DESULTORY READING.

Most So-Called Reading Courses are Pretty Nearly Pure Idiocy.

Mr. Balfour has recently stepped aside from political ways to deliver an address at the opening of a new library, in which he won the approval of all true book lovers by saying a good word for what is among the self-elect known by the contemptuous term of "desultory reading." It is the solemn conviction of the Gradgrinds of the world that there is no reading which is of any advantage to a man unless it is arranged in courses and devoted to some specific end; while equally the true book lover, the man who is born with the literary instinct and conviction, knows beyond peradventure that this reading which has been stigmatized as desultory is the most valuable of all, and that it is only by the good which is won by following it through the winding ways in which it leads as through a labyrinth that one is able to get from formal reading any benefit whatever.

The first principle of reading should be that one is profoundly interested therein. It is worse than useless to force one's self, or to force others, to go over the pages of any book which does not of itself hold the reader. It may be necessary now and then to go through a course of reading upon a special subject as one does any other mechanical task, but he labors under a complete misunderstanding who supposes that by so doing he is increasing his intellectual culture. He may for a moment increase the unassimilated facts in his mind, but this is always a hinderance to mental progress rather than a help.

The genuine love of books is perhaps a thing which one must be born with to enjoy it in its fullness, and it can, after all be largely cultivated. At least, there are few people who can not interest themselves in some sort of reading if they are but placed in a position to reach the books which are adapted to their minds, and—what is quite as important—to their temperaments. What is known as desultory reading is, after all, if one only examines the matter a little closely, reading what is adapted to the condition of the mind at the moment. It is taking the mental food which one can digest, instead of dieting the mind upon those indigestible things which have some time and somewhere been supposed to be good for minds of a different sort in a different condition. Most reading courses are pretty nearly pure idiocy; a stringing together of good books into a perfectly arbitrary and unwholesome composition. One might as well weigh out the food to be eaten meal by meal for a year to come. The appetite has more to do with it than theories, and is a better guide unless it has been most fouly dealt with.

The way to read is to read, and if a person turned into a library can not better find out what to read than anybody can tell him, he is either too young to be trusted alone anywhere or mentally diseased. The mind is its own gauge, and if it does not work well it is very seldom that any outside expedient can be made to serve instead. If the attempt be made it results in something which is not culture, at least.—Boston Courier.

JUSTICE EASILY MISTAKEN.

An Innocent Man Permits Himself to Be Convicted of a Brother's Crime.

"Years ago," said one of the well known members of the Louisville bar, "I was called on to defend a man of nearly middle age, who was accused of having stabbed a man in a quarrel on the street. Imagine my astonishment when at the first consultation he told me these facts: 'Yesterday afternoon,' said he, 'about dusk, my brother, who resembles me somewhat, was crossing the street, when he met a stranger coming the other way. The crossing was muddy, the stranger jostled him, and a quarrel ensued that developed into a fight, in which my brother, who had his penknife in his hand, stabbed his opponent several times, and then ran away as a policeman and several citizens came up. After we were all in bed last night, the officers came to the house after the assailant, and much to my surprise the warrant was made out against me. My brother is a man of dissipated habits, who has several times been in trouble, and if this case is pressed against him I am afraid he will be sent to the penitentiary. On the other hand, I am a law abiding citizen, and can prove an excellent character. Now, what I propose to do is to stand trial on this charge, plead not guilty, prove an alibi, as I can, prove my character, and take the consequences. If I am convicted, I may get off with a fine, and I am willing to pay that to keep my brother out of prison.'

"I tried to persuade my client out of such romantic proceeding," continued the lawyer, "but he was determined, and in order to do him justice in the defense I obtained the assistance of another lawyer, who did not know the facts, and would act in the defense as if our client was guilty. Well, the case came up. My client was identified by the man who had been stabbed and by the policeman and other disinterested parties who had witnessed the fight in the semi-darkness and were sure of their man, as they thought. My client swore that he did not commit the assault, but that he was at home at the time when it occurred, and his family swore to that fact. Then several leading members of the church testified as to his good character. But the jury found him guilty and fined him $50. He paid it without a murmur, and the record of his conviction stands in the orders of the court. All through the trial my client's guilty brother sat by his side in the court and heard the testimony without flinching. I asked him what he would have done if his self sacrificing brother had been sentenced to the penitentiary. 'I intended, in that event,' said he, 'to get up in court and acknowledge my own guilt.' The other lawyer was thunderstruck after the trial when I told him the facts. He refused to believe it, and said the evidence was sufficient to convict any man who lived. Only the proof of good character saved the accused from a severe sentence to the state prison."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

HUNTING BUFFALOES.

A Western Hunter's Efforts to Domesticate the Animals.

"I began hunting the buffalo in 1871. I have killed from forty to sixty buffaloes in one hunt," said a veteran buffalo hunter. "I figured out a plan of my own to corral them upon the prairie. I made an effort to get in front of the herd when they were traveling, so that they would come within about twenty yards of me in passing. I then shot the leader through the heart and dropped her in her tracks. The leader was generally a cow, the old bulls being lazy and usually lagging behind. The herd would fall back in the direction from which they came about one hundred yards, stopping to turn around and look for danger. In a few minutes one of the cows led out to go around on one side or the other, and I would drop her as I did the first. They would again fall back a short distance and huddle up together. After a short pause, another cow might undertake to go around on the other side, and invariably met the same fate as the other two. The herd after this was sure to form a close group upon the ground, where they halted after the first shot, as buffaloes never retrace their steps but a short distance.

"Now, they had trouble on three sides, and on the other was their back track, and I was free to shoot down as many as I wanted, provided I did not fire too rapidly and alarm them. Whenever one would attempt to lead away, I made sure to kill it, and this taught the others that it was sure death to the leaders.

"To be sure, it was very cruel, but I could hear the crack of guns on every side, and I thought I would have my share.

"I soon realized that these animals would soon be extinct, and in 1884 I began to gather up the calves to atone for my slaughter. It was a very difficult matter to raise them, and at first I lost fifty per cent of them; but, after a little experience, I could save ninety per cent. The calves when caught over three months old can not be raised—the cage breaks their hearts, and they give up in disgust. I continued my efforts, however, and soon had a fine stock of calves on my ranch, near Gaulen City. At the close of 1884 I had only succeeded in raising four, the next year seven and the next twenty-two full-blooded calves, and my herd to-day numbers nearly one hundred.

"I bought the famous Manitoba herd, consisting of sixty full bloods and twenty six crosses in 1887.

"I have sold a great many bulls to shows and menageries at prices ranging from $300 to $700.

"The buffalo has a very fine, long coat of hair, which it sheds every year, and I am saving this, which averages about 10 pounds per year, intending to have it made into cloth by way of experiment. The buffalo grow much larger in Northern climates, the bulls reaching a weight of 2,500 pounds, with magnificent heads, which are eagerly sought for by the museums, and for which they have to pay from $200 to $500 apiece when mounted.

"The meat of the domesticated buffalo is as tender as the finest beef and has a delicious flavor. It is not like the old tough 'run down' bull meat, which we used to get and which was nothing but muscle and sinew.

"The cows are more valuable than the bulls, a number of the former having just been sold in Utah at prices ranging from $500 to $800. The half-breeds are not so good as the three-quarter or seven-eighths. The latter are splendid animals, carrying a fine coat of hair.

"With a view of perpetuating the race of American buffalo, and also of establishing an attraction for the city, a syndicate has been organized at Ogden. A zoological farm will be started and completed as rapidly as possible. Negotiations for the purchase of a half-interest in my herd have been going on for some time. They are now concluded, the price being $75,000.

"I anticipate no difficulty in moving the animals, as I had none in bringing the Manitoba herd into Kansas."—N. Y. Herald.

Carlyle's Cold Water Remarks.

The little anecdote of Carlyle related by Lord Houghton to the members of the Yorkshire college is said to be characteristic of its hero. It appears that many years ago, when Carlyle first came on a visit to Lord Houghton's grandfather at Fryston, his host took occasion one morning to lament to him the destruction of a fine view by the erection of a tall factory chimney. Mr. Milnes, no doubt, expected that his guest would readily concur; but the philosopher was not in a concurring mood, and his reply was: "I do not at all agree with you. Since I have been under your hospitable roof this is the first evidence I have seen that any work is being carried on in this neighborhood which is of any utility to mankind." This is the sort of reply which sensitive conversationists find slightly discouraging.

QUAKER LONGEVITY.

It Is Due to Quiet Habits and Disciplined Modes of Life!

It is quite true that many "Friends" live long. It is equally true that certain circumstances in their history militate against long life. Among these latter intermarriage is, perhaps, the most important of all. The followers of George Fox have never been very numerous, but until late years they have been extremely exclusive. The inevitable result of that has been extensive intermarriage throughout the whole community. The consequences of the frequency of intermarriages have been, and are still, very evident. Quakers, as a class, are not muscularly robust; many of them are decidedly anæmic, and not a few are mentally feeble. Yet, in spite of these practical and serious drawbacks, the Friends, as a class, do more than their proportion of the world's serious business, and they manage to attain to a high average of longevity. Now this is exactly the kind of fact that true medical science likes to get hold of, and to interrogate and learn from. What is the reason, asks the sensible man, why Quakers, with so many undoubted disadvantages, attain to such a high average of success in all that constitutes worthy life, and also succeed in enjoying their success to an exceptionally old age?

The reason, we are convinced, is to be found in their quiet habits and disciplined life. An ordinary doctor, or even layman, would probably have felt much more interest in the subject at this point if we had been able to affirm that the Quakers owed their success and long life to certain drugs, as, for example, to arsenic, phosphorous, strychnia and the like; or to certain methods of feeding, as vegetarianism, or meat eating, or fruit eating, or wine drinking, or teetotalism, or smoking, and so on. But we submit that that shows a want of real mental capacity. For what, after all, is the true importance of the subject? Does it not consist in the undoubted character of the results? The results are really the things to be considered. As a matter of fact the Quakers are successful in life. As a matter of fact they do live long. Then, surely, true science will not curl the lip of scorn because these results are obtained by what may be called "natural and simple" processes, instead of by elaborate preparations and out-of-the-way methods.—Hospital.

Fluctuating Interesting.

In this country the chrysanthemum has had its ups and downs in popular favor. Soon after the European gardeners began actively the work of producing new varieties, a number of American florists became heavy importers, and the flower at once became a craze. Then the taste for them declined, until it was difficult to sell any plants at all, but in recent years the interest has been revived, and the florist's windows are gay with many colored flowers.

The chrysanthemum will endure a considerable amount of frost, but usually severe winters will kill them. The plant is one which may be easily cultivated, and may be rapidly increased by dividing the plants in April.—Washington Post.

Where He Draws the Line.

"Throw up your hands!" cried the robber.

"Certainly," replied the obliging tourist.

"I'll throw up anything you want me to. Except" (he added *sotto voce*) "the diamonds I swallowed to keep you from getting."—Epoch.

MENTAL ALERTNESS.

Why It Is the Hardest Part of Any One's Business.

There are different ways of being busy, and the busiest way of all is that which often looks least like business. It is sometimes derisively said that one is "busy doing nothing." But "doing nothing" may mean one thing to one kind of worker, and another thing to another kind. "Your work is only headwork," said the college whitewasher to the college professor, quite contemptuously. The locomotive engineer on the lookout of the fast express, with his hand on the throttle, may seem to the purely physical laborer, or to the purely intellectual toiler, to be "busy doing nothing." He calls no muscle into action, he involves no abstract thought, no philosophy, no science. He appears to be enjoying the view from his cab-window just about as idly and complacently as does the recreating tourist behind him, whose very life is committed to the inactive hands of that engineer. The engineer to all appearance is "busy doing nothing." But the difference is that the tourist-passenger is inert, while the engineer is alert. And this unbroken alertness, this sense of a tremendous responsibility unlifted for one moment, is the busiest of all ways of being busy. Every muscle is ready, every nerve is tense. The whole man, physical, mental, moral, is exhaustingly engaged—albeit the whole man may outwardly seem to be "doing nothing." The hardest part of any one's business is that part of it which lives and dies within himself. The unceasing, unbroken alertness, the ever-conscious responsibility for right action at the right time, is the busiest of all businesses, the first business of every business—of every life.—S. S. Times.

CURE FOR KICKING.

How to Master Horses Addicted to the Vicious Habit.

During the last thirty-five years a neighbor has permanently cured over twenty horses of the kicking habit, without failing in any case attempted. Following is his method: Take a half-inch rope that has been stretched until it can not stretch any more, tie it around the horse six inches back of the pad and bellyband of the harness; insert a short stick and twist it up nearly as tight as the rope will bear without breaking, and tie the stick so that it will stay. Fasten the horse in a stall where there is room behind him to wield a long lash whip, then strike him around the hind legs quite severely; at the second or third blow he will generally kick with both feet with all his might, but only for two or three times. If he has been in the habit of kicking in harness, drive him with the rope on two weeks, or until he quits making any threats. Some will kick once or twice with one foot, and bob up and threaten for several days. They should be tickled or teased, or have a basket or pail thrown under them or tied to a hind foot several times a day to make them try to kick, and until they cease to make any effort in that direction. The remedy is then effectual. After driving the animal half an hour the rope should be tightened. This will also cure bucking horses or any which try to throw their rider.—Galen Wilson, in N. Y. Tribune.

—For heroism in one of the battles of the Mexican war, the Legislature of Missouri granted to Absalom Hughes the right to keep a dram shop during his natural life without paying State county or municipal license. Although over seventy years of age, he is still engaged in the business at Cedar City.

—Merchant—"Can you bring me a few bushels of green peas, this morning?" Dakota Gardener—"Not this mornin'. My peas war' jest blossomin' when I left home an hour ago. But ef that ar' cloud, drops an inch or two so's ter keep offen the sun, I'll be here with a load this arternoon."—Time.

—The total production of gold and silver of the world in 1887, according to the report of the Director of the United States Mint for the year 1888, was, in gold, $100,826,800; in silver (at United States coining value), $125,346,310—or $226,173,110 in all. The real value of the silver was, however, much less, being about $94,000,000.

—An Easton man, homeward bound with a new carpet sweeper, was accosted by a neighbor who is zealous to be thought agricultural, and who asked consent to try that mower on his lawn. He tried it, and finding that he could not make the grass fly he passed it back with an expression of mistrust in "these new patents."—Allentown (Pa.) Register.

—A Baltimore woman dreamed of finding a pot of gold in the cellar, and the next day she went down and began looking for it. She managed in a short time to run across four large sized rats, an old key that had been lost for six months, and a jug of whisky her old man had been hiding behind the potato barrels. She is a firm believer in dreams now.—Peck's Sun.

—A nine-year-old son of Maine, living eleven miles from Bangor, heard of the electric lights in that city, and teased his father to take him there that he might see them. The father said he hadn't time. A few days afterward the boy was missed. His father drove straight to Bangor, and at nine o'clock that night found him under an electric light, gazing in open-eyed delight. He had walked all the way.

—An interesting innovation in the method of catching cod has just been made by the French fishermen coasting off Newfoundland. They catch large periwinkles, remove their shells, and use the creatures for bait. The cod, it is said, have bitten eagerly at the new bait and the owners of the French vessels have caught fish so fast that they were able to sail for France in the first week of July, instead of October as usual. In England the whelk has long been used for the same purpose.

—One of the most interesting natural curiosities of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, is situated in Rose Valley, about six miles from Trout Run. It consists of seven natural wells extending almost straight downward to a depth unknown. Large stones cast in some of these wells go rumbling down, making a coarse, rasping sound at first as they strike against the sides of the well, growing fainter and fainter until lost by the distance. Near these wells is a cave, the mouth of which is large enough for a horse to enter. Several gangways lead off from the main entrance to large separate chambers, and from these other passageways lead off probably to unexplored chambers.

—Edwin Everett Hale says that when he was in college he and his chum took the first daguerreotype ever made in Boston.

—Bishop Fowler thinks that Prince Li, the Viceroy of China, is "one of the greatest statesmen the world has ever produced."

animal's belly, and laid open a fearful gash. I saw the flash of the fellow's knife as Barrows and I hurried forward to get a shot at the tiger.

"Without relinquishing its hold on the man, the *maing-ho* bounded back up the drift, but before reaching the top it lost its grip and stopped short, a crimson stream pouring from its wound.

"At a distance of thirty or forty feet from the animal Barrows and I fired. The tiger again seized the Japanese, and tried to spring with him from the drift into its lair, but miscalculated its ebbing strength, and fell beneath the drift and the wall.

"Mustering our forces, we climbed up the gory snow-bank, expecting to have a hard struggle, but the tiger was then seen to be lying helpless on the other side. A part of its entrails extruded from the wound the Japanese had made, and Barrow's bullet was found to have passed through its body back of the shoulder, breaking a rib where it emerged on the other side. Another shot stretched the animal lifeless in the snow.

"The man whom the beast had tried to carry off lay where the creature had dropped him, and we at first thought him dead. But though he was overcome by fright and badly bitten, his hurts were not fatal. We carried him back to our quarters, and he recovered in the course of a month.

"Two of the Coreans mustered courage to enter the den, and found there some of the bones of their two unfortunate comrades whom the tiger had carried to his lair to devour.

"Three of the Japanese remained behind to take off the tiger's skin, which, when afterwards stretched out at the mill, was found to be nine feet long. This tiger must have weighed fully five hundred pounds, and was handsomely striped."—Lieutenant C. R. Smith, in Youth's Companion.

SOMEWHAT RISKY.

How It Feels to Have an Apple Cut in Two on One's Head.

I once let a professional swordsman cut apples in two while I held them on my head and on the palm of my hand, and I'll never do it again. The experience is too thrilling for the plain citizen who is not military in his tastes. I was with a show when the regular assistant of the swordsman went on a strike, and the swordsman was in a dreadful fume as he thought of disappointing the crowd of spectators that night. He came behind the scenes at rehearsal and called for a volunteer. "I'll give twenty-five dollars to the man who'll hold the apple for me," said he. No one volunteered, and I daringly put in my oar. "I'll do it if you give me a rehearsal." "No rehearsal," said he, emphatically, "it will shatter your nerves so that you'll tremble like an aspen leaf when you come out at the performance." So I went out when night came, the upper part of my body covered with a thin silk vest. It was cold, anyway, and I trembled abominally. He saw it, but said nothing to me. I held the apple on my extended hand, and it shook. I could feel it shaking, and felt ashamed, but I couldn't control the nervousness. I turned away my head; he made a few rapid feints, and I knew by the applause that the apple had fallen. I didn't feel the blade at all as it cut through. Then I knelt down, and he put another apple on my neck. I knew this was really dangerous, for if his hand slipped he might decapitate me. I shut my eyes. In a second, which seemed an hour to me, I felt a thin cold line touch my neck, and there was more applause. In that instant I thought of Mme. Roland and the guillotine, and came near fainting. He told me to get up, and I followed him, feeling rather dazed, to the dressing-room. I thought I must be cut, the touch of the steel had been so plainly felt, but the looking-glass showed me that there was not a mark on me. But I was awfully pale. The next night we got a regular man to hold the apples.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

—Books were scarce in Puritan days, and perhaps that is the reason the writers made the most of the titles, using such choice ones as "A Reaping Hook Well Tempered for the Stubborn Ears of the Coming Crop; or, Biscuits Baked in the Oven of Charity. Carefully Conserved for the Chickens of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Sweet Swallows of Salvation;" "A Pair of Bellows to Blow Off the Dust Cast Upon John Fry."

—"I've been thinking," said Jenkins' mother-in-law, who is something of a gossip, "that it is a woman's duty to fit herself for the same struggle in life that men undertake. I've determined to apply at your father's bank for a place." "Yes," said Jones, "ask him to let you be Teller."—Merchant Traveler.

—Mr. Hardcash—"Well, sir, what induced you to imagine that I would give my consent to my daughter's marrying you?" De Gall—Pardon me, my dear sir, I wasn't so foolish to imagine any thing of the kind. I merely asked for it as a matter of form. If you refuse we shall marry without it, that's all."—Grip.