

or observation ; talk to him, and you will always find him interesting, not only to others, but to himself. You will find that he has developed an individuality ; he has a character that is his own, not one that is made in imitation of and to suit those about him ; he is never lonesome. Emerson tells us : " A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best ; but what he has said or done otherwise will give him no peace. It is a deliverance that does not deliver. In the attempt, his genius deserts ; no muse befriends, no invention, no hope."

Again, it is all but impossible for a hobbyist to be an immoral man. Immorality is born of idleness ; it is the result of stagnated energy, and this is hard to find in a hobbyist. His hobby, his play, is work of a pleasure-giving kind, but it is work nevertheless, and it keeps him at a safe distance from temptation.

A hobbyist not only builds into himself a sturdy individuality and a self-reliant character, and stores his mind with general and useful knowledge, but his pleasures are of a sort so keen that only a hobbyist can appreciate them. He that has no hobby demanding the best of his leisure time, but derives his daily enjoyment from the commonplaces that surround him such as social calls, social functions, society meetings, light novel reading, etc., often finds it very tiresome and stupid. It soon becomes the same hum-drum over and over again until his very pleasure becomes dull, stale and insipid. He is then an excellent subject for pleasures of a questionable kind. The predisposing cause is there and well marked, and the exciting cause of a downfall is not slow to find its opportunity. Not so with the hobbyist, for his hobby *is* a hobby because it is always rewarding him with some *new* achievement. He is continually stimulated by the pleasure of *first times*, so beautifully noted by Dr. Holland in one of his books. When a small boy, on approaching a village, he heard for the first time in his life a church-bell, and he tells us that though he had since drunk in the mellow tones from the famous belfry at Bruges they had not half the charm of that first draught of bell music in his early boyhood, and then he apostrophizes :—" Oh sweet First-time of everything good in life ! Thank Heaven, that with an eternity of duration before us, there is also an infinity of resources, an ever varying supply and ministry, and ever recurring First times."

The other day I was talking to a prominent and well-known man of our city, who possesses no doubt the most complete collection of Canadian ferns that exists. " These," said he, " were gathered when I was quite a young fellow ; most of them when I was on fishing expeditions. While my companions were lying about resting, talking and smoking, I was off in search of ferns, and I never shall forget the keen thrills of joy and satisfaction as I added each new and rare variety to my collection."