

and sensibilities; in a word, on Feeling."—But indeed Keats solved this riddle once and for all:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
We know on earth, and all we need to know."

Has, then, the halting diffidence of middle age no hint for divinely audacious youth? Yes; not yours the need of weeping or of labor. The proper business of youth is play (*testibus* Herr Karl Groos—Professor J. Mark Baldwin concurring, Dr. Hopkinson Smith, *et al.*). Besides, in youth cocksureness takes the place of conviction, and a happy carelessness that of labored expression. Yes; write you fearlessly and carelessly, and renew *our* youth, we who would much rather read THE VARSITY than write for it!

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

ZETHUS AND AMPHION: THOUGHT AND ACTION.

[The substance of an address at the opening of the Carnegie Library in the town of Sarnia, November 27, 1903.]

I feel inclined to begin in the words of another and an ancient orator, when, in the prosecution of a somewhat similar mission, he entered an ancient and very famous city—a city situated like Sarnia on the waterways: "Ye men of Sarnia," I feel inclined to say, "I perceive that in all things you are very superstitious, for as I came through your streets this evening I came upon an inscription to a very ancient and for a long time now an unknown god. S. P. Q. R. was the inscription—the inscription of the ancient Roman, whom we Britons are supposed to recall and resemble. An inscription very familiar to all University men and readers of the Roman historians, "Senatus Populusque Romanus."

And even after the inscription was interpreted to me to mean in the vernacular something less classical, I am still inclined to call it superstitious, though it only stands for "Small Profits and Quick Returns." For standing here to-night, within the walls of a library, must we not call that motto a superstition? The religion of a library the genius loci suggests exactly the opposite thoughts.

The profits of reading are not small; not ultimately small in any sense, not even small in the pecuniary sense for the nation which numbers many readers—though small enough, no doubt, pecuniarily for the best readers themselves (that is not their treasure, *there* is not their heart)—but not small even pecuniarily for their peoples.

All thought is one; and the thoughtful nation wins all prizes. Remember the history of Germany; when France overran Europe and was said to own the earth, and England overran the seas and was said to own the water, Germany was supreme in metaphysics and in poetry and in thought generally, and the more supreme that its thoughts were not distracted to conquest and empire; and Germany was said to own the air; but because it owned the air, the clouds and mists of metaphysics and speculative activity, it also was qualified, when it turned its thoughts, as in our own day, to commerce, quickly to establish a superiority even there; a superiority it will not easily lose unless it turn a means into an end, and make of commerce a goal, instead of one channel only, for its intellectual energy and its thirst for knowledge.

And if the profits of a library are not small, so surely its returns are not quick; but slow, slow as the mills of the gods, slow as the end of the world. Slowly, surely, by some winding, hidden channel, by some forgotten byway—some here to-night must have had the experience—the knowledge which a man has gleaned from his reading, gleaned because it interested him, and because he read it for its own sake and not for money, because, as the phrase goes, it "found" him, slowly but surely in the changes of fortune, in the interdependence of all things, this knowledge turns out to have even a material and practical value and to be synonymous with bread and butter; and the bread and butter so won, won by congenial labor, is as sweet as bread and honey wrested from labor which is not congenial. But it must be knowledge gleaned for its own sake and not for the bread and honey, or it will never turn to bread and honey. Such bread and honey is like happiness or salvation, only gained when not sought. Only those who lose it, who forget honey and money in their pursuit of knowledge, save it; and those who save it, who seek to win such honey for its own sake, miss it.

There is another reflection which obtrudes itself to-day upon any thoughtful man who finds himself in a library. The mass of materials for thought and reading threatens thought and reading. In the middle ages the students in Oxford sat on the steps of the theatre sharing one torn copy of Aristotle; and those students were beggars in many cases. To-day, though few students be beggars, they may be almost as badly off as beggars, from the poor quality of their reading, which has destroyed their mental taste and digestion; upon the mass of rubbish which hides from them the best books, the greatest monument of all literature, e.g., the Bible, is overlooked and forgotten, and is little known on this continent in comparison with former times. Universities used to give licenses to beg; to-day, in spite of Milton, most University men have found themselves wishing that Universities could license the books to be read.

Again, in a library the sensitive mind is conscious of a certain keen depression. As we wander from shelf to shelf we realize that not only have the subjects about which we do not talk, because we are conscious of our ignorance, evoked a whole literature, but the same is true of subjects about which we have hitherto talked and which we have supposed were understood and settled long ago; and it dawns upon us that if our conversation is to be of what we know, there will soon be a general silence in the land. For this very reason, therefore, that our conversation is generally of what we do not know, and also because it is the way of our race to hide our souls in conversation, and talk on the surface of things, and remain superficial always and trifling—unlike a Frenchman or an ancient Greek—for this very reason we above all men need libraries to keep our souls alive. The aim of education for most men, said a great man, is facility to converse; to converse, that is, with real conversation; with such conversation as Dr. Johnson found with Burke, and Goldsmith, and Boswell, and Sir Joshua; with such conversation as Socrates found with the keen-witted unconventional youth of Athens. Is there any one here who has not wished he could interrupt the banalities of "society," by taking up a book and reading aloud; is there any one who has not wished that the "original" banalities of the pulpit could be exchanged for the reading—not original—of the sermons which have moved mankind? This library