

setting boys who are to be farmers, mechanics, and day labourers—or girls who are to spend their lives in house-keeping—to studying natural sciences, the higher mathematics, or languages? In this matter our friend is only the representative of a very large class, existing everywhere in society. They profess to be strict utilitarians; and, inasmuch as their own education, and habits of thought, have not led them to see any direct connection between a knowledge of the higher branches of learning and the ordinary duties of life, they regard the time spent in the acquisition of those branches, as wasted, unless the student is designing to become a teacher or a member of one of the learned professions.

It is not our present purpose to show how much this numerous class of individuals are mistaken, in regard to the direct applicability of all branches of science to the practical advancement of every species of labour, whether in the field, the work-shop or the kitchen. It would be an easy task to show the direct bearing of natural science on agriculture, of chemistry on the duties of the household, and of the higher mathematics on all kinds of mechanical labour; but our present object is rather to show the very imperfect notions entertained concerning *utility* itself.

With perhaps a majority of mankind, anything is regarded as useful only in proportion as it tends to advance pecuniary interests, or add to external or physical comfort. Thus, with the farmer, that kind of education which he thought would enable him to reap a greater number of bushels of grain from an acre of ground, or get a higher price from each bushel would be considered strictly *utilitarian*. And so of all other classes. If men were mere physical beings, capable of only external or physical enjoyments, such a view would be correct. But man possesses a mental as well as physical nature; and it requires only a moderate share of observation to show, that a very large proportion both of the sufferings and enjoyments of civilized man, is purely mental, having little or no reference to the outward or physical condition. Our happiness, then, depends chiefly on our *mental* condition; and that again, is determined almost wholly by our education. The same Infinite Wisdom who framed the human body and made food and raiment necessary for its existence and comfort, added the mind with all its wonderful capacities, and made the acquisition of knowledge just as necessary for their development and happy guidance. Hence, the mind can no more be contented and happy without a proper and just cultivation of all its faculties, than the body without proper clothing. Knowledge is just as necessary to keep the mind fed, occupied, and developed, as bread to feed the body.

Why is it, that the farmer often lives, year after year, in the midst of fields laden with the richest harvests—tramples almost daily on flowers of the most exquisite beauty—holds in possession every physical comfort; and yet, most of his days are spent in *grumbling*, and his evenings in drowsy indifference? Meet him where you will, and you always find him dissatisfied and unhappy. The weather is too wet or too dry, his farm is too stony or too clayey, prices are too low or the market is too far off; finally, he is obliged to work so hard, that there is no comfort in living, and he has half a mind to sell out and try some other place. Thus, the precious hours of life are literally *grumbled* away, with little comfort to himself or any one around him. This is true, not of the farmer only, but of a large proportion of mankind, in whatever occupation they may be engaged.

Now, the true secret of all this is to be found in the defective mental culture of the individuals concerned. Their education has been so partial, that the higher intellectual and moral faculties remain undeveloped, and supplied with that stock of knowledge which should furnish them daily food and enjoyment. To such, the beauties of the vegetable world, the amazing combinations of the inorganic, the sublime grandeur of the celestial, and the evidences of infinite wisdom and goodness displayed throughout the whole, are all concealed behind the dark veil of ignorance.

Hence, the farmer who knows nothing of natural science, sees in the opening flower nothing but a troublesome weed. He knows not that every stone which cumpers his fields, holds in its composition valuable mineral ingredients for fertilizing the soil. He sees in the germinating seed no curious gathering of elements from the earth and the air.

All those noble faculties of the mind, which are designed by the Creator to feed on such knowledge, and afford to the possessor a pure, elevating and exhaustless source of enjoyment, are unemployed and withered; leaving an uneasy, restless, wearisome void, which

renders the whole of life unsatisfactory and burdensome, while the unfortunate sufferer, unconscious of the true inward source of his troubles, vainly complains of his outward circumstances, and as vainly seeks to make them better by changes.

If man would be happy—if he would be a *utilitarian* in a liberal and just sense, let him cultivate and feed every elevating faculty of his mind, by drinking in a knowledge of the whole wide domain of nature and science. Parents! if you would render your children not only happy, but useful in the highest degree, be careful to educate them, not merely in reference to pecuniary loss and gain, but with a view to develop, invigorate, and feed every ennobling intellectual faculty and moral sentiment which they possess.—*Eclectic Journal of Education*.

THE PROPHETIC THOUGHT.

Children are a prophecy. They contain in themselves the yet unrolled future, and they contain, too, the pre-disposing causes which give that future its general form and contour, and even its hues and tints. Coming out of one infinity, and going into another, they receive from the Divine Hand the endowments which stamp life with its image. If every one has a character of his own, the mould of that character is born with him, and in him; and he can no more depart from the type than he can throw off his humanity. And if the varieties of character are endless, then, in all their minute and mingling shades, their causes and occasions are innate—as much a part of a man's primal being as are the impulses which determine the colour of his skin, fix the outline of his features, and form and mould his stature. Circumstances are powerful, but theirs is only a secondary influence in human life: they yield to the internal pressure of the soul. They may encroach on the weak, and become masters of the wicked, but it is an usurped dominion they exert—they have no legitimate throne; and for their deposition, it is needful only that the rightful heir should awaken to the consciousness of his prerogatives.

Children are a prophecy. Their future they, in each case, bring with them into the world, as much as the rosebud, the sapling oak, the callow lark.

This prophecy, like others, is difficult to read. Children cannot read their own prophecy—who can read it for them? No one perfectly, very few well, most not at all. In order to read the prophecy, you must know the characters in which it is written. In that book of God every component element of each one's life is written down. But it is a sealed volume, although some transcripts therefrom are imprinted on the infant soul. Who has the eye to discern and the skill to decipher those dim and scattered characters? In them is *The Prophetic Thought* of each one's life. A babe lately struck my attention as it lay in its sister's arms. I believe it was the broad contrast between the two that attracted my eye. The babe itself was very lovely. Of pure Saxon blood, its large light-blue eyes, flaxen hair, and fair oval face, afforded the sweetest sight I had seen for many a day: blood of darker hue flowed in the veins of its nurse, whose face was commonplace, and almost mean. Broad as was the physical contrast between the sisters, yet more diverse was their attire, as well as their general appearance. The infant, clean in its person, was clad in white garments which might have been bleached on the Alps; the girl, with hands and face begrimed in dirt, wore an old woollen dress, in which rags and stains seemed to strive for the mastery.

Attracted by the singularity, I stopped to take a closer view of the two children; when out of the deep liquid ether of the infant's eye issued and glanced away a look which, for a child's look, was full of meaning, and struck me as a prophecy of that child's history. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'thy future is there; dimly dost thou see it: in no distinct consciousness does it stand before thee, but I discern its general outlines—I know what thou wilt be.'

It is what the infant will *be* I know, not what it will *do*. Whom it will marry I know not; where it will dwell I know not; the number of its children I know not; yet I can tell its fortune—I have discovered its prophetic thought. I know, therefore, what will be the great bearing of its life.

Before I attempt to lay down its horoscope, I will explain myself a little as to the nature and efficacy of this prophetic thought, which, as I have intimated, envelopes the future of that child, and of every child.

Systems of philosophy have each their prophetic thought. The