

ON CHOOSING A PROFESSION.

I consider it as firmly established as such propositions usually are, that a young lady's chances of a satisfactory matrimonial settlement are in an inverse ratio to the number of her admirers ; and a somewhat extended series of observations leads me to believe that the same expression, the terms being changed, holds good in the instance of young men in their choice of a profession. Human nature is so constituted, that the difficulty with which we are pleased is greatest where we have the greatest variety from which to select. I have often, in my shopping excursions, amused myself with observing the countenance and actions of those who have come on a similar errand with myself. Where but a few samples of an article are exposed to view, a choice is generally made with ease ; but in cases in which an endless variety of patterns, colors, sizes and prices, is presented for inspection, indecision grows more and more visible as the articles are successively examined and compared. Time flies ; and at length the consciousness that the patience of the polite and attentive clerk must be well nigh exhausted, admonishes the bewildered customer that action of some kind is necessary, and in sheer desperation a selection is hurriedly made, which in the great majority of instances is unsatisfactory, and by no means the best.

With equal interest, but with different feelings, I have observed the same indecision, the same waste of time, the same ultimate precipitation, and finally the same dissatisfaction on the part of many young men in their adoption of a permanent business. The result is, that the trades and professions are crowded with individuals who have little knowledge, and less skill in the avocations which they have thus chosen hastily and as a last resource. Those who are regularly instructed in their art are injured by the ruinous competition that follows, for people will not be persuaded that the cheapest bargain is not always, or even generally, the best. This state of things is, perhaps, to a certain extent, unavoidable in all newly organized communities where a proper division of labor is not immediately practicable ; but strenuous efforts should not the less be put forth in order to diminish the magnitude of the evil. Much depends on parents. Even in childhood the disposition, physical constitution, and mental powers and tendencies of the individual should be carefully studied, and some course of life chosen for him which will not be in direct opposition to any strong natural proclivity which he may exhibit, and a suitable system of education and general training be accordingly pursued. And let the parent endeavor to impress upon his own mind as well as upon that of his child, that it matters little, so far as true respectability and success are concerned, what line of business is adopted, if only excellence in it be attained. After all we feel inclined to honor a shoemaker who is master of his art, rather than one of those paltry dabblers in what are called the more liberal professions.