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Original Poetry.

AUTUMNAL MUSINGS.

There is a breath of sadness in the air,
A nameless sorrow which the days impart,
A voiceless thought that trembles on the ear,
The soul of nature speaking to the heart.

Each breeze that stirs the changing forest hues,
And whirls the falling leaves in fitful play,
Doth boding murmur through the soul infuse,
And breathe a hidden shadow on the way.

The very birds that gladdened wood and lane,
And joyed in melody the livelong day,
To melancholy tune their plaintive strain,
Or voiceless, grieve the weary hours away.

Sighs soft the stream the drooping reeds among,
While o'er its flow the faded grasses wave,
The moaning forest joins th' Autumnal song,
And chants a requiem over Summer's grave.

"Gone!" sobs the wind the shaded dales along,
"Gone!" whispers low the scentless wayside bloom,
And melancholy are the thoughts that throng
My heart's sad chambers 'mid the evening gloom,

See! from the cloud the buried years once more,
Slow to my sight their varied wealth unfold,
The quiet fields my feet have wandered o'er,
The wooded hill where died the sunset gold;

The evening walk beside the moonlit stream,
The rustic bridge where love's first vow was paid,
The lingering fancies of a fading dream,
The quiet grave beneath the willow's shade.

Ah! weary heart, 'tis sad the ways to tread,
Which in the sunny past my feet have pressed,
Where withered hopes as leaves the pathway spread,
And mouldering joys in rayless niches rest.

INDEPENDENT THOUGHT.

"We have many readers but few thinkers." Few who with regular trained habits of thought are bringing up to the admiring gaze of the world gems of their own creation and polish. The mind too often seems not "rich with unborrowed wealth," but fraught down by the burden of remembered love.

Instead of becoming an active, energetic, creative power, strong for the accomplishment of mighty ends and world-wide enterprises, it has been made but a mere depository of information, a cycle of attained facts. Not the deep-channelled stream ever urging onward with irrepressible flow, and washing up along its sides golden sand for every admirer: but shallow water conforming its course to every intervening object.

The realm of thought is vast, attractive, unexplored. Through this extensive domain many seem to wend their erring flight with bat-like blindness, ever thinking yet never comprehending. Others traverse it only as they can borrow the wings of another, or grasp with clinching firmness the ascending spirit of a matured intellect, and thus reach nobler heights. Perhaps no more fruitful source of mental weakness and vacillation could be mentioned than this imitation and passive compliance with the views of others. In this way the mind becomes an artificial channel for the conveyance of foreign thought from man to man. But there is no increase of power and vigor: no steady growth, no drawing in of other streams to swell its own current, no deepening of the strength and tone in its onward progress. There may be evinced by such a mind a beauty and pointing in figure, a clearness and vivacity of illustration, a copious and imposing magnificence of language, all of which serve to win the temporary attention and please the imaginative; but manifest little force of intellect in their authors and awaken less in their dreamy applauders. Such literature at best only nourishes a habit of thinking for pleasure, a false, delusive enjoyment, without producing finished ideas, structures well designed and completed.

Power of mind must have persistent, independent, original thought for its development and growth. This is its sustenance, its exercise, its moving principle. Only by this can the intellect be expanded to its full and natural proportions. Any other course develops mental monstrosities or leaves undeveloped dwarfs. Constant effort, intense application, strong will may be necessary, but they will bring

forth from the mental soil flowers of peerless beauty and fruits of richest worth. In this sense it is most emphatically true that "there are no men but those who have made themselves." No more can the shrewdest, strongest instructor impart intellectual force to a student who refuses to think for himself, than an expert physician muscular power to a patient persistently recumbent. Each must work himself. The results follow the universal law of nature and so are inevitable.

The advantages derived therefrom are innumerable. Dignity and tone are added to character: self-respect increased without conceit, power without arrogance. The deep impress on style will be unmistakable: fierce without bombast, beauty and elegance without gaudiness. Thus elevated to its Alpine heights, the mind views with wonder the light and darkness alternating; the clearness and confusion; the dawnings and clouds in other minds in the valleys below. Thus with keener vision sophisms which rise with overwhelming proportions before the multitude, melt at its gaze as winter snow before the summer sun. Real satisfaction awaits those who dare to be truly great in the realm of mind. The "pleasures of thought" well up in the soul like an overflowing crystal fountain. They are not sounding and noisy, but silent and deep. The world may not perceive nor sympathize with them; but higher than sensual gratification in their nature, they depend not on the world for origin, and need it not for continuance. But the years of independent thought requisite for attaining this measure of strength meet many obstacles. The light and frivolous literature deluging the land, the aversion to that which is real, substantial, and the result of diligent laborious thought constitute opposing influences of great force. Do these not seem just criticisms on the age: "Men ask for that which they can easily digest." "Those who would become intellectually great must seize their opportunities of reflection and of study where and when they can find them; and be contented with the respect and veneration of a few familiar friends, and the reward of thought in their own bosom. The driving world will not pause to admire nor help them."