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True Estimate of Self

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faces seized their weapons, and, with dreadful desperation, they met the coming foe. Fierce raged the combat; no quarter was asked, no quarter was given; death or victory was the watchword; the groans of the wounded and dying fell heedless upon the ear; hand to hand, each man grappled with his foe. Where the blows fell the thickest and most deadly; where the leaden messengers of death did the most terrible execution; there might have been seen the haughty form of Logan, dealing around him death and destruction; like an untamed lion loosed among the foe, majestic, yet terrible, he raged; the huge piles of the dead told well where he had fought; the moans of the dying were music to his warlike soul.

At length, as if weary of the work of death, (for well he might be,) and his men falling fast by his side, in triumph, he exclaimed, “Logan is avenged!” and back he sped with his savage clan into their native wilds.

Logan had now fully glutted his vengeance. He was satisfied. His war-hoop and battle-cry, as they echoed upon the stillly air, made the white men tremble; they knew the cause and cruelty that roused his vengeance, and the piles of the dead told them he was terribly avenged!

TRUE ESTIMATE OF SELF.

“Homo imperitus nunquam quidquam injustius,
Qui, nisi quod ipse fecit, nihil rectum putat.”

That being, to whom alone intellect is given, has within him exalting and ennobling principles, which have obtained for him the mastery over other creatures, and raised him above the sensual pleasures of passion and appetite to the cultivation of those powers which give him his peculiar distinction. This strength is mind—a power invisible. The possession of this alone determined the position he should occupy—his rank as designed by the Creator.

While man should be conscious of these gifts, and well acquainted with his capacities, never is he excusable for arrogating to himself what he does not possess. He should seek to know himself; acquaintance with truth is never objectionable. This knowledge gives him a right conception of his imperfections as well as of his abilities. While it gives that confidence which is necessary for the proper use and improvement of those powers with which he is endowed, he is humbled by the gradual discovery of the limitation of these endowments. It is not until he becomes wise that he suspects himself a fool, nor is he fully aware of his ignorance until he has attained his maximum in knowledge. It was not until Newton had surpassed his age, and had robbed the solar system of its mysteries, and defined the laws which regulate the heavens, that he conceived an ocean of knowledge to be extended before him, while he could collect but a few drops along the shore.
Ignorance makes us presumptuous. The child, after experience, will not thrust his hand into the flames; the giddy youth, when entering upon life, if he have discernment, will quickly discover that this wide world "embraces more than one man;" and the graduate, returning from college, soon finds that he does not "astonish the natives," though he have a "sheepskin" carefully stored in his trunk. Intellectual improvement secures our true position, it enables us to respect and esteem ourselves properly, and prevents us from lowering our more gifted natures to the ignoble condition of the brute; but never does it become a veil to conceal from us our infirmities; never does it make us esteem ourselves more highly than we should, or exalt ourselves above our fellows. It is "a little learning" that is the "dangerous thing." In every department, whether in the humbler walks, or in conditions commanding more influence, wherever may be found those who are not satisfied with a casual observation, but who look into the causes and effects of things; these have that knowledge of which there need be no fear; these diffuse a conservative influence upon society, and upon their own peculiar sphere; but those who have examined no subject beyond the surface, though they would be learned, have but the "little learning" which would lead them into danger without giving them means to extricate themselves. The truly skilled know the extent of their abilities, and are careful and unassuming; but the foolish think themselves wise, and "venture where angels fear to tread."

To the infant mind, when first it looks upon the world, it appears as though it occupied the centre of creation, and around but a few miles distant, could see all nature terminated by the horizon. But, when a youth, as he ascends those hills beyond which he thought space only was, he perceives that it had been a deluding fancy. Although the same arched heavens seem still to encompass him, yet he learns that the world, whose circumference he thought did not extend beyond his vision, was not limited by his vague notion of it. As he ascends, the extending view makes him more and more aware of his mistake, but he cannot be conscious of the full extent of the delusion until the universe is scanned. Thus many who, in an intellectual point of view, have never ventured from their native domicile, imagine that they are great geniuses and occupy the centre of the intellectual world, embracing all knowledge within the limit of their minds. Such have not yet approached even to the base of the hill of science;—they are but infants in mind though legally men. Though they think that they are entitled to the admiration of all, alas! how often their bright hopes and expectations are destroyed in the germ; how often they are compelled to lament that others have not discernment enough to discover their excellences.

We are often compelled, though reluctantly, to listen to the empty boastings of the egotist. He would entertain you with a dilated account of his own exploits and feats; he makes himself the hero of every little narrative,
and sometimes he is, ridiculously, the principal actor in scenes which were extant before nature blessed the world with his existence. The youth, who was never admitted above the grammar school, relates what occurred during his college days, with a face so straight that his more credulous friends almost believe that he received the honors of the graduating class. The minds of such have not yet expanded sufficiently to receive an idea more weighty than their diminutive selves. True it is, if men do not respect themselves they cannot expect to be respected; but it is equally true, that not all who value themselves are valued. Words are not heard when actions speak louder. Although Bathyllus imposed himself upon Cæsar, and received the honors due to Virgil, yet this deception, when discovered, only rendered him the more odious. Actions are believed: so when any are observed to delight in display and show, it may be well inferred that they possess but little else.

That excessive tameness and innocence, which would make the possessor bow to received opinions without examination, are quite as injurious to society as that confidence which makes him think his own opinions right and true, and that he has already acquired that amount of knowledge which precludes further improvement; "medio tutissimus ibis." This happy medium can only be preserved by a sound and well-regulated mind. Due deference to the opinions of others is to be preserved, and still humanity should not be degraded by dethroning reason, which ought to sit in judgment upon every question.

THE AUTHORESS.

On looking over the Collegian for April, we observed a piece entitled "The Authoress," which, as far as we could comprehend its bearing, undertook to prove that the penchant for writing, with which women are from time to time seized, is very naughty and should be discontinued; that the pen should be resigned exclusively to the male portion of the human family, whilst the ladies should bestow undivided attention on those "heavenly gifts" wherewith they have been endowed, and also, that "magic influence" which, as "reflected on society, gives it a charm which would else be unknown."

Now, this may be a very happy and comfortable doctrine for an aspiring youth who doubtless anticipates setting aside with his pen an Ellis or a de Staël; but then, we have a slight fault to find with his theory, which is, that it doesn't contain a word of truth. And, inasmuch as the Collegian is "at all times open to free expression of thought and opinion," and lest silence should imply a prevalence of the sentiment in college, we beg leave to notice a few of the arguments adduced in the piece.