

pleasure, both in admiring the works of the great masters, and in presenting pictures and thoughts to ourselves, which, though they may not be worth exposing to the view of others, are yet sufficient to divert our attention and raise us above the ever-present world of facts, which otherwise would be our only subject of thought.

With regard to the existing results produced by the Imagination, it must be remembered that the office of this faculty is to conceive the supra-sensible in the form of the sensible, or in the words of the poet, "to body forth the forms of things unknown." Now, taking into consideration the amount included in the term "unknown," we can form an idea of the great extent of the field with which the Poet, Artist, or other imaginative genius has to deal. Assisted by the senses, especially that of sight, to draw ideas from the outward world, how many and various are the pictures which the vivid Imagination may present to the mind. But yet, though I say with the assistance of sight and the other senses, too much importance should not be attached to this, when we consider that our greatest Poet composed the finest of epic poems, with his eyes closed forever to the beauties of external objects.

The higher purposes of the Imagination are most assuredly to present to us ideas of the spiritual world. The most sublime literary productions of this power are of course those which have been penned by the divinely inspired prophets, psalmists and apostles of old. Indeed the Bible in many parts shows clearly the work of a vivid and powerful imagination. Ranking next, probably, to those inspired books, we may mention the Pilgrim's Progress of Bunyan and Milton's great poem descriptive of the spiritual world as presented to him by his imagination. We see this power of a great imaginative genius manifested in the awful picture which he presents of the Lower World and its occupants. The Italian poet, Dante, and others, have written on similar subjects, but if their productions are of equal merit they certainly are not superior to the work of the great author of "Paradise Lost."

The less awful results of this Creative Faculty are those fictitious tales and legends which treat more especially of this world and its life. The mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans, the old Arabian tales and fables, romances and legends of the olden times, all these are products of the imagination. Then, among the results of more modern date, are the Drama and Fiction, of which at the present day we have an almost endless variety, good and bad. Poetry, also, of many kinds, may be classed with imaginative works of this lighter character.

Often, however, when the imagination is exercised upon the unknown, it gives rise to ideas of dangerous and pernicious character. Especially may this be observed in the conceptions of the