

make both ends meet. At the age of ten I was put into the factory as a "piecer," to aid by my carolings in lessening her anxiety. With a part of my first week's wages I purchased Riddiman's " Rudiments of L. m.," and pursued the study of that language for many years afterwards with unabated ardor, at an evening school, which met between the hours of eight and ten. The dictionary part of my labors was followed up till twelve o'clock, or later, if my mother did not interfere by jumping up and snatching the books out of my hands. I had to be back in the factory by six in the morning, and continue my work, with intervals for breakfast and dinner, till eight o'clock at night. I read in this way many of the classical authors, and knew Virgil and Horace better at sixteen than I do now. Our schoolmaster—happily still alive—was supported in part by the company; he was attentive and kind, and so moderate in his charges that all who wished for education might have obtained it. Many availed themselves of the privilege; and some of my school-fellows now rank in positions far above what they appeared ever likely to come to when in the village school. If such a system were established in England, it would prove a never ending blessing to the poor.

In reading, everything that I could lay my hands on was devoured, except novels. Scientific works and books of travels were my especial delight; though my father, believing, with many of his time who ought to have known better, that the former were inimical to religion, would have preferred to have seen me poring over the "Cloud of Witnesses," or "Boston's Fourfold State." Our difference of opinion reached the point of open rebellion on my part, and his last application of the rod was on my refusal to peruse Witherspoon's "Practical Christianity." This dislike to dry doctrinal reading, and to religious reading of every sort, continued for years afterwards; but having lighted on those admirable works of Dr. Thomas Dick, "the Philosophy of Religion," and "The Philosophy of a Future State," it was gratifying to find my own ideas, that reason and science are not hostile but friendly to each other, fully proved and enforced.

Great pains had been taken by my parents to instil the doctrines of Christianity into my mind, and I had no difficulty in understanding the theory of our free salvation by the atonement of our Saviour, but it was only about this time, that I really began to feel the necessity and value of a personal application of the provisions of that atonement to my own case. The change was like what may be supposed would take place were it possible to cure a case of "color blindness." The perfect freedom, with which the pardon of all our guilt is offered in God's Book drew forth feelings of affectionate love to Him who bought us with his blood, and a sense of deep obligation to Him for His mercy has influenced, in some small measure, my conduct ever since. But I shall not again refer to the inner spiritual life which I believe then began, nor do I intend to specify with any prominence the evangelistic labors to which the love of Christ has since impelled me; this book will speak not so much of what has been done, as of what still remains to be performed, before the Gospel can be said to be preached to all nations.

In the glow of love which Christianity inspires, I soon resolved to devote my life to the alleviation of the human misery. Turning this idea over in my mind, I felt that to be a pioneer of Christianity in China might lead to the material benefit of some portions of that immense empire; and therefore set myself to obtain a medical education, in order to be qualified for that enterprising.

In recognizing the plants pointed out in my first medical book, that extraordinary old work on astrological medicine, Culpepper's "Herbal," I had the guidance of a book on the plants of Lan-

arkshire, by Patrick. Limited as my time was I found opportunities to scour the whole country side, "collecting simples." Deep and anxious were my studies on the still deeper and more perplexing profundities of astrology and I believe I got as far into that abyss of fantasies as my author said he dared to lead me. It seemed perilous ground to tread on farther, for the dark that seemed to my youthful mind to loom toward "selling soul and body to the devil," as the price of the unfashionable knowledge of the stars. These excursions, often in company with brothers, one now in Canada, and the other a clergyman in the United States, gratified my intense love of nature; and though we generally returned so unmercifully hungry and languid that the embryo parson shed tears, yet we discovered so many to us new and interesting things, that he was always as eager to join us next time as he was the last.

On one of these exploring tours we entered a limestone quarry—long before geology was so popular as it now. It is impossible to describe the delight and wonder with which I began to collect the shells found in the carboniferous limestone which crops out in the High Blantyre and Cambuslang. A quarryman, seeing a little boy so engaged, looked with that pitying eye which the benevolent assume when viewing the insane. Addressing him with "How ever did these shells come into these rocks?" "When God made the rocks, he made the shells in them," was the damping reply. What a deal of trouble geologists might have saved themselves by adopting the Turklake philosophy at this Scotchman!

My reading while at work was carried on by placing the book on a portion of the spinning jenny, so that I could catch sentences after sentences as I passed at my work; I thus kept up a pretty constant study undisturbed by the roar of the machinery. To this part of my education I owe my present power of completely abstracting the mind from surrounding noises, so as to read and write with perfect comfort amidst the play of children, or near the dancing and songs of savages. The toil of cotton-spinning, to which I was promoted in my nineteenth year, was excessively severe on a slim, loose-jointed lad, but it was well paid for; and it enabled me to support myself while attending medical and Greek classes in Glasgow in winter, as also the divinity lectures of Dr. Wardlaw, by working with my hands in summer. I never received a farthing of aid from any one, and should have accomplished my project of going to China, as a medical missionary, in the course of time by my own efforts, had not some friends advised my joining the London Missionary Society on account of its perfectly unsectarian character. It sends neither Episcopacy, nor Presbyterianism, nor Independency, but the Gospel of Christ, to the heathen. This exactly agreed with my ideas of what a Missionary Society ought to do; but it was not without a pang that I offered myself, for it was not quite agreeable to one accustomed to work his own way to become in a measure dependent on others. And I would not have been much put about though my offer had been rejected.

Looking back now on that life of toil, I cannot but feel thankful that it formed such a material part of my early education; and, were it possible I should like to begin life over again in the same lowly style, and to pass through the same hardy training.

#### WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE IN LONDON.

To any one who is at all familiar with the condition of the English working man, who knows the burden which presses upon him, not merely in the cares for livelihood, but in the social distinctions which shut him out from so many opportunities of advancing himself, the success of a Working Man's College in London will be a matter of some interest. It is

something that the labourer and mechanic should be recognized as capable of enjoying a higher education, and that one at least of the English universities should recall the popular origin of her institution, and throw open her degrees to candidates from the working class. It is a good sign, too, that Government should, with regard to this College, have abandoned its old circumlocutory ways, and have directly proposed to the Trustees to present two candidates to compete for vacant clerkships under the Privy Council Committee of Education.

But the best sign of all is, that the working men of London have taken vigorous hold in this new institution, and are not only training themselves intellectually, after their day's labour, but assisting gratuitously in teaching their companions. When a man, after a day of constant toil, with muscles aching and brain jaded, is willing and eager to put himself to a severe mathematical task, or a drilling in language, or under a dry intellectual lecture, and not only do this, but to help others who are striving in the same way, it shows that the thirst for knowledge is great and a very different thing from the easy pursuit of it, with students of a more favoured class.

The Second Annual Report, which has just reached us, shows a flourishing condition to this young institution. During the two years of its operation, 821 male pupils have joined the College, and 117 females more attended the women's classes which are connected with the institution. It is interesting to note the favorite studies of these working men. In the men's College out of 214 the second term, the greatest number (58) attend the French classes; then follows English Composition, 51; then English Grammar, 47; and then Drawing 38 and Latin 30. Geometry has 16, Book-keeping 15, Algebra 16, Modelling 5, and Greek 3.

The choice of studies is somewhat remarkable, and, supposing it not to be influenced by the scholastic habits of the Principal, (Mr. Maurice,) shows a distinct and more purely intellectual object than would be expected. These men meet every evening at different hours, between 7½ and 10 o'clock. On Sunday, Mr. Maurice gives familiar lectures on Biblical subjects; he also reads lectures in the week on politics and literature. The entrance fee to the College is only 62½ cents, and the classes are from 62½ cents to £1 25 a term to each student. A free library is connected with the institution for the use of the students, and a coffee-room.

The leading spirit and founder of the College is a man whose earnest and mystic mind might place him with the devout monks and preachers before the Reformation, did not his practical humanity and deep sympathy with all who labor and suffer, rank him as a man especially influenced by the spirit of our times—the Rev. F. D. Maurice. Among the Council of Teachers, who preside over the College, are the names of many prominent Oxford and Cambridge men, as well as one from the University of Paris. Ruskin, Westlake, and Rossetti are on this Board, and we know it is the design of the Trustees to give as many opportunities of artistic training as the working men desire. One fellowship has already been founded in the College, and the first successful candidate for it, after having had charge of the Adult School, has gone forth to undertake the care of a Mining School in Cornwall. This fact, insignificant in itself is very interesting as indicating the possible future influence of such a College. In the thousand industrial branches of England, there is a constant demand for educated, scientific labor; and now that the brand is taken off from the working man, and an opening is given him in such institutions as this, (we already hear of three in different cities,) what improvement may we not expect among the