

The Human Mind.

In the unceasing activity of the human mind we have a promise of immortality. To the mind's achievements there is no limit.

"Were man to live coeval with the sun,
The patriarch's pupil would be learning still,
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearned."

The imagination sweeps the circle of the Universe, increasing its knowledge at every flight. The far distant star of the celestial heavens is not beyond the sphere of its contemplation. By its genius earth's treasures are utilized for human happiness, and the invisible forces of nature are appropriated for the convenience of the race. It looks out upon nature and asks, whence came those visible Heavens, and it makes inquiry respecting the foundations of the earth. Mind takes knowledge of its own operations, and judges of a relation it sustains to a power greater than itself. It has its morning, but no twilight shadow will ever dim its undying lustre. Its beginning is the dawn of an eternal day.

Every mental advance is but to add new radiance to its native splendor. Step by step and link by link, it moves onward and upward from premise to remote conclusion, until it soars above the stars. It has named every plant and shrub and flower, "from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop upon the wall." It has made itself familiar with the structure, habits, and abode of each, whether in the valley or on the mountain top. Mind has mastered the peculiarities of every rock and gem and mineral and fossil in all the earth. The mind delights to revel among the chief things of the ancient mountains and the precious things of the everlasting hills.

With what mathematical accuracy will an astronomer determine the return of an eclipse for a thousand years to come. How wonderful a nature that is capable of such feats of activity. It acts with the speed of lightning, though it outstrip the sunbeam in the race, its form shall cast no shadow as it passes, nor jostle a dew drop from the morning flower. Spurning the dull tediousness of inert matter, it acts like something celestial, thus proclaiming both its title to and fitness for an immortal existence.

The very capacity of the human mind for endless improvement is a pledge that it will not be crushed in the high morn of its aspirations. Upon this point, says Cicero, "The wonderful activity of the mind, so great a memory of what is past, and such a capacity

of penetrating into the future--when I behold the number of the arts and sciences, and such a multitude of discoveries thence arising, I believe and am firmly persuaded, that a nature which contains so many things in itself cannot be mortal." The illimitable nature of the mind for improvement was but a natural argument for immortality for a heathen philosopher. If this so impressed his mind in the infancy of the arts and sciences, what should it do now, when the achievements of the human mind are increased a hundred fold?

A future life can alone satisfy the conditions and capacity of our mental being. The immortal Newton says, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lies undiscovered before me."

The mind is not limited in capacity, but in time. And will these latent powers slumber unimproved forever; will they not, beneath a brighter sun and in a nobler soil, unfold their immortal beauty? Are not the tiny, unspread wings of the chrysalis a pledge of its destination, to flit from field to field, like a winged flower with brilliant and delicate pinions, to flutter in the sunshine, and sip the nectar from the summer blossom? And shall not the conditions and capacities of our mental being be satisfied?

The idea of immortality seems to be the highest and noblest thought of any age or any people. It comes up in all poetry, in all mythology, and in all history of antiquity. It is enwrapped as an element in nearly every philosophy. It is the deepest and most universal sentiment of humanity. Does the human mind grow weary in contemplating the briefest outline of its achievements? With the universe for our text book, and an eternity for our school days, well may an apostle declare, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

How swift thought travels. Lo, the cannon's flash,
The swift winged lightnings, and the whirlwind's dash,
Much slower move. Harse thunder's leaping sound,
Hurled orbs careering through the void profound,
And time, swift charioteer, all fly behind.
The speed of thought! Sunlight, our servant kind,
Along the extended way each minute flies
Twelve million miles to greet our waiting eyes;
Yet swifter thought. Yes, this winged power of soul
Can travel round the globe, call at each pole,
Visit the moon, the portal of the sun,
Thence step from world to world, through systems run,