

do we know of anything? Of learning there is no end, and he that has climbed the highest is but standing on the bottom rung of the ladder of knowledge whose topmost height touches the threshold of the eternal, and is there enveloped in the mists of the unknown—perhaps for us through all time and space, the unknowable.

So far as I can judge, the main use of experience in life is to guide and warn inexperience; to direct the tottering footsteps of an infant humanity, and so to tutor its progress as to enable it to avoid the ditches into which its predecessors have stumbled, and the snares in which they may have become entangled. In the pursuit of this purpose I am inclined to believe that the experience of the humblest may be of service, and he who offers it heartily and voluntarily, so far from laying himself open to the imputation of egotism, deserves well at the hands of an aspiring and constantly increasing humanity, whose earnest cry is ever ascending, "What shall we do for bread?" and that assured, "What for honour?"

Look out into the world and ascertain who are the prosperous, who are the respected, who are the leaders of men, be they philosophers, politicians, priests or pedagogues. Without doubt they are the specialists. I speak conscientiously when I declare that a so-called liberal education without the *one* means to gratify the liberal tastes engendered thereby is not an altogether unmixed blessing. Nay, it may become a curse rather than a blessing. I repeat it is good to have a smattering, if—ah! those "ifs," they are the pitfalls of life—if there be a specialty behind, the one means to excel and make bread, the bread of life, and the bread of success and content, which is more than life; one branch of knowledge, one department of business, one province of

art or trade or mechanical skill in which the toiler is at home, among whose intricacies he can take his stand and say, I know them all as far as humanity can know; other men may be lost in the labyrinthine turnings of the maze, but I can follow each sinuous path to the end with ease and profit; mine is the clue by which the Ariadne of knowledge extricates her hero, and tempts the Minotaurus of doubt and ignorance to its inevitable end.

To the teacher then, as to every other "bread winner," a specialty is an absolute necessity. For general purposes and the common school room course a fair acquaintanceship with the ordinary subjects of the curriculum may seem all-sufficient, as doubtless for a season it is. But there comes a time to every healthy and ambitious intellect when the limits of the ordinary routine seem too narrow, the mind pants for expansion. The earnest seeker after a higher perfection longs to ascend another rung in the ladder of competency. Be assured if no such spirit seizes you, you are in the wrong place in life, a round personage in a square hole, and the sooner you drop through, or scramble out, and insert yourself into another orifice of being, so much the better for yourself and for the world at large. As no two natures are exactly the same, and as the field of educational inquiry is very large, it would be useless to lay down cast-iron rules for the guidance of the individual intellect. Ascertain what you instinctively like, what branch of study is your *forte*, that is, which comes most naturally to you, then gird up your loins and go ahead once and for all. The incomparable Goethe has put good counsel in the mouth of old Meister, the father of his hero Wilhelm, to this effect: "One cannot do a young man any greater kindness than