HAND-CRAFT AND REDE-CRAFT.

A PLEA FOR THE FIRST NAMED.

CALLS for more handicraft have been heard of late in many portions of this land,— sometimes a call for higher skill in the use of fingers and arms,— and sometimes a call for the *wider spread* of such skill among the people at large. Just now we wish to speak of some of the general aspects of a movement which is very complex as well as general, and at the same time is full of promise and hope.

We begin by using the word handicraft, for that is the form to which we are wonted in speech and in print; but we rather like the old form, "hand-craft," which was used by our sires so long ago as Anglo-Saxon days. Neither form is in vogue, as we know very well, for people choose nowadays such Latin words as technical ability, industrial pursuits, manual labor, dexterity, professional artisanship, manufacture, technological occupation, polytechnic education, and decorative art, not one of which is half so good as the plain, old, strong term, handicraft or hand-craft. We shall do what we can to bring back this old friend.

One reason why we like this word is that it includes so much, and yet is so clear that everybody knows what it means,— the power of the hand to hold, shape, match, carve, paint, bake, plow, or weave. Another reason why we like to say hand-craft is because of the easy contrast it suggests with another old word, which is likewise out of vogue, rede-craft, the power to read, to reason, and to think,— or as it is said in the book of common prayer, "to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." By rede-craft we find out what other men have written down; we get our book-learning; we are made heirs to thoughts that breathe and words that burn; we enter into the acts, the arts, the loves, the lore, the lives of the witty, the cunning, and the worthy of all ages and all places.

Rede-craft is not the foe but the friend of hand-craft. They are brothers, partners, consorts, who should work together as right hand and left hand, as science and art, as theory and practice. Rede-craft may call for books, and hand-craft for tools, but it is by the help of both books and tools that mankind moves on. Their union is as sacred as the marriage tie; no divorce can be allowed. The pleasure and the profit of modern life depend upon the endurance of their joint action.

Indeed, we should not err wide of the mark by saying that a book is a tool, for it is the instrument we make use of in certain cases when we wish to find out what other men have thought and done. There is a sense in which it is also true that a tool is a book, the record of past ages of talent engaged in toil. Take a plow, for example. Compare the form in use to-day on a first-rate farm with that which is pictured on ancient stones long hid in Egypt, ages old. See how the plow idea has grown; and bear in mind that its graceful curves, its fitness for a special soil or for a special crop, its labor-saving shape, came not by chance but by thought. It embodies the experience of many generations of plowmen.

Look upon a Collins ax, lay it by the side of such a tomahawk as was used by Uncas or Miantonomoh, or with a hatchet of the age of bronze, and think how many minds have worked upon the head and the helve; how much skill has been spent in getting the metal, in making it hard, in shaping the edge, in fixing the weight, in forming the handle. Take a cambric needle and compare it with the fish bone or the thorn with which savages sewed their hides. Or from simple turn to complex tools— the steam-engine, the sewing-machine, the dynamo, the telegraph, the ocean steamer; all are full of ideas. All are the offspring of hand-craft and rede-craft, of skill and thought, of practice put on record, of science and art. The welfare of our land, of our race, rests on this union. We can almost take the measure of a man's brain if we can find out what he sees and what he does; we can judge of a country or of a city if we know what it makes.

We need not ask which is the better, hand-craft or rede-craft. Certainly, "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee"; at times, indeed, when the eye is blind, the hand takes its place, and the fingers learn to read, running over the printed page to find out what is there as quickly as the eye. To what realms of thought was Laura Bridgman, sightless and speechless, led by the culture of her touch!

It is wrong that so many people, some whose minds are full of ideas and some whose purses are full of gold (not to speak of those who have neither), are prone to look down upon hand-craft. They think only of the tasks

of a slave, a drudge, or a char-boy. They have never tasted the pleasure of making, the delight there is in guiding the fingers by the conscious and planning will. They like to hear, see, own, or eat what others have made, but they know nothing of the pleasure of production. Their minds may be bright, but their fingers are lazy. Many such persons work too long and too late with their eyes, poring over the story of what others have done, and keeping their brains alert with the tales of other people's skill; yet they never think of finding another sort of rest or relief in the practice of hand-craft. If you doubt this, put two notices in the paper, one asking for a workman and the other for a clerk, and you will see on the morrow which calling is popular. So it comes to pass that boys become men without being trained to any kind of skill; they wish, therefore, to be buyers and sellers, traders and dealers. The market, which is poorly supplied with those who are trained in the higher walks of hand-craft, is doubtless overstocked with clerks, book-keepers, salesmen, and small shop-keepers. Some young men who are poor in pocket and rich enough in talent go to college, allowing their mothers and their sisters to toil for their support, and many more accept the gifts of unknown helpers, and not because they prefer to do so, but because they have never learned how to produce with their own hands anything which the world is willing to pay for. Ask such a youth, "What can you do for your own support?" alas, how often will "Nothing" be the answer!

To some extent machinery works against hand-craft. In many factories the hand has but little to do, and that little is always the same, so that labor becomes tiresome, and the workman is dull. It is a marvel how machinery, which embodies the inventor's mind, takes the place of mind in the workman; machinery can cut statues, weave tapestry, grind out music, make long calculations in arithmetic, solve simple problems in logic,—alas, the machine has been brought into politics! Of course a land cannot thrive without machinery. How could the ore be brought to the surface and made current as coin without machinery; how could the prairies be tilled as they are without reapers and mowers; how could the corn, the beef, and the sugar be carried from our rich valleys and plains to the hungry of other lands; how could the products of their looms and foundries be brought back to us without the aid of those seven-league-booted giants, the locomotive and the marine engine? Nevertheless, he who lives by the machine alone leads but half a life, while he who uses his hand to contrive and adorn drives dullness from his path. It is hand-craft, the power to shape, to beautify, and to create, which gives pleasure and dignity to labor. A true artist and a true artisan are governed by one spirit; their brains are the masters of their hands.

In other climes and in other times, hand-craft had more honor than it has with us. The touch of Phidias was his own, and so inimitable that not long ago an American, scanning with his practiced eye the galleries of the Louvre, discovered a fragment of the work of Phidias long separated from the other fragments by that sculptor which Lord Elgin had sent to London. The artist's stroke could not be mistaken,—it was his own, as truly as our sign-manuals, our autographs. Ruskin, in a lecture upon the relation of art to morals, speaks of a note which Dürer made on some drawings sent him by Raphael. It was this: "These figures Raphael drew and sent to Albert Dürer in Nürnberg,—to show him his hand." Ruskin well compares this phrase with other stories of the hand-craft of artists,—Apelles and Protogenes showing their skill by drawing a line; Giotto in striking a circle. There is a custom, if not a law, in the royal households of Prussia that every boy shall learn a trade. The emperor is said to be a glazier, and the crown prince a printer; not long ago, as a birthday gift, his Majesty received an engraving by one prince and a book bound by another, both sons of the heir-apparent. In one of the most famous shrines of education in Paris, two paintings adorn the chapel walls, not of saints or martyrs, not of apostles or prophets,—perhaps I should say an apostle and a saint, *Labor* and *Humilitas;* Industry the apostle of happiness, and Modesty the divine grace. Is it not worthy of note that Isaiah, telling of golden days to come, when the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in the land, nor the voice of crying, when the child shall die an hundred years old, and men shall eat of the fruit of the vineyards they have planted, adds this promise as the greatest of all hopes, that the elect of the Lord shall long enjoy the work of their hands?

If now we really value hand-craft, we shall find many ways of giving it honor; we can buy that which shows it, or if we are too poor to buy, we can help on with our looks and words those who bring taste and skill into the works of their hand. If your means are so small that you can only buy what you need for your daily wants, you cannot have much choice; but hardly any who reads these pages is so restricted as that: almost, if not quite, every one buys something every year for his pleasure,—a curtain, a rug, a wall-paper, a chair, or a table, not truly needed, a vase, a clock, a mantle ornament, a piece of jewelry,

a portrait, an etching. Now, in making such a purchase to please the eye, to make the chamber, the parlor, or the office more attractive, choose always that which shows good handiwork. Such a choice will last. You will not tire of it as you will of commonplace forms and patterns, and your children after you will value it as much as you do.

Let us not forget, however, that hand-craft gives us many things which do not appeal to our sense of beauty, but which are nevertheless of priceless value,—a Jacquard loom, a Corliss engine, a Hoe printing-press, a Winchester rifle, an Edison dynamo, a Bell telephone. Ruskin may scout the work of machinery, and up to a certain point in his enthusiasm for hand-craft may carry us with him. Let us say without a question that works of art—the "Gates of Paradise," by Ghiberti, a shield by Cellini, a statue by Michael Angelo, a portrait by Titian—are better than any reproductions or imitations, electrotypes by Barbedienne, plaster casts by Eichler, or chromos by Prang. But even Ruskin cannot suppress the fact that machinery brings to every cottage of our day comforts and adornments which in the days of Queen Bess, or even of Queen Anne, were not known outside of the palace,—and perhaps not there; and let us be mindful that it is modern hand-craft which has made the machines of such wonderful productivity, weaving tissues more delicate than Penelope ever embroidered, and cutting the hardest metals with a precision unknown to Vulcan's forge. Machinery is a triumph of hand-craft as truly as sculpture or architecture. The fingers which have shaped the *Aurania* or the Brooklyn suspension bridge are as full of art as those which have cut an obelisk from granite or molded the uplifted torch of Liberty. Rowland's dividing engine, which with its unerring diamond plow traces forty thousand furrows upon an inch of the concave grating, silently and ceaselessly at work from day to day, that men may see more than they ever have yet seen of the glories of the sun—a machine like this has beauty of its own; not that of the human form nor that of a running brook, but the beauty of perfect adaptation to a purpose, secured by consummate hand-craft. The fingers which can make a mountain stream turn myriads of spindles, or transform rag heaps into perfumed paper, or evoke thousands of handy objects from brass and iron, are fingers which the nineteenth century has evolved. The hand-craft which has made useful things cheap is already making cheap things beautiful. See how rapidly, for example, pottery in this country has become a fine art. Let us hope that Americans will learn from the Japanese how to form and finish, before the Japanese learn from us how to slight and sham.

There is another duty to be enforced, which is this. All who have to deal with the young, whether parents or teachers, should see to it that children acquire hand-craft while they are getting rede-craft. Mothers begin right in the nursery, teaching little fingers to play before the tongue can lisp a sentence. Alas, this natural training has too often been stopped at school. Books have claimed the right of way; rede-craft has taken the place of honor; hand-craft has been kept in the rear. But now the ghost of Pestalozzi has been raised; the spirit of Froebel is walking abroad in the land; changes are coming in schools of every grade. The changes began at the top of our educational system and are fast working down to the bottom. What mean the new buildings which have appeared of late years in all our thriving colleges? They are libraries and laboratories,—the temples of rede-craft, and of hand-craft; they tell us that in universities, the highest of all schools, work-rooms, labor-places, laboratories, are thought to be as book-rooms, reading-rooms, libraries; they show that a liberal education means skill in getting and in using knowledge; that wisdom comes from searching books and searching nature; that in the finest human natures the brain and the hand are in close league. So too in the lowest schools, as far as possible from the university, the kindergarten methods have won their place, and the blocks, straws, and bands, the chalk, clay, and scissors, are in use to make young fingers deft.

Intermediate schools have not yet done so well. There has even been danger that one of the most needful forms of hand-craft would become a lost art, even good handwriting, and schools have been known to send out boys skilled in algebra and in a knowledge of the aorist who could not write a page of English so that other people could read it without effort. The art of drawing is another kind of hand-craft which has been quite too much neglected in ordinary schools. It ought to be laid down as a rule of the road to knowledge that everybody must learn to draw as well as to write. The pencil is a simpler tool than the pen. The child draws pictures on his slate before he learns the pot-hooks of his copybook; savages begin their language with gestures and pictures; but we wiseacres of the school-boards let our youngsters drop their slate-pencils and their Fabers when we make them practice with their Gillotts and their Esterbrooks. We ought to say, in every school and in every house, the child must learn to draw as well as to read and write. It is the beginning

of hand-craft, the hand-craft which underlies a host of modern callings. A new French book has lately attracted much attention, "The Life of a Wise Man by an Ignoramus." It is the story of the great Pasteur, whose discoveries in respect to germ life have made him world-famous. If you turn to this book to find out the key to such success, you will see the same old story,—the child is father of the man. This great physiologist, whose eye is so keen and whose hand is so artful, is the boy grown up, whose pictures were so good when he was thirteen years old that the villagers thought him an artist of rank.

Sewing, as well as drawing and writing, has been neglected in our ordinary schools. Girls should certainly learn the second lessons of hand-craft with the needle. Boys may well do so; but girls must. The wise governor of a New England State did not hesitate, a short time since, to say upon a commencement platform how much he had often valued the use of the needle, which was taught him in his infant school. How many a traveler can tell a like tale? It is wise that our schools are going back to old-fashioned ways, and saying that girls must learn to sew.

Boys should practice their hands upon the knife. John Bull used to laugh at Brother Jonathan for whittling, and "Punch" always drew the Yankee with a blade in his fingers; but they found out long ago over the waters, that whittling in this land led to something,—a Boston "notion," a wooden clock, a yacht *America*, a labor-saving machine, a cargo of wooden ware, a shop full of knick-knacks, an age of inventions. Boys need not be kept back to the hand-craft of the knife. For indoors there are the type-case and the printing-press, the paint-box, the tool-box, the lathe; and for outdoors, the trowel, the spade, the grafting-knife. It matters not how many of the minor arts the youth acquires; the more the merrier. Let each one gain the most he can in all such ways, for arts like these bring no harm in their train; quite otherwise, they lure good fortune to their company.

Play, as well as work, may bring out hand-craft. The gun, the bat, the rein, the rod, the oar, all manly sports are good training for the hand. Walking insures fresh air, but it does not train the body or mind like games and sports which are played out-of-doors. A man of great fame as an explorer and as a student of nature (he who discovered in the West bones of horses with two, three, and four toes, and found the remains of birds with teeth) has said that his success was largely due to the sports of his youth. His boyish love of fishing gave him his manly skill in exploration.

I speak as if hand-craft was to be learned by sport. So it may. It may also be learned by labor. Day by day, for weeks, the writer has been watching from his study window a stately inn rise from the cellar just across the road. A bricklayer has been there employed whose touch is like the stroke of an artist. He handled each brick as if it were porcelain, balanced it carefully in his hand, measured with his eye just the amount of mortar which it needed, and dropped the block into its bed without straining its edge, without varying from the plumb-line, by a stroke of hand-craft as true as the sculptor's. Toil gave him skill.

The last point which we make is this: Instruction in hand-craft must be more varied and more widespread. This is no new thought. Forty years ago schools of applied science were added to Harvard and Yale colleges; twenty years ago Congress gave land-scrip to aid in founding at least one such school in every State; men of wealth have given large sums for such ends. Now the people at large are waking up. They see their needs; they have the money to supply their wants. Have they the will? Know they the way?

Far and near the cry is heard for a different training from that now given in the public schools. Nobody seems to know just what is best; but almost every large town has its experiment, and many smaller places have theirs. The State of Massachusetts has passed a law favoring the new movement. A society of benevolent women has been formed in New York to collect the experience of many places, and make it generally known. The trustees of the Slater Fund for the training of freedmen have made it a first principle in their work that every school which is aided by that fund shall give manual training. The town of Toledo, in Ohio, opened some time ago a school of practice for boys which has done so much good that another has lately been opened for girls. St. Louis is doing famously. Philadelphia has several experiments in progress. Baltimore has made a start. In New York there are many noteworthy movements —half a dozen of them, at least, full of life and hope. Boston was never behindhand in the work of promoting knowledge, and in the new education is very alert, the liberality and the sagacity of one beneficent lady deserving praise of high degree. These are but signs of the times, examples to which our attention has been called, types of efforts, multiform and numerous, in every part of the United States.

But it must be said that the wise differ very much as to what might, should, and can be done. Even the words which express the

wants are vague. Something may be done by an attempt, even though it be rude, to put in classes the various movements which tend toward the advancement of hand-craft. Let us make an attempt, and present the following schedule:

FOR THE PROMOTION OF HAND-CRAFT.

Four Preliminary Needs.

(a) Kindergarten work should be taught in the nurseries and infant schools of rich and poor;

(b) Every girl should learn to sew, and every boy should learn to use domestic tools, the carpenter's or the gardener's, or both;

(c) Well-planned exercises fitted to strengthen arms, fingers, wrists, lungs, etc., should be devised, and where possible, driving, riding, swimming, rowing, playing ball, and other out-of-door sports should be encouraged;

(d) Drawing should be taught as early as writing, and as long as reading, for all, and everywhere.

SUBSEQUENT POSSIBILITIES.

(a) In elementary schools lessons may be given in the minor decorative arts,— such as those of the Leland methods, for example.

(b) The use of such common tools as belong to the blacksmith's forge and the carpenter's bench may be taught at slight cost, as a regular class exercise, in secondary schools for boys, whatever be the future vocation of the pupils.

(c) In towns, boys who begin to earn a living when they enter their teens may be taught in every school to practice brick-laying, plastering, plumbing, gasfitting, carpentry, etc., as is done and well done in the Auchmuty schools in New York. Trade schools they are called; "schools of practice for workmen" would be a clearer name.

(d) In high schools, technical schools, and colleges, youth may learn to work with extreme precision in wood and metal, as they are taught in the College of the City of New York, in Cornell University, and in many other places.

(e) Youth who will take time to fit themselves to be foremen and leaders in machine shops and factories may be trained in theoretical and practical mechanics, as at Worcester, Hoboken, Boston, and elsewhere; but the youth who would win in these hard paths must have talent at command as well as time to spare. These are schools for foremen, or (if we may use a foreign word like kindergarten) they are Meisterschaft schools, schools for training masters.

(f) Youth who wish to enter the highest department of engineering, must follow long courses in mathematics and physics, and must learn to apply their knowledge; if they wish to enter upon other branches of advanced science, they must work in the scientific laboratories now admirably equipped in every part of the country. These are technical colleges for engineers, for chemists, for explorers, for naturalists, etc.

(g) Art instruction must be provided as well as scientific, elementary, constructive, decorative, and professional education.

At every stage, the language of the pencil and of the pen must be employed; rede-craft must be practiced with hand-craft; and there must be no thought of immediate profit from that which is done in the early and rudimentary stages of the training.

D. C. Gilman.

THE LAST GOOD-BYE.

HOW shall we know it is the last good-bye?
The skies will not be darkened in that hour,
No sudden blight will fall on leaf or flower,
No single bird will hush its careless cry,
And you will hold my hands, and smile or sigh
Just as before. Perchance the sudden tears
In your dear eyes will answer to my fears;
But there will come no voice of prophecy:
No voice to whisper, "Now, and not again,
Space for last words, last kisses, and last prayer,
For all the wild, unmitigated pain
Of those who, parting, clasp hands with despair."
"Who knows?" we say, but doubt and fear remain,
Would any *choose* to part thus unaware?

Louise Chandler Moulton.