

Books as a mean of advancement in life.



PARENTS generally entertain the desire to secure for their children an education befitting advancement in life; they very seldom think that there is an education which in itself is advancement in life.

The general opinion held of advancement in life is to become conspicuous, or to obtain a position which shall be acknowledged by others to be respectable or honorable. The seaman does not desire to be made captain because he can manage the ship well, but rather because he will be called "captain." Thus we see that love of praise and recognition is the strongest motive in men's mind in seeking advancement in life.

Likewise we wish to get into good society, not on account of the society itself, but on account of the conspicuousness it gives us. There is hardly one among us who would not make great sacrifices to obtain the company of a cabinet minister or a person of rank, but we scarcely ever think of seeking the company of books where we can read, study and rise to the level of these great men. We wish very much to be given the opportunity of speaking to a poet, but why not read his writings? In his writings he describes passing matters much better than in his careless talk.

The reading of books is one of the chief means of advancement in life. A book is the idea of some great genius. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true, useful and beautiful, and he is bound to express this clear and melodiously. By reading the book carefully you will find the author's idea, or the 'true bits,' and these are the book.

The author's writings are preferable to his talk. In his talk, politeness will frequently induce him to descend to our own level with the result that we receive but little benefit. In his book we must ascend to his level. We learn to think and act as he does. This is learning, this is education, this is advancement.

From this we can easily see that the position a man will take in life is the position he fits himself for; the position he will take in the society of the living will be measured by the companionship he is able to take with the intellectual aristocracy of the dead.