

HUGH MILLER.

"We know of no life that touches a hotter lesson to the young and friendless than that of Hugh Miller. Born in humble life, descended from a long line of sailors, his infant life was not enervated by any boast of purer blood than all mankind derive from "the grand old gardener and his wife," who tilled the soil of Eden, and who now, from the blue vault of heaven, "smile at the claims of long descent," that serve as the only pride of the dullard, who, in his pompous emptiness, had rather be the representative of a race of men who, "over since the conquest have been fools," or the sole inheritor of blood that has "crept through scoundrels over since the flood," than the worthy son of a sensible, honest, humble man. After a short term of tuition in the defective schools of his neighborhood, he commenced life as a stone-mason, studied geology and general literature in the quarry, and, in the winter holidays, by the fire-light of his humble home, was drawn from obscurity by the attention and patronage attracted by some fugitive poetry, became the accountant of a bank, and finally accepted the editorial management of the Witness newspaper, and at once took rank as one of the leading writers of the age.

We need not enlarge upon his subsequent career as the first geological writer of his time. Unequaled in the learning of his profession, he adorned it with an almost unrivalled richness of imagination, and thus presented a previously dry subject in a guise more attractive than that of many labored works of fiction.—Though his early education was not such as to give him smoothness and elegance of style, his native force of intellect and taste triumphed over all difficulties, and made of the Scottish stone-mason an English classic.

Such was Hugh Miller. His life was great and good—useful to mankind, and glorious to himself. When "all the blood of all the Howards" shall have sunk forever into its native dust, the fair renown of the Cromarty stone mason shall still live in the hearts of a grateful and admiring world.

INFLUENCE OF A CLEAN SCHOOL-HOUSE.

A neat, clean, fresh-aired, sweet, cheerful, well-arranged, and well-situated house, exerts a moral as well as a physical influence over its inmates, and makes the members of a family peaceable and considerate of the feelings and happiness of each other, the connexion is obvious between the state of mind thus produced, and habits of respect for others and for those higher duties and obligations which no laws can enforce. On the contrary, a filthy, squalid, noxious dwelling, rendered still more wretched by its noisome site, and in which none of the decencies of life can be obtained, contributes to make its unfortunate inhabitants selfish, sensual, and regardless of the feelings of each other; the constant indulgence of such passions render them reckless and brutal; and the transition is natural to propensities and habits incompatible with respect for the property of others, or for the laws.—*Conn. School Jour.*

THE GREATEST SEMINARY.

The fireside is a seminary of infinite importance. It is important because it is universal, and because the education it bestows being woven in with the woof of childhood, gives form and color to the whole texture of life. There are few who can receive the honors of a college, but all are graduates of the hearth. The learning of the universities may fade from the recollection; its classic lore may moulder in the halls of memory; but the simple lessons of home, enamelled upon the heart of childhood, defy the rust of years, and outlive the more natural but less vivid pictures of after days.

So deep, so lasting, are the impressions of early life, that you often see a man in the imbecility of age holding fresh in his recollection the events of childhood, while all the wide space between that and the present hour is a blasted and forgotten waste. You have perchance seen an old and half obliterated portrait, and in the attempt to have it cleaned and restored, you may have seen it fade away, while a brighter and more perfect picture, painted beneath, is revealed to view. This portrait, first drawn upon the canvas, is no inapt illustration of youth; and though it may be concealed by some after design, still the original traits will shine through the outward picture, giving it tone while fresh, and surviving it in decay.

Such is the fireside—the great institution furnished by Providence for the education of man.

THE DAY BOOK.

Every soul that is born into this world is like a blank book, having its pages of virgin white. Every thought, and act, and deed is written upon that soul with fearful accuracy, and durability. Each day has assigned to it its bright page either to be filled with a neatly arranged record of virtuous thoughts and actions, or to be scrawled and blotted over with sins, stains and vices.

God has given us a memory by which we are enabled to turn back the leaves of the book, and look over our past life, and take lessons and warnings by experience; and though we cannot bring to recollection every thought or deed of our life, yet they exist, indelibly engraven on the tablet of time, and will, at some time stare us fearfully in the face.

Oh, how happy is the condition of that soul who can turn back the leaves of memory, until he comes to the page where the Savior has written, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." What a difference between the pages following this and those preceding it! His "sins are blotted out, and his transgressions are remembered no more." Thenceforth are "all things done decently, and in order."

There is also a Great Book in Heaven. An angel stands by it, and whenever a sinner in this world turns to Christ, in truth and sincerity, fully endowed with faith unto salvation, with obedience to the will of Heaven, his name is written in the Book of Life, and all the holy angels rejoice at the baptism in the "blood that cleanses from every stain."

A MOST EXCELLENT THING IN WOMAN.

There is one part of a woman's education often forgotten or neglected—the culture and formation of a gentle voice. It is a great gift of nature, to be aided by culture—an instrument of powerful influence for good. I speak not of singing hymns now, and the culture of harmony and musical purposes, though these tend to God's praise, or give innocent amusement, but this gentle voice will be able to guide and persuade to good the manly heart of a faithful husband, will mitigate sorrow, lessen trial, and speak of hope and joy to her dearest friends and connections in accents at once powerful and pleasing. Let us then be careful in our schools to cultivate this most powerful acquirement. How different, in all respects, to a family, for friends and neighbors, are the kind, gentle, persuasive accents I have described, from sounds we sometimes (alas! too often) hear in the close abodes of poverty and trial—high, harsh, female treble tones of bitter import, scolding and reproaching, and driving away from the hearth and home (perhaps to sorrow and to sin) the husband and the children.

A WORD TO PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN AT SCHOOL.—If parents do not feel sufficient interest in the education and training of their children—in their moral and physical, as well as in their intellectual culture—to visit the schools, see the progress of the pupils, encourage the teachers in their arduous and difficult labours, and thus assist both teacher and pupil, how can they reasonably expect the scholar or teacher to feel or manifest a desire for progress and improvement, so sadly neglected by those who should feel and exhibit the liveliest interest in the culture of their offspring? The teacher we know has many duties devolving upon him, and because he discharges them faithfully, the parent is not excused from his duty. Parents, if you have not visited your school recently, do so immediately, and you will, we are sure, find the hour well and pleasantly spent.

EDUCATION.—Thewald thought it unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it should have come to years of discretion, and be able to choose for itself. I showed him my garden, and told him it was my botanic garden. "How so?" said he, "it is covered with weeds." "O," I replied, "that is because it has not yet come to the age of discretion and choice. The weeds, you see, have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil in favour of roses and strawberries."—*Coleridge.*

A Teacher should be patient.—Almost every child has some trait which tries the temper of the teacher. He is stubborn or forgetful, idle or hasty, these are great faults, but that of the teacher who loses his temper, is greater. Patience is a virtue which is especially demanded in the work of instruction; but for this reason, above others, that all impatience on the teacher's part disturbs in a high degree the process of communicating moral truth.—*School Manual.*