

his leisure hours in poring over the pages of Milton, Young, Thomson, Cowper, Addison, &c. In the winter of the year in which he attained his majority, he commenced, under the direction of a brother-in-law, who was an accomplished scholar, the study of mathematics. About the same time he entered on the study of the Latin language, for the purpose of reading Virgil in the original. He soon after turned his attention to French, which he mastered with wonderful facility. He then acquired the Spanish, and afterwards the Greek and German languages. During two winters he devoted nearly all his time to study, but he was occupied a large portion of his time during spring and summer in working at his trade as a blacksmith, and in this exemplary way, acquiring the means of subsistence.

"When about twenty-three years old, he accepted an invitation to teach a grammar-school, but this employment did not suit his convenience, or his inclination. He was then engaged for a year or two as an agent for a manufacturing company, when he returned to his *anvil*, and has since been industriously engaged in the honourable occupation of a blacksmith, to which he was apprenticed in his youth; but devotes all his leisure hours to literary pursuits. After having mastered the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and all the languages of modern Europe, he turned his attention to Oriental literature, and in order to avail himself of the facilities afforded by the valuable library of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, he removed to that place, where he has ever since resided, and been regarded as a useful and exemplary citizen. By dint of hard labour he has become a proficient in the most difficult languages of Asia, and in many of those languages of Europe which are now nearly disused and obsolete—among them are Gaelic, Welsh, Celtic, Saxon, Gothic, Icelandic, Russian, Slavonic, Armenian, Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Sanscrit, and Tamul! It was stated in a public meeting, in 1838, by Governor Everitt, that Mr Burrill, by that time, by his *unaided industry alone, had made himself acquainted with FIFTY LANGUAGES.*—Mr. Burrill shows no disposition to relax from his labours. He usually devotes eight hours to labour, eight hours to study, eight hours to *physical indulgence and repose*; and by pursuing this course, he enjoys the advantages—vainly coveted by many literary men—those connected with "a sound mind in a healthy body." Nor does he confine his labours to the mere acquisition of literary wealth—he also diffuses it with a liberal hand. He has written many valuable articles for periodicals of high standing; he has delivered many lectures which have been replete with interest and valuable information; and has been repeatedly listened to by large and highly respectable audiences, in New York, Philadelphia, and other places, with edification and delight. He has not yet reached the meridian of life, and it is to be hoped that many years of usefulness are still before him; he is, indeed, a man of whom New England may well be proud."

The following extract from a letter written by Elihu Burrill, in 1839, to Dr. Nelson, a gentleman who had taken some interest in his history, displays the simple, unassuming, earnest character of the man, in a very interesting point of view:—

"An accidental allusion to my history and pursuits, which I made unthinkingly, in a letter to a friend, was, to my unspeakable surprise, brought before the public as a rather ostentatious *débüt* on my part to the world; and I find myself involved in a species of notoriety, not at all in consonance with my feelings. Those who have been acquainted with my character, from my youth up, will give me credit for sincerity when I say, that it never entered my heart to blazon forth any acquisition of my own. I had until the unfortunate *denouement* which I have mentioned, pursued the even tenor of my way unnoticed, even among my brethren and kindred. None of them ever thought that I had any particular *genius*, as it is called; I never thought so myself. All that I have accomplished, or expect or hope to accomplish, has been and will be by that plodding, patient, persevering process of accretion which builds the ant-heap—particle by particle, thought by thought, fact by fact. And if I ever was actuated by ambition, its highest and farthest aspiration reached no farther than the hope to set before the young men of my country an example in employing those fragments of time called "odd moments." And, sir, I should esteem it an honour of costlier *water* than the tiara encircling a monarch's brow, if my activity and attainments should encourage *American working men* to be proud and jealous of the credentials which God has given them to every eminence and immunity in the empire of mind. These are the views and sentiments with which I have sat down night by night, for years, with blistered

hands and brightening hope, to studies which I hoped might be serviceable to that class of the community to which I am proud to belong. This is my *ambition*. This is the goal of my aspirations. But, not only the *prize*, but the whole *course* lies before me, perhaps beyond my reach. 'I count myself not yet to have attained' to anything worthy of public notice or private mention; what I *may do* is for Providence to determine.

"As you expressed a desire in your letter for some account of my past and present pursuits, I shall hope to gratify you on this point, and also rectify a misapprehension which you with many others may have entertained of my acquirements. With regard to my attention to the languages, a study of which I am not so fond as of mathematics, I have tried, by a kind of practical and philosophical process, to contract such a familiar acquaintance with the head of a family of languages, as to introduce me to the other members of the same family. Thus, studying the Hebrew very critically, I became readily acquainted with its cognate languages, among the principal of which are the Syriac, Chaldaic, Arabic, Samaritan, Ethiopic, &c. The languages of Europe occupied my attention immediately after I had finished my classics; and I studied French, Spanish, Italian, and German, under native teachers. Afterwards I pursued the Portuguese, Flemish, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Welsh, Gaelic, Celtic. I then ventured on further east into the Russian empire; and the Slavonic opened to me about a dozen of the languages spoken in that vast domain, between which the affinity is as marked as that between the Spanish and Portuguese. Besides those, I have attended to many different European dialects still in vogue. I am now trying to push on eastward as fast as my means will permit, hoping to discover still farther analogies among the oriental languages, which will assist my progress."

Amongst his works of philanthropy, Elihu Burrill issues weekly 1,000 or 1,200 of his "Olive Leaves" for the press; and, in proof of his powers of writing, we may mention the fact,—a fact perfectly unparalleled in the annals of periodical literature,—that the articles thus forwarded are regularly printed in about *three hundred* newspapers in various parts of the Union.

### BEREAVED MOTHERS.

(By "Ann Jane," in *British Mothers' Magazine*.)

Afflictions are often the instruments of increasing and maturing the fruits of righteousness; certain it is, they never leave us as they find us; either our hearts are made more holy by them, or they drive us further away from happiness and God. There was one who in early life was written childless—her three beautiful sons were taken from her *in one week!* and their places were never supplied. The little student of seven years was smitten while over his books, the second at his sports, the youngest on his mother's knee. The deepest *humility*, the most earnest searchings of heart, were the immediate results of this bereavement; it dwelt on her mind that for some deficiency in her Christian character this chastisement had been appointed, the language of her contrite prayer was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and he told her. She became a mother in Israel; a sleepless untiring benevolence was the striking lineament of her life; and after the stroke of widowhood fell upon her, and she stood entirely *alone*, it seemed as if every vestige of selfishness was extinct, and that her whole existence was devoted to the good of others; but particularly to *children* was she useful, and was seen, we are told, at the age of fourscore and eight, beautiful through the goodness that never waxeth old.

We have read of a young mother who had newly buried her first-born. Her pastor went to visit her, and on finding her sweetly resigned, he asked her how she had attained such resignation,—she replied, "I used to think of my boy *continually*,—whether sleeping or waking,—to me he seemed more beautiful than other children. I was disappointed if visitors omitted to praise his eyes, or his curls, or the robes that I wrought for him with my needle. At first I believed it the natural current of a mother's love. Then I feared it was pride, and sought to humble myself before Him who resisteth the proud. One night in dreams I thought an angel stood beside me, and said, 'Where is the little bud thou nursest in thy bosom? I am sent to take it away? Where is thy little harp? Give it to me? It is like those which sound the praise of God in heaven.' I awoke in tears; my beautiful boy drooped like a