

of Toil; but just upon the left is a beautiful walk through the verdant and shady lawn of Leisure, by the charming brook of Pleasure. The one leads to an elevated plain where the inhabitants breathe the empyrean air of reward and pluck, the ambrosial fruit from the tree of Fame. The other leads the wanderer down to a vast and densely populated valley, where the dwellers are stifled in an atmosphere of regret and diet on the bitter fruit of disappointment.

But here man is not left without a guide. He is not required to take that decisive step in the lurid darkness of uncertainty. If he see his path well defined, his work in plain view before him, and the sacred fire burning within his breast urges him forward, let him not hesitate, let him not inquire the obstacles in his course, nor ask the opinions of men.

Great men of all ages have followed the guiding star which a divine hand had placed in their intellectual sky. But all are not thus positive in their predilection. To some the stars of the firmament shine with equal brilliancy. But this is no evidence that for them there is no work—this does not show that they have no part in the drama of life. On the contrary it indicates that a broader field from which to choose is open to them. The fire of ambition may be kindled, but the character of its flame must be determined by the fuel with which it is fed. Then let such choose from the callings to which they are eligible, that which to them is preferable. And having made their choice, let it be final. Let them not turn back to the day when they might have taken another path. Let them never permit themselves to think on what they might have been had they chosen another course of life. An humble calling followed earnestly and persistently with a noble purpose will bring a greater reward, than a more ostentatious one followed out through selfish pruriency with shame and remorse. If then it be ours to till the soil, stand at the forge or ply the needle, let us not shrink from the heat of the day, nor grow weary in the toilsome hours of night. Or if kind Heaven has marked out a higher course, given us a higher place in the eyes of the world, let us not shrink from the responsibility thus imposed upon us. If to us are given places of honor and trust, may it not be ours to betray the hand that bestowed them.

But it is asked "Can we not educate men for the various vocations of life? Can we not take the crude material and mould it into whatever shape we choose?" Not so! As in nature each element is assigned its function, so among men each is allotted to his particular sphere. It is as impossible for the instructor to make a musician out of nature's mathematician or a poet out of nature's painter, as for the alchemist to transmute the copper of Lake Superior into the gold of the mountain, or the chemist to convert the dingy coal of the valley into the sparkling diamond of Brazil. It is not the province of education to bestow upon man that which a divine hand has seen fit to withhold. But it is to discover and lead out the talents, golden gems of genius, which nature has hidden, it may be under a rough exterior. Although the scientist cannot make the diamond he may take it from the hidden bed, polish it, and make it worthy of a place in the royal crown, so, although education cannot give talent, it may expand and polish that which was bestowed by a

higher power, make it able to cope successfully with this world and shine with effulgence in that to come.

But it is a lamentable fact that the present system of education too often fails to accomplish this ideal result. The Historian may tell us of him who has reached this ideal, but who shall record the name of his unfortunate companion from whom the course of study was entirely unfit, whose talent it hebitated and whose genius it consigned to oblivion.

Our educational system is too much like the famous Procrustes of Attica, the mind of the student is strapped upon the iron bed of the college curriculum and like the victims of that ancient monster it is made to conform to its dimensions. But the day is beginning to dawn when, it may be hoped, the tendencies of the mind rather than a schedule of authors will be the educational guardian—when the aim will be to bring out what there is in man and not to force into him that for which he has no taste.

Man is endowed with a distinct individuality and to develop it within proper limits and to keep it forever firm should be one of the chief ends of life. That education alone is a benefactor which preserves the individuality of man, while that which would destroy it must forever be a curse. It gives that self-respect, that consciousness of power, that independence of character without which success in life is impossible. It has been said that education makes rogues and villains. If this be true, it can only be when it places before man the rewards of victory and robs him of the weapons of battle. And of all the weapons wielded in the battle of life there are none so potent as a well defined individuality.

H. H. WILSON,

Adelphian Society, Nov. 19.

Goethe's Wilhelm Meister.

(concluded.)

We will not consider it amiss to take up again the discussions between Serlo, the manager, and Wilhelm, concerning the play of Hamlet. Before putting the play upon the stage, these two naturally deem it their duty thoroughly to analyze the characters. Wilhelm is to personify the melancholy Dane. In his sincerity of soul—the incarnation of a lofty character—Wilhelm could not stop short of a full analysis of the play. And this spirit of honesty Goethe makes the most of in the hero of this novel. A fullness of the man that will swallow all that comes to him, as unconscious of performance as though it were a regular routine. But though Wilhelm entered into the spirit of Hamlet as only Goethe or Coleridge could have made him to do, it is hard to abide by his disfigurement of the play. Where could Laertes have gotten his courtliness and his fencing, had he gone to Norway instead of to Paris? Surely there would have been no need of that fine piece of advice Polonius gives him on his departure for the gayest city of all time, if the youth had been going instead to the staidness of the northmen. Nor can it be made very plausible, that plan of having Horatio come from Norway, in place of Wittenberg and the College. He and Hamlet are fresh from study, from classics, and doubtless rooted well in the poets. Moreover, this flavor of College associations gives a tinge of meditation to the piece. Either of them are yet unused to action. Fresh from culture. Just stepping from

the threshold of Aristotle and Socrates, of the platform of Calicles—leaving philosophy for action. And therein is the hesitancy of the prince. Horatio hastening preparations! building a fleet!—acting as a sort of commissariat. That is activity itself. Action has no sympathy with melancholy. Manifestly, Horatio must drop the fleet, or Hamlet drop melancholy, to preserve their intimacy. But it is proposed that Hamlet shall play the courtier to the army, and go with the fleet to Norway, and thus undermine his Uncle. But that is a direct blow at Hamlet. Either he must adopt the adulation of the courtier; and arrange to grasp the details,—multitudinous though they be,—of a ruse with the soldiery;—which would certainly be the deathblow to all his melancholy, and destroy utterly the sublimity of his cautiousness;—or he must remain as he is. Meditation. There would have been little of that had he been in association with a Secretary of the Navy. Besides, to have adopted a course of action, would have been to wipe out the hesitation that gave him his melancholy. And then, by such a course he would have taken more a tinge of revenge and ambition. And with such attributes he would hardly have ventured the play scene that so starts King Claudius and the Queen from their seats. Would he not rather have feared that the result of such a ruse would be his decapitation on the instant? For they could but see his growing popularity with the people, had he been pleased to flatter them, as Wilhelm proposed. No. Let Hamlet stand. There can be no erasures, if the unity of the characters is to be preserved. Goethe's plan might have made a meditative Talleyrand, but never a Hamlet. And then, where would the effect of those unseen proceedings of young Fortinbras—that Serlo so much objected to,—have shown itself. There would be no background for such sparks as "the time is out of joint," and "that thou dead corse, encased in complete steel, revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon?" All these, and such as these, are set in bold relief by the black melancholy of the general outlines. See Aeneas' tale to Dido, as the player recites it. There is melancholy there, too, that would put tears in almost anybody's eyes.

"Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and felloes from her wheel,
And bow the round and nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

It is such as this that sound like the booming of the thunder in a pitch of clouds, from which the lightning steals forth anon, in "time is out of joint," and renders the gloom more fearful from its own radiance and the deep-throated roar of such as the above quotation.

But the play is at last presented, and Wilhelm receives such applause as suits him, and such as every young amateur is conceded, at first, if he be at all talented. When the season is over, he betakes himself to a search after Aurelia's faithless lover. He meets him and others, and returns their friend, with an invitation from Lothair—the lover—to visit him at his [Lothairs] castle. When he arrived at the theatre to assume his duties as before, he finds that Melina, whom he had so often befriended, had made such arrangements with Serlo as would dispense with Wilhelm's services. And here for the first time, he discovered that the world could live without him. And here he finds Felix to be his own son.

His farewell to the stage, brings to his recollection old friends, and he opens cor-

respondence with Werner, the fellow of his boyhood, now his brother-in-law. In the meantime, he visits Lothario. And here it is that apprenticeship to life ends. He "cuts his eye teeth." By some means or other, Jarno takes upon himself the duty of ushering Wilhelm from the domain of contemplation to the kingdom of action. When he becomes a master mechanic. There is a mystery about all this castle machinery and character, that can only be allied to the mystery of memory, or reminiscence. For when Jarno, after welcoming him as "one of ourselves," shoves him unceremoniously through a narrow passage into a dark chamber; Wilhelm recognizes before him the stranger with whom he conversed, some years before,—when in love with Mariana,—concerning Art, Destiny and Character. This stranger suggested to Wilhelm that they may possibly better agree now, and then vanishes. "And can what we term Destiny be nothing more than Chance?" mused Wilhelm. As if he favored Demosthenes. "Good Fortune," rather than Napoleon's "Child of Destiny." Then the clergyman who had sailed with him on the pleasure-boat, some time before, with Philina and the rest of the party, comes before him, and lets on that, "He who only tastes his error will dally with it long, and enjoy it as a rare delight; but he who exhausts it completely, will learn its worthlessness, if he be not wholly senseless." As if he had said, we have many affectations, but only as we require sturdiness and strength do we rub out our foolishness; or, as we wipe out our affectations, so we climb to solidity. But "to what error can the man allude," thought Wilhelm, "but that which has pursued me through my whole life, and has induced me to seek for instruction where it was not to be found—to fancy that I possessed a talent, to which I had not the smallest pretensions." He had always conceived himself capable of greatness in acting. But the puppet shows had perhaps made it too vain a delusion. Once he was warned to beware of Jarno, as he was only a recruiting officer for the army. And now, in the darkness of this mysterious chamber, the young officer who had volunteered such warning, comes before him, and pertly says: "Learn to know the men in whom you may confide." The mystery of so much interest in his fortunes, by so many persons, only now made known to him, gives him a touch of impatience. "If so many persons," he mused, "feel interested in you, and know your way of life, and how it should have been pursued, why have they not guided you with a firmer and a stricter hand! Why have they rather encouraged than forbade your folly?" "Argue not with us," cried a voice, "you are saved, and on the road to happiness. You will never repent nor repeat your follies—and this is the happiest destiny that can be allotted to man." Wisdom! And yet we have screamed in our ears, cleaving our hours of meditation in twain, by the puny-throated disquisitions of every by-way poet, of no philosophy but wondrous(?) intuition; to shun the past. As if experience must never be reviewed in order better to hew our way out of to-day. Experience gives us knowledge; knowledge, courage; courage, strength; strength, success; and virtuous success, happiness. For what else do we live. For has not Socrates demonstrated to Polus that only the good are happy? And does not the good come only from a perfect intelligence—creative intelligence? Indeed, the past