

as an imperative part of education; but circumstances gave me a strong bias in that direction. I turned with dislike from the ordinary avenues of professional life, and on completing my academical course spent two years in special science studies in Edinburgh, then the best school of that kind accessible. It is true that in the circumstances of British America at that time I could find no professional work in the departments for which I had qualified myself, and was obliged eventually to enter on educational pursuits and to resign to my students what I would have gladly done myself. This may have been well for me, but I would not advise many young men to follow the example. Even now, in Canada, it is easy to commit the great sin of being a little in advance of your age; but in almost any legitimate pursuit, however few may seem its opportunities, you may achieve success, if you have weighed your own powers and capabilities, and have the determination to persevere.

There is one part of the student's life which is especially his own—his vacations. How blessed a thing it is to find oneself free from stated tasks and daily studies, and professorial control, and to expatiate at will in the luxury of the long vacation. It is a type of that final emancipation for which the young man ever longs and of his being launched as a free voyager on the sea of life. But even as that great plunge is only the beginning of a voyage which may end in rocks and quicksands, or carry precious freight to the haven of futurity, so is the vacation a time which tries of what stuff the man is made, and which gives the opportunity for an education of its own. Is the student jaded with mental toil, he may enjoy repose and at the same time bring back the ruddy current of health to his veins in country or seaside air. If tired with lonely and monastic life in lodgings, he may enjoy the social amenities of home. If he possess the means, he may visit foreign lands and acquaint himself with the many ways and minds of various men, and study their arts and their manners and the products of the regions they inhabit. If impecunious, or feeling the want of business habits, he may throw himself into some kind of active work, gaining practical strength and professional experience and means to pursue his further education. If his tastes are scientific, he may pursue in nature or by actual

experiment some of the subjects he has been studying in a less practical way in college. If he limits his view to the more immediate future he may study the subjects in which he may have found himself weak, or may prepare for some competitive examination in the next college session. Lastly, with or without any of these pursuits, he may become his own tutor and may prescribe for himself some agreeable and profitable course of literature which may bring him into familiar intercourse with the great writers of his own and other times, and may deepen and widen his mental and moral culture as much as anything that occupies his attention when engaged in his regular studies. The vacations are in truth the opportunity of the student for general literature, and on this subject it is well to give one needed caution. In our time the deluge of light and poor literature almost submerges all that is worth study. It was not so in the student days of those who are now old. Then there was less literature, but this was of a more solid class. Now the tendency is too much to read flashy and pretentious articles rather than more serious works, and to neglect the great masters of thought and expression for writers of a merely ephemeral kind. The student should avoid this tendency. Works of fiction it is useless to read, except to learn something of their character and style; and on any subject which deserves study it is well to have the guidance of the best and most original thinkers, and of those who can most clearly and elegantly express what they know.

I have not in this been giving advice which I have been unwilling to take myself. I well remember how, in student days, I was able in those times of comparative relaxation to gain some knowledge of languages not included in the regular college course, to read much in history and general literature, to take lessons in drawing, elocution and other useful arts, to make collections of plants, animals and fossils. I learned in this way what is, perhaps, the most important of all practical lessons—that variety of employment is equivalent to rest—a lesson which I would commend to all Canadian students. When you are wearied with one kind of study or work, it is often a much greater relief to turn to another of a different character than to sink into absolute repose.

In older countries, where men are more