

The Family.

AT DAY-BREAK

The earth is rolling towards the sun Another day - another day Legend!

The earth is rolling toward the light From out the clinging shades of night

Come hater, and stiffer, and fears, and woes! The earth is rolling into rose

THE MODERN READER.

The difficulties of literature are in their way as great as those of the world, the obstacles to finding the right friends are as great, the peril is as great

Now this danger is one to which we are specially exposed in this age. Our high-pressure life of emergencies, our whirling industrial organization or disorganization, have brought us in this (as in most things) their peculiar difficulties and drawbacks.

And thus there never was a time, at least during the last two hundred years, when the difficulties in the way of making an efficient use of books were greater than they are to-day, when the obstacles were more real between readers and the right books to read, when it was practically so troublesome to find out that which is of vital importance to know; and that not by the dearth, but by the plethora of printed matter.

Who now reads the ancient writers? Who systematically reads the great writers, be they ancient or modern, whom the consent of ages has marked out as classics: typical, immortal, peculiar teachers of our race? Alas! the Paradise Lost is lost again to us beneath an inundation of graceful academic verse, sugary stanzas of ladylike prettiness, and ceaseless explanations, in more or less readable prose, of what John Milton meant or did not mean, or what he saw or did not see, who married his great aunt, and why Adam or Satan is like that, or unlike the other.

I am not presumptuous enough to assert that the larger part of modern literature is not worth reading in itself, that the prose is not readable, entertaining, one may say highly instructive. Nor do I pretend that the verses that we read so zealously in place of Milton's are not good verses. On the contrary, I think them sweetly conceived, as musical and as graceful as the verse of any age in our history. A great deal of our modern literature is such that it is exceedingly difficult to resist it, and it is undeniable that it gives us real information. It seems perhaps unreasonable to many to assert that a decent readable book which gives us actual instruction can be otherwise than a useful companion and a solid gain.

weighs upon me with such really crushing urgency is this: What are the books that in our little remnant of reading time it is most vital for us to know? For the true use of books is of such sacred value to us that to be simply entertained is to cease to be taught, elevated, inspired by books; merely to gather information of a chance kind is to close the mind to knowledge of the urgent kind.

AMBITION AND RUIN.

ABOUT five years ago, Maria P., a young girl, the daughter of a farmer in Pennsylvania, became tired of churning, baking and sewing, and more than all, of the monotony of country life, and resolved to seek her fortune in the city.

To a great shop in that city Maria repaired and asked for employment. She was frankly warned, that as she was totally unskilled, she would be paid for the first year, wages insufficient for her support. She was advised to go home again and to raise chickens or make butter.

But the girl was obstinate. The glimpse of city life bewildered her. What chance in the country was there for her ever to ride behind liveried servants, or wear velvets and diamonds? Doubtless many of the richly dressed women that she saw on the street had begun life as shop-women!

In the store in which she found employment she was paid three dollars a week, and found it necessary to wear her one woollen dress every day. It was impossible for her to find boarding (even at the Women's Christian Association) for less than three dollars and a half.

"What am I to do?" she asked one of the shop-girls. "Do as the rest of us do. Four of us hire a room with two beds in it. We have tea and a roll for breakfast and supper. Dinner at a cheap lunch-counter costs fifteen cents. We just graze starvation, but what better can you do for the wages?"

Maria "clubbed" with two other girls in this way. The room was close and untidy, the food scanty, the work steady. She had no friends in the city, hence no rest or recreation came into her life. She grew wan, thin, and sick at least for some break in the dreadful monotony with which her life endlessly revolved, from the counter to her wretched garret and back again.

One day, two handsome, well-dressed men, passing through the shop, stopped to buy a trifle from her, and joked with her pleasantly. They came again the next day. A few days later they met her on the street and bowed respectfully. After this had happened once or twice, they invited her and one of her companions to go to the theatre and to supper at a restaurant afterwards.

The play, the music, the well-cooked food, the kindness, it was all like a glimpse of Paradise to the tired, hungry girl. One of these men became Maria's friend, as lovers are called by these girls. He proposed a secret marriage, and she consented. She had a certain slight fancy for him, but her real temptation was the carriage, the velvets and diamonds which he promised her.

Two months later he threw her off, and she found that he was already a married man. Maria is now in the almshouse, a miserable wreck of womanhood. This story is true in every detail. It is true also in general, if not in detail, of hundreds of girls who throng into the cities to seek fortune, and who find ruin.

THE ENERGY THAT SUCCEEDS.

THE energy that wins success, begins to develop very early in life. The characteristics of the boy will commonly prove those of the man, and the best characteristics of young life should be encouraged and educated in the wisest possible manner.

Said Judge P. "About thirty years ago I stepped into a book-store in Cincinnati in search of some books that I wanted. While there, a little ragged boy, over twelve years of age, came in and inquired for a geography.

"Plenty of them," was the salesman's reply. "How much do they cost?"

"One dollar, my lad." "I did not know they were so much."

He turned to go out, and even opened the door, but closed it again, and came back. "I've got sixty-one cents," said he; "could you let me have a geography and wait a little while for the rest of the money?"

How eager his little bright eyes looked for an answer, and how he seemed to shrink within his ragged clothes, when the man, not very kindly, told him he could not. The disappointed little fellow looked up at me with a very poor attempt to smile, and left the store. I followed and overtook him.

"And what now?" I asked. "Try another place, sir."

"Shall I go too, and see how you succeed?" "O yes, if you like," said he in surprise.

Four different stores I entered with him, and each time he was refused. "Will you try again?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, I shall try them all, or I should not know whether I could get one."

We entered the fifth store, and the little fellow walked up manfully and told the gentleman just what he wanted, and how much he had.

"You want the book very much?" asked the proprietor. "Yes, very much."

"Why do you want it so very much?" "To study, sir. I can't go to school, and I study when I can at home. All the boys have got one, and they will get ahead of me. Besides, my father was a sailor, and I want to learn of the places where he used to go."

very near the end of the voyage, then came a terrible storm that would have sunk all on board had it not been for the captain. Every spar was laid low, the rudder was useless, and a great leak had shown itself, threatening to fill the ship. The crew were all strong, willing men, and the mates were all practical seamen of the first class; but after pumping for one whole night, and the water still gaining upon them, they gave up in despair, and prepared to take to the boats, though they might have known no small boat could live in such a sea.

The captain, who had been below with his chart, now came up. He saw how matters stood, and with a voice that I distinctly heard above the roar of the tempest, ordered every man to his post.

"I will land you safe at the dock in Liverpool," said he, "if you will be men."

He did land us safely, but the vessel sank moored to the dock. The captain stood on the deck of the sinking vessel receiving thanks and blessings of the passengers as they passed down the gang-plank. As I passed he grasped my hand and said:

"Judge P., do you recognize me?" I told him I was not aware that I ever saw him until I stepped aboard of the vessel. "Do you remember that boy in Cincinnati?" "Very well, sir. William Haverly."

"I am he," he said. "God bless you! And God bless noble Captain Haverly!" - Young Folks Weekly.

STEERING BY MOTHER'S LIGHT.

HE put his hand to his mouth as if he had placed a speaking trumpet there, and then shouted through them

"Hul-lo! Hul-lo! Hul-lo-o-o-o!" There was no answer save that of the heavy swash of the sea at his feet. Neither was there anything to be seen, only a thick curtain of gray mist falling every where over the sea.

He made another speaking trumpet with his hands and shouted again, but there was no response. Neither did the fog break before his piercing cry. Sullen and gray it hung down over the sea.

"I don't see," said Pierre, "where the fishing boats are. And, of course, it don't do any good to call, but then, when one don't know what to do, why—why he will try anything.—Guess I will go into the house and see mother."

He walked up to the hard sandy beach, climbed hummocks in the rear, and then dropped down into a covey valley that several aged willows overshadowed. Under one of these trees was Pierre's home.

"Any word from the boats?" asked a musical voice. "That is mother," thought Pierre. She was stooping over the fire of driftwood that she had begun to make on the broad and blackened hearth.

"Any news from the boats?" she asked again. "It is time for the fishermen to be at home."

"Nothing," he said. "Three boats went out, Pierre—I saw them go—your father's, your uncle Louis', and your uncle Pierre's."

Yes, three boats had gone to the fishing grounds just off a rough, rocky point—three boats rocking on the restless, surging sea.

"Four of your neighbors went with your uncle Louis'."

"I know it, mother. All men in that boat." "And Cosette went in your father's."

"Yes, and she is as good as a man in a boat." "Good as a man?" Cosette, Pierre's big sister, could manage a boat better than some men.

Besides Cosette, two others of the family were in the boat—Clem and Victor, Pierre's big brothers, strong and muscular.

"I saw the boats off the point, mother, two hours ago, and I could see Cosette standing in the stern of father's boat. Uncle Pierre's was farther out, its sail set, and the boat was skipping away."

"God keep them!" murmured the mother. "I don't like to have them late when the sea is rough. God keep them!"

"I will go out and see how things look now." He soon came back, and reported that the fog seemed to be scattering and the wind rising.

"Could you hear the waves off the Big Rock?" "Yes, I could hear them."

The mother sighed again. The waves of the "Big Rock" meant the surf around a lofty shore ledge at high tide; and when a storm was approaching the agitation of the sea about this ledge was very violent and noisy. She went to the door, listened, and slowly climbed the worn stairway leading to her little chamber under the roof.

"I think I will go up stairs," she murmured. "It won't do any good mother," cried Pierre who knew what she purposed to do.

"I wish you only thought it would, Pierre." She lighted a lamp, set it in the narrow window, and then bowed her head in prayer. It was her habit on stormy nights, and Pierre had carelessly joked about it, and yet it was only talk on the surface. The terrible wrath of the sea awed him; and if his pride had not prevented him, he would have declared his purpose to look to that God who holds wind and wave in his grasp.

While a mother at home was praying by the lighted lamp, souls at sea were watching it. The three boats had been bewildered in the fog. Two of them had stumbled on a little island, in one of whose coves they sought shelter for the night. The boat belonging to Pierre's father had not been so fortunate. When the wind rose and the fog scattered Cosette's keen eyes were turned in every direction, searching for some ray from a guiding light.

"Oh, there I see!" she said, pointing toward a dim flash of gold off on the water's edge. "Make for that," replied her father.

The bow of the boat was pointed towards that golden spark. Slowly but steadily they advanced through the rough waters, and the boat was beached in a little sheltered nook not far from the home under the willows.

"Here we are!" shouted Victor at the door of the house. "Oh, thank God!" cried the mother, coming down the stairway, her lamp in her hand. "Oh, how did you get here?"

"We steered by mother's light," said Cosette. "We saw it in the window, though we did not know what it was out there."

"Ah!" thought Pierre; it is time I was steering by mother's light. When he lay down that night he first knelt and asked God to guide him over life's rough sea.

days kindled in the sky that longer light in which the sea rolled and flashed like a vast crystal. Spring, though, did not soften the cough that had attacked Pierre and with which he vainly wrestled.

"He can't live long," said the old doctor of the family; "he may go any day."

One stormy night the boy lay dying; father, mother, Cosette, Victor, Clementine, gathered in tears about his bed. Pierre was wandering in his thoughts; he fancied he was far off on the sea. The waves, he said, were running high.

"Don't you be afraid of me," he said, in low tones, looking round on those who wept at his side. "I shall—make—harbour; I'm steering by mother's light"; and guided by prayer, and steering by a mother's light, the fisher boy quickly reached heaven and home. - Rev. E. A. Rand in Forward.

NOTES BY "PHILO."

THE SUPPLY OF VACANCIES.

THERE is a prospect from the discussion going on, that some conclusion may be reached by the General Assembly on this subject, that may set the matter at rest for a time, and be of great service to the Church. If any remarks made on this subject in these "notes" were of the nature of a "philippic," or "scolding," or "declaring," they were not meant to have any such character. But it was supposed the scheme now before the Church was meant to be criticised, either favourably or unfavourably, as any one should see cause, and not merely to be adopted without any exception being taken to it. Time will show its value, and whether it requires to be modified or not. Meantime whoever can point out any defect in it, renders both it and the Church a service, and it is to be hoped that no one will be prevented from freely expressing his mind on it, because some one may think, not knowing whereof he affirms, that the critic has "not much practical acquaintance with the subject."

THE USE OF CRITICISM.

No one of any intelligence can believe that much good can be accomplished by merely finding fault or scolding, or even "storming," should he feel that necessary in connection either with causes or individuals. And yet no one can deny that good may be accomplished by faithful and kindly criticism. And while every generous mind must take far more pleasure in commending what is good, than in pointing out defects, yet the latter may be as useful and necessary as the former. Many an abuse that would have grown to ruinous proportions, had it been regarded with good-natured indifference, has been checked and prevented by kindly criticism. Many a character that would have grown to power and honour, has deteriorated into weakness and vanity, for want of a friend's faithful pointing out of its defects.

AN INNOVATION.

Some time ago in these "Notes" reference was made to the subject of conferring power on our catechists to administer the sacraments, while not giving them the full status of ordained ministers. This is a question worthy of consideration. Dr. Edmond, of London, speaking in reference to this point, says in regard to work in the mission field of the English Presbyterian Church: "Something would have to be done, and it was unreasonable to deny the power of dispensing sealing ordinances, under proper safeguards, to those whom we commissioned to do the far higher work of preaching the Gospel. Is the dispensing of these ordinances more important than preaching the Gospel? If not, why do we allow our agents to engage in the more important work, while we refuse to allow them to discharge the less important? Does ordination confer any peculiar power that renders its receiver more competent for these lower duties, while it makes him no more efficient in the higher duties? We know that it does not. Is it not time that we were coming to recognize that ordination confers no peculiar gift or sacredness—or else that it is as necessary for the man who is merely to preach, as for the man who is to dispense ordinances? Do you by withholding ordination from the catechist withhold from him any spiritual gift? Do you send him out to preach in the hardest fields deprived of some spiritual gift, while you send the pastor to an easier field, equipped with that gift denied to the other? If ordination imparts the Holy Spirit, or is accompanied with the receiving of the Holy Spirit, by him who is ordained to preach the Gospel, then no unordained man should be allowed to preach, though he might be allowed to baptize. It is a question that deserves consideration, and it will probably be found the Church is not acting consistently in this matter, and a way might be found by which the catechists might dispense ordinances and yet not be admitted to the pastorate."

THE COLLEGES.

There has been some criticism of the colleges going on during the past session, and no doubt there will continue to be some in the days to come. But whatever views may be held about these institutions, the Church has great reason to be thankful for the large number of earnest and gifted young men that are coming forward to the ministry, and for the work the colleges are doing in training them for their life work. While discussion goes on about the colleges and professorships, the Church ought generously to support those at the same time. And the Church would do this were the discussion carried on in a kindly and generous spirit. If only the Church sees that the colleges are doing the work required of them there will be no difficulty about their support. The same principle holds good in regard to them as in regard to other institutions. Let their work appear and support will rally round them. And their work is now appearing, only the people do not recognize it, perhaps are not told of it as they ought to be. They are told more of the money they need, than of the work they do. The people know too little of the important work done by the students in our mission fields. It is to be hoped that a more generous mind will take possession of the Church in regard to the colleges, and that they will receive a more liberal support than during the past year. The question of the union of any of them should not affect this. And if this question were submitted to the people intelligently, if the Presbyteries were more largely entrusted with it, it would much sooner reach a peaceful settlement, and cease to affect injuriously the contributions of the Church towards their support.

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