

## HABITS OF STUDY.

**N**OTHING good without labor, is written in unmistakeable characters on every part of the mental heavens. No person is naturally gifted with intellectual power so penetrating that he can hope for success in the search for truth without diligent toil. Those who now and then rise upon the world with little application shed but an uncertain and fitful light, while those who keep the great undying candle of thought burning, are those who possess the only kind of genius of which Thomas Carlyle admitted the existence—the genius of hard work. Labor is the talisman with which each must open the gates of the vast and endless fields of knowledge, in which there are no Alexanders weeping for more to overcome. To point out a few of the leading principles which must control this labor, that it may yield the highest success, is the task of the writer of this paper. The habits of study which are recognized as being most essential to progress are the following:—

I. *Concentration of thought.*—Fleeting attention is fatal to intellectual advancement. If the fancy is allowed to play upon subjects other than that in hand, the effect of the whole is neutralized. The person who turns up a Greek word a dozen times, and looks at it each time as an old friend whom he ought to recognize, may suspect habits of thought which, if indulged, will effectually impede his progress. The word does not receive the undivided and intense attention which is necessary to render an idea permanent in the mind. As when the scattered rays of sunlight are gathered to a focus on one spot, they convey to it intensified heat, so when all the efforts of mind are collected, and centered on one object, they have a burning power. Some men have possessed this faculty of concentration in a remarkable degree. We are told that as Coleridge was standing on the street one day talking to a friend in his favorite position with his fingers holding the button of his friend's coat, he darted into an abstruse subject. His friend, taking out his knife, slipped off the button, and walking around a block, returned to find Coleridge still holding the button in his hand, and talking on his theme.

II. *Thoroughness.*—Passing through a course of study has been likened to conquering a country. If one leave in the rear garrisons