

that of an Archimedes or an Isaac Newton, aye, of any man of science who works his way successfully from point to point towards the solution of some important problem, not to mention the overwhelming gladness which makes him utter his *Eureka* when at last he has threaded his way through all its mazes? Or what is childhood's mirth compared with the pleasure which the student of philosophy receives from a re-perusal of his Plato, or his exercise of digging in the golden mines of Hegel? Or what, compared with the delight which any man of enlarged sympathies may draw from Chaucer's humorous page, or Spenser, "gentlest bard divine?" Indeed, the child's vivacity, we do not hesitate to aver, is but a poor offset against the pleasure derived by any good-hearted tradesman from the eager pursuit of his vocation.

But it is vain to proceed with further argument on this point. If we have lost a vivacity, we have gained in equability and depth; if not so lightly dancing on the surface, there is a broader and deeper flow beneath. We have lost the animal to win the man. We are more ourselves—more rational, nearer the attainment of our ideal, nearer in every respect to what we are meant to be and ought to be. Poets may tell us a different story. But let us remember that though they may truly speak of children as "similitudes of perfect beauty, innocence and bliss," as "gems leaping in the coronet of love," as "living jewels dropp'd unstained from heaven," etc., they are those things *not to themselves*, but *to us* who look upon them. We may say to any child sincerely—

"O thou bright thing, fresh from the hand of God,  
The motions of thy dancing limbs are sway'd  
By the unceasing music of thy being!"

Yes; but it is a music to which the child itself is deaf—a music to others only whose eyes have been bathed in tears, and whose hearing has been made acute by sorrow. And so we may say that children are scatterers of joy rather than enjoyers—that they afford more pleasure to others than they feel themselves.

"Talk not of pains!

The childless cherubs well might envy thee  
The pleasures of a parent."

It is we, up-grown men and women, who can thoroughly enjoy the pranks and plays of childhood, not children. *We are apt*