

that will mellow and grow into richer beauty with age. One by one its thinly veneered and merely glittering surfaces drop away leaving the poverty of the reality exposed to view. All this we constantly see, and for all these results a thousand reasons are given, a thousand specious excuses made; but they rarely mean any thing, or contain a grain of the real truth, which is always, that good foundations were not well laid, that the best seed was not properly sown or wisely cultivated—that the life itself, just as the season, the tree, or the grain, contains all the elements of its own success or failure—of its own beauty or deformity—of its own splendid fruition and beneficent influence; or its disappointing deformity, and failure to realize the hopes that were built upon it.

The seasons we cannot control; we can only accept them—we can be thankful for the good and gladness they bring, and make the best of their occasional short-comings; but our lives are partly within our own power, we can at least cultivate them as we would trees in a nursery; we can repress tendencies to evil, and encourage the growth toward the good. Above all things we can set ourselves to the performance of our own duty instead of exhausting time and strength in a critical outlook for the faults and short-comings of others. Because when the season, or the day, or the life is ending it does not matter to it how last season, or yesterday, or some other life terminated; the interest for this year, for the work to be done, and the existence that is vanishing from our sight, centers in this one; and what a glorious thing it is, when the sunset glory reflects only the serenity of a perfect past, an existence wherein all duties have been royally done, a radiance which has gathered into itself all the strength and sweetness, all the labor and achievement, all the growth and ripened excellence that has accrued from high purpose and conscientious endeavor. Longfellow wrote—

*“Oh what a glory doth this world put on
For him who with a fervent heart goes forth
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
On duties well performed and days well spent.”*

The after-math of such a life is rich in every blessing; in love, honor, the respect of the good, and the peace which is the halo of age. Oh, life! how beautiful it is when strength and every natural gift is put to best uses; when acts are prayers, that serve as the wings to our best thoughts, our truest aspirations.

But we must not mistake the aim of life which is to bring us such fruition, nor work for the semblance of the thing instead of the thing itself. Life, a true, good, noble life, is just as possible to one as to another, so far as circumstance, place, and condition are concerned. We can be true to ourselves if we are sufficient to ourselves. Emerson's greatness began at thirty, when a brief experience had taught him that there was nothing in the contact with crowds, in the mere acquisition of money, in simply working for popularity; that could compensate him for the loss of himself to himself; and his work is the evidence of what the loss would have been to others. It is not so great in quantity, he did not spread it over space for bread and butter, or that he might live in a fine house; but it is absolute, every thought is like an atom of creation itself; it is fitly embodied, and contains a germ of the whole. When Emerson retired from the world, not as a monk, or a hermit, but to be a good neighbor, a good citizen, a faithful friend, a tender husband, and a true liver of the philosophy which he put into his writings, he became a king. He lifted himself above the world that he did not feel was necessary to him, and that he knew he could help apart from its turmoil; better, and more truly than if hampered by its vanities, and distressed by its turbulence. Some must live in the glare, but they are to be pitied;

do not count them among the fortunate ones, for the exposure is not conducive to happiness, and does not always end in honor. What is it that is most valuable to us? what is it that leads to permanent tranquillity, and that sunset brightness we all must desire to anticipate. The cultivation of gentleness, of toleration, of freedom, and largeness,—the recognition of the relations which exist between ourselves and the rest of the world; and also of the entirety of every human existence, as separate and distinct from the world, and its right to that existence in its own way, provided that way is not hurtful to others.

Imagine a life that is true to itself, that is honest and independent, yet kindly and considerate towards all, and everything that differs from itself, and you will see how rare it is. It does not ask the opinions of others in regard to what it shall say or do; it has its own and lives them. It does not depend on any self constituted authority for its taste, or imbibe prejudices which have no reason to support them because they find expression in foolish speech. It is a calm, wise life, which thinks its own thoughts, solves its own problems, exercises its own faculties, fulfils its own obligations, is severe only to its own short-comings.

Do we any of us know of many such lives? Yet there is not necessarily anything extraordinary in them. Such a life may be lived by a shoe maker, a mason, a carpenter, a farmer, a dress-maker, a school-teacher, a busy wife, and mother of children, or almost any worker; the only almost insurmountable obstacle would present itself to the woman of society and fashion, fenced about with false ideals, with traditions that are time-honored and respected, and conventionalities which are supposed to form the foundation of our whole social superstructure. Still the real woman will put some true life even into the driest of bones. She will bring pleasant and strengthening life with her wherever she goes; in her presence masks fall and truth is not obliged to hide its head. She sees the good in things, and it naturally finds its way to her, and surrounds her like an atmosphere. She passes through the fiery furnace of society unscathed, for she knows and believes only in the bright side which it has shown to her, and she carries with her all pleasant and sunny memories, to make the later loveliness of her days, which have not been spent without yielding their precious influence upon the lives of others. The fairest woman I ever saw was the queen of a brilliant assemblage gathered in her own home. Her social position was a high one, she had many duties in connection with her husband's public office and rank, yet no one spoke of her beauty or her wealth, or her position, but every one of her devotion as a mother or her admirable qualities as wife, of her faithfulness as friend, of her truth as a woman. Her glorious after-math had begun, but it grew out of the qualities which belonged to herself, and which might be common to us all, not from adventitious circumstances.

The Nondescript.

SHE is in her fifteenth or sixteenth year, too old to be treated as a child, not yet advanced to the dignity of the title of “a young lady” and bitterly resenting that of “a miss,” under which name she buys her gloves and shoes. Often she is a thorough student of the mathematics, languages, and music; oftener, we fear, only a giddy school-girl, with her mind running on dress and beaux.

She holds no position in society and a very insignificant one in the family circle. Her big brother twits her on her round shoulders and awkward gait; her elder sisters com-

plain of her advance in stature, because of the inference of outsiders as to their respective ages; her mother frets because her elbows "come through," and her dresses need constant remodeling to adapt them to her growing form.

Her brother of a year or so older, the "Hobble-de-hoy," shares some of her miseries but has no sensitiveness which a hearty dinner or a game of base-ball will not totally overcome.

The school duties and friends of our Nondescript absorb all her attention except at meals, where her elder sisters discuss last night's party or to-day's engagements; her big brother talks over the contested election with her father; her mother meditates on the orders to be given to Biddy, and the Hobble-de-hoy devotes himself to the problem of consuming the greatest amount of eatables in the shortest quantity of time. And to whom does our heroine listen? If thoughtful, to her father; for she is an interested observer of politics (will she ever be more?) but does not advance an opinion which may be met by derision or silent contempt.

If she be frivolously inclined, the gossip about people and dress enlists her attention and her spicy participation.

Happy for her if there be a nursery into which she can bring the light of her merry laugh and ready wit and where she can find sympathy and pure admiration!

How does she pass her evenings? This question is often confined to the young man for whom the Christian Association does so good a work. Ah, it is pertinently applied to another class of neglected young life-voyagers! If our Nondescript be at the head of her class in school all her time is employed in preparation for the morrow's session; far into the night she prolongs her mental struggles with grammar, history, algebra, and lays her aching head upon her pillow to reënact the battles of the day.

But alas! if she realizes no affinity with the great minds of former days and no friendly hands uphold, how can she climb the weary road to knowledge? Ordinarily, she does not try but over the pages of an easily comprehended novel or in the mazes of a "sociable" hop; with others of the nondescript age, her evenings whirl away, and she reaches the age of full-fledged young lady-hood, already blasé to its pleasures and with no conception of its possibilities of character and culture.

What blessedness for our heroine if she meet some broad-minded, generous-hearted woman who shall see beneath her failings the genuine good of her character, the warmth of whose nature shall woo the neglected, frost-pinched bud into lovely, fragrant bloom!

O, anxious mother! busy with the wherewithal of clothing, food, household arrangement, what shall it profit if your daughter grow up estranged from the sweet, sacred tie of family affection, seeking enjoyment in more congenial, perhaps unsafe, companionship of which you know naught?

O, fathers! worried with the gold decline or the rise in cotton, at what per cent do you rate your daughter's affection?

It is nothing to you, parents, that her health fails under this course of frivolity or of persistent study? Is it nothing that she is living for self just as truly in her ambition to be a cultured scholar as in her aim to be the belle of her small circle? Will you not awake to her necessities and give her the consideration she merits, the affection she craves? Provide for her rational means of amusement, lectures, concerts, intercourse with your refined guests. Interest yourself in her reading. Guard her on the one hand from the influence of the whirling frivolity of fashion; on the other, from our modern forcing system of education. Teach her household tasks as a means of health and helpfulness.

Treat her thus rationally, and it shall be your highest joy and reward to see the immature Nondescript growing into symmetrical, useful, happy womanhood.

J. B. A.

Winter Resorts in Southern Europe.

TO those Americans conversant with the varied climate of our native land there is a charm for every season of the year in each section of the country, but a few years suffice to surfeit the taste and weary the mind; while on the continent of Europe, there is such an everchanging scene that *habitués* of the most frequented winter resorts never tire, and year after year finds them enjoying the ruins of Rome, the art treasures of Florence, or the gay carnival of Nice.

While each of these large cities is well known to every tourist, there are many of less note where the invalid or the sated pleasure-seeker may while away months of placid existence amid luxuriant foliage and balmy airs that seem laden with the odors of Arabia.

Commencing on the Bay of Biscay, the tourist will find Arcachon a delightful place of residence. Situated on the south side of the "Bassin d'Arcachon" and sheltered by the picturesque dunes, its temperate climate invites to a lengthened sojourn. The rains fall mostly at night, fog and damp cold are rarely known, the period of cold in winter is brief, and the forest affords sheltered walks where one may promenade without fear of being driven in by any sudden change of weather. One may live comfortably and rather luxuriously at the hotels here for the reasonable sum of \$2 per day, while, if one prefers house-keeping, a pretty villa may be hired for from \$10 to \$150 per month, plate and linen extra. Of course, by this latter arrangement parties are expected to supply their own provisions, which may be done on as liberal or economical a scale as one chooses.

Among the resorts known to the old Romans is Dax, or Acqs, situated about one hundred miles from Bordeaux, among healthy pine forests, in view of the Pyrenees. There are celebrated hot sulphur springs here which attain a temperature of 150° F., and are used for cooking, drinking, and bathing. Mud baths for diseases of the joints, paralysis, rheumatism, and old wounds are administered here.

Pau is, perhaps, one of the winter resorts in this same section of the country most patronized by English families. Here the season begins the 1st of October, and continues until May 31st. The streets are clean, there are good schools, an English club, promenade concerts, polo, cricket, golf, and lawn-tennis clubs, fox hunting thrice a week, and a skating rink. Nearly every denomination may find its favorite form of worship here, and a large circulating library affords abundant occupation to those disinclined to participate in the various forms of amusement so liberally provided by the "Union Syndicate" of Pau. Furnished apartments are to be had at prices ranging from \$100 to \$3,000 for the entire season, while board and lodging ranges from \$10 per week up to \$25, according to the locality and class of rooms.

Space will not permit an enumeration of all the inviting nooks that nestle amidst the projecting shadows of the Pyrenean range, for, from the Atlantic sea-board on the one hand to the mild shores of the Mediterranean on the other, Nature seems to have opened her fountains for the healing of the nations. On the Atlantic border lies Biarritz, and as one traverses the valley, Lourdes, Luchon, Tarascon, Prades, Belgarde, and Perpignan present their claims, and one is loath to quit them for the gayer attractions of those cities that bask in the balmy breezes of more Southern seas.

On the Gulf of Lyons, Marseilles stretches its broad thoroughfares and opens its natural harbor to the world, from whence one may seek retirement in less busy but charmingly seductive quarters. Aix, within eighteen miles, is the birthplace of Thiers; ten miles off is the castle of Mirabeau; a Roman wall still exists near the spot where Marius defeated the Cimbri, B.C. 125; and the student may find ample food in a library of one hundred and twenty thousand volumes.