

For the Calliopean.
The Fine Arts.—Their Influence.

THERE is no theme so truly pleasing and dignified as the cultivation of our own nature—no spectacle, however grand, can lead the mind forth into more sublime fields of thought, than the contemplation of an individual, whose *mind*, the chief attribute of our nature, is irradiated by science—one, whose *heart* is susceptible of holy and elevated emotions. If in man, the very image of Divinity—the master-work of God—the true elements of happiness are not found, where, in all the world, can they be sought? What object on earth has the Creator endowed with higher, with more noble qualities? If then, mankind possess a nature, which properly cultivated, is capable of holding the mind in delightful contemplation, from a present view of the world, the importance of the fine arts, readily suggests itself.—The foundation of all mental discipline, in the words of an eminent writer, consists in “mastering the mind,”—that the mind, in its natural state, is a rude mass, incapable of rigid and correct investigation, observation abundantly testifies; and yet, the great object of mind, is to form correct conceptions of the relations of things, and the purposes for which they were created. But, to accomplish this object, is not the work of a few years employed in trudging in the contents of innumerable text books. True, the acquisition of knowledge is desirable; but to exercise, to strengthen, to expand the mind, by intense application—to make the rough places smooth—to stir its deep springs—to unfold its latent energies—to give it a correct knowledge of its own powers—lead it forth into new regions of thought—in a word, to teach it how to think. These are the greatest and most important objects to be attended to, in the cultivation of the mind.

As the jewel is taken from the mine by strong solid instruments; and afterwards, those of a more delicate nature are applied for shaping, smoothing, and polishing it—so the necessity of applying the solid branches to lead out, and then the more speculative, to smooth and polish the mind.

Who, that has ever paused for a moment to reflect upon the materials that constitute our social system, but has observed those, whose education is confined to the mere cultivation of mind, stand out as rude crags upon the mountain side, as unfruitful plants in the garden of nature. Hence, the necessity of studying the fine arts—of cultivating the *heart*, in connexion with the mind.

An elegant writer has well remarked, that to learn to *feel* as well as to *think*, constitutes a leading feature in a finished education—“there is a pulse in our hearts, as there is a thread in our thoughts; he who can move the one, knows how to feel, and he who can hold the other, knows how to think.” That the heart is susceptible of cultivation, as well as the mind, requires no proof, beyond the observation of every well instructed mind. To cultivate it is to elevate its nature, define its sensibilities, and bring its latent energies into more constant and lively exercise. In accomplishing this, the fine arts, especially painting, music, and poetry, are the most efficient auxiliaries. The study of these unlocks the mystic cells of the human breast—brings into action the purer and more ennobling affections of the heart, and kindles within the soul-cheering and joyous emotions.

To the art of painting, some of the brightest stars that ever decked the galaxy of genius, have loved to consecrate their lives, and pay a willing homage at her sacred shrine. In the practice of it, we are led, more frequently, to contemplate the works of nature, and view, in the azure sky, the foaming billow and the varied landscape—ten thousand beauties, unobserved by the careless beholder. While essaying to copy nature’s enchanting hues, what silent raptures glow within the breast, upon catching the features, tints, and associations of sublime and magnificent scenery; and as we view these features drawn to nature true, our contemplations “rise from Nature up to Nature’s God.”—That music, too, is subservient to refining and elevating man’s nature, is demonstrated in the history of all civilized countries, and apparent to every practical observer. Nations are pointed out to us, sections of which have discarded the practice of music; and which, though surrounded by those distinguished for piety, humanity, and hospitality, are characterised for savage manners, cruelty, and wretchedness. Whence originates this

great disparity? The former were not wont to listen to the strains of heaven-born music, and feel its refining influence on the heart; the latter had learned to bow to its mysterious influence; their ears had been captivated by its enchanting notes, and their natures softened by the heavenly sweetness of its melody. Music is the language of the skies. It is this language that soothes the troubled mind, adorns the brow of nature with additional lustre, and by some magic power, transports the soul to view those golden harps attuned around the throne of God. But Poetry, the divinest of the three, is a still nobler theme to contemplate. In the cultivation of this art, the richest jewels of the *mind* are made to shine forth—the deepest fountains of the *soul* are made to move. External nature assumes a different garb; and oh! what raptures inflame the soul, when first we view, upon her beautiful face, marks of our near affinity—then we feel that all the works of Nature, with ourselves, have descended from a common source—then our hearts, though they ne’er before had lisped a word, long for converse with some babbling brook—some mountain cliff, or forest green. And if, at our oft meetings, who will chide, if we, to make our interviews more pure, should rise above this sublunary sphere, to pass a joyous hour in some more holy clime—a place much nearer Heaven! Poetry is the breathing of those germs of immortality that are implanted in the soul. It is this divine principle in it, that enables it to exert a refining, a sacred influence upon the world—and as a result of this influence, the memory of a Milton, and others who have carried this art to the greatest perfection, has been inscribed upon the tablets of our hearts, and an admiring world caused to pencil their names high on the list of fame.

The Fine Arts then, have a higher object in view than merely to furnish amusement for the young, and to draw off their mind from less innocent pleasures. Their’s is the work of changing the very face of society, of giving, for the rough and unwieldy, a nature that is refined and agreeable; of implanting within the mind a taste for all that is lovely and beautiful in nature.

Hamilton, December, 1847.

BURLINGTON.

To the Evening Star.

CHILD of the sky! thou art shining now
Like an ocean pearl on an angel’s brow!
Thou hast made thy home in my soul for years,
And hast always come with the evening tears!
As the sun first stood on the hills of God,
When the steps of Time on the mountain trod—
As thy sister looked from the halls of even,
And beheld thy face in the glass of heaven—
Child of the sky! evermore shalt thou
Be the same dear thing thou art shining now.

Child of the sky! in thine azure flight,
Thou art hastening on through the halls of Night;
Thou art soaring now to the world above,
Like an angel winged for the isles of love;
Thou art burning now like the smiles of Youth,
When the soul is touch’d by the fire of truth;
Thou art laughing now like an artless child,
In the purple depths of the air so mild:
Child of the sky! thou art on thy way
To the glorious realms of eternal day.

Child of the sky! in the dowy even,
Thou art dancing now in the halls of heaven;
Thou art waltzing now in the rolling spheres,
Where the stars are notes of eternal years—
When the holy ones sing their songs to thee,
And the choir of God makes the jubilee—
Where the silver bark on that heavenly sea
Floats away from Time to Eternity:
Child of the sky! evermore shalt thou
Be the same dear thing thou art shining now.

THE SANCTITY OF HOME.—On the maxim that ‘every man’s house is his castle,’ Lord Chatham made the following beautiful remarks: “The poorest may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail—its roof may shake—the wind may blow through it—the storm may enter—the wind may enter—but the king of England cannot enter! All his power dare not cross the threshold of that ruined tenement.”