

their reality seems but a short distance into the future. While the gray-haired old grandsire reverses the picture, and takes a retrospective view. The youth admires patriotism, bravery in times of danger, and courageous feats of daring; so his imaginations partake largely of the adventurous sort. At one time I have imagined myself a second Rob Roy, and at the head of my band of stalwart outlaws, sent terror into the hearts of the lowland Scotch. Again I am a Robin Hood, and no more gentlemanly robber was ever depicted by novelist. Then my imaginations carry me into Africa, where with Cummings and Gerard I hunt lions, leopards and elephants, or with Du Chaillu I shoot the gorilla. The sea, in my youthful imagination, seemed fraught with the wonders of a fairyland. Oh, how I longed to become a sailor, to visit foreign shores, and see strange sights of other lands.

Soon however the hunter or sailor is superseded by the knight or warrior; and at the head of my long columns I figure in all the grandeur of an Alexander, or a Bonaparte. At the tournament I bear away all honors; my lady fair is rescued from the hands of enemies, and jealous lovers challenged and conquered. But our ideal world changes with our years, and soon the history of great statesmen and literary men fires me with enthusiasm. To be among the greatest of them is now my ambition—for who, in his early teens, does not see in some great man a model in whose image he expects some day to make his own name great among men.

These ambitious thoughts are incentives to study, and soon they gather themselves into a more definite shape, the model standard becomes somewhat lowered, until now, in later teens, the great statesman is metamorphosed into a respectable pedagogue. I have sometimes wondered whether other people are as imaginative as myself, and whether I can congratulate myself on the possession of this gift as a blessed quality of the human mind, or whether it should be censured as dangerous to the requirements of real life. I suppose, however, that this, like any other pleasure, is good enough in its place; but if carried to excess it cannot help being dangerous in its effects. But there are species of air-castles built up around us every day; built up by other minds than our own, and for our enjoyment and happiness, or our unhappiness and ruin. The most important of these are such as we find in the literary world. The poet and the novelist are air-castle builders on a grand scale; and although their fields of labor are widely unlike in some respects, yet they appeal to the imaginative part of one's nature alike. No one doubts the benefits which are derived from poetry as a class of literature. No one will say that, as a class, it is any way injurious in its effects. The poet is given free scope for the exercise of his powers, and his productions occupy the first place on our library shelves. But the novelist has not met with such unobstructed freedom; and with the exception of a few, perhaps, as Scott and Dickens, he has been condemned by a large class of people, who would have us believe that he is a dangerous companion. Much has been said against novel reading as pernicious in its effects upon the mind. Those who discard this class of literature, claim that it has no counterpart in real life, and should be avoided because it draws the mind from its proper channel. But what if it does draw the mind from its proper channel.

Is not that channel toil-worn enough to admit of recreation? Is the mind to be used solely as an intellectual machine, and not be allowed the sport and recreation which we give the body? What if the story has no counterpart in real life? It is but an air-castle which somebody else has built instead of ourself. Why not as well ponder for a time upon the pictures which others paint, as to paint them for ourselves? Besides, there is a great deal in these literary air-castles which does partake of every day life. The scenes and people depicted are generally truthful representations of countries and nations, and the characters portray vividly the various qualities of human nature. "But," says somebody else, "this class of literature is not conducive to good mental discipline." True, if read to the exclusion of more solid matter, it destroys the memory and weakens the mental powers; but if properly read it strengthens both. Then, too, we can gain much general knowledge from the novel. Some historical characters are introduced, national characteristics, and geographical and physical features vividly presented to us through the life-like descriptions. These names and places will attach themselves inseparably to some incident, and remain in the memory as clear and fresh as a panoramic scene to the eye. There is nothing in the whole range of literature so life-like as a story. The eye may be bent upon the page and there trace the written characters, but the mind is far away, enjoying, it may be, the scenes of another clime, and the pleasures of another race. Or it may live for a time in the palace of the wealthy, or cluster around the hearthstone of the humblest cottages.

In my opinion, novel reading, if not carried to excess, is a pleasant and profitable pastime. But it is often carried to excess, and hence becomes injurious, as all earthly pleasures will when thus treated. This, however, should not be urged against novels as a class; the fault lies with the reader and not with the novel. Thus, too, there are bad novels, and corrupting seed is often sown in the mind by reading them. But does not the same thing happen in reading other classes of literature? The trouble in this case is in a bad selection of authors, or in a misapplication of what is read. Mr. Portor tells us that a book, in a certain sense, is an individual, and when we read it we converse with him. Now it is quite possible that we may find in this way a companion whose company is injurious; but because this is the fault with some, is no just reason for condemning the whole. It seems to me that it would be better for parents to make a good selection of authors and then teach children to read novels with impunity, than to hold them up as forbidden fruit, when nearly every newspaper, magazine, and library, is largely filled with them.

But this quality of the human mind has been the source of much good in leading to the discovery of many mechanical and scientific inventions. An ideal is framed in the mind, embryonic, perhaps, at first, but gradually rounding into some definite shape, it finally becomes the archetype for something new or improved in human knowledge or industry. Scientists boast that their profession is, or should be, built upon facts and accurate knowledge. But science is founded rather upon imagination. To the ordinary mind there are but few axioms. First an hypothesis is advanced—often, too, of the most far-

fetched materials—but as its truth becomes more apparent it gradually works itself into a demonstrated and accepted theory. The beautiful picture which delights the eye of the observer, or the poem which pleases the reader, depends not more upon the perfectness of the outlines, than upon the imagination which is in it embodied.

In short, this aesthetical quality of our nature plays the most important part of our being; and far from being condemned, it should be fostered and cultivated.

A. U. H.

Incentives to Human Labor.

The world is filled with busy life. Industry lies at the door of every undertaking and every success. From the tiny insect to man, the lord of creation, there is a necessity for labor and motors which lead to a life of industry. In the animal, instinct is the guide, the prime motor. The bird builds its nest, the beaver constructs its dam, and the bee fashions its honeycomb. The labor of bird, beaver and bee is a natural outgrowth of their natures. It is a part of their being, and each plies its little trade and becomes the recipient of its humble occupation, not by its own free or intelligent choice, but by following the natural tendency of its mind, which is instinct. But man conducts his labor intelligently. His occupations are manifold, and his capacities for filling them, various. He is free to choose, free to act, and free to make himself of great usefulness in the world, or become an idler, and a nuisance to society.

What then are the motors that lead man to industry? First we might say that a man feels bound by some moral obligation to be industrious. He recognizes a duty which bids him labor both for his own good and the well-being of those around him. All may not feel the obligation as equally binding, yet all do feel and recognize it to some extent. There are always some kinds of labor which are irksome even to the most industrious persons; still the tasks are performed, because it is felt that they *ought* to be done. The missionary who leaves home and friends, who takes up his life abode among brutal Caffres or degraded Hottentots, imperils his life, and endures the piercing cold of arctic winters and the scorching heat of torrid summers, does so, not because the task is in any wise agreeable, but because duty seems to enjoin it upon him.

Some may be influenced by secondary motives. They may be urged along by love of admiration, by a desire to encounter these very dangers, just as a boy is led to sea by the reading of Robinson Crusoe and Captain Cook. But in most cases I believe that personal comforts and enjoyments are sacrificed, and this rough life chosen because duty seems to call for it. We might adduce other examples to illustrate this point, but will pass on to consider other influences quite as potent as this and tending towards the same end.

Prominent among these influences is the alluring fascination which the goddess of wealth holds over the minds of men. She is the cupid, who from her exalted position hurls darts of insatiable desire into the hearts of the great mass of mankind, and stings and goads ambition into the wildest flight. Fortune, we are told, is a fickle goddess, but fickleness, instead of detracting aught from her merits, seems rather to add more grace to her attractiveness; and, like the gay belle that she is,

causes more suitors to kneel to her beauty by making skilful use of a little coquetry. Her favors are often exceedingly hard to win, but this, instead of discouraging her admirers rather causes them to press their suit the more boldly. We are told that her company is dangerous: said the teacher of men, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Yet it would seem that many are willing to run the risk of condemnation rather than forego the sweet pleasures of her company. Notwithstanding all these hideous representations of her character, the siren is sought, and petted, and flattered, and courted, now as she ever has been, and ever will be.

To gain wealth, in the mind of many, is the grand end of life, to reach which, time and physical strength must be given, and intellectual culture made subservient. To these, it is the *summum bonum* of life, and their labor in pursuit of it is unremitting.

A few years ago an old man might have been seen wending his way every morning down a certain street in New York city, and back again the same way at night. Every day, through sunshine and through storm, through summer and winter, he went to his office in the morning and returned home again at night. His industry was constant and indefatigable, and his life seemed all absorbed in his business. Fortune was the goddess whose favors he sought, at whose shrine he bowed, in whose fane he worshipped. Fortune smiled benignly upon him and crowned his efforts with gold, and John Jacob Astor arose from the humble dignity of flute pedlar to that of money prince who counted his wealth by the millions. The possession of wealth was the motive for making his life one of such unwearyed industry, and it is the reward which more or less excites the great mass of mankind in civilized communities to industrial pursuits. Nor is its influence entirely unfeared among savage or uncultivated people. The Indian tries to surpass his brother in the number of his ponies, and the Esquimaux glories in the possession of his dogs and bone trinkets.

But if the goddess of wealth holds the cornucopia which showers riches upon her industrious votary, the goddess of fame holds the laurel wreath for his brow, and insignia which are alike sought by warrior, genius and clown. To gain honor and renown is an incentive to labor at once potent and far-reaching. It redoubles the strength of the soldier on the march, and increases his courage and physical endurance on the battle field. It nerves the overtired student to a newness of life, and vigor of action. It leads a Livingston into the heart of Africa, and a Kane to the icebound coasts of northern seas. Its influence is felt everywhere; in high circles of society and in low ones, among civilized and among savage people. Fame is something which men have ever striven to win, from the earliest dawn of civilization. Moved by a longing desire to render her name immortal, Semiramis, at the very beginning of historic record, led her conquering armies from the Indus to Central Africa. Fame was to her the same glorious acme of human greatness, for which she labored with the same assiduity to win, as did Alexander more than two thousand years afterward, when he conquered the same world with his band of Mabedonian heroes, or as Napoleon, who at a still later day sought to bring the