



"JUSTUM, ET TENACEM PROPOSITI VIRUM, NON CIVIUM ARDOR PRAVA JUBENTILM, NON VULTUS INSTANTIS TYRANNI DILITE QUATIT SOLIDA."

VOLUME I. PICTOU, N. S. WEDNESDAY MORNING, DEC'R 2, 1835. NUMBER XXVIII.

THE BEE

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THOMAS RAE.

Sept. 30, 1835. cm-w

LITERARY NOTICE.

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September 15, 1835.

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ROBERT BROWN,

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THOMAS KERR, }
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4th November, 1835. ca-m

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ON THE MORAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF MAN.

It is essential to the development of the energies of that intellectual principle which is within us, that an intercourse be established between it and the material existences without.

The immaterial and undying soul is, in this our present state, so wrought around and entrained by its material appendages, as to be incapable of any availing exercise of its powers, until they have first been schooled and disciplined by that intercourse. Without it, reason there could be none, where there would be no data; memory none, where nothing had been perceived; imagination none, where there was no reality. Man, endued with all the attributes of humanity, could possess none of its energies. His form might combine all the elements of power and beauty: the blood of life might flow through it; the soul might hold in it her accustomed seat; and the senses, his ministers, might be disposed around, ready to do her bidding; but were there no external objects whereon to occupy those senses, or were the sentient principle careless or unable to avail herself of their ministry, the whole would present the emblem of a death-like repose, of a perpetual or dreamless sleep.

For the carrying on of this intercourse, man is provided, in the organs of sense, with means of boundless application, and of most exquisite contrivance.

The Hand, for instance, is capable of moving accurately to any point, of varying the quantity and direction of its motion and pressure in every conceivable way, and, by habit, it may be made to measure, and to take note of this power and direction with inconceivable minuteness. The manual skill acquired by painters, sculptors, and operative mechanics, is no other than the application of a knowledge of the effects of different, and of exceedingly minute, developments of force, accurately measured, both as to their quantity and direction, in the mechanism of the hand, and treasured, with these results, in the memory. It is beyond the power of imagination to conceive the variety and complexity of its operations. Writing is one of the simplest of them, and yet, in the formation of every written character, there takes place a certain minute development of force, varying in quantity and direction, which is accurately poised in the hand as to its quantity, measured as to its direction, and remembered, and may be re-formed again, the same, even without the assistance of the sight.

The hand serves further as a probe, to measure the degrees of the hardness or softness of bodies, and the smoothness of their surfaces; as a balance, to compare weight; as a thermometer, to estimate their temperature.

The Ear estimates for us the motions of the minute atoms of that form of matter (the air,) which is among the most subtle; regular vibrations of the atmosphere, when made with different velocities, producing distinct sounds. And, similarly, the Eye notes the motions of the still more minute particles of light, indicating their different relations in the varieties of colour.

How exquisite must be the mechanism which enables us thus to measure the force of impulses of whose existence the lightest body we can conceive,

however delicately suspended, will, when opposed to them, give no perceptible evidence; impulses of atoms so minute, as to be comparably less than the smallest portion of matter, whose distinct existence we have ever been able to recognise.

Exquisitely wrought as are the senses of hearing and sight, who will assert that any superfluous contrivance has been bestowed on their construction.

Were it not for the perfect sympathy thus established between our organs of sensation, and those subtle fluids of air and light, which pervade the space in which we exist, all that we see, having distinctness and form, and all that we hear of modulated sound, would have been lost to us. There might, with less of contrivance in the eye, have been the perception of light, but there could have been none of those exquisite varieties of shade and colour, which enables us to appreciate the objects we look upon; and so, with a less delicate mechanism of the ear, there might have been hearing, but all distinction of the rapid and evanescent varieties in articulate sound, would have been impossible, and there could have been no perception of measured harmony.

Not only has man the means for carrying on the intercourse thus essential to all that constitutes his active existence, but he is irresistibly impelled to the use of those means, and to the establishment of that intercourse; for, the circumstances in which man is placed, impel him, of necessity, to acquire the knowledge which he has thus the means of acquiring.

He is so constituted as never to be capable of deriving entire satisfaction from any thing which he may obtain. Not only is he gifted with senses enabling him to distinguish the minutest differences of external things, but each of the perceptions which he thus obtains is coupled with an emotion equally delicate and varied, of pleasure or pain. Thus exquisitely sensitive, he finds himself urged perpetually by wants which nothing in the world he inhabits offers itself to gratify, liable to calamities which nothing, of itself, offers to screen him from; and he is never without the hope of some enjoyment or the terror of some suffering.

This apparent destitution of man is the great element of his intellectual and physical superiority; inasmuch as it forces him to the acquisition of that knowledge in which he finds the secret of supplying his wants.

Nature has so ministered to the comforts of inferior animals, as to limit the wants they are themselves called upon to supply, to a definite and an exceedingly small number; and limited as these wants, are their means of perceiving the qualities of the external things which are necessary for their gratification.

Man is a creature of boundless desires and wants, and he is thus intellectually and physically great, because his desires and his wants are thus boundless.

Urged on in a perpetual round of new sensations, every one of which is more or less permanently registered by the memory, and rendered an element of knowledge; he may be called emphatically, as distinguished from all others, a learning animal.

Had he possessed no other distinctive qualification than that of organs infinitely better suited than those of any other class of animals, to convey to his mind distinct perceptions of the material world in all its