

Brain-work is the highest of all antidotes to worry ; and the brain-working classes are therefore less distressed about many things, less apprehensive of indefinite evil, and less disposed to magnify minute trials, than those who live by the labour of the hands. To the happy brain-worker, life is a long vacation ; while the muscle-worker often finds no joy in his daily toil, and very little in the intervals. Scientists, physicians, lawyers, clergymen, orators, statesmen, literati, and merchants, when successful, are happy in their work, without reference to the reward, and continue to work in their special callings long after the necessity has ceased. Where is the hod-carrier, that finds joy going up and down a ladder ? and, from the foundation of the globe until now, how many have been known to persist in ditch-digging, or sewer-laying, or in any mechanical or manual calling whatsoever, after the attainment of independence ?

That precocity predicts short life, and is therefore a symptom greatly to be feared by parents, has, I believe, never been questioned. In poetry and in science, the idea has been variously incorporated that early brilliancy is a sure indication of a feeble constitution and an early death. This view is apparently sustained by analogy, and by facts of observation. Plants that are soon to bloom are soon to fade ; those which grow slowly live long and decline slowly. Observing these facts, we naturally adhere to the opinion that the same principle should hold good as regards men ; but in making the analogy, we forget that it loses its force, unless the objects implicated start in life with the same potential force and are surrounded by the same external conditions. It is probable that, of two individuals with precisely similar organization, and under similar circumstances, the one that developes earlier will be the first to die ; but we are not born equally endowed and similarly circumstanced. Not only are men unlike in organization, but they are very widely unlike ; between the brain of Shakespeare and the brain of an idiot is a measureless gulf, and we may believe that difference of degrees may be found between the greatest and simply great men. We may believe that some are born with far more potential nervous force than others. There are millionaires in intellect as well as in money, who can afford to expend enormous means without being impoverished. An outlay of one hundred dollars may ruin the mechanic, working for his daily wages, while the royal merchant may spend a thousand, and barely know it. There are those who can begin their life-work earlier, toil harder and longer, than the average, and yet attain a very great age. The average age of 500 illustrious men, including those who