstract truth—and yet, even in their case, nature vindicates her supremacy—for what is the motive which keeps such persons in a course of such self-denying labors. The mole may mine its way in the earth, with no other motive than to find food, but man possesses a more exalted nature; and even in those cases in which the prosecution of the abstract sciences seems as if it had such potency over the spirit of man, that the development of abstract truth seems to be his undivided aim—there is a current of feeling too deep and strong to remain unobserved. Has the mathematician, I might ask, no emotion when he has reached the goal of his laborious efforts, and solved some theorem over which he had wasted the midnight-oil apparently in vain? Has he no emotion when he has elaborated his way through the mazes of a demonstration which had puzzled the intellects of men of less acumen than his? Could we penetrate the recesses of his bosom, we should see it was far otherwise, and that there was a joy that sprung up