

he pursued was ruinous to memory. There is no faculty of the mind more sharpened by use, or more blunted by inaction. Henderson, the actor, repeated to Dugald Stewart, after a single reading, such a portion of a newspaper, that the metaphysician thought it marvellous. "If, like me," said Henderson, modestly, in reply to the exclamations of surprise, "you had trusted for your bread to getting words by heart, you would not be astonished that habit should produce facility."

What Henderson would have committed to memory, Southey committed to his manuscript volumes, and trusted to them so exclusively, that at last he retained nothing beyond general impressions. Want of practice was not alone the cause of the defect. His appetite for knowledge exceeded his or any other man's digestion, and he would have recollected more had he read less. Our rough forefathers were sensible of the truth, and some-stamped the body to assist the mind. There were parts of France where it was customary to whip the children at an execution, that they might never forget it. Cellini, in his boyhood, was summoned suddenly to see a salamander in the fire. While he was watching it with wonder, his father gave him a tremendous box on the ear. "Now," said he, "you will always remember that you have seen a salamander."

Johnson never gave a more unquestionable definition than when he said, "The art of memory is the art of attention." This is actually the case, as is well known to every man who attends to the working of his own mind; men who dream when they read, whose eye has exercised rather than their intellect, who do little more than pass through so much type, and who proceed precisely as the studious man does when he wishes, through the aid of reading, not to excite the brain, but to stay its tumultuous action. Such men must not be astonished, if they find it difficult, on finishing a book, to remember much of its contents. A traveller passing through England, not outside the coach, gazing towards every point of the compass, comparing all that he sees with his guide-book, but inside, and there with his eyes mostly closed, and oftentimes asleep, neither reading nor observing, could not, with reason, complain that he had seen very little of the country, and could give but an imperfect account of it. Knowledge is not to be had on such conditions. The habit of the sloth form the character of the sloth. It is with literature as with labour; it is "the hand of the diligent that maketh rich;" "he that deals with a slack hand shall be a poor man;" our advice, then, to you is, put soul into the service! Read as if you were to review the book in hand! So read, that when you have got through, you can recite its substance from beginning to end, setting forth, with tolerable accuracy, its scope and object, arguments and illustrations, and giving an opinion upon the whole with the reasons.

Will it be said, this is hard work? To be sure it is; and from this arises the value of it. If men will only while away time, when they read, it is utterly impossible they can be permanently profited. It cannot be too deeply impressed on young people, that the power of attention is one which admits of indefinite improvement. We know the case of a young man, who acted upon this conviction as follows: his practice was to take Johnson's "Rambler," reading a paper, with the utmost attention he could command, then closing the book, to recite whatever he could remember of the substance in his own words. He then returned to the paper again, going through it with equal care as before, noting what he had taken and what omitted; again closing the book, he recited the substance; and once more he repeated the process. Three perusals from the first enabled him to bring forth the essence of every paragraph. This method he prosecuted for months, with the utmost regularity, and the most intense assiduity, until a single perusal sufficed to enable him to rehearse the essence of any paper, however difficult; and we vouch for it the exercise has ever since been of signal

service to him. The young man who will do this will acquire the power of dealing with a subject in a manner of which, without experience, he can have no conception. This young man's exercise was known to a fellow-student, whom it greatly amused and interested; one day, that gentleman, determined to test him with one of the most difficult passages in Dr. Reid's "Philosophical Essays;" himself selecting the passage, and giving it to the party, saying, "read that, and give me the book." It was done, and the result filled him with astonishment.

It is well known that Napoleon, from his boyhood, was intensely devoted to mathematical study, and that this discipline was subsequently of inestimable service to him in managing the affairs of his mighty empire. Lord Holland, in his "Foreign Reminiscences," lately published, has the following passage:—

"Napoleon's powers of application and memory seemed almost supernatural. There was scarcely a man of France, and none in employment, with whose private history, character, and qualifications he was not acquainted. He had, when emperor, notes and tables, which he called the moral statistics of his empire. He revised and corrected them by ministerial reports, private conversation, and correspondence. He received all letters himself, and, what seems incredible, he read and recollected all that he received."

"He slept little, and was never idle one instant when awake. When he had an hour for diversion, he not unfrequently employed it in looking over a book of logarithms, which he acknowledged, with some surprise, was at all seasons of his life a recreation to him. So retentive was his memory of numbers, that sums over which he had once glanced his eye were in his mind ever after. He recollected the respective produce of all taxes through every year of his administration, and could at any time repeat any one of them, centimes. Thus his detection of errors in accounts appeared marvellous, and he often indulged in the pardonable artifice of displaying these faculties in a way to create a persuasion that his vigilance was almost supernatural. In running over an account of expenditure, he perceived the rations of a battalion charged on a certain day at Besancon. 'Mais le bataillon n' etait pas la,' said he, 'il y a une erreur.' The minister recollecting that the emperor had been at the time out of France, and confiding in the regularity of his subordinate agents, persisted that the battalion must have been at Besancon. Napoleon insisted on further inquiry. It turned out to be a fraud, and not a mistake. The peculating accountants were dismissed, and the scrutinizing spirit of the emperor circulated with the anecdote through every branch of the public service, in a way to deter every clerk from committing the slightest error, from fear of immediate detection."

THAT ONE WORD.

"I never can forget *that word* which was once whispered to me in an inquiry meeting," said a pious man once to a friend. "What word was it?" "It was the word **ETERNITY**. A young Christian friend who was yearning for my salvation, came up to me as I sat in my pew, and simply whispered 'Eternity,' in my ear, with great solemnity and tenderness, and then left me. That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the cross."

The late Rev. Mr. M'Cheyne, of Dundee, was once riding by a quarry, and stopped to look in at the engine-house. The fireman had just opened the door to feed the furnace with fresh fuel; when M'Cheyne, pointing to the bright hot flame said mildly to the man, "does that fire remind you of anything?" The man could not get rid of the solemn question. To him it was an effectual harrow of conviction. It led him to the house of God, and will lead him, we trust, to heaven.

A single remark of the Rev. Charles Simpson on

the blessings which had resulted from the labours of Dr. Carey, in India, first arrested the attention of Henry Martyn to the cause of missions. His mind began to stir under the new thought, and a perusal of the life of Brainard fixed him in his resolution to give himself to the dying heathen.

It is said that Harlan Page once went through his Sabbath-school to get the spiritual census of the school. Coming to one of the teachers he said, "Shall I put you down as having a hope in Christ?" The teacher replied, "No." "Then," said he, very tenderly, "I will put you down as having no hope." He closed his little book and left him. That was enough. God gave that young man's soul no rest till he found a hope beneath the cross.

A member of my church, not long since, overtook a lady on her way to the prayer meeting. She asked the young woman if she never thought of her own salvation? The lady thus addressed, replied, that during all her life, she never had one word spoken to her before about the salvation of her soul! Within a month of that time she became a devoted member of the flock of Christ.

Fellow disciple! have you never yet spoken *one word* to an impenitent friend about the most momentous of all questions? Then I fear you will find no one in heaven that you were the means, under God, of sending there. Though you may reach the "many mansions," I fear your crown will glitter with no splendours. It will be a *starless* crown.

DOING NOTHING.

"He made me out a sinner for doing nothing!" This remark fell from the lips of one who was under conviction of sin, and of whom we asked the question, "How were you awakened?" He had heard a sermon from the words, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" It was a new thought to the poor man, who had been comforting himself with the plea that he had done nothing very bad. But now he saw that his greatest sin was the very thing in which he had been comforting himself—*doing nothing!*

We are reminded of this incident by meeting in an old religious magazine with the following ingenious interrogations on the words, "Curse ye Meroz." The writer, says,

By whose authority?—The angel of the Lord's. What has Meroz done?—Nothing.

Why then is Meroz to be cursed?—Because they did nothing.

What ought Meroz to have done?—Come to the help of the Lord.

Could not the Lord do without Meroz?—The Lord did do without Meroz.

Did the Lord sustain then any loss?—No, but Meroz did.

Is Meroz then to be cursed?—Yes, and that bitterly.

Is it right that a man should be cursed for doing nothing?—Yes, when he ought to do something.

Who says so?—The angel of the Lord. That servant which knew the Lord's will, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 37.

THE GRACIOUS REPLY.

"And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."—Acts ix. 6.

This was the language of Jesus to Saul of Tarsus, in the midst of his trembling and astonishment, when arrested by the arm of Omnipotence and love, on his way to Damascus. Let us notice,

The divine direction given. In his awakening and conviction, a miraculous influence is employed, but he is to receive further instructions in the use of means. When the penitent sinner, under a