

much sticks to the mind; and it is curious to observe that there is scarcely a bit of knowledge retained, or experience of childhood in laughter or in tears, but may find an apt place in the sermon. Almost every one is conscious, however, that much has slipped his grasp, leaving only a dreamy suggestion that baffles and eludes pursuit. In truth, only an infinitesimal part of what we read is stored up as roots and bulbs for the garden, as seeds for the field, or as powder and shot for the day of battle. If the false steps taken by the writer while groping after some method of storing material will stimulate students to adopt his plan, or form one of their own, the object in view in this contribution shall have been achieved.

Before me lies one of the primitive attempts at gathering intellectual treasures. These consist of thoughts by Dr. H. Bonar, notes of a sermon by Dr. Dods, a fine missionary illustration by Prof. Calderwood, telling points by Mr. Moody, then in Edinburgh, notes on a temperance speech by Dr. Newman Hall, suggestions on texts, quotations from a variety of authors, poetry, metaphor, and so on *ad infinitum*. At first it was easy enough to look through the note book and decide whether there was anything available for the subject in hand, and after the collection had become ominously large there was still a pleasure in loitering among the varied and valuable stores. To me it was more than a cabinet of rich and rare jewels; it was a garden filled with luscious fruit. To stroll through it was exhilarating, and every way helpful. But by and by the garden became as long as the Annapolis Valley. The bulk of the collection doomed its usefulness. Heaps upon heaps of gold, silver, precious stones, become little better than so much wood, hay, stubble. In fact it all became wood, a forest, an African jungle.

Mingling with the sense of failure was the feeling that if paths had been kept open the bewilderment and despair of the jungle would have been avoided. This led to an attempt at system. A note book, alphabetically indexed, was used with good effect. All the subjects that naturally fell under A were placed together; and so on with the others. For a time this plan was found quite satisfactory. While preparing a sermon, say on Redemption, the letter R was turned up and its pages scanned, frequently with good success. But as the entries