

Esthetic Essays on Esthetic Subjects

Some General Facts and Fallacies Dealing With the Eccentricities of Inspiration.

Inspiration is the mainspring of successful effort. Without it no portentous intellectual achievement is possible. It causes a current of new ideas to flow in a brain fatigued by heavy exertion or become lax through long dissuade. It rouses the sluggish nerve centers to action and rekindles fires of ambition long since extinguished. It does a great many other laudable things, but above all—it inspires.

Let us consider some of the sources of inspiration, and note the results of our findings. Within the hollow cavity of the humble cob-pipe there dwells a muse of divine origin who rouses into activity the sluggish propensities of a somnolent nature and sheds a halo of light about the crown of the literary fiend, enabling him to generate folios of manuscript in spite of himself. Like the woman who started the fire with gasoline, he is all aglow; and his crazed faculties will not refrain from action until he finally stops paralyzed at the realization of his own genius. A few draughts and then he is ready for any emergency. His pen cannot travel swiftly enough to express in writing the effervescent tide that scethes in his busy brain. He follows in his mental meanderings the path of an imperfectly drawn parabola, and unless some fortunate circumstance intervenes he is destined to be soon struggling in the throes of infinity. With perditional zeal he pursues his course, until his pen runs dry or some other obstacle intervenes between him and the accomplishment of his projects. Just like the appetite of a hungry freshman who has an aching void to fill, he knows no limit, and will never cease until violently ejected from the seat of his operations.

Certain beverages of a degrading and sinful nature—we understand—many of you, we merely understand—have tremendous power to inspire, even to the full extent of the law—how far that is. They drive away moroseness and inspire in its place a cheerful happy frame of mind that causes the spirits to overflow and to see things in an altogether different light. Many ordinary things such as lamp-posts and door-knobs seem to be twice their ordinary dimensions when one is under the spell. That is getting more out of life than there is in it and that is the true secret of happiness.

But such inspiration cannot last forever. The minions of the law are ever alert for subjects of liquid inspiration, and often cause them to suffer unjust wrongs. What a rude awakening it must be for a man trying to collect his scattered faculties to explain his regret for his misdoings to an avaricious police judge, who preys on the depravity of others for a living, and conceals his own behind the majesty of the law. Or else if he is fortunate enough to escape such an ordeal, what better fate awaits him, as he wanders home under the guidance of Luna's pale beams to face

the malignant creature—his wife—who stands ready to devour him piecemeal. A tremulous, anxious search for the door-knob, a covert entrance and a Thank Heaven sigh of relief—and the poor fellow is in the midst of it. If he comes out of the mill, with no broken bones he is indeed fortunate. His scars and bruises are living testimony to the disastrous after-effects of meddling too earnestly with malt, vinous and spirituous liquors.

A noble purpose is said to inspire—and we presume it does. Yet it seems plausible that something substantial taken to bolster up such a purpose would work out to a successful issue. And if a person has a theme-a-day proposition on his hands, other methods of inspiration seem more accessible than a noble purpose—and perhaps more effective. However, to a person of high ideals and supernaturally lofty character, such a thing as a noble purpose may be a common commodity, to be met with at frequent stages along life's burdensome route. Perhaps in their case it would work out to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Of the other higher forms of inspiration we have not undertaken to make ourselves the master, and hence cannot speak authoritatively, as it is easier to write of what we have not had the privilege of observing in unexplored tracts beyond our own limits. True, there are lower forms that have come within the radius of our observation, but these are so commonplace that we consider ourselves worthily excused from dwelling on them.

We have confined ourselves to material inspiration, without touching upon the unaccountable, insane frenzy that seizes upon the intellect every once in a while, and causes the ideas to effervesce. But the very intangibility and eccentric habits of such inspiration compels us to conclude without giving the details.

Scattered Sapiency.

The girl who made a mistake and anointed her hair with eye-water instead of Herpicide, had a new but effective way of doing up her hair.

The man who believed in the equality of all and refused to take off his hat when King Edward passed, probably didn't know any better.

The professor who indulges in sarcasm at the expense of a slow, but hard-working student, is possessed of intelligence that is almost human.

As to the material that Mercury's shoes were made there is much doubt, but it is reasonable to suppose that they were made of Mercury oxide.

Some people are zealous enough in abiding by the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number, but with them the greatest number is number one.

A high school professor in Kansas recently dislocated his knee while chastising a refractory pupil. Let the members of our faculty take warning and profit by this man's experience.

The young man who deserted his sweetheart when he heard that his father-in-law had failed, devoted considerable time to kicking himself when he afterwards learned that he had failed in health instead of business.

One young man has proven himself above temptation. He was a student at Cornell, and upon graduating, he was presented with a check for \$11,000,000 tendered him by his class-mates. But instead of yielding to sordid ambition, he nobly refused the gift, preferring to earn his way rather than be dependent upon others for his start.

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