

just as hard to do a small thing well as a large one, the difficulty of the deed is the gauge of the power that is required for its doing. It was a very forcible remark, to which a visitor at Niagara Falls gave utterance, when he said that considering the relative power of its authors, he did not consider the cataract as remarkable a piece of work as the Suspension Bridge. And it may be truly said that there is no work within the power of man that God has not been below it in a work smaller, and possibly humbler still. A man may think it beneath his dignity to till the soil, yet his Maker breathes upon that soil and works in it, that it may produce food to keep human dignity from starving. Alas! human dignity! I do not know what to make of you.

### CONVERSATION.

It is a pleasant recreation for the student harassed with knotty Greek roots, abstruse mathematical problems, or subtle metaphysical distinctions, to engage in an animated, jovial chat. The topic may be general, local or reflective. Objective subjects, as a rule, are preferable for such exercise. It enlivens the spirits, awakens new trains of thought, develops the social element in his nature. If no suitable companion can be found at leisure, with whom to break the monotony of his life for an hour or so, to relax the strain on his intellectual nerves without lessening their power, an equally exhilarating effect will be realized in casting a glance backward to watch the social movements and idiosyncrasies of distinguished men. Perchance of the authors he studies. True the shady past veils our vision from surveying the exact expression of countenance, the merry twinkling of the eye, the peculiar demeanour of each. We hear not the harsh, grating voice of one, nor the dulcet, silvery tones of another. Yet we can perceive much of their real, inner life in their mingling with the world as private individuals. By looking at them in this way we remove their stilts. Men who wrote dry, hard text-books; who saw things clearly that we cannot understand, and sometimes wish they never had, are thereby revealed to be the merriest, most entertaining souls of the age. Not unfrequently the facts of biography destroy our fancied hero or clown. Virgil, the very embodiment of poetical spirit and expression, we are told was heavy in conversation. Dante we unexpectedly find satirical, and Milton irritable, displeased if urged to colloquial intercourse. Gray, like the rose that "was born to blush unseen," except on rare occasions was born to smile unseen and talk unheard. Swift with his sharp wit and keen withering sarcasm, was noted for his absentminded-

ness in company. "Goldsmith wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll."

Men of eloquence seem to have attained a higher place in the realm of colloquial discourse. Fox was inexhaustible in his variety and vivacity. Burke was ever found pleasant and enthusiastic. Curran is described as a convivial deity, soaring into every region, free and easy in all.

Experience evidently teaches that conversational ability rarely runs parallel with a man's depth and power of thought. It is a peculiar endowment of nature to talk well with a few or a single person, as much as to sway with fervid eloquence the immense multitude. An endowment pre-eminent in demanding, and very susceptible to growth and development by constant exercise. It opens a broad sphere of labour and influence; discovers a pathway to the real motives and life of a man when nothing else will. The orator overwhelms, excites, commands; the poet attracts, pleases, guides; the conversationalist appeals to the individuality of each, and by his adaptability yields more exclusive control where he enters. The former two address themselves more to the general, the common passions and reasons of mankind; the latter to the particular, the personal characteristics of each. Poetry and eloquence resemble the rolling river, rapid, deep, exhaustless; conversation is the winding mountain stream that penetrates with unnoticed progress where the other could never flow.

### CHARACTER.

CHARACTER has been defined as "that which lies in or pertains to the person and is the mark of what he is." We are frequently led to a decision with respect to the character of any individual by noting the character of his associates; in fact, so universal has this idea become that it has passed into a common saying that a man is known by the company he keeps.

'Tis said that "poets are born, not made," and we willingly admit this; but we believe characters are made rather than born. If that is true which we sometimes hear, that a man can make himself what he wishes, surely then we can form our characters as we will, for in this case we deal with passions rather than with the force of circumstances.

Character is not so much the outgrowth of that which dwells within as that which is formed by training and its fostering influences surrounding us. We might mention a few of the causes which affect the formation of character: society, natural inclinations, and passions, the professions and trades pursued, and the localities in which one resides; these are a few of the many causes which might be referred to.

The characters of different persons are differently affected by the same scenes and circumstances. That which in the mind of one would create sensations of joy and pleasure, would in the case of another be attended with pity, scorn and contempt; in the mind of one is raised a desire for a repetition of the scene, another is led to the determination not to uphold such acts.

To possess a character firmly and correctly founded and formed, it is very necessary that we should be subjected to a course of judicious training from infancy, for after having arrived at manhood we all know how very difficult it is to change old habits and customs, and trains of thought and modes of action. We may thus see how all important it is to have our characters rightly formed in youth, so that when we arrive at the stature of men, we may the better be able to cope successfully with the cares, and troubles, and temptations of life. Let us, then, strive to dig deep and lay a sure foundation, so that neither sneers nor smiles, nor any other thing, will turn us from the right.

Show me a man whose character is firm and well laid on a sure and sound basis; let me see him fully impressed with the idea that that character must be upheld no matter in what position of life or in what position of society he may stand, and I will guarantee that he will be a man of influence, and that wherever he is, under whatever circumstances he may be placed, he will exert an influence that must be felt; and if he uses that influence on the side of right, as he surely will if he is a good and true man, he will be classed as one of nature's noblemen, a child of God and a worthy beneficent friend of the race.

### Personals.

A. J. STEVENS, A. B., '75, since our last issue has been ordained over the Baptist Church at Kentville. It is our wish that the success which has attended him in the past may be increased one-hundred fold and more.

MR. SYDNEY WELTON, of last year's Freshman Class, has also been ordained. We are rejoiced to learn that his labors are highly appreciated and greatly blessed, and that he is reaping an abundant harvest.

THE Rev. Donald McDonald, a former student of Acadia, recently paid us a flying visit, and preached to us with great acceptance in the Academy Hall, on Sunday, the 10th inst. We understand that he purposes leaving his present field of labour to take a Theological course at Newton.