

bone than the average were at the bid of every call of pleasure, or too impatient of results from their work. The heritage of even a go-ahead temperament is not without its disadvantages, as enlightened Americans will readily admit.

As I had many excellent pupils whom I shall always hold in pleasant remembrance, so, as might be expected, an indiscriminate fisher such as I was must sometimes have netted strange fish. On the principle of *ex pede Herculem* I shall give an instance of two of these.

A young man wanted very badly to enter Harvard University in the following fall term—it was March when he came to me. Accordingly we set to work, reading "Cæsar" first; but when he had glibly rattled off the first few well-thumbed pages of his book and emerged into pastures new his eagerness oozed out and he collapsed. On my reporting this discreditable breakdown to his father, who was a commercial man, I learned that the boy's sole ambition in wishing to go to college was to shine as a member of one of the athletic societies, of which, it appeared, his elder and more gifted brother was already a distinguished ornament. A tip-top university stamp for his muscle was all the young jack-anapes was after; but, unfortunately for his aim, his pluck was not equal to his ambition, and he returned to his desk in his father's office, to the no small satisfaction of the latter, who doubtless felt he had done his part in surrendering one son to the Moloch of college athleticism.

One day a tall, stylishly-dressed young person came to me on somebody's recommendation, and was not long in letting me into the secret that she had leanings towards a career on the stage. She wished, before entering a school of acting, to read portions of the English drama under my guidance, with the view both of making

some acquaintance with the literature of the stage and of improving her pronunciation. She spoke with a strong German accent, appeared to be very illiterate, but also very positive and self-sufficient. I took down the comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer" to test her reading and expression, and when she had floundered through a scene or two in an execrable manner she suddenly asked me to explain the meaning of the title. But my explanation fell flat; the two notions of "stooping" and "conquering" were so incongruous to her mind that she could not bring them together in consciousness. Such dense, "yellow-primrose" literalness of intellect I never met with in any human being before or since.

Another time I was visited by a robust-looking man in the prime of life, who stated that he was a master plumber, and that, being deficient in his arithmetic, he was finding it difficult to keep track of his bookkeeper's accounts now that his business was increasing. A little fencing, however, elicited the pitiable admission that he was totally unable to read! He could read figures, add a little, and just write his own name—all he had ever learned in his native country—the Green Isle; but though he had hitherto been successful in concealing his limitations from the people about him, certain circumstances had recently given him the alarm, and he had made up his mind to try and mend matters. And what a struggle was his! What pathos in his groping efforts to spell out his way through the primer which his own little son had thrown aside two years before! But night after night, summer and winter, he kept it up, until at last he had his reward, and he could look his little boy boldly in the face, and had no more fears of his book-keeper.

At one time I had a class of young French Swiss watchmakers in Brooklyn,