Beauty as Revealed in Nature.

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Outline.

I. General Aspects of Natural Beauty.
II. Human Nature Revealed.
III. Nature's Influence on the Life and Character of Man.
   a. Red Man.
   b. Child.
   c. Poets.
   d. Artists.
IV. Conformity of Man's Laws with Nature.
V. God the Creator of All.
References:

Dryante Poems.
Wardsworth's Poems.
Emerson's Poems.
Century Magazine.
Bernard's Magazine.
As we press forward in the eager search for knowledge and truth, seeking wisdom from the study and experience of the great scholars of the Medieval and present period; reaching out for the more complex things that we think must mould our lives, and make us true men and women, we are apt to miss some of the simpler things which, if carefully studied, might benefit us most. Therefore, let us pause and view some of the first works of our Creator. Let us consider nature from our simple standpoint, and see what knowledge she holds in store.

Everywhere in our land we hear the rustling of leaves, the whispering of the trees, and the low, melancholy moan of the mysterious wind, which bids us to ponder upon the wonderful things around us. The earth adorned in an enchanting robe, far more lovely than gold encampments, reminds us of the precious coin for which men go to foreign lands and give up home, friends and their lives to possess. Our grove were God's first temple, and it was here, beneath the pure skied and the branches of the gray old thumbs which
mingle their boughs high in the heavens, that
the humble worshippers first held communion
with their maker; the trees of the forest near a
paradise upon the lovely plains. Few places are
found that are as dear for the song birchips of the
birds, and hardly a valley so secluded that a
lily could not bloom there. Green vegetation
had covered the earth with the softest tinted
curtains, and this life crept into each nook
and corner, making its appearance on the
deep waters and in the desert lands, only to
bask for a few short hours in all its subtle
beauty, until the rolling waves or the winds
carry it away. There is nothing more inspiring
than to enter the wild woods and pierce the
heart of Nature. It is there that we catch the
spiritual music of the hills, the song of the
mountain streams and the echo of the high,
massive trees with their swaying arms that
cross and twine each other, until a
dense foliage forms a protection for both man
and beast. The oak, with its towering
branches, shelter the tired and weary
travellers who seek a place of rest; the silent
forest tells us tales of all the good it does. The
aged trunk, with its white limbs drooping with years, tells a story of toil and gladness; still its work is not ended, it lightens the home of the fisherman's hut, and marks the cold piercing wind that sifts through the windrowed cottage. In the nook as perpetual growth. Within these plantations of God, a decenniary sanctity reigns, a perpetual festival is dressed, and the great peck not how he should live of it in all thousand years.

Here we return to reason and faith and feel that nothing could befall me in life which nature could not repair for the enters into all our moods.

To the attentive eye each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again. The heavens themselves change every moment, and reflect their glory or gloom on the plains beneath.

Nature is also regarded with human life that there is something of humanity in each and every particular; thus, as the solar system moved forward on the heavens, certain
Stars open before us, and certain stars close up
behind us. This is man's life. A typical
element of humanity is represented in the
stream that speeds on its course,
carrying the fallen leaves on, on, until they
have written their annals on the rocks of
coming ages. While the great river of time is
drifting him on to eternity, taking alike the
good and the bad. Agamemnon's beautiful
illustration of the golden age is that furnished
us by Autumn, when a delicate leaf, hanging
on a twig, or branch by a mere thread, is
typical of the aged one, waiting the first cold
shriek of death, when they too shall go with
the withering flowers.

God has placed me in the midst
of nature, but how few catch the spirit of
the appreciation of the beauty which they
possess, the simple insignificant flowers,
blooming by the road side in all its fragrant
sweetness, will by some be left unvisited,
and uncared for, while by others it would
be an emblem of beauty. It is these things
that Tennyson refers to when he says:

"There breathe for those who understand"
A voice from every flower and tree,
And in the work of Nature's hand,
Sic Naturae best philosophi.
The redman claims for the life of outdoor
scenes. His true home is in the forest, and his
heart leaps with joy to roam the woods, and
walk the footpaths which have become covered
with snows and odorized with the spicery needle of
the pines. Then (here) are snow-capped mountains
to drive him with the whiteness of their splendor.
And the far off everlasting illimitable sea, makes
him long to launch his canoe on her silver
waves. He roams the woods as his own freestall,
and, like a roe, bounds over the mountain, by
the side of the deep rivers and the lonely glades.
His mind is often incapable of reasoning and
questioning, and he stands in reverence and
love gazing at some of the wonderful things
of nature. Charmed by her simple beauty,
unable to resist the power of the hills, the
music of the water, and the light and darkness
that weave their spells on him:
A child's life depends much on the
influence of nature. Goethe says that every
child should see a pretty picture and hear
a beautiful poem each day. Much of the
deterioration in city life is due, partly at
least to the fact that children grow up in
manhood and womanhood without coming
much in contact with nature and objects
of beauty. They see brick and stone pav-
ements, but get very few glimpses of fields,
mountains, valleys, and streams. As
nature does not speak through brick walls
or stone pavements, the child’s life must be
barren indeed if it has no chance to
frequently absorb into its being the
loveliness of its great mother. Character is
made up largely from what passes before
the eye, and he who would grow, who would
feel his soul expand should never let a
day pass without trying to see some beau-
tiful thing: the artificial, sordid, cold and
calculating side of life is not what we want.
The mind needs largely upon the material
which the eye brings it, and if they bring
beauty, the mind can form noble images,
if they bring nothing but dust and
reflection from brick walls, dusty stones, and
sifting pavements, it cannot build upon a
The youth in his daily rambles, ponders over the questions of nature, and by the bank to watch the ean playing on the quiet stream, the gay bird alights to mask his plumage, and the stealthy wolf laps the clear water, and gently slips away. The boy amuses himself by watching the gopher carry the mite which the breeze flings to earth, when the wind is sweeping the broad forest in its summer prime. Wordsworth says, "If in a youth the vein lies on the lap of the great Earth Mother, something passes into his life which later experience and the worldliness which may come with years can never utterly abolish or destroy. Much of the beauty of his poems is probably due to his early surroundings, and early companionship with nature gave him a kind of primitive and unreasonable touch, which in later years was changed into a more profound and conscious love. He learned to watch and note in nature that to which other eyes were blind; and to a mind thus trained, the scene through
which he passed and among which his life was spent, furnished never-failing food. His Continental journeys left only deep impressions, which were admired by those at home. His deep and tender love for nature never faltered. In his later writings, he has said: “I have learned to look at nature not as in the hour of thoughtless youth, but hearing often times the still sad music of humanity, not harsh, nor grating, though of ample power to chasten and subdue.”

The true lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still firmly adjusted to each other, who has retained the spirit of infancy, even into the era of manhood; and his intercourse with heaven and earth become part of his daily food. This may come nearer applying to Wordsworth than to any other writer, but to some extent we find it in Byron, for to him beyond all other modern poets the earth was a theater upon which the great drama of life was eternally played; and the remembrance of this fact called out the inspiration that led him to write the
beautiful poem entitled "The Crooked Street".

The true artist sees the glories of beauty, and studies it, until the brush reveals to the eye the same loveliness that God hath given; he awakens the soul to a given activity by reproducing with the chisel and saw the true beauty of nature. Nature not only plays a part in the fine arts, but she is also the omnipotent agent in the construction of useful arts. Immanuel Kant built Cadystown Lighthouse on the model of an oak tree as being the form in nature best designed to resist a constant assaulting force, as Polden formed his achromatic telescope on the model of the human eye. The first and last lesson of the useful arts is that nature tyrannizes over our works, they must conform to her law, or they will be ground to powder by her omnipresent activity. She is ever interfering with art, and you cannot build a house as you will, but as you must. Man seems to have no options about his tools, but merely the necessity to learn from nature what will fit best; and he takes his tasks so minutely from imitations of her that
his works become, as it were, here, and he seems longer free.

The highest praise we can attribute to any writer, painter, sculptor, or builder, is that he actually possessed the thought or feeling with which he has inspired us. In landscapes, the painter should give the suggestions of a faerie Creator, thane we know the detail he should omit and give us only the spirit and splendor.

The beauty of nature brings to mind the pure and only one who taught the aged trees to form a circling bower, who laid these infant roots and bared for the delicate spray. The kings of the earth, in all their majesty, are shot arrayed as the Creator hath clothed the broad mountains side. He speaks to us through even the faintest frame of life, and His likeness is revealed in all his works. As God himself was pleased with his earthly paradise when he had created it, how much more should a man who has been endowed with its divine richness, reverence and care for the beautiful things around him.
"Loveliest of lovely things are they
On earth that soonest pass away.
The rose that lives its little hour
Is prized beyond the sculptor's flower.
If we would conceive of the beauty
Around us, let us go forth under the
Open sky, and listen to nature's teachings.