

Boz., May 3: 1857.

Mental & Moral growth combined -

It would be impossible to give a complete epitome even of so extensive a subject in the narrow compass of a two morning composition, much less would it be possible to treat particularly of all the parts into which this subject is divisible. I shall therefore content myself with one of its principal divisions & confine myself to the consideration of that alone - That portion shall be mental & moral growth combined in individuals: using the term moral growth: in the sense of a growth in the principles & precepts of religion as taught in the bible.

It is an opinion prevalent to a considerable extent that a growth in mind & in soul are not indigenous to the same soil & that the climate most congenial to the one is destructive to the other - This wide-spread opinion is not without some foundation & were an appeal to be made to examples, undoubtedly a long & formidable array might be produced by the advocates of this sentiment - But again its opponents might marshal as large a force on their side & each learn the field a victor in its own imagination while neither could point to its trophies won - I am not disposed to deny that there have been numerous cases, where the reception of religious truths into the heart has seemed to put an interdict on the ^{farther} advancement in mental pursuits & on the other hand that an undue attention to mental pursuits, has apparently driven from the mind all regard for religious truths - These are facts to which both history & experience will testify & he must be fool-hardy who would attempt to deny them - But though we admit the force of their examples, we are not prepared to admit that the conclusion they wish to lead us to; for it would be an unwarrantable course to argue from a number of examples in human conduct, a general principle applicable to the whole human family -

On similar grounds the opposite side could argue the truth of this ^{position} ~~proposition~~ ~~idea~~
but ~~both~~ cannot be true, one must be the rule & the other the exception. For
human nature is not so nearly different as to admit that both of these two
opposite results should be natural. Now we will try to discover which is the law
& which the exception. If the principals of religion are of such a nature that they
militate directly against mental cultivation & advancement, then the law must
be in that direction, but if on the other hand nothing thus militates but
~~the other~~ rather furnishes the very essentials which are necessary to the best ad-
vancement of the other, then certainly this would be the law & the other examples
would only be considered exceptions, for which a reason would have to be sought
out of the ordinary course of things - Now to the consideration of some of the most
obvious & natural results of religion -

Prominent among these natural fruits of religion comes humility.
This constitutes the first step of the sinner in his return to God - he prostrates himself
before the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, unchangeable, holy God - In such
a situation he sees for the first time in his life that he is nothing, nothing com-
pared with what his God is. Here there is no place for pride, for what has he
to be proud of - all has its author & not his own - This is then the natural &
only natural result, to consume a mans pride - the opposite was never the result, for
this is among the things that the Lord abominates, when he says a proud look is
an abomination to the Lord - But is humility an obstacle to intellectual progress
Say the wisest among the sons of men "pride goes before destruction & a haughty
spirit before a fall - There are many similar passages in the book of proverbs which
write in their promises of all things to the humble & denunciations of all earthly
destruction & loss to those who are proud of heart - The voice of history is not silent
on this matter - By humility some have made themselves the most prosperous & learned
Dr Sam Johnson says "If there is any one thing more than another to which I can
attribute my knowledge, it is to the fact that I was never ashamed to ask for
information" and many more could join in his testimony - & how many on the other

hands as highly endowed with mental powers have through their pride lived & died in silent ignorance - History has another voice which she raises on this point almost & very near quite all of the men of learning which have ascended highest on the mount of science have been men from the humblest ranks in life, where they escaped this ban of intellectual progress - But we need not turn to the pages of history, for the pages of every day life will furnish abundant illustrations of this universally acknowledged truth - Here then we find that religion far from furnishing any obstacle to mental advancement, gives abundantly of a principle which is most of all necessary in mental development -

Another fruit of religion which always & naturally follows this limitation, is the principle of love - The Christian awakes from the sleep of a Saviour's dying, redeeming love, this fills his soul, it saturates his whole mind & heart & soul - Then wherever he goes he can say with Cooper "my father made all these things" - Therefore there is an interest which overtakes him in all his steps, wherever turned - In studies he seeks & finds God present in his search over the pages of history what more moves him for continued study than the interests, which he feels in all that is recorded; & what more invades this interest than the thought that over & above & through all this he can discern the hand of his heavenly father, ruling & guiding nations raising some as scourges of mankind & then carrying them away when they have fulfilled the mission which he had designed them for; - In natural science, everything is done with interest, here every minutest track displays a love for the happiness & welfare of his creatures that cannot but awaken an interest in the student's mind that any obstacle would be insufficient to barrier - So in every branch of study there is a similar interest which nothing but the love of God can fill with so much interest.

But where is the student most likely to lay out his full powers of exertion? is it not where his heart & feelings are with his mind; who ever was known to make a proficient in anything that he did not love? - A real love

then for one pursuit such as religion is calculated to inspire, is one of the greatest assistants that a scholar can have -

In respect also to earnestness & diligence, who can find such powerful reasons as the Christian or what else can supply them to side religion - The thought that the eye of God is upon him in all that he does, the thought that he approves & disapproves our actions, according as we are diligent & earnest, will throw an inspiration into all ^{of a persons} efforts, that the intoxicating cup of ambition can never arouse - As he stretches forward to his eye towards the pragmatic seat, he gathers new inspiration from the thought there if he is faithful he will be amply rewarded for any amount of effort which may be called for at the present - Would not this thought inspire zeal in mental pursuits as well as all other pursuits - and a zeal too, that would not be vacillating continually as the zeal of those who derive their incentives from the changing things of this life, but steady & sure as the immutable deity himself - But these qualities are essentials to a successful student

Again religion teaches patience in all things - Says the apostle James "let patience have her perfect work" & in many similar passages this is taught distinctly to be a Christian virtue - Religion stops the complaining mouth & quells the rising passion of murmuring impatience & bids him look towards him "who worketh all things well" & "endure as seeing him who is invisible" - This is peculiarly a Christian virtue, but it is likewise a students qualification, without which he will sink ere he arrives at the foot of the hill of science -

It will be needless to carry these remarks further - These qualities mentioned are some of the most important & the rest are like unto them in nature - We have advanced enough to determine the point in question, which is the rule & which the exceptions - We have seen that in the principles of religion there is far from anything that militates against the highest mental development, We must therefore consider that they were designed by the great designer of all things to march side by side, mutually assisting & stimulating each other -