

a little grinding, seems to give forth a tune, and reward the mechanical achievement with a suitable gratuity. This is all natural enough, no doubt, as far as it goes; but it does not go far. There is something more behind education, surely, than that which appears at the first superficial glance. If its foundations are broad and deep, the superstructure will take some time in rearing, and may not be quite finished till the top-stone is put in its place by the builders of Eternity. There is much truth in Voltaire's maxim, drawn from Ovid: "*Bene vixit qui bene latuit.*" It reminds us of the words of the Hebrew seer: "In quietness shall be your strength." He who morosely locks up his knowledge in a private cabinet,—a somewhat rare circumstance.—has not yet learned that the highest use of self-culture is to render a man better able to culture others. But in looking for the results of thought, we must not be precipitate, nor must we expect them from the wrong direction. We must often hasten slowly in translating our knowledge into action if we desire to act with power.

That most acute thinker, Aristotle, laid down the proposition that virtue is a mean, the extreme of defect or excess involving a vice. Viewed from the standpoint of quantity, this statement may be accepted as in the main correct, though its weak point lies in the fact that it does not sufficiently recognize the qualitative distinction between virtue and vice, which puts them upon different planes altogether. One does not like to feel that he may have such an excess of good that it gradually shades off into an evil. And in this regard the Christian philosopher is more exhilarating than the Greek one, when he bids us run to the extreme end of the course, pressing towards the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. But Aristotle's dictum is especially valuable, because it reminds us that virtue is a counterpoise and harmony of the whole nature. It is not solely by a life of contemplation, nor solely by a life of action, but by a proper admixture of both, that we are to attain the most complete development. Solitude is intended to prepare for society, and society to educate and ennoble solitude. We cannot carry out God's will in the community, unless we have learned to unite our will with His in those hours of quiet contemplation, when we face the great problems of life, and our soul grows strong in the consciousness of His presence. Nor, conversely, can we spend a profitable retirement if it is occupied only with personal interests, however noble, and does not include that brooding, Christlike love which remembers the manifold needs of a toiling, sinful world. Saint Bernard, in his treatise *De consideratione*, which he dedicates to his former pupil, Pope Eugenius III., admirably indicates the proper equipoise of this two-fold relationship of life. "I know," he says, "what sweet rest was granted thee before. Now it pains thee that thou art torn away from contemplation. But what cannot the power of custom do? It now seems to thee intolerable. But when thou art somewhat used to it, I