

Written for the Educationalist.

HISTORY.

Summoning before us the eternal character of the world's drama, the vast audience, the unroofed and enormous theatre, the actors themselves enlarged by art above the past generations of men. We can, verily, say that a knowledge of History will always be a source of profit and delight. Examples strike better than precepts. They serve as proofs to convince, and as images to attract. History gives us the experience of the world, and the collective reason of ages. We are organized like men of the remotest times. We have the same virtues and the same vices; and, hurried forward, like them, by our passions, we listen with distrust to those warnings of wisdom which would thwart our inclinations. But History is an impartial instructor, whose reasonings, which are facts, we cannot gainsay. It exhibits to us the past to prefigure the future. It is the mirror of truth. Before its tribunal nations and men the most renowned are judged in our eyes; conquerors descend from their triumphal cars; tyrants are no longer formidable by their satellites; princes appear before us unattended by their retinue, and stripped of that false grandeur with which flattery saw them invested. The love of liberty cherished by the Greeks may kindle the soul; but their jealousies, their fickle manners, their ingratitude, their sanguinary quarrels, their corruption of manners, at once announce and explain their ruin. If Rome with her power, excite astonishment, we will not fail soon to distinguish the virtues which constituted her grandeur, from the vices which precipitated her fall.

N. M.

THE SONS OF POOR MOTHERS.

"His mother was a poor woman, and now he walks the street like a lord."

This sneered a bundle of silks and feathers, as it moved faintly along, scenting with its aristocratic nose, like a genuine pointer, the well dressed and well connected persons of her acquaintance. The young man referred to, trod the ground like neither prince nor lord, but like a man conscious of his power; like an American citizen every way worthy of the name. He had trampled under foot the sneers of the scornful and pretentious, and stood before the world with his foot upon the neck of their meanness. Step by step he had disputed the ground with

adverse circumstances, and they had yielded, step by step, till he now stood where he could look down upon, and use every obstacle that had striven to hinder his progress, and make it a slave to his bidding. He had taken calumny, and pride, and envy by the throat, and flung them from him with such force that they cowered at his glance, nor dared so much as lift their skinny fingers at his shadow when his back was turned.—Through weary struggles against frightful obstacles that the poor alone know—battling with the tide of oppression, buffeted by the waves of adversity, still upward he rose, onward he went, till to-day no man is acknowledged with louder acclamation—no man bowed down to with deeper reverence—no man whose recognition is a greater honor, than this son of a poor woman.

His mother was a poor woman!

Look over the list of earth's magnates—her royal kings of intellect—her lords of genius—patents of whose greatness originated in the courts of the Most High, ere this little world brought forth its mock nobility, and tell us what proportion of those great ones were the sons of rich mothers? Very, very few. The best statesmen, the proudest poets, the holiest divines—those thunderers by whom the earth was shaken to its centre—men who have dethroned kings and founded nations—the masters of rhetoric and elocution—the most profound philosophers—the bravest generals—the noblest authors, were nearly all the sons of poor women, some of them widows who suffered in loneliness and sorrow.

In our own day, our best and brightest names have been given to little babies by the lips of poor women, their heads cradled upon coarse pillows, their little bare feet trained over carpetless floors.

Daniel Webster was the son of a poor woman. The first grandeur he knew was that of the hills that lifted their granite brows in eternal worship toward heaven—the only splendor that of majestic clouds and leaping torrents, the triumphal entry of the sun through avenues of golden glory, and his western march like that of a monarch, wrapping robes of crimson and ermine about him. And yet for greatness, intellectually speaking, the world hath scarcely his equal. Who knows if the babe, Daniel Webster, had been rocked in a rosewood cradle, and lulled to sleep with a silver rattle in his hand, reared in the midst of a city street, with no wild anthems of the forest—no

thunder leaping from crag to crag to bring out the stronger elements of the mind—no birds in the branches, and no silver streams to waken the more ethereal and picturesque characteristics of his intellect and group them into harmony; who knows but the world had sighed over greatness born to blush unseen, to droop, to die in comparative solitude?

Sons of poor mothers! What a host of them have scaled the summit of immortality! They have left their impress in the hand of the idols, and many a dark-browed heathen has learned the way of salvation through their almost superhuman exertions. Everywhere throughout the world, how do they stand forth and challenge our homage! Not with glossy kids and faultless coats, patent boots and slender canes, do they go forth, the admired whiskerandees of thoughtless girls, but with sturdy stops and clouted shoes—with signs of the much used needle here and there seriously showing, with patched knees and elbows, and with many an evidence besides that they were the sons of poor mothers.

All honors to the sons of poor mothers! To them the nation look for statesmen and defenders. For them there will always be vacancies in the halls of science, seats in the temples of our legislatures, and pulpits in our churches. For them the doors of the White House have sprung wide open, and shall again, while the people gather in crowds to do them reverence.

"He was the son of a poor woman!"

Let it never be spoken with the sneer of self-sufficient shallowness, for it is in the hearts of poor women that the noblest resolves have birth. They make sacrifices that would put to blush the indolence and negligence of the purse-proud. Over their humble homes shine the stars that heralded the advent of heaven-born intelligence. It has ever been so since the star of Bethlehem blazed above the spot where Christ, the King of Heaven, lay upon the bosom of a poor woman. While they toil with tears, and struggle with adversity, angels whisper the destination of the babes that sleep against their hearts. At their lowly hearthstones the young mind is imbued with the holy principles of the Bible. When the child comes sobbing home, grieyed and indignant, because those who were better dressed have scorned him, the poor mother, her heart filled with faith, points out his noble destiny. She it is who inspires him with glowing hopes, teaches him that merit lies not in the paltry adornments of the outward man;