

"JUSTITIA, ET TENACEM PROPOSITI VIRUM, NON CIVIUM ARDOR PRAVA JUVENTUM, NON VULTUS INSTANTIS TYRANNI MENTE QUATIT SOLIDA."

VOLUME I.

PICTOU, N. S. WEDNESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 6, 1835.

NUMBER XXXIII.

### THE BEE

IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING,  
BY JAMES DAWSON,

And delivered in Town at the low price of 12s. 6d. per annum, if paid in advance, but 15s. if paid at the end of the year;—payments made within three months after receiving the first Paper considered in advance; whenever Papers have to be transmitted through the Post Office, 2s. 6d. additional will be charged for postage.


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
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ALSO:

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December 12

b-w.

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Arisaig, 23d Nov., 1835.

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[December 30.

### THE SOCIAL AFFECTIONS.

[An Essay delivered before the Literary Society of this place, on the 16th inst. by G. A. BLANCHARD.]  
CONCLUDED.

Some ethical writers both in ancient and modern days, have endeavoured to reduce the principle of action to one unconnected source: and, contrary to the established fact that there is no creative power in nature that does not emanate immediately from its author, have attributed to Education the production of principles which did not originally exist in the mind. Those who have maintained the universal predominancy of self-love or a rational regard for ourselves, have endeavoured to trace all our benevolent acts to this origin; though Benevolence and self-love are as different in their exhibitions, as the various colours of the Rainbow.

If we wish to understand the true nature of the active powers we must carefully attend to the effects of their operations.

Cause and effect are so intimately connected that the one cannot exist without the other; and, in the phenomena of mind as well as the phenomena of nature, every distinguishing feature should be noted, and the inquiry made, is it sufficient to warrant a separate classification.—With this principle of philosophizing in view, and unbiased by preconceived notions, we may proceed in our investigations with much less liability to error.

So far from Benevolence being resolvable into a rational regard for ourselves, our different species of affections, cannot be resolved into any single principle; and this is the reason why men guided by different passions, exhibit such diversity of conduct. Can the opposite influences of Love and Revenge—the one, with its fascinating tenderness—the other, with its ungovernable and savage fury, be considered to originate in the same cause? Certainly, with no more propriety, than any other opposite effects.

The world is inhabited by nearly nine hundred millions of human Beings, and perhaps no two possess similar dispositions. Many are directed by the same pervading principle, but so modified in each individual, by the exercise of other faculties, that the distinction is too perceptible to be mistaken. Some madly follow the dictates of morbid ambition—others devote their talents and energies to the public good—a third class exhausts the resources of its ingenuity, in self-gratification—but every man possesses a peculiarity which makes his disposition appear like an isolated thing.—

"It stands alone like Adam's recollection of the fall."

For this peculiarity we may rationally account by considering the counteracting influence of other active principles, and this is impossible on the supposition that all our actions originate in self regard.

The author of our existence is a Being of unbounded benevolence. He, therefore, so constituted the human mind that, under proper management, all its faculties are naturally conducive to happiness. But the active powers, like the tributary streams of the ocean, are only different means to the same end. If happiness were always anticipated at the period of our volitions—if we always performed acts of benevolence, because we foresaw their ultimate tendency to

our advantage—if, in truth, society were made for the benefit of individuals, and not individuals for the benefit of society, there might be more than plausibility in the doctrine, that all our actions originate in a rational regard for ourselves. But the child, as we have already observed, possesses an instinctive love to its parent, before reason begins to operate; and some of our affections even transgress rational limits. Their sudden and instantaneous exhibition is unconnected with deliberate reflection; and it is evident that they are intended for those emergencies, when the slow and cool deductions of reason, in reference to our good on the whole, would be anticipated by their operation. If the advocates of a simple system of Ethics, admit, that our appetites and desires are original parts of our constitution, (and no one can doubt their ultimate subserviency to our happiness) we may easily, from analogy, conclude that the benevolent affections are natural to man, and promote a purpose no less important in the economy of nature. But the distinction between self-regard and Benevolence is still more apparent, when we consider the objects of their exercise. The one is partially intended for the good of the individual—the other, for the benefit of society; and for the promotion of these different purposes, each in its proper sphere operates. Our own interest may be connected with that of society, but they are certainly different objects, and require the exercise of different principles. It is also worthy of notice that, from an overweening regard to personal happiness, our conduct may acquire the character of selfish; and, stigmatized by sordid avarice and low sensuality, it does not afford even a shadow of resemblance to the philanthropic spirit of benevolent affection.

In receiving a gift from another, none but the abject mind, can contemplate with as much complacency, its innate value as the kindness of the individual by whom it was bestowed. In the intention we perceive a nobility of feeling, that hallows the gift, and makes it a treasure with which we would not part, for treble its inherent value. The slightest parting token of affection—a word—a nod—a look is remembered with satisfaction, after our friends have left us, because we appreciate those feelings in others, of whose operation we are conscious in our own bosom. The story of Damon and Pythias, stands enrolled in the annals of history, as a model of pure disinterested friendship, at which the degenerate devotee of selfish gratification, might blush to look, if every spark of modesty were not extinguished in his constitution. Indeed, benevolence and self-love, like the contripital and centrifugal forces, impel in different directions; but both are necessary for the harmony of the moral system.

In the inferior creatures there is no rational principle of action. Among gregarious animals, various benevolent affections are displayed,

"Beasts of each kind their fellows spare,

"Bear lives in amity with bear"

But even solitary animals exhibit, in a striking light, particular species of benevolence. The savage lioness, more than the timid doe, displays maternal fondness for her young. She protects them with care and tenderness, and exposes her life in their defence. Her glaring eyeballs mark the approaching foe; and, though weakened by repeated attacks, she still perseveres, like the wounded patriot, creeping toward the