

The Portfolio.

Vita Sine Literis Mors Est.

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THE OLD CASTLE.

It was a grand old mansion as it stood
Upon a gentle slope, half-hidden in trees,
And reached by shady avenues and winding paths
That form a very net-work through the grounds.
The castle walls were built of stone, rough hewn—
Their very roughness made them seem more grand.
With many lofty turrets standing close
Against the full-arched dome of deepest blue;
And from the turret windows could be seen
Miles upon miles of woodland, rich and green,
Pastures rich in flocks, and here and there
A peasant's little hut, run o'er with vines
That hid from view the rudely-thatched walls.
The castle grounds were beautifully laid
In mimic lakes, and babbling silver brooks,
With graceful rustic bridges thrown across,
And tiny minnows leaping in the air
And falling back again with gentle splash—
And flowers! such banks of flowers of every hue!
Which filled the air with perfumes rich and rare;
And fountains, shedding sparkling silver spray
On laughing cherubs, and on naiads fair;
And there were spreading lawns, and gravel walks,
And garden seats, and arbors trellised o'er
With climbing roses, hiding tempting seats.
Oh, 'twas enchanting beauty everywhere.
But now 'tis changed, so changed, all lone and drear.
The castle walls fast crumbling into dust,
The ivy creeping over them with clinging feet,
And hiding from our view their mouldering shame;
The flowers, all weeds, the gravel walks grass grown,
The smooth, green lawns run high in coarse, lank grass,
The brooks but empty channels, and the lakes
But quiet pools, and covered with dank weeds.
The fountains, once so full of sparkling life,
Now parched and dark, and crumbling fast away:
The marble nymphs, their lips once wreathed in smiles,
Now mock us sadly, as they mutely call
For their protecting veil of silver spray;
The very trees are changed, all bent and old:
All, all that once did charm is mouldering now;
What once was beauty, now is all decay.

GEORGE ELIOT'S SAYINGS.

“WHAT Shakespeare did for the drama, George Eliot has been, and still is doing for the novel; she has forever sanctified the novel by making it the vehicle of the grandest and most uncompromising moral truth.” But it is not needful to gather up the opinions and statements of eminent literary judges in order to form a right estimate of George Eliot's writings, for no intelligent reader of her works could fail to perceive,

even though they could not appreciate, her ability, or could doubt her rank “among the most illustrious of English authors.” Reading her novels, instead of elaborate highly colored plots, we find simple narratives of life whose parallels are everywhere around us, and scarcely need be sought for to be seen, and instead of the made-to-order perfections termed heroes and heroines, to be found in ordinary fictions, we meet with men and women who to us live, move, and speak, whom we learn to love, while thought of them is as the memory of friends separated from us only by time. She deals not merely with characters already formed, but rather with the influence of circumstances and surroundings upon the development of character. Her strength lies in her wonderful knowledge of human nature, and in her power of tracing words and deeds to their source in thoughts and feelings; her skill in analyzing these very sources, delineating with a master hand the shades of difference between motives and impulses, comparing intentions with actions, the end with the beginning, and “what is” with “what might have been.” Her works are rich in wise, witty and tender sayings, and the reader is continually constrained to pause, contemplate, and admire some profound truth, some fresh thought uniquely framed, or shrewd sarcasm, whether put in the mouth of a character, or thrown in as an aside. “One of the most accomplished of amateur pianists in England,” conversant, besides, with almost every branch of art, alike learned in history, medicine, and philosophy, a clever linguist, and a student of Nature's lore, George Eliot weaves threads from all into her grand fabrics, and so delicately are the colors adjusted and so fittingly placed, that they serve only to heighten the beauty of the whole. But quotations from her works speak best for themselves, and need no comment save the name of their author.

"It was Mr. Stelling's favorite metaphor that the classics and geometry constitute that culture of the mind which prepared it for the reception of any subsequent crop. I say nothing against Mr. Stelling's theory: if we are to have one regimen for all minds, his seems to me as good as any other. I only know it turned out as uncomfortably for Tom Tulliver as if he had been plied with cheese in order to remedy a gastric weakness which prevented him from digesting it. It is astonishing what a different result one gets by changing the metaphor! Once call the brain an intellectual stomach, and one's ingenious conception of the classics and geometry as ploughs and harrows seems to settle nothing. But then it is open to some one else to follow great authorities, and call the mind a sheet of white paper, or a mirror, in which case one's knowledge of the digestive process becomes quite irrelevant. It was doubtless an ingenious idea to call the camel the ship of the desert, but it would hardly lead one far in training that useful beast. O Aristotle! if you had had the advantage of being the "freshest modern," instead of the "greatest ancient," would you not have mingled your praise of metaphorical speech, as a sign of high intelligence, with a lamentation that intelligence so rarely shows itself in speech without metaphor, that we can so seldom declare what a thing is except by saying it is something else?"

"We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it—if it were not the earth where the same flowers come up again every spring, that we used to gather with our tiny fingers as we sat lipping to ourselves on the grass—the same hips and haws on the autumn hedgerows—the same redbreasts that we used to call 'God's birds,' because they did no harm to the precious crops. What novelty is worth that sweet monotony where everything is known, and *loved* because it is known? The wood I walk in on this mild May day, with the young, yellow-brown foliage of the oaks between me and the blue sky, the white star-flowers, and the blue-eyed speedwell, and the ground ivy at my feet—what grove of tropic palms, what strange ferns or splendid broad-petalled blossoms could ever thrill such deep and delicate fibres within me as this home-scene? These familiar flowers;

these well-remembered bird notes; this sky, with its fitful brightness; these furrowed and grassy fields, each with a sort of personality given to it by the capricious hedgerows—such things as these are the mother-tongue of our imagination; the language that is laden with all the subtle, inextricable associations the fleeting hours of childhood left behind them. Our delight in the sunshine on the deep-bladed grass to-day might be no more than the faint perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and the grass in the far-off years which still live in us, and transform our perception into love."

"Fancy what a game of chess would be if all the chessmen had passions and intellects, more or less small and cunning; if you were not only uncertain about your adversary's men, but a little uncertain about your own; if your knight could shuffle himself on to a new square by the sly; if your bishop, in disgust at your castling, could wheedle your pawns out of their places, and if your pawns, hating you because they are pawns, could make away from their appointed posts that you might get checkmate on a sudden. You might be the longest-headed of deductive reasoners, and yet you might be beaten by your own pawns. You would be especially likely to be beaten if you depended arrogantly on your mathematical imagination, and regarded your passionate pieces with contempt. Yet this imaginary chess is easy compared with the game a man has to play against his fellow-men, with other fellow-men for his instruments."

"Mrs. Tulliver had lived thirteen years with her husband, yet she retained in all the freshness of her early married life a facility of saying things which drove him in the opposite direction to the one she desired. Some minds are wonderful for keeping their bloom in this way, as a patriarchal gold-fish apparently retains to the last its youthful illusion that it can swim in a straight line beyond the encircling glass. Mrs. Tulliver was an amiable fish of this kind, and, after running her head against the same resisting medium for thirteen years, would go at it again to-day with undulled alacrity."

"To have a mind well oiled with that sort of argument which prevents any claim from grasping it, seems eminently convenient

sometimes; only the oil becomes objectionable when we find it anointing other minds on which we want to establish a hold."

"Veracity is a plant of paradise, and the seeds have never flourished beyond the walls."

"To see an enemy humiliated gives a certain contentment, but this is *jeune* compared with the highly blent satisfaction of seeing him humiliated by your benevolent action or concession on his behalf. That is a sort of revenge which falls into the scale of virtue. . . . Such things give a completeness to prosperity, and contribute elements of agreeable consciousness that are not dreamed of by that short-sighted, overheated vindictiveness which goes out of its way to wreak itself in direct injury."

AN IDEAL BOTANY CLASS.

CHRIST, in his sermon upon the mount, attracted the attention of the multitude to the lilies of the field. What was worthy of His love and notice is surely worthy of our consideration and cultivation. The perfection of flower and leaf, "the adaptation of means to an end," reveal artistic skill of the highest order, and compel us to recognize the Divine Artificer.

Through all history, flowers have been symbolic of sentiments; indeed, it is recorded that they have often been the means of telling what the lips withheld. A symbolic characteristic has given many a plant its name. The passion flower was so called by the early missionaries who visited Brazil, because they saw in the blossom the instruments of our Savior's passion—the crown, nails, hammer and spear. Every person is familiar with the snowball, the bleeding-heart and the catch-fly; we need not to be told why those names have been bestowed. Bards of every age have found inspiration, and "images of joy and beauty" in flowers.

"— the brightest things which earth
On her broad bosom loved to cherish,
Gay they appear as children's mirth,
Like fading dreams of hope they perish."

True, our only feeling of sadness in relation to them is that they must perish; but we call art to our assistance, and depict their "fading beauties" upon canvas. Those who are not qualified "to dabble in

paint," preserve their beauty by a less artistic process, namely, pressing. We have seen persons who think pressing specimens is easily accomplished; our experience of the work, under the direction of our respected Professor, has taught us that it requires time, application, and perseverance. Pressing specimens should be encouraged; this branch of the study would receive proper attention in our class. It seems useless to attempt to study botany without specimens, consequently our class would be organized in the spring, to continue through the entire summer. In it there would be none but those who were lovers of plants, and could enter enthusiastically into the study.

We should begin by studying the seed in which, protected from winter's cold and storms, lies the tiny germ with nourishment sufficient to last until the plant be self-supporting.

Having collected and examined seeds gathered the previous autumn, we should plant them, and watch their development. We would next take up the subject of roots.

The root is not as interesting a study as the seed, leaf, or blossom, yet it must receive attention. It constitutes the principal organ of nutrition, as it imbibes the food of the plant from the soil. Leaving the roots we would proceed upward to classify leaves.

Owing to their great variety in shape, leaves are the most difficult study. The ovate, orbicular, cuneate, or spatulate form; the serrate, dentate, or undulate edge are, we consider, sufficient to puzzle a professor of the natural sciences, while students of mediocrity blunder in deciding whether the leaf be pinnately-parted or palmately-lobed. The veins of the leaf, and its form enable us to ascertain whether the plant be an exogen or an endogen.

In the flower we meet a similar difficulty, that of designating the sepals and petals. Their great variety in size, form, and color, necessitates minute inspection. The stamens and pistils require microscopic examination before they can be classified, so every member of our class should be provided with one, and would find it of great value in studying the stamens and pistils. Our class, accompanied by its teacher, would go to the woods for each lesson, and thus be

surrounded by wild flowers, all of which we should analyze. Among the benefits thus gained would be extra impetus to study, and a far better acquaintance with plant life. Of course the weather would sometimes interfere with the excursions of our class, but the whole of the spring, summer, and autumn seasons being devoted to it, delays would not visibly affect our progress, and in the end we would have obtained a thorough knowledge of the rudiments of botany to enable us to continue the study by ourselves all through life.

CLIPPINGS.

A CLASSICAL man in Venice, Ill., has christened his cat "Othello, the mewer of Venice."

PROBABLY the happiest combination in all this wide world during these merry spring days is a rhubarb-pie with a boy around it.

THE sick lady refused the steward's invitation for dinner, and called for the chambermaid instead. A case of basin gratitude.

KINDNESS is the music of good-will to men, and on this harp the smallest fingers may play heaven's sweetest tunes on earth.

"OH!" sighed a music student, "if I could only play well! to attain that 'consummation devoutly to be wished,' I would stop at nothing—except—practice."

THE other day a junior happening to notice "The Autocrat at the Breakfast-table," on a friend's shelves, inquired "Whatever can you want here with a book on cookery?"

A LADY told her little son who was teasing for something to eat, to wait until breakfast. With a tear in his eye, he burst out: "Mama, I jest honestly sometimes think you're a stepmother!"

A GENTLEMAN talking of his travels boasted that he had seen all the great in Europe, and had been caressed everywhere. "Have you seen the Dardanelles?" inquired one of the company, "Yes," he replied, "I dined with them at Gibraltar, and found them excellent company."

NOT long since one of our students was talking with a University man in the third year of his course, and casually inquired in the course of conversation, "Have you read any of Nathaniel Hawthorne?" He replied "No, ah, let me see, who is it by?"

COULD conjugal affection be more strictly displayed than it is in the subjoined? "And so, Doctor, you think my wife will get well." "I am sure of it, if you can persuade her to take this dose." "Doctor, take it she shall, if I have to break every bone in her body."

IN connection with men and things French, one may be allowed to recall the old story of two distinguished Britons in the good city of Paris. The name of the one was Thackeray, that of the other Tennyson. They put up at the same hotel and were on terms of personal friendship. One day Thackeray went out, leaving Tennyson in his sitting-room. Anxious for the latter's comfort, for it was winter, "*ne laissez pas sortir le feu*," quoth Thackeray in his own detestable French, to the servant in attendance. After two hours' stroll he returned to find the whole hotel in commotion. The landlord, looking peremptory notices to quit, informed Thackeray that "the madman" was growing dangerous, and insisted on being let out. He must send to the Commissary of Police without further delay. Thackeray asked for an explanation. "*Ne laissez pas sortir le feu*" was the impression his language had conveyed to the servant!—*London Truth*.

THE following we clip from the *Quarterly* of the Hamilton Collegiate Institute. We think it expresses with an admirable nicety the feelings of some of our own Society:

"To spout, or not to spout, that is the question?
Whether 'tis better for a shame-faced fellow
(With voice unmusical and gesture awkward),
To stand a mere spectator in this business,
Or have a touch at rhetoric! To speak, to spout,
No more; and by this effort to say we end
That bashfulness, that nervous trepidation
Displayed in maiden speeches; 'twere a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To read, to specify
Before folks, perhaps to fail; ay, there's the rub;
For from that ill success what sneers may rise,
Ere we have scrambled through the sad oration,
Must give us pause: 'tis the reason
That makes a novice stand in hesitation,
And gladly hide his own diminished head
Beneath some half-fledged orator's importance,
When he himself might his quietus make
By a mere recitation. Who could speeches hear,
Responded to by hearty acclamation,
And yet restrain himself from holding forth—
But for the dread of some unlucky failure—
Some unforeseen mistake, some frightful blunder,
Some vile pronunciation or inflection,
Improper emphasis, or wry-necked period,
Which carping critics note and raise the laugh,
Not to our credit, nor so soon forgot?
We muse on this! Then starts the pithy question:
Had we not best be mute and hide our faults,
Than spout to publish them?"

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A CORRESPONDENT of an exchange gives at some length an account of the origin of the word "slang," the substance of which is as follows: "Slangs were originally convict's fetters; and 'slangus talk,' the conversation of the wearers of such; therefore, slang is only an abbreviated name for the language of thieves, robbers, and all kinds of criminals and convicts."

Fortunately the majority of the patrons of "slangus talk" are not what they were in the early days of that language, or perhaps we might hear of something in the shape of an action for slander.

We would not advocate the extermination of slang, for the reason that it has furnished us with a few words whose equals for pith and brevity are not to be found in the dictionary, and we cannot overlook their good qualities. We have yet to meet the person who would take the "long way round" to describe a condition of mind peculiar to certain aggravating circumstances, when it might be expressed in the simple word "bored," or who would waste time in heaping together authorized adjectives in order to classify certain persons whose whole is summed up in the word "shoddy."

Yet, neither would we advocate the use of slang, because in almost every case its use is equivalent to its abuse, and people of little brains, either not knowing how to express themselves in good English, or not having any ideas to express, interlard their speech with idiotic ejaculations and slang phrases, which, as they suppose, supply the lacking ideas, and add tone and color to their statements; while many who are well able to converse fluently on any subject, unconsciously acquire a habit of employing like expressions.

Much of what might be termed mild slang has its origin in exaggeration. A desire to excite wonderment in others suggests the use of adjectives and adverbs too extreme in their meaning to be applied to the thing spoken of; hence the abuse of that word *awful*. In its right place it ought to inspire the feeling it represents, but when constantly connected with what is trivial and ridiculous, it loses any power it may have had, and rather excites laughter than solemnity. Thus people who exaggerate defeat their own ends, and instead of the desired impression, none at all is made.

Seeing then that no positive rule can be made in regard to slang, and that we are liable to pedantry and affectation on the one hand, and to vulgarity and folly on the other, it is best to be guided in the choice of words by that last but not least of the senses—common sense.

THE resolution of accustoming the ladies to lecture, adopted some time ago in the Society, has been acted upon in a manner which so far has proved highly satisfactory, and we regret that this exercise had not been sooner engaged in. The purpose in thus putting the oratorical and intellectual talents of the young ladies to a somewhat unusual test, is not from any view we have of preparing them all for the rostrum or platform (although, should they be qualified, we know of no reason to the opposite), but merely as an aid in acquiring a greater facility of speech and better command of language. At first there was, as a matter of course, the usual embarrassment consequent upon such an undertaking; but this has worn away, and the desired change is rapidly taking place. We know of no way in which an improvement of such a nature as

we desire can be more effectually attained. Where one is so completely thrown upon her own powers, without aid of memorizing, from text books, etc., the effort cannot fail but to be of the greatest benefit. The subjects, usually, are topics of the day. We may add that this course has been adopted in obedience to one of the many kind and valuable hints given by our esteemed and energetic Governor, Dr. Burns, who believes that ladies should not be without means of developing such talents, which are sometimes attributed only to the sterner sex.

LAST Friday evening Mrs. Burns and the members of the Faculty gave an "At Home" to our resident students. At eight o'clock we were cordially received in the drawing-room, and delightfully entertained by readings, and both vocal and instrumental music. The young ladies who contributed to our enjoyment in this way were Miss Wright, Miss Erb, Miss Smith, Miss Ready, Miss Buck, Miss Limprecht, and Miss D. Bryson. With very few exceptions all the students were present. We noticed among the rest the beaming faces of the "Stibbs" family. At the close of the evening every one seemed sorry to leave, and expressed themselves highly gratified with their enjoyment. We believe that this will not be the last of these charming reunions. The everyday work of school life is apt to make us forget our social privileges, and these Friday night gatherings will prove a happy reminder, adding zest to the labor of the week, and creating a greater sympathy between teachers and students.

"ONLY four weeks more!" is the exclamation uttered by a joyful few, while others, to whom the ensuing weeks mean "cramming," do not view the prospect through rose-colored spectacles. Now is the dignified (?) senior seen stalking through the halls laden with quires of foolscap, and on being interrogated as to the writing thereon gravely openeth her lips and uttereth the one word, "essay." The libraries and reading room are frequented by students anxiously looking up solutions and answers to knotty problems and questions, with a zeal which promises well for the coming examinations. The commencement exercises bid fair to be unusually fine, and all arrangements for the

entertainment of guests are rapidly going forward in a manner which cannot fail to result in the utmost satisfaction. The display in the fine art department, under the charge of Prof. Martin, of this city, judging from the number of paintings and drawings found in the studio, leads us to look forward to an excellent exhibition. Owing to the fact of the opening of college being later than usual this year, the time of closing has been fixed upon for the 18th of June.

THE click of the croquet balls is again heard in recreation hours, and where a few months ago our ice-field presented a merry spectacle we now behold the girls plying their mallets as vigorously as the weather will permit. The variety of uses to which college grounds can be put, and the fun which may be extracted therefrom, is wonderful in the extreme, and possible only to school girls.

As the end of the school session is close upon us, we wish that all of our subscribers who have not yet paid up their subscription would be kind enough to do so at once, and without further notice.

OWING to unforeseen circumstances the continued story will be omitted in this number.

METHOD IN DAILY LIFE.

LIFE has its duties as well as its pleasures, and we are very apt to neglect the former and enjoy the latter. This we would often do if in the performance of these duties of life we did not have some method as inexorable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Taking method into daily practice we are enabled to do more work, and work of a much better quality in less time. In order to accomplish this successfully it is necessary to have the day properly divided, and to have certain duties set apart for each period, then no confusion would result, and everything would follow in order. It was long before any accurate measure was formed for a division of the day itself. The earliest measure of the kind that we can trace was the shadow of an upright object, which gave a rough estimate of time by the variations in its length and position. This easily suggested the invention of sun-dials. King Alfred, of England, divided his day into three

parts, and these periods he measured by candles, burning one inch in twenty minutes. During the sixteenth century the hour glass was employed in churches, and continued in use till about fifty years ago. In several of the churches in England hour glass stands of elegant workmanship are still to be seen. The proper division of time will do for the individual what the division of labor does for the community. In the case of government contracts, the work is divided and given to different parties that the whole may be completed within the time specified; in the same way we divide our daily duties, giving to each hour its allotted task. If so much time were not wasted in thinking of what to do next, we would not at the close of day look back with regret on the loss of golden hours set with diamond minutes. Many times this stopping to consider ends in the putting off till to-morrow. As Young tells us—

"Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead.
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time—

Taking duties in their proper succession is a great saving of time. Many people who neglect to observe this rule bring upon themselves the homely truth, "your head will never save your heels." If we were to see a letter-carrier take his letters out in a general heap and deliver them just as the addresses turned up, we would at once tell him that he could save much time and trouble if he would first arrange them in proper order and then distribute them. If a man fails to have organization in his daily business, the rumor is soon abroad that the business is far from being in a flourishing condition, and this is soon followed by the report that he has failed. In the associations of men for all purposes a system of organization is carried on. In all large establishments law and order is positively a necessity. We have a good example of method in railroad and insurance companies; each person has their labor appointed to them, and everything works in unison. But while considering method in connection with great things, we must not overlook the small as beneath our notice, for it is these which count up, and unless we have method in the most trivial things, we cannot expect to have success in the great.

ASTRONOMY.

How broad the subject, but how narrow our views! How extended the field of observation, but how limited our vision! Above us and all around is spread "the amazing canopy, the wide, the wonderful expanse," and though unable to comprehend all the mystery, we may learn some lessons of the greatness, and power, and majesty of Him who "stretched out the heavens and placed therein great lights, the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night." For six thousand years the same book has been open to man, "the book of God before us set wherein to learn His seasons, months, and days." Its letters of light are stamped indelibly on the dark page, so that he who will may read. For six thousand years the sun has risen and set; "Hesperus has led the glittering host;" the planets have moved on in their own appointed orbits, and "silently one by one in the infinite meadows of heaven," have, each evening, "blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels, until at length the moon, apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light and o'er the darker silver mantle threw;" and for six thousand years has astronomy been studied. It is the oldest of all the sciences, and a grand and glorious one, worthy the attention of celestial spirits. In Eden, in the still evening, "when glowed the firmament with living sapphire," and everything breathed purity, the sinless pair in humble adoration of the Creator together sought from Him an answer to these enquiries, and an archangel stooped to tell the magnitudes and endless circuits of the stars. Time passed on; the light of science set in gross darkness; man forgot his Teacher, and forfeited that knowledge gained without toil or weariness. Now he must learn by his own hard, earnest labor—by nightly patient watching and waiting, and by daily calculation—for in the deluge sank the records of antedeluvian learning, and astronomy with the rest. But by the flickering light, as history begins to dawn upon the world, we see the promise of its re-appearing. Taking its rise in astrology, it glimmered long on the eastern horizon, but as the centuries rolled round, rose higher and higher, advancing "westward, and ever westward." Though error has often obscured or partially eclipsed it, like the sun

after each hiding, it has shone out brighter than before.

Comparing ancient astronomy with modern, we find them substantially the same. Though the Egyptians did, more than once, see the sun rise in the west, the followers of Thales and Anixamander held many views in accordance with our present theories. The first systematic observations were made by the Alexandrian school, which was established by the Ptolemies. But the real written science begins when Hipparchus of Bithynia committed to paper his discovery of ten hundred and eighty-one (1081) stars, and the inclination of the earth's orbit. His successors—Ptolemy, Copernicus, Kepler, Tycho Brahe, Galileo, and a host of others—have left their records of observations and calculations.

Astrology is properly the term by which to designate the science as studied by the ancients. We have read that it was a sentiment rather than a science, for their vague notions and superstitions were the result of mere speculation rather than of earnest enquiry after truth. The Chinese, Hindoos, Chaldeans and Egyptians viewed the heavens and marked the stars as aids to them in their prophesying, and the study was confined to their "wise men" or prophets. They considered the earth as an immovable body around which the sun revolved every day, being created to warm and lighten it, while the stars were designed for the sole purpose of teaching men their destinies. This belief was adhered to by the Romans, and before the Christian era Greece was the only nation which studied astronomy for its own sake. Then Pythagoras conceived the idea that the sun was a fixed body around which the earth travelled once in twenty-four hours, and that the morning and evening star were the same planet. Then, too, Nicetas of Syracuse learned the diurnal motion of the earth on its axis. But their teachings were scouted until Copernicus, dashing to the ground all adverse theories, declared the earth to be but a planet, and the sun the centre of the system. Then men began to study the "celestial spheres" with other thoughts of them than as mere oracles, with another object than to learn their own fate.

How wonderful that God-given power—the human mind. It studies the eye, it

studies light, it studies air. Then it designs, and, to a telescope. Now, it reaches the planets, explores them and discerns their motions, and now, rising, wanders among the fixed stars and tells their dominions. Wonderful indeed it is. What desires, aspirations, purposes it has! What will it not dare? What can it not do? Neither time, nor space, nor numbers appall it; it travels through past, ages, or searches into the future; it goes down into the depths and fathoms the mysterious, or soars above the clouds and measures the infinite; it contemplates system upon system, and counts the innumerable; it discovers the soil of Mars, the rings of Saturn, the moons of Jupiter, the atmosphere of Uranus; it tells the velocity of light, the distances of the constellations, the paths of countless millions; its successes would amaze those who drank most deeply of the streams which flowed from the fountains of wisdom on Mount Olympus; it told of seven planets in our system, and for some reason concluded there must be another. It, therefore, journeyed into the unexplored regions, and soon the exultant cry "Eureka!" was wafted to us from Neptune, twelve hundred and eighty millions of miles away. But this achievement did not satisfy. It only lent new impetus, for written upon the sign posts were those magic words, "*plus ultra*," and firmly grasping in its hand the "banner with the strange device," it waved it in the face of all obstacles, and laughing at impossibilities cried, "It shall be done." Gradually night changed to dawn, and dawn to the broad blaze of day, and day lent some faint glimmerings to the dense shades farther on. Higher and yet higher genius mounted on into the twilight until lost again in night, but still through the impenetrable darkness rings the watchword, "excelsior! excelsior!"

Science leads to God. Chemistry, geology and philosophy show us a measure of His wondrous wisdom whom the elements obey. But astronomy reveals Him in every letter, and "an undevout astronomer is mad." Who can deny the assertion? The vast assemblies of the glittering host unite in one glad chorus of praise to Him "who by wisdom made the heavens," and there is not an infidel on earth, did he listen to their teachings, who could doubt these great multitudes without a reproof, for they declare in tones

deep and solemn, startlingly distinct, "There is a God." Each star that shines points directly to its Creator, and avows "I came not here by chance," and we, while discovering the laws of nature, must discover the Law-giver, and vainly endeavoring to comprehend immensity, filled with awe, prostrate before the Ruler of all things, are forced to exclaim, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?" Then let us, as we read His glory in the heavens, bow before Him in humble adoration.

The study of our own system alone is magnificent, and merits endless research; but what shall we say of the vast field beyond? When we consider that our system is but a speck in the great universe, that it forms a part of some other system and revolves around another centre, and that system is but the part of some other, and this goes on, and on, and on, we are lost in the infinite, and conscious only of our own weakness and littleness, prostrate ourselves before the "King eternal, immortal, and invisible," at whose command these lights shone forth, for God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and it was so."

How small seem all our discoveries when compared with the vast unknown! But yet how grand and glorious they are! They have not been made without serious opposition, great courage, and strenuous exertion. Many and strong were the efforts put forth in order to check the progress of astronomy. Many astronomers have had to endure persecution for the science they loved, or to battle with the discouraging influences of fortune. The Pope attacked Copernicus for daring to trouble the world with his theories, for daring to question the truth of old doctrines, and for daring to discover other laws. Public opinion ran high against him; but the result of the researches of Nicolaus Copernicus still lives, and we reap the reward of his labors.

The Inquisition forced Galileo to deny his own statements. But Jesuit priests, the thumb screw and the rack were totally insufficient to destroy the records he gave the world.

Johann Kepler, one of Europe's honored names, was left, when but a child, to struggle with poverty. But he was destined to electrify the scientific world, and a kind and watchful Providence overruled all adverse circumstances, preserving him as a light to subsequent ages, and Kepler was admitted to the Convent of Mollrun where, undisturbed and unallured by the world, he quietly gave himself to study, acquiring that habit of application, and industry, and love for those sciences which afterward became his life work, and for which he is so justly celebrated. His intimacy with Tycho Brahe, "that timid and careful old man," had a great influence upon him, soothing and directing his fiery enthusiasm. While searching after harmony in the universe, he discovered three grand principles, known to us as Kepler's laws, and earned for himself immortal fame.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century the fall of an apple revealed to Newton the law of the "attraction of gravitation." He opened the seventeenth by proclaiming this with other grand results of his toil and researches, and as he dies, who was "but a child picking up pebbles upon the sea shore," others take his place till Herschell gloriously closes the century Newton had as gloriously begun; and Laplace opens the eighteenth by suggesting the nebular hypothesis, and writing "Mecanique Celeste," and systems which, as astronomical works, are second only to Newton's "Principia."

During the nineteenth much has been done; old theories have been corrected or more firmly established, and new ones pounded; several planets added to the system, and the telescope perfected. But greater things yet remain to be accomplished, and ere the year nineteen hundred comes, this progressive system of ours shall have left a noble record in the history of astronomy.

But not to astronomers ought this subject to be confined. There is no reason why every one should not be conversant with the names and positions of the planets and constellations, their paths in the heavens, and many other things which are to be learned without a telescope. Nor will it, while granting a new and higher enjoyment than any known before, unfit a man for practical life. Socrates once said, "The cour-

templation of celestial things will make a man both speak and think more sublimely, magnificently and correctly when he descends to human affairs." Why, then, is it so neglected and left to the minority? Why are men so absorbed in their everyday pursuits, in their strivings after fame, in their search for riches, that the voice of the stars calling them to "come up higher" is unheeded? Ye students, earnestly seeking knowledge, ye men of letters, entombed amid your books, why never lift your eyes to gather wisdom in the firmament? Ye keen philosophers, searching out your barbara and felapton under Aristotle, can you not find purer logic in this book of God than man has ever taught? Ye lovers of poetry, of music, and of art, has not the finger of God written out, upon the sky above you, grander poems than man has ever penned? Is there not sublimer music in the heavens than Mendelssohn, Beethoven, or Mozart composed? Do not the stars sing you loftier songs than man? And is there not in this art gallery of God, the richness and perfection of beauty, the carvings of a master hand, the tracings of an omnipotent pencil, the imaginings of an almighty mind? And this most rare and magnificent collection is thrown wide open, every evening, to the poorest, the humblest on earth. Our King, in His infinite and incomprehensible benevolence, has freely given it to all His subjects, and yet they nightly pass it by, never entering to taste the pleasures so freely held out to them. O, "go out under the open sky and list to Nature's teachings," and if hitherto you have neglected the constellations, begin this moment to study astronomy, for in the whole catalogue of earthly lore it is the most profound, the purest, the holiest science.

From it children even may derive pleasures such as no other pursuit can possibly afford. They love to wander in the mysterious and dream of grandeur. It is one of their choicest sources of happiness. When "night drops her sable mantle down and pins it with a star," they can drink in the beauty and study the loveliness, or a little later gaze with increased and increasing delight on the robe as it flashes with its millions of sparkling gems.

It is a scene which poets love to contemplate; they have drawn from it some of their

loftiest inspirations, and poets of every color, and nation, and tongue. For of the stars it is said, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

To those heathen enquirers after truth they sang the same triumphant song of praise the shepherds heard on the plains of Bethlehem, the song the angels repeated, the song the redeemed repeat—"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

WORRIES OF SCHOOL LIFE.

A TIME-WORN axiom tells us that "Life is full of care and trouble," and another would lead us to believe that school days are the happiest in life. Comparing these two with our own knowledge of school life, we arrive at the most unsatisfactory conclusion expressed in the ejaculation, "What will the rest be!"

We fully believe in the accuracy of the first statement, but there must be some flaw in the second, for we never hear students make a remark of the kind; it comes from those only who have drawn the enchanting veil of distance between themselves and their youthful days. Yet the students are not altogether the best judges, because, while passing through them, the trials and tribulations are magnified in imagination, and seem much worse than they are in reality.

Literary labor is universally acknowledged to be the most wearing of any kind of work, producing irritability and melancholy, which has been known to result in suicide. A school girl of Northern Illinois was so troubled by a composition she had to write that she attempted to drown herself. A medical student of Baltimore having to prepare a thesis, became so desperate that rather than undertake the dreaded work he swallowed an ounce of laudanum. But these are extreme cases.

"The mere process of composition brings the nerves to the surface, and unduly excites the sensibilities," and when in that state trifles cease to be trifles in our estimation, and so worry more than they would under different circumstances. Troublesome friends, too, are found at school as well as

elsewhere, and it seems to take an amazingly short time for them to find you out; before you know it they are down upon you either to borrow something, or remain lolling round talking nonsense; or perhaps you are very busy trying to prepare a learned treatise on some difficult subject, when you are interrupted by a schoolmate, apparently with nothing else to do but disturb those who have more than enough to occupy their time. If, after hard study, you unravel the mysteries of a problem, how provoking it is to have a fellow student coolly ask to be allowed to copy it. You do not like to refuse, but it would be some satisfaction if you knew that the borrower had spent even five minutes in an honest effort to think it out. When committing to memory difficult passages, and feeling weary of the task, per-

haps just as you think you are getting it perfect a sudden noise or the call of a schoolmate drives it away again, leaving you feeling cross and impatient. Such little troubles occur daily.

Even though we have so much here at school to perplex and worry us, and we often hear a schoolmate fervently saying, "Oh, that these days were over!" yet there is much enjoyment as well, and the bright side is all the fairer in contrast with the dark. When we look into the unknown future, tinged with its brilliant hopes and prospects, we are thankful that here we are educated by those very worries, and the way they are borne, to carry out those glowing dreams, and be men and women in the world's great field of action.

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