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## MISCELLANEOUS MENTION.

"We are shaped and fashioned by what we love."

Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally. Make it the object of search and it leads us a wild goose chase, and is never attained.—*Hawthorne.*

The present literary fashion among young ladies is elocution. Many say that they will die happy as soon as they can win distinction in this field. No doubt this is a laudable ambition, and could they be prevailed upon not to appear in public there would be no objection.

Channing says "a man's happiness and success does not depend on what he has but what he is." If we could all remember this in our struggle after the phantom of power more sunlight would be brought into our lives. We are prone to put too much value on circumstances, and to forget that its only worth is the attitude it causes us to take.

George Eliott makes the remark somewhere in one of her essays that if Dickens had gone deeper not only depicting traits but also the motive, he would have been the greatest novelist the world has known. This criticism is the best that has ever been made. Dickens was a surface writer. What he saw with his physical eye he put down with vigor and clearness, back of that he did not go. The act he described, the cause he saw not, hence his novels are true only for his own day. Another generation will read them with less interest. Emerson calls his writings "London tracts," this is somewhat severe, but perhaps true.

The catholic church, which has stood so long as an impenetrable bulwark, seems now to be yielding. A short time ago a bishop of a church in St. Louis publicly declared that the priest has no right to grant absolution. This may prove the beginning which will lead to a general revolution throughout the church. At least it is only a question of time, no institution can stand still for any great length of time while all other things around it are growing, either it will be choked out, or else stimulated to new growth. The former thus far has been its fate, whether it will be so in the future depends entirely on itself. It stands as a living example of the fate of all institutions, which attempt to resist the incorrigible laws of the universe. The very instruments it used to conquer its adversaries were turned against itself, and experience taught the bitter lesson that true power is not born of force. Religion is no exception, it ceases to be religion when it is supported by external power. When you attempt to put chains upon it, like the fabled Proteus of

old, it has already gone. Emerson aptly says "the faith that stands on authority is not faith. The reliance on authority measures the decline of religion, the withdrawal of the soul."

All colleges seem to be affected with the "society" mania. It is the first and the last thing one hears. Probably they do some good, they could hardly be tolerated if they did not, but many devote time to society work to the detriment of their studies. To come to college with the avowed purpose of mastering the course, and then letting it go for such a hobby as society supremacy seems the height of folly. Such students seem to forget what they are here for, the most essential thing is the habit of thorough, persistent study formed. Practice public speaking till doomsday, and you never would succeed without this. Another thing is also detrimental and that is the tendency to work to please the public. People of course like to be amused, but it is rather a costly sacrifice for a student to waste his time at the very moment when he is preparing for his life-work, for such a paltry consideration. The object of society work should be simply to accustom students to be at home before an audience, not to get up the most flowery orations and hair-raising recitations. It's very pleasant of course to create an impression, but this is hardly the whole end of education. In many respects it would be better if the public were not allowed to attend rhetorical exercises.

The question is often asked why in this age, celebrated for the general diffusion of knowledge, there are not more great writers? Our difficulty may be solved by an illustration from Roman history. In the reign of Augustus an ordinance was made and enforced that only certain writers should be read, the works of these were put in every public place, hoping thus to make a nation of scholars. The result was, not a single author of any might was produced after that. All individuality and originality was stifled. The same trouble affects us, we have been worshippers of the past too much. We do not seem to realize that the same things exist for us that did for our fathers, that nature is the same yesterday, today and forever, and all that is needed is an interpreter. The mind that clings to others for its tone and sustenance will always remain a parasite. We should by no means discourage the study of the writers of the past, but having got onto their ground we should endeavor to see for ourselves, and not continue to use their eyes. "He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and so perceiving throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles: just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head."