

whether it be philanthropic work, travel, study, music, athletics, or simply anything that is an aimless, butterfly-like quest for amusement, we human beings must devote a considerable portion of our energy in the pursuit of some manner of enjoyment. And it is with this thought in mind that I feel we may learn something of use by considering the matter of hobbies.

To attain the highest success in the serious side of life from the expenditure of what we may call our working energy, whether it be devoted to mechanical trades, business pursuits, professional or artistic callings, we hear no end of wisdom about the necessity for such virtues as purpose, system, definiteness, concentration, application, etc., and the necessity of avoiding aimlessness or anything that means the dissipation of energy. And if the success of our work-a-day life is so enhanced by system, etc., why shouldn't our pursuit of pleasure be made more successful, more useful and more keenly enjoyable by giving it the benefit of purpose and continuity of action? And this is exactly what a hobby does..

Our dictionary-makers have not as yet recognized the word "hobby" in the sense in which we use it to-day; but, by way of a definition, I think it is generally understood to be the pursuit after some excellence, or skill, or fund of knowledge where the pursuit is followed not for the profit, but for the pleasure derived. It is something, also, that is usually regarded as quite separate and apart from our regular daily avocation.

A hobby may be the absorbing work of a lifetime. The greatest mines of knowledge that have been opened to the world have been discovered by men who have devoted the energy, the skill and even the fortunes of a lifetime to the work, not for any material benefit that might be derived, but simply for the ample satisfaction and reward of success. It is needless to cite examples; the world's history is full of them. On the other hand, a person may give his time to a succession of hobbies. For instance, a boy may for a time be devoted to the collection of moths and butterflies. After a while, however, he reaches the limit of absorbing interest in this hobby, and it gives way to some other; and so on through his life.

I have always great hopes for the lad who, for a time, is so engaged in the collection of foreign postage-stamps that he is willing to sacrifice other pleasures, and even his small pocket-moneys, in his ambition to possess a collection containing every kind of stamp issued; and when this ambition has spent itself, will become just as much engrossed in the collection of birds' eggs, their nests, or the birds themselves, insects, rare coins, or wild flowers. Take such a lad, who from his boyhood has ridden first one hobby; then another and another, and is even now devoting the best of his leisure time and spare energy to some new line of thought, action