

vice. "What kind of a service was it," I asked one who had been a member? "Well," said he, "when they met in the upper room they first greeted each other with a holy kiss." He was profanely interrupted by a friend remarking that it was a wonder the introductory part of the service had not drawn Joe there regularly, but my informant shook his head and gravely observed that "most of the sisters were elderly."

His apprenticeship itself was a process of self-education. He "worked the press from morn till night," and found in the dull metal the knowledge and the power he loved. One lady—a relative—taught him French. With other ladies, who were attracted by his brightness, he read the early English dramatists, and the more modern poets, especially Campbell, Mrs. Hemans, and Byron. He delighted in fun, and frolic, and sports of all kinds, and was at the head of everything. But amid all his reading elsewhere, and his companionships, he never forgot home. He would go out in the evening, as often as he could, and after a long swim in the *Arm* would spend the night with his father. One evening his love for home saved him from drowning. Running out from town and down to the shore below the house, he went in as usual to swim, but when a little distance out, was seized with cramp. The remedies in such a case—to kick vigorously or throw yourself on your back and float—are just the remedies you feel utterly unable at the time to try. He was alone and drowning, when at the moment his eye being turned to the cottage upon the hill-side, he saw the candle for the night just being placed on the window-sill. The light arrested him, and "there will be sorrow there to-morrow when I'm missed," passed through his mind. The thought made him give so fierce a kick that he fairly kicked the cramp out of his leg. A few strokes brought him to the shore, where he sank down utterly exhausted with excitement.

Had he been anything of a coward, this

would have kept him from solitary swims for the rest of his life. But he was too fond of the water to give it up so easily. When working in after years at his own paper, midnight often found him at the desk. After such toil, most young men would have gone up-stairs, for he lived above his office then, and thrown themselves on their beds, all tired and soiled with ink; but for six or seven months in the year his practice was to throw off his apron, run down to the market slip, and soon the moon or the stars saw him bobbing like a wild duck in the harbour. Cleaned, braced in nerve, and all aglow, he would run back again, and be sleeping the sleep of the just in ten minutes after. When tired with literary or political work, a game of rackets always revived him. There was not a better player in Halifax, civilian or military. To his latest days he urged boys to practise manly sports and exercises of all kinds.

When a mere boy he would string rhymes together on the slightest provocation, and declaim them to his companions, who never knew what was his own and what was not; and at the age of seventeen he wrote his first connected poem, entitled *Melville Island*. When it was published no one knew who the author was, and one morning walking into town with his father, the lad enjoyed the pleasure—surely the most exquisite that a young author can enjoy—of hearing a gentleman, whose opinion he valued, praise the poem highly. The secret was not kept long, and then praises were showered on him. One evening the Chief Justice met him, and spoke some kind words about the poem, and advised him to cultivate his powers. The boy heard with a beating heart. His father had taught him to respect all who were above him in station. He was then, as Burns describes himself to have been in his plough-boy days—thanks also to a wise father. "I remember," says he, "that I could not conceive it possible that