

a possible future guide and aid to them in their affliction.

But in the great struggle for existence and the mad race for wealth that seem to characterize the closing years of the 19th century, the engrossing cares of business and the reckless pursuit of pleasure, have so blunted men's perceptive faculties that, unless any thing tends to further their particular object in life it entirely escapes their notice. And so, many of the bright, beautiful, and curious productions of art and nature that lie thickly along our pathway here are passed by unobserved, and their cheerful and educative influence upon our lives are never felt. Do we not know some hustling farmer, who goes forth some sunny, summer morn, when the birds are sweetly singing and the flowers are shedding their fragrance around them ; who hears not the melodious harmony, nor sees and feels his heart stirred by beauty that exceeds the glory of Solomon. For him the roses bloom in vain, and on him nature's music is thrown away. He may, perchance, scan eagerly the dome of Heaven, but only to form the basis of a calculation as to whether there will be sunshine for the ingathering of his hay, or whether there is promise of refreshing showers for the good of the growing crops. And then his mind goes back to the sordid concerns of his occupation, how to get the greatest amount of labor out of the long-suffering and down-trodden hired man, the prospects of a rise in the price of pork, or fall in the price of wheat, or to wondering who brought his beloved daughter home from singing school the previous evening. But farmers are not the only delinquents who err in this respect. The merchant views the earth as only a place to buy and sell ; the artisan as one huge workshop ; and the lover as a fitting place to worship at the shrine of some dear divinity, and to have no eyes and ears for anything else.

Observation is the principle which, properly applied, has led to and culmi-

nated in the most wonderful discoveries and useful inventions. How many million apples had been seen falling since the first one ripe and luscious tumbled to Eve in Eden's pleasant garden before a simple occurrence, so oft repeated, started that train of thought in Isaac Newton's head that ended in the discovery of the law of natural gravitation, and how many kettle covers had danced a merry hornpipe to the music of the spout ere a Watt arose to grasp the secret of the mighty power of steam. Then let us not despise the most common object, for in their homely and familiar shapes or movements, we may read some undiscovered law of nature or gather material for some unthought of invention, and so place our names in the annals of fame.

Not only is observation an educative quality, but education greatly aids and develops the perceptive faculties. The mountains and soil and rocks, and even the sands of the sea shore speak volumes to the geologist. In their formation and situation, he reads their origin and the successive changes they have passed through since. They spread before him glimpses of ancient creation and modern re-arrangement and through their agency even the future becomes less a mystery.

What are to us mere stalks and leaves and roots and blossom, reveal to the botanist the native clime, the properties, the nature and the uses of each plant and tree.

And there is no page of such deep and thrilling interest as the broad blue canopy above us. To our unpracticed eyes, filled with chaos and confusions, but to the astronomer the luminous depth is a scene of order and regularity and the movement of each celestial body flashes forth the everlasting, changless purposes of its Almighty Creator, God.

A man's observations are generally an index to his character. While some look ever beyond the clouds and see their silver lining, others gaze upon the