FIVE

OCCASIONAL LECTURES,

DELIVERED IN MONTREAL,

BY

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PREFACE.

These Lectures were none of them written originally, with any idea of their being printed; but I was requested, at the time of their delivery, to allow them to appear in the newspapers of the day; and it has since been suggested to me, that it might be useful to publish them in a more permanent form. A great portion of the matter is mere compilation from the works of other authors; and on looking over them to prepare them for the press, I have reason to believe that there are occasionally such extracts, of which I have lost the references. I trust, however, that they may serve the purpose for which they were, in a great measure, intended, viz., to assist in forming a taste for Literature, and Science, and Art, amongst the people of Canada. As yet we have scarcely any Literature of our own; but the great progress which Canada is making, and the growth of her Scientific and Literary Institutions, lead us to expect, that the day is not far distant, when from the Press of Canada there shall issue forth original works doing honor to her name, and worthy of comparison with those of other and older countries. And, in prospect of such a time, this little attempt of mine may, perhaps, have contributed, in a small measure, to have prepared the minds of a few additional readers to welcome the native Literature of Canada with grateful satisfaction.

See House,
Montreal, June 3, 1859.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN THE MECHANICS' HALL,

BEFORE

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG MEN OF MONTREAL,

ON MONDAY EVENING, FEB. 16, 1857.

BEFORE we enter upon those particular objects which have been arranged for the Lectures to be delivered on the Mondays of the following weeks for this Association, in connection with which I am to address you this evening, it may be useful at this the commencement, to enter somewhat into a dissertation upon the nature and intent of such Associations in general, and the principles upon which this has been formed, the members of which, I, as Patron, now address.

The Association is called the "Church of England Young Men's Association." This, like many other societies and associations for benevolent or religious purposes, of which we are every day hearing, is an institution of very recent date; and while many people are too easily interested in any such matters by the very attraction of their novelty, others are too apt to object to any new projects, especially religious associations on this very ground of their novelty;—whereas no valid argument, either for or against them, can be raised on this score; but their merits or demerits must be argued on different principles. The first commencement of associations, more strictly of this particular character, appears to have been in the year 1836; in the November of which year "The Church of England Working Men's Bible and Missionary Association" was established in the Borough of Southwark, which, as most of you no doubt know, joins the city of London, being just on the other side of London Bridge. The funds collected by the Association were at first divided between "The Church Missionary Society," and "The British and Foreign Bible Society." Somewhere about 1840 the portion of the funds devoted to furthering the translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures, was given to "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," the other portion still being assigned to "The Church Missionary Society." In 1842 the first branch of this Association was formed; and, crossing the river Thames, was located in Finsbury Square. The committee of this branch thinking that it would be better to alter the name of the Association, which had hitherto been "The Church of England Working Men's Bible and Missionary Association," after a long discussion, and a number of names had been proposed, agreed on the following:—"The Church of England Young Men's Association for Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad." Up to this period, as the movement had originated with the Church of England, so it had been under the management of its members and in connection with its principles. But some persons wishing lecturers of other communions as well as those of the Church of England to be engaged, and the management to be conducted on a different principle from that which had hitherto prevailed, there was a division; and, while the members of the Church of England kept to their original organization, and made the city of London their head quarters, those who dissented from them appeared in Westminster under the name of the "Young Men's Christian Association." Whatever may be the merit attaching to them, it appears then, that to the Church of England is due the credit of first originating such an organization for the young men of her communion; and since that time similar associations—whether on the principles of the "Church of England Young Men's Associaton" such as the one now formed by several of you present this evening, or on the more general basis of the "Young Men's Christian Association" as originated at Westminster—have multiplied both in England and elsewhere, and have, many of them, entered upon various and important religious and useful labours.

There has very recently appeared in the English newspapers an account of the new Bishop of London having preached a sermon, on the occasion of a meeting of a branch of "The Young Men's Christian Association," (that is the Association which is open not only to members of the Church of England, but to persons of different communions) at the Church of St. Alban, Wood street, London, near the General Post Office. It was on New Year's day, at a quarter before 7 in the morning—and the service concluded with the administration of the Holy Communion of the Lord's Supper. It is mentioned in the account given of the service, that the Bishop, after speaking approvingly of its organization, expressed his satisfaction,—

"If any were present who were not members of the Church of England, and that they would thus show their friendly feeling by being present to hear the Word preached by her ministers, and to join in her spiritual prayers, and in hearing those portions of the Word of God which our Prayer-book sets before us at this time. But added, as to any approaching the most sacred rite of Communion in our Church, that it was a matter which they must weigh well with themselves. All he said were invited to approach who were baptized, confirmed, or ready to be confirmed. He could well understand, he continued, that those who were members of any other national Church might rejoice to communicate with the Church of England while sojourning amongst us, without forsaking the church of their own country and home. He could understand, also, that many of our own countrymen, who from their early training had been kept apart from the Church, might feel a growing desire to unite with her as the great safeguard of Scriptural Christianity in the land, though they could not resolve to separate themselves entirely from past associations. Still he must say that it seemed to be an unsound state to hang doubtfully between one community and another—not feeling really united with the Church, though loving its services and acknowledging that they did the heart good. There was always danger, said the Bishop emphatically, in hanging loose between two systems, and thus failing of the helps which either, according to its means afforded for the building up of the soul." The Bishop,—the account goes on to say—it must be owned, thus improved the occasion with great judgment and propriety,—withou compromise, and yet in all charity. Let us hope that his excellent appeal may have made some of his hearers "seriously lay to heart the great danger we are in by our unhappy divisions," and lead them to banish "all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord."

Now, for myself, I am always anxious to uphold, with all charity towards others, what I believe to be the truth, in matters of religion, and most fully agree in the wisdom of the remarks here given, as embodied in the sermon of the bishop of London—that there is always great danger in hanging loose between different systems, and thus failing of the helps which either, according to its means, affords for building up the soul in spiritual strength. While, therefore, I honor others who may differ from me, when I see them zealously striving to promote what they think the best means of Christian usefulness; so also, at the same time, I desire earnestly to labour, according to my own calling in the Gospel, for the furtherance of true religion and the gathering in of souls to Christ. Whatever shall appear in any way legitimately to advance the interest of that Church, of which I am a minister and chief pastor, to be a fresh channel of communication between any of her members, to afford means of usefulness for earnest and active spirits, seems a most legitimate field of action in which I may labour,—endeavouring not merely to promote union of members, but that full unity of spirit, which may be expected among those, who profess to worship together in one body and in one spirit,—to wait on the same ministry, and give utterance with the same voice to their prayers and praises before the Throne of Grace.

But, in the formation from time to time of any such Associations as this, or any others with kindred objects in view, viz. the furtherance of true religion, or, as it was stated in the distinctive name at first adopted by the Association in London,—"The

Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad," it is very necessary that we should keep in view certain great principles of action to guide us; which will serve to do away with many objections sometimes started in opposition to such Associations, and will be a useful guide and rule to those who advocate them. Now "A Church of England Young Men's Asssociation," from its very name necessarily implies its connexion with the Church whose name it bears; but, as I said before, these Associations are new creations and there are persons who, on this ground alone, object to their introduction, and think because they were not in use in former times, they ought not to be allowed now. It will not be difficult, and may perhaps not be out of place, to show the fallacy of such an argument.

Now in all important corporate Societies there are certain original principles embodied in their charters, which are essential to their existence, and which the members have no authority over, or liberty to alter. But in order to carry into effect the end of their incorporation, they have the power of making and remaking, amending or modifying, certain rules and bye-laws, which regulate the details of their operations; and of delegating to subcommittees certain duties, and thus providing for the necessities of any particular occasions, or for meeting any unforseen difficulties in the way of the action of the Corporation itself.

And this is exactly the state of the case with the Church. There are certain principles connected therewith which are fixed by the Divine Will—certain fundamental laws which are essential to its existence—certain ordinances without which it cannot exist. The 19th article of our Church declares, "That the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things, that of necessity are requisite to the same." And elsewhere she teaches us in her catechism, that there are only two sacraments "generally necessary to salvation, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord." In the preface to her ordination service she teaches us—"That it is evident unto all men, diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of Ministers in the Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons;"—who are appointed to serve in the office of the Ministry, to preach the pure word of God, and duly administer the holy sacraments. She teaches us also from the plain statements of Scripture, that it is essential to the fulness of the sacrament of Christian Baptism that there must be the application of water, and that it must be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"—while the giving and receiving of the elements of bread and wine are essential in the administration of the sacrament of the Supper of the Lord. And also by the adoption into her formularies of the three great Catholic creeds—the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian, she has provided for the promulgation of a pure faith, and for her unity in doctrine with the universal Church;—on which Christ promised that his blessing should rest, and against which the gates of Hell shall never prevail. But while the Church receives her Ministry and Sacraments as of divine institution, and her creeds as a sacred trust: while the former have been unchanged from the first, and are in their very nature unchangeable; and the latter are consecrated and endeared, as the peculiar expression of the Church's faith from the earliest ages even until now,—it has been left to the wisdom of the Church in all times, according as it may seem necessary, to provide means for the effectual discharge of her calling, whether of converting the heathen, or building up her own children in the knowledge and practice of pure and undefiled religion.

Changes of circumstances may certainly produce a species of necessity requiring the engrafting of new institutions upon the Church. And when we look at the antiquity of the Church, and the extraordinary changes of circumstances which have attended its history from the commencement to our own times, we must wonder at the manner in which it has often been able to meet and provide for the emergencies in which it has been placed. This has been effected in two ways, namely, first, by completing and carrying out institutions founded from the beginning,—in a manner filling up and finishing what had already been chalked out in a bold, simple outline; and secondly, by throwing out new institutions adapted to the peculiar exigencies which a more advanced state of the Church, or of civil society, or other circumstances of the times, required.

To this power of filling up outlines, and supplying things wanting in matters of discipline, the learned *Hooker* refers, in Book III, ch. iv., of his "Ecclesiastical Polity." In this remarkable passage, he takes a profound view of a great feature in the economy of the Divine Government, namely, that some things are directly revealed, and others are left to be worked out by a certain machinery adapted to that purpose; and there is an analogy in this respect between the government of the Church and the physical constitution of men.

There is a remarkable exemplification of this theory to be found, for example, in the whole nature of the relations between the Church and the State, or civil government, and the great and intricate system of ecclesiastical public law arising out of that religion. Such a state of things, as we now understand by a connexion between the Church and the State—such as now exists for example in England—was certainly not primitive, for it did not commence for 300 years after Christ until the reign of the Emperor Constantine. But when it did take effect, it had nothing to do with the essential existence of the Church;—no commission derived from any civil authority could confer ministerial office, nor add to or take from the sacraments, or interfere with those matters of faith which are entrusted to the Church, "as the keeper and witness of the truth." But though it introduced a system before unknown, inasmuch as, up to that period, the antichristian authorities had been persecutors of the Church, yet there was in truth nothing novel in the principle upon which the system was founded, since it sprang from the duty of the Christian prince to obey, to protect, and in every way to favor the true Church, on the ground that he is bound by the obligations of Christianity, not only in his private, but in his public capacity also. But whether there be this connexion between the Church and the Civil Government, as at first established by Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, and as now exists in England, or whether the Church, in consequence of the state of parties, be independent of such connexion, as we see it on this continent, can merely be regarded as an accidental circumstance, assisting or impeding the working of the Church; but in no way, by any possibility, affecting that which is of the essence of the Church itself. But this was not the only important change that was evolved by the force of circumstances as time ran on; and the Church, sometimes influenced by individual agency, sometimes in her more corporate character, sometimes as it were imperceptibly led by some secret life within, sometimes answering to outward calls, has met, or endeavoured to meet, the difficulties which beset her; and like a skilful general in the day of battle, has changed her front in the face of the enemy, or redisposed her forces, or called up fresh troops to check the advancing foe.

At this distance of time, and living as we do in an age, when the principle of religious toleration so prevails, as even to be in danger almost of lapsing into indifference, it is not easy for us, though we read the history of the early Christians, and the fiery persecutions that tried so severely the steadfastness of their faith, it is not easy for us, I say, to realize the actual state of society at that time, or always to do justice to the principles by which men were then actuated.

Historians usually reckon ten general persecutions of the early Christians previous to the reign of Constantine—the first Emperor of Rome who was converted to Christianity. The first was under the tyrant Nero, A.D. 64, who, having set fire to Rome, threw the odium of the act upon the Christians. Multitudes of them were, in consequence, massacred. Some were wrapped up in skins of wild beasts, and torn and devoured by dogs; others were crucified, and others burned alive; and amongst those who suffered were the Apostles S.S. Peter and Paul. The second was under the cold-blooded Emperor Domitian, about 30 years after. Then followed, very speedily, the third under Trajan; and others, with brief intervals of rest, under the Emperors Adrian, Marcus Aurelius, Severus and Maximin, till the eighth persecution occurred under the Emperor Decius, in the year 250, after Christ, and was more bloody than any that had preceded it. The Christians were in all places driven from their habitations, plundered, and put to death by torments, the rack and the fire.

It does not concern my present subject to go into any of these details; but I have alluded to this merely for the purpose of stating that it was at this period, and in consequence of the severity of this very persecution, under the Emperor Decius, that Christians began to betake themselves to the life of the hermit, the anchorite or the monk: at first acting by individual impulse, in order to avoid the desolating fury of their persecutors, and afterwards being formed into a systematic rule and order. The names of hermit and anchorite are both derived from Greek words, signifying that the persons lived in deserts and retired places; as is also that of monk, signifying that they lived each alone.

I mentioned that the persecution under the Emperor Decius, which commenced in the year 250, was the most cruel of any under which the Christians had yet suffered; and at this time a Christian of the name of Paulus, a native of Thebes, retired, after losing his parents in the persecution, into a distant part of the country. But a relative, for the purpose of obtaining the property of Paulus, which was considerable, threatened to accuse him of what was then so fatal a crime, viz: that he was a Christian. Paulus, therefore, fled into a desert, and for 92 years lived in a cave, where he attained the great age of 113 years, rigidly practising all the rules of the ascetic life. He is called the founder of the Hermits, or Solitaries, and was canonized under the name of St. Paul, the Hermit. In the year 270—that is rather more than 20 years after Paulus commenced his life of solitude,—another great patriarch of the monastic life, and whose fame is more widely spread, commenced his career, viz: St. Anthony. He is said to have been moved by those words of Scripture, 19 St. Matt.: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me." He embraced the ascetic life, retired into a desert in Egypt, and died there in the year 356. St. Anthony, however, did not, like St. Paul the Hermit, pass his life in solitude. A great number of persons placed themselves under his government, and he made them live according to the ascetic rules—not in separate hermitages, but altogether in a regular community; and he is, therefore, considered the founder of the Cœnobites, that is, those who joined with others, and lived together in a regular community, with all things in common; as

St. Paulus was the founder of the Solitaries or Hermits. A short time afterwards, a person of the name of Pacumius founded in the same country (Egypt) the famous monasteries of Tabenna. His disciples lived in houses, each containing 30 or 40 persons ; and 30 or 40 of these houses grouped together composed a monastery. Each monastery was governed by an abbot, and each house by a superior. All these monasteries throughout this region, acknowledged a single chief, and assembled under him to celebrate Easter, sometimes to the number of 50,000, including only these monasteries of Tabenna; besides which, there were others in other parts of Egypt,—those of Sceta, of Oxyrinica, of Nitria, and Mareotis. St. Hilarion, a disciple of St. Anthony, established in Palestine monasteries of nearly similar description, and his institution spread over the whole of Syria. The great St. Basil also acquired his knowledge of the monastic and ascetic system in Egypt, and toward the end of the same century (before the effects of the persecution by the heathen Emperors had ceased,) established monasteries in Pontus and Cappadocia, giving them a code of rules founded on Christian morals. From that time the monastic institutions spread over every part of the East, in Ethiopia, Persia, and even in India. The West soon followed the example of the east. St. Athanasius introduced monastic life at Rome. His praises of the Oriental monastic bodies gave great encouragement to the erection of similar Societies in Italy. St. Simplicianus accordingly erected a monastery near Milan, with the consent of Saint Ambrose, the Bishop of the See. St. Augustine also founded a monastic order on his return from Italy to Africa, where he was bishop of Hippo. St. Martin, (a disciple and friend of St. Simplicianus) after he became Bishop of Tours, introduced monachism into Gaul, about the 6th century, And St. Benedict (from whom the famous Benedictine order took their rise) a noble of Nurtia, who was born in the year 482, retired from Rome to the desert of Subiaco, where he founded several monasteries, and gave to them that code of rules which was universally adopted and followed in the West, as those of St. Basil were in the East. Now when we consider the state of the Church during the early persecutions of the Christian Emperors—and afterwards the whole state of the countries, in which Christianity had gained any footing, during the period of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire—the intestine troubles—the irruption of the heathen barbarians—the turbulence and ignorance of the various petty chiefs and barons,—we shall not wonder that earnest and faithful men were induced to adopt the means offered by these systems of life for avoiding the desolating ravages of the persecutor, and for the encouragement of learning, and preserving a seed of pure religion to transmit to future generations. Almost the only opportunities at that time for study, and specially (which was of greatest importance) for the copying and preserving of the Holy Scriptures, were in the different religious houses, which were established in the different countries, where the Church was planted. It is not that the hermit, or the monk, or the monastery were any essential part of the Church, or known in the primitive and apostolic age—but they were means of help for that Church, sought out by her faithful members to suit the existing emergencies, and provide for impending dangers. They were voluntary Societies, composed for the most part of laymen, and were therefore, of course, under the authority of the Bishops, like the rest of the faithful; but the rules by which each Society was governed were merely in the nature of bye-laws and instructions. The rule of St. Augustine, which is still observed by many societies of men and women, was only taken from a letter addressed to his sister for the government of the house over which she presided, and from his sermons on the common life of the Clergy. But the two principal rules, in the early ages of the monastic institutions, were the rules of St. Basil in the East, and St. Benedict in the West. They were by far the most complete and finished of any, and with that of St. Augustine, became the fundamental law of all ancient monastic orders. In subsequent times there were also established the great quasi religious orders of the Knights of St. John and the Temple, intended to aid in the recovery of the Holy Land from the infidels: the celebrated society of the Jesuits, founded by St. Francis Xavier; and the orders of the mendicant Friars, the Dominicans and Franciscans, who were meant to be as witnesses against the too luxurious and indulgent rules of the more ancient monasteries and the lives of the secular clergy.

The ancient monks were so essentially laymen, that the desire to become a clerk, is mentioned by Cassian in his Institutes, as a temptation, which they should resist,—for he says that temptation arose from ambition and vain glory. It is clear that, when a monastery happened to be at so great a distance from its proper episcopal or parochial church, that the monks could not ordinarily resort there for divine service, which was the case in the monasteries of Egypt, and other parts of the East, where the monks lived in great deserts, sequestered from the rest of mankind, then some one or more of the monks were ordained for the performance of divine offices among them. But what contributed most towards the clerical character of the ancient monks, was the removal, in progress of time, as the church began to enjoy rest and freedom, of many of their communities from the deserts into towns. That removal was brought about by the necessity which the bishops felt, upon the increase of their flocks, for the assistance of those numerous and now important bodies. Monasteries were also founded in and near towns, as, for instance, those of St. Augustine at Hippo, St. Ambrose at Milan, and St. Eusebius at Vercelli. The monks, too, took an active part in support of St. Athanasius against the Arians; and St. Anthony left his desert and went to Alexandria to labour in favour of the orthodox belief.

But these institutions, which were thus at first the consequence of the emergencies in which the Church was placed, on account of the fiery persecutions to which she was subjected, and the turbulence and ignorance of the times, and which in their day did good service, became afterwards the cause of evils, which led to their suppression in England at the Reformation. The church adopted them in earlier times, because they were useful helps; she put them aside, when they ceased to be so. I have said that at first they were all merely voluntary societies, and that they were formed with the consent of the bishop, in whose diocese they were placed, and were, like the rest of the faithful, subject to his authority; but in process of time, as the bishops of Rome were gradually, but surely, building up the fabric of their usurped power over the rest of Christendom, they found these different religious orders very important allies; and in return for the support they gave to the claim set up by the Bishop of Rome to the supremacy, they received from him promises of certain immunities, especially exemption from the authority and supervision of their own bishops, thus interfering grievously with the working of the church in each particular diocese, and concentrating all power in the hands of the See of Rome. This, together with the laxity of discipline that gradually was introduced, and the corruption arising from the enormous wealth that many of these religious houses had acquired, led (as I remarked) to their total dissolution in England at the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII. How far, Henry, or those that assisted him in this work of dissolution, were actuated by pure and simple motives of religion, or by the desire to get their share of the plunder—which was thus obtained—may be very questionable. Cranmer, fully alive to the necessity of some radical change in the constitution and habits of the religious houses, was still anxious that their revenues should have been preserved to the Church and consecrated to holy uses. He found that their foundations and whole state were inconsistent with a full and true reformation. For among the things to be reformed were these abuses, which were essential to their constitution; such as the belief of purgatory, of redeeming souls by masses, the worship of saints and images, pilgrimages, and other similar superstitious practices. And therefore Societies, whose interest it was to oppose the Reformation, were in the first place to be suppressed; and then he hoped, upon new endowments and foundations, that colleges should have been erected at every Cathedral, to be nurseries of Ecclesiastics for the whole Diocese, which he thought would be more suitable to the primitive uses of monasteries, and more profitable for the Church. He had also advised the King to erect many new Bishoprics, that the vastness of some dioceses being reduced to a narrower compass, Bishops might better discharge their duties and oversee their flocks, according to the Scriptures and the primitive rule. And honest old Latimer earnestly recommended to Cromwell, that the priory of Great Malvern, in his Diocese of Worcester, might be allowed to stand, "not in monkery, but so as to be converted to preaching, study and prayer." Adding: "Alas! my good lord, shall we not see two or three in every shire changed to such remedy." But such was not to be. When Henry and his courtiers set themse vlseot the work of demolition, because these religious houses were m i plying their wealth and not fulfilling the intents of their institution, many were the promises held out of the great public works, both religious and useful, to which their revenues were to be appropriated; but, with a very trifling exception, the whole amount of wealth thus obtained was either bestowed on royal favorites or went into the private purse of the crown.

Wordsworth alludes to this wholesale plunder and work of destruction in some beautiful lines in "The Excursion":—

> "He had witnessed, in his morn of life,
> That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,
> In town, and city, and sequestered glen,
> Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,
> And old religious house—pile after pile:
> And shook the tenants out into the fields,
> Like wild beasts without home! Their hour was come;
> But why no softening thought of gratitude,
> No just remembrance, scruple, or wise doubt?
> Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help,
> Save at worse need, from bold impetuous force,
> Fitliest allied to anger and revenge.
> But humankind rejoices in the might
> Of mutability; and airy hopes,
> Dancing around her, hinder and disturb
> Those meditations of the soul, that feed
> The retrospective virtues."

Henceforth in England the Church was left to depend, so far as any actual ecclesiastical organization was acknowledged, upon what is known as the parochial system alone. That is, that whereas the whole country was divided into Dioceses, each Diocese being presided over by a Bishop, so each Diocese was sub-divided into Parishes, each Parish being under the charge of its own Rector or Minister, by which provision was made that in every place, whether in the cities, or villages, or remotest parts, there was some Minister on whose services the people had a claim, and who was answerable for the duties connected with the Church. Now this parochial system in England has constituted both the strength and weakness of the Church—its strength in that it insures the ministration of the Church everywhere throughout the length and breadth of the land; not merely in the great towns and near the residences of the rich, but equally in the wildest glen and on the bleakest hillside. While it has been a source of weakness in that, the public mind for generations rested satisfied with the provision once made, and heeded not the fact that what might have been sufficient 300 years ago, has gradually ceased to be adequate to the wants of the people, or able to take oversight of a population which has doubled and redoubled itself during that period. The greater attention paid to religion and the education of the people, and the increase in England of various communities dissenting from the Church, has served to set this fact more plainly before us during the last 30 or 40 years; and many statistical returns have been published giving painful evidence of the large amount of the population, who have grown up practically excluded from all access to the means of grace, and unprovided with pastoral care; since it was manifestly impossible with the thousands, and sometimes perhaps tens of thousands, who were nominally under the charge of a single Minister, that he could possibly be able, ready, as he might be, to spend and be spent for the Gospel, to have any personal intercourse with more than a fraction of them;—nor if willing, was there any room for them in the parochial Churches. Neither have the exertions of other religious bodies been in any measure sufficient to supply the deficiency. In the middle ages, as we have seen, the Church sought the aid of the monasteries and religious communities, as then constituted. We do not want such in these days, as schools of learning, for we have provision made for that in a way more suitable to the present age; nor can we approve the manner in which the members of those religious orders bound themselves by vows; but still we want for the clergy some co-operation and help to enable the parochial system, especially amongst the masses of large towns, to cope with the enormous amount of evil and infidelity that has grown up around us. In England during the last 20 years 3,826 new churches have been built, including those which have replaced old ones; while in the same period so difficult has it been to provide the men, and the means of supporting them, the clergy have increased only 411; the population, however, which before had far outrun the power of the clergy, has been still increasing at a fearful rate. Here, therefore, the evil has been met by no adequate remedy. And even in the matter of Churches, there are yet cases where the disproportion between the accommodation afforded and the number of the inhabitants is something quite appalling. For instance, in an appeal now making for aid towards the erection of Churches in London and its suburbs, the following statement is given:—

		Population.	Church Room.
Parish of	Shoreditch	110,000	9,000
"	Stepney	81,800	5,200
"	St. John, Clerkenwell	10,000	800
"	Clerkenwell, rest of	55,000	5,000
"	St. Botolph, Aldgate	16,000	1,000
"	Poplar	30,000	1,700
"	Plumstead	12,000	400

But in order to try and provide some remedy for the overwhelming evil which is now acknowleged on all hands, and to meet which in such cases the single services of the parochial clergyman, or it may be of two or three in any given district, are powerless, the Church, a few years since, adopted a regular system of Scripture Readers under the sanction and license of the Bishop of London and other Bishops; there are frequently, also, District Visitors employed by the clergy on a more or less systematic plan; and more recently we have, as I stated at the commencement, the establishment of "The Church of England Young Men's Association for Aiding Missions at Home and Abroad." These are efforts made by the Church, or by some of her members, to aid and help her in the great work of her calling, and may become most useful and efficient agencies in connection with her regular ministry; and as such we, here as well as in England, may receive their co-operation with thankfulness, and endeavour to give permanency and efficiency, and a true ecclesiastical character to their labors. There are, however, two objects to be kept in view, I consider, in this your Association:—first, in that it offers opportunities of improvement and wholesome recreation to those who are members of it; and next, as furnishing an agency whereby you may yourselves be an instrument of good to others. As to the first, the very terms of the Association necessitate a more frequent personal intercourse with the clergy, which, in a large and populous city especially, and where almost all of you are busily engaged in your several callings, it is not easy to keep up on any systematic principle. Then you have provided the present course of lectures for your improvement in the knowledge of ecclesiastical history, and the Bible Class, which, though, only at present attended by a certain number of you, has commenced, and will no doubt become more and more appreciated, as the good leaven works its way. Then, at a very trifling cost, you have the use of an excellent library, and a pleasant room, where you can pass your evenings, and associate with others, for the purpose either of recreation or study, instead of wasting your time, and means, and health, in haunts of vice and dissipation, as so many young men are led to do, *merely* for want of some better place to go to, or some inducement to employ themselves more usefully.

And, for the second object you are associated together for the purpose of being useful to others,—to induce other young men to join you, and partake in the advantages of your association ; and also by the help of your funds, as you get more established, to aid more directly in the work of missions, by providing the means of supporting one or more missionaries, to be employed in cultivating some of that spiritual waste that we see around us. If you enter, as I trust you will, heartily into the work, (and as your thus associating together is a purely voluntary act, I am bound to believe that is *because* your hearts are in it that you have done so,) there is an immense field of usefulness open before you; and especially in that species of usefulness which the earnest-minded among you may be able to exercise over other young men just entering into life, whom you will be thrown amongst in familiar intercourse, and associated with in business. They are a most important class in society, and often the most difficult for the clergyman to meet with, or to influence by direct appeal. I trust that, if God spare us to meet together after the conclusion of a year's experience of the working of the Association, we shall find that in this and other ways much good has been done. And that though not necessarily a part of the Church's machinery, not essential to her *being*, yet we shall find that the effects are so beneficial, that it conduces so to the *well-being* of her work, that we shall almost recognise it as an inseparable adjunct. It is but a few years since that Sunday Schools were first introduced, and then were thought by many as unnecessary; now we look for them as being almost as indispensable as the congregation who assemble to worship in the church. Thus, too, as we saw in early times the monks and monasteries and hermits arose out of the pressing wants of the Church at that period, and being useful, were adopted, and, as it were, incorporated into her system; but when found to have become instruments of evil rather than good, they were set aside at the Reformation. May we ever keep in view the great end and objects of this Association, and remembering the principles upon which it has been established, seek earnestly for the accomplishment of its work—the welfare of the members, and, through their agency and co-operation with the Church, the furtherance of true religion and the extension of the Gospel Kingdom.

LECTURE II.

"SOME REMARKS ON COLONIAL INSTITUTIONS,"

DELIVERED IN THE MECHANICS' HALL,

BEFORE THE

MEMBERS OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, THE 11TH OF DECEMBER, 1855.

HAVING been requested to give the first of this winter's course of lectures, in connection with this Institution, "The Mechanics' Institute of Montreal," I propose to endeavour to turn the occasion to some profitable account by making a few remarks on "Colonial Institutions," and this amongst the number.

First, then, let me remind you that from the very expression, "Colonial Institutions," we have brought before us the connection with the Mother Country; and from the rapid and continual intercourse now kept up between England and Canada, from the constant immigration of fresh settlers, from the general circulation of news and information, respecting all that is going on in the Old Country,—and from the admiration with which so many of us regard England, and the success of her Institutions, it is but natural that we should wish to see many of them reproduced here, and adapted to our position, that they may be to us, what they have proved to her, elements of social usefulness, and means of political greatness. The consequence, however, is that when we have established amongst us such an Institution as this, or, "The Natural History Society," or "a University," or, to go still further, "a

Provincial Parliament," we are forced often into an unfair juxtaposition, as it were, with such Institutions in England: people look upon this picture and upon that, and because ours here are so comparatively insignificant, or beset with difficulties, many would hold them to be mere failures, unworthy of further support, utterly inadequate to the end proposed. Now I hope you will agree with me when any people do so judge of them, that they have come to an unhappy conclusion, drawn from false premises; and it is to place this more clearly before you, that I shall occupy at least some of our time during the passing hour this evening.

It is not yet quite one hundred years since Canada became a Colony of England; and has not yet, I believe, quite completed the first decade of her present Parliamentary system. Many of the Institutions of the Old Country date from the days of Alfred and Edward the Confessor; and the first assembly of the Commons, as a confirmed Representation, dates back as far as the year 1265 in the reign of Henry III. This Province, compared with the growth of England, has almost started, as it were, into sudden maturity, her population and material prosperity advancing with extraordinary rapidity, and also the necessities for various Institutions to suit her growing life. England has been nearly one thousand years consolidating her greatness and maturing her condition. But, nevertheless, as to public scientific institutions, even in England, they are comparatively of very recent growth. The "Royal Institution," of Great Britain, for diffusing the knowledge and facilitating the general introduction of useful mechanical inventions and improvements, and for teaching, by courses of philosophical lectures and experiments, the application of science to the common purposes of life, was only formed in the year 1800, under the patronage of George III. "The Royal Society" for improving natural knowledge, had preceded it about 150 years; and others have sprung up more recently. It is true we have now the use and advantage of all their discoveries and publications; but we have a population very differently circumstanced to work with, and it is but just to take this fact into consideration.

First let us look at the subject, as respecting our Provincial Parliament and public official business. It is made a matter of reproach very often, in the public newspapers and elsewhere, that many of the representatives of the people are only political adventurers, without any fixed political view or opinions, who seek a seat in the House merely for the sake of obtaining the allowance paid to members, or to get, at some happy conjuncture, their share out of the spoils of office, or to secure some special benefit for their own immediate locality. And again, how often do we hear complaints of the impossibility of getting business expedited through this or that public office, without some special private fee being forthcoming. This may be so in many cases; but if it be, however we may lament it, we must remember how far it arises from the present condition of the country. In a young country like this, where every one is engaged in the active business of life—where there are so few persons of acquired fortunes, who have time and inclination to devote themselves to the public service of the country, we must be more generally exposed to this risk, and with less feeling of an opposite kind to counteract it. But we are not on that account to decry our institutions as failures; but work onward in the hope and expectation of improvement. Nor is it fair to compare our Provincial Parliament with the Imperial Parliament as at present constituted, but rather let us look back but a very few years, and see what is then related of it. Payments, as here, used to be made to members in England for their attendance in Parliament, but they have ceased for a long time; and on the contrary, now, as is very notorious, people are willing to expend enormous sums for the mere honor of representing their native county in Parliament without expectation or desire of any pecuniary gain for themselves or those connected with them, perhaps continually occupying the opposition benches. These expenses have been much reduced since the passing of the reform bill; but when Mr. Wilberforce was returned for Yorkshire by the freeholders, free of all cost, in the famous contest with Lord Milton, (the present Earl Fitzwilliam,) his lordship was understood to have expended nearly £120,000. Moreover, to very few of the leading politicians of the day in England, are the emoluments of office a necessity; and any one now known to have received a direct pecuniary bribe for his vote, would scarcely ever be able to recover from the disgrace attaching to such a transaction. But it was not always so, how much soever the increase and more general diffusion of wealth may have in time rendered the payments for attendance unnecessary, and also produced a class of representatives, who, being themselves of more independent private fortune, are in a position more easily to despise the attempts of any minister who might try to corrupt them.

As late as 1724 Sir Robert Walpole used to make an allowance to all the Scotch members for their attendance in Parliament, as coming from a greater distance and poorer country. There being about that time, on one occasion, a difficulty about passing a bill, authorising a duty of sixpence on every barrel of beer in Scotland, as an equivalent to the malt-tax in England; the Scotch members were disinclined to vote for it. But the money was wanted, partly to defray an allowance of ten guineas weekly, which Walpole used to give to every Scotch member during the Session, in order, as was alleged, to support the charge of their residence in London. When they waited upon Walpole to remonstrate against this tax on beer in Scotland, he told them that they must find, or acquiesce in, some mode to make up this expense from the Scotch revenue, or else, as he expressed it, they must in future " tie up their stockings with their own garters." The Scotch *members* might thus have then had excellent reasons for yielding to this impost, but the Scotch *people* unhappily had none; and its result was a general irritation throughout the country, and a serious riot at Glasgow. But the system of Parliamentary corruption was too common in those days to excite much observation. It had been customary in previous administrations, but it reached its maximum under Walpole. It was just before Walpole's day that the Speaker of the House of Commons (Sir John Trevor), on one occasion, accepted a bribe of 100 guineas from the city of London, and on its detection was himself obliged to put to the vote, that he had been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. The Secretary of the Treasury, (Mr. Guy) on another occasion, was sent to the Tower for a similar offence. A shameful system of false endorsement of exchequer bills on the part of several members was detected before; and even Burnett, the apologist of those times, is reduced to admit and deplore the extent of the corruption. In the " History of his own

Times," Burnett says, "I took the liberty once to complain to the King of this method (of buying votes); he said he hated it as much as any man could, but he saw it was not possible, considering the corruption of the age to avoid it, unless he would endanger the whole." The secret service money which, in the ten years preceding 1717, had amounted to £277,444, in ten years of Walpole's ministry, swelled up to very nearly a million and a half, or at the rate of £150,000 per annum; a large part of which, it was well known, was spent in bribing votes in Parliament. Some few statesmen of that day occasionally raised their voice against the prevailing system. Amongst others Secretary Stanhope, who succeeded Walpole after his first administration, publicly declared, (evidently as being something then very unusual,) "that he would be content with the salary and lawful perquisites of office; and though he had quitted a better place (as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,) he would not quarter himself upon any body to make it up; that he had no brothers or sisters to provide for, and that on his first entering into the Treasury, he had made a standing order against the late practice of granting reversions of places." And he acted up to this; for some large government negotiations having been arranged with the Bank of England and South Sea Company, he stated in the House, that he "understood it had been the common practice of those concerned in the administration of the Treasury, to make bargains for the public with Governors and Directors of Companies, by which some private advantages were generally made; but that in his (Mr. Stanhope's) opinion, such bargains ought to be determined at the bar of the House; and if any advantages could be made the public ought to have the benefit of them." In the following year Mr. Secretary Craggs writes, "It is incredible what prejudice all these sales of office do the king's service; for to complete our misfortunes, I have remarked that there is no distinction of persons or circumstances (to whom they are not sold, Jacobites, Tories, Papists, at the Exchange or in the Church, by land or by sea, during the Session and in the recess, nothing is objected to, provided there is money to be obtained."

But one individual, who more than any other, assisted in raising the tone of public feeling in England on this subject, and who introduced a higher and better system of political morality, was Lord Chatham. Lord Mahon (now Earl Stanhope) in his History of England, among the many admirable portraits which he gives of the leading statesmen of the day, has drawn one, not the least happy of his efforts, of William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, but more popularly known as the Great Commoner. In the course of his remarks, he says of him:—"bred amidst too frequent examples of corruption, entering public life at a low tone of public morals, standing between the mock patriots and the sneerers at patriotism, between Bolingbroke and Walpole, he manifested the most scrupulous disinterestedness, and the most lofty and generous purposes; he shunned the taint himself, and in time removed it from his country. He taught British statesmen to look again for their support to their own force of character instead of Court Cabals, or parliamentary corruption. He told his fellow citizens (not as agitators tell them, that they were wretched and oppressed), but that they were the first nation in the world, and under his guidance they became so."

I mention these circumstances just to show how comparatively recently in her history England has had such difficulties to encounter, and evils to overcome; and if, in this country, quite in its earliest stages, we find ours, we may hope nevertheless, that we shall be able also to work out successfully the problemn of our political system, and with the inherent health and energy, and buoyant hope of youth, in due course to acquire and maintain a good and honorable name in history. Why may we not anticipate a time, when the future historian of Canada will have to tell of some one amongst us, who shall have taught Canadian statesmen to look for their support to their own force of character, instead of Court cabals, or parliamentary corruption—who shall have told his fellow citizens (not as agitators tell them, that they were wretched and oppressed, but,) that they were, if not the first, yet a great nation, and how, under his guidance, they became so.

But the general complexion of the representation of any people must, of course, take its colouring from that of the people themselves, and as the great body of the people advance in wealth and independence, and intelligence, and general tone of character, so there will be a wider and better field from which to select, and more required in every way from those selected. While corrupt statesmen increase the degradation of a community, so, if the people's principles are right, they will soon themselves bring an influence to bear upwards, and will feel their character compromised by corruption in statesmen or officials.

But while there is a rapid and acknowledged growth in the general material, wealth and prosperity of this country—while there seems a natural aptitude in her population for developing her varied resources in connection therewith—there are in other departments great difficulties to be overcome. The cultivation of the intellect, the promotion of scientific knowledge, and the higher branches of learning are not marked by the same manifest progress. But still in these departments, I maintain that it is our duty to work in hope of better things; seeing that, from the very nature of our position, this must naturally have been the case for many years. Who are the classes of people, who naturally come out as settlers in a new country like this? Are they the men of leisure and highly cultivated minds, devoted to the pursuits of science and the quiet pursuits of literature? For one of such a description as any of these, we have thousands who, as intelligent men of business, or sturdy cultivators of the soil, or skilful mechanics, have come here to seek and find room for their energies, and means of acquiring independence for themselves and their families; and where the means of employment, at very remunerative rates, are generally greater than the demand, it is, of course, no easy matter to meet with advanced students to fill the higher classes of our Colleges and universities, or any large proportion of persons, who are prepared to devote any great time or labor to scientific pursuits. Here, then, I say, because institutions for the advancement of such objects are not yet largely supported, or their class-rooms always crowded, we must not necessarily consider that they have failed of success. They are, slowly it may and must be at first, laying a foundation; by little and little diffusing information; imparting new tastes; and we may expect that their effects will be increasingly visible, as years pass on, and a new generation grows up to maturity.

And here I would refer to this, your own Institution, as one indication of progress in this direction. This Institution was incorporated ten years ago for the purpose, as is stated in the preamble of the Act of Incorporation, " of forming a Library and Reading-Room, and of organizing a system of instruction by means of Lectures and Classes, for the use and benefit of those who are, or may hereafter become, members." How little appeared to be accomplished for many years, it had a name but scarcely a local habitation—certainly a very unsuitable one. And indeed, it was little better than a Newsroom. But its members increased, and a desire to see all its objects accomplished was keenly felt by many of its supporters; and the consequence has been, first, the erection of this spacious pile of building, with all the conveniences for carrying into effect the end for which the Institution was incorporated. There is here not only the Newsroom,—but this large and well appointed Hall for public Lectures, a Library with the commencement, at least, of a supply of books for its shelves, and class-rooms for courses of Lectures on particular subjects, for Schools of Art and Design for students. We cannot imagine that such a work has been so far accomplished by the united exertion of the mechanics of Montreal, at so large an outlay, and yet that it will produce no further results.

With respect, however, to the advantages to be derived from attendance on any public Lectures, which are now so common, on every conceivable subject, I would remind you, that in order to be really useful, they must not be taken as a substitute for all personal study and intellectual labor on the part of those who attend them; but rather as affording useful hints and assistance. In the first place knowledge cannot be truly ours, till we have appropriated it by some operation of our own minds. I have read that some of the best writers on property in land have attributed that right to the first proprietor having blended his own labor with the soil. Something like this is true of intellectual acquisitions. Again, we often admire the skill with which any particular work is executed; and it perhaps seems to be done with such ease and rapidity that we are apt to under-rate its value, and imagine that it would cost us no great effort to do the same. " You charge me fifty sequins," (said a Venetian nobleman to a sculptor) " for a bust that cost you only ten days labour." " You forget," replied the artist, " that I have been thirty years learning to make that bust in ten days." I trust, then that besides the Class-room and the Lecture-room, the Library will form an important branch of this Institution; and that its shelves will in time present a goodly array of sterling literature and useful books of reference; and further, that its volumes will be so much in use, that no dust or cobwebs will be allowed to accumulate or to rest upon them. And what a wide field is there not open for study in our own language alone—a field full of that which may delight, as well as instruct, strengthen as well as refresh the mind. I was much interested the other day with reading, in the *Illustrated London News*, an account of the third festival of the St. Martin's-in-the-Field's Library and Reading Room for the working classes. There were 400 working men and their wives present; besides many of the London Clergy and other friends of the Institution. The Library was crowded and many of the guests adjourned to the school of Art and Design. Here a number of drawings (the production of members of the working classes) were exhibited, which showed considerable talent and accuracy. There are two hundred and two adults and children who receive instruction in the School of Art; and evening instruction and recreation for 129 in the Library; it was stated to be already nearly self-supporting. Many speeches, on topics connected with the Institution and its objects, were delivered; but the most striking one of the evening was by a Mr. Parker, a working man, in a coach factory in the parish, who astonished the company by quoting Aristophanes, Æschylus, and Sophocles; and then, as he expressed himself, stripped himself of his plumes by saying, " that he had learnt all he knew of them, by first attending a Lecture of Professor Browne at that Library on Attic Tragedy: and then by obtaining translations of these Greek poets, which he had read with delight and avidity." Here the Lecture-room and the Library were brought into due and proper connection, and by after study the teaching of the passing hour was carried on. It may not be expected that every individual will follow out, as matter for study, every subject on which he may hear a Lecture delivered; or that such a systematic course will in any instance, be taken by all who attend such Lectures. But to be really and permanently useful to any class or classes of the people, as well as a means of exciting a passing interest, or spending an agreeable hour, this ought to be a frequent result of attendance on public Lectures on Literary or Scientific subjects. Such Lectures should be a *help* to many who are really anxious to obtain information, but have not had full opportunities for regular training at college or school—should give them hints; and often, as in the case of the working man referred to in the report of the St. Martin's Institution, be perhaps the happy accidental means of directing the individual to a particular line of thought or study, that will, in the pursuit of them, open up new fields, not only for pleasure of a high and pure kind, but for the exercise of talent, the cultivation of the intellect, and the discipline of the mind to a greater extent, than, perhaps, he was himself aware that he was capable of. And this, after all, is bringing us nearer to the great end of education; and this is one of the great rewards for studying the best authors in every department of literature. Any specific branch of science or art is interesting to a certain extent, and for particular objects, and may be essentially useful to this or that particular person in his particular line of life. But the training the mind, and developing the intellect, and forming the opinions, through a particular course of study, in proportion as this is effectually carried out, prepares a man to take a high place in his intercourse with his fellows, enlarges the range of his own ideas, and puts him in possession of the experience and the thoughts of men of genius of every age; which, becoming often unconsciously mixed up with the working of his own mind, give additional power and activity to his own natural endowments, when called into exercise on any specific objects.

I observed just now that some happy accident will often give a direction to the individual, and be the means of much eventual benefit to him. Mr. Willmott, in his pleasing "Journal of Summer Time in the Country," gives some interesting illustrations of this. Watching the leaves of the over-hanging trees in a gently running brook, he says: "These leaves of the stream seemed to be images of slight circumstances in life—little things that influence our hopes, successes, consolations and pains. We are not only pleased, but turned by a feather. The history of man is a calendar of straws If the nose of Cleopatra had been shorter, said Pascal in his brilliant way, Anthony might have kept the world. The Mahommedans have a tradition, that when their prophet concealed himself in Mount Shur, his pursuers were baffled by a spider's web over the mouth of the cave. The shadows of leaves in water, then, are to me so many lessons of life. I call to mind Demosthenes, rushing from the Athenian Assembly (after his first attempt as an orator), burning with shame, and in the moment of degradation encountered with Satyrus. It was the apparition of his good spirit, and changed his fortune. The hisses of his countrymen melted into distance. He learns the art of elocution: and when he next ascended the bema, his lip was roughened by no grit of the pebble. Again Socrates meeting Xenophon in a narrow gateway, stopped him by extending his stick across the path and enquiring,—"How a man might attain to virtue and power?" Xenophon could not answer: and Socrates bidding him follow, became thenceforward his master in Ethics. These incidents were shadows of leaves on the stream: but they conducted Demosthenes into the temple of eloquence, and placed Xenophon (as an historian) by the side of Livy. We have pleasing examples nearer home. Evelyn, sauntering along a meadow near Say's Court, loitered to look in at the window of a lonely thatched house, where a young man was carving a cartoon of Tintoretto. He requested permission to enter; and soon recommended the artist to Charles 2nd. From that day the name of Gibbins (so celebrated for his carvings in wood) belonged to his country. Opie bends over the shoulder of a companion drawing a butter-fly, and rises up a painter. Giotto sketches a sheep on a stone, which attracts the notice of Cimabue, passing by that way; and the rude shepherd-boy is, by and bye, immortalised by Dante. Slight circumstances are the texts of science. Pascal heard a common dinner-plate ring, and wrote a tract on sound. While Galileo studied medicine in the University of Pisa, the regular oscillation of a lamp, suspended from the roof of the Cathedral, attracted his observation, and led him to consider the vibrations of the pendulum. A sheet of paper sent from the press, with the letters accidentally raised, suggests the embossed alphabet for the blind; and a physician lying awake and listening to the beating of his heart, contributes the most learned book upon the diseases of that organ."

There are a thousand other instances which might be given of the accidental direction of the mind to particular subjects, or the apparently accidental developement of genius. But whatever may have first turned our studies or thoughts in any particular direction, in no case will success be achieved, or excellence arrived at, or any sure progress be made, unless there be some personal effort, unless we appropriate, as I before observed, the information given to us by some operation of our own minds: unless we strive to exercise our own powers in any particular department. However true it may be that happy accidents might, at a critical juncture, have influenced their course, yet it was only in this way of patient study that Demosthenes or Xenophon achieved their fame, or that Opie or Giotto have a reputation as painters. The answer of Euclid to Ptolemy, King of Egypt, when he asked him, if geometry could not be made easier, has passed into a proverb: "There is no royal road to learning:" was all the encouragement the philosopher could give the King. Dryden marks the progress towards excellence in the following couplet:—

"What the *child* admired,
"The *youth* endeavoured, and the *man* acquired."

It is interesting to follow great authors or artists in their careful training and accomplishing of the mind: like the sculptor, we heard of just now, who had been thirty years learning to make a bust in ten days. "The long morning of life (again observes Mr. Willmott) is spent in making the weapons and armour which manhood and age are to polish and to improve. Abp. Usher, when only twenty years old, formed the bold resolution of reading all the Greek and Latin Fathers, and at the dawn of his 39th year he completed the task. Milton's youthful studies were the landscapes and the treasury of his blindness and of his want. 'I have neglected nothing,' was the modest explanation which N. Poussin gave of his success."

The great hindrance, however, in the way of any satisfactory progress in the best courses of general literary pursuits on the part of the many, even where an earnest desire shall have been excited, must always be the difficulty, in the first place, of choice. Their time and opportunities are limited, and, without judicious assistance, they will hardly make a good selection of authors : and, even if they do, perhaps they will spend too much of their time, in reading what might be not inconveniently omitted, or what being briefly explained would allow of their passing forward at once to more striking passages and more important matter. Here, then, I cannot but think, that something in the shape of Lectures or Readings for an Institution like this might be made more useful, as well as more easily attained than they are. And I am sure that to many minds independent of its withdrawing them from mere idleness or something worse, they would be increasingly acceptable and improving. We hear in England, in the present day, that crowds will assemble just to hear Mr. Dickens read his Christmas Carol, or some other of his minor works—as in ancient times crowds used to gather together to hear Homer recited at Athens, or Herodotus at the Olympic Games. Now, without attempting the original Greek of Homer or Herodotus, or any of the Latin Classics, which would require of course long and careful study to acquire the original languages, what a rich field lies before us of fine English Classic lore—most of it much newer to nearly all of you than "the Christmas Carol:" to which (as in the case of Mr. Parker at St. Martin's) might be added any of the best translations of the ancients. It is astonishing by attention and regularity and judicious management, what a large amount of valuable ground might be travelled over, in the course of two or three hours a week, during the six winter months. And I own I think that thus far greater progress might be made in the acquisition of Knowledge, and combined with mental training and improvement, than by the usual system of ordinary public lectures, for an Institution like this. An author should be selected, some general account given of him and his work : and then from time to time, certain of the finest selected passages should be read, an abridgment being given of the intermediate matter, so as not to break the thread of the story. And why may not History or Biography thus afford as much pleasure as a modern fictitious tale. It is forever the question of a child when listening to any story that excites its interest,—but is this all really true?

And moreover truth, we are often reminded, is in numberless instances stranger than fiction : independent of the interest attaching to that which, we feel, we may picture to ourselves with all the vividness of an actual fact. I remember once hearing of a gentleman, who, finding two ladies reading for the first time the account of the trial of the seven Bishops, was about to speak to them respecting what they were reading, upon which they anxiously stopped him, saying " Oh! pray don't tell us how it will all end; it is so intensely interesting." And I can well remember too myself as a boy, reading with unsatisfied eagerness Historical and Biographical works, such as Cook's Voyages, or Robertson's History of America, the most stirring passages of which latter work have since been all painted with still fuller detail and truth by Prescott in his History of Mexico and Peru. " History (to quote the words of the author of the Pleasures of Literature) presents the pleasantest features of poetry and fiction : the majesty of the Epic; the moving incidents of the Drama; the surprises and morals of Romance. Wallace is a ruder Hector; Robinson Crusoe is not stranger than Crœsus: the Knights of Ashby never burnish the page of Scott with richer lights of lance and armour, than the Carthaginians winding down the Alps cast upon Livy. History may be considered in three lights—a pleasurable, an educational and a moral, as it entertains the fancy, opens new sources of instruction, and cherishes or enlarges the feeling of virtue. A scholar, in his experience, may be 6000 years old, and have learned brick-making under Pharaoh. Dryden called history a perspective glass, carrying the mind to a vast distance, and taking in the remotest objects of antiquity. The lives, however, of nations, as of individuals often concentrate their lustre and interest in a few passages. Certain episodes may be judiciously selected. Such as the ages of Pericles, or Augustus, Elizabeth or Louis XIV, and Charles V. Sometimes a particular chapter embraces the wonder of a century, as the Feudal System, the Dawn of Discovery, and the Printing Press. But the fragments must be bound together by a connecting line of knowledge, however slender encircling the whole series of enquiries."

General abridgments of entire works of eminent writers, though they may give us a sufficient acquaintance with certain dry hard facts, are for the most part always heavy, dull and disappointing, and just so in proportion to the excellence of the original work. What we yearn after are the graphic details, the minute incidents, the reality, that enables us to bring the scene, as it were, all before us, and secure our warm interest on behalf of those engaged. We shall for ever find all this in translations; but it is next to impossible in mere abridgments. Good translations are like good engravings from the pictures of great masters; they cannot give us all the richness of the coloring, but they may give us the beauty of the design, and all the minute incidents of the piece. In abridgments also, we lose all or nearly all evidence of the talent of the original author; the reflections and political sagacity, which are so large a portion of their value. Why, how large a portion of the arguments used by the late Sir S. Romilly and Sir. J. Macintosh, in their speeches in the House of Commons, on the subject of capital punishment, is to be found in the 3rd Book of Thucydides, in the debate at Athens, specially in the speech of Diodotus, respecting the execution of Mitylenæans. Again, what thrilling interest is given in the same author, by the minute touches with which he fills up the pictures, in his account of the siege of Platæa, the Corcyræan Sedition, or the plague at Athens—the last not surpassed by the fictitious tale of Defoe, respecting the Plague of London. Once more, what is it has so roused public attention, during the last twelve months, on the subject of the present Crimean expedition? Has it not been because we have had so constantly before us all the little details of the sufferings, the heroism, the wounds and the death of the combatants? Just so is the account given by the Grecian historian of the expedition of the Athenians to Syracuse. An expedition which, in so many ways, bears a singular resemblance to the siege of Sebastopol: though differing in this most material particular, that at Syracuse the besieged, at Sebastopol the besiegers, proved victorious. We have first the account of the magnificent preparations of the armament; the names of the commanders, their characters, the reluctance with which Nicias accepts the post assigned him; the expedition sails. Then the little episode of the overthrow of the statues of Mercury, throughout the whole city of Athens; the consequent ferment; Alcibiades, the most energetic of the leaders, is implicated, and his recall decided upon. The arrival of the expedition at Syracuse; the description of that city, with its several fortified harbors, and lines of fortification on the land side. The first successes of the Athenians. A rising ground which nearly commanded the whole city taken by surprise; but the besiegers are then met by a counter wall; this is stormed and taken also, but another wall has been erected within. There are full descriptions of the varied success of the combatants, and the arrival of succours to each party at critical conjunctures. But at last the Athenians, after much suffering, determine to abandon the siege, as impracticable. Just as they are embarking, and when they might have made good their retreat, a total eclipse of the moon occurs,—their superstitious fears, dismay, and fatal delay in their departure, and subsequent total destruction of their whole magnificent armament—both fleet and army—are described: winding up with the closing incident respecting many of the prisoners sold as slaves in Sicily, who gained the good will and favor of their masters because they were able to repeat to them large portions of the poetry of Euripides, then at the height of his fame at Athens. So popular were the works of that great tragedian throughout Sicily, that some even of the stragglers of the defeated army are affirmed to have procured for themselves shelter and hospitality, during their flight, by the same attraction. And Euripides, we are informed, on the authority of Plutarch, lived to receive the thanks of several among these unhappy sufferers, after their return to Athens.

And the same observations will apply to poetry, where its story is matter of invention. It is still the detailed incidents that give the feeling of reality to the picture, and excite our interest and win our sympathy. Hence it is that every schoolboy when reading Homer becomes for the nonce either a Trojan or a Greek; rushes with Hector to fire the ships, yearns to give him back again his spear, when he finds how Pallas has played the warrior false in his last single combat with Achilles; or joins Diomed and Ulysses, in the excitement of their night adventure in the Trojan camp. It is for this same reason that we feel so deeply for the grief and humiliation of old King Priam, when we go with him to beg from stern Achilles the dead body of his son.

There is no doubt great difference in the style of different authors; and, independent of the matter, we are thus able to read some with much greater ease and pleasure than others. "How striking, (observes the late Mr. Sharp, in his volume of letters and essays) is this short passage in a speech of Edward the IV., to his Parliament: 'The injuries that I have received are known everywhere, and the eyes of the world are fixed upon me to see with what countenance I suffer.' If actual events could often be related in this way, there would be more books in circulating libraries than Romances and Travels. This lively and graphic style is plainly the best, though now and then the historian's criticism is wanted to support a startling fact or explain a confused transaction. Thus the learned Rudbeck in his Atlantica, ascribing an ancient temple in Sweden to one of Noah's sons: warily adds ''twas probably the youngest.' You will of course, (jocosely remarks Mr. Sharp) hasten to study his book, it is only in 4 volumes folio."

For a particular instance of the dramatic in modern history, where shall we find one more striking than in the account of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, as given in Dalrymple's History of Scotland. Dundee wandering about Lochaber, with a few miserable followers, is roused by news of an English army in full march to the pass of Killicrankie. His hopes revive. He collects his scattered bands, and falls upon the enemy filing out of the stern gateway into the highlands. In fourteen minutes infantry and cavalry are broken; Dundee, foremost in pursuit as in battle, outstrips his people: he stops and waves his hand to quicken their speed. While pointing eagerly to the pass, a musket ball pierces his armour. He rides off the field, but soon dropping from his horse, is laid under the shade of trees that stood near; when he has recovered of the faintness, he desires his attendants to lift him, and turning his eyes to the field of combat, enquires "how things went." Being told that all is well, he replies with calm satisfaction, "Then I am well," and expires.

Very similar and scarcely less graphic, is the account of the death of General Wolfe, as given in his history by Lord Mahon, who satisfies the curiosity by many little facts. It is an event made familiar to many also by the excellent relation of it in a well known popular engraving. But, of course, no abridgment can afford space for those very details which comprise the beauty and interest of the narration. And I might observe, in passing, that it was mentioned in the account of the St. Martin's Institution for the work-classes, that there were 202 adults and children who were receiving instruction in the School of Art and Design; and I believe it is desired to have a class, or classes, of something of the same kind in connection with this Institution. Now, it is true that we are in a state of infancy in many ways, and specially all that relates to what are termed the cultivation of the fine arts. But if there be any latent talent to be called into active operation, if we ever hope to have our School of Art and Design amongst us—and why may there not be natural genius and talent in the youth of Canada as well as in the youth of old England or old France?—it will be, at times, from reading such striking and stirring passages in history, that unconscious genius will draw its ideas, and gather the inspiration, which it will afterwards strive to embody in its works.

I need hardly now stop—indeed, time will not allow me—to speak much of the charms of biography: those detailed portraitures of individuals, that make us acquainted with the private life of the great, the good and the wise of every age and nation, nor detain you to enumerate all its uses. "The lives of men of science have one peculiar advantage, that they often show the importance of little things in producing great results. Smeaton drew his principle of constructing a light-house from noticing the trunk of a tree to be diminished from a curve to a cylinder. Rembrant's marvellous system of splendour and shade was suggested by accidental gleams of light and shade in his father's mill. White, of Selbourne, carrying about in his rides and walks a list of birds to be investigated, and Newton turning an old box into a water clock, or the yard of a house into a sun-dial, are examples of those habits of patient observation, which scientific biography attractively recommends. Biography will also often serve to cheer merit when its hopes are drooping. It leads down a gallery of portraits, and gives the comforting or warning history of each. It shows Jackson working on his father's shop-board, and cherishing a love of art by an occasional visit to Castle Howard; Richardson, a printer's apprentice, stealing an hour from sleep to improve his mind, and scrupulously buying his own candle, that his master might not be defrauded; or the Chinese scholar, Morrison, laboring at his trade of a last and boot maker, and keeping his lamp from blowing out with a volume of Matthew Henry's Commentary."

It will, however, be but the rare exceptions, who will go forward under the pressure of difficulties and force their way, as it were, towards the clear light of day. And it should be the business and aim of an Institution like this,as its means will allow and its influence extend, to aid and encourage all its members in the pursuit of knowledge, and the cultivation of the mind, and the advancement of science and art. Whatever may be the case with a few earnest and ardent spirits, instruction in true and useful knowledge was never yet demanded by the many, till it was in a measure forced upon them. And here I must remind you, that the noblest stimulus to exertion, and the only true rule by which wisdom and learning can be exercised to any really good end, will still be wanting, unless the principles of all education be laid in those higher motives, which have their foundation in revealed truth. I am well aware that it is not the specific business of this Institution in any instruction which it may impart, to undertake any particular charge in connection with religion; and that it does not assume the superintendence of the general training of its members. But while dwelling upon the advantages connected with science and literature and arts, while stating my desire to see them more duly appreciated and attentively cultivated,—I wish expressly, as a minister of Christ, to guard myself against ever being supposed to imply, that any real benefit can be expected to arise to any nation or people from the pursuit or attainment of knowledge, except so far as it shall be overruled and influenced by true principles of education; those which have reference to the destiny of man, as responsible for his actions to his Maker, and to his relation to Him, as being an heir, not of a mere temporal birth-right, but of immortality. Any mere cultivation of the intellect, apart from such reference to man's responsibilities to his Maker, is but preparing more subtle and powerful agents for accomplishing the work of the Prince of this World; it is, in fact, committing over again the primal sin that lost our first parents' paradise, and entailed on all mankind the curse of God—it is approaching by forbidden ways the tree of knowledge, and seeking to enjoy the fruits thereof, before we have earned our title to them by learning obedience.

I am the more anxious to enforce this, because we are yet a young country, our population is as yet comparatively small, and our character is yet in course of formation. And it will be our wisdom to take warning from what we see and hear elsewhere. Our neighbours in the United States are a great nation, increasing in wealth and numbers, exhibiting great activity of intellect, and with a vast array of public and private institutions for the intruction of youth, and imparting knowledge; yet, as I find it stated by themselves, there seems something deficient in their system. And it is well that they have the honesty, and boldness, and candour, amongst their own citizens, to denounce what is false or pernicious in their institutions or their effects, in order, if it may be so, to provoke a remedy. And while I could have no means myself of forming such an accurate opinion respecting them, and if I had, I might have been perhaps backward to declare it: yet, as their own testimony, it ought to be instructive. About ten years ago, in a fourth of July oration, delivered by Mr. Mann, the Secretary of the Massachusetts Education Board, I find such passages as the following:—

"The great experiment of Republicanism, of the capacity of men for self-government, is to be tried anew, which, wherever it has been tried,—in Greece, in Rome, in Italy,—has failed, through an incapacity in the people to enjoy liberty without abusing it. A vast continent is here to be filled up with innumerable beings, who may be happy through our wisdom, but must be miserable through our folly. In a Republican Government the ballot-box is the urn of fate, yet no God shakes the bowl, or presides over the lot. If the ballot-box is open to wisdom and patriotism and humanity, it is equally open to ignorance and treachery, to pride and envy, to contempt for the poor, or hostility to the rich. It is the loosest filter ever devised to strain out impurities. It gives equal ingress to whatever comes; no masses of selfishness and pride, no foul aggregation of cupidity or profligacy are so ponderous, as to meet obstruction in its capacious gorge."—Then having spoken of the evils in the system of government, he goes on to say —" I have shown if not incurable, yet unless cured, a fatal malady in the heart. I tremble at the catalogue of national crimes, which we are exhibiting before heaven and earth." (And having enumerated a long list, he proceeded to ask:) And are not the business relations of the community contaminated more and more with speculation and knavery? In mercantile honour and honesty, in the intercourse between buyer and seller, is there not a luxation of all the joints of the body commercial and social?" Such was the picture ten years ago; and how has it since improved? Bishop Hopkins of Vermont, in an eloquent address delivered last year before the House of Convocation of Trinity College, Connecticut, and published by request, fills up the canvass to the present time. After paying a tribute of praise to the sages and patriots, who settled the government of the United States, about seventy years ago, he proceeds to speak of its present condition and prospects: " First, then, we hear on every side the charge of political corruption. Bribery is practised in all our elections. The spoils of office are expected, as a matter of course, by the victorious party. The President of the United States dares not to be impartial: for if he were, he would loose the confidence of his friends, without gaining the confidence of his enemies. The oldest statesmen, and the most prominent cannot follow the dictates of their own judgment and conscience, without being reproached as if they were laying traps for the Presidential chair. With the other classes in the community the same charge of venality and corruption meets us again. Our merchants are accused of all sorts of dishonest management; our brokers of stock-jobbing, our city aldermen of bribery, our lawyers of knavery, our justices of complicity. The same worship of mammon serves to govern the whole, and the current phrase " the almighty dollar " is a sad but powerful exponent of the universal sin, which involves the mass of the population. But most of all, we see it in the awful blasphemy with which the Bible is denounced by male and female lecturers, while statesmen and politicians stoop to pander to this public outrage upon all religion and decency; totally forgetful of their high official duty as guardians of the faith and morals of the people, and ready to give their countenance to the most sacrilegious and wanton attacks upon the word of God. It would seem strange, indeed, if we did not find, at such a time, the loudest complaints of the increase of juvenile depravity. It is well known there are thousands of children in our large cities who are taught to live by crime; young in years but old in wickedness. In fact the christian religion, in every form, is attacked with more open boldness than at any former period. False philosophy, pretended science, spiritualism, rationalism, are all busily at work; and the light of the world is growing more and more faint as the clouds of scepticism multiply and thicken around it."

I might easily add to such testimony, but I have taken these witnesses, at an interval of some years, both persons in high official position, well acquainted with their country, men of talents and intelligence. Now it is certain that no mere acquisition of knowledge, however curious or profound, no instruction in any particular sciences, however useful or interesting, can be any remedy for such a state of things, or a safeguard against it. And I have noticed now what is said by these American citizens, that in these our earlier days, in this adjoining country, with much of the same elements both for good or evil amongst us, we may not rest satisfied without having some deeper foundation laid, for the security of our social system and national prosperity. There is something else required to make a nation truly great and her people happy, besides coffers filled with dollars, or a people full of knowledge. A heathen poet would say—"*Quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt?*" "What profit are inoperative laws without morality?" And how can we hope for morals without religion? and what is religion but submission to the law and will of God? But let us not look forward without good hope for Canada; at least, let us do our endeavour, that, the foundation being duly laid, the superstructure of her society, from the chambers of her legislature and the seats of justice to the lowliest dwelling, may, as she grows and becomes great and powerful, be yet rendered secure, and not only well able to bear, but able to impart additional force and beauty to all the achievements and triumphs of science and art.

And, with these few observations on the folly, as well as the sin, of supposing that you can rightly educate or improve a nation by merely abstract scientific or intellectual instruction; while looking upon all such work as only the adjuncts and subordinate parts of any system that ought to find favour with Christians, I shall rejoice to see this Institution accomplish the object for which it was incorporated, and in its own place take its due and proper part in the work before us; and, shall be well satisfied to contribute my labor, if I might hope thus to see it succeed. It may become, not all at once, but in due time, an instrument of much use in assisting and forwarding the studies of its members, in the manner I have hinted at in a former part of this lecture; and by-and-by also, as your means and opportunities will allow, by enlarging your library, and establishing in some systematic form, a School of Art and Design. But your young men should feel that Art and Science, to be pursued at all successfully, must be pursued earnestly, with a resolute will, and with some definite object. Nothing is more absurd than that affectation of science, which is now so often witnessed; shreds and scraps of knowledge must be gathered together from all quarters; every book must be opened, and none read; every science heard of, but none studied.

And having enlarged so much upon the pleasure as well as the advantages of studying the best histories and biographies of former times, I will now conclude with a few of the remarks made by the poet, in his conversation with Rasselas, when he tells him that, "there is no part of history so generally useful, as that which relates to the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of the reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of art, and the revolutions of the intellectual world?"

LECTURE III.

"ON TASTE AND STYLE IN LITERATURE."

DELIVERED IN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL ROOM,

AS THE

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE OF A COURSE IN CONNECTION WITH THE DIOCESAN LIBRARY,

ON MONDAY EVENING, JAN. 3, 1853.

MY purpose, in the present Lecture, will be to make a few observations on the faculty of *Taste* in general, under its definition, as it has been described to be "the power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art:" and afterwards, I shall apply the subject more particularly to works of Literature. And I must at once expressly state that I put forward no claims myself to any deep acquaintance with the fine arts, nor to any originality of idea in anything I may say on this occasion. Where it suited my purpose, I have freely availed myself of the assistance of Blair and other writers on the same subjects; not however with any view of entering into any systematic or learned disquisitions; but simply wishing, in addressing a mixed audience, like the present, to furnish them with a few rules, which may be useful to them hereafter in forming their opinions of, and increasing their relish for, and pleasure to be derived from works of acknowledged excellence.

There is a common saying respecting Tastes, which has passed into a proverb, viz: "that there is no disputing about Tastes;"

that is, that one person has as much right to his Taste, and to consider it the most correct, as another has to his; and that therefore there are no means of settling the question between them. And this to a certain extent is true. The Tastes of men may differ very considerably as to their object, and yet none of them be wrong. One man relishes Poetry most; another takes pleasure in nothing but History. One prefers Comedy, another Tragedy. One admires the simple, another the ornamented style. In Architecture some prefer the Gothic, some the classical orders. In Painting some may delight most in the bold outlines and glowing colors of Rubens, others in the stateliness and high finish of a Vandyck. In Music some may prefer the simplicity and grandeur of Handel, others the ornate beauty of Mozart, or the elaborate science of Beethoven. Though all differ, yet all pitch upon some one beauty, which peculiarly suits their turn of mind; and therefore no one individual has a title to condemn the rest. It is not in matters of Taste, as in questions of *mere* reason, and of course specially in the exacter sciences, where there is but one conclusion that can be true, and all the rest are erroneous. Truth, which is the object of reason, is one; beauty, which is the object of Taste, is manifold. Taste, therefore, admits of latitude and diversity of objects; but it must, in each case, be in sufficient consistency with goodness and justness of Taste. And then comes the question, whether there is any standard of Taste; and, if there be, how it is to be applied? If Taste be a "power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of Nature and of Art," there must be degrees in the quality of Taste, according to the excellence of the subject matter; and *that* must be, in a certain degree, tested by *reason;* and I may say, by *experience* also, since a man may in ignorance admire at one time what increased experience will lead him to reject at another. And the works of Nature, which bear the impress of their Divine Original, are, in a certain measure, a guide by which to judge of works of art. But it requires experience to become a good judge. Some people, no doubt, have a certain exquisite innate perception of the beautiful; they possess, what is termed, a natural good Taste, which will manifest itself at all times. But this is not the case with the many. In the same way, we have heard of instances of persons who seem almost to have been born Mathematicians, but they are the rare exceptions; and we most of us require to have our Tastes formed by the exercise of *reason* and *experience*. *Experience*, which gives us the opportunity of comparing different specimens, and *reason*, which enables us to judge of the fitness and adaptation of the object under inspection for the end proposed, and the harmony of its several parts, which is one great element of beauty. And, moreover, there is a rule of perfection in the works of *nature*, which is manifested more and more to the observer, and which it is the business of *art* to aim at obtaining. Let us see how this operates in any different examples. To take a very simple one:—Many people are fond of flowers; they possess, perhaps, a Carnation plant, which bears an abundance of flowers of a large size, and striped in varied marks with red and white; they admire and cherish it. But some friend, it may be, a little more advanced in floriculture, will inform them that their favorite is but a poor specimen; that, though large and full of blossoms, it is not true; that its colors are all run, and its shape contrary to all rule. And this is a fact, which, bye and bye, when they have seen and marked more perfect specimens of the same flower, will at once approve itself to their own reason. And nature proves it too; for while by care and attention you may perpetuate the perfect specimen in its identity, the imperfect one is ever varying; no two flowers, perhaps, will resemble each other, and all will be false. By *reason* and *experience* then, an improved Taste is acquired, and you learn to judge more correctly of the Beautiful, and, to a certain extent, of, what we may even term, the True. All Tastes are, so to speak, progressive; they are formed and improved by that exercise of our reason, which we are enabled to call into play by enlarged acquaintance with the works of nature and of art. This is the case in Music, Painting, Architecture and Literature; and the same principle, which enables us to form a correct judgment in these departments of art, will influence us in other matters also, such as Dress, Equipages, Furniture, and general manners and conversation. We learn to appreciate things by a different rule, and require a certain propriety, a harmony (which simply means a fitting together) in all the parts to satisfy us. And where we meet with these requisites we shall derive a depth and intensity of gratification, of which, in times past, we had no conception.

There is no doubt often an affectation of Taste, a pretence of admiring because it is considered the right thing to do so; while the individuals expressing such admiration, or affecting such Taste, may neither understand nor appreciate the works they are praising. But this is beside the present question. As there are some people, who, as I said, have a natural and intuitive correct Taste, so some others will always retain a false one; as there are some people who cannot distinguish colors, and others who perceive no difference between different tunes. I speak, however, of the general state of the case; that there is a certain standard of Taste, which, though not defined exactly, is yet a *real* one; and by experience we become fully conscious of it, appreciate it, and acknowledge its truth. Taste is progressive; and in general we always find, until cultivated and refined, that it rests with most satisfaction upon what is *merely* vast, or what is ornamented and showy; without reference to any rules of concinnity, harmony, fitness or propriety. Let us take one of the lowest specimens in connection with dress: viz., the passion for an accumulation of all the brightest and gaudiest colors, which is manifested so generally by negroes—and in a certain degree by many of a different class. So again with respect to Music, you will always find, that any people who know but little of music, receive but little satisfaction from any thing which has not, what is termed, a great deal of tune in it; and that they will listen with far more delight to a comic song set to some jingling notes, than to the finest pieces of Handel or Mozart. But this would not continue if they had sufficient experience to test their Taste; and nothing is more remarkable than the growth in England, specially in London, during the last few years, of a true Taste for the better styles of both vocal and instrumental Music; though the English are certainly not a people of musical genius, like the Germans and Italians. Besides many other places used for like purposes, in the great room at Exeter Hall, which will hold upwards of 3,000 people, with an orchestra for 500, Oratorios are performed all through the winter to such crowded audiences that every inch of standing room is filled; and this not for the sake of any particular popular singer, but for the sake of the music itself. The Messiah of Handel, the creation of Haydn, the Elijah of Mendelssohn, a work confessedly so scientific that it requires to be heard *often* to be fitly appreciated, are the objects of their admiration. These concerts, though all classes are present, are for the most part attended by the neighbouring tradespeople and their families, who not long since would have been tempted out by nothing less exciting than an Ethiopian melody.

The same change, though at a slower rate, is being effected in the public taste in the department of Painting, by the greater facilities afforded for becoming acquainted with the works of the great masters in the National Gallery, Lord Ellesmere's and others, freely opened to the public. And it is not possible that any one, whose eye has been accustomed to delight in the richness of Rubens, or whose imagination has been excited by the inspiration of Raphael, can fail to see the justness of that Taste, which accords to them such an illustrious place in the Temple of Fame; and while deriving intense gratification from the contemplation of their works, he will turn with indifference from the gaudy canvass, which he perhaps had once fondly regarded as a masterpiece of art.

Good Taste will particularly require that there should be a certain harmony and propriety in all the parts of any work; not satisfied with any amount of ornament, which is not in place and keeping. Thus, however excellent may be the quavers and flourishes of any scientific singer, yet if they are intruded into the music of Handel, for instance, they will be so out of place, so out of keeping with his majestic simplicity, that they will utterly destroy its character and effect. Just as if in Architecture you were to erect a Portico, with Corinthian pillars, for a Temple of the severe simplicity of the Doric order; or what is still more incongruous, a highly ornamental Grecian porch for a Gothic church: as is the case in the great church of St. Mary's at Oxford. However such ornaments may be admired in themselves, they are out of place.

But to form a correct Taste in Music, Painting or Architecture, it is requisite that the best models should be studied. In Painting, the first thing which attracts the attention of the many, is the story, if there be one; but this evidently has nothing to do with the painting, since it is equally well told in an engraving, or in a painted *copy*. This is soon mastered, and can be learned at once by reference to the printed text of a catalogue; and when once understood, there is nothing further to be developed by it. But this is but a small portion of the painter's art; the poetry, the imagination, the high artistic skill which depends on the genius of the artist, and which are shown in the lights and shadows—the depth and richness of colouring—the force of expression—all this requires long study to appreciate. It gives such an enduring interest to the portraits of Vandyck, and the great master-pieces of Correggio, Caracci or Raphael. The same occurs in Poetry. What numbers have read " The Lady of the Lake," or " Marmion," simply for the story; utterly regardless of all the beautiful imagery and poetic fire which constitute their highest charm and excellence.

Here on this side the Atlantic there must be, for many years, great disadvantages in forming a correct Taste in most of the Fine Arts from want of facility of access to the best models. In painting, scarcely any single specimens of the best masters are to be seen anywhere by the public on this continent; and there does not exist one great public collection of them. There is one public exhibition of pictures in New York, the Dusseldorf Gallery, which is a collection of works of modern German artists, sent there for exhibition and sale: and though including some pictures of considerable merit, yet as a general gallery of Art it is quite without pretensions.

Where there is but little familiarity with the style of the old Masters, great impositions are often practised; and a school of painters is said to exist in Italy for the purpose of manufacturing pictures which may pass for old originals, and which are being constantly bought up as such. These copies easily remain undetected, where they are not exposed to the examination of any experienced judges. But you could not exhibit a copy of any ancient master in London for a single day, how excellently soever it might be executed, without its being immediately detected as such, by many scrutinizing eyes, which know at once the exquisite touch of Caracci and Correggio, Julio Romano and Raphael; and each distinct from the other, as well as if their names were emblazoned in full at the bottom of the picture. This arises from having their judgments corrected by experience, and their Taste raised by long familiarity with excellence. And so also in Architecture. Where shall we look in this country for any pure specimens of Art? And in Music we must likewise to a considerable extent, be at great disadvantage in these respects, when compared with the inhabitants of England and the continent of Europe.

But if this be so in these branches of Art, from the difficulty of access to more perfect models, the same need not be the case, to the like degree, in Literature.—Raphael's great work of "the Transfiguration" in the Vatican, or his "Madonna di San Sisto" in the Dresden Gallery,—the Crucifixion of St. Peter by Rubens at Cologne,—or that marvellous "Statue that enchants the world" in the Tribune of the Florence Gallery,—the ecclesiastical edifices in Normandy and England,—the colossal remains of the Flavian Amphitheatre at Rome, or the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens,—are single and alone; they cannot be reproduced and multiplied in their identity, and made equally accessible to the inhabitants of every nation.—But the Art of Printing enables every one, if he pleases, at a trifling cost, to be as familiar with the works of the ancient or modern Augustan ages of Literature, in the backwoods or wilds of North America, as in the most famed seats of learning on the banks of the Isis, or amidst the groves of Academus. Of course it is not likely that in such different localities they will be studied with equal assiduity or success; and there must be many advantages, arising from without, that are accessible in one and not in the other. But still, as contrasted with the sister arts, the path of Literature is thus comparatively laid open, and in consequence the best models may be studied, and the taste improved, and what is excellent appreciated. And there is such an affinity between these different branches of Art, that the formation of a just Taste, capable of appreciating the Beautiful and the True in any one department, will prepare the way for the development of an improved Taste in others also. For it will give a more correct standard to the mind and feelings, and will cause a craving after a just proportion, a harmony, a fitness of parts in whatever may be under consideration. And it will generally be found that the same style which is approved in the one, will be approved in the other Arts also; and the power of appreciating excellence in one having been attained, will, by developing the faculties of discrimination, and raising the standard of true Taste, assist in cultivating a *general Taste* capable, to a certain extent, of being applied, when required, to any objects presented. It may, for instance, be generally expected that a person who is fond of tropes and figures, and what is often termed fine language, or flowery eloquence, will also give the preference to the Corinthian capitals, or the later florid style of Gothic Architecture, with its flamboyant windows and richly carved mouldings; while another, who gives the preference to Addison and Hume, instead of Johnson and Gibbon, as models of style in Literature, will be far more likely to give the palm to the earlier Gothic edifices, where the great harmony of the whole is less disturbed by the elaborate development of single parts; or to point with admiration to where " in simplest grandeur stands a Dorian Fane."

Having then made these few and hasty remarks on Taste in general, let us apply the subject more particularly to Literature; and this, more especially, because it may be more practically useful: the means of improving our Taste, and raising our judgment of the Beautiful and True to a more correct standard, being, in this department of Art, more easily accessible to all.

It was a saying of that wily diplomatist, Talleyrand, that, " speech was given us in order that we might be able to conceal our thoughts." Without entering upon the duties of diplomatic reserve, certainly, ordinarily considered, the use of words and language, whether written or spoken, is intended to assist us in making manifest thought, and conveying information. And if that be so, care should be taken that, in composition, *that* end be effected; that, whatever be the subject, or whatever the style, it should be clear and intelligible, from the right use of words, true grammatical construction, and proper formation of sentences. That, supposing there *be* something which is intended to be told, that we *have* some information to communicate, it should be done in a manner capable of being understood.

With respect to the right use of words, people of imperfect education, who affect fine language, often make sad blunders. This has been broadly ridiculed by Shakspeare and other dramatic writers, in the characters of Dogberry, Mrs. Malaprop, and the like. But, without offending to such an extent, more careful persons often write and express themselves loosely, confounding words in common use, but of widely different meaning, such, for example, as secure and safe; since a person may be quite *safe*, liable to no danger, and yet not *secure*, free from all apprehension; and vice versa, he may feel quite secure, when really least safe. So again Pride and Vanity are often spoken of as if they were synonymous, or almost necessarily developed in the same character; whereas a really *proud* person is hardly ever *vain*, nor a *vain* one *proud*. A *proud* person thinks so highly of himself, that he is perfectly indifferent to what the rest of the world think of him. A *vain* man is timidly solicitous for the applause of others because he does not feel really proud and self-satisfied. Then, there is great care required in the use and proper location of pronouns; most useful parts of speech, when rightly applied, but making sad confusion and nonsense, when out of place. So careful and elegant a writer as Addison is not always free from censure, as Blair remarks, in this respect. Thus in the Spectator, No. 412, he writes, "We no-where meet with a more glorious and pleasing show in nature, than what appears in the heavens at the rising and setting of the Sun, *which* is wholly made up of those different stains of light, that shew themselves in clouds of a different situation." *Which* is here designed to connect with the word show, as its antecedent; but it stands so wide from it, that without a careful attention to the sense, we should be naturally led, by the rules of syntax, to refer it to the rising and setting of the Sun, or to the Sun itself; and hence an indistinctness is thrown over the whole sentence. The following passage in one of Bishop Sherlock's sermons is still more censurable: "It is folly to pretend to arm ourselves against the accidents of life, by heaping up treasures, which nothing can protect us against, but the good providence of our Heavenly Father."—*Which*, the relative pronoun, always refers, grammatically, to the immediately preceding substantive, which here is treasures; but this would make nonsense of the whole period. The sentence ought to have stood thus: "It is folly to pretend, by heaping up treasures, to arm ourselves against the accidents of life, which nothing can protect us against, but the good providence of our heavenly Father."

Metaphors, similies, and the like figures of speech are often of great force and beauty; but they must be well sustained and apposite, or they only create confusion, and appear ridiculous. For instance, when we read in the Spectator, that, "there is not a single view of human nature, which is not sufficient to extinguish the seeds of Pride:" observe the incoherence of the things here joined together, making a *view extinguish*, and *extinguish seeds.*

The use of the parenthesis is always to be avoided, if possible; and is hardly ever really necessary; it weakens the force of a sentence, and renders it less distinct. Boswell, in his Life of Johnson, says: "Johnson's attention to precision and clearness in expression was very remarkable. He disapproved of a parenthesis; and, I believe, in all his voluminous writings not half-a-dozen of them will be found."

But perhaps few things are of more importance than *the structure of the sentence;* not only to have them grammatically formed, and full of words rightly applied, but the whole put together in a pleasing and intelligible manner. The sentences should not be all uniform, as that creates a wearisome monotony; nor too long, as then they are apt to become obscure. Clarendon, in his great work on "The Rebellion," errs sadly in the length of his sentences; which must make it a very fatiguing book to read aloud. Milton, in his work on "The Reformation," makes the second sentence run into 29 folio lines, divided into nearly as many members. Hammond, one of our most learned Divines, exceeds terribly in the length of his sentences. What would you think of my commencing a Sermon, as he once did, with such a compact little sentence as the following? "There is not, I conceive, any piece of divinity more unluckily "mistaken, more inconveniently corrupted by the passions and "lusts of a man, made more instrumental to their foulest purposes, "than that of the promises of Christ; whether by giving them the "enclosure and monopoly of our faith,—the commands of Christ "and the threats of Christ, which have as much right to be believed "as they, His kingly and prophetic office, to which he was as particularly anointed as to that of our priest, being for the most part "set aside as unnecessary, and by many steps and degrees at last "not only left quite out of our faith, but withal fallen under our "envy, become matter of quarrel against any that shall endeavour "to obtrude them not only so impertinently, but so dangerously, "either on our gospel, or on our practice,—or whether again by "persuading ourselves and others that the promises of Christ are "particular and absolute, confined to some few, and to those howsoever they be qualified; when the whole harmony and contexture "of Christian doctrine proclaims directly the contrary, that they "are general and conditional, a picture that looks every man in "the face that comes into the room, but cannot be imagined to eye "any man else, unrestrained to all so they shall perform the condition, those diffusive store-houses sealed up against all who do not "perform it." And this is only one of many consecutive similar sentences.

But it is very possible occasionally to introduce a lengthened sentence with good effect, where a leading idea is carefully kept in view; and when it is followed by shorter ones it affords a grateful relief to the ear. Thus Bishop Jebb, whose style is always chaste, correct, and pleasing, and often eloquent, speaking of the call of Abraham says:—" The generous patriarch obeyed. "Without a murmur or a doubt, he forsook his country, because "his country was forsaking God. The endearing recollections of "childhood; the chosen companions of his youth; the long cherished habits of age; his plans of future activity; his prospects of "future enjoyment; his country, that name, which embraces all the "charities of life, which no adventurer thinks of, in a distant land, "without a fond hope that he may at length revisit those scenes, "which he never can forget; his father's house,—that residence of "purity and innocence and unreserved affection, which we love to "recall, amid the cares and competitions of a selfish world, which "awakens in prodigals themselves the embers of their early virtue;— "all were insufficient to warp his steady purpose; all were incom-

"petent to shake his holy resolution. God had promised, and " Abraham believed. God had called, and Abraham obeyed.—He " therefore became a voluntary outcast. He therefore traversed " regions that he had not seen, to reach a country which he did not " know. Assured that, in all regions, God would be his guide and " protector. Assured that his posterity should flourish in the " promised land."

To go, however, into any particulars respecting styles of writing, under the various heads under which they have been classed,—sublime, pathetic, diffuse, concise, feeble, nervous, plain, elegant, flowery, &c., would be far beyond the limits now afforded us. But since, as I have observed, the communication of knowledge, the imparting new ideas, is the object to be kept in view, this must not be lost sight of, because of any satisfaction imparted to the ear, either by the musical structure of the sentence, or the use of mellifluous or imposing words. A grandiloquent florid style of composition often meets with many admirers, who would probably be puzzled for a reply, if they were to be asked, what ideas they had gained from what they had heard? though they might not perhaps feel all the humility, which Southey, in his curious, and most interesting work, " The Doctor," ascribes to " a woman in humble life; who, on being asked on the way back from church, whether she had understood the sermon which a stranger had preached, and which had been both a long and abstruse one, gave as her simple and contented answer, 'wud I hae the presumption?' " Dr. Johnson has much to answer for in exciting a taste for a grandiloquent style; but then his was not *mere* verbiage; he had abundance of matter. Dr. Johnson has been supposed, with some reason I believe, to have formed his style after the model of Sir Thos. Brown, from whose works he quotes continually in his *Dictionary*. Brown wrote on " Vulgar errors," and also other works; where such sentences as these occur:—" Scintillations are " not the accension of the air upon the collision of two hard bodies, " but rather the inflammable effluences discharged from the bodies " collided." And again, " Ice is figured in its guttulous descent " from the air, and grows greater or lesser, according unto the " accretion or pluvious aggelation about the mother and fundamen-

"tal atoms thereof." But if Johnson imitated Brown's style, he gave the praise to Addison's; for in his life of Addison he says: "Whoever wishes to acquire a style which is familiar but not "coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and "nights to the volumes of Addison."

It has been surmised that after Johnson had written his *Dictionary*, he introduced such a number of hard words into "The Rambler," in order to oblige people to buy the *Dictionary*, that they might be able to find out their meaning. In his conversation he got so fond of such long sounding words, that often, after having expressed himself in simple words, he would go over it again, and translate his speech into something more sonorous. A lady having one day said that she doubted Mr. Thomas Hollis was an Atheist. Johnson replied, 'I don't know that. He might perhaps have become one, if he had time to ripen;' then, smiling, 'he might have exuberated into an Atheist.'

But, however such a style may be tolerated, or even admired, when it *is* the vehicle of an abundance of matter and powerful thought, it is a gross imposture when used without such accompaniments; and it is certainly a great mistake to suppose that simplicity of style and easy language are not fully capable of expressing the sublime, the beautiful, and the pathetic.

When Sir Walter Scott was contemplating writing "The Tales of a Grandfather," he entered into his *Diary* the following passage:—"A good thought came into my head to write "stories for little Johnie Lockhart, from 'the History of Scotland,' "like those taken from 'The History of England,' by Croker. "But I will not write mine quite so simply as he has done. I am "persuaded both children, and the lower class of readers, hate books "which are written *down* to their capacity, and love those that are "composed more for their elders and betters. I will make it, if "possible, a book that a child shall understand, yet a man will "feel some temptation to peruse, should he chance to take it up. "I will require, however, a simplicity of style not quite my own. "*The grand and interesting consists in ideas, not in words.* A "clever thing of this sort might have a race." How admirably he succeeded in his attempt, it is needless for me now to say; or how great has been the pleasure and improvement afforded to young and old. The author of "Companions of my Solitude" remarks "that of all defects, *that* which has been most fatal to a good style "is the not knowing when to come to an end. Take some inferior "writer's works. Dismiss nearly all the adjectives; when he "uses many substantives, either in juxtaposition, or in some de-"pendence on each other, reduce him to one; do the same with the "verbs; finally omit all the adverbs; and you will perhaps find out "that this writer had something to say, which you might never "have discovered, if you had not removed the superfluous words. "Indeed in thinking of the kind of writing that is needed, I am "reminded of a stanza in a wild Arab song, which runs thus:—

"Terrible he rode along,
"With his Yemen sword for aid;
"Ornament it carried none,
"But the notches on the blade.

"So in the best writing, only *that* is ornament, which shows some "service done, which has some dint of thought about it."

The great Roman critic observes, "To your expression be attentive, but about your matter be solicitous." And still further, in all compositions of a serious kind, the object, as Pope remarks, should invariably be to turn the attention

"From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart."

Since the days of the great philosophic critic of Palmyra, Longinus, down to those of Blair and the moderns, the words of the Jewish lawgiver,—"no common person," as Longinus designates Moses, all recognition of anything like Divine inspiration being, in his estimation, of course, quite out of the question,—the words of the Jewish lawgiver have been for ever quoted, as a notable instance of the true sublime; yet words more simple in themselves could scarcely be uttered. As for what is *called* the sublime style, observes Blair, it is for the most part a very bad one, and has no relation whatever to the *real* sublime. Persons are apt to imagine that magnificent words, accumulated epithets, and a certain swelling kind of expression, by rising above what is usual or vulgar, contributes to, or even forms, the sublime.—Nothing can be more false: "God said, let there be light, and there was light." And this, in the Hebrew, as Moses wrote it, and in the Greek, is still simpler, and expressed in fewer words, "*genestho phos kai egeneto*"—"Let there be light, and there was light." This is striking and sublime. But put it in what is commonly called the sublime style: "The Sovereign Arbiter of Nature, by the potent energy of a single word, commanded the light to exist"; and, as Boileau has well observed, the style indeed is raised, but the thought is fallen.

In general, in all good writing, the sublime lies in the thought, not in the words; and when the thought is truly noble, it will for the most part clothe itself in a native dignity of language. Milton is simple in the midst of all his grandeur; and Demosthenes in the midst of all his vehemence. Milton shows too how harmony of expression may be preserved even among monosyllables, in Adam and Eve's Morning Hymn:

> "His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
> "Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
> "With every plant, in sign of worship wave."

Here we have three lines, of which the second, although composed entirely of monosyllables, is the most harmonious; indeed, throughout the whole of this beautiful Hymn the abundance of monosyllabic words is very remarkable, several lines being made up entirely of them.

Most of the passages from the best authors, which are being forever quoted as remarkable for their force and beauty, have a chasteness and simplicity about them, even when combined with the greatest richness of fancy and strength of idea. For those who are fond of the sweet music of language, perhaps there is hardly a sentence to be found more remarkable, than the well-known and often repeated one, with which Dr. Johnson commences his beautiful Tale of Rasselas; and which is the more apposite for our present purpose, because, though not all expressed in simple Saxon, yet is encumbered with none of his sesquipedalian words: "Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope, who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow, attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia." Scarcely less known, and even more striking, are the words of Bishop Horne, in which he describes the conclusion of his labours, in his Preface to his much-valued Commentary on the Psalms: "And now could the Author flatter himself, that any one would take half the pleasure in reading the following exposition, which he has taken in writing it, he would not fear the loss of his labor. The employment detached him from the bustle and hurry of life, the din of politics and the noise of folly; vanity and vexation flew away for a season, care and disquietude came not near his dwelling. He arose, fresh as the morning, to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it: and he can truly say that food and rest were not preferred before it. Every Psalm improved infinitely upon his acquaintance with it, and no one gave him uneasiness but the last; for then he grieved that his work was done. Happier hours than those which have been spent on these meditations on the Songs of Zion, he never expects to see in this world. Very pleasantly did they pass, and moved smoothly and swiftly along, for while thus engaged he counted no time. They are gone, but they have left a relish and a fragrance upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet." Simpler expressions it were hardly possible to use; while he that uttered them must have learnt the sweet melody of words, as well as thought, from those lovely songs of Zion, he had been so fondly and profitably studying.

I shall only give you one more passage, of a different cast of thought; but still simple in diction, though vivid in the picture set before you, and full of power. It is on the vanity of wordly greatness, from a sermon by Dr. Donne: "The ashes of an oak in the chimney are no epitaph of that oak to tell me how high, or how large it was. It tells me not what flocks it sheltered while it stood; nor what men it hurt when it fell. The dust of great persons is speechless too; it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing. As soon the dust of a wretch, whom thou wouldst not, as of a prince whom thou couldst not look upon, would trouble thine eyes if the wind blew it thither; and when a whirlwind hath blown the dust of a churchyard into the church, and the man sweeps out the dust of the church into the churchyard, who will undertake to sift these dusts again and to pronounce, 'This is the patrician, this is the noble flower, this is the yeomanly, this is the plebeian bran.'" Coleridge once, in noticing this passage, added a brief, but expressive, "very beautiful indeed."

If beauty and force of expression can thus be combined, both in poetry and prose, with much simplicity, it is well to be guarded against that tinsel splendor of language, which some authors perpetually affect; but which is so often very contemptible. It were well if this could always be ascribed to the real overflowing of a rich imagination. We should then have something to amuse us, if we found little to instruct. But the worst is, that, with such frothy writers, it is a luxuriancy of words, not of fancy. We see a labored attempt to rise to a splendor of composition, of which they have formed to themselves some loose idea; but having no strength of genius for attaining it, they endeavour to supply the defect by poetical words, by cold exclamations, by common place figures, and every thing that has the appearance of pomp and magnificence. It has escaped such persons that sobriety in ornament, an essential element of good Taste, is the great secret for rendering it pleasing, wherever it can be justly appreciated; and that without a foundation of good sense and solid thought, the most florid style is but a childish imposition on the public. The public, however, are but too apt to be imposed upon, and too often ready to be caught, at first sight, with whatever is dazzling and gaudy.

But it is impossible, as passing time warns me, to do more in a single Lecture of this description, than in a very general way to offer such remarks, as may be suggestive rather, than completely to discuss so wide a subject. I wish I may, in this respect, have succeeded in even a little measure. But why should we be thus solicitous for the development of a true Taste in the works of nature and of art, and for the appreciation of a correct Style in Literature? As a Christian Minister I would say: because, in doing this, we are cultivating those higher powers with which the Almighty has endowed us; and giving proper scope and exercise to faculties, which were surely intended for use, and meant to be improved.

Our merely animal appetites we share in common with the creatures of a lower order of being; but, in all that pertains to the exercise of reason and intellectual gifts, man stands alone. And in proportion as we can enter into, and duly appreciate the finest works of Art and Literature, and acquire a correct Taste, and see their real points of excellence, we are thus creating food for the strengthening and enjoyment of some of our better gifts, for the possession of which we must, one day, render account. Such pursuits will always, in their degree, have a tendency to raise the tone and character of a people; and leave them less time, less inclination, and less *bad* Taste, for the indulgence of mere sensual pleasures, vice, and, what always leads to vice, unoccupied time and vacancy of mind.

Amusement and recreations of some kind we all want; and we have different vocations in life, wherein some are called more directly to work with the hand, and some are called more directly to work with the head. But it would not be much out of place, if we all remembered in maturer age, applying it to our altered circumstances, what perhaps most of us have, often too thoughtlessly, repeated in our childhood, out of one of Dr. Watt's simplest little Hymns:

In books or works or HEALTHFUL play,
May my first years be past,
That I may give for every day
Some good account at last.

In the simplicity of the diction we forget the greatness of the thought. And having referred to the example of the bee, which gathers food from every flower, and usefully employs its time, and which may teach us the duty of gathering-in wholesome food and improvement from all the works of God, the Hymn concludes with what is of universal application to young and old, and will refer as well to idle heads and tongues, as to idle hands:

In works of labor or of skill
I would be busy too:
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

NOTE.—It may interest some readers to examine the following "Definitions of Taste," which I have noted down since I delivered this Lecture:—

"The best definition of Taste was given by the earliest editor of Spencer, who proved himself to possess any, (Mr. Hughes), when he called it a kind of 'extempore judgment.' Burke's view was not dissimilar. He explained it to be 'an instinct, which immediately awakens the emotion of pleasure or dislike.' Akenside is clear, as he is poetical, on the question:—

'What, then, is Taste, but those internal powers,
Active and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse? A discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
For things deformed, or disarranged, or gross
In species. This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor public state, nor culture can bestow,
But God alone, when first His sacred hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.'

"We may, therefore, consider Taste to be a settled habit of discerning faults and excellencies in a moment,—the mind's independent expression of approval or aversion. It is that faculty by which we discover and enjoy the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime in literature, art, and nature; which recognizes a noble thought, as a virtuous mind welcomes a virtuous sentiment, by an involuntary glow of satisfaction. But while the principle of perception is inherent in the soul, it requires a certain amount of knowledge to draw out and direct it. The uttermost ignorance has no curiosity. Captain Cook met with some savages who entirely disregarded his ship—the first they had ever seen—as it sailed by them. * * * Taste is not stationary. * * * * A taste enriched by observation and training, sensitive even to the tremble of the balance by which the scale is suspended, is probably one of the most desirable endowments of the mind. It enjoys some of the humbler qualities of invention."—*Willmott's "Pleasures of Literature."*

The late John Bowdler, jr., in one of his essays, (a Review of Dugald Stewart's *Philosophical Essays*), after giving the definitions of Blair and Akenside, says:—"According to both these writers, Taste is merely, or exactly synonymous with Sensibility. Mr. Burke long ago objected to these and similar definitions; and Mr. Stewart has satisfactorily shewn that they are erroneous. Taste and Sensibility are certainly not conceived to be synonymous terms in the common apprehensions of mankind. Sensibility is often possessed, even to excess, by persons who are very deficient in Taste. * * * * * Mr. Stewart's account of this power is to the following effect: 'In objects presented to the mind an indefinite variety of circumstances may concur in producing that agreeable impression to which all give the name of Beauty. Yet the impression, as far as our consciousness can judge of it, is simple and uncompounded. It is impossible, then, for the most acute Sensibility, united with the greatest sagacity, to say, upon a single experiment, what are the circumstances in the supposed object to which we are chiefly indebted for the agreeable impression produced; what those, if any, that may be considered neutral; and what those which tend to diminish and injure the general effect. It is only by watching attentively a great variety of experiments upon different things that we can arrive at that discriminating knowledge which enables us to separate, in every expression, those circumstances which have been favourable to the general result from those which have been injurious to it. This power of discrimination we call Taste. It supposes of necessity some sensibility to pleasure and pain; but it is formed to the perfection, in which we see it often possessed, chiefly by diligence in multiplying, and accuracy in watching, those intellectual experiments from whence the materials which inform and exercise it are supplied. Mr. Stewart says: 'It is observed by Shenstone, that *good Taste and good-nature are inseparably united;* and although the observation is by no means true, when thus stated as an unqualified proposition, it will be found to have a sufficient foundation in fact to deserve the attention of those who have a pleasure in studying the varieties of human character.'"

Mrs. Piozzi remarks: "It is observable that the further people advance in elegance, the less they value splendour; distinction being at last the positive thing, which mortals elevated above competency naturally desire. Necessity must, we know, be first supplied; convenience then requires to be contented; but so soon as men can find means after that period to make themselves eminent for Taste, they learn to despise those paltry distinctions which riches alone can bestow."

LECTURE IV.

"SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF A VISIT TO ABBOTSFORD, AND OF SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES."

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG MEN,

IN THE BONAVENTURE HALL,

ON MONDAY EVENING, THE 10TH OF JANUARY, 1859.

ABOUT three weeks ago, I delivered the first of a Course of Lectures before such of the members of this Association as attend the Bible class; and this evening I am to commence another Course of a more general character, in the delivering of which we shall also have the assistance of some of the talent and learning of our Lay brethren. Notwithstanding the severity of the cold this day, unprecedented for the last thirty years, I am pleased to see so many assembled on this occasion; and I trust that the Course arranged by the Association, and thus auspiciously commenced, will be successful, not only in a pecuniary point of view, and thereby encreasing the funds at its command, but also in providing the means of usefully and pleasantly passing an evening—attracting a fair attendance of auditors, who may receive instruction in many useful general subjects, and an additional incentive to seek the improvement of their minds, and the cultivation of their tastes. And I do feel that if this end be answered, we shall not have altogether spent our labors in vain. With this object in view, I propose on the present occasion to put together a few remarks respecting some of our modern English poets: rather, however, by way of anecdote, than as entering upon any general disquisition respecting them, but still giving occasionally a few quotations for the purpose of illustration.

It has been observed by a late English critic that, whatever be the cause, the effect appears undeniable, that we shall generally look in vain for satisfactory lives of the poets of the highest order: such lives as may furnish a real account, not merely a conjectural solution, of the chief facts in their history—their works. Of Homer for instance, who can affirm anything positive beyond the simple matters in the fragment preserved by Thucydides: that he was blind, that he resided in Chios, that he exercised the profession of *aoidos* (minstrel or bard), and in that character went occasionally (amongst other places) to Delos? Of the great father of tragic poetry, Æschylus, we can hardly be said to know more facts; but those which are preserved to us are more important, they are the critical points of his life—that he served actively as a soldier, that he fought at Salamis, that he invented additions of no small moment to the mechanical and scenical part of tragedy, that finding himself eclipsed by Sophocles he retired in his old age from Athens to Sicily; and lastly, and perhaps we may say chiefly, with regard to his cast of poetry, that he was a disciple of the Pythagorean school. The histories of Pindar, Lucretius, Virgil, and our own Spenser and Shakspeare, so much of them as is certainly known, might be related in as few and as brief sentences as these. Our modern poets suffer rather from an inconvenience of a different kind: not always happy in their biographers, the public are too often wearied with voluminous and uninteresting correspondence, and minute details, which are not given with spirit, and have no tendency even to illustrate character. Consequently, though their biographies are written in fullest detail, they are comparatively but little read; and thus much of the interest that might be attached to their works is lost. This is very much the case with recent biographies of Campbell, Wordsworth, Southey and Moore. Indeed, it requires no small judgment and peculiar talent to compose a successful and characteristic Biography, specially of an eminent poet.

When I first began to be interested in such matters, Gray, and Goldsmith, and Cowper had passed away,—they were of a previous generation,—but Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Byron, Scott, Campbell, Moore, and Rogers, were all in the zenith of their fame. Every year some new work, from one or other of them, issued from the press, to excite and interest the public mind. And what an illustrious company! We shall seldom find, in any age or country, so many names of high rank as contemporary poets. But all of them have now passed away from amongst us—all their pedestals have been vacated by them; and there have, alas! risen up no successors to fill their places. From such a height we are sadly fallen; and except Tennyson, who still is living, we can scarcely be said to retain a single name of high poetical fame, unless Macaulay's fine spirit-stirring Ballads shall remind us, that, though he is an historian and politician, he is also a poet.

With some of those persons, whose names I mentioned just now, it so happened that I was more or less personally acquainted, or with their families, and was brought, in a certain way, into connection with others; which gave me a still further interest in everything relating to them. And there is certainly always a considerable curiosity excited, and not an improper one, to see and know personally those who have, from any cause, achieved for themselves an eminent name. It is true, and especially in the case of great authors, that when our curiosity is gratified, we experience at times considerable disappointment; since those, who have won our admiration or our reverence by their writings, often fail to realize by their conversation our expectations of their talents, or of their appearance and manners; but still we cannot but wish to see and to know the great occupants of the Temple of Fame.

Now Campbell I knew very intimately from a very early age, and we were often guests together at the same friend's house. Southey I have met quietly in private society; Rogers often in more general company. I succeeded Crabbe as Rector of the Parish of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire; and though I never saw the poet himself, I became well acquainted with his family, and entered upon all the fresh reminiscences of his daily life. Moore was living a few miles off from me in the same county, close to Lord Lansdowne's at Bowood, but in declining health, and scarcely ever went from home. I only once saw Scott; he was sitting below the Judges in the Court house in Edinburgh. It was in the early part of the year 1827, just when he had publicly owned the authorship of Waverley. He was, as usual while in Court, busily engaged in writing, probably, as we learn from the account given of his habits in his life, some work then preparing for the press; perhaps "the Life of Napoleon," as that was the great work which he then had in hand. I have, however, been intimately acquainted of late years with several of his family, including Mr. Lockhart, his son-in-law and biographer, and his children; and on different occasions have been staying, for some weeks at a time, at Abbotsford with Scott's grandaughter and her husband, who were then the owners of the property.

There is a story told of the Caliph Omar by Gibbon, that, when he was at Alexandria, he caused all the books in the famous library there to be burned; because, he said, if they only contained what was in the Koran, they were not wanted; and, if they contained anything else, they ought to be destroyed. I need not stop to reason upon such an act, if it ever occurred, which however there is not much historical evidence to prove: but, as a matter of fact, in our day, since there is such a vast amount of literature in circulation, besides the Bible,—and since people will and ought to read, and acquire information, and strengthen and improve their understandings, surely it is most desirable that they should cultivate a taste for the higher grades of literature, and that the English Classics, so to style them, whether in prose or verse, should have their due places assigned them. And when there is such an abundance of mawkish, sentimental, wishey-washey trash, not to speak of works more positively evil sent across the Lines, to be retailed in limp covers at a few cents a volume, it is not out of place to remind you, that there is in the same language, matter more sterling at your command, and far more wholesome for your use. And moreover, I believe, that, in the education of youth, it is of immense importance not to omit the cultivation of the imagination. I am inclined to agree in the opinion that all romantic fiction, whether in poetry or prose, which does not actually and purposely paint and praise vice and vicious characters, and seek to make them attractive and imitated, acts advantageously on the mind and especially on the well educated spirit, and most certainly adds to the happiness of life. Luther once said "I would not for any quantity of gold part with the wonderful tales, which I have retained from my earliest youth, or have met with in my progress through life." And Dr. Johnson's grand idea is universally true, "whatever can make the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings!"

Of the above eminent poets Byron and Moore have, not without reason, been charged with injuring, by some of their writings, morality and religion. Moore was much ashamed, in later life, of some of his earlier productions of this kind, and did all he could to suppress them. He is now most generally known from his "Irish Melodies," in which all his intense love for his country is displayed; and which, when he used to sing them, though he had but a poor voice and was an indifferent musician, were always listened to with deepest interest; and the tears, of those who heard them, often testified to the combined power of the poet and the musician. His greatest work is "Lalla Rookh," an Eastern Romance, full of many beautiful passages, and exquisite and truthful pictures of Eastern scenery and imagery. I will read one passage from "Paradise and the Peri," the most pleasing of the poems; it is founded on an Eastern legend. The Peris were erring spirits, who, it was supposed, might be re-admitted into Paradise, if they brought to the eternal gate

"The gift that is most dear to heaven."
"When, o'er the vale of BALBEC winging,
Slowly she sees a child at play,
Among the rosy wild flowers singing,
As rosy and as wild as they;
Chasing, with eager hands and eyes,
The beautiful blue damsel-flies,
That flutter'd round the jasmine stems,
Like winged flowers or flying gems:—
And, near the boy, who tir'd with play
Now nestling 'mid the roses lay,

She saw a wearied man dismount
  From his hot steed, and on the brink
Of a small imaret's rustic fount
  Impatient fling him down to drink.
Then swift his haggard brow he turn'd
  To the fair child, who fearless sat,
Though never yet had day-beam burn'd
  Upon a brow more fierce than that,—
Sullenly fierce—a mixture dire,
Like thunder-clouds, of gloom and fire;
In which the PERI's eye could read
Dark tales of many a ruthless deed;
The ruin'd maid—the shrine profan'd—
Oaths broken—and the threshold stain'd
With blood of guests!—*there* written, all,
Black as the damning drops that fall
From the denouncing Angel's pen,
Ere Mercy weeps them out again!

Yet tranquil now that man of crime
(As if the balmy evening time
Soften'd his spirit) look'd and lay,
Watching the rosy infant's play:—
Though still, whene'er his eye by chance
Fell on the boy's, its lurid glance
  Met that unclouded, joyous gaze,
As torches, that have burnt all night
Through some impure and godless rite,
  Encounter morning's glorious rays.

But, hark! the vesper call to prayer,
  As slow the orb of day-light sets,
Is rising sweetly on the air,
  From SYRIA's thousand minarets!
The boy has started from the bed
Of flowers, where he had laid his head,
And down upon the fragrant sod
  Kneels, with his forehead to the south,
Lisping the' eternal name of God
From Purity's own cherub mouth,
And looking, while his hands and eyes
Are lifted to the glowing skies,
Like a stray babe of Paradise,
Just lighted on that flowery plain,

And seeking for its home again!
Oh! 'twas a sight—that Heav'n—that child—
A scene, which might have well beguil'd
Ev'n haughty EBLIS of a sigh,
For glories lost and peace gone by!

And how felt *he* the wretched Man
Reclining there—while memory ran
O'er many a year of guilt and strife,
Flew o'er the dark flood of his life,
Nor found one sunny resting-place,
Nor brought him back one branch of grace!
" There *was* a time," he said, in mild,
Heart-humbled tones—" thou blessed child!
" When, young and haply pure as thou,
" I look'd and pray'd like thee—but now—"
He hung his head—each nobler aim,
  And hope and feeling, which had slept
From boyhood's hour, that instant came
  Fresh o'er him, and he wept—he wept!

Blest tears of soul-felt penitence!
  In whose benign, redeeming flow
Is felt the first, the only sense
  Of guiltless joy that guilt can know.

* * * * * * * *

And now—behold him kneeling there
By the child's side, in humble prayer,
While the same sun-beam shines upon
The guilty and the guiltless one;
And hymns of joy proclaim through Heaven
The triumph of a Soul Forgiven!

'Twas when the golden orb had set,
While on their knees they linger'd yet,
There fell a light more lovely far
Than ever came from sun or star,
Upon the tear that, warm and meek,
Dew'd that repentant sinner's cheek.
To mortal eye this light might seem
A northern flash or meteor beam—
But well th' enraptur'd PERI knew
'Twas a bright smile the Angel threw
From Heaven's gate, to hail that tear,
Her harbinger of glory near!"

The Byron mania, which for a few years was so intense, has happily long since passed away. Silly young men no longer think it necessary to dress *à la Byron*, nor silly young ladies to talk unmeaningly of his *sweet* poems. It was a false taste, excited by unreal and accidental causes, quite apart from the actual merit of his writings. He was a lord, an eccentric lord, a noble poet; and there was a romance about all his life, from his school-boy days down to his struggles on behalf of oppressed Greece, in whose service he spent his last years. Some powerful and beautiful passages there are in the most of his writings; but, as poem after poem appeared, the public found that it was but a fresh exhibition, in darkening colors, of the same picture—the working of a morbid misantrophy, of which he was himself the real original. I will read two stanzas, out of perhaps his greatest work, "Childe Harold," and one that excites interest from the descriptions he gives of Italy, and its architecture, paintings, statues, scenery, &c. I select these, because they supply one of the few passages, in which, forgetful of self, he exhibits a strong and right feeling for others. Many of you will know the lines well. They contain a description of the celebrated statue at Rome, which has been named "The Dying Gladiator,"—

"I see before me the gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony;
And his drooped head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay
There were his young Barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!"

Some of my earliest reminiscences are connected with Campbell; and later in life I met him constantly, both in London and elsewhere. When first as a child I heard him talked about, he had just published his beautiful and pathetic poem of "Gertrude of Wyoming." "The Pleasures of Hope" had preceded it, and had already gained for him a world-wide reputation. "Gertrude of Wyoming" was a tale of transatlantic life, transatlantic, of course I mean, in relation to England; and true and expressive are many of the pictures given of the rich and varied landscape at and about "Wyoming," which was a settlement that had been destroyed by the Indians. It begins,

"On Susquehanna's side fair Wyoming!
Although the wild-flower on thy ruin'd wall,
And roofless homes, a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall;
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore."

Afterwards the poet, having again mentioned the river, describes the scenery in its neighbourhood:

"Yet wanted not the eye for scope to muse,
Nor vistas open'd by the wandering stream;
Both where at evening Alleghany views,
Through ridges, burning in her western beam,
Lake after lake interminably gleam;
And past those settlers' haunts the eye might roam
Where earth's unliving silence all would seem;
Save where on rocks the beaver built his dome,
Or buffalo remote low'd far from human home.

But silent not that adverse eastern path,
Which saw Aurora's hills th' horizon crown;
There was the river heard in bed of wrath,
(A precipice of foam from mountains brown,)
Like tumults heard from some far distant town;
But softening in approach he left his gloom,
And murmur'd pleasantly, and laid him down
To kiss those easy curving banks of bloom,
That lent the windward air an exquisite perfume."

And further on he notices,—

> "The winglet of the fairy humming-bird,
> Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round."

But we must not linger any longer by Susquehanna's side. Few of our modern poets are better known than Campbell; and in smaller lyrical pieces, such as "Hohenlinden," "The Battle of the Baltic," and "Ye Mariners of England," he is scarcely equalled by any, certainly surpassed by none. But these I need hardly mention, as they are become like "household words" familiar to every one. His greatest and best works were written when he was a young man. I think it was Scott who said of him, "Campbell would write more and more easily, if he were not so much afraid of his own reputation." And few poets were ever more fastidious in correcting and recorrecting, whatever he intended for publication. I was once staying with some friends of his and mine, when he sent them in manuscript his stanzas entitled "The Last Man," asking their judgment respecting them. As chance would have it, I was asked to read them aloud, that all present might hear them. But it so happened that the manuscript was not very legible, and there were several interlineations; and so it was rather difficult to make it out, reading it at sight. And, indeed, reading any poetry really well is not so easy a matter, as many people fancy; and altogether, I know it came to pass, that I made several blunders and great boggling; and I well remember what disgrace I got into for thus murdering his fine stanzas, and felt much ashamed of myself. Perhaps now, having them in print before me, and I may add in a volume, the gift of Campbell himself, with his own autograph, in the title page, I may succeed better, and will read some of them, not as being of equal merit with the other lyrical pieces I named before, but as being less known; and just to see, if I am myself improved in my manner of reading it:—

"THE LAST MAN."

"All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
  The sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
  Its immortality!

I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!
I saw the last of human mould,
That shall Creation's death behold,
As Adam saw her prime!

The sun's eye had a sickly glare,
The earth with age was wan;
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in fight,—the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands,—
In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread;
And ships were drifting with the dead
To shores where all was dumb!

* * * * * * *

This spirit shall return to Him
Who gave its Heavenly spark;
Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark!
No, it shall live again and shine
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recall'd to breath,
Who captive led captivity—
Who robbed the grave of victory,
And took the sting from Death!

Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste,
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste,—
Go, tell the night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race
On earth's sepulchral clod,
The darkening universe defy
To quench his immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!"

Poor Campbell had many hard struggles in early life, and clouds darkened much his declining years. He was a man of a kindly spirit, an agreeable companion, possessed very considerable information, and was ever ready to impart it. He was once thinking, he told me, of publishing, in a periodical magazine, some papers on the domestic life of the ancient Greeks. And from the various little incidental notices which he had gathered from their histories, biographies, orations, dramatic writings,—especially such as the satires of Aristophanes,–he thought he should be able to make out, with considerable exactness, "the weekly bills of the Grecian Dames," as he expressed it; "what was the price of bread, meat, and green-grocery at Athens, and all their little family arrangements." But I never could find that he carried out his plan, or left any sufficient matter in manuscript respecting it for the use of others. If done as he had pictured it, it would, I have no doubt, have been not only curious but interesting. He has not been very happy in his biographer, who executed the task with all the zeal of friendship; but that will not be enough to redeem two heavy octavo volumes from oblivion.

When I first met Southey, he was staying in Devonshire, at the house of one of my college friends, a few miles from my father's. I was much pleased at such an opportunity; for, besides the natural wish, before alluded to, that we all have to see and know those who have gained for themselves an honorable name, Southey was kind and simple in manners, and most agreeable and communicative in conversation. I went, on receiving the invitation to meet him, full of expectation; and, when I arrived, my friend expatiated with great delight on the rich treat he had been already enjoying, and which he was so pleased that I should share with him. It happened, however, that just as I arrived, Southey had received from London the proof-sheets of an article for the *Quarterly Review*, and Mr. Murray was importunate to have them returned by the next post. Then he was to leave Devonshire early the following morning, for his own residence in the North of England; and, as this was some years before the time of railroads, he was much occupied with the thoughts of his long and somewhat complicated route, and all the arrangements for his transit; and, last of all, I remember he had left a gold pencil-case, the gift of some friend, and for which he had a great value, at an inn at Dorchester, on his way down from London a day or two before: and he was planning how he might recover it, and have it forwarded to him. The consequence was, that on that occasion, except seeing him, I could carry away but little remembrance of him; for he scarcely took any part in the general conversation during the whole evening.

And this reminds me of an anecdote respecting the late Mr. Canning, who, besides his great reputation as a statesman and parliamentary orator of the highest class, was one of the most agreeable companions, remarkable for his brilliant powers of conversation, and full of lively playful wit at all times; and it will serve to show, how it will chance at times that people do suffer such great disappointments, when invited to meet those, whose conversation may reasonably have been expected to be most instructive and entertaining:—A gentleman under an engagement to dine with a friend in London, called on him to say that he hoped he would let him off, as for that very day he had since received an invitation to dine at the India House, where he should meet Mr. Canning, who was then President of the Board of Controul. His friend readily admitted the force of his plea, and agreed to let him off, but on one condition, viz., that he should call on him the next morning, and relate to him some of the brilliant and witty sayings which Mr. Canning had given utterance to during the evening. Accordingly he went to the dinner, and in due time came to his friend to fulfil his promise. "Well," said his friend, "I am delighted to see you. What a fortunate man you have been! But come now, sit down, and tell me all about it. What did Mr. Canning say?" "Well," said he, "to the best of my recollection, the only observation I heard him make, that I can retail to you, was to this effect:—Speaking to the gentleman who was sitting next him, he said, 'General, I believe the elephants on the Island of Ceylon are larger than those on the Continent.'" The fact was, Canning never took kindly to the work at the India Board, as he did in after years at the Foreign Office; and these official dinners at the India House, were not much to his taste, and so he was in no good humor for conversation and interchange of wit.

But to return to our subject. Southey has never been so popular, as some of his brethren, as a poet, though he has some very fine passages in *Thalaba*, *Madoc*, and *Kehama*. Nor will his name live with posterity so much in consequence of his poetical fame; but rather because of his prose works, in which his style is exceedingly chaste and simple. And specially will he be remembered for his "Life of Nelson," (a piece of biography hardly to be excelled in interest), and also for "The Doctor," and "The Book of the Church." He affected a great irregularity of metre in his poetry, introducing very long and very short lines, in close juxtaposition; and he is often obscure in his meaning, and there is a singularity in his diction. He is one of those poets whose style was imitated by Horace Smith and his brother, in the "Rejected Addresses"; and the Edinburgh Reviewer says that it is the best in the whole collection. "The imitation of the diction and the measure is nearly almost perfect; and the descriptions as good as the original." And I doubt not the imitation has been read by thousands who never read the original.

Crabbe was my predecessor in the living of Trowbridge, a large manufacturing town in the County of Wiltshire, with about 11,000 inhabitants in the parish. He was an exceedingly kind and benevolent old man, personally loved and respected. But he came to the parish as an old man; and having, until his 60th year, always officiated in a small country parish, he never was able to master the difficulties of his new position, ecclesiastically considered; or accommodate himself to the requirements of such a population, and the change in the nature of the pastoral work. There is a passage in one of his own poems, "The Parish Register," in which (whether designedly or not, I cannot say,) he gives, as his biographer remarks, a similitude of himself, in all points, except in the subject of his lucubrations:—

"Then came the Author Rector: his delight
Was all in books; to read them or to write.
Women and men he strove alike to shun,
And hurried homeward when his tasks were done:
Courteous enough, but careless what he said,
For points of learning he reserved his head;
And when addressing either poor or rich,
He knew no better than his cassock which.
He, like an osier, was of pleasant kind,
Erect by nature, but to bend inclined;
Not like a creeper falling to the ground,
Or meanly catching on the neighbours round.

Careless was he of surplice, hood and band,—
And kindly took them, as they came to hand:
Nor, like the Doctor, wore a world of hat,
As if he sought for dignity in that:—
He talk'd, he gave, but not with cautious rules,
Nor turn'd from gypsies, vagabonds or fools;
It was his nature, but they thought it whim;
And so our beaux and beauties turn'd from him.
Of questions much he wrote, profound and dark,—
How spake the serpent, and where stopp'd the ark;
From what far land the Queen of Sheba came;
Who Salem's priest, and what his father's name:
He made 'The Song of Songs' its mysteries yield,
And 'Revelations' to the world revealed.
He sleeps i' the aisle,—but not a stone records
His name or fame, his actions or his words."

Certainly it was most true of Crabbe himself that—

"He talk'd, he gave, but not with cautious rules,
Nor turn'd from gypsies, vagabonds or fools."

His hand was ever open; and, like Goldsmith's Village Pastor,

"His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain:
Careless their merits, or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began."

One fact was told me by one of my old parishioners, who had been an intimate friend of Crabbe's, and which placed this feature of his character in a very pleasing light. This gentleman, whose name was Clark, was a fine musician, and, with some of his neighbours, had got up some very excellent concerts of instrumental music, under his own leadership. Mr. Crabbe neither knew, or cared in the least about music; but one day he made Mr. Clark a present of a fine and expensive edition of Handel's complete works, for which he had some time before put down his name as a subscriber. Mr. Clark having expressed his surprise at his subscribing to so expensive a work, on a subject in which he took no interest, Mr. Crabbe replied, that in early life, when he first went up to London with a manuscript of some of his poems in his pocket, he had known such *real* distress, and had felt so truly the value of a subscription to his intended publication, that now, in altered circumstances, when he had himself the means, he made it a rule never to refuse to subscribe to any work that appeared upon the face of it to be a *bonâ fide* work deserving encouragement, and where a subscription would really be a kindness, and of use. It is not, however, true of himself, when he says of "The Author Rector" in his poem:—

> "He sleeps i' th' aisle—but not a stone records
> His name or fame, his actions or his words."

A public subscription was raised immediately after his death, and a beautiful marble monument, executed by Bailey, was erected over his grave, in the chancel of Trowbridge Church. It exhibits a recumbent figure admirably representing the dying poet, clasping in his hands the sacred volume, with an inscription from the pen of his friend and brother-poet, Rogers; and concluding with a statement, that "as a writer he is well described by a great contemporary, as

> "Nature's sternest painter, yet her best."

It was Byron that thus wrote of Crabbe, and most truly is he thus described. And many are the deeply interesting pictures drawn by his pen in "The Parish Register," "The Borough," "The Tales of the Hall," &c., with a minuteness of detail, truthfulness of colouring, and humorous satire, that remind us of the paintings of the Dutch School, or rather of some of our own Hogarth's or Wilkie's happiest efforts. I dare say many of us here present this evening have often spent a good deal of time in reading many less interesting, less amusing, as well as less wholesome works, than the life and writings of Crabbe.

Roger's principal works are the "Pleasures of Memory," and "Italy;" but he has never attained, as a poet, a popularity equal to most of those I have named to you. Indeed it was said he was much mortified at the great sale of his "Italy," when the illustrated edition was published, which, when first published in a simpler form, had hung rather heavy on the hands of the publisher; and the editor of the "John Bull," newspaper (the well known

Theodore Hook) who wished to have a cut at Rogers, as a Whig, used to annoy him very much by constantly putting ridiculous jokes and *bon mots* into his mouth, and giving them out as the sayings of "our friend the witty *Banker*," (Rogers being a member of one of the city banking firms in London), ignoring as it were his character as a poet. But nevertheless there is much of true poetry in his writings, and he was a man of an elegant and refined taste, and his house was for many years the resort of all, who had any pretensions to a name in literature and the fine arts. As I said, I have constantly met him in general society, where he always appeared a favourite, but I was never personally acquainted with him. I will give you, as a specimen of his poetical powers, a short passage from "The Pleasures of Memory," towards the conclusion:

"Hail, Memory, hail! in thy exhaustless mine,
From age to age, unnumbered treasures shine.
Thought and her shadowy brood thy call obey,
And place and time are subject to thy sway.
Thy pleasures most we feel when most alone,
The only pleasures we can call our own.
Lighter than air hope's summer visions fly,
If but a fleeting cloud obscure the sky;
If but a beam of sober reason play,
Lo! Fancy's fairy frost-work melts away.
But can the wiles of art, the grasp of power,
Snatch the rich relics of a well spent hour?
These, when the trembling spirit wings her flight,
Pour round her path a stream of living light:
And gild those pure and perfect realms of rest,
Where virtue triumphs and her sons are blest."

It was early in the month of January, 1849, that I went to Scotland to spend three weeks at Abbotsford with Mr. and Mrs. Hope, who were then residing there; Mrs. Hope, with her brother, being the children of Mr. Lockhart, and grand children of Sir Walter Scott. The brother died soon afterwards; and Mrs. Hope, having with her husband taken the name of Scott, succeeded to the inheritance; and now we have heard, within the last few weeks, of her death, and that of her only son, and an infant daughter, leaving one other daughter, about six years old, as the sole surviving descendant of the author of "Waverley." On this occasion I was alone, but in the following summer I repeated my visit, accompanied by Mrs. Fulford and my daughter. Immediately on my first arrival, I was informed that one of the servants had died a few days before; and, as there was no clergyman of the Church of England residing in that part of the country, the family were anxious that I should perform the funeral service, the deceased having been a member of our communion. Accordingly, on the following morning, I buried the young man in the churchyard of Melrose Abbey, just under the wall of that venerable ruin, and in a grave adjoining that of old Tom Purdie, who is so often spoken of in "Scott's Life," as his favourite woodsman. A great many people were present, almost all of them being members of the Scotch Church, and many of whom had never heard our funeral service performed before. I was told afterwards, that they were exceedingly struck with it; so much so, that at another funeral, which occurred some time after, the friends requested their minister to make use of the same service, which was done accordingly; and certainly it is a most solemn, touching, and appropriate service. So much has been written, both on this side of the Atlantic and in England, descriptive of Abbotsford and the surrounding scenery, that I shall not dwell too minutely upon these particulars now. During part of my visit both the master and the mistress of the mansion were unfortunately ill, and the weather not being favorable for many out-door excursions, I had no other resource than looking over the library, and examining at my full leisure all the old curiosities with which the house is filled; and to get a look at which so many pilgrimages are made from all parts, and not least so from this continent. You will perhaps think that, while enjoying a little recreation from my usual duties, I wanted no pleasanter employment.

There are some tolerable pictures there, as paintings, and several exceedingly interesting from their subjects, and as indicating Scott's own tastes and predilections. There are eight small sketches by Turner; Ginger, one of the now well-known breed of terriers, by Landseer; portraits of Charles I., Henrietta Maria, Oliver Cromwell, Charles II., James Duke of Monmouth, Queen Elizabeth, a head of Mary Queen of Scots (after death), Tom Purdie, John

Ballantyne the well-known publisher of many of his works: the Castles of Dunbar, Hermitage and Tantallon; and a small miniature of the famous Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, with blue eyes, fair complexion, and light flowing hair, &c., &c., &c.

Then there is the musket of Rob Roy, the freebooting leader, and the sword of the gallant Graham, Marquis of Montrose, a collection of bones from the Plains of Marathon, and a variety of other interesting articles of the like nature. But the chief interest was centered in the library. It contained about 12,000 volumes, all in most beautiful order; for Scott was exceedingly particular about his books. He was never satisfied till he got the very best editions of every work; so that, when he heard of a better copy or a new and improved edition of a work already in the Library, in order to meet the increased cost, he used to write some marginal notes in the copy already in his possession, and offer it for sale; and for the sake of obtaining a volume which contained such a memorial of the author of "Waverley and Marmion," in his own handwriting, he was able to dispose of it for a sum at least equal to what he was to pay for the other more costly edition. Besides many valuable works on Lexicography, old Chronicles, Standard Divinity, Belles Lettres, &c., there are several subjects respecting which he had been very diligent in collecting everything that he could possibly lay hands upon: such as ballads, both in manuscript and print, from the earliest dates; old plays of every kind, being a most curious collection, and very illustrative of the times in which they were severally written; very full collections of everything, of every kind, on the subject of the Great Rebellion and the Jacobite *Risings* in 1715 and 1745, as he used mildly to term them. Then on Astrology, Demonology, Dreams, Witchcraft, Magic, &c., &c., quite an unique collection and filling several shelves. But the most curious of any perhaps consisted of several shelves full of little penny Chap-Books, as they used to be termed, or Tracts, which the travelling pedlars carried about in their packs and sold to the country people, especially all along on both sides of the Border. They are all now neatly bound up in little volumes, and are of a most miscellaneous character, and curious, as being almost the only literature formerly to be met with in those districts. They are on religious, political and historical subjects, poetry and prose, sermons and hymns, lives of pirates, robbers and murderers; the vision of Mirza, the ballad of Chevy Chase, Robinson Crusoe, Whittington, Jack the Giant-killer, and fairy tales, the History of Guy Fawkes and Sir Wm. Wallace, &c., &c., &c. There is a note in one of the volumes, in Scott's own handwriting, dated 1810, stating "that this little collection (it refers to six volumes of them) of Stall Tracts and Ballads was formed by me, when a boy, from the baskets of travelling Pedlars. It contains most of the pieces that were popular thirty years since; and, I dare say, many that could not now be procured for any price. W. S."

Appended to one ballad, printed in very *odd* spelling, there is a note in his hand-writing: "Found in a parcel of ballads collected in the year 1774; a palpable forgery; whoever attempts the ancient style should remember never to retain any *affectation* of *odd* spelling in a ballad, supposed to be preserved by *tradition*; because the orthography alters of course according to the time. W. S." It is mentioned in a note in Lockhart's life of Scott, that 'in a letter he wrote in 1830, he states that he had bound up things of this kind to the extent of several volumes, before he was ten years old. And a school-fellow of his, when he was at the High School, Edinburgh, says of him that "he began very early to collect old ballads, and as my mother could repeat a great many, he used to come and learn those she could recite to him. He used to get all the copies of these ballads he could, and select the best." These, no doubt, were among the germs of the collection of ballads in six little volumes, which, from the handwriting, had been begun at this early period, and which is still preserved at Abbotsford. And it appears that, at least as early a date must be ascribed to another collection of little humorous stories in prose, penny chap-books, as they are called, still in high favor amongst the lower classes in Scotland, which stands on the same shelf. There was one story, amongst this little collection, entitled, "The Durham Garland," whence he took the original hint for the plot of "Guy Mannering;" and many incidents thus picked up by him, in these little volumes, were skilfully interwoven into his stories.

In a fly-leaf of a manuscript copy of "Tam O'Shanter," Scott had written "This manuscript of the inimitable 'Tam O'Shanter' is addressed and corrected by Burns' own hand. Mr. Ainslie says, that when Burns recited it to him, he added these two verses which do not occur in the printed copies. The second line is admirable:

" The crickets joined their chirping cry,
The kitlings chased their tails for joy.

These lines were perhaps rejected because the first resembles one in the ballad of ' Edwin and Angelina.' W. S." In the printed copies of Burns' works there are some verses addressed to Mr. W. Tytler, with Burns' picture, commencing, " Revered defender of beauteous Stuart," and which evidently breathe a strong Jacobite tendency. Further on in the peom, Burns says—

" Still in prayers for K. G. I most heartily join,
The Q., and the rest of the gentry;
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine,
Their Title's avowed by my country.

" But why of that epocha make such a fuss ?
* * * * * *
* * * * * * *
* * * * * *

And leaving these three lines blank, he proceeds,

" But loyalty truce! we're on dangerous ground,
Who knows how the fashions may alter:
The doctrine to-day that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us the halter."

Scott, who was a warm hearted though most innocent Jacobite, fills up the hiatus in the following manner, alluding to the succession of the Elector of Hanover to the English Crown:

" But why of that epocha make such a fuss,
Which brought us the Electoral stem ?
If bringing them over was lucky for us,
I'm sure 'twas no less so for them."

But I must not indulge at greater length in such reminiscences; and, of all modern poets or authors, none perhaps is better known, or more generally read, than Scott. And he has been eminently fortunate, above most of his brethren, and so have the public, in his biographer, Mr. Lockhart.

If it will not be taking up too much time, I will read one passage from the beginning of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel;" and I select that, as well for its own beauties, as because it was his first great work, and gives the key note to his own character and writings, all at least that he undertook freely and heartily; it tells of border scenes and chivalry, feudal pomp and clanship, and hereditary strife.

"The feast was over in Branksome tower,
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower;
Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
Jesu Maria, shield us well!
No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
  Knight and page, and household squire,
Loiter'd through the lofty hall,
  Or crowded round the ample fire:
The stag-hounds weary with the chase,
  Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
And urged in dreams, the forest race,
  From Teviot-stone to Eskdale moor.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
  Hung their shields in Branksome-Hall;
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
  Brought them their steeds to bower from stall;
    Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
    Waited, duteous, on them all:
    They were all knights of mettle true,
    Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel:
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
    They lay down to rest,
    With corslet laced,
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;
    They carved at the meal
    With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten;
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood axe at saddlebow;
A hundred more fed free in stall:—
Such was the custom at Branksome-Hall.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
Why watch these warriors, arm'd by night?—
They watch to hear the blood-hound baying:
They watch to hear the war-horn braying;
To see St. George's red cross streaming,
To see the midnight beacon gleaming.
They watch, against Southern force and guile,
  Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
  Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

Such is the custom of Branksome-Hall.—
    Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
    Beside his broken spear.
  Bards long shall tell,
  How Lord Walter fell!
  When startled burghers fled, afar,
  The furies of the Border war;
  When the streets of high Dunedin
  Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
  And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
  Then the chief of Branksome fell.

Can piety the discord heal,
  Or stanch the death feud's enmity?
Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,
  Can love of blessed charity?
No! vainly to each holy shrine,
  In mutual pilgrimage, they drew;
Implored, in vain, the grace divine
  For chiefs, their own red falchions slew:
While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
  While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,

The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!"

And as evidencing a different cast of the Poet's mind, I will read a few lines, with which this same poem concludes, being an English metrical version of an ancient Latin hymn :

Dies iræ, dies illa.

"That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead:

Oh! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be *Thou* the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!"

But perhaps the most remarkable effect of the writings of Scott was the way in which he kindled an enthusiasm about, and gave a wide historical interest to, all the border scenery, and to the various events that occurred in those districts. It was not only the lovely scenes of Loch Katrine and the Trossachs that became popularized in consequence of the inspiring poetry of "The Lady of the Lake," or the venerable ruins of Melrose that travellers hastened to see by moonlight, because Scott bid them view it at such an hour, but there is hardly a locality which has not its legend, and the magic power of the wizard of Abbotsford has invested them all with a world-wide reputation. His own estate has many and famous spots of this kind. Just above the house was the conclusion of the battle of Melrose fought in 1526, between the Earls of Angus and Home, and the two Chiefs of the House of Kerr on one side, and Buccleuch on the other, in sight of young King James, the possession of whose person was the object of the contest. In the names of Skirmish-field, Charge-law, &c., various incidents of the fight have found a lasting record; and the spot where the retainers of Buccleuch terminated the pursuit by the mortal wound of Kerr of Cessford (ancestor of the Dukes of Roxburgh), has always been called Point Turnagain. But it has now received a special mark by which to arrest attention, because Scott has alluded to it as the spot,

> "Where gallant Cessford's life-blood dear
> Reek'd on dark Elliott's border spear."

It was a favourite object of Scott's to buy any properties in the neighbourhood, which, beside the convenience of their situation, had been the scene of any incident in history or of any popular legend. And often, in effecting this, he acted the part of Glaucus in the Iliad of Homer, when he exchanged his golden armour for the less costly suit of Diomede, being made to pay most extravagantly for his fancies. But a purchase that exceedingly pleased him, was one that was said to be the scene of Thomas the Rhymer, or Thomas of Ercildoun's interviews with the Queen of the Fairies. And in time he succeeded in adding to his property all those legendary haunts of True Thomas, as he was called, and the whole ground of the battle of Melrose from Skirmish-field to point Turnagain. The house at Abbotsford was, I think, hardly equal to what we are led to expect from the description given in his life, and the site is far from being the best that might have been selected; but the general scenery of the neighbourhood is very beautiful, some of it very grand, and the charm of interest cast over the whole not often surpassed.

Before closing this brief notice of these great names in the list of English poets, I wish to mention also one or two of the other sex, whose writings well deserve our attention, and with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted. About twenty years ago there was an article in the *Quarterly Review* on "Modern British Poetesses," nine of whom were mentioned. The reviewer, after noticing them each in detail, bound them up as he said in a wreath; and under the similitude of flowers, gave us the type of each. There was a Rose, Wild Angelica, Passion Flower, Roman Nettle, Magnolia Grandiflora, Meadow-Sage, Blue-belle, Violet, and Hearts-ease. Of these I was acquainted with three,—the Magnolia, Meadow-Sage, and Blue-belle. I will not venture to assert how far they are all likely to have achieved any enduring fame by their poetry; but one of them, the Meadow-Sage, will have an additional reason for being remembered, because of her husband's name; since, soon after I saw her, she became the wife of Southey. And she was the patient and kind nurse of him during the sad latter years of his life, when his mind failed him, and he was left so dependent on the care of others. Her maiden name was Caroline Bowles, and the following lines entitled "The Pauper's Death-bed," shew very considerable power, and deep feeling :

"Tread softly—bow the head—
In reverent silence bow :
No passing bell doth toll,
Yet an immortal soul
Is passing now.

Stranger ! however great,
With lowly reverence bow,
There's one in that poor shed—
One by that paltry bed—
Greater than thou.

Beneath that beggar's roof
Lo ! Death doth keep his state :
Enter—no crowds attend—
Enter—no guards defend
This palace gate.

That pavement damp and cold,
No smiling courtiers tread ;
One silent woman stands,
Lifting with meagre hands,
A dying head.

No mingling voices sound—
An infant's wail alone ;
A sob suppressed—agen
That short deep gasp, and then—
The parting groan.

Oh change !—Oh wondrous change !
Burst are the prison bars :
This moment *there* so low,
So agonised, and now
Beyond the stars !

Oh Change—stupendous change—
There lies the soulless cloud ;
The Sun eternal breaks—
The new immortal wakes—
Wakes with his God."

In conclusion I will give you a few lines, written when she was ten years old, by the daughter of a clergyman, who lived near us in Wiltshire. I have other verses of hers which are exceedingly good, though not evincing the same power of thought and description as these which were written much earlier. I think she is still living, but I have never heard that, as she grew up, her poetical talents were further developed. As a child they were most surprising. She is I believe a cousin of Wordsworth's, and really one might almost think she had a portion of his spirit, when she composed, not altogether so unlike what might have been the fruits of his muse, the following lines, of the genuineness of which there is not the least shadow of a doubt:—

" On a sound resembling thunder, heard on a cloudless day in summer. It seemed to traverse the whole heavens, and was indescribably grand."

"Where art thou, thou mysterious sound,
With thy low, deep murmur gathering round,
Slow rolling o'er the bright summer skies,
As their vault in its tranquil beauty lies ?
Thou fliest not on the breeze's wing :
No breath doth the rose's perfume bring :
Thou camest not in the thunder cloud :
The heavens no gloomy vapours shroud.
Thou doth not spring from tempest's ire :
No deadly flames of forked fire
Herald thee thro' the firmament.
Whence dost thou come, and wherefore sent
Would I were skilled in mystic lore ?
Would I thro' star-lit paths might soar !

Oh! were I not chained to this parent earth,
Sound! I would know thy wondrous birth.
Say, in some bright revolving star,
Are countless myriads waging war?
Art thou the rush of their armies flying?
Art thou the groans of their millions dying?
Or, still more dread is thy sound—Oh! say—
That of worlds like ours which pass away?
In thee is heard their heavens last roll,
Shriveling away like a parched scroll?
And even now, whilst I hear thy roaring,
Are myriads on myriads of spirits soaring,
Soaring to God?—or doomed—Ah me!
Unknown and unguessed may thy secrets be!"

LECTURE V.

ON THE STATE AND PROSPECTS
OF
SCIENCE AND LITERATURE IN MONTREAL.

DELIVERED IN THE

LECTURE ROOM OF THE MONTREAL NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,

AS THE

CONCLUDING LECTURE OF THE WINTER COURSE,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 5, 1859.

WHEN God had finished the work of creation, having, as the chief and last portion thereof, made man in his own image, He then blessed Adam and his wife Eve, and said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it;" and again, after the flood, when Noah and his family, the sole survivors, came forth out of the Ark, God spake to them and said, "Be ye fruitful and multiply, and bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein." The earth was made as the habitation of man; subject to the supreme law of his maker, he was to have it in possession, to occupy and to subdue it. As mankind began to increase and multiply, it was God's purpose that they were to spread themselves over the earth; and the sacred historian, in Genesis, informs us, how this began to be carried into effect: acquainting us after what method the three branches of Noah's posterity did distinctly plant or settle themselves at the first, in three distinct tracts of the earth. For that the first settlements were made, not by mere chance or confusedly, but after some regular method, is evident from the sacred history; wherein we are told, first as to the sons of Japhet, the eldest branch of Noah's posterity, that "by these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations;" and so also the same is said of the descendants of Shem and of Ham.

In many of the colonies formed by thriving nations, as recorded in ancient history, something of the same order and method seems to have been observed; of which the Phœnicians, who settled in Africa at Carthage and the adjacent parts; and the Greeks, who settled in Sicily and parts of Italy, were marked instances. Whole sections, tribes or families, led by some of their most eminent public men, seem to have gone forth together, carrying with them, as it were, in miniature, the likeness of the parent State, with all its advanced civilization and institutions. In modern times colonies have been established with less system; and have been rather looked upon, simply as a means of easing the parent state of an over-burthened population at home, than with a view to the well being and due organization of the new countries. The consequence has been that the vast majority of those, who thus seek a new home in some distant land, are of one particular class:—those whom poverty or necessity of any kind induces to seek elsewhere a better fortune, than either Providence has given or their own exertions have earned for them in their native country. And thus it is, that, though brought into constant and quick communication with advanced civilization and settled institutions in the older countries, the population of such new settlements are placed at great disadvantage, having to work out for themselves the formation of their own character, and to raise their own institutions, whether religious, political, or scientific. This development of national character and formation of institutions may eventually, where there is some sterling worth in the people, be most successfully achieved; but it cannot but be a work of deep interest to all who have at heart their well-being as a nation, a work that is encompassed with many difficulties, and only to be accomplished by much perseverance and earnest zeal and hopeful patience.

And such must be the view which we must take of Canada, and such the temper, in which all, as good citizens, should endeavour to serve the State. I shall not now advert to the difficulties experienced, in that department, with which I am more immediately connected, of continuously providing the ministrations of religion for the large immigrant population, who have been flocking into this Province in successive years, bringing with them no means of grace for themselves, and often evidencing little desire to accept them, when provided for them. Nor shall I allude to the political problem, which our legislators and statesmen are attempting to solve, and for the solution of which I trust wise and honest men will be raised up amongst us, equal to meet the difficulties of their country's need. But I shall, as bearing more pertinently upon the subject of these Lectures and this Institution, advert to "the State and Prospects of Science and Literature in Montreal;" and while pointing out the obstacles that impede our advance, do my best to encourage our efforts towards the attainment of a higher measure of success.

Whatever may be the inducements, which may tempt men of active habits and energetic wills to seek their fortunes, either as merchants, as agriculturists, or as politicians, in this growing country, and however a missionary zeal may excite others to labour for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-creatures: yet it is natural that the least likely to be attracted here are men of retired and studious habits, devoted to the investigations of science, and the cultivation of letters. Neither have we yet had raised up amongst us a class of persons of independent means, who can follow at will the inclination of their minds, and give themselves up to what are felt to be, in a certain sense, *unremunerative* pursuits. And our endowments for their encouragement, unaided as they are by either liberal grants of public money or private subscriptions, are so small that they have scarcely began to take effect. We must not be surprised then, if hitherto we have not had any great results, in these departments, of which to boast; and yet it is no small satisfaction to believe that some foundations are being laid, which will produce good fruit, and are already giving proofs of what shall be hereafter.

If we mark the progress of other countries, similarly situated with ourselves, we shall find that they have had the same adverse circumstances to battle with; and that they have neither been discouraged by them, nor given up the struggle without achieving great and manifold success. It is not so very long ago, only as far back as the year 1820, that the Rev. Sydney Smith, in an article in the Edinburgh Review, wishing to compare the progress that had been made in the United States, from the date of their Independence, with the Science and Literature of England, during the same period, wrote as follows: " The Americans are a brave, industrious and acute people; but they have hitherto given no indications of genius, and made no approaches to the heroic, either in their morality or their character. * * During the thirty or forty years of their Independence, they have done absolutely nothing for the Sciences, for the Arts, for Literature, or even for the Statesmanlike studies of Politics or Political Economy. Confining ourselves to our own country, and to the period that has elapsed, since they had an independent existence, where are their Foxes, their Burkes, their Sheridans, their Windhams, their Horners, their Wilberforces? where are their Arkwrights, their Watts, their Davys? their Robertsons, Blairs, Stewarts, Paleys and Malthuses? their Porsons, Parrs, Burneys or Bloomfields? their Scotts, Rogers, Campbells, Byrons, Moores, or Crabbes? their Siddons, Kembles, Keans, or O'Neils? their Wilkies, Lawrences, Chantreys. * * * In the four quarters of the Globe, who reads an American Book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue? What does the world yet owe to American Physicians or Surgeons? What new substances have their Chemists discovered, or what old ones have they analyzed? What new constellations have been discovered by the telescopes of Americans? What have they done in the Mathematics?"

If, however, with some near approach to the actual truth such a disparaging statement might have been made in the year 1820, what a marvellous change have the subsequent years produced! It is just thirty-eight years ago, quite within the memory of many of us, since Sydney Smith thus wrote;—and now in almost every department of Literature, of Science and even of the fine Arts, the

United States may fairly challenge comparison, not only with England, but with the whole civilized world. Her poets, historians, philosophers, naturalists, geologists, bear names everywhere known and honored; their works are in every library, and have taken their place as standards and authorities in their several departments; and is there any reason why we should despair that the Canada of the present generation, may thus look forward to the day, and that within the lifetime of many young and earnest spirits now amongst us, when she too may have a literature of her own, and names emblazoned on the rolls of science, which shall make their nation known and honored in the great commonwealth of letters? Why should this be more hopeless in our case, than it was in the case of the United States, as described in 1820? One great advantage was certainly possessed by the United States, even as far back as the date just mentioned, which we do not possess at present, and it is one that has been afforded to them since that time in a still greater measure; I allude to the number and excellence of their public Libraries. From a statement which I saw some little time since, I find that there are now in the United States, 50 Libraries containing upwards of 15,000 volumes each; and six of them with over 60,000. Some of these, including that at Harvard College, Boston, which is the largest of all, with 112,000 volumes, have been in existence for a long period; and must afford immense advantages to students in every department. While in the whole of Canada, with the exception of perhaps the Library of the Houses of Parliament, now just in course of formation, there is not one Library, public or private, that deserves notice, as supplying the wants of Literature or Science, or to which reference can be made, in case of need, with any reasonable hope of finding required information on any particular subject. One of the finest Libraries in the States, the use of which is given most freely to the public, was, with the building in which it is placed, the munificent gift of a private individual—the late Mr. Astor; and contains upwards of 80,000 volumes. I hope the time is coming when wealthy citizens of Montreal will, in increasing numbers, thus show their affection for their country, by assisting in providing useful Institutions for the benefit of the people. And though we cannot yet boast of being in any marked sense a literary people in Canada, yet there are evident proofs of great and continual improvement in this particular. In a lecture which I delivered in the early part of the year 1855, I took occasion to remark upon the very large increase shown every year in the returns made to Government of the books imported into Canada; and that, while the *total imports* of the years 1852–3 showed an increase of about 37½ per cent. in the latter year above the former, the value of *the books imported* showed very nearly as great a proportion of the whole—being £103,253 in 1853, against £75,100 in 1852. This sum however we find had risen in 1856 to £159,156 ; and though since then it has been somewhat less, as, owing to the difficulties of trade, have been the imports of every kind, yet still keeping far above what it used to be in former years. And in matters of science, I was pleased to find, on reading the account of the interesting proceedings which took place on the occasion of the first opening these New Buildings, (at which I was much disappointed that I could not be present, having been prevented by illness) that Professor Hall of Albany, himself occupying a distinguished position in the ranks of science, and well acquainted too with Canada, bore honorable testimony to the progress that had been making here. He felt warranted in saying that, during the last fifteen years, no state or country, on this or on the other side the Atlantic, had made more rapid progress in scientific investigations than Canada had done during that period. He referred more especially to the department of Geology : and I believe that in this department more care has been taken and greater results produced than in any other ; but it has not been to the *exclusion* of others. I might refer to this very course of Lectures, and others which have preceded it in former years, to show that there are amongst us those, who are well qualified to treat other subjects, whether of Natural History, Astronomy, and the like, with much knowledge and talent. And our bi-monthly periodical " The Canadian Naturalist," the papers in which are all contributed by members of this Society, is surpassed in excellence, as I believe, by no publication of the kind on this continent; and has been repeatedly noticed with approbation in England.

It is a subject for much satisfaction to observe that there is an encreasing earnestness thus being manifested amongst us for the diligent and the *systematic* study of particular branches of science; and that in botany and entomology and meteorology, but especially in geology, (to which last, as I mentioned, Professor Hall particularly alluded, giving high praise to Canadian geologists) we are making very considerable progress. Mere *popular* lectures on such subjects, or a superficial attention to them as matters of amusement, can only be really useful signs, when there is a stronger and fuller current running beneath; and when we can feel assured that we have some of our members who are really masters of the science, and able and willing to direct aright the popular mind.

And here I would observe on the great importance at all times of accurate and systematic study on any subjects. It is remarkable in general society, how comparatively rare it is to meet with people, who have really made themselves masters of any particular subject; but when they have, and can give reliable and valuable information, they become then, in that department, an important authority, and worth listening to in society. It used to be said that a man of one book, the "homo unius libri," was a dangerous man; that is, a person who was really master of one book, even if only one, was dangerous to argue with respecting it: as he would be almost sure to overpower you. And so in public life, in Parliament, if instead of talking superficially and often foolishly on any, or every question, a member is known to have made some one important question his particular study, he will be listened to with respect and attention, because he can then really give some reliable and useful information. And so in every case, if besides general gossip and passing remarks, people can bring into society, on any subject, really accurate and sensible information, whether of literature, or science, or trade, it is adding to the general stock, and advancing the intelligence of all. Sometimes, however, people get up facts or information in a dry mechanical way, without being able to exercise their minds, and, by intruding their particular line into the conversation on all occasions, become tedious and disagreeable. I was lately reading in a little piece of American autobiotion is supposed sometimes to be *got up* for use. "I found (says the writer) the other day, a gentleman very fine in conversational information. The talk ran upon mountains. He was wonderfully well acquainted with the leading facts about the Andes, the Apennines, and the Appalachians; he had nothing particular to say about Ararat, Ben Nevis, and various other mountains, that were mentioned. By and bye some revolutionary anecdote came up, and he showed singular familiarity with the lives of the Adamses, and gave many details relating to Major André. A point of Natural History being suggested, he gave an excellent account of the air bladder of fishes. He was very full upon the subject of agriculture: but retired from the conversation when horticulture was introduced in the discussion. So he seemed well acquainted with the geology of Anthracite, but did not pretend to know anything of other kinds of coal. There was something so odd about the extent and limitations of his knowledge, that I suspected all at once what might be the meaning of it, and waited till I got an opportunity. 'Have you seen the new American Cyclopedia?' said I. 'I have,' he replied, 'I received an early copy.' 'How far does it go?' He turned red and answered, 'to Araguay.' Oh! said I to myself;—not quite so far as Ararat; that is the reason he knew nothing about it; but he must have read all the rest straight through, and if he can remember what is in this volume, until he has read all those that are to come, he will know more than I ever thought he would."

In all well arranged systems of education it is necessary to provide, not merely for storing the memory with facts, but for the exercise of the mind; and, in the systems pursued in the great educational establishments in England, it is for this purpose that such care is taken to make the pupils pass through such a long training, either in the mathematics or classics. It is not merely for the sake of the information imparted, but for the habits of application and accuracy acquired by such discipline, without which no excellence can be acquired in any departments. And this may be applied still further: I saw the other day an account of an Introductory Lecture, on the opening of the Ladies' College, 47 Bedford Square, London, delivered by the Professor of Mathematics to the Institution. The Lecture was very well attended by friends and supporters of the College, and also by a large number of the lady pupils. The subject chosen for the discourse was the "Importance of the study of mathematics." After a few preliminary observations, the lecturer remarked that though the female mind might not retain all the principles of abstruse mathematics and ancient history, yet the study of those subjects would tend very much to the sound cultivation of the female mind, and would fit them for the everyday life they would have to mix in. He urged the necessity of pursuing these studies, and showed how mathematics assisted what was called the accomplishments, and where they partook of the nature of that study. The great difficulty to be overcome in teaching this science was the construction of the female mind. He found that the mind of men was hard and inflexible, and required a great deal of hammering to make an impression on it, but when it was made it was permanent, while the female mind was more delicate, flexible, and more easily susceptible of impressions, but did not retain them, and the result was that the instruction had to be repeated again and again. He concluded by impressing on his audience the importance of this study, in order to develop the female intellect, and, by making them think for themselves, protect them from bigotry and superstition.*

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* In an article published some few years ago in the Quarterly Review, *On Music*, there were some very interesting remarks on the connection between Music and Mathematics.

"The connection between sound and numbers is a fact which at once invests music with the highest dignity. It is like adding to the superstructure of a delicate flower, the roots of an oak of the forest. Far from being a frivolous art, meant only for the pastime of the senses in hours of idleness, it would seem to be of that importance to mankind that we are expressly furnished with a double means of testing its truth. The simple instinct of a correct ear and the closest calculations of a mathematical head give the same verdict. Science proves what the ear detects—the ear ratifies what science asserts—instinct and demonstration coalesce as they do with no other art: for though the same species of identity exists between the rules of perspective and the intuition of a correct eye, yet the science in this instance is neither so profound nor the

Now the careful and systematic study of any particular branch of science would, in its manner, produce something like the same result; and if applied to Geology, Botany, Entomology or Astronomy, would, no doubt, be more interesting than abstract mathematics. But here is the difficulty, people have not the energy, or resolution, to go through what they consider the drudgery of systematic study. It is all very well to hear an amusing lecture, or read a book if filled with some interesting anecdotes; this requires little thought or trouble; little confinement to one subject; their minds are *passive*, instead of *active*. Why, it is just the same thing that leads people, in higher matters, to run with eagerness after popular preachers; but avoid self-examination and discipline of the heart and life. What Kingsley, in one of his lively and interesting lectures, says of those who are ever wanting change and locomotion, may, in a certain sense, be applied to persons who can never be satisfied to pursue any definite object of study, so as to master it; but are always in want of discursive amusement. And as he illustrates it by an example taken from Natural History, it will be germane to our present purpose to quote his words: "Monotony is morally pleasant and useful. Marriage is monotonous. Locomotion is regarded as an evil by our Litany. The Litany is right as usual. 'Those who travel by land and by sea' are to be objects of our pity and our prayers. Why should we change our place, any more than our wife and children? Is a hermit-crab slipping his tail out of one strange shell into another, in the hope of its fitting him a little better, either a dignified, safe, or a graceful animal? No, George Riddler was a true philosopher:

Let vules go sarching vur and nigh,
We bides at whoam, my dog and I.

nd became there, not only wiser, but more charitable, for the oftener one sees the better one knows, and the better one knows the more one loves."

Jenny Lind should have any common bond of union; but deep in the secret caverns of the mind, the material from which both are supplied mingle in one common source, and the paths which have conducted a Galileo, a Kepler, and a Herschel to the profoundest abstractions the human mind is capable of, have started from the sweet portals of musical ound."

Plutarch, in his life of Pericles, one of the greatest statesmen and orators that Greece can boast of, tells us how much that great man owed to his attending the Lectures of Zeno, a Natural Philosopher of Elea. "But (he goes on to say) the philosopher, with whom he was most intimately acquainted, who gave him that force and sublimity of sentiment, superior to all the demagogues, who in short formed him to that admirable dignity of manners, was Anaxagoras the Clazomenian. This was he, whom the people of those times called the Nous, or *intelligence*, either in admiration of his great understanding and *knowledge of the works of nature*, or because he was the first who clearly proved that the Universe owed its formation neither to chance nor necessity, but to a pure unmixed Mind, who separated the homogeneous parts from the other with which they were confounded. The sound doctrines of Natural Philosophy produced a secure and well grounded piety, attended with good hope, instead of a fearful and consuming superstition."

Such was the effect upon the mind of heathens from the study of the works of nature; it did for them, to a certain extent, what St. Paul tells us, in the absence of the clear light of Revelation, it was but right to expect it should do: "For the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead": (Romans i. 20)—And there are some ancient legends which give us specimens of the early researches after truth, ascribed by Oriental or Jewish tradition to Abraham, which show the same tendency. One of these legends relates that Nimrod, forewarned of danger from the birth of a boy, commanded all the male children born at that time to be slain. Abraham, however, (whose father, Terah, and all his friends were worshippers of idols,) was preserved, and nourished secretly by his mother in a cave, but was sustained far more by miraculous food. There he grew and flourished. On stepping out the first time beyond the cave, he saw a beautiful star, and said, "This is my God, who has given me meat and drink in the cave." But soon the moon arose in full splendour, and made the star look dim. Then he said, "That is not my God, I will worship the moon." But when, towards morn-the latter for his God; until he also sank below the horizon. He then asked his mother, "Who is my God?" she replied, "It is I." "And who is thy God?" he enquired further. "Thy Father." "And who is my father's God?" "Nimrod." "And who is Nimrod's God?" But his mother had by this time got to the end of her resources, so she struck him in the face, and bade him be silent. He was silent; but he thought within himself, "I will acknowledge no other God than he who created the heaven and earth, and all that is in them."*

This seems the just and reasonable conclusion of the contemplation of the works of creation, whether we look at "the heavens which declare the glory of God and the firmament which showeth his handy work"; or examine the formation of the earth on which we have our habitation, or the exquisite workmanship in the structure of the vegetable or animal creation. There is a very touching but familiar anecdote told of Mungo Park, the celebrated African traveller, which illustrates this most happily. Stripped and plundered of his clothes in Africa, he sat down in despair. The nearest European settlement was 500 miles off. What could he do? In the agony of his grief and desolation, he happened to look upon a small moss in flower. "Can the Being" he thought, "who planted, watered and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after his own image?" The meditation restored his courage; he went on his way comforted and rejoicing, and soon arrived at a small village.

In many departments we now can read and understand this record of God in his works, in a way that was not open to those who lived in former times. In the present state to which science has attained, nothing is more curious, than to look back at the rules, which some of the wisest ancient philosophers laid down. Astronomy—now exhibiting the maximum of perfection, with the largest and most exact power of predicting future phenomena, which human science has ever attained—was pronounced by Socrates (always spoken of as the wisest of all the ancient philosophers) to be amongst the divine mysteries, which it was impossible to understand, and needless to investigate—as Anaxagoras, the master of Pericles, had foolishly pretended to do. He admitted that there was advantage in knowing enough of the movements of the heavenly bodies to serve as an index to the change of the seasons, and as guides for voyages, journeys by land or night watches. But this much (he said) might easily be obtained from pilots and watchmen, while all beyond was nothing but waste of valuable time, exhausting that mental effort, which ought to be employed in profitable acquisitions. He reduced geometry to its literal meaning of land measuring, necessary so far as to enable any one to proceed correctly in the purchase, sale, or division of land, which any man of common attention might do almost without a teacher; but silly and worthless, if carried beyond to the study of complicated diagrams. Respecting Arithmetic, he gave the same qualified permission of study; but as to general physics, or the study of nature, he discarded it altogether.*

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* Kitto's Bible Illustrations.

And slow and laborious were the advances made in unfolding those hidden mysteries, which now are so largely revealed. It was full 2000 years after the time of Socrates, before Copernicus overthrew the greater part of the antique and venerable scaffoldings, with which the illusions of the senses and the pride of successive generations had filled the universe, and showed men the true principles of our solar system. And he was shortly after followed by Kepler, whose three celebrated laws, known in Astronomy as the laws of Kepler, with the subsequent discoveries of Newton, have led to all that wonderful accuracy and extensive investigation, which in these later days have so astonished and interested the world. Kepler having been two and twenty years pursuing his investigations, at last satisfied of their correctness, but conscious that he was far in advance of all existing knowledge on the subject, published them, exclaiming " The die is cast, I have written my book, it will be read either in the present age or by posterity, it matters not which; it may well await a reader, since God has waited 6000 years for an interpreter of his works ?"†

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* Grote's History of Greece.

The greatest advances made in this department of Science in very modern times have been in the improvement of the machines, specially in the telescopes, whereby these great laws, thus discovered, may be further investigated and applied; and in the multiplication of observations in various places, so that by constant observation of the same phenomena of nature from different points, or by the discovery of particular ones in particular places, some more certain conclusions may be drawn. About twenty-five years ago a friend of mine was travelling with Mr. Babbage, (well known in the scientific world, and particularly in connection with his wonderful machine for calculating logarithms,) and they were talking of the two Herschells (father and son); and it was remarked that the father, "Sir William Herschell, (one of the greatest Astronomers perhaps that ever lived) had looked farther into space than any human being at that time." Babbage said, "that was very true: but that Sir John, his son, had accomplished a deed which no human being besides had ever done. He had with his Telescope diligently swept over the *whole* Northern Hemisphere. And perhaps was the only man that had ever done so. But he had done more: he had also swept over the whole Southern Hemisphere, (when he went some years ago to the Cape of Good Hope to observe there the transit of the planet Venus over the sun); having thus accurately examined and looked through all space, as far as it is permitted for mortal skill and science to do so; which is a great idea." And this reminds me of an observation I read as having been made by one of our most eminent portrait painters, viz: that he had noticed in every celebrated person, whose features he copied, from the Duke of Wellington downwards, *a looking of the eye into remote space.* The author of "A Journal of Summer Time in the Country," remarks that this same idea often occurs in Literature. Milton perhaps led the way by his description of Melancholy:

With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
The rapt soul sitting in her eyes!

Sterne assigns the same peculiarity to the face of his monk, in the *Sentimental Journey.* His head, "mild, pale, penetrating, free from all common place ideas of fat, contented ignorance, looking downwards upon earth; it *looked forward, but looked as if it* *looked at something beyond the world.*" The late Mr. Foster probably had this portrait in his remembrance when he described the Christian in Society—in the world, but not of it: "He is like a person, whose eye, while he is conversing with you about an object, or a succession of objects, immediately near, should glance every moment towards some great spectacle appearing in the distant horizon."

But to return to the subject of these wonderful researches of science. For assisting in such investigations, as well as for the encouragement of the study of Astronomy, Geometry, Meteorology, and all kindred subjects, it is much to be desired that we could have a suitable provision made in this city; and I was pleased to see that the labours of one of our honorary members (Dr. Smallwood) in this department, have been duly commended by the Legislature, in answer to a petition which has lately been presented to them.

I know it has been sometimes alleged that the study of nature, by making evident the laws which govern the universe, has a tendency to encourage what is known as Materialism; while the discoveries of Geologists have been supposed to prove that the Bible account of the creation is at variance with actual facts, as now made known to us. To suppose that every phenomenon of nature was the immediate effect, so to speak, of a special miracle or interposition of Divine power, would divest the works of God of half their glory; for they are more marvellous in their mechanism, in the chain of causes on which they depend, than in themselves. All indeed is miraculous; but it is in connection with certain definite and immutable laws, which, acting with unerring precision, invariably accomplish their appointed ends: and we may imagine it to be a position, worthy even of the Almighty, to contemplate through the lapse of successive ages, the operation and sublime effect of these great principles, and the vast changes they were gradually but steadily producing. It was in His power to have completed at once, and in an instant of time, the whole fabric of the universe; but in that case, its wonderful structure would scarcely have been so apparent, and we should be unable so clearly to trace the vestiges of His presence.*

And as to any supposed discrepancy, between the facts of geology and the Mosaic account of the creation, which can have a tendency to disturb our belief in the truth of revelation, I cannot but think that it only requires a fair examination of the question, at once to put an end to any fear of such results. That there are some minds who wish to discredit the word of God, and therefore gladly take advantage of any popular argument for that purpose, I believe it must be acknowledged. But, as the late Sir S. Romilly remarked in a letter to a friend, " the cause of modern atheism, like the atheism of antiquity, as Plato represents it, is the most dreadful ignorance, disguised under the name of the sublimest wisdom "; so it is with such cavillers at the authority of the word of God, as revealed to us in the Bible. In the first place, the Bible, in its several parts, has now been received as the word of God, and attested as such—whatever infidels, like Hume, may argue to the contrary—by stupendous miracles and fulfilled prophecies for nearly 4500 years; the evidence growing and accumulating in clearness and strength with every succeeding generation, and every fresh addition to the volume of inspiration. Geology began to be studied as a system about thirty or forty years ago; and up to the present time, great as have been the advances made, no two geologists perhaps exactly agree in their interpretation of all their discoveries. New and improved theories of interpretation are being constantly propounded; and can such a science, thus in its infancy, have the slightest real effect upon the credibility with which we are to receive the inspired word of God? Much harm, I cannot but think, has been done, though with the best intentions, by the over-eager attempts which have been made to reconcile the old received interpretation of the Mosaic account of the creation, with the *present state* of geological science. Several schemes which have been successively propounded, all unsatisfactory in themselves, have all been obliged to be abandoned, as further discoveries in geology have been made. A better course, as it appears to me, is to receive the written word on its own evidence, which is amply sufficient to support it as the expression of the mind of God, quite apart from all that geologists can tell us; and to receive the created world on its own internal evidence, confirmed as it is by the written word, as the work of the same Almighty Being; to study and investigate each; and in due time we may feel assured that the unity as well as the perfection of their great Author will be fully manifested. As I observed just now, geology is yet in its infancy as a science; as Kepler observed, God has waited 6000 years for an interpreter of these his works: and it is great presumption to expect, that where so much is still hidden from our view, we can so easily and rapidly have made out all their history. And with respect to the Bible, there is no canon or law of interpretation, that necessarily ties us down to receive the first chapters of Genesis in the exact sense in which our forefathers interpreted them. The great Bishop Butler, than whom we possess not a more careful and profound christian writer, has an argument in his treatise on "The Analogy of Religion," which we may, without overstraining it, apply to this matter now under our consideration:—"One might go on to add (he says) that there is a great resemblance between the light of nature and of revelation in several other respects. Practical Christianity, or that faith and behaviour which renders a man a christian, is a plain and obvious thing, like the common rules of conduct with respect to our ordinary temporal affairs. The more distinct and particular knowledge of those things, the study of which the apostle calls 'going on unto perfection,' and of the prophetical parts of revelation, like many parts of natural and even civil knowledge, may require very exact thought and careful consideration. The hindrances, too, of natural and of supernatural light and knowledge, have been of the same kind. And as it is owned, the whole scheme of Scripture is not *yet* understood, so if it ever comes to be understood, before the 'restitution of all things,' and without miraculous interposition,—it *must* be in the same way as natural knowledge is come at, by the continuance and progress of learning and liberty; and by particular persons attending to, comparing and pursuing, intimations scattered up and down it, which are overlooked and disregarded by the generality of the world. For this is the way in which all improvements are made; by thoughtful men's tracing on obscure hints, as it were dropped us by nature accidentally, or which seem to come into our minds by chance. Nor is it at all incredible, that a book (like the

Bible) which has been so long in the possession of mankind, should contain many truths as yet undiscovered. For all the same phenomena, and the same facilities of investigation, from which such great discoveries in natural knowledge have been made in the present and last age, were equally in the possession of mankind several thousand years before. And possibly it might be intended that events, as they come to pass, should open and ascertain the meaning of several parts of Scripture."

And indeed well may we guard with gratitude and reverence the sacredness and authority of the written word of God; for whatever we may learn of the Creator from his works, however they may convince us of his *being*, his power, his wisdom, or even of his goodness, yet they must leave us still in deep perplexity about much, that it most concerns us to know, respecting his dealings with his creatures, our relations to him, our present position and future hopes. "Reason," as Dr. Johnson observes, in one of the finest numbers of the *Idler*, "deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence." And the excellent Pascal, when yet a boy, in reply to a remark on the incompatibility of reason with revelation, gave utterance to the remark, reproduced in such various lights and aspects in his "Thoughts,' —"Aye, as you say, reason confounds revelation: but then creation—existence—confounds reason. Ask reason what it has to say of an eternity gone past—of the interminability of space; and yet eternity, a past eternity, interminability of space, are self-evident facts! True, reason is a truth and power in her own domain,—beyond it, a falsehood and a juggle." Let us, then, thank God for the gift of his written word, and learn to cherish and to study it with the care it so well deserves, and we shall find that not only will that word be "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths," but that we shall "have more understanding than our teachers, when God's testimonies are our meditation, and understand more than the ancients because we keep his precepts." And in the natural world, the visible creation, let us remember also that all is the work of his Almighty hand, and endeavour to trace the impress of his power, and wisdom, and goodness in all that he hath done. And if it must ever be within the reach of but few to illustrate science with such great discoveries, as shall open up to future generations fresh paths of knowledge and clearer visions of the true; or, if even systematically to master particular sciences, may not be our province, consistently with other occupations and other duties, yet all may assist in the promotion of science, and the encouragement of those who are striving to learn its mysteries, and to make them practically useful, as well as interesting to all. Our President, in the Introductory Lecture of the last year's course, on " Things to be observed in Canada, and especially in Montreal and its vicinity," gave us some very plain and useful advice on this subject. And, in the notes to the " Pursuits of Literature," it is mentioned that Watson, formerly Bishop of Llandaff, writing to a friend, told him that " Sir Isaac Newton and Dr. Bentley, meeting one day accidentally in London, Sir Isaac inquired what philosophical pursuits were carrying on at Cambridge? Bentley replied, none; for when *you* are hunting, Sir Isaac, you kill all the game: you have left us nothing to pursue. 'Not so (said the philosopher), you may start a variety of game in every bush, if you will but take the trouble to beat for it.' And truth it is, (continues the Bishop), every object in nature affords occasion for philosophical experiments."

And certainly there is a wonderful difference between those who go through the world with their eyes open, and those who keep them shut; which is very prettily exemplified in a little story—well known, I dare say, to many—called " Eyes and no eyes," in *The Evenings at Home;* where two boys having taken the same walk through a diversified tract of country, but without falling in with each other, on being asked by their tutor, when they came back, how they had been amused,—one said it had been the dullest, most uninteresting walk he had ever taken; the other, by making use of his senses, and observing the different places he passed and objects he met with, was full of delight and adventure.

One thing is a great encouragement to us in Montreal at present, and that is the completion of this Building, in which we now are assembled, for the service of *the Natural History Society;* not merely as being more commodious for our meetings and lectures, but as affording a fit and proper place for the collection of our antiquities and specimens of natural history. And here those, who wish to further the objects of this Society, may easily and usefully give their aid; by sending specimens to add to the present collection, where they are now far more likely to be taken care of than in private hands, and will be more widely known and useful than it is probable that they would ever otherwise become. It must be a subject of great satisfaction to those who were amongst the original founders of this Society, to witness the advance it has been making in the last few years: for which we are mainly indebted to the increased exertion of our President and a few other members of our body. It has been in the face of many difficulties,—uncheered and unsupported as yet by any general countenance of the citizens of Montreal, and hardly noticed by those who dispense the patronage of Government, though really, with scarcely an exception, doing more for science and the honor of Canada than any other existing Institute of the kind,—that *the Natural History Society of Montreal* has reached its present position Perhaps such difficulties, this general indifference, has stimulated the zeal and nerved the energies of those who have been labouring to advance her interest and increase her usefulness, and thus enabled them to attain their present measure of success. We are told by naturalists that Birds of Paradise fly best against the wind; and against an adverse gale our Society has long been pushing onwards. Its *ultimate* success is *now* no longer a matter of uncertainty; its *immediate* powers of usefulness, their extent and application, mainly depend on the support it is yet to receive. Let us hope that that support will not be wanting in this city; and that the time is coming, when public grants of money will not be always voted, as acknowledgments of political support, but in some just proportion to the real claims and merits of the institutions of the country.