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CHILDHOOD'S HAPPINESS—A POPULAR FALLACY.

WITHOUT ever thinking about what they are saying, or whether they have reasons for making the averment, men and women, when they are looking upon children tumbling about and screaming with glee, and making all sorts of fun, seem all to say that "now's the time of life. Let them enjoy themselves, poor things, to their heart's content, for darker, harder times are soon to come. The cares of life will soon be upon them to subdue their laughter and sadden their mirth." Then sighs are heaved in attestation of the truth of the remark. "There's no time-like childhood," one says gravely. "It's a real fact," responds another, quite as much in earnest. And so, go where you like, if you put the question, "What is the happiest time of life, do you think?" you invariably get the answer, "Childhood." I have asked the question often, just out of curiosity, to hear what folk would say, and I have always got the answer, "Childhood."

But somehow or other the answer is felt to be unsatisfactory. It has never seemed to me the right one, and I have often thought that people might lead more contented lives if their minds were disabused of such a belief. For if men believe that their happiest years are gone, they cannot but sigh for the past, and feel that they are comparatively wretched now. And if a man thinks that he is unhappy, he is really so, and is verily to be pitied, and the community in which he lives is to be pitied too; for he lacks one of the best incentives to activity in his work, whatever it may be. He who looks back into the past for all that is good can never