

son, by Charlotte de Montmorenci, had not, in after years, transcended his own.

History has, with her usual partiality, passed lightly over this dark spot in the character of the gay, the gallant, the chivalric Henri Quatre, without bestowing a single comment on the lofty spirit of honourable independence that characterised the conduct of his youthful kinsman on this trying occasion; and has left wholly unnoticed the virtue and conjugal heroism of the high-born beauty, who nobly preferred sharing the poverty and exile of her husband to all the pomp and distinctions that were in the gift of a royal lover.

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

LECTURE ON THE HUMAN EYE.

By Thomas Taylor.

CHAPTER I.

He that formed the eye, shall he not see?—PSALM xciii. 9.

The anatomy and physiology of the human eye, constitute one of the most interesting branches of natural science. There is a fascination in the study rivalling the most enchanting scenes of fiction and romance. As an ornament to the countenance of man, it is so exquisitely beautiful—as an organ of the noblest of the senses, it is so inexpressibly useful—and as a piece of complicated mechanism, it is so consummately perfect—that the human eye is eminently entitled to the attention of all persons of every station and degree.

Does beauty attract us? Does the bright attire in which the rose and the daisy, the violet and the lily are arrayed, win our notice and regard? Does the feathered race, in so many of which are combined elegance of shape and brilliancy of plumage, command our attention and love? Do the insect tribes, those "favorite productions of nature, and to which she has given the most delicate touch and highest finish of her pencil," excite our endless admiration? Does the lovely spring with her green tapestry and her expanding buds, her refreshing odours, and her cloudless skies, exhilarate our spirits, and call forth the expression of grateful adoration? And shall we fail to number among the infinite beauties of nature, that most beautiful of all beautiful objects, the human eye. The clearness of water, the transparency of glass, and the lustre of precious stones delight us; and shall we refuse to be charmed with the humours of the eye, more pellucid than crystal, and infinitely surpassing in brightness the most polished mirror? The various families of plants so rich with colours, "dipped in heaven," render us unmixed delight, and shall the beautiful colours of the eye which our Creator has selected to adorn the human face divine, the sweetness and delicacy of the blue, or the fire and vivacity of the black, yield us no pleasure and satisfaction? Take the various qualities which entitle an object to be ranked among the beautiful, according to the theory of that impartial writer of the English language, Edmund Burke, and observe how all these qualities unite in a single eye. An object to be beautiful must be comparatively small, and what is the eye but a resplendent little globe, peering from beneath the folded drapery of the soft and pliant eye-lid. It must be smooth, and is not the surface of the eye free from all asperity? does not the finger glide evenly over it without the least obstruction? and does not the beautiful curtain, the iris, present a smooth and velvet-like appearance. It must be delicate, and surely if extreme delicacy has its chief residence in one object more than all others, it is in the human eye. But enough; on this subject let the old English poet Spenser teach us, in the quaint and homely style of our forefathers,

Long while I sought to what I might compare
Those powerful eyes, which lighten my dark spirits;
Yet found I nought on earth, to which I dare
Resemble the image of their goodly light.
Not to the sun, for they do shine by night;
Nor to the moon, for they are changed never;
Nor to the stars, for they have purer sight;
Nor to the fire, for they consume not over;
Nor to the lightning, for they still preserve;
Nor to the diamond, for they are more tender;
Nor unto crystal for nought may them sever;
Nor unto glass, such baseness might offend her.
Then to thy Maker's self they must be;
Whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

And certain it is, if our hearts are really susceptible of the charms of beauty, the organ of vision will not be a despised, neglected object.

To the prosecution of this interesting enquiry, we are farther invited by the great utility of the sense of sight. "If we shall suppose an order of beings"—we see the striking illustration of Dr. Reid—"endued with every human faculty but that of sight, how incredible it would appear to such beings, accustomed only to the slow information of touch, that, by the addition of an organ, consisting of a ball and socket of an inch diameter, they might be enabled, in an instant of time, without changing their place, to perceive the disposition of a whole army, or the order of a battle, the figure of a magnificent palace, or all the variety of a landscape? If a man were by feeling to find out the figure of the Peak of Teneriffe, or even of St. Peter's church at Rome, it would be the work of a lifetime."

"It would appear still more incredible to such beings as we

have supposed, if they were informed of the discoveries which may be made by this little organ in things far beyond the reach of any other sense: that by means of it we can find our way in the pathless ocean; that we can traverse the globe of the earth, determine its figure and dimensions, and delineate every region of it: yea, that we can measure the planetary orbs and make discoveries in the region of the fixed stars."

And simple as sight is, of what instruction and joy and beauty and ever-varying magnificence is it the source. Deprived of it, and the light which glows in the ruby, sparkles in the diamond, and flames from the sun, would be unproductive of pleasure to man. For him nature would put on her beauteous garb in vain—and the sweet moon with her silver radiance, and the myriads of golden orbs which deck the sable robe of night, would prove useless to him—and all the wonders which crowd the miniature worlds of animated existence in every drop of water, would exist unknown to him. The morning and the evening would be alike to him, and the revolving seasons would succeed each other, without ministering to his instruction by the variety of beautiful objects they exhibit. Almost to any extent we might expatiate on the unspeakable advantages of vision, and yet the half would not be told. To receive so great a part of the happiness of our present existence from the sense of sight, and not to reflect on its noble organ, is, undoubtedly, to evince a thankless heart to the giver of every good and perfect gift."

Independent, however, of the beauty and utility of the eye, in its mechanism it displays such perfect ingenuity of construction, such exquisite nicety of workmanship, and such completeness of adaptation to the purposes of vision, that viewed simply as a refined optical instrument, it eminently merits our attention and regard. Almost from time immemorial it has been the subject of glowing eulogy and profound admiration. A scientific examination of the structure of the eye, produced in the mind of that eminent ancient physician Galen, the conviction that there was a God. Socrates expatiated on its wonderful mechanism, and the princely pen of Cicero was employed in unfolding the various complicated parts of this astonishing contrivance. And among the moderns, we need hardly remark, that no single object in nature has elicited so much panegyric. Take a few testimonies in proof. Says the distinguished Euler, "we discover in the structure of the eye perfections which the most exalted genius could never have imagined—it infinitely surpasses every piece of mechanism which human skill is capable of producing." Says Dr. Thomas Brown, "the eye is a machine of such exquisite and obvious adaptation to the effects produced by it, as to be, of itself, in demonstrating the existence of the Divine Being who contrived it, equal in force to many volumes of theology. The atheist who has seen and studied its internal structure, and yet continues an atheist, may be fairly considered as beyond the power of mere argument to reclaim." Says Dr. Reid, "the structure of the eye and all its appurtenances, clearly demonstrate this organ to be a masterpiece of Nature's work." The celebrated Dr. Brewster remarks that, "while the human eye has been admired by ordinary observers for the beauty of its form, the power of its movements, and the variety of its expression, it has excited the wonder of philosophers by the exquisite mechanism of its interior, and its singular adaptation to the variety of purposes which it has to serve." Dr. Arnott, with that spirit of enthusiasm which breathes in all his writings, observes, that "the human eye in its simplicity is so perfect, so unspeakably perfect, that the searchers after tangible evidences of the existence of an all-wise and good Creator, have declared their willingness to be limited to it alone, in the midst of millions, as their one triumphant proof." And Dr. Roget, in his most excellent treatise on Animal and Vegetable Physiology, pronounces that, "on none of the works of the Creator which we are permitted to behold, have the characters of intention been more deeply and legibly engraved, than in the organ of vision, for the most profound scientific investigations of the anatomy of the eye concur in showing, that the whole of its structure and all its parts, are finished with that mathematical exactness which the precision of the effect requires, and which no human effort can ever hope to approach—far less to attain." These, be it remembered, are the clear, philosophical conclusions of a few of the great lights of the scientific world, and we have introduced them to excite an intense interest on this most interesting subject, and to work up the mind to that pitch of ardent enthusiasm which should be felt by all, engaged in so delightful a study. But if these fail in enlisting all our awakened energies in this pursuit, we have left one other resource. How perfect is the knowledge of God! how infinite his understanding! how inconceivable the exercises of the attribute of his omniscience! And yet in the inspired volume, the proof of this attribute is brought, not so much from the ponderous orbs of the universe, guided in their motions by an omnipotent arm, but the proof is triumphantly adduced from the minute ball of the eye, gracefully rolling in its socket, and taking full cognizance of all the rich and varied beauties of an extended landscape. Says the royal monarch of Israel, "He that formed the eye, shall he not see." Concede that God possesses all the wisdom necessary to invent and perfect so curious and accurate an instrument as the eye, and you must concede that he has unbounded intelligence, for so perfectly conclusive is the reasoning,

that a man must admit its soundness, or take refuge in the gloom and misery of atheism. In the formation of the human eye, then, we have a constant demonstration that the Lord is a God of knowledge. This simple consideration will, I trust, inspire us with a quenchless ardour, in the acquirement of just and enlarged views, of the mechanism and vital endowments of so admirable an organ as the human eye.

ANIMATED EXISTENCE.—"One thousand millions of human beings are conjectured to exist upon this revolving planet. But who can number the quadrupeds and birds, the fishes that pass along the great waters, and the insect population that inhabit every leaf and opening flower. Examine a map of the world. There are the Rhiphan hills, and Caucasus, and the magnificent sweep of the Andes. There are the Cordilleras, and the high hills of Tartary and China. Yonder are the snow-clad mountains of the frozen regions, and beneath them rolls the Arctic sea. Lower down is Iceland, the cultivated fields of Britain, civilized Europe, and burning Africa, the vast continent of America, stretching from north to south, the smiling plains of Mexico, Peru, and Chili, turbaned India, and all the glory and luxuriance of the east. Look again, but with the mental eye, for the visual organ can no longer follow it; dissimilar races of men are conspicuous in various portions of the globe. One part is crowded with fair men, in another are seen clear olive faces, in another, black. Some are swarthy, others of pale complexions. Their languages are various, and their modes of thinking widely different. Each continent, and every large island, has also its own peculiar kind of quadrupeds, and birds, and insects. The lordly lion, the boar, the antelope, the wild bison, the tusked elephant, the reindeer, the wolf, the bear, and arctic fox, have all their boundaries assigned them. The air is filled with a winged population. The lakes and ponds, every sea and river, is stocked with fish and animated beings, of strange forms and aspects. Myriads of insects, and creeping things innumerable, are seen walking in the green savannah to their forests of interminable length, and among the branched moss that clothes the roots and branches of high trees. And more than even these, every leaf that quivers in the sun-beam, and every flower that drinks the dew of heaven, is in itself a world of animated life.

"Over the mighty whole watches One who never slumbers, and whose ear is ever open to the prayers of his children. He is our Father: his eye is perpetually upon us; the darkness of the night cannot hide from him, he spieth out all our ways. He will not overlook us in the thronged city; nor need we fear to be forgotten in the most solitary place."

LYRICAL POETRY OF GREECE.—"The peculiar character of the Greek lyrical poetry can only be understood by remembering its inseparable connexion with music: and the general application of both, not only to religious, but political purposes. The Dorian states regarded the lyre and the song as powerful instruments upon the education, the manners, and the national character of their citizens. With them these acts were watched and regulated by the law, and the poet acquired something of the social rank, and aimed at much of the moral design of a statesman and a legislator; while, in the Ionian states, the wonderful stir and agitation, the changes and experiments in government, the rapid growth in luxury, commerce, and civilisation, afforded to a poetry, which was not, as with us, considered a detached, unsocial, and solitary art, but which was associated with every event of actual life—occasions of vast variety—themes of universal animation. The eloquence of poetry will always be more exciting in its appeals—the love for poetry always more diffused throughout a people in proportion as it is less written than recited. How few even at this day will read a poem!—what crowds will listen to a song! Recitation transfers the stage of effect from the closet to the multitude—the public becomes an audience, the poet an orator; and when we remember that the poetry thus created, embodying the most vivid, popular, animated subjects of interest, was united with all the pomp of festival and show—all the grandest, the most elaborate, and artificial effects of music—we may understand why the true genius of lyrical composition has passed for ever away from the modern world."—*Bulwer's Athens.*

ENGLAND.

England! my native land, O loved the most!
Not for thy wealth, that could not make thee great;
Nor power, though now a thousand years elate,
Walled round by love with valour's peerless host;
But that thou art of every land the boast
For glorious charters of an ancient date,
Through which from time to time regenerate,
Thou shed'st new light on every distant coast.
Whence had America the soul she prizes,
But from thine institutions framed of old?
And if in her more bright our phoenix rises,
If from her ore more pure flows freedom's gold,
We hail the light that cheers and that surprises,
England, thy first-born, beautiful and bold!

RICHARD HOWARD.