



MUTABILITY OF HUMAN AFFAIRS

Descended from the same great progenitor; settled on the borders of the Red Sea, and having constant intercourse both by land and water with their brethren, the Egyptians; the Ethiopians must have been inferior to the most extravagant opinions entertained by the warmest advocates for the intellectual inferiority of the African race, to have degenerated so soon from their original state.

There must have been considerable intercourse between the two nations, not only from the favourable position of the two kingdoms but also from the historical fact, that in the year 3277, A. M. Bocchoris, king of Egypt, was overthrown and succeeded by Sabacos, an Ethiopian prince, who is supposed to have been the So of the Scriptures. We are further informed, that Theraea, who succeeded and reigned during eighteen years, and upon whose decease, the throne reverted to the ancient Egyptian line of kings, was also an Ethiopian. The more we investigate, the more are we inclined to believe, that there could not possibly have been any great difference as to the state of the arts and sciences in the two kingdoms; and as to the difference of features, who has the presumption to say that it was greater than that existing between us and the present race of Arabs, who are also generally allowed to be descended from Cush, our great progenitor.

It is, I conceive, generally known that the first great monarchy of Assyria was founded, as were likewise the Republics of Sidon, Tyre and Carthage, by the descendants of Ham; and also that the chief nations of Africa, with whom the Romans had any intercourse, besides the Egyptians, were the Numidians, Mauritians, and the Gattuli. Between them and the Ethiopians, there never existed but little intercourse for the latter always preserved their liberty and independence. In confirmation of which, we find their queen Candace spoken of in the days of the Apostles, when the Roman power was at its greatest height, and the nations above alluded to, had become provinces of the empire. From this it must be evident, that but a small part of Africa could have been known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, for that spirit of conquest which led Alexander to weep because he had not other worlds to conquer, and Julius Cesar to contest with the barbarous tribes of Britain, (from whom he could expect nothing but the mere honour,) would have prompted the former to have crossed the burning sands of Zabar, even to the far-famed city of Timbuctoo; and the latter, instead of the voluptuous arms of Cleopatra, to have marched his victorious legions, (or by the Red Sea, to have coasted into Ethiopia, and added to his present list, the names of a few more cities plundered and burnt, a few more thousands slain, and left to wailenature's face.

But of what complexion were the original settlers of Egypt and Ethiopia? Was it white or black? I humbly conceive neither, but rather the copper-colour of our Aborigines. To prove which, we have only to observe the effects of climate upon the present races of men. We have before stated that the two races were black, while the present race of Arabs, who must be descendants of Cush or Cushites, remain to this day a copper-coloured race. How is this to be explained, save we to suppose that the present race of Arabs have degenerated, with the same rapidity as the original inhabitants of the same country, since that time that black is the colour of the different quarters of the globe, and the more temperate parts of the globe, in fact, that a colony of the same race, on the coast of Africa,

torious of the church, within three days under pain of being delivered over to the secular arm, and its merciless flames.

Don Torribio, without being discovered, immediately repeated aloud the three mysterious words which the reader were dejected to remember; and going to the window, cried out, with all his force, "Jacinto, you need spit out one paragraph, for my friend the Dean will not let you go to-night." This was a thunderbolt to the imaginary pope. He immediately recovered from a kind of trance, into which he had been thrown by the three magic words, when they were first pronounced; and perceived that, instead of being in the Vatican, he was still at Toledo, in the closet of Don Torribio, and saw by the clock it was not yet a complete hour since he first entered the fatal cabinet, where he had been entertained with such pleasant dreams. In that short time he had imagined himself a magician, a bishop, an archbishop, a cardinal, a pope; and at last he found he was only a dupe and a knave. All was illusion, except the proofs he had given of his deceitfulness and evil heart. He instantly departed, without speaking a word, and, finding his mind where he had left her, returned to Badajoz; without having made the smallest progress in the sublime science in which he had proposed to become an adept.

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It is a given point, that the human mind devoid of culture is incapable of sharing in the great affairs of the world, or of enjoying in its own reflections that satisfaction which is in no small measure conducive to its well-being.

The doctrine, that by the sweat of the brow, shall man eat of the fruit of the earth, implies, that except man shall till the earth and sow the seed, it will not be productive of those fruits so essential to his subsistence. And our own experience may have taught us, that uncultivated land, however favourably located, never yields to the proprietor so great a revenue, as it necessarily does after cultivation. The works of nature, in some features or other bear resemblance to one another. Accordingly, the mind of man in its unpolished and rude state, resembles ground unimproved by a process of agricultural labour; but when disciplined by a good education, is alike benefited with that same ground, tilled and cultivated by the husbandman.

It is easy to account for the grovelling and selfish habits, so prevalent among us, when we reflect that we are, as a mass destitute of education; it is of rare instance, that the principle of benevolence is conspicuous in an individual or community uninfluenced by the light of science. On the contrary, it is to be remarked, that wherever darkness envelops the mind, we find man desiring to live for himself alone; and exhibiting a selfishness, the most sordid, he appears to aim at defeating one of the grand designs of the constitution of the social order.

If in a dark and barbarous age, man refused to move out of the sphere of self-love, to lend a helping hand to assuage the sorrow, or to alleviate the distress of his fellow, we may extenuate the fault, in consideration that the light of his original was obscured. But the night is far spent; the day has dawned. He that reads may read, and the way-faring man need not err.

Our brethren who have attained mature age, are bereft of a covert, to shield them from the imputation of listlessness to so great a matter as education. The mass, it is true, have unfortunately been deprived of participation in literary studies, at that season when the mind is pliable, and exonerated from cares. And when we take into view, the narrow compass of their means, and in general, the drudgery of their several vocations, we conclude that the time for attaining proficiency in literature and science, is to them, quite gone. These advantages, we expect they will confer upon their children. Still, we do not concede, that they may not make some improvements, from the sources yet within their province.

We therefore, hold up to view, Sabbath schools, for the instruction of those who may be disappointed with the art of reading. In these schools, many who have entered them in entire ignorance of the first principles of our vernacular tongue, have attained such proficiency, as now to be capable of reading comfortably most English authors. If therefore, this were all that could be urged in recommendation of attendance on schools of this nature by adults, it should weigh much with such of our brethren, to whom we have here alluded. Thinking, we granted that a just sense of the importance of this acquisition is cherished by most of them, we con-

clude, that neither pride nor shame will operate as a prevent to the adoption of so laudable a measure. For, who is there, so infatuated as to desire the accomplishment of an end, without at once perceiving that the means conducing to that end should be at once brought into requisition.

Another source of improvement, accessible to adults, is that to be obtained in Schools of mutual instruction. It is gratifying to learn, that there are at least, two schools of this description in operation, among our brethren of this city, and if we are not mistaken, under their own superintendance. Here, we have the privilege of communicating to each other, the little store of knowledge, which we may have industriously acquired; at one and the same time, supplying ourselves and imparting to others, from the same common fountain. This stream among others, will be salutary to fill the grand reservoir of knowledge—and raise, from the common level, those who may wisely devote a portion of their time to so momentous a subject.

We may advance another step in knowledge, by Reading and Reflection, as well as by conversing in the social circle, upon such topics as are instructive, and profitable. What, forty shall we suppose society would assume, if instead of perusing those authors in which are portrayed noble sentiments, dignified feelings, bright examples of fortitude under depression, and perseverance in advocating virtue, marking at large, were to devote their time to frivolity or idleness? The icy hand of misfortune may press heavily, the shafts of calumny may be aimed, pity and compassion may desert, but the man of reading, amid all this untoward scene, may find comfort and consolation from his books. While, however, we urge the necessity of reading, we also warn our brethren to be judicious in the selection of the works they peruse. In general, works of fiction mislead the mind not previously fortified; and so far from imparting solid advantage, they lead the reader to make calculations which are slender as the spider's web, deceptive as the ignis fatuus, retarding the mind from making substantial progress, and obstructing the prosperity of our race.

Pursuing the course marked out, we shall have remarked, that selfishness advocates its throne to benevolence; envy yielding to pleasure at each other's prosperity; discord and faction, heaving space, and harmony and unanimity occupying their ground; and ignorance and depression, vanishing before science and equality.

Within the limits of our observation and reading, we have noticed that the individuals who have attended most to the subject of education, have in general become respectable, and sometimes wealthy; and that those who sunk neglected it, have lived in obscurity and sunk into contempt.

But for the light of science, some of the most essential properties of nature, would have been concealed; while, cheered by its rays, we shall behold among other consequences, a people, tenacious of their liberty; the storm of passion allayed, when it may have been excited, and the slave raised to a level with his master.

The welfare of generations yet unborn, should influence us to emulate those great leaders, by whose exertions, the sun of science beamed upon, and influenced to reformation Rome, Greece, Britain, and even this western world.

Years of toil must mark our lives, if we are solicitous of being useful. And we have this, among other considerations to incite us to action,—that it will be grateful to our posterity to be enabled to say,—We honour and revere the memory of our fathers, who have for generations slept and mouldered into dust, as the instruments of producing, his general emancipation among men. We will convey to future ages their deeds of worth and virtue, inscribed on monumental marble.

This is to us, an essential crisis. A crisis, because affairs wear an aspect extremely gloomy, and appear in some of their lines, to be about their height. An essential crisis, because we are convinced that something must be done in the way of education—and that it must be a work of our own. Let us, therefore, not give ourselves misanthropos; but united and firm, let us gird ourselves, and vigorously engage, each one in his sphere, for the promotion of our dearest interests.

...at this proof of his justice as he might... what he had to expect when... which it certainly would be... opportunity.

This anecdote concerning the ancient obligations of the archbishop the magician had the goodness to believe; and rejoiced, as much as he was able, that his interests were sacrificed to the side of Don Ferdinand.

Don Torribio was not at Compostella when the courier of the holy father arrived. He had been to see his son, who still continued a priest in a small parish at Toledo; but he presently returned, and was not put to the trouble of asking for the vacant archbishopric. The prelate ran to meet him with open arms.

"My dear master," said he, "I have two pieces of good news to relate at once. Your disciple is created a cardinal, and your son shall shortly be advanced to the same dignity. I had intended, in the mean time, to have bestowed on him the archbishopric of Compostella; but, unfortunately for him, or rather for me, my mother, whom we lost at Badajoz, has, during your absence, written to me a cruel letter, by which all my measures have been disconcerted. She will not be pacified unless I appoint for my successor the archdeacon of my former church, Don Pablos de Salazar, her intimate friend and confessor. She tells me, it will occasion her death, if she should not be able to obtain pre-ferment for her dear father in God; and I have no doubt but what she says is true. Imagine yourself in my place, my dear master. Shall I be the dea'h of my mother?"

Don Torribio was not a person who would incite or urge his friend to be guilty of parricide; nor did he indulge himself in the least resentment against the mother of the prelate.

To say the truth, however, this mother he talked of was a good kind of woman nearly superannuated, who lived quietly with her cat and maid-servant, and scarcely knew the name of her confessor. Was it likely then that she had procured Don Pablos his archbishopric? Was it not far more probable that he was indebted for it to a Gallician lady, his cousin, a young widow, at once devout and handsome, in whose company his grace the archbishop had frequently been edified during his residence at Compostella? Be it as it may Don Torribio followed his eminence to Romo. Scarcely had he arrived in that city, before the pope died. It is easy to imagine the consequence of this event. The conclave met. All the voices of the sacred college were unanimous in favor of the Spanish cardinal. Behold him, therefore, pope!



