

claim, will not be denied the rights of citizenship in this most glorious of all fields. Still further, a literary taste in the teacher not only tends to raise his position in the eyes of the world, but would assuredly have a beneficial effect on the taught. If children imitate the language, copy the gait, and gestures of their parents, so must they naturally do those of their teachers, especially if there is a bond of sympathy between teacher and taught. As the poet says :—

"From those we love unconsciously we learn,
We think their thoughts and with their passion burn ;
Breathe the same accents - the same idiom speak -
Strong in their strength, but in their weakness weak.

A man cannot long give much attention to any pursuit without being in some degree moulded by the contact. Devotion, whether paid to worldly or spiritual objects, gradually assimilates the worship to the thing worshiped. This is especially the case in the pursuit of letters. A continual contemplation of the highest and best products of genius must leave an abiding impression upon the mind and heart. The sweet music given forth by nature's choicest sons finds a ready response in the universal sympathies of mankind. One can hardly commune with the Miltons and Shakespeares of the past - the Macaulays, Wordsworths and Tennysons of the present, without being made a better and a wiser man by the sweet converse. Their noble creations, like some fair plant on an old rugged wall, imperceptibly perhaps, but not the less surely entwine themselves around our hearts, and creep into the rough crevices of our nature and find a ready lodgment, thus filling in the irregularities and imperfections and making vernal man more symmetrical and more graceful than before. Nor is this good influence partial in its nature. It appears in the little as well as in the great things of life. It modifies the man's whole being and gives a new aim and direction to his individual likings. It extends the sphere of his sympathies, giving them greater intensity. It enters into the less and more pleasing concerns of life and imparts a greater attractiveness to the sterner and more repulsive duties that devolve upon us. As Cicero says in one of his famous speeches in the Roman forum, pleading the poet's cause—referring to the influence of literary studies. "These

studies nourish youth, delight old age, adorn prosperity, afford a refuge and solace in adversity, give satisfaction at home, do not hinder us abroad, spend the night with us, accompany us in our travels and go with us to our country retreats." Great as is the influence which these studies exercise upon him who pursues them, the influence which the teacher has upon his pupils is still greater and more certain, in the one case the soil of the heart may have been early hardened by sinister impressions, so that it refuses to be softened—in the other, the hardening contact of the rude world has been anticipated and the heart opens itself readily to the sunny influences that are brought to bear upon it. We accept in all their breadth those common phrases which are used to express the plastic nature of children. "They are as wax—they are as blank paper," ready to receive any impression we please. "They are as things" whose beauty and fitness when matured depend upon the early training they have received. The school is a great nursery. Its influences are of wonderful power, second only to those of home, and the teacher is the guiding hand that lifts the sapling into sunshine, gives it direction and has in a great measure the power of deciding whether it shall be tall and sprightly or a stunted and improper thing. We do not say that all the influence of school depend upon or are traceable to the teacher. The associations, the friendships, the rivalries, even the petty feuds that form a part of every scholar's life have all an important share, are all only so many tutors, silently but surely educating both head and heart, and determining what the future man shall be. But even these subordinate influences derive their tone and character from the genius and temper of the teacher who governs the whole. Like some great general whose enthusiasm is caught up by every soldier in the army, and whose commanding mind is seen in every thing, whether in the decisive onset or in the less momentous arrangements of the camp, the mind of the enthusiastic teacher pervades and controls the little as well as the great things that make up the early experiences of the young under his care. If the teacher is kind, intelligent, active and refined, his labours will be seen to produce fruits of the same quality, and the amount of the fruit will always