

Supreme in might and wisdom. And he hears nature, clothed in beauty and verdure, sending up an unceasing song of praise to a never failing Providence.

But there are other voices.

The young man just setting out in life, before whom is spread the boundless sea of an untried future—standing, as it were, on the outlook of that scene in which he will soon be an actor, hears many voices ringing through his soul all calling him to action. Life is spread before him in a beautiful and inviting panorama. This great gift with all its glorious possibilities is his. He feels that he has powers and faculties that can be developed to almost any extent. Thinking of the future there is stirred within him many emotions as he longs to go forth and cope with the forces around him. He sees before him innumerable paths of life, some trodden, others new and untried. And as he looks on this scene with a heart full of hope, and beating high with strong aims, there comes to him almost imperceptibly, voices, each in its own way, and with its own peculiar power appealing to his emotions, and inviting him to follow.

Some speak loud and commanding, others in soft winsome accents, full of persuasion, while the tones of others again are grave and serious, each presenting great inducements.

There comes the winning voice of pleasure, speaking of happiness, promising to satisfy every desire of his heart, and spreading before him in glowing colors a life full of enjoyment. The way she leads is very easy to tread, every barrier is taken down, and he has only to follow the promptings of his desires.

While this pleasing voice is heard in his heart telling him to give up all care, and to enjoy life, there comes another of a somewhat loftier nature pointing out to him the possibilities of attaining to an exalted position among men.

In tones urgent and strong rousing his ambition it invites him to high honors, and offers him the crown of fame. Through his excited mind there floats in dreamy thought a magnificent picture of his life, and a thousand fancies of future greatness flit before him in fascinating forms called into existence by the magic wand of imagination.

The voice of fame shows a path rugged indeed and narrow, but leading to renown.

The voice of wealth in silver tones points out the way to solid joy, and holds forth golden hopes for the gratification of every wish.

Among the other voices is heard one eloquent and impressive, speaking with words of power. This is the voice of duty. She shows that while all the joys promised by the other voices will disap-

point the seeker, or be swept away, the satisfaction found by listening to her words will remain forever, like the old gray crag whose head is lifted high among the storm clouds and around whose base the rushing tide of the restless sea ever chafes and foams.

She incites him by the noble examples of the past, and by the degradation of man to a life of disinterested labor. And mingled with this voice comes that of revealed religion, showing him for what great ends he was created, and pointing him through faith to a future home in a land of endless happiness.

Thus we are surrounded, thus we are influenced, and our characters moulded by the silent voices in the soul.

### PERSPICUITY.

LANGUAGE, as the incarnation of thought, becomes the most potent medium of influence within the broad realm of mind. Adorned with the grace of style and manner, or accompanied by the resistless logic of natural and impassioned action, it proves itself mighty to take by storm man's complex nature at the point assailed, and the idea, evolved from the inner depths of an individual consciousness, burns its way deep into the profoundest convictions of others. In connection with all those subjects of prime importance which must ever prove of interest, inasmuch as they are founded upon the essential principles of human nature, and stand in vital relation to man's highest welfare and happiness, in connection with all such, there have sprung from the fruitful soil of universal common-sense, a class of ideas long since become venerable as generally recognized truisms. The title of this article embodies such an idea in relation to the grandly important subject of the practical employment of human thought through the medium of speech. It must be evident to all that there is no essential which should be more carefully regarded by those ambitious to excel as writers or speakers, or one whose necessity is more frequently illustrated in the failure to realize it than this, that perspicuity is the crowning excellence in either method of employing language. All the graces of style and manner may abound, but if the composition be wanting in this particular, so far as any practical results will follow, it might as well be a gaudily decorated corpse. To the real worker, the man of set purpose and conscientious resolve, who has recognized the importance of employing to the utmost extent this grand channel of influence, this element will at once commend itself as the prime essential. He will perceive the necessity of having strong conviction and clear insight in relation to

any subject to which he would turn the attention of others, hence the kindred necessity of so moulding and fashioning language to his purpose as to most readily move and convince those to whose sympathy or reason he appeals. Ornament follows as an after consideration, and care is taken that this shall never be used in such a way as to conceal or impair the sense. A tendency to the converse is observable in many writers, especially youthful essayists. The meretricious glitter of a gaudy style, the harmony of neatly turned aggregates of words, the pompous tread of stately periods; these dazzle and charm and are eagerly sought for, and so it comes to pass, that from the scanty stock, crude unformed ideas are pushed forward like beggars in the cast off robes of royalty. The cultivated mind will ever turn from the author whose meaning lies hid beneath mountains of barren words, to slake the mental thirst at the calm stream of another's thought as it flows on in icy clearness. Much evil has no doubt arisen from the indolent neglect of perspicuity. The truth intended may, through imperfection in this respect, be so cognized in the mind of reader or hearer as to become one of those *half-truths*, which are the most fatal of *un-truths*. Thus a pernicious germ may be implanted in some mind and a hurtful bias given to a developing intellect—the twist in the tender shoot which displays itself a painful deformity in the full grown tree. Doubtless many of those prejudices so deeply rooted in some natures, dwarfing and distorting in their tendencies, and hindering to a great extent sound mental growth, may have arisen through this primal imperfection in the guides of youthful thought. In matters of greater or less importance these evils are being frequently illustrated. Considered in this light, how pre-eminently essential does this quality of good composition become. Here, then, is the first point to be aimed at, the lustre that adorns should be mainly that of the keen steel which has become polished in the process of sharpening, or the peerless glow of the diamond as it comes a finished gem from the patient hands of the lapidary.

He is a good artist who can draw a breath with his eyes shut.

THERE was an eclipse of the sun a short time ago. We knew there would be, or something similar, for only the morning before a certain somnolent senior was observed to be on hand when the hash-gong sounded.

The nights, for some time past, have been moonlight, much to the chagrin of our pomological class, who fear that all the fruit will be gathered ere the moon wanes again.