

Life, Literature, Education.

(Continued from page 866.)

THE BROOK-SONG.

Little brook! Little brook,
You have such a happy look—
Such a very merry manner, as you
swerve and curve and crook—
And your ripples, one and one,
Reach each other's hands and run
Like laughing little children in the
sun.

Little brook, sing to me:
Sing about a bumble bee
That tumbled from a lily-bell and
grumbled mumbly,
Because he wet the film
Of his wings and had to swim,
While the water-bugs raced round
and laughed at him!

Little brook—sing a song
Of a leaf that sailed along
Down the golden-braided centre of
your current swift and strong,
And a dragon-fly that lit
On the tilting rim of it,
And rode away and warn't scared
a bit.

And sing—how oft in glee
Came a truant boy like me,
Who loved to lean and listen to your
lilting melody,
Till the gurgle and refrain
Of your music in his brain
Wrought a happiness as keen to him
as pain.

Little brook—laugh and leap!
Do not let the dreamer weep:
Sing him all the songs of summer till he
sink in softest sleep;
And then sing soft and low—
Through his dreams of long ago—
Sing back to him the rest he used
to know.

—JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

THE COURAGE OF PUNCTUALITY.

The courage of time is punctuality. When there is a hard piece of work to be done, it is pleasanter far to sit at ease for the present and put off the work. 'The thousand nothings of the hour' claim our attention. The coward yields to 'their stupefying power,' and the great task remains forever undone. The brave man brushes these conflicting claims into the background, stops his ears until the sirens' voices are silent, stamps on his feelings as though they were snakes in his path and does the thing now which ever after he will rejoice to have done. In these crowded modern days, the only man who 'finds time' for great things is the man who takes it by violence from the thousands of petty, local, temporary claims and makes it serve the ends of wisdom and justice.

There are three places where one may draw the line for getting a piece of work done. One man draws it habitually a few minutes or hours or days after it is due. He is always in distress and a nuisance to everybody else. It is, very risky—ethically speaking, it is cowardly—to draw the line at the exact date when the work is due; for then one is at the mercy of any accident or interruption that may overtake him at the end of his allotted time. If he is sick or his friend dies, or unforeseen complications arise, he is as badly off as the man who deliberately planned to be late and almost as much to blame. For a man who leaves the possibility of accident and interruption out of account and stakes the welfare of himself and of others on such miscalculation, is neither wise nor just; he is reckless rather than brave. Even if accidents do not come, he is walking on the perilous edge all the time; his work is done in a fever of haste and anxiety, injurious alike to the quality of the work and the health of the worker.

The man who puts the courage of punctuality into his work will draw the line for finishing a piece of work a safe period inside the time when it is actually due. If one forms the habit and sticks to it, it is no harder to have work done ten days, or at least

one day, ahead of time than to finish it at the last allowable minute. Then, if any thing happens, it does no harm. This habit will save literary workers an incalculable amount of anxiety and worry. And it is the wear and tear of calm, quiet work, that kills such men before their time.

I am aware that orderliness and punctuality are not usually regarded as forms of courage. But the essential element of all courage is in them—the power to face a disagreeable present in the interest of desirable permanent ends. They are far more important in modern life than the courage to face bears or bullets. They underlie the more spectacular forms of courage. The man who cannot reduce to order the things that are lying passively about him and endure the petty pains incidental to doing hard things before the sheer lapse of time forces him to action, is not the man who will be calm and composed when angry mobs are howling about him, or who will go steadily on his way when greed and corruption, hypocrisy and hate, are arrayed to resist him. For, whether in the quiet of a study and the routine of an office or in the turmoil of a riot or a strike, true courage is the ready and steadfast acceptance of whatever pains are incidental to securing the personal and public ends that are at stake.—PRESIDENT HYDE, in the *College Man and College Woman*.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY

We are very pleased to be able in this issue to present a cut of one of the many members of the F. A. and H. J. L. S. He is a sample of what the society has attracted in the way of intelligent men and women. You will notice that he wears the badge of our order in a conspicuous place and as if he were proud of it.

For our new competition we have chosen a subject for an essay submitted by one of the brightest of our members, and this subject is well worth the attention of all who belong to the Society. "What are the advantages and disadvantages of Cheap Literature?" By cheap literature of course is not meant literature cheap in quality particularly, but cheapness of form. What have we gained and what have we lost since the inventions and improvements in the printer's art have brought the works of almost every writer, dead or living, within our reach? It is worth thinking about and writing about. Let every member of the Society do both the thinking and the writing and we shall have a record competition. Essays will be limited to 300 words and should be in the office by the 25th of June. Come one, come all, old members and new, and make this competition a credit to the Society!

A COURSE OF READING IN ENGLISH FICTION.

Not many years ago the formal study of literature was a pursuit almost unknown. Literature, prose and poetry alike, was read for the pleasure it afforded. The essay first came in for serious study; and soon the field of poetry was invaded by the student. That this change of attitude to literature has robbed reading of much of its charm is true; and equally true is it that the adoption of intelligent principles of interpretation and criticism has put new meaning into literature. Whether the gain has been greater than the loss may be regarded by some as an open question. It is the purpose of this paper, assuming that the subjection of literature to formal study is a forward step, to suggest the invasion of a department of literature into which the serious student seems least disposed to enter, namely the department of fiction.

There are several methods of studying English fiction, but of these the most logical seems to be the historical. This for two reasons: 1. Because the history of fiction discloses a series of reactions, from romance to realism, and, again, from realism to romance; 2. Because no writer has been free from the influence of one or more of his predecessors. The following outline will suggest, in chronological order, a list of ten works of fiction which might with pleasure and profit be read by the individual or studied by a club.

1. "Pilgrim's Progress," by John Bunyan (1678).

To begin with Bunyan is to pass over a long period of fiction prior to the eighteenth century, which is of interest only to the specialist. Two classes of stories found favor in this early age—romances of the most extravagant type and rogue stories dominated by a note of cynicism. "Pilgrim's Progress" is the one noble exception, its author mingling with imaginative scenes of his own, the familiar scripture imagery, and the still more familiar incidents of village life, in such a way as to create in

the minds of his readers the illusion of reality.

2. "Robinson Crusoe," by Daniel Defoe (1719).

This work stands alone in the early part of the eighteenth century. The secret of its popularity is clear to read. The author, as one writer puts it "humanized adventure." Englishmen recognized in the experience of Robinson Crusoe a symbol of their own lives, their struggles, their failures, and above all, their faith.

This brings us in the eighteenth century to the point of a vigorous reaction from romance, finding expression in the works of Richardson, Fielding, Smollet and Sterne. These realists, whether they dealt with minute incident, as Richardson and Sterne, or in farce, intrigue and adventure, as Smollet and Fielding, have one characteristic in common: their subject is the heart. Each has an ethical motive. While these are the recognized leaders of the period, we venture to select as the type of the movement the work of a minor novelist, namely:

3. "The Vicar of Wakefield" by Oliver Goldsmith (1766).

This is the work which we would least willingly lose out of the century, because (a) its characters are most like the people of the time; (b) its humor is clean; (c) its style is poetical; (d) its philosophy of life is sane.

The early 19th century witnessed a return to romance. Out of this period we have no difficulty in picking a typical novel.

4. "Kenilworth," by Sir Walter Scott (1821).

Equally easy it is to select our next novel—

5. "The Scarlet Letter," by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850).

Again there set in a reaction toward realism, marked by the appearance of the humanitarian novels of Charles Dickens. From these we select,

6. "David Copperfield," (1850).
The humanitarians let the novel down from the "picturesque heroic" to the "matter of contemporary life."

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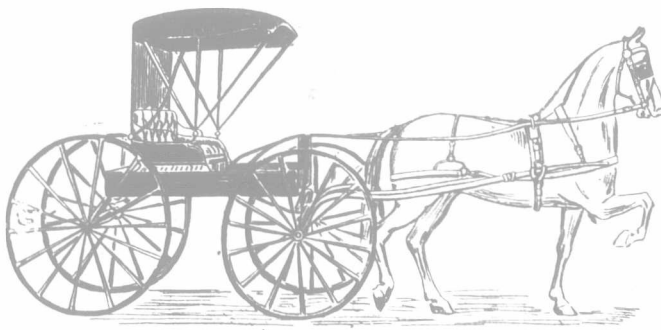
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