

human intellect as a divinely emanated essence. The mere knowledge of unexplained facts is by no means calculated to satisfy a thinking soul which grasps eagerly every form of truth and beauty, the possession of which may assimilate it to the Great Ideal. These God-evolved aspirations for a closer relationship and a more perfect knowledge of himself were never planted in the human soul without corresponding means being provided, whereby they might, in a measure, be gratified. Into all the works of his hand, the Creator has entered largely, and to man He has given the power of extracting from everything around him already existing truths, but has reserved exclusively for himself the grand prerogative creation. So, as far as it is compatible with His will and as far as the finite mind is capable of conception, man finds open to him various sources of knowledge. In the accumulation of this soul-wealth he is not a mere passive recipient, but an active agent.

The senses are the principal channels through which a knowledge of external things is communicated, and by the working of the finer powers within all information thus obtained may be improved and expanded. Hence it follows that observation is a prime source of knowledge. Facts acquired by careful observation form the foundation on which the mind builds a more subtle structure by the process of reasoning. The construction is like the chiseling of a statue, the intellect working as the sculptor on the rough material thus presented, bringing out in full relief by its fine and powerful strokes the perfect form hidden in the hitherto unwieldy mass. So that neither the senses nor the mind can work independent of each other. Take as illustration the case in which a person, from birth deprived of the senses of sight and hearing afterwards becomes possessed of them. We find that his knowledge of the external world is very crude and imperfect, and his ideas of right and wrong not less so. On the other hand where the senses are perfect, but the intellect clouded, no outward circumstances can yield when not subjected to the order and classification of an active and well disciplined mind. It becomes therefore a part of man's duty to exercise each separate function of the mind and render profitable all acquisitions by storing them

in a mind whose retention will guard its treasures with fidelity.

In pursuit of education we are apt to give an undue prominence to books, and thus depend too much on others and neglect our own resources. Not that their worth is to be ignored by any means. We are, without doubt, deeply indebted to the literature of the present and of past ages, still, books are not creative powers in any sense, but merely helps, instruments superadded to those with which the wise pre-vision of nature has equipped us. The writer of the first book, not inspired, had to depend on his own observation and experience for material, so we see they do not furnish an original fountain of information. But to an earnest thinker who works upon a solid basis they are valuable helps. Taken otherwise, their mission is short lived, affording only such pleasure as is drawn from them at the time of perusal.

Bacon says of studies, they perfect nature and are perfected by experience, for they teach not their own use but that there is a wisdom without and above them won by observation. Histories, he says, make men wise, poets witty, mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend. But they must have a reliable foundation on which to establish their wisdom, subtlety and gravity, capacity for deep soundings, and a disciplined mind from which to draw a line of argument. When he used the term man he did not mean a mere moving machine who accepts as natural sequences all conclusions presented to him, but a rational and responsible being holding deep converse with the works of the universe.

Another means of entering into the region of life's possibilities is through the power of intuition—the quick moteless eye of the soul—which recognizes immediately the divine fitness of things. Knowledge thus obtained, acting on that already possessed, is the origin of the laws which govern the moral nature, and which, if observed, educate and invigorate the faculties and capacitate us for receiving and understanding loftier truths, and fits us better for the performance of the higher duties which invariably follow the faithful fulfilment of the lower.