The Art of Thinking and the Habit of Observation

We have frequently directed the attention of parents and instructors to the importance of teaching children to think, and we now quote, from the Philadelphia *Ledger*, some apposite remarks on the subject.

"In very early life, the perceptive faculties are the principal channels through which we can reach the mind. Closely connected with this subject is the cultivation of the thinking powers. The two are indeed so intimately blended that neither can be effectually improved without some increased development of the other. In learning to see and hear with delicate accuracy, we insensibly strengthen our powers of thought, and accustom them to work more effectively. Still the operation of thinking deserves a far more systematic training than it generally obtains.

"When we are striving for success or excellence in any special pursuit, we think to some purpose. Our will concentrates our thoughts to the point in question, dismisses summarily all irrelevant subjects, presents the matter in its various bearings, with some degree of logical sequence, and rarely allows the mind to drift away from it until some definite result has been obtained. There is a considerable portion of every one's time in which nothing but thinking can be done. There is time spent in cars, where even reading is injurious; and there are times of waiting, resting, and enforced inaction, when the mind has undisturbed opportunity for effective operation. Then, too, there are many employments so mechanical as to claim no portion of the mind's aid. When we have learned to do anything without thinking about it, the thoughts necessarily run in other channels. Much manual labor is of this description. A distinguished prisoner of war, of large mental resources, being allowed to choose his employment while in confinement, selected one so simple as to neither skill nor thought, assinning as a reason that, though his hands would be employed by compulsion, his mind at least would continue his own and remain in freedom. We all have some of such work, and many have much. Now, if we have learned to employ this time in clear and consecutive thought– if our will could control our reflections, directing them in definite channels, and aiming to reach some well defined conclusions—we can hardly compute how great an effect would be produced in strengthening our mental powers, in maturing our judgment, in bringing us to the knowledge and appreciation of truth and thus of increasing our solid happiness and our permanent value to the community.

"The best exercise of every faculty is the chief road to true enjoyment, and no one who has once tasted the pleasures of thinking to a purpose will ever willingly allow his mind to dissipate in wandering thoughts and day dreams. Neither is such discipline so difficult as some imagine. It begun in early life, by awakening the childish interest in what is seen and heard alluring the mind to reflection by question and answer, and accompanying the thoughts to dwell for short periods, but frequently, upon familiar subjects, it will become a pleasant exercise, and gradually grow into the habitual tenor of the mind. What we truly will to do is already half accomplished, and the watch thus placed over the thoughts will, of itself, reduce to order and regularity much that is now chaos and confusion. It is by no means necessary that the subjects thus mentally discussed should be remote or abstract. On the contrary let them be matters familiar to our minds and agreeable to our tastes. Let the memory please us with pictures of the past, and the imagination revel in beauty of scene or heroism of deed. Let the business man revolve the scheme which he longs to execute, and the philosopher meditate on the principles of life. But whatever be the subject, let the thoughts pursue it with a consistent progress that shall eventuate in some real benefit to the mind."

Similar in nature and importance is the habit of rapid and accurate observation, the great value of which was the subject of an address to the Dairymen's Association, delivered by Hon. Horatio Seymour. In the course of his remarks, he said:

"It seems singular that some men pass through life without observing things which come before their eyes almost daily. An intelligent farmer once told me that he would not recognize any of the horses belonging to his neighbors, excepting those noticeable from some peculiarity of color. A Chicago merchant, who daily drove his own horse eight or ten miles, told us he had never noticed any difference in the movement of horses; did not notice the difference between trotting and pacing. A college president is said to have made the question, 'in which way do the seeds lie in an apple?' a test of the habit of observation among his student. Our tests with this question would indicate that more than one half of the average men or women either don't know or will answer incorrectly. We once received a well-written essay on the value of observing closely, yet there was not a capital letter or a punctuation mark in the half dozen pages. Many such instances could be given, were it necessary.

"This matter is not one of slight importance. The carefully observant man will see things which will be of pecuniary importance to him, while his ill-trained neighbor will lose by not seeing. The farmer with habits of observation will notice slight symptoms of illness in his animals or plants; will readily see the effect of this or that practice; will much more quickly discover countless little things which, if neglected, may result in a serious loss.

"As in the case of habits generally much can be done in childhood, and it certainly should be the duty of parents and other teachers to help children to learn to observe carefully quickly, and accurately. It is told by some one that in his childhood he practiced running past a shop window and then stopping to describe as many articles as he could recall, and in this way he acquired wonderful quickness of observation. There are hosts of points to which a farmers boy should have his attention called at an early age. Suggestions as to the mode of growth of plants, the form of a leaf, growth of a fruit, or the pointing out of peculiarities of different classes of animals, may do him great good in developing this habit, and also have a marked effect in interesting him in his calling

"This habit of observation should not be confined to the things we see alone, but should extend to things we hear and those we read as well. In this latter matter, there is a great lack. Many read to little profit because they have not trained themselves to observe carefully."

The "Great Bastrop Coal Company."

A few months ago a party of men, purporting to do business in this city, undertook to place the stock of a *bonanza* of plausibility, impudence, and rascality, otherwise known as the "Great Bastrop Coal Company," upon the London market. An Englishman, known hereabouts as Prof. J. W. Clarke, was made Secretary to the Company, and was, by a Col. W. C. McCarty, induced to represent the Company in London. The Professor left New York early in September last, and in November was joined in London by Dr. Collettso, President of the Bastrop, so-called. The doctor excused his delay in reaching London by the plea that it was necessary to have his title deeds and other documents properly authenticated; but soon after his arrival he handed Prof. Clarks a report and basis for a valuation of not less than £3,000,000. This valuation purported to be from the American Bureau of Mines of this city, and was signed by Col. McCarty, as President of that bureau. The Colonel's signature was witnessed by a notary public, the seal of the bureau was affixed to the document, and the Vice Consulate seal of Great Britain testified to the genuineness of that of the notary. If the Professor had had any suspicions they were quieted by this formidable document, and he in good faith introduced Dr. Collettso to friends likely to advance the interest of the enterprise. Everything was propitious, and had the scheme been anything but a fraud, a company on a stock basis of £1,000,000 would have been formed in a very few days. The Doctor, unfortunately, had no means, and as preliminary expenses to the tune of £10,000 had to be met, he undertook to have a draft on the bureau for $100,000 cashed by some of the parties with whom negotiations were pending. Before cashing the draft enquiries were set on foot through Scotland Yard, London, and Pinkerton's Agency, Chicago, and the result was an exposure of the entire scheme. The doctor was compelled to seek safety in flight, the Secretary recrossed the Atlantic, and is now in this city a wiser man, and the Colonel has gone, no one knows where. He was a very handsome man was the Colonel. He gave out that he came from Texas, and affected the peculiar ferocious military air and dress which are supposed to be emblematical of that State. Early in the winter he married the widow of a certain doctor who had committed suicide, owing, it was said, to domestic troubles. The wedding was postponed a few days owing to a disfigurement of the Colonel's handsome countenance. The night before the day originally fixed upon, the Colonel became engaged in a bar-room row with some local actors. He undertook, as a Southern gentleman, to carry conviction by displaying a good-sized revolver, but he had no sooner drawn it from his pocket than a "walking" gentleman hardly half his size floored him with his fist, and followed it up with such a pummelling that he was unable to call on the widow for a week or more. The American Bureau of Mines, of which W. T. Richmond, Esq., is President, disclaim all knowledge of the Coal Company. The Secretary of that bureau says, however, that he heard of the Company, as it was reported to him by Prof. Clarke, that Bassemer, the English steel manufacturer, had agreed to take stock to the amount of $50,000. Col. McCarty was the original projector, and assisted in the organization of this bureau; but he never put up a dollar. The objects of this bureau, as announced in one of their circulars, is "to organize a system whereby we can, with the assistance of capitalists, and the public in general, suppress operations in bogus mining property and mining stocks." But even the bureau could not assay and find out so big and handsome a rascal as the Colonel. The whereabouts of his "pal," Dr. George Collettso, is also unknown; but it is said they have gone to New York City. *Chicago Cor. N. Y. Times.*

The imperial old potentate of Prussia likes to do nice things when proper occasion offers. Among the many beautiful articles sent to him during the holidays was an album containing the events of the last war and the conflict between the Emperor and the Vatican. The contents were written in such an extraordinarily fine, clear, pearl script, ornamented with pen drawings, that it excited the curiosity of the Emperor and he caused the donor to be hunted up and sent to him. When the authoress was discovered she was found to be the widow of a former civil officer who, being reduced to poverty, supported herself by sewing in different houses by day, and employed her evenings in composing and writing verse in this admirable style. It is needless to add that the poor widow received a generous gift from the good-hearted Emperor.

Miscellaneous Items.

John Wesley says, "Shall Christians assist the prince of hell, who was a murderer from the beginning, by telling of the *benefit* of war? Shall Protestant publications proclaim to the nations that war is a *blessing* of Providence?

Arthur Helps, in his latest work, *Social Pressure*, a series of conversations between certain friends, makes one of his characters say that in the course of his official career there were three persons who struck him as perfect hosts: "One was a man of letters—I may as well say it was Dickens; the other was an archbishop and the third was the Prime Minister of the day, whose excellence, however, in hostship was to be attributed to his wife." The telegraph brings the sad intelligence of the death of this fine writer and most estimable man. He was knighted in 1872, and is said to have assisted Queen Victoria in the preparation of her *Leaves from the Journals of our Life in the Highlands.*

Australia has been identified so prominently with gold discoveries that few have thought of her progress in agricultural wealth. The wool interest has gradually grown in proportions, till now it ranks only second to gold in the industries of the country. It has been grown and exported in vast quantities, and efforts are being made to export it direct to eastern ports, instead of England, which has heretofore monopolized the commerce of this her old colony. Last September a million dollars worth of wool was purchased in New South Wales for shipment direct to New York and Boston merchants, and the project has been agitated of sending a wool ship direct to New York from Victoria.

In the Malayan Peninsula large apes of naturally intelligent breeds are employed by their masters much in the same way that human slaves are made use of in some parts of Africa. The cocoanut palm is valuable for its fruit, but this is very difficult to procure, so the landlord of a tope of palms trains his apes to climb the trees and judiciously pick the ripest nuts for him. The apes seem to delight in the work. The apes thus employed in the neighborhood of Sinapore and Penang are bred in Atchin, and the owners itinerate and hire them out. They go up the trees with a line attached, and obey the command of their masters, choosing the proper fruit. They twist the nut round and round till it falls down from its stalk, when the feat is hailed on the part of the apes by jumps and chuckles of evident satisfaction.

The *Canadian News* says:—A party of two hundred emigrants left Cambridge accompanied by Mr. John Dyke, Canadian Emigration Commissioner, for Liverpool, where they will embark this evening in the Allan line steamer Sarmatian. This party is collected from Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, and special arrangements have been made for their reception by the Canadian Government. As demand for labor has arisen earlier in the season than usual, another party of seven hundred will follow on the 4th of March, and this is announced as the last "free" ship, owing to the steamship companies raising their fares. Many laborers are now locked out at Rougham, near Bury St. Edmunds, because of their joining the union. The emigration agitation has been actively continued by Mr. Dyke and Mr. Kingsmill, Canadian Government agents. Eleven homes were broken up in one village, that of Wilken, on Monday last.

A man in San Francisco entered a police station in a state of intense excitement and told the captain that he wanted to prefer a charge against his room mate. "We both wanted to go to heaven," he said, "and we knew we couldn't get there if we committed suicide. We talked the matter over a good deal, and finally we agreed to kill each other. The plan was for each of us to have a sharp razor ready at the other's throat, and at a signal to cut as hard and deep as we could. We got all ready, with the razors at our throats, and I gave the word. I cut his throat all right, but he failed to do as he agreed, and here I am alive. I want to make a regular charge of false pretences against him, so he can't get into heaven." The captain locked up the maniac, for such he was, and went to the room described by him. There he found that a man had been murdered by having his throat cut while asleep in bed. The lunatic had invented the rest of the story, and while under an hallucination had committed the deed.

Tennyson lives in luxury in a poetically picturesque country mansion, rich in its architecture, and lavish and tasteful in its adornments and knicknacks. There are about it terraces and fountains, greeneries and flower parterres, avenues and lawns; it is the mansion of a rich man of high taste and culture. Here, for the most part, both summer and winter, the most eminent of England's poets passes his time. It is rarely that he appears in the London streets and more rare that his presence is obtained in the hospitable houses of the West End. He is tall, gaunt, shaggy-haired, with a ragged-looking beard, and long, straggling locks of a light brown, very much tinged with gray. Indeed, he is almost shabby to the outward eye, and his apparent endeavor is to pass along unnoticed. He gets bushels of letters begging for autographs, which he never answers. Those who, few in number, are received at the poet's fireside as his friends speak in glowing terms of his kindly and genial hospitality, and his sometimes almost childlike playfulness. He is full of anecdote and likes to talk of his own literary experiences. His library is said to be a model of coziness and elegant taste, and his gardens, which he loves, are described as beautiful and well kept.

Babies and Baths.

BY MRS. C. F. YOUNG, M.D.

Extremes follow. A daily cold bath for an infant, a few years ago, was supposed to be equal to murder.

To-day the extreme of warm bathing is practiced, with little regard to temperature of room or condition of child. This habit is quite as productive of bad results as the first. In many instances colds and croups follow in rapid succession, until death or awakened reasoning powers convince the unwise care-takers that somewhere a great mistake was made. Then the other extreme of entire neglect of the bath is adopted.

A little knowledge of temperament, and temperature of the blood and the room, also of the vital power of the child, would correct these mistakes.

With infant or adult, frail, nervous and feeble, great care should be given to insure thorough reaction; *i. e.*, coming from the bath and quickly dried with a soft sheet or towels, the entire body should be warm and pink flushed. To insure this, the bath should be taken or given in a warm room. The warm bath should always be followed by a rinse off, with water at least three degrees cooler than the bath.

If breakfast was at seven o'clock, the bath hour should be eleven to twelve o'clock, after digestion has been completed. If there is any tendency to blue hands and feet, the patient should be placed in bed, with bags of warm—not hot—sand, bran or meal to the feet and hands. Sleep should be encouraged and invited, that nervous power shall not be used by the brain.

The strongest, healthiest child or person accustomed to the daily morning cold bath, should take it in a warm room, and at least one hour before breakfast. That hour should be given to vigorous exercise in the open air and bright sunshine. If the slightest chill occurs after breakfast, there is something wrong. Either the exercise has been too violent, the bath too protracted and cold, or the food is of poor quality or taken in too large quantity. The bath, the exercise, and the food should vivify and exhilarate. If they do not, then search out the causes and remove them.

The people are puzzled by contradictory cases, and do not sometimes know how to explain them.

"Look at my boy," said a young father; "see how hard his flesh is; his health is perfect. At one month of age this little one did not weigh as much as when a day old. Bad management of the mother deprived him of his natural food. The nurses fed the baby with the usual preparations found at the drug stores, called infant food. The child did not thrive. As soon as the young mother could endure the fatigue of the journey, the sea voyage home to mother—our educated, sensible hygienic mother—was decided on. Baby we thought worth saving, though it seemed to us to be more dead than alive. It was doubtful if it could survive the five days' voyage. Mother gave our wailing, wrinkled little starveling fresh cream from the milk of a healthy young cow. Warm soft water diluted this cream to the consistency of good milk. Warmth from her hands and an open fire soothed the babe. Perfect quiet—freedom from all sharp sounds or confusion of voices was insured, and perfect rest and sweetest sleep followed.

"All the starchy, sugared, and other preparations of infants' food was put away as trash—better calculated to kill than to cure.

"After a night's rest an enema, and a full bath of lukewarm soft water, with one dip in cool water, followed.

"Then sleep, and food and warmth and sunshine and quiet and more sleep followed. Baby began to grow and crow and coo in the delightful baby language, and our hearts were full of joy. Mother, each morning with her own hands, bathed and dressed our darling. Each morning she lowered the temperature of the bath, the first one being one hundred degrees. In one month baby took the bath cold, and came out of his rubbing sheet pink as a rose. When well rubbed and molded by loving, warm hands, his flesh fairly glistened—it was so smooth and velvety.

"At fourteen months of age he welcomes his cold bath in the morning as pleasantly as he does his bottle of milk. As his strength increased the water was left out and his cream was diluted with milk; *i. e.*, he has pure milk cream included. His teeth are coming. He is free from colds and croups. We intend to have him grow up without knowing the taste of flesh or stimulants."

We handled the child and measured its brain. Square built; broad shoulders; large brain; born of healthy vigorous parents; great tenacity of life—all the little one needed was a chance to live.

There are thousands of babies whose vital powers would respond to favorable conditions as readily as this if nurses and doctors cared to think or reason.

Woman's Versus Man's Fidelity.

A wife keeps a husband's secret much safer than he does hers. It has been estimated that there is one drunken wife to about four hundred and ninety-nine drunken husbands. In gambling, lying, cheating, hypocrisy, covetousness, there is pretty much the same proportion. Yet of the four hundred and ninety-nine wives, four hundred conceal, cover up, silently endure the terrible secret: while the one husband mourns over his wife's frailty in the study of his pastor, and to the ear of his friend, and probably complains of it to a court of law.

A Child's Prayer.

HOW NOT TO BE AFRAID IN THE DARK.

I was very much interested last evening in a story told me by a lady, of her little boy, only four years old. She said he had always been very timid, and especially afraid in the dark, always requiring a light left in the room upon going to bed. She said to him one night, "Jimmy, you have nothing to fear—God sees and takes care of his little ones in the dark, just the same as in the light." "I know it mamma, but I can't help being afraid." "Do you ask God to keep you from being afraid?" "No." "Then I would."

Not many days after he asked his mother for an apple. She told him he could have it, if he would go himself and get it. A few moments after she saw him go into another room, kneel behind the door, and heard him make this little prayer:

"Lord, do you love me? I love you—don't let me be afraid! I want to be good—don't let me be afraid! I have a little brother—will you love him too? Don't let him be afraid either! When I grow up to be a man, don't let me go into wicked places and drink naughty stuff, that makes men bad. Amen."

Then he arose from his knees, went down into the dark cellar, and got an apple from a barrel in the farthest corner. "Did you get one?" asked his mother, upon his return. "Yes; but I didn't hurry. I wasn't afraid." —*Evangelist.*

The *Times* thus describes the condition of France in 1871:—"Credit gone, work ceased, no one borrowing, no one paying, the officials receiving no salaries for half a year; the railways in the hands of the enemy; the public departments administered by hostile commissaries; the taxes flowing into the enemy's cashbox; the roads and highways nearly destroyed; the bridges blown up, whole villages disappeared, towns half destroyed; the whole society to be reconstituted; the whole country to be reconstructed by glazier, carpenter, joiner, and bricklayer."

A pleasant prospect: "Traveller (in Ireland): "Hi—pull her up, man. Don't you see the mare is running away?" Paddy: "Hould tight, yer 'onour. For yer life don't touch the reins—sure they're as rotten as pears. I'll turn her head into the river at the bridge below here. Surely that'll stop her, the blagyard."

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for his high standing in the profession, and the learning and science of an able mind, quickly compelled the censor to succumb, and now physicians generally all over the world, where this medicine is introduced, admit of its wonderful efficacy, and often prescribe it for their patients. Of course, the use of the Diamond Rheumatic Cure, without the aid of a physician, is a saving in fees to the sufferer, but the really conscientious physician should rejoice at this, for the reason of the general benefit arising to mankind from its use.

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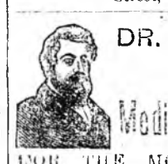

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Toronto, Aug. 7, 1874. 226-cow-1y