

a distant bullock bell, the sight of the sea, or the moaning of a winter wind. Our responsiveness is immediate, we settle as by instinct to our work, and under such moments of mental pressure some of the grandest music, some of the finest works of art, and some of the noblest thoughts have been given to the world. Inspiration thus leads to inspiration by producing in other minds that which has been the cause of its own expression in lasting form.

Many of us have been roused from a lethargy of brain by a single sentence or a stray verse, which have themselves been the outcome of inspiration.

They stand out from a page, we could put our finger on them in the dark, and the mind returns to them for days afterwards. Recently two in particular arrested the writer's attention, and are worth quotation. The following sentence appeared in the British Weekly in a description of Lord Rosebery's mother:—

“And somewhere in the heart of this great lady there lurked all the gypsy's longing for the wind on the heath, strange stars, solitude and the open road.”

This is a simple sentence but the latter part calls up associations that are part of one's creed. The following exquisite little poem by Juliet Wilbur Tompkins appeared in a recent number of Munsey's Magazine, and was entitled “For All These.”

“I thank Thee Lord that I am straight and strong,
With wit to work and hope to keep me brave;
That two score years unfathomed, still belong
To the allotted life Thy bounty gave.”

“I thank Thee that the sight of sunlight lands
And dipping hills, the breath of evening grass,
That wet dark rocks, and flowers in my hands
Can give me daily gladness as I pass.”

“I thank Thee that I love the things of earth,
Ripe fruits and laughter, lying down to sleep,
The shine of lighted towns, the graver worth
Of beating human hearts that laugh and weep.”

“I thank Thee that as yet I need not know,
Yet need not fear, the mystery of the end;
But more than all, and though all these should go—
Dear Lord, this on my knees!—I thank Thee for my friend.”

This is distinctly good.

We might quote many lines which have called forth instant response in ourselves, and have led to us being braced up for a good spell of work, but apart from the written expression of ideas, we may obtain inspiration from the ever changing phases of nature. Who has not tried a walk as a refresher? There is no better cure sometimes for stagnating brains. If one can reach a hill-top, so much the better. Nature's heights are good for the soul. If no hill is within convenient distance, try a valley and look upwards. A solitary tree on the sky-line may suggest a thought that will open up a whole train of ideas, for though inspirations do not originate in conscious effort, still we need not sit down with folded hands to wait for them. On the contrary the harder we strive to do good work, the finer do our perceptions become, and the oftener we put ourselves in the way of receiving impressions, the more readily will we be influenced by them. We must cultivate the capacity for receptivity. Hardening processes of any kind are fatal to the writer who would succeed, and there is no finer soother than the touch of Nature. In this beautiful Colony of ours with its easy transit to spots of solitude and beauty no one need lack mental food or the sources of inspiration. There may be a few who are handicapped to such an extent that they are shut off from