

ROSES OF THIS LIFE

AND THORNS OF OUR I.

—BY—

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TRANSLATED BY

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## and Thorns of our I.

They are pet-thoughts which I will give in the following pages. I have cultivated and kept them for a long time, they are hallowed to my heart and senses; often have they supported and helped me, so much so that they have become as dear to me as life.

They are especially designed for those who fulfill with me the most beautiful position on earth, which no favour from prince or people gave us, but the order of which came from heaven, namely, the degree of parents and pedagogues.

But the thought is also pleasant to me, that they also will be read by those young men and young ladies who in the near future will have to fulfill the duties which rest upon the head of every family.

They will possibly take away many illusions from them, which they formed of life, but it is simply that they may know better the reality of life.

Nevertheless I do not expect my pet-thoughts will meet with much success. Perhaps the fair mouths will say: "Oh! I suppose it is something about corsets or dresses?" Or mothers will say: "See—we are told again that we do not know how to educate our children or to govern our households;" while the old gentleman adds: "That is young America, they

want to be liberal and tell us how to travel and how to do everything!" Yes, even in my imagination I hear some famous men say that our old authorities never taught such things and that there is a fragrance in them of the carnification of the medical faculty. And then that loving and afflicted mother who wept bitter tears, when she believed to have recognized the picture of her beloved son! No it is surely no melancholic thought, that all of these will prevent me from forming too great an idea of the success of my labor.

Look at that five-year old boy, who sits on that table who has been playing for hours with a box of leaden soldiers. That large head, that flat crown, those eyes that look so old and wise and whose long eye-lashes attract our attention, that pale, drowsy face, that bent position, those enlarged hand-joints, that flabby flesh, those weak, poor legs in which as yet he has so little strength, that peculiar sour air that we perceive as we come near him, shows us that he is suffering from rickets.

Let us have compassion for the sweet boy and love him, for how unfortunate he is and of how much pleasure he is deprived, he is so wise and he can talk like an old man; yes his thoughts are some-

times even beautiful, and sometimes charmingly mysterious. Darling of the house! though you are often peevish and difficult to satisfy how you captivate the hearts of all about you.

The sweet, wise language of that little man, the dependent condition of that weak physical body and that abnormally developed spirit, that caricature attracts the attention of all adults and it makes of him an interesting being. That is why he associates only with grown people and from each he learns something; that is the reason why he pays so little attention to the usual way of children.

But those who should be his comrades don't like him. They care not for that wise thin-leg who cannot run where they can run nor play where they can play, with whom they even cannot quarrel or fight, for every adult is his protector. My dear boy you differ much from that quick healthy boy of seven over there, who is ever on the move and eats his bread with a ravenous appetite, who plagues his brothers and sisters, who is the terror of the servants, who hunts birds, rabbits, insects and birds nests, who is the continual test for the patience and pedagogy of his Papa and Mamma. Imagine twice already did he come in from the garden crying with cold hands because he played in the snow. He is now forbidden to go there again. But the mischief cannot sit still; he takes away a silver spoon from

the sick boy, who used it to stir the sugar in his coffee, and now he bends it in such a way, that, according to his genial observations, it now can sit on the edge of the table. He is just beginning to write and as application he writes all over the white-washed walls with large letters "Charle". The older brother says that he is stupid, for Charly is spelled with a y and not with an e. This fires the red-cheek right up and he proves by the first primer that y is not pronounced like e. Nothing less than a fight can settle the question.

And poor mamma is the one who has to separate them and who weeps over her fighting boys and—oh! those newly whitewashed walls! Charly! Charly!—Selfish, naughty boy, but who is also mamma's boy;—we also are angry with you, for every little while you take the last bit of pedagogy out of us that we possess,—we clench our fists against you, our eyes glisten with indignation, which we cool upon your back and . . . . inwardly speaks a voice to us and says: fools—ungenerous fools—do you love your children and yourselves now?

No, loving mother!—Your sickly darling does not do such naughty things. He knows better than to write on white walls, nor does he have the power to do it. He uses silver spoons every day, but never bends them; his tender fingers have not the power to do it. He never fights, because he cannot,

He rarely gets angry as other children do,—he seems to know or feel that anger without strength is vain. And suppose he gets angry! What of it! As one of the symptoms of his disease there is a constant appetite and some delicious bite will quiet him. O, Charly! if you only had the nature of your brother; how much trouble you would save! But Charly looks at you with a pair of large eyes in which you can read: not for the world, for, to have such a nature requires also to have such thin legs and such weak flesh,

Pshaw! that miserable common sense

Hold—on Somebody enters who is on Charly's side. This man takes the liberty to protect all these mischievous actions of Charly; he is one of the kind of Doctor Allebe; often a troublesome man for many mothers because he rarely agrees with them. "Never mind Lady", says the doctor, what you call the mischief of your boy is only the result of strength and life. That boy wants to produce something; he applies what he was taught, that, exercises and develops his body and soul; appreciate the health, the greatest treasure that your boy possesses. "But," exclaims the good lady, "must my silver, white walls and a thousand other things suffer on account of that 'treasure'?" "You certainly could have prevented all," answers the doctor, "if you had permitted the boy to continue his playing in

the snow. This room is too small for all this strength and life; he feels a desire to exhibit them on a larger scale, under different surroundings and under different impressions. After this desire is satisfied, the impressions of rural order are again new to him and he can become accustomed to them. "But good mother," continues the doctor, "your motherhood does not only require of you a large amount of intelligent, thoughtful condescension, but also often great sacrifices and much self-denial. If it hinders you that your white walls can be blackened by your child, paint them black, and if he spoils your silver, put them away and use iron or something else."

Poor mother! She becomes angry, for she has an abundance of love, but little common sense, and such large sacrifices she cannot bring. Concerts, balls, visits, dresses., music, drawing, youth and beauty, rest and ease—sleep even has been laid on the marriage altar and is that not enough!—now also white walls, shining furniture and bright silver!

Poor doctor! he also gets angry and murmurs something of social evils and satan who also should have his share. Treasure of health! you make life often difficult.

And when the doctor went home, he did not find there what his conviction was looking for. Shining furniture which his children were

not allowed to touch, carpets that would wear off too much if thousands of footsteps should be put on them every day, table-cloths that could not be soiled, half closed shutters to exclude the daylight which would bleach the color of the paper and carpets, unwholesome air because open windows would allow the dust in the room. But look, near the doctor stands Hygeia, the goddess of health. Her eye looks sad and she looks pitifully at the physician.

"Why do you look so sadly at me Hygeia?" asks the doctor. "Do I not work in your service, do I not esteem you highly, are you not convinced how willingly I would lay down all priesthood in the temple of your father Aesculapins to become priest in your service which is so much more delightful?"

"No, my truest adorer, that is not what makes me sad," says Hygeia, "but your inability makes me sad. Had I a number of daughters which I had brought up and taught, I would give them in marriage and send them all over the world to preserve health—those who not only carry the future of the human race in their laps, but who also hold it in their hands.

"But alas! their number is still so small and but few of my sex esteem me highly; by most of them is the thought of me put in the background. It is for this reason that I put my trust in my ever

growing number of sons. In my mother-pride I said: what princes, politicians and laws cannot accomplish, will be done by my sons. They will begin to do in their own houses and in those of their relatives what is advantageous to health and they will there from banish whatever may be harmful to that treasure. These examples will be followed; they will esteem me more and more and my blissful reign will extend farther. My father Aesculapins has schools and academies in the United States, which have been founded purposely for the education of his followers but without their aid will I succeed in my great purpose in the preservation of the treasure of health."

"But I see, the will of my sons is a powerless. Why is this room the best and most beautiful, not the room for family-use? Is the beautiful light of the sun for you and yours no vivifier? Are you not afraid here?—for there where we have an insufficiency of light there blooms anæmia and rickets. Is this room your magazine of still air, your empire of darkness?"

Your 'empire of darkness! Yes Hygeia was right, for there before the doctor stood the demon of fashion, with clenched fist and teasing grin sure of his victory.

"Try," he says to the doctor, "to change my sanctuary if you dare! This room belongs to your station and gives you distinction and customers. There you receive the people when you want to show

them your prosperity and your extensive practice and when you want to convince them of your ability. It is fashion that causes your wife and daughters to put on corsets, though Hygeia calls them instruments of torture;—it is fashion that puts your children in furs;—it is fashion that causes you to pierce the lobule of your darling's to hang gold on. Doctor! Doctor! kneel for me and worship me," and the doctor knelt and worshiped.

Poor man! he almost succumbed under the weight which his strive for the treasure of health caused him to bear.

They are wonderful beings, those boys of twelve or thirteen years.

Girls are different, they retain more of that simplicity and submissiveness through which they can more easily adapt themselves to others; the germ is already there of their consciousness that they belong to the "weaker sex" a germ which we decided to cultivate carefully. What need do they have for strength? But those healthy boys, we would not count them amongst the weaker sex for all the world. Quick, strong, agile fellows they shall be. For they have such a long, troublesome and strength requiring life before them. But we repeat—those boys bring a stir into the world. Yes, if we stop to consider we shudder for their future. That wonderful mixture of childishness and firmness, of boldness and cowardice, of foolish-

ness and sensible consideration, of generosity and selfishness,—it is for us a sea of instabilities and mysteries.—And yet—it cannot be contradicted, that is just the way we find them to be. Now he shows his mother the most sincere love, but after a little he is as obstinate as a Texas pony; bold, almost insolent he endures a punishment from his teacher, yes he almost calls him names to his face and next day he brings him his dearest possessions; the eggs which he found himself; now he gives his best comrade a good threshing and a few minutes later you see them the best of friends again by a nest of young birds; to-day he is in heavenly joy with something he bought for a dollar, which is half a years savings and to-morrow he has changed and altered it so that it is not worth a dime.

Tell us, what will become of our boy? We would like to make a man of him within a year, a man with character, a man with principles who can withstand the Sirensongs of prosperity and the blows of adversity, a diligent pupil in the school of life. And yet there is so much instability and thoughtlessness! How is it possible? Are these also a product of health?

It is almost too bad, but we believe it is. For when our boy is sick, do we not then miss that type of instability?—then he is tame and quiet;—that is so disagreeably strange to us, and we wish heartily for his rapid recovery. We feel

then plainly that all his whistling and his silly jokes are peculiar to that boy; yes we even accuse ourselves of having been intolerant towards that child and promise ourselves to do better after his recovery.

What do you think now, Fathers and mothers! Do you think you are positive yourself now? Certainly only as much as your son. But do you know the difference between your instability and your son's?—Be silent, I will whisper it to you, he may not hear it. I want you to understand that there is no real difference, instability remains always instability, but you understand it better, to cover up your mistakes because you can feign; teach him that art also and you will probably be less troubled by this lively boy and he will seem more positive; no matter if it only "seems", the world itself is only appearance and we only live in this world.

For shame! who would teach his child deception?

Well! let us take away a part of his health, let us make him weaker, less lively and more dependent.

No, we don't want that either. What then? Have patience till something real grows out of all these contradictions and instabilities, until something good is borne from it, believe firmly that they are results of the strive towards the highest aim, perfection;—trust that the rent of the treasure of health is common sense, that com-

mon sense produces wisdom and wisdom produces virtue and happiness. Certainly we cannot otherwise and therefore resolve to tolerate all the effect of health, but at the same time we come to the conclusion that the health in our boy requires from us the treasure of wisdom.

O! treasure of health! you require so much. Don't you require more than we possess?

Once more do we ask, what must become of our boy? How quickly he could learn at seven. He could learn his lessons by heart in a moment, names of plants and animals he had to hear only once to remember them for a long time, he could read pretty good, he could draw quite nicely and sing sweetly, and a comprehension . . . . .! Why!—we never told any one, but sometimes we thought he might become a Washington or a Lincoln. It is true, at his ninth or tenth year it seemed he could not learn as quickly any more, but we then thought his development was taking a more definite course, that he was becoming a philosopher. He knew all the birds and recognized at first sight their nests; no dog or pigeon species was unknown to him; he knew the names of lots of insects, whether a cat was a male or a female he knew by the number of colors of the hair. We then thought he might at least become a Holmes or a Harting. But wonderful! The boy who was once so quick is such now no longer at school. Language he cannot

remember, geography is tiresome, he cannot see the good of studying history, and arithmetic bores him. If you could lift his scalp once and could see the knowledge in his head, it would probably look as wonderful as the books in his bookcase. There is part of a conjugation, there an imperfect history of Napoleon or Grant, yonder a little of the decimals, further on a few french sentences as clear and pure as possible, how much imperfectness and how little connection. And yet he will have to submit to an examination pretty soon. We even use that means to stimulate him to harder study and point him to the examination before he can go to college, for that is where we want him. But how shall he get there? His teacher says: "it goes pretty fairly with him, he does not know very much yet but he has common sense, what he knows he can apply." Beautiful consolation! Common sense and no knowledge. It will not help him much when he stands before all those learned men and professors.

Well, what do you think of West Point? No we don't like it, for to believe that generalship is situated in the soldier's knapsack it would be necessary that Napoleon himself come down to repeat it;—the path of honor is so slippery! "Boy! boy! you cause us so many cares. Again the treasure of health loads them upon our shoulders. All your attention is taken up by innumerable, little,

insignificant things and drawn away from your books; for the boy who gets a pointed nose by his studies and blue rings around his eyes, is going to beat you at the examination sure."

And while we are speaking to our boy so earnestly, he does not listen to us at all, the unfeeling creature is counting the rows of shingle on our neighbor's house. He does not hear our warning and our reprov-als, he feels nothing of our sorrows.

Treasure of health! you are becoming unendurable; for you alone are the cause that our child does not feel sorry and does not promise us more fidelity and love to his books. And really so it\* is. But let us be reasonable. Remember our boy has confidence in himself, self-confidence, that is a beautiful result of health:

Hundreds of difficulties and dangers he surmounted royally. Wide ditches, high walls and tall trees have already succumbed to his ingenuity, even when they refused to do so. He leads his little sister with sweet words, his schoolmate with kindness and his dog with a whip and crusts of bread. He has a fine perception of the weak and strong moments of his parents and teachers,—and they too have often to succumb to his will. Why then not trust in our selves? "Well" he thinks, or better still, feels, for he does not think much. "I'll pull through that examination well enough."



But that self-reliance satisfies him, but not us. We know better than he that he must come well prepared. Still, we will risk it with him. The professors don't always prefer the learned boys of fourteen or fifteen, they say of those that they are only "trained" for the examination; that their learning is not their property. Those gentlemen know by their experience what that means, for they themselves have to "train" their pupils also to get them ready for higher schools. Besides those gentlemen prefer boys with healthy brains and they find them only in boys with healthy bodies.

Nice boys, who are always obedient, kind and attentive at home, who study diligently in school and who are polite on the street,—that is the ideal of thousands of parents. Is it too bad that it is never realized? And strange to say,—our own children seem to be farthest removed from that realization. I wonder is it not because we know our own boy better than our neighbor's whom we saw clearing up the yard all afternoon? That seemed a nice boy, who feared and respected his mother, but unfortunately we happened to catch him the other day in the act of stealing from your mother's pantry.

Were we idealistic children ourselves? Far from it, who will deny it? When we consider what we have done and left undone, then we are like the sinners who acknow-

ledge all possible sin, but will know nothing of an itemised note of their sins. And yet it seems our boys are less good than we were. They seemed to have more respect for parents and teachers; in our days; but now with all that steam and electricity and liberality, —why it seems as if all "good" boys have been buried under all the "ty's." In our young days there were "good" boys. It is still vividly on our minds how their example was kept before us after we came home with muddy pants or the girls with torn dresses. We had great respect for those samples, but secretly we hated them. We could not play with them, for they played in a different way from us; their walk was always straight ahead, and that was intolerable to us; we preferred to look here and stand there a while. And do you know what was the most hateful of all in them?—they were such tell-tales, so proud and so false,—that seemed to us awfully good, that we believed it to be a misfortune.

And what became of those "good" boys? Have they risen above their schoolmates? They did in their own estimation, except those who died early. Strange that those "good" boys die so early or become insane. But we will say no more about them. We did not like them, and possibly we are partial in our judgement.

But there is still more that concerns us about the treasure of health in our children. Their

happiness is the highest aim of our strife. We no longer wish much more for ourselves; we have a wife, a profession or occupation that we like, we can meet our expenses, and we may wish for this or that or some other little thing, but that is all. Happiness—how shall we give it to our darling? Riches are relative honor looks like the shadow we try to catch, distinction is like Dutch-gold, friendship is rarely gold of true carat, we cannot protect them from accident—Everything here below is perishable and brittle. Why then should we hunt for it? Let us look for happiness in an other direction. "Love above all" came from the lips of the most suprême mortal when he wanted to open an ever flowing spring of happiness in every ones heart. We certainly cannot find a safer guide to the true Eldorado of happiness,—our heart feels it, our reason teaches it and the experience of thousands of people and of whole nations presses its seal upon it. We will follow Christ. Whether we swear by the Talmud, whether we pray with our face towards Mecca or our belief is in old or new—no matter. If we have his spirit, the obstruction that destroys our brotherhood is removed—His spirit is for all a same necessity. That knowledge of love and its power, is a beautiful privilege of life!

Treasure, exalted above treasures, we will pursue you during

all our life, for ourselves, for our children and for the world! Is health again going to stand in our way? Let us see. In our youthful days we were perfectly healthy. We went out in the world and as we saw the thousands of new and desirable things, we discover that a certain irresistible power drew us away from love. Work was not pleasant and we made no headway in enobling, we did not think of higher aspirations; nothing but worldliness could please us. It is true, disappointment and sorrow were the products of wandering away, but we did not mind these punishments—we went on and on, did not health give us the strength for it?

At last disease causes us to live differently. On our sickbed we saw our dependence and weakness. This taught us more forcibly than anything else that something different from worldliness leads to happiness. Blaise Pascal says in his "thoughts:" "Sickness is the natural state of Christian-, because through it we become what we should be: in suffering through evil, in the absense of all good and all sensuality, freed from all passions which stir us during our whole life, in constant expectation of death." "Did not Christ pass his life thus? Is it not fortunate when we are obliged to be in a state in which we have to do nothing than to submit quietly and humbly? It is for this reason that I pray God to give me that favor."

(Pensees de Blaise Pascal, Article XVII. Pensees sur la religion No. LXXXV.)

Remarkable words indeed!—Evidently flown from a heart full of christianity and ready to bring great sacrifices there to; produced by a brain that thought so clearly in mathematics and physiologic sciences, but that never observed the beautiful laws that unite the service of God and the fulfilling of our duties.

Pascal once saw death face to face. While riding in a carriage and four over a bridge at Nully, the front horses began to stagger and nearing the edge of the bridge they fell off, but the traces broke off through the sudden shock and the hind horses and carriage remained on the bridge. Ever since that occurrence, Pascal saw in his imagination a wide chasm before him, and this caused the sombre earnestness in which he wrote the preceding words. Certainly they plainly show the characteristic melancholic state of his mind, and we may not consider them in any other light, but they are not entirely untrue. The condition of the soul of the sick is unique. Just as the healthy state teaches us how high a position we can reach, so also can disease teach us a true idea of our human insignificance.

However it is not on the authority of Pascal or others, that we want to show how dangerous health is for the religion of ourselves and

ours. Let us look to our own experience and knowledge of men.

Possibly we can find a similar sample among our acquaintances like the youth whose biography follows here.

What nice boy George was at eight. Everything good could be truthfully said about him. Body and soul were well developed and he was attractive. No wonder that his parents saw with pleasure his rapid advancement as he left all his schoolmates behind him. He had the best teachers, was constantly stimulated to do his best. At fifteen he was quite advanced in two languages and had laid good foundation for nearly all branches of knowledge that are required for present civilization. Every one admired him and all thought he had a bright future before him. No one had seen so many good qualities united in one person. George was getting ready for an examination. He was in his room all day studying. "That is what we call work," said his friends. Soon however he perceives that hard study cannot be kept up day after day by anyone without becoming dull and mixed up. But he would persevere. In spite of himself however he was overtaken now and then by an unquerable dislike for his studies; his thoughts were drawn to other things, this way of living caused in him a greater sensitiveness and irritability; inwardly he felt tendencies and desires which he never had before;

his original lively and strong system cried loudly for satisfaction, but he persevered and made a glorious examination. Touching was however the change that had taken place in him. With the healthy look had also disappeared the easiness and liveliness, and beefsteak and wine did not restore them. He sang and whistled no more, he no longer was so careful of his dressing. When other boys went out to have a pleasant afternoon or evening he sat down by his mother, read sermons and talked with her about missionaries and charities. Poor mother! She thought her son had become so domestic. George went to college to finish his studies. But he could not study any more. His knowledge remained the same and he never reached higher. But what he lost in intellectuality, he gained in spirituality. Proof of it is a letter he wrote two years later: "he had now entirely left his previous sinful life. God had brought him to a wonderful light. The devil however gave him no rest but tried to draw him constantly away from the right path. He continued however to glory in the blood of the Lamb, whom he felt had been crucified for him,—that and that alone would conquer for him."

Hi-health was, at the same time, failing more and more. The blush of health on his cheek had made place for the blush of consumption, accompanied by a little cough. Sleep was restless, but more quiet

towards morning, and when poor George awoke, he was wet with perspiration, felt weak but still refreshed. You could then see in him again something of the healthy, lively George; he looked more natural again and his facial expressions had something charming. At the sight of that we had our hopes for his recovery renewed.

Not so with him. This tendency to returning health only brought him back to his sinful life. According to his own expression, shortly before his death, "those periods of recovery were only periods of return to his wicked and sinful life, they brought him anew under the power of the evil one,—he no longer wished for such a life," and with a touching sincerity he longed for death. Treasure of health! Can you be the means of causing such destruction?—Or do you simply turn your back to those who want to force the natural course of development? Your punishment may be just, but we declare with weeping hearts by the coffin of our beloved boy, it is terrible, . . . terrible!

Health, Strength and Self-reliance,—these are three true companions that never separate. Together they are the source of all human capability, and alone subject to the will of their possessor. But that unity is not a guarantee for the union with which they work outwards. There are so many powers that are hostile to them and they so often resist our limited

will.

Our boy is now twenty and says "I am healthy strong and self-dependent. I want to go into business and afterwards get married, but you must help me." Now we would not like our boy to be sickly or that he should be incapable of starting a business or of getting married, but again his health brings us into a pinch.

And do you know our daughter? We don't know whether you would call her beautiful or pretty, but she is healthy, strong and self-dependent. That strong neck carries her head somewhat stately,—however she never bent for anything but conviction and love,—That well-developed chest is probably somewhat broad and large, but we are the cause of that; for when that breast breathed of life, love and liberty, we thought it a pity to impede it by corsets and it was our opinion that there was too much good in that breast to transform it into an ugly looking hourglass shape. We think a great deal of our girl and we feel inclined to sketch her after the picture of the morning-star of creation; but we thought that several would turn up their noses and ask; "are those course forms really your ideal? Does that look of courage and positiveness belong to that also? We don't like it; for when we look at her we think unvoluntarily of a president of a Woman's

Emancipation Association. No we like our weaker girls better. Their passions and tempers threaten us sometimes bad enough, but we laugh in our sleeves at them, for they amount to nothing anyway, because they have no strength. And suppose your ideal became our wife and we made any thoughtless and unjust mistakes, which it is true, cannot be called good, but which are so natural and so easy made, when we had to face such a type of just feeling, of acute observation so strong and positive? What would become of us? No we repeat, we like our weaker girls better. We are sufficiently corrected and resented." Well, put your weak girls carefully in cloaks and furs, be sure you don't give them too much fresh air but plenty of foul, hot, dusty room-air. Give them romantic books and perfume and when consumption comes or some other disease produced by faulty blood-formation, which takes them away from you, do not forget to tell the world through a pathetic advertisement in the paper in which you say that "God so willed it."

No, health, strength and self-reliance cannot let the youthful life pass calmly. The ever ripening individuality of youth causes it to hope constantly for the happiness of to-morrow. That day appears and still its happiness is incomplete.

What will become of this large amount of justice in the youthful heart when it shall come in contact with the unjust world; what of this sense of beauty in opposition with tastelessness; of these fresh original ideas of good against so much old, inveterate evil? This feeling and those ideas speak strongly in that fiery spirit and through that powerful body, but they are at the same time indefinite and so little governed. Undoubtedly our youths await a heavy battle on the field of life. We fear! And shall we now deprive them of the treasure of health and strength, and thus take them from the field of battle and exchange it for our fears? Or shall we continue to give them more of this treasure and not impede its course of development, since our experience has taught us that the time will soon come when it will be more composed and when they, as husbands and wives, parents and members of society, will become wise in the school of self-knowledge and self-control?

And yet even for the period of adult life, health does not always produce as many, and such fruits as we would be led to believe. We quietly pass how health could abuse the beautiful capabilities connected with a well-developed spirit that lives in a strong body. Bulwer tried in his, "What shall he do with it?" to sketch the life of such a person, when in it he dis-

scribes his Jasper Loseley as a handsome, powerful, self-willed and bright sample of mischief. Fortunately however is the union of so much capability for good and so much deliberate and masterly executed evil, very rare, if not impossible. At least it seems to us that there are too many elements in the evil that destroy or neutralize it, than that the devil-sketch could come so near its realization in man. The ordinary man also is constantly tempted by health, strength and stability. They certainly want to express themselves in some way or other. Now we have abundance of opportunity to apply these two great gifts in our family, in our vocation or in our heart,—an unlimited field for work indeed. For here the weeds threaten to suffocate the small plants and there grows, in spite of diligence and attentiveness, the rough milkweed between the plants; and when the harvest comes it would seem that the little ro-es and smartweeds laugh at the watchful of the laborers by their showy colors

But this work becomes monotonous on the long run, it tries our patience so severely and requires so much perseverance and sacrifice that we long for some thing else to do. When we meet on our field of labor that same family, the same wife, the same children, the same house and the same occupation, we then begin to wish for some

other company sometimes. We would like to take a little trip or to read, or write, or sleep and rest just as we please, or we like to put our nose in somebody else's business, or we imagine that we ought to pay some attention to philanthropy. You see all these things elevate us somewhat above the more common things in life and that is why we want it; it stimulates our monotonous life as husbands, fathers, mothers and money-earnings being a little,—a life that heralds our glory really too little and that never gave us a single badge of valor. Who would deny us these recreations? Certainly no one, fortunates as we are, we are free! And should our conscience knock at our door and ask us whether the limited field before us is benefited by it, whether that is the best we can do for ours and ourselves; in other words, whether we are not gathering the sparrows-eggs instead of the goose-eggs, we say,—fortunates as we are, we are free,—“And when our conscience does not stop and talks to us of sacrificing love, of eyes that must be pulled out and of hands must be chopped off when they lead us away from love, then we simply believe those words that were uttered over eighteen hundred years ago to be so terribly virtuous and wise and so direct in opposition with our ever praise-deserving “I,” that we prefer to lament about our sins and

groan about our imperfectness, give a few alms to the poor and observe certain forms. Don't you see that is far easier than to strive for that unattainable perfection, and it quiets us so completely that we go quietly with it into eternity. What more do we want?

The course of our observations led us to a remarkable result. Because we are so accustomed to appreciate health on account of the pleasure it gives us, we are very apt to forget its value and at the same time the great danger that that feeling can bring with itself.

We saw how our will and our inclination modified the result of our health, but also how health exerted its influence upon the will and inclination. But strange to say,—the older we become the more our will seems to loosen from the power of material. In our youth, health produces playfulness, later on strength and reliance and still later earnestness. At least so it did if we used it constantly to develop mind and body simultaneously. Simultaneously,—for if our body was developed and not the mind, we would go back to the period of the right to the strongest; and when the reverse took place we would be like the learned professor who could not stand the out-door air and who carried around in his learning a great capital that gave none, or very little profit.

The simultaneous development of body and soul gives us control over our sensuality and thus opens the way to perfection. Our life's history bears the proof of it. When we were children we knew nothing but the sensual, everything was selfishness. When we learned to love our parents and made friends, sensuality began a transaction with love. When we choose a wife, we felt fully that we did not exist alone but that we had to divide our existence on earth with the image of our love. And when we followed a vocation that showed us to care for others, especially when our children asked our help, it became perfectly plain to us that our life required our "I" as sacrifice. But we got strength as our burden became heavier. Our strength and stability augmented as the number of our duties increased;—strength and selfreliance, the own daughters of our health became more and more valuable, and so combined with our life that it seems to us as if they were life itself. Still we ever felt that the possession of them enabled us to divert from that which our duties prescribed and how often they flattered our sensuality and how they were constantly a danger for our rest and happiness.

And now we have become old and gray. Laughing hope and bitter disappointment beautiful

fantasy and awful reality, hearty affection and cruelly torn bands of friendship and love, have brought us knowledge of the world. The world gave us sense, but how much did it take from us! We received rich lessons of experience, lessons that we heard from others before and which we gladly accepted, but they were then not yet our property, not written in our heart nor in wrinkle-writing on our foreheads.

Fortunately the world did not take from us these lessons. And yet, experience teaches us that snares can be laid by the treasure of health for the happiness of the aged. Who does not know the meddlesomness of some old man or woman to which the young can accommodate themselves with so much difficulty? Who has not often been astonished at their great attachment to riches? Fortunately more rarely we see the aged in love, but when we do see it, it disgusts us and seems a mistake in nature. These are false fruits in the treasure of health in the aged. It is certainly more beautiful to show the true fruits that grow on the field of life. And yet this is a difficult task; for after we have become seventy or eighty years of age we often ask ourselves: "what are we doing here anyway?"

It is said too that we are still " hale," but that seems so strange,



so gracious and seems only for old people. And really, when we observe ourselves, a separate word seems necessary to express our bodily vigor, while the former quickness and rapidity and our present stiff joints, bent position and stiff-measured walk is overlooked. We cannot deny that in spite of our "haleness" we are worn out. If we are lawyers we cannot get along with all those new laws and altered principles of justice,—we, who for so many years used the old ones and considered them from all sides. If we are physicians and read about stethoscopes, about our eye—and ear—mirrors, microscopy, microbes, and chemistry applied to diagnosis, intermixed with hieroglyphics that calls our common water  $H_2O$ , we hardly recognize our art which we commenced fifty years ago. And when we are ministers, O! dear what a change! No personal devil, no trinity, no learned discussions about predestinations,—what is left us of theology? If we try to learn something new we find it difficult to grasp and still more difficult to forget the old. And so also in our domestic life we are worn out. The new dresses and new furniture may be better, but they are strange and uneasy in use.

Literature? Dickens and Holmes are not like the old ones. We used to talk with our neighbors about the war and the Indians and

about business we transacted in coffee and tobacco and our children listened with open mouths. But all those old neighbors and friends are gone and the young ones make a polite visit and when we begin to talk about General Lee or Sheridan, they make a motion as much as to say: "we have heard that so often already." Our children call that Papa's hobby-horses, smoke cigars and talk of steam, galvanism, animal magnetism, table-dances and finely leave us alone. However they have other duties to perform than to amuse the old people. O! the parent duty is so thankless and children can do so little for their parents.

Alone? Yes we are alone. Those whom we loved, whom we knew through and through, who had arranged themselves to our faults,—they are all gone. And when we now ask again, what are we, "hale" men and women of seventy or eighty, doing here, then we answer with an oppressed heart: to appreciate and use the many valuable impressions and feelings, knowledge and wisdom, which they and their surroundings have left us; for no one, no matter how learned, can look upon life as we can. We were placed here together in the important position as man, together we strove for one aim, for perfection; but hundreds did not pick the fruits from the field

they sowed. Some died before they had a vocation, others before exertion and diligence had brought them independence and esteem, and others before their children were grown. But we!—how happy we are who are still in possession of sufficient health, strength and clearness of mind to remember, what and how and with whom we have worked. We do not complain as we feel daily the nearing to the childish egoism, it does us good to be alone. Come let us take a view of the traveled path. It will show us what a life can do in which health and strength have been spent well. The contemplation of the world of the aged is unique.

Yonder, in the gray distance on our life's path, we see ourselves jumping between the school-benches. The aim of life is still unknown to us and our future is still in the hands of others. A little forwards and we see a different life awakening in us. Do you see us there in that row of young men and maidens singing the song of Spring? How beautiful! The superb morning-red of life shining upon us, beautified with the blush of health, surrounded by an illuminated crown of joy. We are getting ready to begin the journey of life. Mark how kindly the future laughs at us, for on our side is the maiden of our choice,—together we go to the unknown gold-land, to the land of pure happiness. There

we make a banner together and upon that banner we write with giant letters:

WORK, LOVE AND PERFECTION.

The voyage goes on full of fire and energy. And again somewhat further on we kneel before the marriage altar; we give each other the right hand as symbol of the union we make of true fidelity and eternal love and we cling to our banner. Still further and a little child is born to us. Stronger still do we cling to our banner and it looks lovelier than ever, as the noonday sun of life shines upon it. It is true some threatening snakes crawl on our way that like to poison our happiness, falsehood is shooting its arrows and envy and jealousy are trying to lay snares for us. But what danger? Have we not written on our banner work and love, and is not the soul-enobling atmosphere around us an unconquerable fortification against evil? And the fountains of our prosperity are springing still higher around us, and the sources of our happiness are flowing still more abundantly.—Grand view!

But alas,—there we see a little spot, only about twenty square feet and near it stands the spade.

Is it true that our wife is buried there who was the soul of our soul and the life of our life? A dark cloud arises there on our path; a cloud of sorrow and affliction that seemed to suffocate us; and though

it becomes somewhat thinner further on, still it reaches high up to where we are now standing and is resting upon our grey head.

It seems by that grave that this is the last of our banner, it hangs low and lifeless. Strength has been taken away from it and it lies in that grave. A part of our "I" has been lost, where shall we find it again? We are alone, entirely alone in the world, even in the midst of thousands of loving friends. Gone is the loved one who created our world and who left us a world covered with a veil of mourning. And do you see the little river flowing from the grave? It contains the tears we wept. And do you see that the fluid in that river is muddy? It is because it contains the mud of our vanity. It was hard and cruel to separate from that too, for we never knew before that vanity and self-deception were so dear to us, because we were taught to call them evil and dangerous, but now that we are delivered from them, we feel how often they made us unfaithful to the motto we wrote on our banner.

And the dead whispers to us from the spirit-world: "go on,—my departure made you wiser,—hold up

your banner,—go on!" There we see again how we raise it high in the air and how our children want to carry it also. And though it does not wave as pleasantly as before, still it seems as if its colors are clearer and its letters glisten more beautiful than before.

Some join us and say: "How beautiful is your banner, allow us to help you carry it. And from the spirit-world a smile glances at us from our dead.

Immortality and meeting again! You were surrounded by an unpenetrable mist until now, but now we have felt and tasted you.

Again we see ourselves surrounded by new sources of prosperity, again many fountains of happiness spring up on our path of life.

But the sources of our misfortunes are not yet stopped. Do you see that heartily beloved son, that son of our hope, that Godsgift of our dead? Do you see how he walks on the wrong path and how we watch and work to get him away from it?

When we were standing by the grave of our loved one, we thought that the measure of affliction was running over, but that boy teaches us that scorned love is far worse than death.

Do you see now how our hair is turning white and how our inward suffering begins to show itself on our face? But how fortunate! With life we also possess health and that gives us rest, work, and work produces love, and love ennobles the soul. And ennobling and love are liked even by vice. Even our poor wandering boy cannot keep his eyes from our banner on which we wrote those words. Is it true, he does not follow it; but we see that as often as he looks at it he is attracted by its shining beauty and the refreshing light which it pours into his dark soul. That is why our stiff hand raises that banner now so high with grief but also with trust.

All of a sudden we turn around on our dizzy height from where we looked back at our past life, and we see the end of our path. Our view falls on the other side of time. Thick mists still cover infinity. Yet something is plainly visible: the morning of a new life, many old acquaintances in a new and beautiful garment. Good by! path of life with all your beauty and with all your affliction. We leave everything behind, everything, except that what health gave us; the banner on which was written: "work, love and perfection," that goes with us. It measured us with the same measure with which we measured it; it was true to us according as we were true to it.

DR. WAs.