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THE

LADIES' WREATH,

A MAGAZINE.

DEVOTED TO

LITERATURE INDUSTRY AND RELIGION.

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1846/47

EDITED BY

MRS. S. T. MARTYN.

NEW YORK:

J. H. MARTYN, 162 NASSAU-STREET.

1847.



THE
LADIES' WREATH.

VOL. I.]

MAY, 1846.

[NO. 1.]

INTRODUCTION.

In presenting to our beloved countrywomen, a new periodical, devoted to their interests, and respectfully claiming a share of their attention, it becomes necessary that we should state briefly, the objects we have in view, and the means by which we shall seek their accomplishment. We are well aware that there are already in existence many papers and magazines, designed for our own sex, but none we believe, occupying precisely the ground we intend to take in the **LADIES' WREATH**. It is to be emphatically the **VOICE OF WOMAN**; giving utterance to truths in her behalf, whose value has never yet been adequately appreciated or understood. If we can succeed in awakening the wives, mothers, and daughters of the land, to a sense of their true dignity, and the important agency they are destined to exert in the moral and physical regeneration of the world, our utmost expectations will have been realized.

“Whatever may be the customs and laws of a country,” says Aime Martin, “women always give the tone to morals. If we wish to know then, the political and moral condition of a state, we must ask what rank women hold in it. Their influence embraces the whole of life.”

A wife—a mother—magical words, comprising the sweetest and purest sources of earthly felicity. The empire of women is that of the affections, her reign, the reign of love, of beauty, of reason. The sternest and most impassive natures yield in some degree to the gentle influence of

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THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

BY REV. WM. B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

WHEN the great architect of the world had finished the work of his hands, he surveyed the stupendous fabric, and pronounced all "very good." There was beauty and magnificence, there was order and light and joy in every thing. The whole creation seemed vocal with its Maker's praise, and man especially, the noblest work which the Creator had left on earth, the brightest monument of wisdom, and power, and goodness, which he had erected here below, was clothed with the beauty of perfect holiness, and animated by a spark of immortal life, and fitted in the whole constitution of his nature, for the station of dignity he was called to occupy. If the Creator himself was pleased with his finished work, no doubt man, when he looked abroad for the first time upon the face of nature, and looked within at the same time on the greatness and immortality of his own spirit—no doubt *his* eye must have kindled, and his bosom heaved with emotions of unutterable sublimity and delight.

That this great system of things which we now behold is not, in all respects, what it was when the first morning after the creation dawned upon it, cannot successfully be questioned; for almost ever since that period, there has been a spoiler of God's works walking up and down the earth; and whatever that spoiler has touched, he has marred; though his deranging and destructive influence has been most vigorously exerted where he has had his immediate dwelling place,—viz., in the heart of man. But though the very earth has been cursed for the sake of man's rebellion—though darkness has come over the understand-

ing, and disorder is deeply seated in the affections, still we can recognize, both in the world without and the world within, the broad marks of God's wisdom and goodness. We see much indeed, that we cannot comprehend—for we cannot go far beneath the surface in anything; but so far as we *can* penetrate, we can see that the hand of God has done its work well, however much the sin of man may have marred it; we find irresistible evidence that God has suited everything wisely to its own place and its proper end; and that whatever derangement and deformity appear, must be charged to the creature, and not to the Creator.

The ultimate end for which God made and governs the world, is the manifestation of his own glory. But there are other and subordinate ends which he has in view—such as the happiness of the intelligent creation, and especially the happiness of the human race. It is this latter end—the happiness of man, which will be kept particularly in view in the present article; and as the field is so extensive, I shall limit myself to a single portion of it. In other words, I shall endeavor to show in the most general manner, how admirably infinite wisdom has consulted our happiness in the works of creation.

Let us then, for a moment, contemplate man himself, and see how his whole constitution as it came from his Creator's hands, was adapted to the promotion of his highest enjoyment.

Look at the wonderful organization of the human body—look at it in its minutest parts—look at it with the eye of the most skilful anatomist, and the farther you penetrate into its mysteries, the higher will be your views of the intelligence and goodness which are exhibited in its formation. Why is it that the eye occupies precisely the place which is best fitted to the purpose of vision? Why does the ear perform its functions with such exquisite perfection? Why is it that the arm hangs conveniently by the

side—that the hand is fitted for every species of labor—that the feet perform their office with such entire security—that the lungs, though constituted with extreme delicacy, play with perfect freedom, and sometimes never become deranged? In short, why is it that each part of this incomparably delicate machine, is exactly adapted to every other part, so that entire harmony reigns through the whole? And, more than all, why is it that this machine, in many of its movements, is entirely subject to the human will—the energy of that spirit which animates it? This is only the surface of the subject, and the deeper we go, the more we shall find to awaken our astonishment and admiration. The atheist himself, if he has ever a lucid interval, must pronounce the mechanism of the human body complete—must own that it is entirely adapted to the purposes of human happiness; and if he believes that chance hath done all this, he is surely inconsistent in giving to this wonderful agent so little of his homage.

We have glanced at the habitation; now let us contemplate the inhabitant—that living principle that acts in every motion of the body—that immortal spirit which thinks and feels, which ranges at pleasure about the material and immaterial creation; which can mount up even to the third heavens, and hold communion not only with the angels around the throne, but with Him who sits upon it. It is but little comparatively that we know of our minds, even after we have studied them with the greatest diligence; but can we take even a superficial glance at the wonderful faculties with which they are endowed, without perceiving that the Creator, in giving to man his intellectual and moral constitution, had an eye upon his happiness? Consider the faculty of perception, the faculty of judgment, the faculty of memory, the faculty of reasoning, the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong, analyze the office which the mind, in the exercise of each of these faculties,

performs, and say whether all this does not confer superior dignity upon man's nature ; whether it does not furnish evidence enough that man was made with reference to an exalted destiny.

From having contemplated man's own nature as having in it originally the elements of happiness, let us look next at the constitution of the world around us, and see whether we are not conducted to the same conclusion in respect to the Creator's wisdom and goodness.

When the first father of our race awoke into existence and surveyed the ground on which he stood, and beheld the groves which waved around him, and tasted the fruits which hung before him, *he* surely could have no doubt that the Being who made him, designed that he should be happy. The same evidence have we, in a degree at least, that God designed happiness for the *children* of Adam.

The sun, that vast body of fire in the heavens, is so stationed as to illuminate and cheer the globe, to cause it to yield its thousand fruits, and to render it a proper habitation for human beings. By the regular changes of the seasons, those parts become habitable, which otherwise would be burnt with continual heat, or sealed with eternal frost. Around the globe is spread a body of air so fine and subtle as to transmit the rays of light, and yet so strong and active as to sustain the flight of birds. This serves for the breath of life, the vehicle of sound, the suspension of waters, the conveyance of clouds, the promotion of vegetation, and other uses essential to human subsistence. The earth is replenished with innumerable kinds of animals, some of which assist man in his labor, while others yield him food, and others still yield him ornaments and clothing. The productions of the earth, various beyond our conception, are some of them spontaneous, and some the effect of human industry. On earth's surface, we meet with springs and streams at convenient distances to satisfy the thirsty

beast, as well as to serve the purposes of man : and beside these, there are every where, just beneath the surface, continual currents of water, spreading in their numberless ramifications, like the veins in the human body, whence, with comparatively little labor, daily supplies may be drawn. And then, the great bodies of water with which the land is intersected, facilitate the commerce of nations, while they contribute to refresh and fertilize the earth. By the heat of the sun and other co-operating causes, waters from the seas, rivers, and fountains, are raised into the cooler regions of the air, and there condensed into clouds, wafted around by winds, and poured down in showers ; and thus the fields are watered independently of human labor and skill.

Moreover the course of nature is constant and regular. The sun observes his hours to rise and set, and his seasons to approach and retire. Summer and winter, seed time and harvest, keep the order of their succession, and come in their appointed weeks. The fruitfulness of summer supplies the consumption of winter, and the frosts and snows of winter contribute in turn to the fruitfulness of summer. In consequence of this uniform arrangement in the government of the world, we are able to judge within our sphere what means are necessary to certain ends, and by what success our labors will ordinarily be attended. The husbandman knows when to cast abroad his seed, and when to collect his harvest, and we all know how to provide for our own support and to guard against common dangers. If the seasons were thrown into confusion and the course of nature often interrupted, human industry and prudence would be at an end, as there would be no probable connection between the object to be attained and any means which could be devised for its attainment. Reason and experience in this case would teach us no useful lessons, and yield us no valuable assistance.

But to what end was all this order and beauty of nature,

all this fertility and furniture of the earth, if not to meet the convenience and promote the comfort of man? Surely then the Creator has done all things well! He has "made every thing beautiful in his time;" and in view of this, *who* is prepared to withhold from him the homage of the heart, the praise of the lips, the obedience of the life? *Who* will not regard it a privilege, in view only of creative power and wisdom and goodness, to magnify the name of the Lord, while immortality endures?

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ORIGINAL.

"RICHES WITHOUT WINGS."

BY MRS. E. LITTLE.

"To be resigned when ills betide,  
Patient when favors are denied,  
And pleased with favors given;  
'Tis this, is wisdom's better part,  
This is the incense of the heart,  
Whose fragrance smells to heav'n."

"ARE you easy now, dear mother? do you sit comfortably?" said Helen Stanton, bending tenderly over the chair of her invalid parent, and arranging the cushion at her back.

"Thank you, my darling, that will do nicely," was the cheerful response, as the mother gazed with fondness at her sweet and devoted child. "And now, dear Helen, indulge me for a few moments by laying aside your work, and reading to me in one of the books which Mrs. Lumley brought you to-day."

"I will read you a short story, mother, or an essay, which