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ART. I.—THEORY OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste. By ARCHIBALD ALISON, LL.D., B.F.R.S., &c. 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1811.

IN the Edinburgh Review for May, 1811, Lord Jeffrey said of the work at the head of this article, "We look upon this as, on the whole, the best and most pleasing work which has yet been produced on the subjects of taste and beauty. Less ornate and adventurous than Price or Knight, the author, we think, has gone deeper into his subject than any of those writers; at the same time that he has been more copious (perhaps too copious) in his examples and illustrations, and more constantly awake (perhaps to an excess here also) to those feelings of enthusiastic delight which the contemplation of such subjects is apt to excite in the minds best qualified to discuss them." It is because the work of Alison still, in our opinion, holds the place assigned to it by the Edinburgh critic, that we now make it the starting point in an inquiry into the theory of the beautiful in the material world, which we propose in this article.

The theory of the beautiful often resolves itself, in the course of discussion, into the theory of taste; they being only different views of the same question. We shall, therefore, begin the inquiry by an investigation into the theory of taste, as the polemical aspects of the question make this the most convenient mode of examining it.

So difficult has it always been to fix upon any certain standard of taste, that there is a long-established proverb denying there is any standard. All tastes are supposed by it to be equally justified in reason; or, rather, the proverb supposes, that taste is a matter with which reason has nothing to do. "There is no disputing about tastes," is the great canon of popular opinion by which the most disputatious is silenced.

But philosophy does not yield to popular opinion, neither is it content to acquiesce in what has a mere semblance of truth. It

ART. VIII.—BARNARD ON AMERICAN COLLEGES.

Improvements Practicable in American Colleges: a paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Education, at its Fifth Annual Session, in the Chapel of the University of New York, on the 30th of August, 1855. By F. A. P. BARNARD, LL. D., Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in the University of Mississippi. Hartford, Conn.: F. C. Brownell. 1856.

WE have read this pamphlet with very great satisfaction, and, if we knew nothing of the author except what might be gathered from its pages, we should pronounce him a man of sense and learning, an experienced and skilful teacher, who has made himself master of the system he proposes to improve, who has thoroughly studied it in its practical details, and brings a sound, discriminating judgment to the questions he reviews. It is refreshing to turn to a work like this, so solid, manly, and judicious, from the rash schemes and visionary projects, the crotchets and plausibilities of pretenders and empirics, who seem to consider education as only a field for experiment, and the destruction and reorganization of colleges a species of amusement as cheap and harmless as the blowing up of soap-bubbles. What adds to the value of the tract is, that it comes from a man of science, a professor of mathematics and astronomy, from whom we should hardly have expected such large and liberal views. We congratulate the infant College of Mississippi upon the possession of such an instructor, and, if all its teachers are like minded, we predict for it a career of distinguished usefulness.

After adverting to the sources from which complaints against our college system have sprung—practical men and men of science on the one hand, and scholars and philosophers on the other, and illustrating the impossibility of any radical or essential change—the pamphlet before us proceeds to unfold the fundamental notion of a college, to explain, as our German brethren would express it, the idea which underlies the whole organization, and regulates the adjustment of its parts. The writer assumes, at the outset, “that there is a specific function which the college ought to fulfil.” That being settled, the details are to be determined according to their harmony, or want of correspondence with the principal end. These details may be referred to the general heads of study and discipline. What studies should be exacted, what stimulants to diligence adopted, and what tests of proficiency applied, are the inquiries to which he reduces his discussion of the first topic. The second is confined to strictures upon the different modes of government pursued in different institutions, and to some general

suggestions about a closer union and better understanding among the colleges themselves. We shall follow Mr. B., *haud pari passu*, through his lucid and interesting tractation of these points.

The "specific function," which he assigns to the college, "is the systematic development and discipline of the faculties of the mind, in due proportion and in a natural order." This, with Sir William Hamilton, he "makes the one end of all liberal education," and the tendency to stimulate thought, and to quicken and exercise the energies of the mind the true measure of the educational value of a subject. Our readers must excuse us here for a long extract, but the passage is too good to be curtailed :

"Now, much of the discussion which has, of late years, agitated the public mind on this subject, seems to me to have originated in an entire misconception of the proper business of a college. If such discussions had, in all cases, ended as they began, in words merely, allusion to them here might be unnecessary. But this is by no means the case. In a number of instances they have resulted in breaking up the long-established and time-honoured course of collegiate instruction, and substituting in its place something new and materially different. Nor yet could this be a subject of reasonable complaint, provided that, in the novel schemes, we could find evidence of a distinct recognition of the proper function of the college. But, so far is this from having been the case, that the entire argument, by which these innovations have been urged and indicated, has been founded on the tacit assumption, that the college has no such proper function. It has, for example, been maintained, with a great deal of warmth, that our colleges have, in later years, failed to keep pace with the rapid progress of human knowledge; that the subjects of study, to which they mainly confine the student, are in part obsolete and in part useless; that they take no account of the prospective pursuits of the young men whom they undertake to train, but subject all alike to the same unvarying intellectual regimen, and, in short, that they are far in arrear of the demands of an eminently utilitarian and practical age. We have, accordingly, been accustomed to hear the value of classical learning discussed, as if its only claim to attention lay in the directness with which it is capable of being turned to the pecuniary advantage of its possessor; and we have heard the usefulness of the higher branches of the mathematics brought to the same test by which we would judge of arithmetic, surveying, or the principles of machinery. How, it is demanded, will it help a man, in this stirring world, to have spent some of his best years in the perusal of Greek and Latin authors? How will it help him—even to communicate with his fellow-men—to have attained any degree of proficiency in the use of languages, in which men have long since ceased to communicate? Or, how will it contribute to his success as a lawyer, as a physician, as a merchant, or as a

divine, that he is deeply versed in the mysteries of mathematical analysis, or familiar with the theory of the lunar perturbations?

"All this course of argumentation rests, it will be observed, on a simple *petitio principii*. It is taken for granted that the college course ought not to embrace, and was never intended to embrace, any thing which should not be capable of a direct practical application, in the business of life. This postulate being granted, the triumphant conclusions of the objectors are at once legitimate and unavoidable. And not only so, but those who persist in advocating the perpetuation of our present system of college education, however in other matters they may be respectable for their intelligence, must, in regard to this, be admitted to be wanting in common sense.

"But no such postulate can be received. The studies condemned were never selected, nor is their selection now defended, on the ground that they are to form any necessary and immediate element of those pursuits by which the learner is, in after life, to gain his daily bread. They were selected because of their pre-eminent value as instruments of mental discipline. It is unnecessary for me, on this occasion, to enter into any argument, upon a subject which has already been so often and so ably discussed, and in which I should only travel over ground which has been beaten again and again. I hold it to be time that, on this question, we should be permitted to believe, that there are certain principles, too well established to leave room for further controversy; and, for the sake of explicitness, though they may now be regarded as sufficiently elementary, I will venture to recapitulate them here.

"1. Education, in its widest sense, signifies the development, discipline, and cultivation of all the powers and faculties of man, physical, mental, and moral.

"2. Intellectual training, which is that which for the moment concerns us, implies the exercise of the mental powers, in a natural order, and in just proportion, upon subjects of thought.

"3. The subjects which furnish the most beneficial discipline are not necessarily, nor even usually, those which are most immediately related to the ordinary pursuits of men in life.

"4. Though, in the process of education, we necessarily impart knowledge, yet the best education by no means implies the largest amount of that knowledge which the world calls practical.

"5. In arranging a plan of studies, designed to furnish a complete system of intellectual discipline, the question, how far the subjects selected may have an immediately practical value, is one of secondary importance. But,

"6. Other things being equal—that is to say, when the choice is between subjects of similar disciplinary character—that which affords the largest amount of useful knowledge is of course to be preferred.

“Assuming these principles to be true, I say, then, that the business of our colleges is to educate, and not to inform. And no argument, which goes to decry the freedom with which they employ mathematical or classical studies, as instruments of mental discipline, on the score that these subjects are less practical in their nature than something else might be, is valid, until it shall have been shown—a thing which has never yet been done—that this something else has an equal educational value with the studies so denounced. I am not prepared, therefore, to assent to the judiciousness of any of those proposed changes of our present plan of college education, by which the amount either of classical or of mathematical study, now exacted, shall be materially diminished. And, entertaining these opinions, I am equally unprepared to admit the propriety of abolishing the curriculum of study, or even of introducing parallel courses of study, if these courses are to run through any considerable portion of the time now devoted to college education.”

We might raise a question as to the right of the mathematics to be put upon a footing of equality with the classics, but the ointment, in other respects, is so sweet, that we shall not throw away the box for the sake of a single dead fly. Something may be pardoned to professional prejudice.

The author insists upon “the necessity of a curriculum,” as growing “out of the nature of things.” He is not prepared to leave the selection and arrangement of studies to the caprices of pupils, or to the blind partialities of parents. Those alone who understand the nature and conditions of intellectual discipline, and the comparative fitness of different subjects to promote it, are competent to determine which shall be chosen, and the order and method in which they shall be pursued. The following is the author’s statement of “the principles on which the curriculum should be constructed:”

“A curriculum being, therefore, an evident necessity, it is next in order, to consider the principles upon which it should be constructed. These appear to be the following:

“1. The curriculum should embrace the number and variety of studies properly disciplinary, and the amount of each, which is necessary to an adequately thorough intellectual training. In the choice of these, the question, how far they are practical, is to be made entirely subordinate to the higher objects of education.

“2. It should *not* embrace a greater amount than can be well and completely mastered, within the period of time over which it is spread.

“3. The foregoing condition being fulfilled, it *may* embrace other studies, chosen simply because of their value as subjects of knowledge.

“If, therefore, our course of collegiate study is to continue to

be restricted to a definite term of years, and if the space of time allotted to it is to be no more than sufficient for the purposes of a thorough intellectual training, we are evidently driven to the necessity of denying the propriety of selecting any studies, to form a part of the course, simply on the ground that they are practical."

If the following passage should afford to our readers the same pleasure which it has given to us, they will thank us for extracting it:

"Let it here be observed, that I am employing the word practical, in this place, in that entirely utilitarian sense in which it has been so much used in public strictures upon the American college system. But I am by no means of the number of those who would withhold this epithet, when understood in its largest and most liberal sense, from any of the studies which we require our students to pursue, however little affinity they may seem to have to those occupations in which the same young men are to become immersed, so soon as the period of their college education is past. Nothing can possess a higher practical value, to any man, than that which makes him a man, in the fullest sense of the word; which gives him habits of clear, systematic, and independent thought; which sharpens his penetration, invigorates his powers of reasoning, teaches him to analyze, chastens and refines his taste, subdues to method his insubordinate imagination, and confers upon him the priceless gift of lucid and forcible utterance. Considered from this point of view, the studies of the college course, however abstract, barren, or profitless they may appear to a superficial observer, possess a practical value of the very highest and most inestimable character, since their beneficial effects are spread out over the entire life, and are daily manifest in every variety of circumstances by which men are surrounded. If we compare the success in life of the few—for it is but a few after all—who have early enjoyed the advantages of the training which our colleges afford—the average eminence which they attain, in their respective professions and pursuits, the labours by which they command the attention of mankind, the variety and extent of the researches in which they engage, the boldness and success with which they push inquiry into the regions of the unknown, the controlling influence which they often exert in public affairs, and all those various modes in which a cultivated mind displays its superiority over matter and over other minds—if we compare these things with the degree to which the same things are, upon the whole, true of those who in youth have been denied similar advantages, we cannot hesitate to attribute the observed results, in the main, to that early mental discipline which is furnished by these very studies, which we are so accustomed to hear denounced as wanting in practical value. Nor will it be any reply to this, to point, on the one hand, to those, for we need not go far to find them, whose college edu-

cation has failed to lift them above a respectable mediocrity of standing; nor, on the other, to those more remarkable individuals who have risen to eminence in spite of the deficiencies of their early education. If nature has made men essentially small, no education can render them great; or if gifted youths choose to neglect their early advantages, or to idle away their subsequent lives, the consequences of their neglect, or their indolence, must rest upon them. To use again the names of such men as Franklin, and Watt, and Hugh Miller, as arguments to depreciate the value of collegiate education, is no more to the purpose than it would be to declaim against common schools, because some persons have taught themselves to read. The true form in which to place the argument is this: If these men have done so much without education, what might they not have done with it?"

Having settled the principles which regulate the subject, Mr. Barnard institutes an inquiry as to the extent to which they are exemplified in the actual arrangements of our American colleges. These colleges are all modelled on the same general type, and what is true of one is, for the most part, true of all. The first thing which strikes one, in looking at their course of studies, and comparing it with the standard of past requisitions, is its undue extension in the direction of practical utility. The new exactions have not been prescribed for the purpose of making better scholars, or adding intensity to intellectual exercise, but purely on account of the knowledge which it is supposed will be imparted. The end has not been to train, but to stuff the mind. The departments from which the additions have been made, indicate the principle which has determined the selection. In the mean time, the period of study has remained unchanged, and a boy is expected now to accomplish in four years nearly double as much as our ancestors were able to achieve. The "march of mind" has grown into a proverb, but we shrewdly suspect, that, however the race may advance, each individual has to begin at the same point and pass through the same stages of intellectual growth. We much doubt whether boys now are any cleverer than they were of old. What our fathers could not do, it may be reasonably hinted, is not apt to be well done by ourselves. This, then, is the state of the case: our colleges, in accommodation to the spirit, and perhaps also to the necessities of the age, have undertaken to combine two functions, and to execute them both in the same time which was previously deemed sufficient only for one. It is obvious that in this, as in every other case, the attempt to do too much can end in nothing but failure. What shall be done? The answer to this question elicits the first "improvement of American colleges," to which Mr. Barnard adverts. He is not willing to sacrifice the sciences, nor to curtail the subjects eminently disciplinary. He, therefore, proposes one or both, for they may be readily combined,

of two schemes; either to lengthen the period of residence in college, or to increase the exactions for admission. If we undertake to do double work, we must have double time to do it in, or double strength to do it with. By the first scheme, the college loses nothing of its disciplinary character, but only superadds another function. By the second scheme, it transfers a part of its disciplinary work to the schools below, and begins at a higher point—the first scheme gives the double time; the second, the double strength. For ourselves, we should prefer to unite them, and then we should have a reasonable guarantee that the work will be done. If, however, neither of these changes be admitted, Mr. B. does not hesitate to say, in effect: “Lop off the sciences. Do not sacrifice the fundamental notion of a college, ‘its being’s end and aim,’ to perpetuate a sham. What is done, let it be well done, and if a choice must be made, select that which is most important.”

There appears to us to be a little inconsistency between the author’s principle, that the one exclusive end of the college is the harmonious development of the faculties, and the recommendations which contemplate the extension of its curriculum beyond the exigencies of mere discipline. He feels the importance of *training*, and justly gives it the *first* place; but he also makes provision for the communication of knowledge on its own account. The end of the college, consequently, as he would have it organized, by an extension of time or an intension of study, is not single, but double; it is discipline, primarily—instruction, secondarily: both ought to be included, and the perfection of the scheme consists in combining them in the order of their relative value.

These opinions are sound, but we should prefer to modify the form in which Mr. B. has stated them, though we heartily approve the manner in which the extension of the college terms is proposed. We would say explicitly, that “the specific function of the college” is twofold. We cannot agree with Sir William Hamilton, profoundly as we reverence his name, that the “harmonious development of the faculties is the one *exclusive* end of education.” It is the *first*, but not the *exclusive* end. There is a period, consequent upon the expansion of the mind, when habits of thought and inquiry have been formed, when the taste has learned to discriminate, and the fancy been quickened into life—a period of comparative maturity, in which the man is prepared to relish knowledge for itself, and to pursue it for the luxury of possessing it. Truth is the end of the understanding, as virtue is of the heart. Man was made to *know*. The mind, as the instrument of knowledge, must first be tempered and sharpened, which is done by training; and then it may be used, and used efficiently, in making permanent acquisitions. What is called development is nothing but the culture by which it is fitted to its end. Discipline is directed to two points; first, the enlargement, expansion, or

growth of the understanding—it is impossible to indicate the change without borrowing terms from the analogies of matter,—and next, the formation of habits, or principles of action, which, to be just and proper, must be in harmony with the laws of mind. But when the mind has been developed, and its habits established, its energies are not without a purpose, nor is that purpose an increase of their own intensity. They are designed for the apprehension and discovery of truth, and the highest of all motives to intellectual activity, is the love of truth for itself. The *matter* of thought, according to the reasoning of Sir William Hamilton, is chiefly to be prized as an instrument of eliciting the energy of thought. Whatever calls forth most energy is most valuable. Hence he does not hesitate to say, that a “waking error is better than a sleeping truth;” that an error which sets men a thinking is better than a truth mechanically received. To this proposition we can not assent. Error is always poison, and the activity which it stimulates can never be healthful. Stagnation of thought is also a great evil, but we cannot help believing that it is better not to think at all than to think wrong. Wherever there is error, there is some violation of the laws of mind; it is the penalty of intellectual transgression; and the development it promotes is, accordingly, in the direction of unnatural habits. It is disease, not strength. Energizing, therefore, is not the supreme good of the intellect; but *energizing in truth*. The mind attains its perfection only when it attains sound wisdom and discretion. Knowledge and mind are not to be contrasted and opposed, nor are they to be separately conceived; they imply each other; without mind, no truth; without truth, no mind; and the synthesis of mind and truth is *knowledge*. The highest form of culture has not, consequently, been received, until there has been awakened a spirit of speculation, which loves knowledge for itself, and seeks the perfection of its being in the pursuit and possession of it, as the complement of intellect. The culture of mere development or training is subsidiary to this; it expands and drills, matures in strength and habits, that this strength and these habits may be concentrated upon truth, that the man may be qualified to know. Just as in the moral nature, the ultimate end of education is *action*, so in the intellectual, the ultimate end of discipline is knowledge. And the reason, why an academical education is called *liberal*, is precisely because it leads to the culture of knowledge for itself; it makes the possession of it its own end. Not that the process of development is, by any means, arrested. The mind continues to grow as long as it continues to act. Exercise always invigorates; but the exercise is now taken, not for the sake of health, but for the pleasure which it gives. The mind delights in the object, and is drawn to it by an impulse analogous to the appetite which the body has for food. A complete system of education must, there-

fore, provide for this double end or function. It must look first to the discipline of the mind, and select and arrange the subjects of study with a special reference to their aptitude to evoke the dormant capacities and to impart to them healthful and vigorous habits of action; it must look, in the next place, to the spirit of liberal inquiry, and provide the means of gratifying the curiosity which its previous culture has awakened. It must, in other words, first train, and then instruct; it must give both development and knowledge. This, accordingly, is what is attempted in the most perfect scheme of education which anywhere exists, the scheme that obtains in Germany. The gymnasia there, are eminently schools of training. The universities, on the other hand, are schools of knowledge. They still continue the discipline which was begun in the gymnasium, but their principal design is to give the opportunity and furnish the means of prosecuting philosophy and letters as liberal pursuits.

Now, the American college is a mixture of the gymnasium and university. From its first establishment in the country, all its arrangements have been made with the evident design of achieving both ends. It is the last stage of a liberal education. It is presumed, not only to have trained the mind, but to have awakened the spirit of liberal inquiry; to have given a taste of the sweets of knowledge, and to have inspired the honourable ambition of seeking it as at once the health and beauty of the soul. We give no opinion as to the wisdom or expediency of the theory, but the fact seems to us unquestionable, that this is the true theory of our colleges. This is the key to the enormous exactions of their course of study; the secret of their magnificent promises to teach all that can be known. They undertake to do what in Germany is done by different institutions, and institutions organized upon different principles; and when we are required to state the specific function of an American college, we should never overlook this peculiarity of their structure. Mr. B., throughout the tract before us, has evidently seen and felt it, but he has not explicitly announced it. He has treated of the selection of studies, and very justly and judiciously, in reference to the gymnastic function; he has given it the prominence it deserves, but his recommendations obviously presuppose the other function, and indicate the only way by which it can be adequately fulfilled. But still, with him, this other function is something foreign, something that does not enter into the essential idea of the college, and something introduced rather from a concession to the spirit of the age, than from the nature of the thing. Let it, then, be distinctly understood, that this is a part of the work which our colleges propose to do; that they are treasuries of knowledge as well as halls of discipline: let this be explicitly stated and clearly apprehended; and then the question arises as to the arrangements by which both functions can be most successfully

performed. Mr. B.'s suggestion, that a longer time is required, is too obvious to admit of doubt; and the other suggestion, that a better preparation, previously to entering, is desirable, is equally undeniable. But shall the college undertake to discharge both offices synchronously? Shall it carry on, side by side, a set of studies which are taught for the purpose of awakening the energy, and another for the purpose of imparting the matter of thought?

It is here, we think, that our American colleges are grievously at fault. We do not object to them for undertaking to initiate their pupils in the mysteries of science; but we do object to them, that they have absurdly blended what should be kept asunder, and, in consequence of the unnatural combination, have entailed inevitable failure in both. That portion of the physical sciences, whose results are rather the classification of phenomena, than the discovery of general laws, have not only very little value as a discipline, but are apt to be positively disgusting, in the earlier stages of education, before a generous curiosity has been excited, from their enormous exactions upon the memory. Those departments of physics, on the other hand, which are conversant with laws and causes, possess a higher educational value; but we are inclined to think that their chief interest depends, not upon the energy and intensity of mind that they elicit, but upon the pleasure which they give and the reflections they suggest. They are palpable illustrations of order and design. The "great theories" they establish are beautiful subjects of contemplation in themselves, and in tracing the harmony and dependence of the various parts of nature, we feel that knowledge is its own reward. But the very fascination of these studies is a proof that they are not as intensely gymnastic as those which turn the mind upon itself. They may afford instances and illustrations of the inductive process, but this is not like studying the laws and conditions of that process as a matter of reflection. They may impart a dexterity, analogous to mechanical skill, in conducting observations and experiments, but they never reach the height, and dignity, and intensity of pure thinking. We cannot withhold the opinion, therefore, that the physical sciences are not the aptest instruments for the discipline of mind. They should not be made the meal, but the dessert. They should be postponed until they can be pursued as a matter of rational curiosity, when they become an amusement or relaxation from the severe demands of reflection. They are a good condiment, but a poor diet. "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind."

The improvement, therefore, which we are disposed to recommend, is the introduction of two separate and distinct courses in the college, which might be called the gymnastic and the liberal. The first should embrace a period of three years, and be exclusively devoted to gymnastic exercises, or to the elements prepara-

tory to the pursuits of science. The second should consist of studies which the student might desire to prosecute as a man of letters or of science. The term, here, would depend upon the number of subjects pursued. At the conclusion of the first course we would give the pupil the first degree in arts; at the conclusion of the other, the second degree. None should be allowed to enter on the second course, who had not completed the first, and even with those, the entrance should be purely voluntary. This arrangement would fulfil the conditions involved in the notion of an American college. It would have all the advantages, without the inconveniences of what is usually understood to be the university plan. The influence of a body of graduates, imbued with the love of knowledge, and trained to habits of diligent and persevering study, could not fail to be happy on the raw and inexperienced freshmen, who have just come from their schools and their homes, with very imperfect notions of what they have come for. The experience of every graduating class, at least of the clever men, is that they leave college just as they are prepared to appreciate its advantages. As soon as they have learned to study, and are beginning to glow with a generous enthusiasm, they are called away and deprived of the opportunities of indulging their tastes. We think it cannot be doubted that our colleges stop too short. The scheme proposed would detain none but generous and manly minds, those that were desirous to enter the temple and to worship with a pure devotion. The *ὁ πολλοί* would go no further than the first degree. A voluntary course, therefore, engrafted on the gymnastic curriculum, seems to us to be the best remedy of existing evils. This expedient, while it develops the idea of the college, and enables it to fulfil the law of its being, adapts it also to the spirit and demands of the age. Those who wished to cultivate the practical sciences, could have the privilege of doing so, and of doing so to their heart's content. This suggestion, as we have already intimated, is in harmony with the whole spirit of Mr. B.'s reasoning, and with an articulate recommendation about the master's degree. He has not, however, enunciated his own opinion precisely in this form.

We would make the classics indispensable to a degree in both courses, and we think that a little reflection will evince that they are justly entitled to this distinction. As a discipline, their importance cannot be estimated too highly. They are suited to all stages of the mind's progress, and to every form of its activity. They have gentle stimulants for the dormant capacities of the child, and higher demands for the expanding powers of the boy; the energies of youth find in them the fittest materials for exercise, and manhood resorts to them as a food, a solace, and a charm. There is no department of our being to which they do not address themselves. From the first dawn of intellect, in the simplest exercises of apprehension and memory, to the full maturity of reason,

they attend our course, ministering to every faculty according to its want, and conducting us by easy and gentle gradations to the harmonious development of our nature. They give the infant memory its best lessons; the child's understanding its most healthful exercise, the youthful taste its richest models, and the matured intellect its profoundest thoughts. They cannot be dispensed with. Nothing can supply their place as a means of mental discipline. But they are not less valuable as a body of philosophy and literature. There is a freshness in them, a power to quicken and interest, which no other compositions possess. They have in literature the vivacity, energy, and enthusiasm which distinguish youth as contrasted with age. Who has not felt, as he pored over the divine dialogues of Plato, or tracked the remorseless logic of Aristotle, that a new life was stirring within him? Who has not kindled at the burning periods of Demosthenes, or been lifted to loftier views of history by the pregnant hints of Thucydides? In these languages, moreover, we are really studying the very texture of the mind. Language is nothing but the reflection of thought; and in the origin, derivation, and complication of words; in the manifold shades and variety of meanings; in the structure of sentences, the dependence of clauses, the force of particles, the relations indicated by cases and prepositions; in all that constitutes the peculiarity of speech, we are tracing the operations of that invisible principle, of which it is the product. The languages of antiquity are not fossil remains; they are not like the dead and dried specimens of a cabinet or museum. They are still instinct with a living power, and reveal to us the mysteries of mental being. They are mind made palpable. That the benefits, in this relation, of classical pursuits, cannot be replaced by the study of our mother tongue, arises from the nature of the case. "Our mother tongue," as Professor Pillans has very justly remarked, "is so entwined and identified with our early and ordinary habits of thinking and speaking, it forms so much a part of ourselves from the nursery upwards, that it is extremely difficult to place it, so to speak, at a sufficient distance from the mind's eye, to discern its nature, or to judge of its proportions. It is, besides, so uncompounded in its structure, so patchwork like in its composition, so broken down into particles, so scanty in its inflections, and so simple in its fundamental rules of construction, that it is next to impossible to have a true grammatical notion of it, or to form indeed any correct ideas of grammar and philology at all, without being able to compare and contrast it with another language, and that other of a character essentially different." Here we may take occasion to commend the admirable discourses from which this extract has been given. They may be found appended to the very interesting account which Professor Pillans has published of the monitorial system of instruction as carried out and applied by

him, with signal success, in the High School of Edinburgh. But it is time to return to our author.

The next topic he discusses is that of the "stimulants" by which young men should be incited to intellectual effort. He has no sympathy with the mawkish sentiment, which would discard all appeals to ambition and to the natural desire of pre-eminence as essentially immoral. Our nature must be accepted as it is, and it is the part of wisdom to make one element of it counteract the evil of another. Ambition may be a sin, but indolence is certainly a greater one, and we can see no reason why the less evil should not be permitted to extirpate the greater. We are glad to have Mr. B.'s approbation of the scheme adopted in the South Carolina College, for marking what he calls absolute merit. That scheme, we take the liberty of saying, originated with the late Dr. Henry, and has been attended, in practice, with the happiest results.

"It seems to be desirable that some means should be devised for stamping absolute, as distinguished from relative merit. We ought to be able to say of a scholar, not merely that he is better than another, which, if the entire truth were known, may after all be but insignificant praise; but that he is capable of passing with honour some definite and intelligible ordeal, such as may be provided by requiring of him the performance of tasks of ascertained difficulty.

"Such tasks may be prepared in the several departments of instruction by the officers respectively in charge of them; and if no individual of a class shall be found equal to the highest, or the second, or third in grade of difficulty, the corresponding honours may for that time be withheld. A plan like this will make the members of every class competitors, in a certain sense, with all who have gone before them; and its tendencies must obviously be to stimulate effort to a much higher degree than where the competition is only for the stamp of a certain nameless and indefinite merit, in no instance clearly ascertained.

"It is worth considering, moreover, that this plan will remove, in great measure, the moral evils which are probably inseparable from a competition immediately personal; since, when the struggle is for absolute and not for relative superiority, the success of one aspirant to honour does not involve the necessary humiliation of another."

As to the tests of proficiency, the topic to which Mr. B. next adverts, he has some observations in which we cordially concur, and others from which we must totally dissent. The plan which generally obtains in the American colleges, of estimating scholarship by the average value of the daily recitations of the term, combined with an examination which is hardly equal to a recitation in time or thoroughness, cannot be too severely condemned. It is altogether deceptive and fallacious. To say nothing of the

tricks and artifices by which indolence escapes detection, and ignorance conceals its shame, suppose each lesson thoroughly conned, the knowledge is fragmentary and detached, and the accuracy with which details are successively acquired only for a temporary purpose, is no security that the subject is mastered as a whole, or that the connection and dependence of the parts are at all adequately apprehended. The parts may be recited, and well recited as parts, and yet the whole may not be impressed upon the mind. Mr. B. thinks that the evils of this system might, in some degree, be obviated by giving the students a voice in the assignment of college honours. They would be likely to know who had been faithful and conscientious students, and who had resorted to stratagems and evasions. They might save the college government from impositions; but still the root of the difficulty is not really touched. They have nothing but fragments to judge from, and the conclusion would be obviously unsound, from special accuracy to general proficiency. In addition to this, other evils of a very serious nature might be introduced. Students are but men, and what security is there, that their testimony will always be awarded to merit? Is it not possible, that they might be influenced by personal and private feelings, and that popularity may carry off the prizes which belong to excellence? Is there not danger that college honours may become the objects of electioneering expedients, and that diligence in winning favour may outstrip diligence in study? We cannot, therefore, assent to this suggestion. The true remedy, in our judgment, is to abolish the whole system, and to institute in place of it, the only adequate tests of proficiency, real and searching examinations. The only way to ascertain the accuracy and extent of a man's knowledge is to require him to express it; and if he cannot express it, he is not to be presumed to have it. "De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio." The Virginia University has certainly adopted the right plan, and if all our colleges would imitate it, with respect to the rigour and minuteness of their examinations, they would soon find that they had put new life into their systems, and that they had done more to promote diligence and intensity of study than by all their contrivances of demerits and reports. Here is where they have all failed. They have practically suppressed the examination. They have left off calling the student to an account, at the close of his term, of his stewardship in it; and the absence of responsibility has produced in his case, what it does in all others, indifference and neglect. Our American colleges have been modelled upon the type of Cambridge in England, but strange to say, the most efficient feature in the English system is precisely the one we have omitted. All improvements will be abortions, as long as examinations are underrated. That Mr. B. is at one with us on this point we collect from the following passage :

“I have no hesitation in expressing the belief, that, unless these exercises can be so modified in their plan and their thoroughness, as to become in fact what they profess to be in name, it would be better that they should be abolished entirely. They ought to be the means of ascertaining how faithfully the student has employed his time, and what is the extent of his knowledge of the subject with which he has been occupied. To this end, they should in the main be conducted in writing, and the same tests should be applied in every individual case. These tests should be carefully prepared beforehand, in such a manner that they may show at once the range and the depth of the student’s knowledge. Time enough should be allowed to render the trial a thorough one. The tasks allotted to each examination-session should only be made known after the session has commenced; and no one should be permitted to depart until he has completed his performance. Such performances may be fairly relied on as presenting an exhibit of scholarship both positive and comparative; and in this respect they are infinitely preferable to any record of daily recitation which can be kept during the period of instruction.”

We are happy to say that the plan here recommended has been adopted in the South Carolina College, and, so far as we know, there is but one opinion among the students and faculty, as to its efficiency in stimulating study.

Mr. B. next takes up college degrees, and vindicates them from the exceptions which a misapprehension of their nature and import is apt to suggest. What he says about the master’s degree, coincides precisely with what we have recommended upon the same point.

His remarks upon college government are entitled to grave consideration, though we are not prepared to join in his condemnation of the dormitory system. There are evils connected with it, but the question is, whether, upon the whole, it is not more favourable to uninterrupted study, and to the formation of a manly and self-relying character, than any scheme which contemplates less independence and less exemption from outward supervision. Some, perhaps, abuse their liberty, but it is made the instrument of a most important moral discipline to a great many others. We suspect that the character is apt to be wanting in energy and decision, which has been moulded by influences that operate more through outward restraint than the inward education of principles. The young man should be trained to govern himself, which cannot be done without giving him opportunities of transgression. A manly virtue must be purchased at the price of corresponding trials: and where there has been no temptation, there is no security for stability of principle. It seems to us that the best arrangement which can be adopted, is to put the students under the pastoral care of a pious and able chaplain, who can accommodate

his instructions to their circumstances, point out affectionately the dangers to which they are exposed, intimate the principles which they should endeavour to incorporate into habits of life, and, by appealing to their moral and religious sensibilities, persuade them to use their liberty as the trial of their virtue. The influence of such a man, operating secretly, silently, and powerfully, upon the hearts, understandings, and consciences of the young, is, in our judgment, better than the most vigilant police, or the most intimate relation and intercourse with private families. The world does not present a nobler field of pastoral labour than in the halls of a college, and there is no charge on earth in which the work is more grateful, more appreciated, or more its own reward, than among the students gathered there. They reverence religion and its ordinances; they reverence the power of a holy life; and their souls are tenderly responsible to the gentle accents of pastoral admonition and persuasion.

The attempt to govern by mere police Mr. B. very justly condemns. Not that vigilance is unnecessary. When disorders occur, they should be punished, and punished promptly. But the impression should never be allowed to obtain, that the faculty are spies upon the students. We concur cordially in what Mr. B. has said on the subject:

“The difficulties of college government grow mainly out of the questions, how shall offences be prevented, and how, when they occur, shall offenders be treated. In regard to the first point, I am persuaded that little is gained by holding out the idea that the faculty expect to accomplish much by the mere exercise of vigilance. This is directly to invite a trial of wits between the two parties, in which the advantages are all on one side; and it is to give birth to a feeling that good order is not a matter in which the governors and governed have an equal interest. My experience satisfies me that more may be accomplished by appealing to the sense of propriety of which no young man is wholly devoid, and by professing to *expect* that a community of young gentlemen will behave as gentlemen should, than by permitting them to suppose that any reliance is placed upon any degree of watchfulness which the faculty have it in their power to exercise over them.”

There is one evil in our colleges to which Mr. B. has not adverted, which operates seriously to the injury of the students, in prompting them to forego the advantages of their situation. We allude to the absurd jealousy with which private and confidential intercourse with the faculty is virtually interdicted. It is not that there is any hostility to the officers of the college, or an inadequate appreciation of the benefits of their society, but the sentiment predominates that he who seeks it is influenced by low and mercenary motives; and the consequence is that the fear of dishonourable imputations is a wall of separation between professors and pupils.

This is extremely unfortunate. If this sentiment could be eradicated, and the feeling become general, that officers and students constituted *one* body, that their interests were *one*, their aims one; if they could be brought to cherish the sympathy which is the natural expression of unity, the problem of government would soon be solved. Much of the disorder, especially of that kind which may be characterized as mischief, arises from a sort of antagonism, which, although it argues no malice, is yet productive of considerable annoyance, and is a constant impediment to study. The disappearance of this senseless and ridiculous impression would be the disappearance of nine-tenths of what are called college tricks. The idea of the college as *one whole*, a homogeneous society, of which faculty and student are alike members, with different functions to perform, this is the idea which must take possession of the minds of the young, before any institution can put forth all its vigour and exert all its efficiency for good; this is the idea which could and would regenerate our American institutions. The relation of teachers and taught should be a relation of confidence and love; and, next to our parents and our God, according to the old French proverb, the person of an instructor is to be revered.

Mr. B. closes his dissertation with some remarks upon the question, "whether it is possible to do anything to improve the relation in which our colleges stand to each other." This is certainly a very grave subject. It is extremely desirable that some scheme should be devised, by which the various institutions of the country might be rendered parts of one harmonious whole. There ought to be concert and unity among them. Efforts at improvement, in one quarter, are no doubt often repressed by backwardness, in another, to join in the process. Temporary success rules the hour, and the real interests of learning are sacrificed to the reputed interests of the day, and in the unnatural rivalry which is engendered, the competition of numbers ends in the degradation of the standard of scholarship. We are sorry that our space does not permit us to quote the concluding observations of the pamphlet. They breathe a spirit of enlightened liberality which will find an echo in every generous breast. We take leave of Mr. B. with our grateful acknowledgments for the pleasure he has afforded us. His little work is a seasonable contribution, and its value is in the inverse ratio of its size. We sincerely trust that those who are interested in the prosperity of education, will not fail to procure it and to study it.

We cannot dismiss this general subject without submitting a few thoughts upon the prospects and policy of the South Carolina College. The intimations are not obscure or doubtful that efforts will be made to detach it from the patronage of the Legislature. The attack will come from very different quarters; first, from real

friends of learning; who are opposed, on principle, to the superintendence of education by the State, and next, from the pretended friends of the people, who, in their zeal for popular instruction, will not scruple to denounce the college as a fraud upon the poor, for the exclusive benefit of the rich. If the counsels of folly shall finally prevail, it will not be through the force of the open and manly assault of the first class, but through the triumph of demagogues, affected by appeals to low and vulgar prejudices, and to coarse and wicked passions. We respect the opinions of men who, like Adam Smith, and perhaps we may add, Dugald Stewart, are inclined to remit the interests of higher education to individual effort, or to voluntary combinations, or who, like most of the clergy of the country, are disposed to entrust the whole subject to the agency and direction of the church. But we have no sympathy with that miserable tribe of grumblers, who, like Judas, are eternally deploring the "waste" of what might have been sold and given to the poor, not that they care for the poor, but because "they carry the bag," which being interpreted, means that they have an exclusive eye to their own interests. These are the men who make mischief.

The policy of a State college turns upon three questions: Is it a public benefit? Is the good derived from it of the kind which it is the office of the State to provide for? And is it, in degree, an adequate compensation for the means expended? The first question is answered in the negative, by those who seek to represent the college as an establishment for the rich, or a privileged class, to the exclusion of the poor. The second, by those who think that education is a private or ecclesiastical function; and the third, by those who think money the chief good of a commonwealth. That they should all be answered in the affirmative, we think susceptible of the clearest proof; but our limits at present, will permit us only to touch upon the first, and that chiefly in a single aspect—the reflex influence of the college upon popular instruction. We are prepared to reverse the brocard, the college is for the few; and maintain the thesis, that it exists preeminently for the people. It was called into being for their good, and is, in the highest sense, a public benefit. Those whom it educates, it educates not for themselves, but for the State, their country, and their God. To whatever extent enlightened men are a blessing to any community, to the same extent the college promotes the welfare of the whole commonwealth in every succession of scholars that it sends out. The national character is raised; the tone of sentiment and thought made healthful; and the thousand cords of sympathy which bind the members of society together, are like so many wires which transmit the electric influence of light and knowledge to every nook and corner of the land. The effect is a silent process of education, which, in awakening thought, soon creates a demand for instruction, and the demand is never satisfied until a general system

of common schools is put in operation. The higher education, as a comprehensive scheme, precedes the lower. The college gives rise to the common school, and not the common school to the college. Those, therefore, who are attempting to cripple or to destroy the college out of pretence of zeal for the instruction of the people, are taking the most effectual measures to defeat their own ends. Let all higher education be extinguished, and barbarism would soon succeed. The schools which are now scattered through the State, their high character and general efficiency, the clamour which is everywhere raised, and justly raised, for universal instruction, have all been stimulated by the influence of the college. Had it not been established, or had not those whom it trained have received a similar training in other halls, South Carolina would have presented the same spectacle to-day which she presented fifty years ago. We are happy in being able to confirm these opinions, by the authority of one who is entitled to be heard :

“Popular education could not be the starting point of education, for the ignorant masses are of necessity incompetent to plan and adopt measures for their own improvement. Individuals elevated above their age and the people around them, by superior genius, and a peculiar inspiration of thought, called out by circumstances sometimes extraordinary, and often accidental, took the lead. Homer will always remain a mystery ; and yet Greek art, letters, and civilization must be referred back to his immortal work as their inception. Socrates is a miracle of humanity, and stands alone ; but he is the acknowledged father of an undying philosophy. Bacon was the only man to write the *Instauration of the Sciences*, and the *Novum Organum*. Christianity itself, the divine religion, made its advent in the solitary Jesus of Nazareth.

“From the solitary poet, philosopher, and reformer, proceeds the quickening and regenerating truth, first of all to be received by the few. Then by association the truth gains power, is widely disseminated, and, finally, permeates the masses of society. Such is the progress of knowledge and education. The first period shows us the solitary gaining the few. The second period shows us the beginning of association preparatory to the universal diffusion of knowledge. The third period is that in which association will be perfected, and the universal diffusion of knowledge take place. In universities we have the association which in the end creates common schools, or schools for the people. * * *

“The third point to be noticed in modern educational development, is popular education. This is a necessary part of the educational movement, and must follow the proper university development. We have shown how the few great thinkers must first appear ; how they naturally become the educators of their day, and permeate all following times with the quickening energy of their thoughts. We have shown how naturally and inevitably

learned associations arise from these, and grow into educational organizations. It is all a work of genius and free thought. It is a light struck from the heart of humanity itself. It cannot be isolated, it cannot be confined; the very law of its existence is that it shall spread itself far and wide. Disciples gathered around the old philosophers to be taught; they in turn could not but teach others. Thousands crowded the halls of the scholastic universities, drawn by the charm of knowledge, themselves to be graduated as teachers; the very condition on which they were taught was that they should teach others. Education has never been confined to rank. The call to thought was breathed by the winds, murmured by the streams, scattered abroad by the light, written in the beauty, harmony, and glory of creation, and spoken in the inward sense and longing of the human heart. Education could not begin, without, in the end, becoming universal.

“The modern university exemplifies this principle of necessary diffusion. The university must be supplied from the gymnasium; the gymnasium must be supplied from the broad and deep reservoir of the people. But a rudimental training becomes necessary as a preparation for the gymnasium. Here, then, is the necessity of a general rudimental education. Then arises a supply of a different kind moving in the opposite direction—a supply of teachers. The taught must teach, or the whole system breaks to pieces. Hence, the university supplies teachers not only for itself, but for the gymnasium also; and the gymnasium must, directly or indirectly, supply teachers for the people. With the multiplication of educated men, entering into all the offices of society, the charm of education is felt, and its necessity perceived. The genial inspiration spreads, and a whole people is pervaded by the spirit of education. Popular education is the natural and necessary result.”*

Let truths like these be once firmly rooted in the popular mind, and the college is safe. The people will cherish it as their best friend.

The policy of the college, on the other hand, is to vindicate its claims to confidence, by enlarging the sphere of its usefulness. Education has now reached a point, thanks to the college for it, which will justify the improvements we have ventured to recommend. The standard of admission is, perhaps, high enough, but the present organization fails to accomplish as efficiently as the change would enable it to do, the gymnastic training, and the liberal culture, which in it, as in every other institution of the country, are awkwardly combined. Let the college superadd the main features of what is called a university, and admit to this

* Tappan, in *American Journal of Education*, March.

second course none but those who have completed the other, in itself or some other institution; and then it will offer the advantages of voluntary studies to those who are at once qualified to select and appreciate them. The objections to the university, as succeeding immediately to the grammar school, are absolutely insurmountable. Banish institutions with a fixed and enforced curriculum, and you banish the most important part of education. While minds are yet raw and inexperienced, before tastes are formed and habits of diligence contracted; while yet "the military discipline of thought" is a positive restraint, it would be worse than idle to leave the young to themselves, or to the general suggestions of their parents. They must be *made* to study, and made to study precisely the things which, from the concentration of energy they demand, are at first irksome and repulsive. They must first feed on "bitter roots, before they can enjoy the pleasant and wholesome fruits." What Sir William Hamilton says of the classics, is true of every strictly gymnastic study: "The higher and more peculiar its ultimate advantages and pleasures, the more it educates to capacities of thought and feeling, which we should never have otherwise been taught to know or exert, and the more that, what it accomplishes can be accomplished by it alone, the less can those, who have had no experience of its benefits, ever conceive, far less estimate, their importance." On such grounds we feel ourselves bound to oppose any and every scheme which would strip the college of its disciplinary feature. The first degree we would have all compelled to strive for, and to strive for in the same pursuits. After that point we would leave them to themselves, putting the college in a condition to give the amplest instruction which they could receive. We would open it, in its university features, to the bachelors of every other college in the land. They might study what they pleased, but if they desired to be masters, we would have a certain number of departments in which they must be skilled. In this way, it seems to us, that the college could be made to answer the expectations equally of the friends of letters and of science. Its advantages would become so palpable and tangible, that, after a few years of successful experiment, the clamour of opposition would be silenced forever. It would proclaim itself to be what it is now, a *public benefit*.