

the profound influence it must necessarily exercise. In some ways it is undervalued by the poor ; in other ways absurdly overvalued. If they were only educated, they are apt to think, everything, including a rapid rise in life, would be easy and plain before them. In the *Reminiscences of a Stonemason*,¹ the excess of the stonemason's pride in his self-educational attainments over his pride in a hard-working, well-spent, and effective life, is almost pathetic. Usually, in conversation, the poor who have become newspaper readers recall their own valuable and interesting experiences and any stale nonsense they may have picked out of a cheap newspaper with equal satisfaction and a singular lack of discrimination. They have heard so much about education and reading as panaceas that, against their better sense as at other times expressed, they more than half believe it. The education given in our primary schools has been much criticized for its failure to teach useful, as opposed to examinational knowledge ; for the habits of inattention, thoughtlessness, and slipshod workmanship which many children seem to gain at school ; and for the false social ideals with which they are there infected. It is a phase, we

¹ Anonymous. Murray.