

nature, the unfolding of his being will be by resistance as well as by affinity. The most self-complete personality can have no development but by means of society; and the more it has largeness of capacity, the more it has fulness of thought, the more it has greatness of feeling, the more it has aptitude for action, the more it needs society; the more it needs society to draw out its faculties and to engage them. Intellect works by means of society. Thinkers, the most abstract have not all their materials of reflection in themselves. The studies that belong purely to the mind as well as those that belong to matter, and to the active relations of life, require observation, comparison, sagacity, variety of acquisition and experience. No man can be a thinker by mere self-contemplation. He might as well expect to become a physiognomist by always gazing in a mirror, or to become a geographer by measuring the dimensions of his chamber. A man is revealed even to himself by the action on him of external things, and of other minds. According to the measure of the sphere in which a man is placed, and his sufficiency to fill it; according to the force of the influences which operate upon him, and his ability to give them form and direction, must be the expansion of his being. Society is, of consequence, a necessity, not to the growth merely of thought, but to its very existence. The body could as easily breathe without an atmosphere, as the mind could cogitate without society.

Thinkers, the most abstract as well as the most practical, have been men of the world, and men in it. Aristotle was a courtier; so was Lord Bacon; and no modern politician is more among crowds than was the mighty-minded Socrates. Imagination works by means of society. For society, it builds and sculptures, paints, forms its concord of sweet sounds, and puts its dreams into melody and measure. Of the men who have done these things so supremely, as to gain immortal names, many were reared in cities, and nearly all labored in them. Among such we may especially name the great poets, and, as not the least remarkable, the bards of rural life. In contrast with crowded places and artificial objects, men felt with quick delight the influences of God's uncontaminated creation, while many whose dwellings were embosomed in the secluded peace of nature, slept through life and into death without awaking to any knowledge or enjoyment of their inheritance.

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Life in our age is too much in the mass for any thorough spiritual culture; and life is too much in the outward for any intensity of individual

character. Men are looking beyond, when they should look within themselves; they are anxious for the good of the community, when they should be at work to mould their own nature to the best conformation of which it is susceptible. If those who use efforts for others, and use them seriously, would first use them to the utmost on their own spirits, society would advance more quickly towards regeneration. Just as one supreme work has a more elevating influence upon art, than thousands that are imperfect—so one really complete and harmonious character does more to raise the community than scores which fail of power and proportion. Society unfolds the life to a true end, only when it respects, while aiming to improve the individual, his inward, his really inalienable rights. It may correct, it may chastise—I will not say it may kill—but these it has no title to outrage. The individual has the authority, and, if he will, he has the power to resist such usurpation, to hold his inner being as his own, and to preserve inviolable its individuality and independence. Let every man do this, and for the same reason that he respects his own personality, let him respect that of every other. Let every man, I say, hold his personality sacred: let him do so, because he will thus build a nobler virtue for himself; because he will thus exercise a juster influence on his neighbors, and because the combinations which grow out of sympathies free and independent, have that real union wherein is strength. Let not even the consciousness of having done evil break down the strength of this personality.

WORDS OF LOVE.

BY SIDNEY FRANCIS.

How sweetly falls upon the weary ear

A gently spoken word of love!

It speaks the presence of an angel near,

It breathes a message from above.

A word of love! what sweeter sound than this—

The utterance of a kindred heart!

What other sources of terrestrial bliss

Can purer, holier joys impart!

A word of love! what more ecstatic thrill

Can vivify the languid frame,

Can move the spirit, or can nerve the will,

Than that which springs from love's blest name!

Then let each spirit hold this priceless love;

In every action let it shine;

Let every smallest word we utter prove

Communion with the love divine.