

all to perfection, or the time required for the process. It is necessary in this connection to bear in mind the vast difference there is between amateur and professional excellence. We listen to a friend's singing of a favourite song while his wife plays the accompaniment, and to our mind he seems to touch the acme of performance and expression. It is not till we hear the same selection sung by the vocal idol of the concert platform that we realize the vast difference there is between that which is merely correct and pleasing and that which is truly excellent and paramount in its musical superiority. The main use of conjurers, sleight of hand performers, acrobats and other vaudeville artists, is perhaps not so much to amuse us, as to show us how far native gift combined with intense application and perseverance can go.

It seems therefore the path of wisdom of the many-sided and many-gifted to ask themselves whether they possess those qualities of vital force and resolute endeavour which will enable them to achieve excellence in the various departments that are suggested to them by their native make-up. At present the retrospect of many of them is cumbered by half-done things. But I think it will be conceded that so far as mere happiness is concerned the versatile people have the advantage over those who narrow down their interests to the one pursuit by which they make their living. It is well for everybody to have a hobby, and there is nothing more pitiable than the continuous ennui of those who, stranded on the shores of age or retirement from business, have no avenue of activity which they can pursue. It is well to have an avocation as well as a vocation.

Apart from the happiness conferred by versatility; and I can certify that the before-mentioned Tom Handicap enjoys life far more than any member of the firm with which he is connected who has retired with a fortune; it must be remembered that there are regions where the versatile man is in some measure monarch of all he surveys. In our new lands, the tempting spaces of which are being taken up by those who pour forth from the centres of congestion, the man of various faculties finds his proper habitat. He is discovered in every new settlement, where he is the refuge of all and sundry, as well as the living nucleus of progress and enlightenment in all directions. It is he who mends agricultural machinery, answers questions in horticulture and botany; gives first aid to the wounded, sends home sketches of his new quarters to his friends, celebrates each event of the budding community in verse. It is he who plays the organ in the clapboard church, and is on hand at the church social to oblige with a variety of amusing numbers. He photographs his lonely fellow-settlers, mends their wives' sewing machines, and starts the Literary Society. There are occasions when he may lament the fact that his variety of accomplishment was not recognized in over-specialized Britain. But he never regrets the impulse that brought him to the wider opportunities of a new world.