

view of enjoying their own stock.

Such fantasies pass away. By the time that boys and girls are getting up in the "standards," they can grasp some of the realities of life—the stern necessity for earning bread—and all the limitations of sex, of place or of purse, which often seem to shut us in far more really than they do, and which, as time passes on, we often discover to be little more than barricades raised round us to test our strength and agility in leaping over them!

What are the influences which commonly bring about decision in this matter of choice of life work?

There is parental leading and authority. When these are enlightened and unselfish, their worth cannot be over-estimated. Anyhow, a father very rarely gives his son too roseate a view of the advantages of his own calling. If the boy adopts it, it may be through some hereditary instinct, or under the force of sheer necessity; he generally does so with his eyes open to all its drawbacks.

On the other hand, parents often lay plans for their child's future and try to fit him into them. The hole of their ambition is a round hole, and the boy is a square boy, and if he gets forced into it he will get sore chipped in the process. Parents often have a very natural wish to keep their children with them at any cost; forgetful that they will not remain always with their children, who may have to stay withering in the uncongenial soil where they planted them, long after their own heads are laid in the grave. Worse still, they do not always consider health or inclination, or ability, but only ask where is the best opportunity "to get on." It is asked: "What trade is the most highly paid? What calling is the most genteel?" It is not asked: "What is this boy fit for?"

but "What is it becoming to his family, that he should be fit for?"

I remember reading a letter that was written to John Ruskin by a gentleman who was in great distress, because his young brother, who, he thought should go into one of the learned professions, had gone off to British Columbia, and got work in a salmon-canning factory! John Ruskin replied that, on the whole, he thought it was quite as honorable to prepare potted fish as to distribute potted talk! Some parents see this. I know a case just now in which the son of "gentle" people, with many other possibilities open to him, has declared his own ardent desire to be a *cook*. His father, after giving and taking time for consideration, has yielded to his desire, and he is now in training under a *chef*. But too often young people whom nature has plainly intended to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and who would be happy and honorable in such vocations, are sent up to college, because it is thought derogatory to their family's standing that they should work with their hands; it often ends in their family having to put them out of sight as wasters. Or parents of a humbler class, as they grow old and easier in circumstances, resolve to give themselves "a social lift" by sending their youngest boy to the university, though he may be the fool of the family, or a roystering youngster who would far rather go on a cattle ranch! Schoolmasters have always been very severe on this perverse judgment of fathers as concerning the fitness or unfitness of their children. Roger Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's tutor, even went so far as to wish that this parental power was clipped in the interests of the commonwealth, for he said, "Fathers in old time, among the