

was a feeling of horror at the place I was in, a shuddering dread that I could not shake off. What I drank saved me; without it I should not have been able to free myself from that overwhelming anxiety."

"PATIENCE IS GENIUS!"

THIS was the maxim of Buffon, the naturalist. He used to aver that men did not so much differ one from another in the gifts of intellect as in the practice of the virtue of patience: and he held, that by dint of indefatigable industry, perseverance, and labor, nearly all things could be accomplished.

Labor is the price set upon every thing valuable; nor has any man, whatever his genius, risen to eminence in any art, profession, or calling, except by dint of unwearied industry and patient labor. And Buffon was not far wrong in his assertion that the genius of great men consisted mainly in their superior patience.

Dr. Johnson once remarked that "the mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely on unassisted genius and natural sagacity; the wits of these days have discovered a way to fame which the dull caution of our laborious ancestors dared never attempt."

The remark is as applicable at this day as it was in Johnson's time. Our young men are still eager to arrive at great results without the drudgery of labor. They would be scientific and learned, rich and wise, without paying the inevitable price—hard work. They get a smattering of many things, but very few are at the pains to bottom a subject. They resemble too much that lady of fashion who, desirous of brushing up her knowledge of foreign languages, engaged a master on the express condition that he did not plague her with verbs and participles.

The present age being so decidedly mechanical—our leading inventions resulting in the triumph of science at the expense of labor—there is a strong tendency and desire to arrive at results suddenly, without undergoing the dull plodding which our laborious ancestors were willing and obliged to confront. In education, as in other things, we invent "labor-saving processes," seek for short cuts to science, learn "French in twelve lessons," or by means of a sixpenny pamphlet, which advertises to do it "without a master." We think to learn chemistry by listening to popular lectures on the subject at mechanics' institutes; and when we have inhaled laughing-gas, seen green water turned to red, and phosphorus burnt in oxygen, we have got our smattering of chemistry—the most that can be said of which is, that though it is better than nothing, it is yet good for nothing. And so do we also learn popular astronomy by means of an orrery, transparencies, and the magic lantern; and geology by the aid of pictures and "highly interesting models." We may not believe now that there is a royal road to knowledge, but we seem to believe very firmly in a "popular" one.

We have science spiced by puns, and art seasoned with anecdotes. We have now got Comic Grammars, Comic Histories of England and Rome, and by-and-by we may possibly arrive at a Comic Euclid. Thus do we "make things pleasant" on the road to knowledge; and imagine we are being educated when we are only amused.

But it will not do. To be really wise, we must labor after knowledge; to be learned, we must study; to practice self-culture successfully, we must be diligent and self-denying: to be great in any thing, we must have patience. Remember the principle of Apelles—"No day without a line;" and the axiom of Napoleon—"An hour lost is a chance for misfortune in the future." A young man ought to bring himself to revolt in feeling at a lost hour, as if it were a crime; he needs to watch himself carefully hour after hour, and every night, before going to rest, balance the accounts of his day's employment. If he do this, it will soon become a habit, and a most valuable one.

It is astonishing how much may be done by economizing time, and by using up the spare minutes—the odds and ends of our leisure hours. There are many men who have laid the foundations of their character, and been enabled to build up a distinguished reputation, simply by making a diligent use of their leisure minutes. Professor Lee acquired Hebrew and several other languages during his spare time in the evening, while working as a journeyman-carpenter. Ferguson learnt astronomy from the heavens while herding sheep on the Highland hills. Stone learnt mathematics while a journeyman-gardener. Hugh Miller studied geology while working as a day-laborer in a quarry. By using up the orts and offal of their time—the spare bits which so many others would have allowed to run to waste—these and a thousand more men have acquired honor, distinction, and happiness for themselves, and promoted the well-being and general advancement of the world.

Haydon, in his lectures on painting, has given some excellent advice on this subject. He says: "Always look temptation in the face, and never shirk it. There is no being takes so many shapes as Miss Mary Idleness. She is a beautiful devil, with lustrous teeth, raven hair, black eyes, and a nose and cheeks, chin and dimple, lips, and forehead not to be mentioned; and the worst is, whatever she proposes is always for your good. If you have genius, industry alone will make you ready for its inspirations; if you have not, industry, at least, will give you knowledge. I am no friend to that lachrymose croaking about 'time of life;' I am just as able now, at fifty-eight years, to set to work in a new acquirement, as at eighteen years—and perhaps, more able. 'Were I to begin the world again,' said Reynolds; he would do all sorts of things he had neglected to do, and follow Michael Angelo's steps. Now, he had been saying this forty years. Why did he not, at once, like Tintoretto, write over the door of his painting-room, 'The day to Titian, the night to Michael An-

gelo!' and in six months we should have had his limbs more like legs and thighs than ninepins. Why? because he had only the consciousness of imperfection, without the sufficient power (or *will*) to impel the remedy. After lamenting this to Burke, he would sit down to a game of whist, or sojourn to the club to listen to the declamations of Johnson."

It is *will*—force of purpose—that enables a man to do or be whatever he sets his mind on being or doing. A holy man was accustomed to say, "Whatever you wish, that you are: for such is the force of our will, joined to the Divine, that whatever we wish to be, seriously, and with a true intention, that we become. No one ardently wishes to be submissive, patient, modest, or liberal, who does not become what he wishes."

Even at advanced years men can accomplish much, if they determine forthwith to begin. There are many late learners in the world: Sir Henry Spelman only commenced the study of science when between fifty and sixty years of age; and after this he became a most learned antiquarian and lawyer. Franklin did not fully begin his philosophical studies till he had reached his fiftieth year. Boccaccio was thirty-five when he commenced his studies in polite literature; and Alfieri was forty-six when he began the study of Greek. Dr. Arnold was above forty when he learned German, for the purpose of being able to read Niebuhr's works. When Dryden came up to London from the provinces, dressed in Norwich druggot, somewhat above the age of thirty, he did not even then know that he could write a line of poetry; and he was sixty-eight when he commenced the translation of the *Æneid*. Scott was upward of thirty before he published his *Minstrelsy*, and what a life of hard work was his after that. Handel was forty-eight before he published any of his great works; and Mehemet Ali was above forty when he learned to read and write. Indeed, hundreds of instances might be given of men who struck out an entirely new path, and successfully entered on new studies, at a comparatively advanced age. None but the sick or indolent will ever say, "I am too old to study."

One of the most striking illustrations of industry, and of Buffon's maxim that "patience is genius," is afforded in the life and labors of Sir Isaac Newton. It is related of him, that when he was questioned respecting the mental qualities which formed the peculiarity of his character, he referred it entirely to the power which he had acquired of *continuous attention*. "When he was asked," says Mr. Whewell, "how he made his discourses, he answered, 'By always thinking about them;' and at another time, he declared, that 'if he had done any thing, it was due to nothing but *industry and patient thought*; I keep the subject of my inquiry constantly before me, and wait till the first dawning opens gradually, by little and little, into a full and clear light.'"

When William Cecil, afterward Lord Burleigh,

was at St. John's College, in order that he might daily devote several hours to study without interruption, he made an agreement with a bell-ringer to be called up every morning at four o'clock. But his strength was soon seriously impaired thereby, and he contracted a painful humor in his legs, of which, however, he got subsequently cured. At sixteen he delivered a public lecture on the logic of the schools, and three years later, on the Greek language. He studied all subjects, including law, antiquities, and heraldry, recording with his pen any thing that appeared to him 'worthy of notice. His dispatch of business was extraordinary, his maxim being, "The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at once;" and he never left a thing undone with a view of recurring to it at a period of more leisure. When business pressed, he rather chose to encroach on his hours of meals and rest than omit any part of his work. Even when laboring under pain he was carried to his office for dispatch of business. An eye-witness says of him, that for a period of twenty-four years he never saw him idle for half an hour together; and if he had no particular task, which rarely happened, he would still busy himself in reading, writing, or meditating.

As a concluding illustration, take the career of the late Sir S. Romilly. He was the son of a jeweler, descended from a French refugee; he received little education in his early years, but overcame all his disadvantages by unwearied application, and by efforts constantly directed toward the same end: his life is a lesson of facts, worth more than volumes of moral sentiments. "I *determined*," he says in his autobiography, "when I was between fifteen and sixteen years of age, to apply myself seriously to learning Latin, of which I, at that time, knew little more than some of the most familiar rules of grammar." He took a lesson of an hour daily from a teacher, and devoted the greatest part of his remaining time to poring over Cæsar, Livy, and Cicero. "In the course of three or four years, during which I thus applied myself, I had read almost every prose writer of the age of pure Latinity, except those who have treated merely of technical subjects, such as Varro, Columella, and Celsus. I had gone three times through the whole of Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus; I had read all Cicero, with the exception, I believe, only of his academic questions, and his treatises *De Finibus* and *De Divinatione*. I had studied the most celebrated of his orations, his *Lælius*, his *Cato Major*, his treatise *De Oratore*, and his *Letters*, and had translated a great deal of Homer. Terence, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Juvenal, I had read over and over again." At the same time he acquired and studied Greek, and "went through the most considerable of the Greek historians, orators, and philosophers, in the Latin versions which generally accompanied the Grecian text." He studied also geography, natural history, and natural philosophy, and obtained a good acquaintance with other branches of general knowledge.

At sixteen he was articled to Mr. William M. Lally, one of the sworn clerks in Chancery; he worked hard, became solicitor-general under the Fox administration in 1806, and so on advanced to the highest celebrity in his profession. Yet he was always haunted by a painful and almost oppressive sense of his own disqualifications, if we may judge from his autobiography, and never ceased laboring to remedy them. In 1817, he says: "The highest office and the greatest dignity that the Crown has to bestow might make me miserable; it is impossible that it could render me happier than I already am. One great source of misery to me in such a situation the public, and even my own most intimate friends, little suspect—it is the consciousness that I am not qualified to discharge properly its important duties."

In somewhat like manner, Sir Walter Scott said, seriously, in his autobiography, "Through every part of my literary career, I have felt pinched and hampered at my own ignorance."

Such is true wisdom! While many think themselves learned, who have gained but a smattering of knowledge, from "comic" primers and "popular" lectures, the wiser a man really becomes, the more he begins to feel as the sage of old did, when he said, "The longer I live, the more persuaded I become that I know nothing."

THE FRENCH SPY SYSTEM.

AMONG the many families which rose into notice under the empire of the first Napoleon, few held a more distinguished position in the Parisian society of the day than that of the Countess B—. Her house, at the period of which we speak, was the rendezvous of all the celebrities of the time—marshals of France, statesmen, artists, men of letters, alike crowded to her saloons. The Baron M— was one of her most frequent guests, and had the reputation of being as witty and amusing a personage as could be met with; in consequence, his company was very generally sought, even by the highest circles, in which, though but little was known of his family or connection, he had found means to obtain an excellent footing.

One evening, in the winter of 1805, a brilliant party was assembled in the gay saloons of the Countess B—, when a gentleman, well known to all, arrived in breathless haste, and apparently much excited. He made his way as quickly as possible to the countess, and all crowded round to hear what great piece of intelligence he had to communicate.

"We are all I think," he said, "well acquainted with Baron M—, who is so constant a visitor here. I regret to say that I have just learned, in the most positive manner, that he is undoubtedly a spy; he has in fact been seen to enter and to leave the cabinet of Monsieur Fouché."

The assembled guests were thunderstruck at this unexpected announcement, each one endeavoring to recollect what indiscreet expression might have passed his lips in the presence of the treacherous baron; and all naturally enough,

feeling extremely uneasy at the possibility of being called upon to answer for some long-forgotten words, spoken, as they thought, in the security of private society. The hostess of course was most indignant at the insult which had been put upon her, and could hardly believe in the truth of the accusation.

However, something must be done; the baron was momentarily expected; and unless he were able to clear himself from this serious imputation, he must be at once expelled from the society. After some discussion, therefore, it was decided that, upon the arrival of Baron M—, the countess should request a few minutes' private conversation with him; that she should take him into another room, and having told him of what he was accused, should ask if he had any explanation to offer, as otherwise she should be obliged to signify to him, that he must discontinue his visits.

In the midst of the invectives which were poured forth on the head of the unfortunate baron, that worthy made his appearance. Immediately all was silent; and though he advanced to greet his friends with his customary easy assurance, he evidently saw that all was not right, as his most intimate associates of yesterday avoided speaking to him, or at most, gave him the slightest possible salutation.

Not being, however, very easily abashed, Baron M— proceeded, as usual, to make his bow to the hostess, who at once, as had been agreed, said to him: "Monsieur le Baron, may I request the favor of a few words with you in private!"

"Certainly, madame," replied the baron, offering his arm, which she declined to take, and led the way to an ante-chamber.

The countess, feeling naturally very nervous at the part she had to perform, at length said, with some hesitation: "I know not whether you are aware, Monsieur le Baron, of the serious accusation which hangs over you; and which, unless you can remove or explain satisfactorily, must for ever close my doors against you." The baron was all attention, as the countess continued: "I have been informed, upon what appears to be undoubted authority, that you are in the pay of Monsieur Fouché—that you are, in short, a spy."

"Oh," replied the baron, "is that all? I will not attempt to deny it; nothing can be more true: I am a spy."

"And how," exclaimed the lady, "have you dared to insult me and my guests, by presuming to present yourself night after night at my house, in such an unworthy manner?"

"I repeat," said the baron with all possible coolness, "that I am in the pay of Fouché; that I am a spy: and in this capacity, upon some subjects, I am tolerably well informed, of which, Madame la Comtesse, I will give you a proof. On the last pay-day, at Monsieur Fouché's, you received your pay, for the information you had brought him, immediately after I had received mine."

"What!" cried the countess; "dare you in-