

Too many, however, still feel only in nature that which we share "with the weed and the worm"; they love birds as boys do—that is, they love throwing stones at them; or wonder if they are good to eat, as the Esquimaux asked of the watch; or treat them as certain devout Afredee villagers are said to have treated a descendant of the prophet—killed him and worshiped at his tomb; but gradually we may hope that the love of nature will become to more and more, as already it is to many, a "faithful and sacred element of human feeling."

Where the untrained eye will see nothing but mire and dirt, science will often reveal exquisite possibilities. The mud we tread under our feet in the street is a grimy mixture of clay and sand, soot and water. Separate the sand, however—let the atoms arrange themselves in peace according to their nature—and you have the opal. Separate the clay, and it becomes a white earth, fit for the finest porcelain; or if it still further purifies itself, you have a sapphire. Take the soot, and if properly treated it will give you a diamond. While, lastly, the water, purified and distilled, will become a dew-drop or crystallize into a lovely star.

Or, to quote another beautiful illustration from Ruskin, speaking of a gutter in a street, he well observes, that "at your own will you may see in it either the refuse of the street or the image of the sky."

Nay, even if we may imagine beauties and charms which do not really exist; still, if we err at all, it is better to do so on the side of charity; like Nasmyth, who tells us in his delightful autobiography that he used to think one of his friends had a charming and kindly twinkle, till one day he discovered that he had a glass eye.

But I should err indeed were I to dwell exclusively on the importance of science as lending interest and

charm to our leisure hours. Far from this, it would be impossible to overrate the importance of scientific training on the wise conduct of life. There is a passage in an address given many years ago by Professor Huxley to the South London Working Men's College which struck me very much at the time, and which puts this in language more forcible than any which I could use.

"Suppose," he said, "it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game of chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces? Do you not think that we should look with disapprobation amounting to scorn upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight? Yet it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and more or less of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just and patient. But also we know to our cost that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity which with the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill