

# **"MAKING GOOD"**

**POINTERS FOR THE  
MAN OF TO-MORROW**

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*By*  
**JOHN T. FARIS**  
*Author of "Winning Their Way," etc.*



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***"MAKING GOOD"***

## Foreword

**S**YMPATHY with young men in their problems, their ambitions, their struggles, their failures, and their successes, has led the author to tell them some of the things he has been trying to learn during years of intimate association with other young men in the home, in school, in business, and in the church.

Because people are more interesting than words, the messages are given for the most part by means of incidents from the lives of actual young men. These incidents show that none but those who struggle can count on achieving success, and that the best success comes to the man who works not simply for a living, but in order to make life better worth living, for "the other fellow," as well as for himself.

J. T. F.

*Philadelphia, Pa.*

# Contents

## I. Getting Ready

I.	PREPARATION AND POSTPONEMENT . . . . .	13
II.	LOOKING AHEAD . . . . .	17
III.	USING PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES . . . . .	23
IV.	SUCCESS IN THE HOME TOWN . . . . .	26
V.	HOW LITTLE THINGS COUNT . . . . .	29

## II. Surmounting Difficulties

VI.	THE TWO ROADS . . . . .	37
VII.	AROUSING HIS AMBITION . . . . .	42
VIII.	THE STRUGGLE OF THREE . . . . .	48
IX.	THE TRIUMPH OF A CRIPPLE . . . . .	54
X.	THE MAN WHO CAN SMILE . . . . .	58
XI.	THE TESTING TIME . . . . .	64

## III. Stability and Instability

XII.	THE NEED OF FIXED CHARACTER . . . . .	69
XIII.	ONE SECRET OF FAILURE . . . . .	72
XIV.	"FIFTY YEARS OF FAILURE" . . . . .	76

## IV. At School

XV.	BE THOROUGH . . . . .	83
XVI.	BUSY HERE AND THERE . . . . .	87
XVII.	EARNING A COLLEGE COURSE . . . . .	91
XVIII.	THE FIRST MONTH IN COLLEGE . . . . .	98
XIX.	HOW TWO STUDENTS WON . . . . .	102

## V. In Business

XX.	GETTING AND KEEPING A SITUATION . . . . .	109
XXI.	TWO WAYS OF WORKING . . . . .	112
XXII.	WHY THEY WERE DISCHARGED . . . . .	115
XXIII.	HONESTY THE BEST POLICY . . . . .	121
XXIV.	FIVE SECRETS OF SUCCESS . . . . .	125
XXV.	THE SCHEME OF A BEGINNER . . . . .	129
XXVI.	WRITING A GOOD BUSINESS LETTER . . . . .	132
XXVII.	"THANK YOU!" . . . . .	138

## VI. Was It Luck?

XXVIII.	DOING SOMETHING WORTH WHILE . . . . .	145
XXIX.	THE BOY WHO EARNED PROMOTION . . . . .	148
XXX.	EARNED BY CLEAR HANDWRITING . . . . .	150
XXXI.	BY WAY OF "STRUGGLE TURNPIKE" . . . . .	154

## VII. Work and Wages

XXXII.	THE JOY OF WORK . . . . .	163
XXXIII.	"WORK, WORK, WORK" . . . . .	168
XXXIV.	EARNING A SALARY NOT ENOUGH . . . . .	172
XXXV.	IDLERS AND WORKERS . . . . .	176
XXXVI.	FAILURE AND SUCCESS . . . . .	180
XXXVII.	NOT MONEY, BUT CHARACTER . . . . .	187

## VIII. Habits

XXXVIII.	THE REWARD OF INTEGRITY . . . . .	193
XXXIX.	WANTED—A MAN OF HONOUR . . . . .	197
XL.	"I PROMISE" . . . . .	201
XLI.	CATCH UP—AND KEEP UP! . . . . .	205
XLII.	ON TIME . . . . .	207
XLIII.	KEEP CLEAN . . . . .	211
XLIV.	THE USE OF BOOKS . . . . .	216
XLV.	THE USE OF TIME . . . . .	219

## Contents

9

XLVI.	THE USE OF MONEY . . . .	224
XLVII.	DEBTS AND THEIR PAYMENT . . . .	227
XLVIII.	TRAINING THE MEMORY . . . .	231
XLIX.	TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD . . . .	233
L.	THE THINGS THAT PLEASE US . . . .	238

### IX. Ourselves and Others

LI.	HELPPFULNESS . . . .	243
LII.	"MOTES AND BEAMS" . . . .	247
LIII.	COURTESY AND DISCOURTESY . . . .	252
LIV.	TAKING SECOND PLACE . . . .	257
LV.	MAKING A CHUM OF FATHER . . . .	260
LVI.	BEING A GENTLEMAN . . . .	265

### X. Getting a Vision

LVII.	CUI BONO? . . . .	273
LVIII.	TO-DAY OR TO-MORROW . . . .	275
LIX.	POVERTY AND RICHES . . . .	278
LX.	THE GAIN OF LOOKING CLOSELY . . . .	281
LXI.	"BLIND LEADS" . . . .	285

**I**  
**Getting Ready**

## I

### PREPARATION AND POSTPONEMENT

**T**HE captain of one of the coal boats which ply on the Ohio River from Pittsburg to Louisville once invited me to take a trip with him. As I was the only passenger, I was permitted to spend much of my time in the pilot house, with eyes open to the novel sights which constantly presented themselves and ears attentive that I might miss none of the pilot's keen and practical observations of persons and things.

When I first entered the pilot house with him, the fleet of coal boats had been tied up for several months because of low water; but a general rain had been falling for some days, and a good stage was expected within a few hours. Consequently, the boats were rushing hither and thither, each captain making an effort to get his tow together as quickly as possible, that he might take his boat out ahead of all competitors.

While our boat was making fast to her carefully arranged tow, the pilot called out: "See the *Silas Manner* over there? She's just starting out with ten barges. I hope everything will be all right with her this trip, but I'm afraid for her. Often she is in such a hurry to be off that the work of

preparation is not well done, and something happens. I have learned that it is best to spend a little more time in preparation, and not to start until everything is in good shape.”

I had occasion to remember the pilot's words a few hours after our own journey had been commenced. A few miles from the city, at a spot where navigation was extremely difficult, a black mass showed itself. The pilot watched it a moment, then said :

“ I was afraid of that. It is one of the *Marners*'s barges. Evidently it broke loose when she was rounding the bend, and drifted on a rock. Now hundreds of tons of coal lie there in the river bed wasted—and worse, a menace to navigation—all because of undue haste.”

Some distance further on, we sighted the railroad bridge at Parkersburg. “ What is that against the channel pier ? ” I asked the pilot.

“ I am afraid it is more of the *Marners*'s coal. Yes, there she is herself ! The current must have caught her tow and thrown it against the pier. The barges were not well lashed, and several broke loose. Poor Captain Jones ! I'm sorry for him ! The profits of this trip—yes, and of several other trips, too—are all gone, just because of a little carelessness. Now he'll have to hang round here several days, and finally be forced to bring up the rear of the procession, even following after the vessels which are always delayed because their captains leave all preparation till the last minute.

“They are a warning, too—those captains who come down to their boats in hot haste when their owners send them word there is a rise on the way. They loaf round the pilots’ club-house during low water, putting off the making of needed repairs on their boats from day to day, and when the water comes they have a hundred things to do. The boilers must be overhauled or there are washers to be replaced, or the machinery is to be fixed. They finally start off a day or two late, and each day’s delay means several hundred dollars lost for their owners. They make me think of the farmers whose places I pass every trip, who leave their reapers in the fields after harvest. They always intend to move them to shelter, ‘to-morrow,’ or ‘next week.’ But intentions go for nothing, and they are left there through fall rains and winter snows. In the spring, repairs are necessary, but the farmers are busy, and they put off fixing up until harvest comes on just a few days sooner than they had expected. Then the reapers must be repaired in a rush. But, at the best, valuable time is lost, and often many bushels of grain drop from the over-ripe stalks to the ground.”

Every ambitious lad is in danger of falling into the snare that entrapped the *Silas Marner*. He is eager to take his place in the world, to begin doing a man’s work. “Why should I wait another year?” he asks. “It would be only a year lost! What does one year more at school amount to? But one year earlier at business would be a wonderful gain.”

And many a lad has persisted in such plans for an early start in business, only to learn in later years that he is seriously handicapped by the lack of what he might have learned in that year stolen from the preparation season.

On the other hand, there are some boys and young men who are continually putting off the day of beginning. They intend to begin some day, of course, but they intend so long, and do nothing in the meantime, that when finally the day for action can no longer be postponed, they are all at sea. Everything is at sixes and sevens. They are handicapped at the start, and are apt to fall farther to the rear as the years go by. And their only solace is a continual growl and grumble at the "hard luck" which pursues them.

## II

### LOOKING AHEAD

“**B**ETTER wait another year or two before you think of leaving school to go to work in the store,” Henry’s father said to him. Henry was sure he was losing valuable time, lingering in school when he might be hard at work, getting his feet firmly planted on the ladder of success. He was sure his father did not understand. Anybody could fill the position which he had in mind; what was the use of going to school another year? So he was not satisfied till he was on the pay roll at the dry-goods store.

All went well for a year. Then Albert, who had been in his own class at school, applied for work. It was arranged that he should take Henry’s place, while Henry was promoted. How happy he was! He had proved to his father that it was not such a bad thing, after all, to leave school. And how superior he felt to plodding Albert, who had lost a whole year’s time by staying at school! Albert might have been where he was, if only he had been wise enough to begin work at the same time.

But Henry very soon learned his mistake. One day his employer asked him to go over a bill of goods, just received, and mark them at a certain per cent. advance on cost price. Confidently he

began his task, only to find that it was too much for him. Percentages, fractions, and decimals became mixed as he worked. But at length he finished, though he feared the work had not been properly done.

A few hours later he found that his fears were justified. His employer examined several pieces of the newly priced goods, and frowned. "Poor work, poor work!" he said, and looked about for some one to do it over. Everybody was busy but Albert. So he was called.

"I wish you would look over these prices and see what is wrong with them," he was instructed. "Ask Henry there about the advance you are to make on the cost price."

So Albert, though reluctant to change Henry's figures, went to work. It was not difficult to do the figuring, for his class had been thoroughly drilled in percentage and decimals that last year at school. When his employer examined his work, he spoke a few words of commendation. Before another week passed Henry was at his old tasks, and Albert had been promoted above his head.

"All on account of those old figures!" Henry thought. "I never was quick in arithmetic. But who would have thought plodding Albert would get ahead of me this way? It's all luck. If only I hadn't been asked to do that percentage work!"

But he did not stop to think that one more year at school would have enabled him to do "that per-

centage work " correctly. He was merely paying the penalty of his unwillingness to make proper preparation before beginning his business career.

A young man was taking a bicycle trip through a beautiful country. The tire on the rear wheel was badly injured by a day's ride on a rocky road. It was late in the afternoon when he reached a town where he might have secured a new tire ; there was still plenty of time to repair damages before night. But he wanted to do other things. So he left the wheel alone. The next morning, as he was about to mount and ride on, he looked ruefully at the tire. Even then he might have had it fixed, if he had been willing to delay a single hour. But no—he had planned his day. He wanted to ride to the mountains before the day was too far spent, then climb a steep, winding road, and be ready for an exhilarating eight-mile coast to the valley on the other side. Should he delay to repair the tire, he feared he would be unable to reach the summit in time to have this pleasant ending to his trip. So he decided to go ahead, without repairs, and hope for the best.

He had ridden about fifty miles, and was not far from the base of the mountain, when the bruised tire exploded. He found that he could not mend it, even temporarily—the break was too large. On consulting his road map, he saw that he was in a lonely district, with no town nearer than twenty miles. It was six o'clock, and he was weary ; but there was only one thing to do. Pushing the use-

less wheel, he walked to the mountain, wearily climbed the ten-mile slope, and then trudged down the eight-mile stretch on the other side, where he had hoped to coast. Is it strange that all the way to the valley he thought of his folly in starting before he was fully prepared ?

In the autumn of 1907 a ship was at a South American port, laden with cargo for Philadelphia. But before sailing the vessel should have been cleaned. During months of cruising in southern seas the hull had become covered with barnacles, which very perceptibly impeded her progress. However, the captain was loath to spare the time necessary for scraping the hull ; he wanted to be on his way—delay would be expensive. So he gave orders to start on his long trip to the North.

He had not proceeded far when it became evident that the hull was in even worse condition than he had thought. Progress became slower and slower. Finally the food, which should have been sufficient to take the vessel to Philadelphia, was exhausted, and it was necessary to put into a port in the West Indies for a fresh supply. Even this was insufficient for the impeded vessel. When fuel gave out the second time, all extra wood on board was burned. Even some of the deck fittings were stripped off and fed to the fire on the last day before making port. Finally, the ship, a sorry spectacle, was on her way up the Delaware. When a few miles from Philadelphia, a large steamer was seen ahead, passing down-stream. Signals were ex-

changed, indicating the courses to be taken by the vessels in passing. The steamer just leaving port was able to keep her course; but the barnacle-covered ship was sluggish, and would not respond to her helm. There was a collision. Fortunately, no lives were lost. But it was necessary to tow the South American steamer to port, where, for some time, she was laid up for repairs. The captain's attempt to save time by starting before he was ready had proved costly, in both time and money.

In these days of rush and confusion it is more than ever necessary that we should "get a good ready" as boys sometimes say when they are at play. The spirit of modern life is well indicated in a description of things observed during a midnight walk through the streets of a seaport city, as told in a newspaper sketch. The writer told of passing an engine-house, where he saw the shining fire-engine ready for any moment's call. "The double harness, already attached to the engine, hung suspended from the ceiling, where a pull at a cord would drop it instantly upon the horses' backs. Day and night that engine stands there, in readiness for instant service; and men and horses are equally prepared and equipped to obey the first sharp summons of the alarm bell."

Then the observer noted a huge factory. "The machinery was still, but the steam was breathing softly from the engine-house, and a night watchman was going about the dimly lighted interior. At any hour of the day or night the touch of an

electric button would set that complicated machinery in instant motion."

He went to the railway station. "A vestibuled express train stood on one of the tracks, equipped for its first swift flight of fifty miles without a stop. It still lacked many minutes of scheduled starting time, yet the locomotive, with all steam up, was attached, the engineer and fireman were at their posts, the brakemen on duty, the porters standing by the steps of their cars. 'Prepared for service' was written on every line of the glistening train."

Thus, "throughout the great night-wrapped city, the spirit of watchfulness was abroad. Even the breathings of the city's sleep were like those of a dreamer who has thrown himself down in his working clothes and slumbers fitfully, expectant of the early hour when he must not fail to wake."

Prepared, all of them! But the preparation was not an accident. It was the result of careful planning, of daily sacrifice, of earnest purpose. Nothing was to be left to "luck" or "chance." In order that they might be successful, men were ever noting the things they must do, and doing them. This is the only sure way of performing our tasks.

### III

#### USING PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES

I WAS attracted by him. He was a bright, healthy-looking young fellow, whose bearing indicated that he had a purpose in life. He passed me several times as we walked back and forth on the deck of the little lake steamer. At length I ventured to speak to him. He answered with a smile, and soon was telling me of himself. He was a student for the ministry, and had just finished the first year of his seminary course. With animation he spoke of beginning his work.

“I want to devote myself to the working men,” he said. “I feel that they are neglected, and that more men should consecrate themselves to their interests. There is a great possibility of results, if only they are approached in the proper spirit.”

I told him I agreed with him. Then I ventured to suggest that the successful worker in that field must be able to put himself in the place of the labouring men, striving to understand them as he mingled with them.

“Oh, that is all right!” he answered. “I thoroughly sympathize with working men. I know I shall get along with them perfectly. There will be no difficulty on that score.”

I saw him again within a few minutes. He was going forward on the main deck, picking his way in the wilderness of trunks, conveniently placed by the deck hands as they would want them at the different landings. The passage was entirely closed, except at one place. Passengers could safely reach the bow, beyond the trunks, by the use of the stairway from the upper deck. But the young man chose to go by the nearer way. Unfortunately, his trousers caught on a trunk nail as he brushed by, and an ugly rent was made. Seeing one of the deck hands near by, he hurried to him and said, angrily :

" See what your carelessness has done. Why don't you have a safe passage to the bow ? "

Respectfully the man answered : " Sorry, sir, I'm sure. But you see we must have this space for the trunks ; there are so many of them to-day. "

" But I wanted to get to the bow. Aren't passengers supposed to have access to all parts of the deck ? I've a mind to report you to the captain. "

" There is a free way to the bow from above, " was the response, still respectful. " Perhaps you didn't see others using it. "

" Well, I didn't see why I should go around ; it was easier to go through here. A pretty way to manage a boat you have here ! "

The deck hand kept his temper admirably, and said nothing. The passenger, too angry to say anything more, went to another part of the boat. Until he reached the landing he could talk of nothing

but the heedlessness and worthlessness of some men he knew.

Probably it would be unfair to infer that the young man is mistaken in his idea that he is called to special work among labouring men. There is too much judging of men on insufficient evidence.

But it is certainly fair to take advantage of every such incident as a warning to ourselves to use present opportunities for service, and not merely to look forward to distant opportunities for larger usefulness which may or may not come. Careful doing of our best in the little things of the present will prepare us for the possible larger things of the future; misuse of the incidental opportunities of every day must inevitably hinder our development for capable performance of the tasks of which we dream.

## IV

### SUCCESS IN THE HOME TOWN

“**I**T’S of no use for me to think of getting a start here in Greggsville! There’s no chance in a little place like this, where everybody knows me. No one takes me seriously. I think I might as well give up trying, unless I can go to the city, or at least to some large town where there are some chances for a young man!”

The speaker evidently thought his words were final. So he seemed a little surprised when his father answered him :

“I’m not so sure about the lack of opportunity for you right here in Greggsville. I have found it a very good place. I have managed to make a comfortable living.”

“But times have changed since you were a young man.”

“No; I don’t think they have; at least in this respect. There is still an opportunity for many a young man of push, right in the town where he finds himself. It may be he will have to make his opportunity, but it is there.”

“It’s easy to talk, father,” was the answer, “but I’m afraid you can’t really point me to young fellows like me who’ve been making things go in a little, out-of-the-way place like Greggsville.”

"Yes, I think I can," the father replied. "I know a man who was born in a village of eight hundred people, three miles from a railroad, and not even on a trolley line. He felt the town was too small to give him a chance, so he went to the nearest city. There he struggled for a while until he became ill. The physician sent him home. He tried to go back to the city, but soon learned that he could not keep well away from the pure air of the country. He found his way home once more, and moped about for a while. Then he made up his mind that he must find work.

"But there was nothing to do. He made various efforts, but was unsuccessful. Finally he thought he could at least carry brick for a new farmhouse being built near the village. While at this work he talked with the contractor, and learned that an apprentice was needed by his carpenter. Application was made for the position, and he was successful.

"Then followed four years of hard work. Many times he was discouraged; but he shut his teeth hard, and declared he would not give up. He had his reward. He was, at length, a finished workman.

"Now what was he to do? He could not go to the city. For weeks he thought of his problem. Then he began to wonder why he could not build up a contracting business in the village, and among the farmers of the surrounding township. Houses and barns were continually wanted; builders from

the city where his health had failed were given the work.

" Soon he had a chance to bid against one of these city builders. His bid was the lowest, but the farmer said, ' Why, it's only one of our own boys who wants the work. Guess I hadn't better risk him. He's young ; then it doesn't look reasonable to expect good work from one of the boys who has had nothing but Greggsville opportunities.'

" There were other setbacks. When he succeeded in gaining his first contract, the local bank, which consented to discount his note in anticipation of the completion of the building, called it in without warning, thirty days before the expected date. There was no explanation ; but the contractor soon learned that the difficulty was that he was only a Greggsville boy.

" More than ever determined, he fought his way step by step. At length the farmers and the townsmen were forced to recognize him. He had all the contracts he could care for. Now the bank is only too glad to have him on the books. He keeps three gangs of men busy in different parts of the country round, and rides in his own automobile from operation to operation. He is one of the leading men in Greggsville, and everybody respects him."

Many times there is reason in leaving home to undertake work somewhere else, but not nearly so often as young men think.

## HOW LITTLE THINGS COUNT

“**B**UT it’s such a little thing! Surely it won’t do any harm if I am an hour late at the store this afternoon!” a young clerk said to a companion, who was urging him to be in his place at the usual hour. “I want a little fun in my life, and now that I have a chance to stop and see the parade, I propose to do it.” And he walked on, while his fellow clerk turned the corner to go to the store.

Only a little thing! But the young man who begins his business life thinking that such little things do not count is deceiving himself. Unless he changes his ways the day is likely to come when failure will be his lot, just because of the accumulation of the little things which he felt at the time were of no consequence.

The story has been told of a young man who was usually very careful of his speech. When he was out camping with a number of friends, who were accompanied by two older men, he heard a story which suggested an obscene comment, and this he made on the instant. It seemed a small thing; he knew that he had seldom been guilty of such an offense; and he hoped that one of the men, whose good opinion he desired to have, would forget the incident.

Early next morning this man was called back to the city. The thought of the obscene word spoken by the camp-fire was his last memory of the young man. A year or two later, the young man was a candidate for a responsible position. One of the three who were to decide the matter was the man who had been so much displeased by the hastily spoken obscene word. The appointment was given to another; and the young man always thought that his one careless word was responsible.

Some years ago, in an English shipyard, hundreds of men were building the *Discovery*, which was to be used by a party of explorers in the Antarctic Ocean. Orders had been given that only the strongest timbers should be used, and that all work should be done in the very best manner. But, for some reason, one workman became careless, and—as afterwards appeared—made use of some defective material. Perhaps he thought his disobedience of orders would never be discovered; it may be he felt that his work was in such an unimportant part of the vessel that a little carelessness would not do any harm.

His failure was never traced to its author. But, months later, when the vessel was thousands of miles from a dry-dock, she sprang a leak. Efforts to stop it were of no avail. Finally the captain was compelled to conclude that the defect was somewhere under the skin of the vessel, where poor work had been done in England. There was nothing to be done but keep the sailors at the pumps,

in order that the leak might not sink the ship. And for months they were obliged to do back-breaking extra duty—just because of the failure of one man, who probably thought his slack work would never trouble any one.

In October, 1907, the *Principessa Jolanda*, a 12,000 ton steamship—the largest ever built in Italy—was ready for launching. A vast crowd was waiting to see her glide down the ways into the waters of the Mediterranean. “Amid the cheering of thousands the launch was triumphantly accomplished,” a correspondent telegraphed to his paper. “But no sooner was the vessel fairly afloat than she was seen to heel over in an alarming manner; the cheering ceased in an instant, and a dead silence followed; the effect of this and the huge mass of the vessel slowly going over was so horrifying to the spectators that they started to flee from the spot. The water reached the port-holes, and the cabins quickly filled. Soon all that was to be seen of the great steamer was a portion of her side, like the back of a whale, about five feet above the surface at its highest point.”

It is probable that this great loss was occasioned by some very small mistake in construction—maybe an error of a fraction of an inch in drawing some part of the plans. For, it has been agreed, it was just such an error that caused the collapse of the Quebec bridge a few weeks earlier—a slight change of figures in calculating the unit of stress.

Earlier in the year a French submarine vessel

was lost because of a very trifling difficulty, discovered when the boat was raised. An insignificant pebble had become lodged in one of the valves that let the sea water into a compartment where it acted as ballast. "As the valve was thus prevented from closing, the water continued to leak into the compartment until the accumulating pressure burst its inner partition, which was not intended to resist the full pressure of the sea. There was a sudden burst of the water into the interior of the vessel, and it went to the bottom."

But, just as little things, which are thought of no consequence, frequently wreck a business, a vessel, or a life, other little things, seemingly just as unimportant, have been known to be responsible for striking successes which many superficial observers say are unaccountable and undeserved. The determination to overlook nothing merely because it is small is a characteristic of many leaders who would otherwise never have been heard from.

"How is it you are prospering in business, when so many of your competitors are having a hard time to pay their bills?" a dry-goods merchant was asked. "You buy in the same markets as the others, and charge the same price to your customers. Your rent is no lower than theirs. And yet everything seems to be in your favor. How do you explain it?"

The answer was promptly given. "The margin in this business is so small that it is necessary to watch every corner. For instance, I always dis-

count my bills. The two per cent. I am allowed for cash may seem a small item. But two per cent. on two hundred thousand dollars' worth of goods is four thousand dollars. There you have what is, in itself, a good income."

"Only a little thing." But it is the little things that make or mar life. And it is the man who can stop these little leaks—first in himself and then in other people—who is looked to for the control of great interests.



**II**  
**Surmounting Difficulties**



## VI

### THE TWO ROADS

**A** WHEELMAN was spending his vacation in Scotland and England. He had heard of the magnificent roads to be found there—roads as smooth as boulevards—and he looked for them wherever he went. At first he was disappointed. True, he found many stretches of fine road ; but there always were drawbacks.

One day, however, he found the ideal surface. The road was like a floor. The machine seemed to move almost without the rider's effort ; it was child's play to work the pedals. Mile after mile was registered by the cyclometer, and there was no weariness, no aching muscle. This was delightful ! If only all roads were like this ! It was so cool ! A double row of great trees sheltered him from the sun. Then it was unnecessary to keep an eye on the road for stray bits of "metal" as the English call the broken stone used in macadamizing. Every few miles an old man was seen, with a basket on his arm, who patrolled his allotted section of road, and carefully removed all loose stones. All was made easy for the rider. He could look about him, and enjoy the scenery to his heart's content.

But there was the trouble. There was no scenery to enjoy. The road led through a flat country.

Sometimes it crossed a moor, again made its way through a bit of lowlands. Once in a while, a farmstead or a village was seen—but these were not picturesque; they were as uninteresting as the country. Yes, the bicyclist was free to use his eyes as much as he wished. But for very weariness of gazing on the monotonous picture, he often closed them as he pedalled along the perfect roadway.

He rode one hundred miles that day, but this fact is the only thing for which the day was remarkable—this, and that ideal bit of road. No pictures were stored in the memory to delight him in the coming years, when his thoughts would go back to that day's ride.

Another day he was in the Western Highlands of Scotland. He was told he would have a wretched road if he persisted in his purpose to ride from Loch Lomond to Oban by the sea. But he was determined to see that country, so he made up his mind to endure the discomforts of the road.

And what a road it was! Not only was there no caretaker to gather up the rocks, but one would think that an army had passed that way, and every man had thrown a stone in the path. Progress was difficult. The wheel was continually bumping against something. The rider was jolted until he ached in every bone and muscle. Finally one tire was wounded almost to the bursting point, and it became evident that a visit to the repair shop would soon cause demands on the owner's shallow purse.

The enamel, so bright and shiny in the morning, was scratched and marred. The spokes were twisted and bent. It was the worst road found in the course of several thousand miles of riding.

But the memories of that day! The beautiful, beautiful pictures stored away in the memory, pictures which come to the mind of the returned traveller in the midst of worries, and the unlovely surroundings of later years. That wonderful Glen Falloch, leading from Loch Lomond to Crianlarich! That ride by the quiet waters of Loch Awe, the gem of the Highlands! Those miles by the base of lordly Ben Cruachan, in a silence unbroken! The beautiful colouring of the rocky walls of the Pass of Brander! And a score of other memory pictures, such as artist never yet has been able to put on canvas.

The cyclometer recorded no hundred miles that day. Far from it. But it was the best day of the tour. Stones were forgotten, bruised muscles were of no account. They served but to add zest to the day's enjoyment.

The wheelman thought of those two roads when he heard the story of two young men, who were just beginning life.

He met one of them on a crowded street car, and was attracted to him by his courtesy to a ragged newsboy, who seemed to be in the way of everybody else. "When I heard him speak a kind word to the lad, I looked at him, and was drawn to him," the observant passenger said to a friend. "His

was a refined face, the face of a man of breeding. He was smiling, and his smile was winning. I spoke to him as one sometimes speaks to others under similar circumstances. We soon were engaged in conversation. As I heard him speaking easily and naturally of people and events, I wondered who he could be. I thought he must be some student from Harvard or Princeton. He could have talked with the most cultured on equal terms. I found myself wanting to know more of him. I thought of pleasant hours in his company when we should meet in the future. But my thoughts were interrupted as he exclaimed: 'Here's my corner. Pardon my glove, sir!' as he took my hand. 'Wish you'd drop in to see me. I have just opened a little saloon out on D—— Avenue!'

"You could have knocked me down with a feather," the passenger continued. "That man a saloon-keeper? I shuddered as I thought of the waste of good material. Why had he chosen such an occupation when he might have filled—and acceptably, too—almost any position one could mention? It is only conjecture on my part; but I think he must have gone into the business because it seemed the easiest thing for him to do. I am sure he is there because he feels there are no stones in his way. His path is as easy to travel as the down-hill road always is."

The other man is a student in an Illinois city. He is a cripple—has been a sufferer from hip disease for years. The natural thing—the easy thing

—for him would have been to give up, and be a charge to his relatives. But for years he has been travelling the rough road to a profession. There has been no one to pick the stones out of the way. Often he has been bruised in body and mind as he has pressed on. But obstacles and difficulties have only made him more determined.

When he was a lad he longed to climb trees with his fellows. They said he never could do it. He tried—and fell. He tried again, and yet again, until he could make his way up any tree in the town. He secured a fair education by his own efforts. He went into a lawyer's office, and prepared for the state examinations for admission to the bar. He took them—and failed. He tried again another year, and once more he failed. A third attempt was made, with the same result. But he has not given up. He is still studying. "That board must give me a license," he said recently. "If I try nine times and fail, I may succeed at the tenth attempt."

He has chosen the rough road. There are stones that way, and discouragements. But that way he proposes to travel.

Two roads—a road where the way is made easy, from which all the stones are removed to order; and a road, stony and rough, where the traveller longs often for ease and rest. Two roads! At the end of one are defeat and disappointment. Along the other opportunity beckons. At its end joy is promised—the joy of the victor.

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## VII

### AROUSING HIS AMBITION

**A** DOZEN patrons of the public library were laughing and talking as they stood at the receiving desk, waiting to return their books. Schoolgirls talked gaily of their sport, boys discussed plans for their summer holiday, mothers spoke of their children and their homes. Everybody seemed happy.

“Yes, everybody else is happy, and I am miserable,” one boy thought, as he stood apart, unwilling to approach his acquaintances. “Their lives are full of pleasure, and mine is full of misfortune. I wonder if those fellows would laugh so much if they had lost everything and had to give up college? Would that woman be chattering like that if she had my outlook on life? Would any of them ever smile again if they had to stand in my shoes? No opportunities, no future, no hope! I might as well be dead.”

So his thoughts ran on, as, one by one, the patrons passed to the issuing desk. He did not observe that he was alone until the librarian called to him from her seat behind the railing.

“Yes, I have a book to return,” he greeted her. “But please do not ask me to read any more books like this. I know you gave it to me because you

thought it would help me. But it did not do me one particle of good. These men who write do not seem to know what life is. I don't believe that the author of this book,"<sup>1</sup>—he laid it contemptuously on the table—"ever knew what it was to be really disappointed or discouraged, or hopeless. I thought I was going to like it at first when I read about the young fellow whose back was injured when the tree fell on him. Those pages which told of the months when he thought of his ruined life were about right. I know just how he felt. But I lost patience when he began to study wood-carving. And when he began to enjoy his work so that he laughed as he used to do before his accident, I wanted to put the book down. It was only a novel. Don't tell me that when a man is in his fix he can be of any use in the world! No, thank you! I guess I won't take any book this week. Books are so unsatisfactory. My life is real enough to occupy my mind without reading any such trash as that author wrote. When he can point me to a man in a fix like mine who has actually done something to make life worth living, I'll listen to him."

The librarian listened sympathetically. Suddenly there came into her mind a bit of biography she had read in the morning paper. That might help him.

"I know of a man who really lived, who was able to succeed in spite of grave misfortune," she began. "He lives only a hundred miles from here, too.

<sup>1</sup> "The Wood Carver of 'Lympos," by Waller.

As a boy he had declared he would be a railroad man, and that he would not be content to remain in a minor position. He became a locomotive fireman. His work brought him to the attention of his superiors, and they were about to make him an engineer. But one day, while performing his duties on the engine which drew the fast mail, he strained his muscles, and as a result was paralyzed from the waist down.

"He went to his father's home, and was tenderly cared for. A wheel chair was secured for him, and he was told to make himself easy for life. But he was not satisfied to be idle. He thought for many days, trying to devise a way in which he could be of use in the world. Then he called for paper and ink, and wrote to several fire insurance companies, asking for appointment as agent among the farmers of his township. Securing a horse and buggy, he began to go out for business. But I must read you the rest from the paper.

"His insurance business has grown until now he is agent for six of the big companies, and is reputed to be one of the best insurance men in his state. He figures that he has driven fifteen miles a day on an average during the past nine years, his longest one-day drive covering sixty miles. He usually goes alone, but sometimes takes a boy along where there are gates to open or measurements of houses to be taken. Many a night he has driven over the lonely country roads by himself. Only a few weeks ago the king-bolt in a small wagon in which he was

driving broke. He crawled out on the front axle and went home on two wheels.

“After getting a start in the insurance business he added a machine shop to his office. At first he ran the machinery with a little engine of his own construction. As his business grew he put in an eight-horse-power engine, and an assistant. He does repairing of all kinds, from a watch to a sewing machine. The benches are built low, so that he may work at them while sitting in his chair. Among other machines attached to his line shaft is one for grinding feed for his ponies.

“Some time ago he said to a friend: ‘Of course I am labouring under difficulties, and I find it hard sometimes to fight off the blues. But I always try to laugh instead of cry, and by so doing manage to keep up my spirits.’”

“You said you didn’t want to take another book to-day,” the librarian continued. “But while I have been talking I have thought of a volume which came in with the last lot from the publishers. I want you to read it. The title is ‘Life at Sing Sing, by Number 1500.’ It tells of a man who made something of himself in the face of obstacles which you or I would have thought insurmountable. No, it isn’t a novel this time!” She smiled as she observed the boy’s impatient look. “It is the true story of a convict in Sing Sing prison.”

“Of a convict?” he asked, astonished that a lesson could be drawn from such a life.

“ Yes—of a convict ! I’ll tell you a little about him. He was hard, and he was discouraged when he entered the prison. Unfortunately, he had time to indulge his morbid feelings, for the agitation of labour leaders had been instrumental in silencing the machinery in several of the prison factories. There was not work enough to keep the men busy. Among the equipment which stood idle was a complete printing outfit, sufficient for the employment of thirty men. Day after day hundreds passed by the printing office. Not one of them thought of the golden opportunity—until our convict had an inspiration. He was not a practical printer. But he thought it was a pity to permit such a waste of good material. At night, in his cell, he thought of a plan. If they could only have a prison paper ! It seemed a wild dream. But the more he thought of it the more feasible his scheme appeared. After careful deliberation he asked to see the governor of the prison, and laid his plans before him. The result was the first issue of *The Star of Hope*, the first prison paper ever published. The convict, who grasped the opportunity hundreds of others had passed heedlessly by, became editor. He had his editorial office in the corridor. His condition as a prisoner was as light as it was possible to make it. Life took on new meaning for him. He forgot that he was in a prison, at least for a part of the day. He proved the truth of the old lines :

“ ‘ Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage.’ ”

"But he not only helped himself—he made life brighter for others. Contributions from the prisoners were welcomed. Talent was developed. Ambition was awakened. Many men, discouraged before, gained new faith in themselves. Prisoners, influenced by the little paper, have gone out to live useful lives. Several prison reforms were instituted, because of discussions begun in the columns of the convict's paper—among others the law of 1901 which introduced the system of parole or provisional release.

"*The Star of Hope* became a permanent institution of the prison. During the editorship of its founder, it was one of the most frequently quoted papers in the country. And now, trained in his own office, even if that office was in a prison, he has given to the world a book which deserves careful reading. If you care to take it home, I will send for it."

"If you please," the boy answered. "I think I'd like to know more about that man."

A few minutes later the librarian smiled, as she saw him pass from the library with the book in his hand. There was a hopeful look on the face which had been so gloomy.

"I believe he will find his opportunity," the librarian thought, as she turned to respond to other visitors.

## VIII

### THE STRUGGLE OF THREE

**T**HERE is inspiration for young men in the biographies of men of to-day who have achieved marked success. Obstacles which are thought insurmountable seem to lose something of their terrifying aspect when we read what others have done in the face of great difficulties. And when we are tempted to give up because of one or two failures, there is encouragement to renewed effort in the knowledge that men whom we know and whom their countrymen honour won their way in spite of many failures.

Less than thirty years ago a young man of twenty-two was attending a lecture in chemistry at Oberlin College. The professor was speaking that day of aluminum, the light, strong metal now so extensively used. The student became deeply interested when the professor declared that aluminum was the most plentiful mineral element known, but that, because of the great difficulty of extracting it from other elements, it was too expensive for ordinary use. Thousands had tried to discover a cheaper process, but without success.

When the lecture was over, and others were rushing from the class room without giving a further thought to aluminum, the young man was

making a resolution. "Because nobody else has been able to obtain aluminum on a commercial basis, it does not follow by any means that I cannot do it," was his thought.

He did not wait for his graduation to experiment, but began the difficult work at once. Soon after leaving college, he secured a patent for a process perfected after many trials. Then he sought to interest capitalists. They laughed at him when he told of his discovery. It did not seem reasonable that, when hundreds of older men had failed, a young student could be successful. But capital was finally secured, and the new process was put to the most severe tests. The tests were convincing. The experimenter had succeeded. The price of aluminum has been reduced from ten dollars a pound to twenty-two cents, as a result of one man's determination to overcome difficulties.

A machinist's apprentice in Pittsburg longed to become an astronomer. Instead, however, of neglecting his work because it was distasteful, he wrought diligently in the shop and became a skilled engine-builder. In the evenings he studied astronomy. As he was too poor to buy a telescope, he determined to build one for himself. It was not to be a toy, but a serviceable five-inch instrument. After making his drawings, he submitted them with fear and trembling to the astronomer of the Allegheny observatory, who, astonished at the lad's skill, assured him that his plans were well conceived.

In three years the telescope was successfully completed. But the lad was ambitious for a twelve-inch instrument, and he set to work to build it. He was now superintendent of the machine shop, and so was able to buy expensive tools and complete the work in two years. It was ready for use, when the lens was broken. Undaunted, he began a new lens, which was ready in a month.

It was not long until friends persuaded him to give his life to the manufacture of astronomical instruments. He succeeded in his business as at his trade. Some of the finest instruments in the world have come from his laboratory, and astronomers know that the Brashear name on any instrument is a guaranty of superior excellence.

Some thirty-five years ago a young school-teacher in Maine was eager to make his way in the world. He studied law in the evenings, and was admitted to the bar. He studied mechanics and chemistry for recreation. He practiced law, became a banker, and laid by a comfortable fortune before he was thirty-five.

Nineteen years ago he was ready for further triumphs. Resolving to go into a new country and develop its resources, he associated himself with other young men, and went to Sault Sainte Marie, in the province of Ontario, Canada. Here he purchased a five-thousand-horse-power canal. But it was insufficient for his purpose. He determined to deepen and widen it, in spite of the fact that it was cut out of the solid rock. At great expense,

he blasted a channel with three times the old capacity, and used the rock so obtained for the construction of the power houses. Thus, at the beginning of his career in Canada, he showed that ability to make use of obstacles which soon attracted the attention of the industrial world.

When he had his water-power ready for manufacturers, he waited for them to come and make his fortune for him, and waited in vain. He must use his own power. But what should he manufacture? He thought of paper pulp. But there was no raw material at hand. Undaunted, he organized exploring parties to traverse the wild forests of Ontario. The life was hard. Privations were many. Eight men died before the quest was successful. But at last almost inexhaustible forests of spruce were found.

The next need was water to float the logs to the factory. But there were no rivers. Never mind! He could build railways; and build them he did. The timber was carried to the mill, and paper pulp was put on the market.

Then another obstacle presented itself. American paper-makers combined, and refused to use the Canadian pulp. Canada used very little, and it would have been very unprofitable to export to Europe, as the pulp, saturated with water, weighed too much.

Then he determined to make dry pulp for export. Knowing competitors confidently awaited his failure. He could not succeed, they said. So, when

he asked manufacturers to make drying machines according to his specifications, they refused. There was nothing for it but to build his own machines. But he had no foundry and no machine shop. These were constructed, the machines were perfected, the dry pulp was produced, and the combination of American competitors was a failure.

It was not long until the ambitious manufacturer saw a chance to make an improvement in his pulp. To do what he wished he needed sulphur. Sulphur was to be obtained only in Sicily, and the price was high. Freight charges would make it much higher. Then why not have a sulphur supply of his own? Near him were some nickel mines in which were large deposits of sulphur. But no way had ever been discovered to separate it from the ore with which it was found. This was no obstacle to him. He built a laboratory and discovered a method to separate the sulphur. Then he bought a nickel mine, and his sulphur supply was at command.

It seemed a pity to waste the ore remaining after the sulphur was extracted, so he experimented until he found a way to use it in combination with steel. Thus a nickel-steel alloy was formed, so superior to anything known that the Krupps contracted for all that he could manufacture.

This was only the beginning of the triumphs of this remarkable man. It would take too long to tell how copper alloy in the nickel ruined the nickel steel, until it was extracted by the use of caustic

soda ; how the caustic soda was extracted from common salt, and the by-products used for other purposes ; how, when iron was needed for an improvement in the nickel steel, an iron mine with thirty million tons of ore in sight was discovered by an exploring party under the indefatigable man ; how, when he wished ore boats, and could not secure them in America, he bought four steamers in England, and paid the expense of bringing them over by loading them with cement for his factories.

This is like a fairy story, but it is only a sober account of what one determined man has done. He had help, of course, but the help came to him only after he had proved his courage when confronted by obstacles, his resourcefulness when his way seemed to be blocked. Capitalists stood by him when they saw the temper of the man, and success crowned his efforts because he was undaunted by failures and worked up to the limit of his powers.

## IX

### THE TRIUMPH OF A CRIPPLE

**W**HEN he came home from the war "Jim" M—— was a helpless cripple from inflammatory rheumatism. After some years he recovered the partial use of his legs, but even after he left his invalid's chair he was compelled to use crutches. And he was only twenty-one!

There were other discouragements, moreover. His father, a farmer, was in debt. This debt was growing larger each year. As the cripple reclined in the chair his father fashioned for him—he could not sit up for several years—he thought of the family's failing fortunes. Soon, in a quiet way, he began to make suggestions about the farm. After a while it was seen that order was coming out of chaos. Debts were paid. The farm was well managed. Neighbours wondered at first, but they soon found that the change was due to the thin, gaunt cripple, almost a skeleton, whose face was distorted by the constant pain he was suffering.

While still unable to sit erect, he began to read law. How he managed to hold the heavy books was a mystery. "I might as well be trying to do something while I am lying here, useless," he said to a visitor, with the smile which almost continually illumined his face—a twisted smile it was, for his

facial muscles were distorted by the great pain he suffered. As the visitor studied the face he saw the marks of something more than pain ; it was the inflexible purpose that enabled the cripple to master obstacles.

Almost weeping, the mother explained to the visitor that " Jim " was far from useless, even as he was, for everything in the house went as he said. His word was law. His younger brother fairly worshipped him ; his father and mother were wrapped up in him.

" He can never walk," the father remarked sadly ; " he cannot by any possibility finish his law studies—why, he cannot read more than fifteen minutes at a time. He hasn't a moment free from pain. Even if he could finish reading law, he couldn't practice. We fear he cannot live more than a few months longer."

Twenty years passed. The visitor who had seen the helpless cripple studying the law book was now living several hundred miles away. One day, to his astonishment, he saw " Jim " M—— entering his home—crooked, twisted, one leg bent and stiff, walking very slowly, leaning on a cane, his face unchanged save for added maturity, the same smile adorning it. He explained that he was on his way to conduct a case in the next county seat !

The years between had been years of struggle and victory. He had not only completed his studies, but had been admitted to the bar. By sheer will-power, as much as anything else, he had

left his invalid chair and by slow and painful degrees had gained some control of his muscles.

Then he climbed to the head of the bar in his county—this man who had never seen the inside of a lawyer's office until he began to practice. He was the chosen adviser of the widows of his region in their business perplexities, and of others in need. He was the leader of his political party in his county. A year or two after the visit to the home of his friend he was sent to the state legislature, and at once became the recognized leader of his party on the floor.

When at home he had time for other things than his own affairs. He was a moving spirit in creating and maintaining the village library, one of the first in his state outside of the large towns. When he saw the need of more adequate educational advantages than he himself had enjoyed, he led the way in founding and equipping an academy of high grade.

For twenty-five years he continued this service of his fellows. He was, so his physician insisted, "on borrowed time," all the while. Perhaps in all those toilsome and fruitful years he never drew a breath free from acute pain. Even at his best he was unable to unfasten his shoes.

The change in him from careless boyhood to resolute and capable manhood was a marvel to all. The discipline of pain served a noble purpose. It brought out the best that was in him, and made him ten times the man he would, in all probability,

have been under what men are tempted to call more favourable circumstances.

However, the story of "Jim" M—— is only one more evidence of the fact that we do not know what are the most favourable circumstances for ourselves. If we could choose our own surroundings we would probably be tempted to make them quite different from those God has given us. We are apt to chafe and fret because we think some one else is so much more favourably situated than we are. What successful, triumphant lives ours would be, if only we did not need to contend with poverty, for instance, or some physical infirmity!

But would they be triumphant? Does not the fact that God has permitted us to be so situated indicate that He has a purpose for us? As the careful gardener chooses for each variety of plant the soil and temperature best fitted to its needs, so God, who knows what will best develop us, gives us just the needed measure of discipline and hardship. Thus through struggle we come to understand that

"Life is not as idle ore,  
But iron dug from central gloom,  
And heated hot in burning fears,  
And dipped in baths of burning tears,  
And battered with the shocks of doom  
To shape and use."

## X

### THE MAN WHO CAN SMILE

**I**N 1905 the citizens of New Orleans made the first determined fight against the yellow fever epidemic. During previous epidemics the people became panic-stricken, and business was paralyzed. But that year it was resolved by the leaders in the city that there must be no panic, and that the disease should be stamped out as quickly as possible.

Acting on the then recent discovery that contagion is carried by the *stegomyia*, a species of mosquito, it was determined to destroy every mosquito in the city, and to seek out and render harmless every possible breeding-place for the insects.

Since there is surface drainage in a large section of the city, and since, instead of using underground cisterns, the householders store their rain water in large wooden tanks, it will be seen what a herculean task was before the volunteer health officers. But they were not deterred by the magnitude of the labour. The city having been divided into sections, thousands of men organized themselves and set to work. Gutters were cleaned, the filthy courts of houses in the poorer sections were disinfected, and practically every barrel and cistern was screened. When the supply of wire netting

gave out, cheese-cloth was used, or oil was spread on the surface of the water. Hundreds of houses were sealed up, and the mosquitoes within were destroyed by the fumigating squads.

After several weeks of vigilant effort, the workers breathed more freely. The entire city had been covered. Now all could rest and wait for the abatement of the pest which must surely follow the destruction of the disease-carriers. Then came misfortune. "A terrific night storm of wind and rain fell upon the city," one who watched the fight closely wrote at the time in a magazine article. "It tore loose the cheese-cloth and lighter netting. It overflowed the water receptacles, carrying off the safeguarding surface oil. It formed thousands of little pools, where the stegomyia might drop her eggs. It not only undid the work of toilful days, but established new conditions of difficulty. That next gloomy morning, when the working leaders crawled down to general headquarters, sick at heart, bedraggled, weary with the desperate, hopeless battle of the night, they found above the office door a bright, new placard, bearing a motto for the hour of disaster :

“ ‘Wear a smile upon your face,  
And a flower in your buttonhole.’

“It was like a trumpet-call to the fighting men. In it was embodied the unconquerable spirit of New Orleans under fire. The workers passed beneath

the sign, and within, found Dr. Warner with a smile on his face, and a flower in his buttonhole. None of the atmosphere of defeat was there. It had been a knock-down blow, but the fighter was on his feet again, cool, resourceful, and with unabated courage. That day the very essence of inspiration went out from headquarters. The call to the work was sounded in every quarter of the city. In banks, in office buildings, on the floor of the exchanges, in the crowded stores, in clubs, in church meetings, in restaurants and saloons, the summons came to every able man to help rebuild the defenses of the city. That day, and the next, and the next, and for days thereafter, coatless and hatless, lawyers, clerks, merchants, doctors, bookkeepers, barkeepers, ministers, and bankers, perching perilously on roof slopes and cistern tops, hammered alternately their unpracticed fingers and the nails that made sound the netting fortifications of the beleaguered town."

And the result? The epidemic was conquered. Slowly it yielded, until, two months before the coming of the frost—which, in previous years, had been the only salvation from the plague—the volunteer workers joyfully disbanded, and went to their accustomed places of employment.

This spirit of the man who triumphs over misfortune was shown by Lieutenant Gordon Johnston, once an officer in the Rough Riders during the Spanish War, later serving in the Philippines, where he was severely wounded in battle. The

newspapers reported President Roosevelt's message to his old comrade :

"How are you?"

Instantly upon its receipt by the wounded man the reply was flashed back to America :

"Fine, thanks!"

No word of his wounds! No complaint of his hardships! Not a hint of his sufferings! No more cheerful greeting could have been given by a man who had never known pain, or grief, or sorrow.

One who read of this brave lieutenant thought of an experience some years ago in Scotland. He had been looking forward with delight to taking a bicycle ride through a picturesque bit of country. When the day fixed dawned the rain was falling, and everything was dreary. Nevertheless, he put on his storm coat and started on his way. He had gone a mile or two, and his thoughts were as gloomy as the surroundings, when he met a countryman, plodding along the muddy road. The rider was about to pass without a word; he did not feel like speaking. But the footman, looking up with a smile and a nod, said :

"Fine day, sir!"

And he said it as if he meant it. After that the wheelman had something to think of besides his discomfort. And when—still in the rain—he pushed his steed through the heavy roads back into the town, there was a smile in his heart, as he recalled the plodding wayside philosopher, and reflected that :

" The man worth while  
 Is the man who can smile  
 When everything goes dead wrong."

James Whitcomb Riley thus expressed the same idea :

" Whate'er the weather may be," says he,  
 " Whate'er the weather may be,  
 It's the songs we sing, and the smiles we wear,  
 That's makin' the sunshine everywhere."

But sometimes we think we can't smile. There is nothing to smile about. Our smiles would be empty, and our songs would be mockery. Why so? Why not smile as we recall days which have not been so gloomy, and sing as we think of the pleasures which have been ours, which, we trust, are to be ours again? Why not follow the example of an obscure physician of whom a returning traveller once told? On a gloomy day when the rain was falling, and the most beautiful buildings looked dingy, and the distant Alps were shrouded in clouds and fog, the traveller entered the Kaiserbad to take his daily exercise and Swedish bath. " What disagreeable weather!" was his greeting to the physician who attended him. But the physician did not agree. Just the day before the Prince of Bulgaria had visited the baths, and had given him a pleasant word and a gift. And so—even if it rained, and others were gloomy—he could smile and be happy. For he was thinking of his yester-

day. "Ah! But I have the remembers!" he said; and the traveller was silenced.

Is there a frown on our faces? Have we as much reason to be dismayed as the brave men in New Orleans, after the storm which destroyed the work of weeks? Is there sadness in our hearts? Let us think of the message of the Philippine soldier, and be cheerful. Let us imitate the Scotchman in the rain, and the physician who remembered pleasant things in the time of gloom, and try to brighten things a little with our own smiles and "remembers."

## XI

### THE TESTING TIME

**J**EREMIAH had a hard time to convince the Israelites that it was to their interest to listen to his appeals as he urged them to turn from their sins. But he was of good courage for many years, until the people, wearied of his utterances, plotted his destruction. Then he cried for relief: "Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place . . . that I might leave my people, and go from them!"

God answered him: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" as much as to say: "To-day is a day of testing. The trials you have now are trivial in comparison with those which will come upon you later. If you faint now, what will you do when your enemies oppose you not only with words, but with deeds? Courage! Bear these things like a man! Be not weary in your strife with footmen—then shall you be ready to contend with horses."

Jeremiah learned his lesson. There was no further complaint. Longings for a lodge in some vast wilderness were never again expressed. He endured the stocks, the prison, the loathsome dungeon, without a word. He proved himself able to

contend with horses ; but he had first trained himself to run successfully with footmen.

God's question to the despairing prophet is, in effect, continually in the minds of men in every-day life. It is the question of the practical man of affairs who seeks to train the lad in business habits. Does he fail in necessary qualities early in life ? Then what hope of him in the future, when more and more the burden must be laid upon him, when responsibilities increase, and men have the right to expect more of him ? Since the future depends on the present, the merchant with a new clerk in his employ watches him with the eye of a lynx to see how he carries himself at his work. Perhaps the clerk does not know how he is watched. He is not aware that it is his time of testing ; and unless it is his habit to perform his duties faithfully and uncomplainingly, he will some day be found wanting. The recognition of this fact by employers frequently leads to the discharge of brilliant men, and the retention of steady, zealous plodders, for employers realize that present reliability or unreliability are forecasts of the future ; that to-day's determination to do the best work in the best way is a promise of to-morrow's success and usefulness.

One hundred years ago there was an English lad named Carey who was never discouraged. He would do what he set out to do, no matter what the difficulties. He tried to climb a tree ; he fell, and limped away. Next day he tried that tree again, and climbed to the top. It was his day of testing.

A few years later that lad became a missionary. After arduous labour he had translated the Bible into the native tongue. The type was ready, the printing machinery installed. Then, before a single copy was printed, fire destroyed both translation and printing outfit.

But Carey, the lad, had climbed trees in spite of repeated falls. And Carey, the man, undaunted, began at the beginning once more, and in two months the work of translation was under full headway. He had run with the footmen and had not been weary ; so he was able, when need arose, to contend with horses.

Is it plain ? Inability to endure the small discouragements of life, failure to meet the trivial responsibilities of to-day, unfit a man for larger responsibilities and patient endurance in later years ; and he who stands the test put upon him in the smaller things of life is thereby fitted to encounter problems and cares which await him as he grows older.

To-day is our testing time. What does it foretell ? Are we weary as we run with the footmen ? Then what of the days when we contend with horses ?

# III

## Stability and Instability



## XII

### THE NEED OF FIXED CHARACTER

“**H**E is solid as a rock,” is the popular characterization of the man in whom the world has learned to confide, because he is fixed in character. How satisfying it is to hear such a statement! There is a universal craving to meet the man who can be depended on.

But the world has no place for the man whose character is not fixed, who is tossed about by every wind that blows, ready to be influenced by present surroundings, only to be driven by changing surroundings to contradictory ideas and contrary purposes. His name is bandied about with joke and with gibe, to his discomfiture in life, and the shame of those who bear his name after him.

John Erskine, Secretary of State for Scotland some two centuries ago, was such a man. His greatest gift seemed to be his ability to accommodate himself to circumstances, without regard to principle. The well-earned nickname “Bobbing John” was given him by his associates, and as “Bobbing John” he is known in history. His character was not fixed.

A few years ago there was a young clerk in San Francisco who was gifted with many qualities which should have made him successful. He had a

winning, genial personality. His friends prophesied for him a brilliant future. For a time events seemed to justify the prediction. However, when every prospect seemed bright, he failed. Another attempt he made, with prospects even brighter than before. Once more he failed. Thus brilliant beginning and humiliating failure followed each other until his friends shook their heads and said: " Poor man ! he is just one short of success." He came short, simply because of failure in application, unsteadiness of purpose, lack of fixed character.

A little later a young man entered college with great promise. His friends were gratified as they noted his progress. Their gratification increased as the years passed. But his fellow students began to fear for him. He was an enthusiast in everything ; this was promising. The difficulty was that his enthusiasms were continually changing. One day he would tell a companion that Napoleon needed but four or five hours of sleep ; so he would cut down his rest accordingly. A week later, having read of some noted man who made it a rule to sleep nine hours each night, his plans were changed, and he seldom breakfasted with his fellows. Again he would determine from something he had heard that a light breakfast was best for a brain worker. For two or three weeks he would go almost entirely without his morning meal. Then he would suddenly begin to eat heartily, in imitation of his hero of the moment. In short, while the young man was brilliant and enthusiastic, he was erratic in his

enthusiasms. His fellows joked him. The greeting of the morning was apt to be: "Good-day! What scheme is on your mind to-day?"

Immediately on graduation he was given a position at a salary enjoyed by few young men. That position he retained, with satisfaction to his employers, until some brilliant plan entered his head. Then he resigned, and without capital or backing began work which only a man of fixed character and steady habits could bring to a successful issue. Disappointment, discouragement, failure—this is the record of the succeeding years. Death was a welcome relief.

Just as the rock is the symbol of that which is fixed in character, so water is the popular emblem of that which is ever changing—water, which fills the almost measureless abysses of the seas; which foams and tosses mountain high, only to break and fall to the level once more, terrible, unreliable, impotent.

"Is my character fixed like the rock, or is it unstable as water?" This is the question each young man should ask himself. If he shirks the question, the world will answer for him; and the answer will be his epitaph.

### XIII

#### ONE SECRET OF FAILURE

“**N**OWADAYS everybody is talking about the secret of success,” a business man remarked to a young friend. “I haven’t much to say about that to-day; but I do want to tell you of one secret of failure—the habit formed by so many young men of changing employment frequently. I know there are often good reasons for making a change. But how often the only reason is an unreasoning longing for something different. Beware, my lad, of leaving a situation simply because you think anything will be better than what you now have. You may find your mistake when it is too late.

“I wish I could impress on the mind of every young man an incident I read in some book of biography when I was a boy. The writer was at one time a passenger on a sailboat, becalmed on a river. He found it hard to endure the heat of the mid-summer sun, as there was no shelter from its rays. After an hour or two he cast longing eyes towards the bank where stood a large tree. At length he asked the captain to set him ashore. He was warned that he would not find the bank as pleasant as the deck of the vessel, but the passenger thought he knew better. So a boat was manned,

and he was set on the bank. With a sigh of satisfaction he stretched himself out in the shade of the tree, only to find himself almost instantly the centre of a swarm of mosquitoes. In vain he fought them. How he longed to be back on the burning deck of the boat! But he had asked to be left ashore for two hours. During those two hours he learned a lesson.

“Here is another incident, from a recent book of travels, which tells how much more successful, under ordinary circumstances, is the man who does not make frequent changes. The author is telling of a fishing expedition in Scandinavia, and says: ‘One night three of us had gone off in our respective boats to fish in the river. A Scotch friend elected to fish in his waders. He took his stand in one spot where the waters of the lake foamed and rushed into the river. There he stood for three hours, without shifting his position, merely changing his flies once during that time. When the night’s catch was weighed that man had a greater weight of trout than had the occupants of the three boats together, who had fished the whole of the river. Here was the result of patience and perseverance.’

“I knew a young man who had a good home on the farm. But he was not satisfied, and he entered a machine shop as apprentice. The wages were small. In his boarding-house was a man of his own age who earned twice as much money, as an unskilled labourer on the street. The apprentice,

therefore, determined to leave the machine shop only a few weeks before his first advance in wages was due. In vain the foreman talked to him, telling him of the future and its rewards. He went to work on the streets. The life of a labourer had its unpleasant features, and he gave it up to take a place on the waiting list of firemen on a large railroad. It is hard to tell what has become of him now. He has floated from one thing to another until he has floated out of the knowledge of those who were his friends.

"I remember another young fellow who left the farm. It was his ambition to go into a large wholesale house in the city. On making application for employment he was told there was no opening at the time, and was advised to seek temporary employment elsewhere. The wholesaler watched his movements and nodded his approval when he went behind the counter of a retail dry-goods store. Then and there he determined to make a place for that promising young man. A few weeks later the clerk again sought the wholesaler. 'How do you get on in S——'s store?' he was asked. 'Oh, I am not with S—— any longer. The hours were too long. I am in a carriage shop now.' The merchant said nothing, but he decided at once that a young man who could not endure the discomforts of a retail store was not the man to work up in a wholesale establishment.

"It was the same thing at a meeting of ministers I once attended. A man of mature years had ap-

plied to be taken under the care of the body as a candidate for the ministry. The committee to which the application had been referred reported that, after a thorough investigation of the man's history, it seemed unwise to recommend the granting of the request. 'He has been a floater all his life. He left school at fourteen years of age because he didn't like to study. He has had one position after another, and each one has been given up without good reason. He seems to have no steadiness of purpose, no "stick-to-it-iveness." We question the wisdom of encouraging him to undertake a ten years' course of study, when he is already nearly thirty, with such a record behind him.' The report of that committee was unanimously adopted.

"The moral?" the merchant concluded. "You will find it in an old proverb, and in Tusser's quaint addition to it:

" 'The stone that is rolling can gather no moss.  
Who often removeth is suer of loss.' "

## XIV

### “FIFTY YEARS OF FAILURE”

**T**HIS was the strange title which caught the eye of a reader as he glanced over the volumes in the case devoted to new books at the library. What could it mean? He was eager to know, and so carried the book home.

It proved to be the anonymously written autobiography of an Englishman whose life justified the title he had chosen. He was a failure—had been a failure from his boyhood. Many times he was very near success; but always he slipped back among those who had come short. And the reasons for his repeated failures were so patent that he made no attempt to hide them. He was not handicapped by unfavourable surroundings in his youth. In his early years he knew his grandfather, “a statesman distinguished as one of the best-informed and most cultured men in the kingdom,” whose house was “famous as the resort of diplomatists and of literary men.” His father was a clergyman of the Church of England, a man of some prominence among both churchmen and statesmen.

From his home in a cathedral city the lad was sent to Eton. There he did some work, it is true. But he gave himself up so completely to sport and pranks that he had little time for study. “I do

not know whether or not I was a failure at Eton,” he wrote. “ Having been a failure all my life, I ought, to be consistent, to have begun early. Certainly I was no conspicuous success.”

When he left Eton he sought a nomination to the Foreign Office, in the hope that he might carve out a career in his country’s diplomatic service. With five others he entered the examination required—and failed. Probably failure to make the most of his opportunities at Eton was responsible for this failure at life’s threshold. “ I often speculate what would have happened had I been successful in this competition,” he wrote. “ The man who succeeded has risen to high rank in the diplomatic service, and . . . there is no saying to what dizzy heights of ambition I might have climbed had I come out first in that examination.”

It is not likely, however, that he would have advanced very far. For there was a fatal weakness in his character. To the end of his life he manifested a lack of stability which stood in the way of success.

Some time later friends urged his parents to seek for him an appointment in the British Museum. To secure this, they pointed out, he would not be brought into competition with other candidates, but would be required to pass only a nominal examination. No scientific qualification being required, he was soon appointed to the coveted place. There, in daily contact with some of the brightest men in the kingdom, he had wonderful opportuni-

ties for self-improvement. He did his work well, and was several times advanced. His superiors encouraged him to hope for better things. But the better things came so slowly that he became restless, and resigned. Years later, looking back on this action, he said: “I must frankly admit that had I stayed in the British Museum I should probably have been better off than I am. . . . I was not there long enough to be able to say whether I should have been eventually a failure or not.”

Some time before his resignation he thought he would study law, and so he prepared for advancement in another sphere, if he should ever leave the Museum. So, entering as a student at the inner Temple, he began his course. But it does not appear that he persisted in his studies to the end, for when he left the Museum he took a position with a publishing house, “full of great ideas as to the dignity and importance” of the business, to use his own words. A few years were spent here; then he became assistant secretary to a church publishing society—the one occasion in his life when a change of position was made without entire change of the character of his work. After five years he once more became restless, and resigned, assigning as his reason that he needed an assistant who was not appointed. To quote from the autobiography: “Again the result of several years’ work was a failure, though the authorities of the society were pleased to speak in the highest possible terms of the work I had done.”

Then he became secretary of two societies devoted to the interests of artists. A few years elapsed and one of these societies died a natural death; the work of the other was not sufficient either to take his time or to provide an adequate support. So he tried first one thing and then another. But he achieved little success in any work, because he did not persist in it.

In concluding the story of his life, he wrote: “ I cannot see, on looking back, however closely I may scrutinize my conduct throughout life, that my failure has been my own fault. I have always done the work entrusted to me to the entire satisfaction of those for whom I have done it.” But the fact remains that he did not persist in any one thing for a sufficient length of time to make his work tell.

A second cause of failure is apparent even to the most casual reader. He did not know how to be dignified. From the early days at Eton, when he was the leader in “ baiting ” the masters, to that later day when he led a party of friends—all grown—at the end of a circus procession, so successfully that the proprietor thanked him for his assistance, he was always playing the buffoon. His children, as was natural, were quite lacking in respect for him. And his friends refused to take him seriously. This was not strange; when a man does not take himself seriously, how can he expect others to do so ?

Still another cause for failure was his eagerness for relaxation and amusement. He was con-

tinually seeking excuses for a holiday. On one occasion he and his superior officer in the Museum gave each other leave to be absent for the afternoon, and a day was spent in the city. In season and out of season he managed to go to the Continent—sometimes only for a day or two, often for weeks or months. He came to know the favourite spots in Italy and France as well as he knew his own London. And it grew to be a habit to get away from town for the "week-end"—Friday or Saturday to Monday. So many of these short trips did he make that he wrote: "I claim to be an authority with regard to week-ends, especially those which can be spent out of this country."

As the reader finished the autobiography and noted the irresponsible manner in which days and weeks and months were taken from business for pleasure, he recalled the advice given some years ago by a wise friend to a young man who was just leaving school: "Have spots for freedom, but do not be spotted all over. There is need of some variety in life; but variety is a spice, and spice is a poor substitute for bread." The days of this anonymous writer were spotted with vacation and spiced with change until he was unable to accomplish anything worth while; until "Fifty Years of Failure" was the truest title he could give to the story of his life.

**IV**  
**At School**



## XV

### BE THOROUGH

**I** DON'T see the use of this geometry," a senior in the high school objected. "I have been giving it a good deal of time; but hereafter I do not intend to spend one moment more than I can help on the lessons. Of course I'll be careful to get through the final examinations. Then I do not care how soon I forget all about the subject."

How well the student's careless remark describes the attitude which we are tempted to take towards many things. James is studying Spanish at the commercial college. "I'll never have any use for it," he says—and becomes careless. A year later, he is offered a fine position with an exporting firm; but one of the conditions is that he must know Spanish well. John studies bookkeeping—it is part of his course in the academy. "What do I need of bookkeeping?" he says. "I shall never have to support myself." But reverses come, and a practical knowledge of bookkeeping is the one thing he lacks to fit him for an opening in a business office. Henry and Thomas are employed as packers in a wholesale dry-goods house. They need to know something of the goods they handle. Thomas learns just as little as possible. Henry,

on the contrary, takes advantage of every opportunity to increase his knowledge of the stock. "What's the use?" Thomas asks. "You'll not get a cent more wages and your knowledge will never do you any good." He learns his mistake when one of the travelling men asks for a helper to go with him on the next trip. "I want somebody who knows the goods I handle," he insists. So Henry finds the opportunity for which he had, unconsciously, been fitting himself. He has not dreamed of taking a trip on the road, but he has always had the habit of doing everything thoroughly, whether he saw any immediate prospect of profit or not.

At the moment, we may not see exactly how thoroughness in performing some particular task will be to our advantage; but those whose attainments fit them to be our advisers tell us that thoroughness always pays. The habit of being thorough has a wonderful effect on character. And it may be that the thorough handling of some seemingly unimportant matter will—it may be years afterwards—pave the way for personal profit, or for some signal service to others.

An experience of a man prominent in educational and political life during the last forty or fifty years<sup>1</sup> will serve as an illustration. When he was a young man, he studied the issues of paper money during the French Revolution. At first he thought a few days would be sufficient to give him all the

<sup>1</sup> Andrew D. White, LL. D.

information he needed for a lecture to his class in history. But he disliked to leave the subject until he had exhausted it, even though he felt it might prove he was wasting time. "I obtained," he writes, in telling the story, "a large mass of documents from France, and then, and afterwards, accumulated by far the largest collection of French paper money . . . as well as of collateral newspaper reports and financial documents ever brought into our country." Months were spent in the search. "At last, when I had given my lecture on the subject to my class at the university, a feeling of deep regret, almost of remorse, came over me, as I thought how much valuable time I had given to a subject that, after all, had no bearing on any present problem; which would certainly be forgotten by the majority of my hearers, and probably by myself."

This investigation was made in 1859. In 1864 the investigator was a member of the New York State Senate. It was proposed to raise by loan several million dollars for bounties to enlisting soldiers—a proposition which, when carried out, proved to be of incalculable benefit to the state and the country. But, for a time, it seemed that the measure would be defeated. For an earnest member—whose words always commanded respectful attention—prophesied that the debt created by the bounty payments would, some day, be repudiated. He supported his contention by a reference to the experience of France in issuing paper

money during the Revolution, and the subsequent repudiation of the debt. The argument made a deep impression, and the friends of the bill were at a loss for an answer, until the member who had been a teacher recalled his complete knowledge of the French issues in question. He arose, and by giving an exhaustive summary of the facts as he had learned them years before, and by showing the original bills and other documents which he had with him in Albany, was able to point to the fallacy in the first speaker's argument. The day was won by this speech, the loan was made, the bounties were paid, the volunteers were secured, and New York was saved from the dreaded draft riots.

Perhaps we may never have as striking an experience as this to prove the inestimable value of thoroughness in matters which may seem of comparatively little moment. But every day—if our eyes are open—the lesson will, in some way, be brought to our notice that "what is worth doing at all is worth doing well."

## XVI

### BUSY HERE AND THERE

**I**N an Old Testament parable the story is picturesquely told of a soldier on an Eastern battlefield to whom an officer delivered a prisoner, with instructions to guard him carefully. Evidently the prisoner was a man of some note, for the penalty of failure to keep him was to be death or a heavy fine. The soldier allowed his interest to wander in so many directions that he lost sight of his charge. After a time he discovered that the prisoner had escaped. To the officers in command he had no excuse to offer but, "As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

The parable of the soldier's failure has a meaning for young people at school. They are expected to perform certain clearly defined tasks. A good beginning is, in many instances, followed by indifferent work, and perhaps almost complete failure, not because the student is idle, but because he does not keep continually in mind the one thing he should do. The things he does do may be good in themselves, but he will usually find it impossible to attend to them and at the same time do properly his appointed tasks. It is desirable, for instance, that daily exercise be taken; but if half the hours

which should be given to study are spent in the gymnasium, the duty of chief importance is neglected. The condemnation of the soldier was not that he was idle, but that he did not hold himself rigidly to the duty of the hour.

One of life's hardest lessons is the necessity of fixing the attention determinedly on the matter in hand. Every day men and women are failing because of the habit of being "busy here and there." They are always doing something, but somehow at the end of a week, a month or even a year little has been accomplished. They may be far more brilliant than many of those who take their places among the leaders in the nation; but their efforts are not properly directed. They did not learn when they were in school to say, "This one thing—the thing chosen for me—I will do, no matter how attractive other things may appear." And when school is left behind they are incapable of making choices for themselves and rigidly holding to those choices.

"But I don't see the use of the subjects chosen for me," the objection is frequently heard. It may not be easy for the student who opens his first Latin book to understand that one of the chief benefits to be drawn from the new study is discipline, but he will soon know how accurately the words fit into each other; that, unless the precise order is discovered, the sentences will be a hopeless confusion; and that, when everything is properly arranged according to definite rules, the sentence

will give up its secret as readily as the locked door yields to the turning of the key.

For a similar reason, the study of geometry is valuable even to those who are never to make use of the facts learned. Every line must be accurately drawn; if one is misplaced the demonstration is impossible. Thus the subjects which sometimes seem so useless serve to bring the students in touch with an orderly world, where reward waits on definite effort.

Yet something more than definiteness is required; there must be persistence in the face of the discouragement that will be so often experienced. It would be helpful if every student should read once a year that delightful book, "The Hoosier Schoolmaster," by Edward Eggleston, as a tonic for discouragement. The best thing in the book is the story of the way the teacher, just ready to yield the battle with a difficult school, saw how Bud Means's bulldog got a grip on a raccoon, and held it, in spite of everything, till the animal was dead. The spirit of the bulldog took hold of him; he set his teeth, returned to his work, and conquered the refractory school.

The same spirit took possession of a student who was faltering in his determination to receive an education in the face of rather trying conditions. While reading an old English author he saw the lines:

"I mean not thee entreat  
To pass, but maugre thee I'll pass or die."

The message was like an electric shock. "I won't give up!" he said, and renewed the battle. When new difficulties presented themselves, it was only necessary to remind himself of the message of the lines, and the beginning was made that led to fresh victory.

But victory cannot be counted on by the man who is "busy here and there." "This one thing I do," must be the motto of the seeker after success. Then he must be as good as his word.

## XVII

### EARNING A COLLEGE COURSE

**T**HE young man who longs for a college education and fears that he must give up his dream for lack of funds cannot but be inspired by a study of the statistics of the graduating classes of almost any college or professional school. Careful inquiry reveals the fact that a large per cent. of the students in these institutions are, wholly or in part, self-supporting.

Such men win their way to an education in the face of obstacles which, oftentimes, seem insurmountable. While in school they are, other things being equal, among the most honoured men in their classes. They do not lose caste among their fellows simply because they work. The American college is the most democratic of institutions. I have seen a millionaire's son walking arm-in-arm with a classmate who was obliged to earn his board every day of the term. So far as clothes were concerned, a stranger could not have told them apart, for both wore brown corduroys, with slouch hats and sweaters. I have seen a sophomore, who between classes worked as hostler, on intimate terms with seniors who were the marked men of their class, honoured by every one.

But far more important is the fact that the student who works his way through college is ordinarily better fitted than his wealthier classmate to fight the battle of life when commencement day sends both out into the world. The man whose bills have been paid for him must often spend a season adjusting himself to new conditions, while the self-supporting man finds himself in congenial surroundings at the very outset. He needs to waste no time in getting ready. He usually knows what he wants, and goes for it, long before others have recovered breath after the plunge into cold, matter-of-fact business.

But how do men support themselves in college? The question is asked in every high school and in many a district school, by boys on the farm, as well as by boys in the town. They have heard vague stories of those who have won their way to an education. Perhaps they have read the assurance printed in some college catalogues that "no man of earnest purpose need deny himself a full course simply for lack of means," with the statement which often follows, calling attention to prizes and scholarships, and also, it may be, to an employment bureau, run by the college, through which work of many kinds is to be secured.

Since, however, there are not prizes and scholarships enough to go round (even if every student could win them), and since it is usually safer to depend on one's own efforts than on any shadowy hints of what a bureau might do, eagerness for

specific details of how men work their way in college is natural and commendable.

Often college men act as waiters at student boarding-houses, in this way securing their board, and so solving one of the hardest problems by which they are confronted. If in a city, public restaurants sometimes make use of them on the same terms. But it is far pleasanter to dispose of the board bill by serving as steward of a students' club. The would-be steward persuades a dozen or more men to take their meals with him. He does all the marketing and catering, while they pay the actual cost of food, cooking and service. An easier task is that of the student who agrees with some landlady to keep ten or a dozen fellows at her table. The initial task of securing the men is not always simple, but the quota once full, it is not difficult to supply the places of any who drop out during the term. For this service the pay is usually full board.

But at most, only one man in a dozen can earn his board in this way. What are the others to do? Two or three men can act as agents for city laundries. The commission paid is generous, and in a college of any size such an agent will earn enough to pay a large part of his expenses.

If, as is often the case, the institution is in a small city or town, there is a demand by city merchants for student agents who will keep in their rooms samples of goods and take orders. Thus many men earn money as agents for sporting goods, shoes, scientific instruments, clothing, jewelry (in-

cluding, of course, college pins), musical instruments, stationery, and fountain pens. The list might be extended indefinitely. Bright students are continually discovering new needs, and they reap a harvest by being first to supply them.

Students are frequently employed about the college buildings as bell ringers, monitors, typewriters and stenographers to classmates or professors, proof-readers, copy-holders, library-helpers, or copyists.

The student who has a trade can often find employment for every hour he can spare. Printers, carpenters, bricklayers, painters, plasterers, and other workers are in demand. Frequently a student has the opportunity to work at his trade a week or more during term time. If he is diligent in his class-room work, he will not, ordinarily, find difficulty in securing leave for such interruption of his study.

College men are usually most acceptable as local reporters for city dailies. In institutions near Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, the student reporter is much in evidence. By his earnings he is frequently able to pay all his expenses—and it is not unusual to learn of a comfortable bank account started by the surplus after all school bills are paid.

But it is the tutor who earns his way most pleasantly and with the least friction. In every class there are students who have entered with conditions to be made up, who are continually

behind in their work, who are paying the penalty of faulty preparation, or who have been hindered in their work by illness. Many of these find it necessary to employ one of their fellows as a tutor or coach to guide them or prepare them for examinations. Some well-to-do men are thus continually in the hands of a tutor, often by order of the faculty. In smaller colleges the rates charged are not large, and the opportunities are not so numerous, but in the leading institutions the rate varies from one to two dollars per hour. Just before examination time, a class of from four to ten men is frequently formed by a student who is known to be well up in his studies. It is not unusual to charge each member of such a class from five to ten dollars for a few hours' review of a particular course. Thus, sometimes, one hundred dollars may be earned in a dozen hours.

When a tutor is employed by order of the faculty, a student is usually designated. Often an instructor is asked to recommend a tutor to those who wish to employ him of their own accord. The man named is always one who has shown marked efficiency in his class-room work.

These are some of the more common ways of earning money in college. But the young man who is determined to fight for a diploma will invent other methods of paying the cost, if necessary. Originality tells when a student is working his way through college, as all through life. Here are instances of original schemes which paid :

The football and baseball teams of F— College were taken for ten o'clock morning lunch to the club-house, half a mile from the campus. A student, noting how much time was lost in this way, proposed to the managers that the lunch be brought to his dormitory room and served there. The proposition was accepted, and a comfortable sum found its way to the student's pocket.

In a city institution, the postman left the large bundle of letters for the two hundred students on the library table. Each man selected his own mail. There was always confusion, and many complaints were made. No remedy was found till a wide-awake student asked leave to install a private post-office plant, with lock boxes, in the hall outside the reading-room door. Then the mail was assorted in an orderly manner, and box rent became quite an item in the "postmaster's" account of receipts.

In the same institution, the signals for classes were given by bell in the old-fashioned way. A student who was a practical electrician submitted a scheme for electric signal gongs, to be rung by a programme clock in the main hall. The scheme commended itself to the trustees, and the student was given the commission to install the plant.

At X— College, a large part of the productive endowment is invested in dwelling houses, for rent. A few years ago, it became necessary to put a new agent in charge. A student saw his chance and asked for the position. He was permitted to do the work as a temporary matter, but he did it so

well that he kept the appointment through the entire course at a salary of a hundred dollars a month. It is not surprising that ten years after graduation he was collecting rents from his own tenants in the same neighbourhood.

But what of vacation? How are the summer months spent by self-supporting students? Summer travellers to seaside, lakes and mountains will tell how they frequently pay their fare to steamboat pursers fresh from college halls. They are assigned rooms by student-clerks. They are served at table by student-waiters. They ride on electric cars which are manned, front and rear, by student-workers. They rent rowboats from students. They deposit their valuables with student-keepers of bathing establishments. Wherever there is opportunity for remunerative summer employment, there self-supporting students are apt to be found.

“What man has done, man can do.” Moreover, the opportunities for self-support by college students, in term time and during vacations, were never as numerous as they are to-day.

## XVIII

### THE FIRST MONTH IN COLLEGE

**T**HE impressions made by a student during the first month of his freshman year have a lasting effect in the estimate formed of him by his college mates. It is almost impossible to "live down" a bad impression given to those keen readers of student character, the men who are with him every day. And good impressions are just as easily made.

Of course a freshman wants to be well thought of. He looks forward, perhaps, to being a leader in college life. He will make a mistake, however, if he permits his anxiety for leadership to show too plainly; and the only safe way to keep it from showing is to put it out of mind altogether. The way to the confidence and esteem of others is more likely to be found by the man who, forgetful of self, does his best to live a clean, manly, unselfish life, than by his classmate who continually worries about what the fellows will think of him, and calculates the effect on them of every word and act.

A mistake is made by the college student who talks too much about himself. "He gave me his full history for the last ten years," a junior said to a company of friends after he had spent a half hour with a freshman. How bitterly the young man re-

gretted the careless confidence of that half hour when for two years, or until the junior graduated, mocking reference was made to some fact he had imparted to the stranger! The facts of a man's life-history are sacred, and should be told only to a friend, and many of them not even to him.

Sometimes those who are chary of confidences about themselves have offended by talking too much about fathers or mothers, or brothers or sisters. It is so easy to think that others must be interested in what concerns ourselves. One secret of popularity is not to expect others to be interested in the subjects uppermost in our own thoughts, but to discover what are the subjects uppermost in their thoughts, and to show a real interest in these.

The freshman who brags of what his relatives have done, or of what he himself has done, becomes a laughing-stock. The college braggart is detested. "What would your father say in such a case as this?" was asked of the son of a county judge of whose wisdom the foolish freshman had been boasting. For a time it added to his self-importance to hear such questions, but he soon realized that sport was being made of him.

It is a common thing to hear a young college student brag unduly of the school in which he received his preparatory training. It is expected of him that he will be loyal to his former instructors and to the memory of the days before college; but college men do not relish hearing continual reference to "the way we used to do at C——." "If

you think so much of the way they do at C——, it is a pity you ever left the place," an exasperated classmate retorted when he had heard a little too much for quiet endurance. One student by almost daily laudatory reference to the head of his school made some of those who heard him so sick of the man's name that they were never able to do him justice; and he was a strong, useful man.

The days of serious hazing are, happily, past in most institutions. The freshman is received by other college men as if he had a right to be one of them. Upper classmen frequently put themselves out to be courteous and helpful. But woe to the student who presumes on this friendliness, and considers himself entitled to treat with familiarity those who have sought to make pleasant his first days in college! One freshman who had been shown about the campus by a sophomore whom he had never before seen ventured to call him by a nickname overheard when a friend hailed him. Another freshman, asked one day to bring mail to a member of the senior class when he went to the office for his own, joked the upper classman about one of his correspondents. Hazing was frowned upon in that college, but it is not strange that those two freshmen were subjected to petty annoyances by which their days were made most unpleasant.

A wise freshman is ready to learn from the men he meets daily. College students are apt to be quite frank with one another; and it is well to take

it for granted that the remarks they make are intended in a kindly spirit, at least until the contrary is proved. And even from unkind criticisms valuable lessons may be learned. The criticism may be given in the guise of a joke that makes a man wince; but it is a good thing to be made to wince if thus the eyes are opened to a defect in character. The lessons of college life are not all learned in the class room.

A student welcome among his fellows is the man who is ever ready to take advantage of opportunities to be helpful. Of course, an officious man is unpopular, but there is a way to be helpful without being officious. One of the popular men in an Eastern college once showed his readiness to serve by spending an entire evening—which he could not readily spare from his own work—in helping a defeated football-player forget the disaster of the day, thus unconsciously taking his place as one of the men whose influence for good was felt in the college.

There is just one secret of having a profitable first month in college, as of having a profitable college course and a profitable after-life. Be a man, your life patterned after the only perfect man, the God-man, Christ Jesus.

## XIX

### HOW TWO STUDENTS WON

**F**OR the young man who is trying to excel, or struggling to secure an education, there is encouragement and inspiration in two incidents recorded in the autobiography of Andrew D. White.

When Mr. White—then a lad of eighteen—was a sophomore at Yale College, he resolved to be a contestant in a prize debate. This is his own story of his failure and success :

“ While I had prepared my speech with care, I had given no thought to its presentation, and as a result, the judges passed me by. Next day a tutor told me that Professor Porter wished to see me. . . . On my arrival at his room he began discussing my speech, said some very kind things of its matter, attended to some defects in its manner, and all with a kindness which won my heart. . . . His kindly criticism was everything to me ; it did far more than any prize could have done.”

In the next competition he was a little less unsuccessful ; he succeeded in dividing third prize with a classmate.

But his defeats did not discourage him. He resolved to win first place at his next attempt—in the

chief competition of the course. For a time, however, he felt that first prize was too much to expect and so remarked to his father. He felt sure he would be one of the six men admitted to the competition; but there were other speakers much better than he. His father looked at him somewhat scornfully, and said, "If I were one of the first six competitors in a class of over a hundred men, I would try hard to be the first one."

"That was all," Mr. White says. "He said nothing more, except good-bye. On my way to New Haven I thought much of this, and, on arriving, went to a student who had much reputation as an elocutionist, and engaged him for a course in vocal gymnastics. When he wished me to recite my oration before him, I declined, saying that it must be spoken in my own way, not in his; that his way might be better, but that mine was my own, and I would have no other. He confined himself, therefore, to a course of vocal gymnastics, and the result was a surprise to myself and to all my friends. My voice, from being weak and hollow, became round, strong, and flexible. I then went to a student in the class above my own, a natural and forcible speaker, and made an arrangement with him to hear me pronounce my oration, from time to time, and to criticize it in a common-sense way. This he did. At passages where he thought my manner wrong, he raised his finger, gave me an imitation of my manner, then gave me the passage as he thought best, and allowed me to

choose between his and mine. The result was that, at the public competition, I was successful."

The second incident occurred during the early years of Dr. White's presidency at Cornell. He was delivering a course of historical lectures to the senior class when he noticed a student, two or three years below the average age of the class, carefully taking notes, and apparently much interested. "One day, going towards my house after the lecture," the author writes, "I found him going in the same direction, and beginning conversation with him, learned that he was a member of the sophomore class; that he had corresponded with me, two or three years before, as to the best means of making his way through the university; that he had followed out a suggestion of mine, then made, in that he had learned the printer's trade; that he had supported himself through the preparatory school by means of it, and was then carrying himself through college by setting type for the university press. Making inquiries of professors and students, I found that the young man, both at school and at the university, was, as a rule, at the head of every class he had entered. . . . When the examination papers came in at the close of the terms I first took up his papers to see how he stood the test. They proved to be masterly. There were excellent scholars in the senior class, but not one had done so well as this young sophomore; in fact, I doubt whether I could have passed a better examination on my own lectures. There was in his

answers a combination of accuracy with breadth which surprised me. . . . I sent for the young sophomore, cautioned him to secrecy, and then and there made him my examiner in history. He, a member of the sophomore class, took the papers of the seniors and resident graduates, and passed upon them carefully and admirably—better than I should have ever had the time or patience to do. Of course this was kept entirely secret; for had the seniors known that I had intrusted their papers to the tender mercies of a sophomore, they would probably have mobbed me. At the young man's graduation, he was openly appointed examiner in history, afterwards becoming instructor, then assistant professor, and . . . full professor, and has greatly distinguished himself both by his ability in research and his power in teaching."

These two young men had the American spirit which, in the face of obstacles and difficulties, says, "I will." They succeeded—as others are succeeding every day; as thousands who are now beset by discouragements and dangers will succeed—if, refusing to whimper, "all these things are against me," they grit their teeth and, each day, struggle manfully to win that day's victory.



**V**  
**In Business**



## XX

### GETTING AND KEEPING A SITUATION

**I**T is necessary that an applicant for a position should have a definite idea of the work he wants to do. "What can you do?" is apt to be one of the first questions asked by the prospective employer. If the answer is "Anything at all!" as likely as not the response will be, "We employ only those who can do something in particular, not anything at all." Employers have learned to fear lest "anything" may mean nothing.

But sometimes applicants who are well fitted to do some particular work are met everywhere by the word that all places are filled. There is no reason to be discouraged at such an answer. A young man who was denied a position on a daily newspaper asked if he might take his place in the room of the city editor, waiting for some possible need for his services. Weeks passed, and he was never called on. But he was always in his place. One day there was work to be done, and he was the only one available. He was given an assignment, and acquitted himself so well that he was given the position for which he had asked.

In another town were two young men who wanted employment in an establishment of prom-

inence. One contented himself by making an application by mail; the other said nothing of his desire for work, but gave such valuable volunteer assistance that the manager of the business said, "We must have that young man with us in the office."

Men who are thus willing to attempt tasks that are not definitely marked out for them stand a better chance of success than those who shirk responsibility. There is no limit to the price paid for initiative and judgment. "I do not like my position because I do not know in the morning when I begin work exactly what I must do before night," a young man complained. "I wish I had a place where nothing was left to my initiative or my judgment." He was not content till he secured the new position and settled down to an ordinary, commonplace, routine life.

Another young man resigned his position because the work was too hard. He said he wanted some kind of a sitting-down job. Is a prophet required to predict that boy's future?

The demand of the day is for men who are not afraid of hard work, and who are painstakingly careful in everything they do. The old story is not out of date of the busy man who tested two new boys, one after the other, by setting for them the task of sorting over the contents of a tool-chest filled with all sorts of odds and ends. The first boy thought the work of no consequence, and slighted it. The other handled the rubbish as

painstakingly as if it were of great value. The employer, who had permanent use for but one boy, did not find it difficult to choose between them.

The seeker for success needs to remember that the world has more need of the man of ordinary ability who can be depended upon than of the genius who is erratic. "A—— isn't as brilliant as B——," a man said of a clerk. "But he is steady and dependable. I know I can always count on him. He has never disappointed me." No wonder that A—— retained his position year after year, while the more brilliant but less dependable B—— shifted from position to position, without once making an advance.

## XXI

### TWO WAYS OF WORKING

“**W**HAT do you think of raising Sam’s wages Saturday night?” A business man, seated at a restaurant table, asked the question of his partner. “I know he has been with us only four months, but he is proving reliable and faithful. I am aware he does not know so much as Henry, whose place he has. Henry was a stenographer. Sam is not. But there is something better than a knowledge of stenography. I feel safe when Sam is about. He does not seem like an outsider. Unless I am badly mistaken he is as much interested in the affairs of the firm as if he owned an interest in the business. Did you see his eyes kindle this morning when he heard of that contract we got from Evans? That’s the spirit I like. He is worth two dollars a week more to us, and I miss my guess if before the year is out another two dollars will not have to be put on the top of that!”

A man at the next table who had been listening did not hear the partner’s response. But it must have been favourable, for the first speaker continued :

“It won’t be many weeks before we have to slip a little more into Adams’s pay-envelope, also. Didn’t I tell you how keen he is in watching our interests? He has his work to do, and he is

supposed to attend to that, and that only. At least, that is what some of the other young fellows in the office seem to think of their responsibility. But Adams has thoughts beyond his ledger and his inkstand. A few days ago he called my attention to a leak in the business that no one had seen before. It was obvious when he spoke of it. I've had matters corrected, and already we have been saved fifty dollars. You can't keep down a man like that.

"Then there is Jackson. He has been going home at five o'clock, like the rest of us, since the warm weather set in. Two or three days ago I had to hurry back to the office after six. I had just let myself in at the outer door when I heard Noble say: 'What, Jackson, you here yet? Why, man, it's after six!' And Jackson answered, 'Why, can it be so late? I got so interested in finishing these calculations I did not realize how the time was going.' Fine spirit that. Wish we had more such men in the business. We'd soon distance our competitors."

"It's good to hear these things," the partner answered. "Makes me readier to forget some facts of a different nature that have come to my notice just lately. For instance, there's Dalny. I heard him talking to the elevator boy one morning. It was twenty minutes to nine. 'Ten minutes late, Dal!' the boy greeted him. 'Well, what of it?' was the answer. 'It's not my fault. I left home in time—always do. I allow myself just half an

hour from the house to the office. Cars make the distance in thirty minutes if everything is all right. If there is delay, I'm not to blame. Let it come out of the firm, I say ; it can afford the loss better than I.'

" Then you know what a struggle I have been having with Timberlake. When the clock strikes five, if he is not going out of the front door, he is at least on the stair. Somehow he thinks the five minutes in the wash-room should come out of our time, not out of his. Fifteen minutes before noon he sends the office-boy out to the restaurant to bring lunch for him. Thus he has his full hour to himself, without waiting ; seems to forget that the office-boy is intended to do office work in office hours. When he is asked to do extra work, he feels much put out. Usually he consents, but only after much argument. Often the overtime is only ten minutes. Last week, however, he was kept half an hour. As he went down the stairs, I heard him call to Danvers, ' They got it out of me to-night, but see if I don't make it up in the morning.' He did, too ; came in after nine o'clock.

" And Timberlake wonders why he is kept in his old position, while others are advanced. It grates on him that Forbes, who ten years ago had the desk next him, is now head of the department. Of course the reason is that Forbes is everything Timberlake is not. But he won't see that."

The merchants' lunch was over, and they passed from the room. The listener took note of what he had heard, and now it is passed on for others.

## XXII

### WHY THEY WERE DISCHARGED

“ I WONDER why the superintendent told us he didn't want us any longer ? ”

Tom asked the question. Ellis and Frank, to whom he spoke, could give no answer. The triple discharge that morning was as much a mystery to them as to the speaker. They all were bright young men. Ellis and Tom were seventeen ; Frank was eighteen. They had been employed in an insurance office for some time. Each had thought himself on the high road to promotion, and had dreamed of the day when a partnership would be offered him. They had been hardly more than speaking acquaintances until their common misfortune drew them together.

“ Suppose we go and ask ‘ the boss ’ himself about it,” suggested Frank. “ I'd like to find out.”

So the three lads waited in the anteroom of the manager's office until they were admitted. The manager courteously inquired what he could do for them.

Frank spoke first. “ We have been given to understand that our services are no longer required,” he began. “ We have been talking things over. Perhaps there is some mistake. We have thought that if we could see you for a few minutes it would be possible so to explain matters that you would want us back.”

The business man smiled quizzically, but, instead of answering, he turned to Tom.

"And what have you to say?" he asked.

"Why, I have thought that maybe you didn't know about one or two things in my department," was the answer. "I am worried for fear they will not be done properly if I am not there. No one else understands them exactly as I do. Can't you send me back to my desk? I hate to think of some one else messing up those books."

Again the manager smiled. But once more he delayed his answer. He looked at the third lad.

"I am ready to hear from you, Ellis," he said.

"Well, I was surprised to be told I was not needed any longer. So many things suggested by me for the improvement of the office and its work have been adopted, that I thought I was sure of a place with you as long as I wanted it."

Then the manager's smiling face became sober. He pushed aside the papers with which he had been occupied, and settled himself in his chair.

"Sit down, lads," he invited. "Now I can answer your questions. Yet my answer is hardly necessary. For you, Tom—and you, Ellis—and you, Frank—have already, since you came into the room, given the reasons for your discharge."

The boys looked their surprise, and began to speak. The manager lifted his hand.

"No, let me speak now. I'll tell you what I mean. Frank, you said you thought you might be able to explain matters. That is precisely your

trouble. You are always explaining mistakes, excusing yourself, seeking a loophole by which you may escape blame for something which has gone wrong. You are not ready to own a fault; nor have you been found open to suggestions made by your superiors. You always have been eager to explain why your way is right, and have persisted in doing what you have thought best, no matter what has been said to you.

“Do you remember the day your attention was called to your failure to notify a customer of the expiration of his insurance? That might have been a serious mistake. Fortunately, it was discovered in time to allow him to get protection before that disastrous fire in his store. You were told of the blunder. As usual, you had a plausible excuse all ready. Another day you were told to improve the way of keeping the record cards in cabinet G. You replied that your way was best, and you have been doing our work in your way ever since, when we are quite sure our way is best.

“You see what I mean, Frank? If you are at fault, own up. We all make mistakes. We expect our employees to make some mistakes. But when they do make them, we do not want them hidden. . . . Again, some of us who have been in the business a long time think we know how our work should be done. At any rate, we want employees who will listen to their superiors, and be guided by them.

“I'd like to pass on to you a bit of advice given

by a prosperous English merchant to a son who was just beginning work in the shipping room : ' Do not be tenacious and self-vindicating. Admit frankly and freely when you may have been mistaken.' Or, just fix in mind the words of Solomon, ' He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper,' and that plea of the apostle, ' Be not wise in your own conceits.' If you only could live in accordance with these precepts, I think the superintendent would be glad to have you back at your desk. He has been pleased with your work in other respects. I think I would see him. Suppose you carry this note to him."

Then the manager turned to Tom :

" You, too, have stated the reason for our dissatisfaction with you. You remember you said you had been worrying for fear one or two things in your department would not be done properly because of your absence. You see, you seem to think yourself absolutely necessary to the business. You have been heard to say that we could not get along without you. Now it is an excellent trait in an employee to try to make himself invaluable. But is it wise to talk about it ? The truth is, not one of us is necessary to the success of this business. The superintendent is not necessary. I am not necessary. The most valuable employee—other things being equal—is the man who has his work in such condition that his successor can step to his desk at any moment, and find memoranda and all other things so well kept that it is only a day or two until

he is master of the situation. You, however, have not thus prepared the way for a successor. You have kept in your head much information which should have been committed to the files.

“Your idea has evidently been to hold a mortgage on your position. We cannot permit such mortgages. Our eyes were opened last year when one of the men died. He always had depended on a marvellous memory. What a store of information he had in his mind! But it was our information. And, because it was not tabulated, his division was disorganized for two weeks or more, until his successors were able to get certain facts in shape. Since that experience, we have been watchful. . . . But it might be worth while for you to take this note to the superintendent, and ask him about your desk. I believe this little talk will help you.

“And now, Ellis, you hit the nail on the head when you reminded me of the number of suggestions made by you which have been adopted as a part of our office scheme of work. You have been reminding us of that for some time. I do not doubt your honesty. I really believe you have thought that you have made many valuable suggestions. Now we wish our employees to feel free to propose innovations. Our men often must see opportunities for improving our methods. But, while we are open to suggestions made to us by our men, we must insist that they be just as ready to listen to our advice. This was what I was saying to Frank a few moments ago. Your great fault is

like his—yet unlike his. He has shown himself unwilling to be advised. You, on the contrary, are accustomed to take words of advice and counsel out of the mouths of those who speak to you of your work, and adopt their suggestions as your own.

"For instance, not long ago, the superintendent asked you if you didn't think it would be wise to rearrange your hours so as to do all outside work in the afternoon, while you devoted the morning hours to the office. 'I have been thinking of that,' you answered, 'but haven't had time to propose it.' On another occasion, I passed your desk when you were speaking to one of the men who had come to you for orders. After he had gone I suggested that hereafter you have your conference with him at a certain definite hour when he would not interrupt the routine of the office. The words were hardly spoken when you said, 'I was about to speak of such a change. I have thought about it a good deal.'

"No, Ellis, you are not tenacious of your own ideas. You are only so overanxious to be thought progressive that you appropriate every bit of advice, and claim it as your own thought. Can't you give us the credit of making a valuable suggestion now and then? If you think you can, my boy, maybe the superintendent might be persuaded to reconsider your discharge.

"That is all, boys," the manager concluded. "I am glad we have had our little talk. I think perhaps we'll understand each other better hereafter."

## XXIII

### HONESTY THE BEST POLICY

**I**N these days when the newspapers are full of revelations of dishonesty, and the magazines are telling of politicians and business men whose names are a byword by reason of their corrupt lives, it is good to hear of others who have steadfastly resisted the temptation to take advantage of positions of public trust for personal enrichment.

Once a state geologist whose work is in a region where mineral deposits are discovered, and new mines for their development are opened every few months was asked whether he did not have a wonderful opportunity to "make a good thing" for himself by investing in some locality where he had made important discoveries, before permitting the public to learn of them; or for his friends by giving them advance information of such opportunities.

"Yes," he answered, "there are opportunities, and I own there is a temptation to take advantage of them. But I should lose my own self-respect if I should yield to the temptation, and should prove myself unworthy of the trust of the public. My friends realize the delicacy of my position, and do not make embarrassing requests. But mere ac-

quaintances, and even strangers, have asked me to give them hints. Of course I can make but one answer."

A few years ago ex-Comptroller of the Currency Dawes, in an article in a popular weekly, told a story, which, as he said, "is well calculated to increase confidence in the integrity of human nature." This is the story :

"A capitalist whose name is widely known in railway circles met me in Chicago to discuss the affairs of a certain national bank. 'You have just been appointed Comptroller of the Currency,' he said, 'and the course of conduct which you propose to pursue in relation to this bank will largely determine my own action. I was elected without my own knowledge a director in the bank, which, though not closed, is insolvent, and have continued in that official position under protest. My holdings of stock amount to one thousand dollars, and double that amount, of course, is the limit of my liability under the law. But the fact remains that I did allow my name to be used as that of a director of the bank, and this may have influenced some persons to become depositors. Because of this possibility I have determined to step in and save the depositors and other creditors from loss, provided the other shareholders, without expense to them, will consent to arrangements necessary to an equable execution of this plan. And now, with this explanation, I desire to learn what is your official view of the matter.'

“Though I knew this man to be of large fortune, he was not classed among the multi-millionaires, and the plan proposed involved the immediate use of a very large amount of ready money, not far from five hundred thousand dollars. Before he was through with the project, as I recall it, he voluntarily took upon himself the actual losses of others to the extent of nearly one million dollars, and all because his fine sense of personal honour would not let him see depositors suffer loss by the failure of an institution with which, even without his knowledge, at first, his name had been associated. The gentleman who did this has not asked, expected, or received public credit for his action; and some years have now passed since these occurrences. He is a modest man, and no doubt has his full reward in the consciousness of duty well done.”

The employees of the Dead Letter Office sometimes have their temptations. These sentences are taken from a newspaper description of the work of the department:

“The Dead Letter Office at Washington is the depository of a multitude of secrets. In the course of a year many hundreds of thousands of letters are opened there and the contents read. Not a little of the matter contained in these communications is of a private and confidential nature, and some of it might do a great deal of damage if made public. More than this, in many cases employees could make use of such confidential communications for their own profit. But,” the article continues, “there has

never been a case in which information of this kind has been divulged."

It was a humble home missionary who unconsciously furnished this final illustration of scrupulous honour in his work :

"I was sent down to do what I could for the thousands who had gathered for the opening of the Kiowa and Comanche reservations. When I got there I found everybody hungry for a town lot or a quarter section ; there were tens of thousands in that crowd on tiptoe of expectation, longing for the time when they could choose their land. Did I get a good lot, you ask ? Why, no ! You see, I wasn't there for that purpose. My business was to have gospel meetings for the men, and later, start a Sunday-school in the new town." The Sunday-school was organized, and is flourishing to-day. But the missionary owns no town lot.

How refreshing these glimpses of scrupulous, honourable servants of their fellow men ! What an object lesson to young men just starting in life for themselves, who perhaps are thinking that they might as well be as careless as their neighbours in drawing the line between right and wrong. The twentieth century has not made any change in the old saw. Honesty is still the best policy—and the best business, and the best politics.

## XXIV

### FIVE SECRETS OF SUCCESS

**A** COMPANY of printers in one of the smaller cities invited a minister to give them a talk in the office. Perhaps some of them expected a regulation sermon, and were prepared to be bored. But they were agreeably surprised. The talk was pointed and practical. It was good not only for printers, but for every man and boy who is trying to fill his place and do his work.

The speaker began by urging his hearers to be proud, not only of their part in the work of the shop, but also of the product of the establishment. "The shop," he said, "is greater than the individual workman. He must work not only to bring credit to himself as a workman, but to bring credit to the name of the office. Employees should have the 'team spirit' of the football team. Together they should work to make the 'firm imprint' stand for the highest quality of work."

Wise officials of a prominent American railroad company have fostered this spirit among the employees until their road is known for its splendid and safe service. The strength of their pride in the road and its work was manifest when a fast train

from New York to Chicago was ordered off the schedule. But so many officials reported that their best men would leave if a rival road should be permitted to run a faster train than their own company that the schedule was restored.

After emphasizing the necessity for pride in the day's work, and pride in the firm for which they worked, the speaker said that the successful worker must be punctual in beginning work. If he would be properly punctual, he would not reach the office exactly at seven o'clock and remove his coat, adjust his apron, warm his hands, etc., at so much per hour; but he would arrive at ten minutes to seven, ready to begin profit-producing labour on the dot. Then he added: " Proper punctuality in quitting is not to rush from the task in hand on the first suggestion of the arrival of quitting-time, but to give a few moments, if necessary, for good measure in finishing up whatever may be necessary. The time is coming when promotion will be desired, or some favour sought from the employer. Those who have been generous are then the ones who will be favourably considered. Gospel measure is a good thing in the kingdom of printing as well as in the kingdom of grace. The generously punctual man soon acquires an air of punctuality which becomes one of the recognized excellences of his character."

Then, after dwelling on the necessity of learning every possible fact about the art of printing, it was shown how necessary it is for the good workman to do genuine work. " A proud man once said to

a member of Parliament who had risen from obscurity, 'You used to black my father's boots.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'I did, and I blacked them well.' That characteristic made him a member of Parliament. Wash rollers well; sweep floors well; sort 'pi' well; tie up the package well. The practice of perfection in all things."

But the young man who would be successful must think of himself as well as his work. He must be pure, if his work is to be of the best. "Think right; then the act will be right," the wise counsellor pleaded. "Impure actions come from impure thoughts. Scorn the workman who would pollute the good name of the office with a vulgar or suggestive story or remark. Have a pride in making the atmosphere of the office so pure, morally, that mother could come into it at any time and feel at home."

But, to be pure, a man must depend on God. This means, in the words of the speaker, "Straight religion. Recognize God in all things. Live for Him. 'Be diligent in business, serving the Lord.' It always pays to walk through the years with God. No young man or young woman can do a stronger thing than link arms and keep fellowship with the Almighty."

No new secrets were given to the world in that address in the printing office. We have heard them all before. "A workman not ashamed"; "Not with eye-service, as men pleasers"; "Study to show thyself approved"; "Whatsoever thy hand findeth

to do, do it with thy might"; " Blessed are the pure in heart "; " Whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God "; " Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." Just the simple Bible messages. But how they take hold on life !

## THE SCHEME OF A BEGINNER

**A** SENIOR in college determined that he must do more towards paying his own way. His hard-working parents had been helping him as much as they were able, the mother even having gone out as a book agent to secure money to send him. He was eager to send her word that it was no longer necessary for her to do the trying work which only her love for him had given her courage to attempt.

But what could he do? He had tried every conceivable means of raising money. The town was small, and opportunities were scarce. It is true that less than fifty miles away was a large city. But it was a time of industrial depression, and thousands were out of work. Other students who needed to provide funds for their expenses talked over the outlook with him, and sought to discourage him from making further attempts. What was the use? they said.

Yet this eager senior would not be discouraged. One day he was looking at a copy of a popular weekly published in the city. He had always thought he would like newspaper work. Why not write the editor, offering his services? The letter

was sent; and the reply quickly followed. There was no place for him in the office.

More than ever determined, he studied the paper from cover to cover. At last, when he had thought out several plans which he thought would improve it, he went to the city—spending a large part of his meagre resources in the venture—and called on the editor who had turned him down. He made known his plans, and asked advice as to the wisdom of starting a paper of his own in order to carry them out.

"No! What do you want to start a paper for?" was the answer. "Come here to us, and work out your plans right here. We need just such a man as you on our staff."

A triumphant young man returned that evening to the college town. And a dutiful son was able, a little later, to write home to the self-sacrificing mother that she need not longer worry about his finances. She had brought him to the place where he could take care of himself.

The work on the paper was done in connection with college routine until the end of the year. Then, so satisfied was the editor, the promising recruit was taken permanently into the office. One opening led to another, until, within a few years, his name was known through his work all over the country. And it all came from his determination to win his way to a situation in spite of discouragement.

The best part of the story is that the mother who

had sacrificed so much for her son was, later, his constant companion. When she was left alone, he made a home for her. She travels with him over the world, and when he meets famous men and women in many lands how proudly his voice rings as he introduces her :

“ This is *my mother* ! ”

## XXVI

### WRITING A GOOD BUSINESS LETTER

**I**N these days of cheap postage and rapid transportation, when nearly everybody writes letters, it is noteworthy that the courtesy once so characteristic of letters written for business purposes, as well as of those passing between friends, has been displaced by curt phrases and colourless sentences.

Whereas it used to be the ordinary thing for a letter from a total stranger to leave a pleasant taste in the mouth of the recipient, business letters are now usually as dry as sawdust, and as lifeless. And frequently one friend writes to another so hastily and carelessly that there is a distinct sense of disappointment when the letter has been read.

Thus it happens that the feeling of delight which once followed the reading of a letter has become carelessness or positive indifference. And it would be so easy to restore the old delight! All that is needed is a more thoughtful attitude on the part of both writer and reader.

A business man recently wrote to a stranger, asking for a few words of counsel and help. The stranger was a man who had recently emerged from comparative obscurity into a position of national prominence. His correspondent had every reason to expect a favourable answer to his request.

When the reply envelope was in his hands, he opened it eagerly, only to be dismayed at sight of the brief message.

“DEAR SIR:

“It will be impossible to do as you request.”

Disappointed, the reader exclaimed: “He has been spoiled by his new prominence. Three months ago I believe he would have responded in a different manner.”

Then in a moment he added, as if to himself: “No, I will not put it that way. I prefer to think that something irritated him just before the moment of writing, that under other circumstances he would have sent a pleasanter message. But how much easier it would be to take the refusal if he had gone to the slight trouble of adding three small words, so that his message might have read, ‘I regret that it will be impossible to do as you request’!”

That business man made the disappointment easier to bear because he was trying to live up to a rule of conduct a friend had given him some time before. “Make every allowance for the other fellow—and none at all for yourself!”

In a technical magazine a similar message was given to young men in business:

“Back of each letter in your morning mail stands the imperative element of personality. Will you accept the bare, bald statements at their face

value, or will you illuminate the text by what you know of the man's temper and individuality, or what you can guess of the circumstances or influences about him as he wrote ?

“ For instance, Hamilton, the frank, open-hearted optimist, in a fit of depression or irritability—due to the weather or an incompetent cook—may adopt an acid, even savage, tone in notifying you of a trivial mistake or oversight. His letter deserves rebuke.

“ Answer him with this thought in your mind, and it may reach him when his mood is normal again, when he has forgotten his own offensive manner, and recalls only that he had cause, though slight, for just complaint.

“ What is the result ? His original annoyance recurs, is intensified and magnified by your apparent unfairness into a grievance which may cost you Hamilton's business. All because, hurrying through his message in the absurd race against time, you did not spare thirty fruitful seconds to adjust yourself to his unaccustomed mood, to put yourself at his elbow as he dictated, construe his truculent sentences by your estimate of the real Hamilton as revealed by earlier letters or interviews—to help him to overcome his passing ill humour by tactful, cheerful words.

“ The key to the handling of men lies in getting their point of view. The more closely you analyze the facts and circumstances influencing them, the traits of personality or temperament involved in

each case, the more surely will your answer strike the right note, the note to which each man will make the fullest and freest response, thus paving the way to mutual understanding, confidence, forbearance."

It is seldom safe to answer a trying letter at once. The lapse of time—it may be only a few hours—will frequently enable the recipient to gain a new point of view. Then the reply may be safely penned.

A young man, receiving a letter which irritated him, answered at once according to his interpretation of the message and according to his feelings. Two days later, on rereading the letter, he was sure that his irritation was due in part to his own willful misinterpretation, and in part to his own failure to put himself in the place of his correspondent. At once he forwarded a second letter, of apology and regret.

Fortunately the man addressed had failed to receive the first letter because of absence from home. When he went over his mail on returning he opened the second letter before that written earlier, and thus came to the irritable message in a kindly spirit.

But we cannot count on such fortunate circumstances to annul the consequences of our failure to be kind and considerate as we write. The time to write the second letter is before the first is committed to paper. Or, a good rule would be to wait a day or two before mailing an irritable or a

sarcastic message. After such a wait the chances are that the message will never poison the mind of the correspondent, but will find its proper resting-place in the waste-basket. How many customers would be saved for the business, and how many friends for young people who write, if this rule were observed!

Or one may not be tempted to write bitterly; he may merely be falling into the habit of writing slipshod, trite letters, "machine-made" letters, thousands of which cumber the mails every day. It is true that such a letter will not do so much harm as the irritable letter. But it does no good. And business men as well as friends are learning to value those who are able to write in such a way that their letters are charged with their own personality.

A young man beginning business commended himself to his employer because he wrote the letters intrusted to him, not in a hackneyed style, but in a fresh, pleasing, cheerful way that brought unbidden smiles to the faces of those who read.

Another young man, also just beginning in a new position, pleased his employer at every point but this; he seemed to be constitutionally unable to write a letter unless he used the formal phrases; he did not know how to say one genial word as he wrote. He could be pleasant to customers when he met them face to face, but his letters were as forbidding as a granite cliff, as chilling as an iceberg.

In like manner two young women began work as stenographers. Their employers tried them to see whether they could answer routine letters without dictation. The first wrote in few words, seeming to grudge a single unnecessary expression. The second, on the contrary, while writing briefly and to the point, added a genial word here, a kindly phrase there, and made the letters personal. She had a genius for picking out clues to the correspondents' thoughts and circumstances. And the correspondents were naturally pleased.

Her employer learned what she was doing when a busy man, accustomed to send the briefest messages, added in one of his letters, "I want to thank you for your good wishes for my success in my new enterprise."

The letter-copying book was soon in the curious employer's hands, and thus he discovered his stenographer's winning method of answering letters. Naturally, he did not forget this evidence of her fitness for her tasks. He valued one who could so easily win friends for the business.

## XXVII

“THANK YOU!”

“**D**ID you observe that boy who just went out?” the druggist asked as he was wrapping a parcel for a customer. “He came in a few moments ago while I was behind the prescription glass. Of course, when the door opened, I came out to see if I could do anything for him. He paid no attention to me, however, but walked over to our private 'phone—not the public 'phone, where a fee is charged—and spent three or four minutes at the instrument. When he was through, he looked neither to the right nor the left, but walked straight out of the door. Not one word of thanks for the favour received; not even a word of recognition!”

“You would be surprised to know how many men and women and boys and girls are just like him. The telephone is used perhaps fifty times a day, and a word of thanks for the favour is so rare that I am almost surprised when I hear it.

“We handle stamps, too, just for the convenience of our customers. Frequently I stop in the midst of prescription work to weigh a letter or parcel, and to deal out the necessary stamps. For this service, also, there is seldom any recognition. When a ‘Thank you’ is heard, it is more apt to

be from a working man or woman than from those who have been brought up in the homes of wealth.

“ The other day a boy of fifteen came in and called out, ‘ Give me ten twos ! ’ It was a little too much. I thought that the boy who made such a demand would forget the ‘ Thank you ’ too ; so I simply ignored him.

“ A little later his father came to me, very angry, and demanded my reasons for refusing to wait on his son. I asked him if he would permit the boy to call on his mother for a service, forgetting to say, ‘ Please ’ and ‘ Thank you. ’ Then I told him the manner of the demand for the stamps.

“ He thanked me for calling his attention to the matter. Evidently he talked to his son when he went home, for now the boy never forgets his ‘ Please ’ and ‘ Thank you ’ when he makes a purchase or asks a favour. He is one of the best little friends I have.”

The customer, surprised by the man’s complaint, resolved to watch his own words carefully all that day.

When the conductor of the street-car handed him a transfer, he said “ Thank you.”

The conductor looked startled, and said, “ I didn’t understand.”

The word was repeated.

“ Oh,” was the response, “ you’re welcome, I’m sure. Excuse me, but we’re not used to hearing soft words like those.”

The passenger alighted at the post-office, and

went to one of the stamp windows. It was just before Christmas, when the clerks were all burdened by reason of the extra work.

Just ahead at the same window was a young woman who found fault because for a moment she fancied a mistake had been made in her change. The clerk answered her sharply.

When the turn of the observer came, he received a stamp, and said, "Thank you."

The busy clerk paused a moment to remark, "Well, that's the best word I've heard to-day."

Into an office building the observer next found his way.

When he had ridden to the top floor, he stepped out and said, "Thank you." The boy grinned, and said, "Welcome, boss."

The lawyer at whose door the visitor sought admission was not in; so he returned at once to the elevator shaft, thinking he would have a long wait before he could make the trip down. But the elevator was there. "I waited, boss," the boy greeted him, "because I saw you going down the corridor to Mr. B——'s door, and I was most sure he wasn't in."

That "Thank you" surely paid good interest.

That evening the observer was talking to a minister who almost daily received letters from total strangers who sought information as to methods of church work, or advice in various emergencies. "Isn't it a great tax to answer all these inquiries?" the minister was asked.

“ Yes, it does take much of my time,” was the reply. “ But I am glad to do it, in the hope that I may help as many as possible. But I do wish my correspondents would be more appreciative. Not one in fifty writes to say, ‘ Thank you ’ for my answer.

“ But my experience is not unique,” he continued. “ Just to-day I was reading an editorial note in a paper of national circulation, which for years has conducted a bureau of information for its readers. Let me read you an extract, which I cut out :

“ ‘ Let us occasionally award the courtesy of a simple “ Thank you ” for a service conscientiously and often laboriously given. It is simply amazing to any one sitting in a position of granting favours, how seldom, yes, how very rare, it is that the simple courtesy of an acknowledgment is made for services freely granted. I have known case after case where the most difficult and arduous investigation was employed to secure some information asked for, to say nothing of the material expense sometimes involved, only to have the information received as a matter of course without even the slightest acknowledgment. It would seem that there are thousands ready to ask, where there are not a score ready to say a mere “ Thank you. ” It is easy to believe that it is not ingratitude, but merely thoughtlessness, that withholds the acknowledgment. But is it to be wondered at that sometimes an editor, toiling day after day to give information freely where it is asked, would get

discouraged in his work, and ask, "Is it worth while?" What is it that makes a "Thank you" come so hard to some folks?

"During last year we received more than 25,000 letters asking questions, and if I say that, of all those letters answered, we received one hundred notes of acknowledgment, it is overstating, rather than understating, the number. Only last month the officer of a large public organization told me that his directors had decided thereafter to answer no more letters calling for information. "Time and again," he said, "we have spent money and effort in seeking correct information and in writing most careful letters, and never yet have we received as much as a 'Thank you' on a postal card. So we quit." And after a while, if this lack of courtesy goes on, it will be found that one after another of the channels of gratuitous information will cease to offer facilities. A favour asked should always be—when the favour is granted—a favour acknowledged.'"

When it is so easy to say, "Thank you," isn't it astonishing that the gracious word is so often omitted? Those who make it a rule to give the acknowledgment at every reasonable opportunity will be surprised to notice how often it smooths the difficult way, and proves an open sesame to the hearts of others.

**VI**

**Was it Luck?**



## XXVIII

### DOING SOMETHING WORTH WHILE

A SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD lad came to a friend after school to ask him if he would interview his employer for him. "Everybody else seems to be promoted, and I am passed by," he said. "I think, if you would speak for me, I, too, might be promoted. I suppose the other fellows have a 'pull' somehow. And I have no influence at all. If I had a little influence I would not only get my promotion, but I would be pretty sure to hold my position when times are dull."

The friend was embarrassed. He wanted to help the boy. But he was unable to speak to his employer in his behalf. He could only say that the advancement of an employee does not depend on influence, but on achievement. A homely story from his own experience, recently told him by a working man, served to point the assurance.

The working man in question had been in the same factory for more than thirty years. Other men came, and other men went, but he remained. In busy times and slack times it was the same. And he did not seem to fear dismissal, though he was getting near the age limit.

"I am solid for life," he said. "I do the best work I can, of course. But, aside from my work, I know I am a fixture here."

When an explanation was asked for, he said: "Just come with me down to the corner of the mill. I've knocked off for the day; but my helpers are still here, and will set my hammer going. Then you'll know why I'm solid."

His corner was in the great building where tubs and pails and pans and stovepipe elbows were made. As they walked, the men passed several boys who were trundling loads of scrap metal, the refuse from the benches of the cutters and trimmers. The men stopped by the great heap where this scrap was deposited.

At a signal from the mechanic who was "solid for life" one of the helpers gathered quantities of the scrap into a square receptacle under a monster hydraulic hammer. Then a lever was moved, and the hammer descended with forty-ton force. The scrap disappeared from sight in the box. More scrap and more hammer blows followed. Then two other assistants opened the box and lifted out a solid cake of scrap, perhaps twenty inches on a side.

"Four hundred pounds in that little cake!" the workman remarked. "We turn out twelve or fifteen tons of it a day, and all is to be shipped over the river to the other mill.

"Never saw anything like it, did you? Good reason, too! There isn't another plant in the country has that arrangement. We didn't have it, either, twenty years ago. They used to try to pound the scrap into shape with a trip-hammer. Work as they would, they could not get four

hundred pounds of the stuff into smaller compass than the size of a dry-goods box—and a mighty big dry-goods box, too. These bales were nasty to handle—they were so loose. And they took up so much room that storage and freight charges were high.

“The bosses grumbled about the inconvenience and the expense. Then they began to experiment. They got this hydraulic hammer and made a cast-iron box in which to place and pound the scrap. But the box couldn’t stand the racket. They’d make a new box, and break it every few days.

“They were ready to give it up and go back to the trip-hammer, when I went to them and told them I’d been thinking about the trouble. I said I was satisfied what they needed was a cast-steel box, made on lines which I suggested. They laughed at me. You see I was only eighteen, and wasn’t supposed to know much. Then cast steel was a newer thing than it is to-day, and folks were a little shy of it. But I felt I was right, and kept on talking. In the end they tried my scheme. The first box did well—but it wasn’t perfect. Then I suggested an improvement. This box you see under the hammer now is the very one they made after my plans twenty years ago. You see how it does the work.

“They saw, too, I didn’t get a patent; left that to the boss. But I’ve got a life job here, and a mighty good one. I told you I am solid. I got solid by doing something worth while—not by any ‘pull.’”

## XXIX

### THE BOY WHO EARNED PROMOTION

**S**OME years ago, on the streets of a midland city, a youth of sixteen was selling papers.

He was fairly successful, and, for a time, was satisfied with his humble work. But, as he looked about him, he saw other young men getting ahead. Resolving that he would not be left behind, he made application for employment in a large dry-goods house and was given a trial as collector. He succeeded so well that he was added to the regular staff.

As it is the policy of his house to change its collectors every year or so, in order that customers may not become too familiar with them, he soon found himself taken from the street to the store, where he was made janitor of the third floor. This did not suit him; it did not seem much better than selling papers.

So he looked about the establishment, watching for a better opening. He soon concluded that he was fit for nothing but janitor work. He could not hope to go in the office; he had been forced out of school at an early age. "But I will be more than a janitor!" he determined.

One day he overheard a member of the firm tell

of the need of an expert rug buyer in the house ; it seemed that such an expert was hard to find.

The discontented janitor made up his mind to become an expert. By inquiry, he learned when salesmen for the carpet houses were due in the city. He sought these out, one by one, after working hours, and made himself helpful to them. He haunted the sample rooms where the stocks were displayed, and at every opportunity quizzed the men in charge. At first they laughed at him. Then they became interested, and were willing to help him.

Thus, evening after evening, he put in his time. He gave up the pleasures with which he had formerly occupied his leisure hours. His mates urged him to go with them on pleasant jaunts, but in vain. He had something to learn, and he was bound that nothing should stand in the way of his learning it.

He has thoroughly mastered—by reading and personal intercourse with men in the trade—the knowledge of rugs. “He is now our expert rug buyer,” one of his employers recently remarked, “and he is the best in the city.”

### XXX

#### EARNED BY CLEAR HANDWRITING

“**W**HY don't you pay more attention to your penmanship?” a business man asked a young friend who stood well in his classes at school, yet wrote a very illegible hand.

“Oh, what's the use being so dreadfully particular about such a small matter as handwriting?” was the impatient response. “The day of the pen is gone forever; the typewriter has taken its place. I expect to do my own typewriting for a while after I am in my office, and when I am able I shall have an assistant to do the work for me. It seems to me a waste of time to worry over trifles.”

“But are you sure handwriting is a trifle?” was the reply. “Not long ago I heard a man say that he was frequently able to pick out a good candidate for employment in his business simply by studying his handwriting. He said he had been seldom mistaken in one who was careful—he did not mean finicky,—in forming his letters, dotting his ‘i's,’ crossing his ‘t's,’ and having everything in such shape that there could be no possible misunderstanding of a single word or letter.

“You may be interested in hearing the stories of how two men of some note in public life got their start.

“Some forty years ago a young college student in Tennessee, overtaken by a sudden rain-storm, borrowed an umbrella of a lawyer whose acquaintance he had made very casually as they travelled together. A few days later he returned the umbrella with a note of appreciation of the stranger’s kindness. To his surprise, he soon received a reply. His surprise was still greater when he read the message, which was something like this :

“‘My dear Sir,— I am pleased with your manner of writing, your care and neatness, and the attention paid to the important matter of punctuation. I am a busy man, and have for a long time felt that I must have assistance in one of my extra bits of work, that done for a prominent court of which I am clerk. What do you think of becoming my assistant? You can continue your work at college, of course. Perhaps, when you graduate, the clerkship may be calling for so much work that there will be a living in it for you. What do you say?’

“The position was accepted. The last year at college was made much easier by reason of the fees belonging to the assistant clerk. And when, some years later, the chief clerk stepped aside, the young assistant was elected in his place. Promotion followed promotion until he was filling a fine position. To-day he is a leader in his community,—and he secured his start because he took pains with his handwriting.

“The second story comes from a college town

where the hero is living. As a young man he had a hard time supporting himself. When he was about through school, he began to cast about him for hard work. His classmates were, most of them, in search of an easy life, but he was determined to do his very best to make his life count.

"So he wrote to the authorities of the leading college of his denomination, and told of his desire to be sent to the hardest, dreariest, most unpromising field of which the faculty knew. When his letter of application was received it was brought before the faculty. They discussed various fields, but decided they had none to offer which fulfilled the conditions. The grave men seated about the table were ready to pass the request until the next meeting, but one of their number, who had been toying with the letter after others had passed it to the lower end of the table where he was, said:

"I am not satisfied to let the application rest, nor do I think you will be when you stop to think. Just see how carefully he has written.

"Now, we have been looking for a man to become pastor of the University Church, haven't we? And we haven't yet found him. But I believe if we should offer the position to the writer of this application we should not be making a mistake. What makes me think so? Well, for one thing, look at that handwriting. Did you ever know a man who would take pains to write like that to be a failure? There is character in every line. See how carefully the letters are made. You can't find

any fault with that letter. And, unless I am very much mistaken, you will not be able to find fault with the writer.'

"The prophecy proved correct. The position was offered to the young man. He accepted the offer, and so began a life of varied usefulness.

"So don't say that it is not worth while to take pains with your handwriting. You may think penmanship is a small matter,—but frequently it is the small matters which prove to be of greatest moment in life."

Gift of The State of New York  
Through the Department of Education  
(A. L. A. ...)  
To the Armed Forces ...  
XXXI

## BY WAY OF "STRUGGLE TURNPIKE"

"THE luck some folks do have!" Robert said enviously, as he threw down the paper.

"What excites you now?" his mother asked. She was used to her son's discontented attitude towards life in general. But she was patiently trying to change his point of view.

"Well, there are two things, mother," was the son's answer. "This paper I've just been reading has an item telling of the marvellous rise of two men; they were almost unknown a year ago. Now one of them is superintendent of schools in a large city, with thousands of teachers under him, and the other has been elected president of a great railway system. He has a big salary—and just as like as not some one else does all the work. I'd like nothing better than to be in his shoes. But no such luck will come my way."

"Doesn't the item say anything more about them?" The mother had laid down her sewing, and was ready for a talk. "No? Then suppose you go to the bookcase, and get my scrap-book. I think I have something about the lives of the men you mention; I know I cut out something about one of them, at any rate."

"Mother always has something to say when a fellow makes a remark," Robert muttered, as he brought the book. "Perhaps it would be as well to keep still. But then," he continued, loyally, "somehow what she says is always interesting."

The mother turned over the clippings which had not yet been pasted in the book, and selected one.

"Yes, here is a bit about your railroad president. I found it in the *Journal* several weeks ago. To a friend, who asked him about his early life, he said :

"I was a crier in the Civic District Court, and you can imagine that I was not greatly in love with the job. One day the court stenographer told me there was a demand for good stenographers, and I at once took up that study, in the hope of finding it congenial employment. After I had become tolerably proficient in shorthand, I heard that Vice-President and General Manager Edgar of the old Jackson route, now a part of the Illinois Central Railroad, was looking for a clerk, and I became an applicant for the position.

"Mr. Edgar looked me over and decided to give me a trial. In those days there were no typewriters, and stenographers had to translate their notes in longhand. My writing at best was never good, and when Mr. Edgar put me on trial I became so nervous that the first letter I wrote was a dismal failure. However, I handed it to him, and awaited his verdict. He looked at the letter dubiously and shook his head. "I am afraid you won't do," said he. Then, taking pen and paper

he said, "Why don't you write this way?" He was one of the best penmen I ever saw, and the characters he traced that morning were beautiful. When I watched them being formed I realized that I would, indeed, not do.

"I picked up the paper on which he had written, put it in my pocket, and bade him good-morning. Going down the street I took the paper from my pocket, and again looked at the writing. I made up my mind that I would learn to write like that if I could, and if I could not, at least to improve my writing. I practiced every day after my duties as court crier were finished, and within a few days had improved so much that I wrote to Mr. Edgar, "I do not want you to think I am applying for that position, for, no doubt, it has been filled long ago, but I do want you to see that I have profited by your writing lesson." Almost by return mail I received a letter from him. He asked me to come to see him, and I went. He gave me the job.'

"Now, I don't know anything about his later history," the mother added, as she laid down the clipping. "But isn't it natural to suppose that a boy who got his first start after such a strenuous preparation must have kept on in the same way, earning every promotion he secured?

"So much for the railroad president. And here is a long story of the career of the school superintendent you mentioned. I can't read it all to you, but I want you to have a few facts.

"He was born on a prairie farm, and he had but few advantages. It was necessary for him to go to work at an early age, but he managed to earn a little schooling. Then he built a little home, and married. Some time later, he determined that he could not be content without more education. So he studied at night, and prepared himself to teach in a small school. After a few years his principal resigned. To his surprise and consternation, he was chosen to take the vacant place. It was a large contract, for he would have to teach—among other things—rhetoric, physiology, solid geometry, and natural philosophy. He was absolutely ignorant of all these subjects. However, his wife encouraged him to make the attempt. By night study he succeeded so well that he was reëlected.

"The next year the school board in a larger town chose him superintendent. He accepted, but did not learn the extent of his new duties until the next week, when he was told what classes he was expected to teach. He must instruct young people in five more subjects which he had never had in school: astronomy, zoölogy, chemistry, psysiology, and physics. Work must begin that very morning. Fortunately it was two hours and a half before his first recitation. So he borrowed the text-books, and spent the time in the basement, where he prepared for the day.

"I must read you about the rest of his experience in that school. 'That evening he bought

the entire set of text-books, and shut himself up in his room in the hotel. There he wrestled with them until two in the morning when things began to swim before his eyes. So he went out on the street for some exercise, only to return to his books again and wrestle with them until five o'clock in the morning. With occasional variations, this programme was repeated until the first year was finished—and even after that.

“ ‘ While the fight was the hottest, however, he struck a snag which cost him an immense amount of labour, but brought out the dominant note of his character as nothing else had done. Concluding that the text-book of geometry used in the school was behind the times, he sent for Chauvenet's treatise, and began to master it. Early in this work he found a problem which he could not solve. Night after night he struggled with it, and it still evaded him. But the longer he worked the more determined he was to solve it, single-handed and alone. For three months he kept steadily at it. Later he learned that it should have been solved by analytics, and should not have appeared where it was placed.’

“ After some years of like faithful work he took the examination for a life diploma before the Illinois State Board of Examiners. He passed with credit. Promotion followed. Then he presented his work to Chicago University, and was informed that—so well had it been done—it would be accepted in lieu of three years out of the four required to earn a Bachelor's Degree. ‘ He had been going

to college without knowing it while digging away in his attic den,' the biographer writes. The fourth year's work was done, and the degree was secured.

"Do you wonder that when they wanted a man in Chicago to fill the vacant place of superintendent of schools, they turned to the man who had conquered so many difficulties? He earned his position by the same sort of hard work which put the young clerk in the chair of the railway president.

"You see, Robert," the reader concluded, as she closed the scrap-book. "Some day I hope you will win your way exactly as these men have done. Then you will understand that 'luck' isn't so much of a factor in modern life as discontented people profess to believe. And when you have conquered your difficulties, and are safely settled in your position of responsibility and trust, you will surely feel like agreeing with the sentiment which I noticed in the instructions of a typewriter company to its salesmen: 'The better your acquaintance with "Awful Struggle Turnpike," the more you will appreciate your lodgings on Prosperity Street, when you have shouldered your way to its door.'"



VII  
**Work and Wages**



## XXXII

### THE JOY OF WORK

“**T**HERE is a man who was boasting to me yesterday that he has never done a stroke of work in his life,” said a guest at a summer hotel—himself a hard worker, taking a well-earned rest. The man to whom he pointed was delicate-looking, querulous, old before his time. Poor fellow! He was a millionaire, who thought he did not need to work. It did not occur to him that he owed it to the world to do something more than live on his income. His parents had not been as wise as the fathers of many sons who are heirs to fortunes. In consequence, he had been living a life of self-indulgence. Everything had lost its zest; he could have almost everything he wanted, without an effort. The days were monotonous. In the morning he longed for evening; in the evening he wished for the morning.

Next day acquaintances sought him in vain. When several days passed without his reappearance, the physician who was seen coming from his room was asked if his patient was seriously ailing.

“There is no reason to be alarmed,” was the disgusted answer. “He is merely spending a week in bed because of utter weariness, caused by doing

nothing. What he needs is some good, hard work to take his mind from himself."

A friend had the courage to give a message like this to the parents of a sixteen-year-old boy. They were bemoaning his poor health, his inability to take part in the pleasures of other boys of his age, and the nervous condition that made life a misery to himself and a burden to those who were about him.

"How much exercise does he take?" was the friend's question.

"Exercise?" was the shocked answer. "Would you kill the poor boy? We try to see that he never has the slightest bit of work to do."

"And that is just the trouble with your son!" the friend insisted. "If you will send him to the wood-pile, with a saw and a sawbuck, for a single half hour each day I think I can guarantee that his condition will soon be much improved, and that life will become worth while to him, and much more worth while to those who are about him."

And the friend was right. Work was the boy's great need, not pampered idleness.

God, the great worker, decreed that we should work, and so should find our happiness. He could give us all we want, without an effort on our part. But what would be the result? We would inevitably become like the African savage, or like the beasts of the field. These reach for what they want; they take until they are satisfied, and their lives are empty, purposeless, hopeless. But the man who has learned that it is his birthright to work,

who feels dissatisfied unless he is doing something worth while, who agrees with Mrs. Browning that "All work, even cotton-spinning, is noble ; work is alone noble"; who, like Miles Standish, is "never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful of others,"—he alone possesses the rich, full joy of living that makes the days pass happily.

The editor of a prominent paper, not many years ago, asked a score of men and women, leaders in national life, to tell what during the year had given them greatest cause for gratitude. When the answering statements were read, it was noticeable that a large proportion of these busy people were rejoicing that they had the opportunity to be busy at something worth while.

The president of a large university, who has spent and is spending himself for others, who might—if he so desired—put aside his labours, and rest for the remainder of his days, said: "I am thankful for the opportunity of rendering service to my fellow men."

The leader in a national reform movement, who has willingly endured insult and worse in the course of doing his God-given work, whose life has been many times in danger, said: "I am grateful that I have been assigned by God to a specific post of duty. Oh, the joy of service for God and the children!"

One who came to America years ago a penniless immigrant, but has been for years a toiler in behalf of the oppressed, said: "I am thankful that I am

permitted to be yet a little while among His children, to help, to be glad, to suffer with Him, if that is all I can do."

A busy editor, who is a helper of thousands all over the world, sounded this note of joy: "This has been the happiest year of my life because it has been the fullest of service. No doubt heaven will be better than earth, but I can think of nothing even in heaven sweeter than this year of serving has been to me."

A teacher who has touched thousands of lives said: "I am glad to be alive and at work"; and the president of a large woman's college used nearly the same words: "I am thankful to be well, and to be able to work"; while another woman—an author whose work is treasured in many homes—wrote: "I am thankful to be alive; thankful for congenial work."

The leader in the struggle to give a once enslaved people opportunity to make men of themselves thanked God, first of all, "for the opportunity to work, because work is the greatest blessing that a Good Providence has conferred upon the human race. Any one who has learned to love work for its own sake cannot fail to be supremely happy. The man who has something to do is to be envied; the man who has nothing to do is to be pitied."

These all found the secret of happiness in work—work for God. It is the lesson taught by Dr. Van Dyke, in "The Toiling of Felix." Felix

was unhappy. He sought to find God, but in vain. Then he heard, spoken by unseen lips, the words :

“Cleave the wood, and thou shalt find Me ;  
Lift the stone, and there am I.”

He was puzzled to tell the meaning. But he followed directions. He went to the quarries, and then to the builder's shop. And there, in active participation with other toilers in their work of blessing, he found God.

Happy the man who learns that it is his privilege

. . . . “To work as well as pray,  
Cleansing thorny wrongs away ;  
Plucking up the weeds of sin,  
Letting heaven's own sunshine in.”

### XXXIII

#### “WORK, WORK, WORK!”

**W**HEN a young man asked Abraham Lincoln how to become a lawyer, he was told to read and study law books, and a list of these was given him. But the most characteristic and valuable part of his advice was in seven words: “Work, work, work is the main thing.”

Lincoln had had occasion to give this same advice many years before when his step-brother, John Johnston, pleaded for a small loan, that he might leave Illinois and failure behind him and move to Missouri, in the hope of being more successful. But Lincoln urged him to go to work just where he was, saying:

“I propose that you shall go to work ‘tooth and nail’ for some one who will give you money for it. . . . I now promise you that for every dollar you will, between now and the first of May, get for your own labour . . . I will then give you one other dollar. . . . In this I do not mean that you shall go off to St. Louis, or the mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now, if you will do this, you will soon be out of debt, and what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again.”

A little later he wrote him once more:

“ What can you do in Missouri better than here ? Is the land any richer ? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work ? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you ? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are ; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do you no good.”

That Lincoln was qualified to give such advice is shown by several incidents in his own life. Just before he was nominated for the presidency a well-educated man, marvelling at his wonderful use of language, asked him where he had been to school. This was his answer :

“ I never went to school more than six months in my life. I can say this : Among my earliest recollections I remember how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way that I could not understand. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbours talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their—to me—dark sayings. I could no more sleep, although I tried to, when on such a hunt for an idea, until I had caught it. And when I thought I had got it I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over again, and had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and

it has stuck by me ; for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, until I have bounded it north, and bounded it south, and bounded it east, and bounded it west.”

When Lincoln was in Springfield studying law, he found himself in difficulty. Thus he told of it to a friend :

“ In the course of my law reading I constantly came upon the word ‘ demonstrate.’ I thought at first that I understood its meaning, but soon became satisfied that I did not. I consulted Webster’s dictionary. That told of certain proof, ‘ proof beyond the probability of doubt’ ; but I could form no sort of idea what kind of proof that was. I consulted all the dictionaries and books of reference I could find, but with no better results. You might as well have defined blue to a blind man. At last I said, ‘ Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer if you do not understand what “ demonstrate ” means’ ; and I left my situation in Springfield, went down to my father’s house, and stayed there until I could give any proposition in the six books of Euclid at sight. I then found out what ‘ demonstrate’ meant, and went back to my law studies.”

The same habit of persistent work was his in later manhood. One of the most recent of the many biographies of Lincoln says : “ After he was admitted to the bar and became a member of the legislature, he continued a regular course of study, including mathematics, logic, rhetoric, astronomy, literature, and other branches, devoting a certain

number of hours to it every day. He followed the rule even after his marriage, and several years after his return from Congress he joined a German class which met in his office two evenings a week.”

He was never satisfied with his progress. When he had been practicing in the courts many years and was recognized as the leader of the Illinois bar, he went to Cincinnati, to take part in an important case. There he met a thoroughly-educated Eastern lawyer. He was dejected for a time as he thought of his own shortcomings. Then, to a friend who was with him he said :

“ I am going home to study law.”

“ Why,” was the answer, “ you stand at the head of the bar in Illinois now. What are you talking about ? ”

“ Ah, yes ! ” was the answer. “ I do occupy a good position there, and I think I can get along with the way things are there now. But these college trained men, who have devoted their whole lives to study, are coming West, don't you see ? They study their cases as we never do. They have got as far as Cincinnati now. They will soon be in Illinois.” He paused a few moments as if in earnest thought. Then, with a determined look, he exclaimed, “ I am going home to study law. I am as good as any of them, and when they get out to Illinois I will be ready for them ! ”

That was Lincoln's commentary on his own advice. Work, work, work ! is the great secret of achievement.

## XXXIV

### EARNING A SALARY NOT ENOUGH

“MY company made a new contract with me last year,” a district agent for a large life insurance company said to a friend. “It was a generous contract, and I was naturally much gratified by their readiness to make it. But it brings temptation. You see, I have a salary for attending to the office business—the routine work of collections, correspondence, organization, et cetera. Then I have a commission on any insurance I write myself. And I have a small interest in all business done by the agents.

“At first I thought it would be a simple matter so to arrange my work that I would always do the honest thing by my company. But do you see what a chance there is for doing what is not exactly right? Just suppose, for instance, that I have an appointment to see a business man at a given hour. It is practically certain that the interview will result in business which will net me several hundred dollars, over and above my salary. If I am not on hand at the specified hour, it is almost certain that I will lose the business. When I am about to leave my office in order to keep the appointment, I receive a telegram from an out-of-town client of the company who asks for a conference at

the very hour which has been set for the interview with the prospective policy holder. I am aware that the conference asked will certainly mean as much to my company as the new policy of the business man. It may mean more; but it will mean nothing whatever for me. Now, I am really in need of the commission I shall—almost without a doubt—receive, if I leave my office to care for itself, and look after the outside customer. You see, we have been having sickness in our house this season, and the doctor will soon present his bill.

“What am I to do? This is only a sample of the problems which are constantly clamouring for solution. The temptations to dishonesty are many; and they are all the harder to resist because my company will usually be served whatever I do. I must constantly be on guard that I may conscientiously serve my employers. I have found this my only safeguard.”

A like problem presented itself to two young men when they were employed by the contract department of a telephone company. Their work was to carry on negotiations with old contract-holders, and to make contracts with new patrons of the company. First, they were to attend to “office business,” to go to residences and business houses when sent by the office manager. Then they were permitted to originate new business. For the office work they were promised a salary; for all new business they were to receive a commission. At first, neither of them did much in addition to the

office work—time is required to learn how to originate business. During this period there was little to choose between the men ; the manager nodded approvingly as he noted their industry. Soon, however, they began to see opportunities for earning commissions. Then there was a difference in the way they did their work. The first young man attended to the office business as faithfully as ever. Every task set him was thoroughly investigated. If a dozen visits to one address were necessary, a dozen visits were made, as a matter of course ; and the final report, "No use to make further calls at present," was not given until every effort had been put forth. For months he did not have much time for commission work. Yet, even so, he was able to add quite a tidy sum to his salary.

His friend, who had begun work at the same time, remonstrated with him. "You are not treating yourself right," he said. "You shouldn't work so hard on the office business. Of course, office business must be done. I make one call at each address which is given me, and then turn in my report. They oughtn't to expect more than that, especially when they send me out on such errands as that of yesterday. I had to talk to a man who merely wanted to ask for a reduction in his contract. It took me three hours to make the trip. There wasn't a cent in it for me, or for the company, either. And the day before, in three hours, I made six dollars in commissions. Is it any wonder I look out for myself? You ought to do

the same. Pretty soon the company will be asking us to act just as unreasonably as you do."

Six months passed. The young man who gave most of his attention to the commission business was told that his services were no longer required. But the conscientious employee is to-day receiving nearly as much in commissions as in salary. Moreover, the business of the company is soon to be enlarged, and there will be a number of promotions. The manager has already picked out one man whom he wishes to advance.

It is not enough that a man is simply earning his salary. He must earn his salary so well that his employer will feel that the salary can never pay for his employee's service. And the only way one can be sure of rendering such service is so to give himself up to his work that the thought of salary will be in the background, never in the foreground.

## XXXV

### IDLERS AND WORKERS

ONE afternoon a visitor, compelled to wait a few minutes in the offices of a city bank, watched the occupants of the room. At half a dozen desks sat bank officials and their assistants. All were busy, so busy that callers had to wait for an interview.

But there were two idlers in the room—boys who wore the uniform of messengers. One was lazily cutting a strip of cardboard into fantastic shapes. He tried to keep one eye on his handiwork, while with the other he looked for the return of the man near whose desk he was sitting. However, in a moment when both eyes were directed to his cutting, the employer returned, and administered a sharp reproof. Unabashed, the lad rose and went into the next room, where he continued his work with the cardboard and scissors.

The second lad was standing at an upright desk, apparently very busy. The employer, disgusted by his encounter with the first boy, looked approvingly over his shoulder, only to discover that he was aimlessly drawing lines with the aid of a ruler on a blotter. He was about to rebuke the idler; but evidently he thought it was useless to say any-

thing, so he contented himself with smiling wearily at the visitor.

Just then the boy with the ruler was called away and asked to carry a bundle of papers to another desk. He waited a moment to draw another line, then picked up blotter and ruler, and carried them with him while he did as he was bidden.

While he was absent, the first boy returned to the room and seated himself in a lounging attitude in an easy chair by the side of his employer. He was eating a large piece of candy which he had just thrust into his mouth.

"Now, clean up the muss you made with those scissors," was the greeting of the man at the desk.

Very leisurely the boy leaned over the edge of the chair, and, with many a groan, gathered up the bits of paper. He bumped into his long-suffering employer, and made no apology. And then he complacently stretched himself in the chair once more.

"In a few weeks more," the visitor thought, "these lads will be hunting for other positions. And they'll wonder why they were not appreciated at the bank."

As he returned to his own office he thought of the contrast presented by the stories of three boys of whom he had heard that very day. These boys won their way to fame and fortune, not by idling away their time, but by earnest, persevering effort.

The first of these boys was—fifty years ago—

running barefoot on the streets of a New York village. He had two ambitions—he wanted to become a printer, and a member of Congress. Securing a lowly position with the town job printer, he resolved to learn everything about the business. He was not content to perform the menial tasks set him without learning the reasons for them. He was always busy. When there was nothing else to do, he studied the machinery in the office, and learned how to run it. As he grew more accustomed to the business, he invented new and quicker ways of doing his work. At length, when he had become foreman, his work attracted the attention of a capitalist, who encouraged him to go into business for himself. From that time his progress was rapid. It was not long till he was elected to Congress.

The second boy, when he was fifteen, sold newspapers in a Kansas town. His father was dead, and the family depended on him for support. He must have more money; so he secured work with a contractor, and did it so well that larger opportunities were put in his way. At length he found himself in Chicago, just before the Columbian Exposition. He resolved to bid for the contract on one of the great buildings. His friends laughed at him. He tried—and failed. He tried eight times more, and failed every time. At the tenth attempt he secured a contract. He was told he could not put up the building without losing money; material was too high. So he bought his own timber

in the Michigan forests, and had it shipped to Chicago, where it was cut in his own sawmill on the exposition grounds. The building was put up at a good profit.

The third boy was also—at seventeen—compelled to leave school and go to work, on the death of his father. He had looked forward to a comparatively easy life. Undismayed, however, he rolled up his sleeves, and did the hardest kind of work for the mason who employed him. He soon became known as “the fellow you can’t knock down hard enough to make him stay.” He was always doing just a little more than he was expected to do. Then he became superintendent. Now he employs hundreds of men.

If only the messenger boys in that city bank—and others like them—would learn the lesson taught by the experience of these lads who have become masters of men!

## XXXVI

### FAILURE AND SUCCESS

**T**WO young men, seated in front of a business man in the street-car, were talking of their work as they went home after their day's toil. Always interested in a young man's problems, the man was glad that they spoke loud enough for him to hear.

"My wages are to be raised next week," the first young man was saying. "I am to have twenty dollars then; you know I am nearly eighteen now. . . . Yes, that will be fine. . . . Give me a chance to have more fun and better clothes, you think? No, I must say I hadn't thought of that. I don't need to spend any more just because I am receiving more. I am very comfortable as it is, so the extra two dollars can be saved—every cent of it. Perhaps two dollars a week saved doesn't seem much; but it's more than one hundred dollars a year. Besides, I've been saving for five years now, ever since I started in to work at the bakery. At first, they gave me two dollars a week. I couldn't save very much on that, even if I was living at home; but I put by a little. After two years, they paid me twelve dollars every Saturday night, and I was able to do a lot more. Now I have nearly enough to buy that house on G Street I've been looking at—for

father and mother, you know. They've always been good to me, and I'm trying to be good to them."

"You're a lucky fellow, Tom," his companion commented. "You must have a fine boss, the way he advances you. Now, I haven't had a 'raise' for more than a year. It isn't for lack of asking, either. Twice I've been to Mr. Porter to see if he couldn't give me another dollar or two. He turned me down both times. Last time I told him that I thought I could do better work if I had the inspiration which would be sure to come from higher pay. He only looked at me hard, and told me the better work must come first—the higher pay would follow very quickly. Think I'll try a new way at the end of this month. I'll tell him I feel I am worth more, and that—unless he can pay it—I propose to leave him. Maybe that will bring him round. What do you think?"

The answer, spoken in a low tone, did not seem to suit the youth who yearned for higher wages, for, at the next corner, he made it convenient to leave the car, though that was not his street. This gave the interested listener an opportunity to take the vacant seat by the side of Tom.

It was easy to begin a conversation by telling him that a part of what he had said had been overheard. In a moment, he was telling more about the bakery where he worked.

"I have a good employer," he said. "He is a man who appreciates the fellow who tries to do his best. I am the foreman now"—he said it proudly ;

and he might well be proud of such a position, earned when so young—“and I know how anxious he is to promote the boys who work with me. I’ve heard him complain that he has so little chance to promote anybody. Most of the new boys who come in seem to be thinking a lot more about the wages they’ll get than about the work they can do. A new day doesn’t mean a chance to do something worth doing ; it just means a chance to earn a dollar—no, not to earn it, but to get it.

“You’d be surprised to see how the boys come and go. I’ve got so I can pretty nearly tell whether a new boy is going to stick, the very first hour he is in the shop. If he walks with a spring in his step, I have hopes of him. But if he shambles along, lounging against the tables, and acting as if it was a sort of come-down to be in our shop, I haven’t much use for him. If, when my back is turned, he does more dreaming than working ; or if, a few minutes before quitting-time, he starts to wash up so as to be all ready for the street before the rest of us, I begin to think of where the next boy is to come from.

“A while back I felt cheerful over a new boy who seemed eager to get ahead. He was a good worker, and I felt he had the making of a baker in him. But, after a few weeks, he began coming down-town looking listless and all fagged out. No, he wasn’t sick, he said. He wouldn’t tell us what ailed him, but—accidentally—I found out from a fellow who knew him. He was so eager to get

ahead that he was putting in half the night as well as all the day. Days he worked for us, and nights he worked in a similar shop in the North End. I asked him if he didn't think he ought to give up the night work in fairness to his day boss; said it didn't seem right not to give his very best strength to the man who had set him to work. He got mad, and quit. That was the end of one lad who might have stayed on, and had as many advancements as I've had.

"Who did we get in place of him? Well, it isn't always easy to find a boy who is willing to go in with us—so many I speak to are unwilling to learn the baker's trade because they don't like to soil their hands. But a few days after I let the last one go, I saw a friend who was out collecting for one of these industrial insurance companies. This surprised me, for he had had a good position as helper in a shipping-room. I asked him about it. He told me that his firm had failed, and that, while he was looking for a new place, he took this other work. 'It doesn't pay much,' he said, 'but you know it gives me a chance to be on the lookout for something better; and it keeps me busy.' That caught me. I offered him work, and he took the chance. I do like a fellow who thinks more of keeping busy than about the money he gets for it. Of course, he needs to have the pay; but pay isn't the biggest thing in life."

It was time to leave the car. The business man thanked his young acquaintance for his illuminat-

ing comments on his fellow workers. But, as he walked on, he did not dismiss the conversation from his mind—it had set him thinking.

He recalled what he had heard some time before of several college boys of seventeen or eighteen who had their own expenses to pay. At first, one boy found it difficult to make ends meet. But he did not wait for work to find him. He hunted for work, and took the first that offered—which happened to be a twenty-five cord pile of wood. His willingness to do this job, and do it well, procured for him other employment. Another student, in great need of funds, was asked to act as play-companion to two young boys. Others had had the opportunity, but they had considered it beneath their dignity to "play nurse." The wise student took the chance, and by faithful service proved himself fit for better things. A third student heard some of his fellows say it was impossible to procure employment; they had tried, but in vain. One day he heard the village doctor say that he wanted some one to care for his stable. Thereupon he offered his services. Prior to this, the doctor had asked several of the very boys who complained of lack of work to take the place, and had been disappointed by their refusal. However, he was not disappointed in the man he had, at last, secured. Several of the students looked down on their stable-boy classmate, as they called him; but he won the respect of most of his acquaintances, and paved the way for a more lucrative situation.

But the most striking incident recalled was from the experience of a young woman, as told by herself in a contribution to a woman's magazine. She had to have work, and after many failures, succeeded in obtaining it in the office of a business man notoriously difficult to please. He told her the appointment was only temporary. Some people, under like conditions, would have thought they needn't bother much about temporary work. But she resolved to do just as well as she could as long as she did remain. The story of how she kept her resolution has been helpful. "I absorbed myself completely in the one thing before me," she wrote. "I believe the world, for me, narrowed itself down to that one thing. . . . I began to study the convenience of my employer. I did not take my noon hour when the regular time came, because he was still at his desk and might need me. . . . I go for my luncheon at any hour I find suits him, sometimes as early as eleven in the morning, sometimes as late as three in the afternoon. I have never spoken of the matter, he has never shown that he noticed it, but as long as he sits at his desk, I am at mine. . . . I found things in my desk which needed attention, things which my predecessor had neglected. . . . Quietly and opportunely I learned from others in the office what they were intended for. . . . Then one day when my nervous employer just happened to remember that these matters must be out of gear, and came jumping around to my desk

to investigate, he found them all neatly arranged and brought up to date. Not one word did he say, but I saw a relief . . . which repaid my effort. . . . One constant watch I have maintained over myself: no matter how long, how trying, or how tiresome the dictation, no gesture of fatigue is allowed to escape me. I smother yawns, I seldom change my position, I never ask questions." No wonder the temporary employment was made permanent!

But not the least significant word about this worker's experience was this: " Why have I studied so persistently to make a success of this trying position? Entirely for the sake of the compensation so sorely needed? A thousand times, no! Had that been the underlying and deepest motive, let me tell you frankly the success would not have followed. The success came partly because I strove to understand my employer. . . . I put myself in his place. . . . I strove to see in just what way quiet, effective helpful service could be rendered. . . . There was infinite compensation wrapped up in this. I came into an understanding of another's trials. Partly, also, the success is the result of the fine discipline this hard position has worked in me. My nerves are steady and clear, for all day long I think not of myself, but of offering the best help to some one else. I am quiet and happy and contented. At night I go home feeling that my part in the world's earnest work has been a real one, and well done."

## XXXVII

### NOT MONEY, BUT CHARACTER

**A** RECENT magazine story that attracted much attention told of a struggling, self-supporting student who was finally compelled to decide that he must give up the fight for education. With heavy heart he was packing his trunk, intending to leave town by the next train, when an acquaintance who lived in the college town entered the room and, seeming to be surprised at the disorder apparent, inquired what it meant. On being told of the decision to leave college, he insisted on making a loan of several hundred dollars to the student, asking only an unsecured note payable when the money could be earned after graduation.

The grateful student continued his course, graduated with honours, secured a situation as teacher, was promoted several times, and at last was elected principal of a school in a growing town. Not long after the auspicious opening of his work there the "friend" who had provided the money came to him and asked him to recommend the adoption of a specified series of geographies. When the conscientious teacher declared his inability to do this, on account of glaring defects in the text-books, the

man informed him that the loan by which he was helped through college was in reality furnished by the publishers of the geographies, who, knowing that they depended on the good-will of teachers for their profits, looked on him as a good investment. Surprised, the teacher said he could do nothing more for the publishers than for any other firm. Then the agent, laying aside all pretense of friendship, informed him that he had no choice, the publishers expected him to do their bidding. Unless he did so, he would find himself out of a position at the end of the year and unable to secure another of anything like equal value, for the publishers would quietly use their influence against him.

There was a battle, made all the harder because of the needs of the teacher's family. But he resolved to be true to his conscience. At the close of the year he was compelled to go with his family to the old home farm and spend a season in retirement before he could get another school.

This story is true to life. Unfortunately there are everywhere those who are doing their best—and frequently with success—to corrupt others for their own profit, but fortunately they are continually finding those who steadfastly refuse to be corrupted, who are ready to sacrifice ambition, fortune, friends, that they may retain their honour. Almost every day the papers tell of some one who has fallen a victim to the wiles of those who have tried to buy him; but it is comparatively seldom that

publicity is given to the inspiring stories of those who have resisted.

A friend of a Western lawyer, an honoured judge, recently described in the hearing of the writer an incident that deserves wide publicity. A committee of politicians approached the lawyer and asked :

“Would you like to become a United States Senator ?”

“It has been my highest ambition,” was the reply.

“Then suppose you go down to the offices of the —— Railway Company (mentioning the name of an influential corporation), and the whole matter can be arranged.”

“Do you mean that I would owe my nomination to that company ?” the judge inquired. “Then I must refuse to go.”

Assured that he could never go to the Senate under any other conditions, he indignantly said he would remain at home unless he could go as an honest man. He never entered the Senate ; but he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had been true to his convictions of right and wrong.

Another judge of like spirit, when invited to give up his place on the bench, where he received a salary of six thousand dollars a year, to become attorney for a corporation at a salary of one hundred thousand dollars, declined because, as he said, “It was too much like surrendering opportunities for dollars.” And the governor of a Southern state, poor at the close of his term because he had not taken advantage of opportunities presented to gain

wealth at the expense of honour, was offered a position as editor of a leading newspaper, where he would draw a large salary in return for advocating policies opposed to his sense of right ; the offer was declined, because he " preferred poverty in private station with honour rather than wealth and position purchased at the price of his manhood."

A pastor, who was becoming discouraged as he saw the evidences of corruption about him, fearing that the young men of his congregation would be unable to hold out against the specious temptations presented on every hand, learned to take a brighter view after a talk with one of the young men for whom he had been most fearful. The two were passing the beautiful home of a banker of whom the pastor knew nothing but the fact that he had risen from extreme poverty to a position of wealth and influence. "Such a man as that must be an inspiration to you, Robert," he said to his companion. Robert looked at him in surprise, then said, "Yes, an inspiration to me to keep straight!" Then, realizing that his words were not understood, he told briefly some of the methods by which the fortune had been won. "You know mother has taught us boys to have nothing to do with a dollar unless it is clean," he added ; "she says that character, not money, is the greatest thing in the world."

In the fathers and mothers who are teaching that lesson, and in the sons and daughters who, depending on God for strength, are trying to heed their words, is the hope of America's future.

**VIII**  
**Habits**



## XXXVIII

### THE REWARD OF INTEGRITY

“IT doesn't pay to be so particular,” a boy said, as a friend corrected the mistake made by the grocer in making change, handing him the dime to which he had no right. “People don't like to be told of their mistakes. Besides, you are not responsible for them. I think you ought to take advantage of every little opportunity like this to make up for the times somebody else gets the better of you.”

A bystander listened for the reply. The words were spoken quietly but earnestly :

“I think it always pays to be scrupulously honest. I know I am not responsible for the mistakes of others, but I feel I become responsible if I take advantage of them. I can't afford to take what doesn't belong to me. It is too uncomfortable to have an accusing conscience.”

With a smile which robbed the words of their sting, the speaker took his friend's arm and left the store, while the observer said to himself : “There is a boy on whom one can rely. Not only does he have a conscience void of offense in financial matters, but he gains a reputation which is an invaluable asset.”

In his volume, "The Making of a Journalist," Julian Ralph relates two experiences of his own which show how his conscientious fidelity in professional and financial matters stood him in good stead in time of need.

During an investigation of the condition of the theatre buildings of New York City, he had the opportunity to make hundreds of dollars by misrepresenting the true state of affairs. But he resolutely determined to be honest. His reports were strictly accurate, while those written by a number of other reporters were evidently influenced by bribes they had taken. The editor of the newspaper which employed Mr. Ralph noted the fidelity of his workman, but said nothing.

Some time later, the reporter was at Albany during a corrupt session of the legislature. He kept the state informed of threatened inroads on the treasury by venal lawmakers. Angered by his exposure of their methods and plans, they offered him "one thousand dollars down and a steady rain of bribes," if he would amend his ways and let them alone. He was told he could ride in his carriage if he would accept. "But I knew a correspondent," Mr. Ralph says, "who was already in the pay of the treasury raiders, and already rode in his carriage, and I knew he was despised of all men. I said to myself, 'I might take the money, but I should feel obliged to drown myself afterwards for fear I might see myself in my looking-glass.' The man who tried to corrupt me afterwards confessed

that he was so afraid of God and his own conscience that he dared not spend a night alone, and therefore brought his little son to Albany to stay with him.

“One day a combination of men was formed to remove me from my place, and a man of dignity and high position was sent to Mr. Charles A. Dana, my editor, to tell him I was doing my newspaper a great deal of harm. ‘Yes, yes!’ said the great editor, ‘I suppose he does make mistakes. But we will keep him where he is because he is honest.’”

Again, when Mr. Ralph was in Shanghai during the Chino-Japanese war, his integrity received conspicuous recognition. “Some Japanese students were locked up in the French consulate. The United States had given its promise to protect all Japanese in China, and we were violating our pledge. But the minister who represented us in Peking had taken that moment for enjoying his holidays at home. . . . Our consul-general gave me the fullest information in order to gain my aid, and was, at the same time, doing all he could to obtain the discharge of the prisoners. But as we had no war vessels in Chinese waters, the authorities laughed at us in their sleeves. They took the Japanese from the French consulate, hurried them to Nanking, and tortured them . . . for seven days. Then they beheaded them. All this I knew to be true; but the Chinese Minister at Washington told our Secretary of State that I was misinformed, and he believed the oily rogue and challenged my

statements. Let no journalist ever forget the moral of what happened. Simply because I had never abused my opportunities by writing mere sensationalism or untruths of any sort, the Senate took up the matter, and purely and solely on my written word, as was then stated, it was turned over to the Committee on Foreign Relations for investigation and report."

These incidents from the diary of a man of the world show that the reward of integrity is not imaginary. The man who is scrupulously honest in word and deed may not become rich, but he has something that is far better than money. He is able to look his fellows in the face, and is conscious of a record for honourable living which will always stand him in good stead. The resolution of the Psalmist was good: "But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity."

## XXXIX

### WANTED—A MAN OF HONOUR

“**Y**ES, Robert is a brilliant fellow ; he is quick and honourable, but I had to let him go. To tell the truth, his sense of honour is not well enough cultivated for my business !”

Some such explanation is made by many a business man when some clerk has been discharged.

The world is calling for the man of honour. There are positions of trust awaiting him. But the man with a high sense of honour is not to be found by every employer when he wants him. Sometimes a business man is compelled to wait weeks, months, or even years, before his ideal man of honour is found.

Young men are training themselves mentally and physically for their future work ; they are applying themselves with commendable zeal to their books—but how many of them overlook the fact that the possession of a high sense of honour is even more essential to real success than some other things, which they consider vital.

They see men of the world grasping what is called success by sharp practices, and they are tempted to imitate them. Their heroes are not rigidly honourable—why should they be ? “ Is not integrity of character old fashioned ? ” they ask.

" We propose to be up to date! We must be, if we are to succeed! "

But if to be honourable is old fashioned, be old fashioned! If a man cannot be up to date and at the same time be a man of integrity, let him be a back number! Some may sneer at him, but not those whose opinion is worth much. Some employers may have no use for him, but they are not the employers the young man should choose.

A college professor has written of his experience with a student who would cheat in examinations. " He would bring scribbling paper to the examination, and on the back of the sheets would be crammed a most useful array of facts. He would place the text-book under the edge of the desk, and peep at it in apparent craftiness. "

All sorts of efforts were made to break him of his bad habit. When the professor was almost in despair he thought of a new expedient. The student was to take an examination by himself. To his astonishment, he was asked to go alone into the library and write out his answers to the questions!

But the student's astonishment was nothing to that of the professor when, an hour later, he entered the library and found the student doing his poor best at a paper which showed that no attempt had been made to cheat.

This was the beginning of a new life for that student. The fact that he had been put on his honour had done for him what expostulations, threats and penalties could not accomplish. From

that day he was wanted in his college—for he was a man of honour.

It was a promising sign when, in January, 1893, the student body of Princeton University petitioned the faculty to remove all restrictions during examinations; to put them on their honour. They pledged their honour that if they were left absolutely alone in the examination room there would be no cheating. The faculty agreed, and the system as proposed worked to perfection. A thousand students are examined several times each year; but in the four years succeeding the inauguration of the plan, only half a dozen cases of cheating were discovered. The guilty ones were accused by their fellows, and were driven from the college by the force of public opinion. The honour of the students was at stake, and no reproach could be suffered to rest upon it.

This was a promising sign because these Princeton men were on the threshold of life; they were preparing themselves to be men of affairs, and they did not forget the necessity of cultivating a high sense of honour.

The spirit of those Princeton students is the spirit that should be cultivated by every young man. If he would be a man of honour, he must be rigidly severe with himself. He must suffer nothing to pass muster in his daily life which is not "all wool and a yard wide," until, in business transactions, in social life, in church affairs, he will be pointed out as one who is to be depended upon, a

man of honour, a man who never yields when principle is at stake, a man who will live in the spirit of the famous words of George III of England, "I can give up my crown, and retire from power ; I can quit my palace and live in a cottage ; I can lay my head on a block and lose my life ; but I cannot break my oath."

A man of honour is a man of honour always and in all things. It is not sufficient to be honourable by fits and starts. The reputation of a man is usually determined by what he is at his worst ; the world simply refuses to take him at his best. Nor will the world be satisfied with a man who is honourable up to a certain point and no farther. A business man once wrote an anonymous letter to the government and announced that he had defrauded the revenue of fifty dollars. He enclosed ten dollars because, as he explained, his conscience twitched. Then he promised to send more when he felt the next twitch ! A conscience which twitches only ten dollars' worth on a fifty dollar stimulus is not worth much. A sense of honour which is at home to-day and then miles out in the woods to-morrow had better stay in the woods and give its owner a chance to get a new sense of honour—one that will be on hand on rainy days as well as in pleasant weather—to-day, to-morrow, all through life.

**Wanted—A man of honour !**

## XL

### “I PROMISE”

**I**T has been said that we of this generation are not so scrupulously careful in keeping our word as our fathers were. We think we regard the truth. We intend to keep a promise when we make it. But we sometimes find that it is much easier to make an excuse than to keep a promise; so we easily persuade ourselves that the excuse is justifiable. Then it is not long until it is whispered that no dependence can be placed on our word.

One of the worst things about this fashion of breaking promises and making excuses is that it is contagious.

Years ago the merchants and professional men of an entire American city earned a bad name for themselves. They were always making promises, and failing to fulfill them. The jeweller would promise faithfully to repair a watch before a certain day; the day would come, and the watch was not ready. The cleaner would declare he would have a patron's carpets ready to lay within a week. Two weeks, and still he would be promising. The lawyer would agree to have the papers in an important case ready by the time desired, but he would offer only an excuse on the day set. The builder would solemnly assure his customer that his house would be turned over to him at Thanksgiving. And at Thanksgiving it would be apparent that weeks more were

necessary. The stranger in the city would believe the promises until taught by bitter experience that he must add days or weeks to the times set by men with whom he had dealings. At first, perhaps, he would try to exact penalties. But in a little while, in disgust and self-defense, he would himself fail to keep his promises, and be as ready with his excuses as the other residents of the city.

For the man who is thus becoming careless of his word there is a tonic in an incident told of Geronimo by S. M. Barrett, in his story of the life of the captive Apache chieftain.

For weeks Mr. Barrett met Geronimo in the forest, on the prairie roads, or in the home of one or the other, in order that the story might be taken down from the Indian's lips. "He soon became so tired of book-making that he would have abandoned the task but for the fact that he had agreed to tell the complete story," Mr. Barrett writes.

"When he once gives his word, nothing will turn him from fulfilling his promises. A very striking illustration was furnished by him early in January, 1906. He had agreed to come to my study on a certain date; but at the appointed time the interpreter came alone, and said that Geronimo was very sick with cold and fever. He had come to tell me that we must appoint another date, as he feared the old warrior had an attack of pneumonia.

"It was a cold day, and the interpreter drew a chair up to the grate to warm himself after the exposure of the long ride. Just as he was seating him-

self he looked out of the window, then rose quickly, and without speaking pointed to a rapidly moving object coming our way. In a moment I recognized the old chief riding furiously (evidently trying to arrive as soon as the interpreter did), his horse flecked with foam, and reeling from exhaustion. Dismounting, he came in, and said in a hoarse whisper: ‘I promised to come. I am here.’

“I explained to him that I had not expected him to come on such a stormy day, and that in his physical condition he must not attempt to work. He stood for some time, and then without speaking left the room, remounted his tired pony, and with bowed head faced ten long miles of cold north wind. He had kept his promise.”

Not so striking, perhaps, but just as conscientious, was the example of a young man who had been sent as delegate to a convention. He was in attendance during two days of a rather monotonous session. On the afternoon of the third day it became evident that the convention would not adjourn as soon as he had expected. He felt it was necessary to revise his arrangements for leaving the city, although he would thus be put to great inconvenience.

“I wouldn’t bother to stay, then,” a friend suggested. “See how many others are leaving. Surely you can go, too.”

But this was the answer: “No, I feel that I cannot go. When I accepted the appointment to come here I—by implication, at least,—gave the promise

to be faithful. I must not go back on my word." And he stayed to the end, at great personal cost.

Here is another instance of determination to keep an implied promise, which made a deep impression on those who noted it.

It was in a college where a number of students were speaking before the president and the professors. Some of the talks were good ; some were fair ; others were very poor indeed. A number of the professors began to weary of listening, and became quite inattentive. But the students noted that, while every one else was listlessly looking out of the window or gazing into space, one professor was paying as strict attention as if he were hearing the best speaker in the country.

When the hour was over, one of his associates, a much younger man, asked how it was that he had been able to listen so closely to such empty vapourings.

"I could do nothing but listen," he answered. "I owed it to the young men who were speaking : and I owed it to myself. By simply coming into the room for the exercises, I had given a promise that I would listen to all that was said. I have merely been keeping my word."

What a difference it would make in our own comfort and happiness and in the comfort and happiness of those about us if we should be as careful to keep our promises, spoken or implied, as were those three men of so different training ; the scholarly professor, the bustling young man of affairs, and the Indian on the plains !

## XLI

### CATCH UP—AND KEEP UP!

**Y**ES, B— is called a successful man," a friend remarked, speaking of a prominent lawyer of his acquaintance. "But there is one thing which will keep him from real success; he is always a step or two behind. He allowed himself to fall behind when he was beginning practice, and he has never caught up. Instead of economizing while he was waiting for his first cases, and earning the money for his few necessary expenses by outside labour, as many of his fellows had to do, he borrowed a thousand dollars, and lived well. As his income grew, he permitted his expenses to grow a little faster. The original debt has been multiplied many times. He borrows from one man to pay another. Usually he borrows a little more than is necessary to satisfy the note about to fall due. He never knows what becomes of the surplus; it is swallowed up by his living expenses.

"Two years ago, he came to me and asked me to write him a life-insurance policy for a large amount; he said he was worried about his family's future if he should be taken from them suddenly. He gave a three months' note for the initial premium. At the end of this period, he asked for an extension. In six months he borrowed the money to pay the company. The second premium is now long past

due; I had a letter from him this morning pleading for a little more time.

" His income must be twenty thousand dollars a year. By reasonable economy for two years he could pay all his debts: But he is always in financial hot water, because he keeps just a step or two behind. I do not think he will ever catch up."

How many there are who, like the lawyer, keep just a step or two behind, and how much they worry themselves and other people by their failing! The habit of lagging behind is formed in youth, and it is often retained in manhood. The boy who frequently responds to his teacher's request for a recitation with, "I am not prepared on the advance lesson, but only on the review," is likely to enter college with conditions which follow him through the entire course, and he is ready to be graduated only by strenuous efforts at the last. The boy who does Monday's chores on Tuesday is apt to develop into the bookkeeper who takes his November trial balance some time in January, or the business man who always has a pile of unanswered letters on his desk. The young man who is content to owe a few dollars to an acquaintance bids fair to become that dread of the tradesman and the landlord, the man whose bills run on from month to month, whose rent is always overdue, whose pocket is in a chronic state of emptiness.

The remedy? Catch up! And having once caught up, keep up—with work, with financial obligations, with all of life's duties! And then it will not be necessary to stop just one-step short of success.

## XLII

### ON TIME

**A** TEACHER once told of a young man at college who would have been popular with his fellows and with his instructors, but for one thing. He was always behind time. He seemed to have no sense of the value of time. He was late to his meals, until his landlady lost patience and the waiters grumbled. He was late at chapel, until his allowance of "cuts" was exhausted and he was summoned before the committee of the faculty for explanation and discipline. He was late to the evening gatherings in the rooms of his comrades. He was usually at least a day late in handing in his theses, and once he lost a prize because he forgot the day announced for the close of the competition.

Not long ago, a merchant's busy day was crowded almost beyond endurance because two men and one woman with whom he had appointments were not on hand at the time agreed upon. The first appointment was for nine o'clock ; it was kept at half-past nine. The second was for ten ; it was kept at eleven. When the merchant went to keep the third appointment, and found no one waiting for him, he used the telephone.

"I'll be there in ten minutes," was the reply.

"Do you expect her in ten minutes?" asked a clerk to whom the message was repeated.

"I know her," he continued; "if she says 'ten minutes,' it will be nearer an hour, depend upon it." And sure enough—it was.

Next morning the same woman went to church. She was kept waiting, in the vestibule, while the prayer before sermon was concluded. She usually is, though sometimes she is in her seat before the reading of the Scripture.

Outside the door of a Chicago church, there was once a sign on which were the words printed, "You are late." When the second bell had rung on Sunday, the sexton was accustomed to place this sign in position, and the accusing words confronted every one who entered the building after time.

A better method of reminding those who are guilty of dilatory habits was that adopted by Miss Lyon, the famous founder and first principal of Mt. Holyoke Seminary. Her method was superior because it not only reminded the guilty ones of their fault, but it also pointed out a way to overcome a habit which tries the patience of thousands every day.

At the beginning of a term at Ipswich Seminary, Miss Lyon spoke to her pupils in this way :

"Young ladies, you are here at great expense. Your board and tuition cost a great deal, and your time ought to be worth more than both ; but in order to get an equivalent for the money and time you are spending, you must be systematic, and that is impossible unless you have a regular hour for rising. If that hour is five, and you are on your feet before the clock has done striking, then you are punctual,

but if you lie five minutes, or even one, after that hour passes, you are tardy, and you must lose a little respect for yourself in consequence. Persons who run around all day to regain the half hour lost in the morning never accomplish much. You may know them by a rip in the glove, a string pinned on the bonnet, a shawl left on the balustrade which they had no time to hang up, they were in such a hurry to catch up the lost thirty minutes. You will see them opening their books and trying to study at the time of general exercises in school ; but it is a fruitless task. They will never overtake the lost half hour.

“ Now, young ladies, I want every one of you to fix on an hour for rising for a week to come. Be sure not to fix on too early an hour, for it would not injure your character so much to make a mistake and decide to rise at six, when you might rise at half-past five without injury to your health, as to fail of meeting your own appointment.”

Miss Lyon's pupils did fix on some definite hour for rising. It was announced that next day inquiry would be made as to how many had kept to the hour, to the very minute. This was done, and repeated. Soon Miss Lyon had a school made up almost entirely of prompt students, whose lives were more of a pleasure to their teachers, their companions and themselves than those of the few tardy ones who persisted in remaining indifferent to the importance of time. They had been trained to promptness.

Perhaps Miss Lyon's method will give us a hint

how to overcome the habit of tardiness by self-training. If we make engagements with ourselves, every day ; if we inquire of ourselves at night whether we have kept them to the minute, or not ; if, when we have failed to keep them, we resolve to improve next day on the record of the past,—and keep the resolution—we will be on the straight road to promptness in all our dealings, and business men will welcome us to their offices, instead of making wry faces when they see us approach.

Be on time !—in rising, at meals, at the post of duty, at social gatherings, everywhere—and the life will be pleasanter, the temper will be sweeter, the face will have fewer wrinkles upon it, and the soul will be more peaceful.

## XLIII

### KEEP CLEAN

“**E**XPERIENCE teaches” is an old saying—and true. Sometimes we must learn by our own bitter experiences. But if we are wise, we will learn many things by the experiences of others, and so save ourselves many hard knocks.

The student from the academy or high school who is soon to enter college is eager to secure preliminary examination papers used in previous years that he may see what questions others have had to answer. The graduate of the business college who has not yet applied for a position asks a friend who has worked in an office for years what are the requirements of his employer. And the young man just from school who is beginning to look about him with the thought that soon he must strike out for himself, and join the ranks of those earning their own living, is glad to learn everything which can be told him by those who have travelled the same road before him.

This is one reason why the biographies of famous men and women should be more popular with young people. The observant reader will find in them facts which may prove of value as he orders his own life.

One of these hints is to be found in the story of the life of a business man of national reputation who has made a fortune by industry and frugality, and has been helpful to thousands. This hint is: "Keep clean!"—clean in body, in mind, and in heart. And it is emphasized by a number of illustrations, scattered through the volume, which show how cleanliness helped men in their work, and how the lack of cleanliness hampered them.

A characteristic story is told that a visitor once sought the merchant at his office for a talk on a subject in which, ordinarily, he would have been much interested. But the subject had hardly been opened when the host said: "I can't listen to you, sir; your collar and cuffs are dirty!" The remark was blunt, yet it taught a needed lesson.

But the lesson he desired to teach others he learned himself. With a partner he had made a journey to another city for the purpose of seeking a large loan at one of the banks. The partner wished to do the errand at once on arrival. But the merchant objected. "I must get a shave first; don't you think they will accommodate me more freely if I am clean?"

Cleanliness was a first requirement of his employees. On one occasion, when he had advertised for a young man, he met in a body the fifty or sixty who appeared to make application. "He looked them over, clothes, collars, neckties, and shoes. If they were clean, he told them to step aside; if not, he told them to go."

Because of his belief that "being well dressed not only helps to secure the attention and respect of others, but adds to self-respect," he insisted that his travelling men—of whom he employed about one hundred—should obey the rule printed, with others, in a book furnished to all: "Wash your hands and face often, shave every day, wear good clothes, a fine-fitting pair of shoes, and keep them shined. Get a new hat twice a year." He enforces the rule by the quotation from Shakespeare of the words of Polonius to his son Laertes, who is off for Paris :

"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man."

And by this :

"Dress has a moral effect on the conduct of mankind. Let any gentleman find himself with dirty boots, soiled linen and neckcloth, and a general negligence of dress, and he will, in all probability, find a corresponding negligence of address and of conduct."

One salesman, in spite of a good salary, was noted for his shabby dress. He was not as successful as he should have been. His employer, laying this to his carelessness in the matter of personal appearance, telegraphed for him to come in, and directed him to get two suits of clothes at the expense of the house. The prescription worked; the salesman was more successful.

As the first observation made of an applicant for work was as to his personal appearance, the first question was: "Do you drink?" "Wanted: a young man, born on a farm, who does not smoke or drink, and is not afraid of work," was the characteristic advertisement which—six years ago—aroused the interest of every reader, and brought scores of applicants, among whom was a young man now drawing a good salary from the house. His answers were satisfactory, and his record has justified the selection.

Sometimes the answer to this first question is so emphatic that the keen merchant is satisfied; he takes the candidate into his employ without further ado. "Some years ago," says his biographer, "a man applied for a position. He was asked for whom he had worked, and was then told to call again the next day. Of the former employer the question was asked, "What do you know about Blank?" "He does not drink, chew or smoke." It was enough. The young man went to work, has been advanced again and again, and is to-day independently wealthy, through the opportunity opened to him by his cleanly habits.

But the merchant does not think his full duty to his employees is done when he urges them to cleanliness of body. He insists that the mind and heart also must be clean. In his conferences with the men he speaks of the necessity of chastity in thought and in deed. He believes that personal purity lies at the very foundation of success; that

a gentleman will keep his heart pure ; that purity is an unmistakable sign of character ; that "Keep thyself pure" is the best plank in the business platform.

And no false modesty restrains him from urging them to take Jesus as a partner, that they may be able thus to guard their thoughts and their deeds.

The employees thus chosen and trained by him have been a remarkable body of men. Some have said that he is fortunate in choosing his lieutenants. But the biographer says : "It is not good fortune, but knowledge gained by experience and observation and put to use."

## XLIV

### THE USE OF BOOKS

“**W**HY are you reading that book?” The question was asked of a traveller who was turning the pages of the latest popular novel. He began to answer, but paused, as he realized that he had no good reason to offer. It was not that he might gain strength—the book was not helpful; it was not that he might be delighted—it could not delight any earnest reader. Then why was he reading it? “To satisfy my curiosity,” he confessed—and then closed the book, resolving that he would never again take up a volume unless he could give a satisfactory reason for spending his time in turning its pages.

It is possible to read only a small proportion of the new books. Then what necessity to choose carefully among them! A careful reader once said that he allowed no book on his library shelves until it was at least five years old. While it would perhaps be unwise to adopt such a rule for our reading, it is well to remember that books which have stood the test of years are probably best worth reading. Character would be strengthened and delight would be greatly increased if one half of the time devoted to novel-reading should be taken from the novels for which we must sometimes wait

weeks at the library, and given to the masterpieces of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, Charles Reade or Jane Austen. Such books as "The Last Days of Pompeii" and "Lorna Doone" should never be passed by.

The real book-lover, the man or woman who knows how to get the most out of books, is often not content with a single reading. A tested volume will bear a second and a third perusal. Some books are worth reading once a year. The reason for this is not easily grasped by the average careless reader, but it is appreciated by those who are more thoughtful. "You do not mean to tell us that you have read that book through five times?" was the surprised exclamation of a girl employed in a factory to a more intellectual fellow worker. The exclamation was justified by the point of view. The speaker was accustomed to read only books in flashy bindings, while her companion made choice of the books which, to use Bacon's expression, are "to be chewed and digested."

If reading is to strengthen it must not be done simply from a sense of duty. The sickly boy in the library, pictured by George Macdonald in one of his novels, drove himself by will-power to the perusal of books in which he had no interest, and should have had no interest. It was only when he turned to books in which he could learn to delight that he began to regain the strength of mind and of body he had lost while reading from a mistaken sense of duty. Right reading is a duty, but duty-

doing, in reading as in other things, should be a delight.

"I suppose I should care for other books, but I don't," a confirmed novel-reader is often heard to say. How often the lack of delight in strengthening reading is due simply to failure to try one of the despised volumes! "Why don't you read biography?" a father asked his son, who was always poring over a novel. "It's so dry," was the answer. Persuaded to read a single biography, he became so enthusiastic that to-day he greedily devours every story he can discover of the lives of men who have helped their fellows.

But let it be remembered that the Bible is the book in which there is most to delight and strengthen. Other books are of value in proportion as they are impregnated with the spirit of the Bible and its teachings.

## XLV

### THE USE OF TIME

“**H**OW did you ever get time to read so much? I am in despair because I cannot do anything for the improvement of my mind.”

The speaker was a young man who had listened to a friend's paper at the literary club, a paper which had required for its preparation the reading of many books and hours of thought. The writer was known to be a faithful son in a home where there was always much work to do. So it was not strange that the question was asked.

The answer was suggestive: “I have to take care of the odd minutes. You would be surprised to find how much reading one can do just by using the cracks of time.”

That young man had learned one of the secrets of life. “The cracks of time,” the odd minutes, seem so insignificant that many people make no account of them. But the man or woman who would be successful cannot afford to disregard them.

Time is precious, so precious that not one moment should be allowed to go to waste; so precious that it should be used with a single purpose, as it was used by him who received the ten talents, and

definitely gave himself to the task of increasing that which was committed to his trust by his lord.

Very often the child's thought—and the thought of the man with a childish heart—seem to be, "There is nothing so plentiful as time, except air. No sooner is one moment gone than another follows." And they are constantly searching for something to pass the time. "I want a book good to kill time," is the demand made of the libraries by such people. Or "Come with me to the ball game this afternoon; I want to kill time till five o'clock," another says. Thus the precious moments are permitted to slip away.

But we are not to kill the time—we are to redeem the time, to use every moment of it for some good purpose. If recreation is needed to fit one for doing more effective work, let it be taken for this reason, never to kill time. If a book is to be read, let it not be read aimlessly, but with an object in view. If a task is to be done, it should be performed, not in the easiest way possible, but eagerly, thoughtfully, carefully. Time is every man's fortune—every minute is precious.

As a boy, Ion Keith Falconer, who in later life became a famous traveller and missionary, appreciated this fact. When he played, he played with all his might, but when the time for play was past he gave himself to his tasks with equal alertness. And he was not content with the tasks set him in the schoolroom. He used the odds and ends of time wasted by others in dawdling or idle talking,

and managed to do much extra reading. He became a master of shorthand, having taught himself in these odd moments.

Do you ever watch your fellow passengers on the street-car, or the suburban train—those who travel regularly? Every day they spend an hour or two in travel. Some read the papers; others look bored; a few carry a book—a novel, a volume of biography, or, perhaps, one of Shakespeare's plays—and spend the minutes in the company of their chosen author. Some have thus learned a new language or mastered a difficult subject in the course of a year or two. "I frequently prepare my editorial notes in the car," a busy writer said. Some neither read nor write—their eyes will not permit it; but they think to such purpose that their own lives are richer, and they are enabled to enrich the lives of others by the fruit of their thinking.

When President Taft was governor of the Philippines, the newspaper dispatches told of his visit to Washington. This visit was brief, and he had much to do. The days seemed all too short for the work in hand. But that work was done, nevertheless, because he knew how to use every moment. When he drove from his hotel to the White House for a conference with the President or his associates, he was usually dictating to a stenographer.

When John R. Mott returned from one of his visits to the student centres of Japan, China, and India he brought with him copious notes of interviews

with business men, statesmen, missionaries, and young men. These notes, transcribed and bound in a large volume, present a vast fund of information concerning the conditions of life in these countries, the needs of the young men, and the ways of approaching them, which have been of incalculable benefit to the Young Men's Christian Association in carrying on their work in the Orient. Mr. Mott's friends, knowing of the great meetings he had conducted in many places, and sure that he had spent all his time in that way, asked him how he managed to secure such a mass of information. "During my stay in the East," was his explanation, "I did not take a single half day's journey, on horseback, by train, or in any other way, without having with me from one to half a dozen men with whom I talked on the subjects on which I sought information. Frequently I paid the expenses of these men to have them with me. I had to have the information; that was the only time I could take to obtain it."

To a calculation once made of the number of years spent by the average man in sleeping, eating, working, etc., the statement was added that from four to five years are passed, in the course of a lifetime, in doing "not much of anything." This may be true of the average man, but it is not true of the man who leaves his impress on the history of his town, of his state, of the world. It was not true of Gladstone, who wrote and read and thought whenever, for five minutes, he was not

engaged in other tasks. It was not true of Elihu Burritt, who learned eighteen languages in his spare time. It was not true of Macaulay, who read Greek when on a journey, and kept a book by him for use at any moment. Nor will it be true of the young men who are to-day fitting themselves for positions of responsibility and trust. For them, the hour at the railroad station, when the train is delayed, the half hour of waiting for a friend who is late in keeping an engagement, or the ten-minute gap between the hour of reaching the office and the appointed hour for beginning work, will all present golden opportunities for doing something worth while.

## XLVI

### THE USE OF MONEY

**S**OMETIMES people ask for answers to the question, "What would you do if you had a million dollars?" Various programmes are mapped out; and then the dreamers turn to everyday life again with the sigh, "But I haven't a million dollars; so what's the use in planning?"

But there is use in planning, for the problem is the same for the man who has a dollar, as for his neighbour who has a million dollars. It is his in trust. He is responsible for its wise use to the Giver of all good things, who asks for an accounting from the man who has one talent, as well as from him who has ten.

Money is not to be hoarded. There is something better and nobler in life than the laying of gold in store, until this becomes the chief concern. It is to be used in such a way that the world will be the better for its use. That does not, necessarily, mean that it should all be given away; the world is apt to benefit by the expenditures for rent, or clothes, or books, or an education, or a vacation trip—provided always it is the purpose of him who makes the purchases thereby to fit himself, or those dependent on him, for greater usefulness.

While money is for use, not all of it should be

used to supply present needs. A portion should be laid aside to meet future demands. No one should permit himself to live up to the limit of his income. It may not be easy to save, but that is only another reason for saving. We need the discipline of present denial for the sake of future good. "It will be hard," a wise mother said to her son, who was talking of saving to secure an education. "But we must not mind the trouble. During the first part of the night we must prepare the bed on which to stretch ourselves during the latter part." But the aim of saving should be not merely to have something for ourselves and our own comfort. We must think of others; our own comfort must include theirs.

It is almost impossible to save systematically without keeping an accurate, itemized account of receipts and expenditures. The mere act of noting the small sums frequently spent on useless trifles is a check on repeating the expenditures. An account should be kept by the man who handles one dollar, as well as by him who disburses ten thousand dollars. The time to form the habit is in youth; and, if not formed then, the time is now.

Wisdom in the use of money demands that it should never be spent before one has it; debt is to be avoided at all costs. The young man or young woman who begins life with the resolute determination to keep out of debt is, so far, following in the steps of millions who have succeeded in life, and is, so far, avoiding the pitfalls which have

wrecked the happiness of millions more. It is written of a young husband and wife that when they began housekeeping with a very meagre outfit, they "resolved that nothing should ever tempt them to run in debt in the smallest degree." The resolution was kept.

But, at the same critical time, they made another resolution, that they would give to the Lord's work as they were prospered. From the first they gave one-tenth of their income, and later this amount was increased. "When I reached that point where I had a surplus above what was required for my business purposes," the husband wrote, "I looked around to see what use I could make of it. I resolved to consecrate to the Master's work as much as I expended on my family. This had a double blessing. It caused economy at home, and enabled me to use cheerfully for Christian work what I had thus set apart."

## XLVII

### DEBTS AND THEIR PAYMENT

**A** PASTOR was asked by a working man to find him employment. "I have my trade, at which I earn three dollars a day," he said. "But work is light in my line now, and I get two days a week in a lumber yard, at two dollars a day. Can you tell me of something better?" The pastor spoke of a chance to secure temporary employment at eight dollars a week. But the applicant would not listen to the proposition. His explanation of his refusal was unique. "How can I support a wife and seven children on that amount?" he asked. "After rent is paid I would have only twenty dollars a month for other expenses. How far would that go? You see, as things are now, I can stand off the landlord and get credit at the store, because I have no steady job. That gives me four dollars a week for clothes and other things. But, sure as I have regular work, the landlord and the grocer will be after the cash. I thank you for your offer, but you see I can't afford to accept. It's easier to be out of a job!"

But was the explanation so unique, after all? Was it not merely an unusual statement of a very common attitude to the question of debt? Some-

times it is necessary to run in debt, and it is entirely honourable to do so, if there is prospect of ability to pay. But how often debts are contracted when there is neither prospect nor intention of payment! In every community there are people who are the despair of merchants simply because they refuse to think of bills as liabilities. On the contrary, they reckon as an asset the possibility of adding to their liabilities. Their ingenuity is taxed to devise new ways of running in debt. They never pay cash if they can avoid it. Their philosophy of life seems to be summed up in the thought: "We need never want for anything so long as there are men who will trust us." They make promises by the score—the promise is their stock in trade. But performance is another question.

It is not only the poor man who is guilty. A skillful physician in a Western state is a victim of the habit of contracting debts and failing to pay them. A jurist of note in several states, a man of brilliant mind, who could easily live honestly, is constantly forcing others to contribute to his support. The superintendent of a large concern which handles millions of dollars is known as a man who lives on his friends.

It is easy to form the debt habit. A young man who has no need to borrow money, having succeeded on several occasions in contracting small loans, concluded that this was the easiest way to live. So he seriously handicapped himself at the beginning of his career. His promises to pay were

frequently and carelessly broken. His credit was soon ruined.

George Cary Eggleston's biography of his brother, Edward Eggleston, gives an incident in the life of a man of different character. Mr. Chastaine Cocke was a Virginia planter whose honourable dealings were well known. "Never in all his life did he fail in an obligation or delay its fulfillment one hour beyond the appointed time, no matter how free he might be to delay, or how much trouble it might cost him to meet the duty on time." Once a note fell due during a severe winter storm. He was in frail health, so sent his nephew, in his stead, on a sixty-mile ride over bad roads. When the lad returned, Mr. Cocke said: "Of course I knew that Mr. ——— did not care to have that money paid to-day; but all my life I have made it a rule to pay every dollar I owed on the precise day on which it was due, no matter if it cost me two dollars for every one dollar owed. The result is that my name is good in every bank in Richmond for any sum I may happen to want. Let me commend that rule to you. Remember always that when you promise to pay money on the twenty-first of a given month, your creditor is entitled to expect it on that day, and not on the twenty-second. He may have obligations of his own to meet, and he may have counted on your prompt payment as his means of meeting them. No man need undertake an obligation unless he wishes to do so. But, having undertaken it, he is in honour bound to fulfill it, no mat-

ter what happens. I know you had to swim a swollen river twice to-day. . . . If I had not had you as a substitute, I should have made the journey myself, swimming the river as a necessary part of the proceedings."

If the working man out of a job had been possessed of the same spirit of financial integrity he would have gone to work at eight dollars a week. If the young business man would learn the lesson Mr. Cocke taught his nephew, he would be taking a great stride successward. Both men must learn to hate debt.

There is sound sense in Emerson's advice :

" Wilt thou seal up the avenues of ill ?  
Pay every debt as if God wrote the bill."

## XLVIII

### TRAINING THE MEMORY

“**I** WISH I had a memory like Henry’s!” exclaimed a clerk who had been reprimanded by his employer for his forgetfulness. “I am always promising to do things, and half the time I forget all about them. Henry seems to have the faculty of remembering every little thing. I wonder how he does it?”

“I happen to know that it hasn’t been easy for Henry to remember,” was the response of his friend. “In fact, his memory used to be so bad that he was continually annoying his friends by failing to keep his promises to them. I was as much surprised to learn this as you are. Once, when I was thanking him for bringing me a book he had promised me, I complimented him on his memory; he has never failed me, though we have been working together for several years. Then he told me that his memory was wretched until he was put to shame by his employer, who was always careful to do the slightest thing he said he would do, and at the time he promised to do it. ‘If,’ Henry thought, ‘busy man as he is, he can remember to give me a fresh box of pens, or to bring from his safe-deposit box the copy of his lease, for my guidance in dealing with my own landlord,

why cannot I bear in mind the things I promise, and be just as careful to keep my word in small matters as in larger affairs? I'm going to do it!'

"He did, too, just by setting his mind to the matter in hand. There were many failures before he had himself well under control, but now his memory seems to act almost as automatically as his lungs. It is a pleasure to have dealings with him."

There was a new light in the eye of the forgetful young man as his friend finished speaking. "More than once the hint has been given me that my forgetfulness is responsible for my slow progress in the store," he said. "But if Henry could conquer a bad memory, surely I can. I'm going to try."

He is trying, and he is succeeding. One secret of his success he has told to his interested friend. "I very soon found that I must be as particular about a promise made to my baby sister or to the office boy, as to my mother or my employer. You see, a promise is a promise, no matter to whom it is made, or what it is about."

## XLIX

### TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

“ I PLAYED a good joke yesterday on the conductor of the midnight express from Chicago,” Albert E—— said to some of his academy classmates. “ Want to hear about it ? ”

“ Sure ! Let’s have it ! ” was the prompt answer from half a dozen young fellows who were always ready to listen to one of Albert’s stories. They were already becoming famous in the little school where he had entered a few months before.

“ Well, it was this way. When I was going down last week I heard the conductor of the train remark that he had yet to find the man who was smart enough to beat him out of his fare. I thought nothing more of it till I saw him on the train last night. Then I thought, ‘ Look here, my friend, I’ll just see if I can’t get ahead of you ! ’ So I dropped back in the corner of my seat and pretended to be asleep. Just before the conductor reached me in his round after tickets there was some trouble on the track ahead and he had to go forward. When he came back again he hesitated just an instant, as if he was uncertain where he had left off in his rounds. In a second he got his bearings and came to me. I was

sound asleep—or so he thought. He touched me gently, but I didn't stir. Then he shook me. I pulled my hat back on my head, looked at him as if I could bite him, and said :

“How many times do you ask a man for his ticket on one trip ?”

“That floored him. You see he was a little rattled anyway. With an apology for disturbing me he passed on his way. Pretty good joke, I call it.”

“But you told him about it before you left the train, didn't you ?” asked a second-form student, shyly. Albert, a first-form man, had been his hero—and his hero could do no wrong.

“Tell him, you softie !” was the sneering answer. “Certainly not ! That would have spoiled the joke.”

This incident from real life illustrates the dangerous tendency of so many people to think lightly of truth telling. They are careful—of course they are!—to be strictly truthful when it comes to out-and-out falsehood ; but acting a lie, or telling a lie by implication, seems such a different matter.

Frederick Trevor Hill, in his book “Lincoln the Lawyer,” tells an incident of the great man's life that shows how unmercifully he scored his partner for what he thought to be entirely justifiable subterfuge.

Lincoln was anxious to secure delay in a certain case in which he was interested. His partner “drew up a dilatory plea, which would effectually

postpone the trial for at least one term of court. It was the sort of thing which is condoned in almost every law office, but Lincoln repudiated it the moment it came to his notice. 'Is this founded on fact?' he demanded of his partner. Herndon was obliged to admit that it was not, urging in extenuation, however, that it would save the interests of their client, which would otherwise be imperilled. But Lincoln was not to be persuaded. 'You know it is sham,' he answered, 'and a sham is very often but another name for a lie. Don't let it go on record. The cursed thing may come staring us in the face long after this suit has been forgotten.'"

A grain dealer has recently told of a trick by which several farmers, ordinarily quite honest, who would have scorned an out-and-out lie, managed to misrepresent the true weight of their loads of grain when they took them to market. "After driving upon the scale platform with the load they would settle their horses back as hard as possible, thus depressing the load. Then, when they later weighed the empty wagon, they would reverse the process and have their horses pulling ahead until the tugs were tight. This, of course, had a tendency to lift and make the wagon weigh lighter." Thus three hundred pounds could be added to the true weight of the grain sold. And the farmers deceived themselves into the belief that they were not lying.

An incident in the public life of a recent tem-

porary occupant of the chair of the Speaker of the House of Representatives tells of one man who, when his eyes were opened to the fact that, by his course of action, he was really telling a lie, refused to go farther, though he thus lost his point. The minority were using all the obstructive tactics they could think of. The ruling had been made that dilatory motions were not to be recognized. A representative made a motion that was declared to be dilatory, and so out of order. When he protested, the temporary speaker said :

"If the gentleman makes the motion in good faith, and will assure the chair that it is not a dilatory motion, the chair will put it."

The representative had not another word to say.

Men of to-day need to have impressed on their minds the old Hindu saying that "The sin of killing a Brahman is as great as that of killing one hundred cows, and the sin of killing one hundred cows is as great as that of killing a woman ; and the sin of killing one hundred women is as great as killing a child in the womb, and the sin of killing one hundred children in the womb is as great as that of telling a lie."

But better than this is the message of Robert E. Speer, who says : " Every boy and every man shuns a liar. He carries with him the atmosphere of repulsion. Strong haters of lies are always attractive to us. The spirit of manliness responds to the strong loathing of a lie. It was largely on this account that Charles Kingsley was so popular. He

was the very incarnation of truth. No wonder his wife dedicated her delightful biography of him,

*“ To the beloved memory  
of*

*A righteous man,  
Who loved God and truth above all things.  
A man of untarnished honour—  
Loyal and chivalrous—gentle and strong—  
Modest and humble—tender and true—  
Pitiful to the weak, yearning after the erring,  
Stern to all forms of wrong and oppression,  
Yet most stern towards himself.  
Who being angry yet sinned not.”*

## L

### THE THINGS THAT PLEASE US

**T**HE national amusement of Spain is the bull fight. The Spaniard takes delight in watching the contests. They anger the beasts that the conflict may be more exciting. Even the women and children are trained to the enjoyment of such sports. And the Spaniards are cruel and tyrannical. They are laggards in civilization and progress.

The Greeks gave themselves up to the enjoyment of art and literature. So long as their love for art and literature was kept within bounds, they were a strong, courageous, cultured people. It was only after they permitted their love of art and the beautiful to lead them to lives of debauchery that they became enervated and brought ruin upon themselves.

Gibbon notes that the Romans also by their pleasures brought ruin upon themselves. Once strong and brave, they became cowardly weaklings through yielding to unmanly pleasures. The poor were satisfied only with gifts of bread and amusements, by gladiators and fighting wild beasts in the circus. The rich enjoyed the blessings of ease and tranquillity, which had been won by the careful living of their ancestors, and failed to realize that, to retain these blessings, they also must be vigilant

and active. In vain public-spirited men tried to rouse them from their stupor and open their eyes. Then Rome fell—because the character of her people had been changed by changed pleasures.

The same thing is true of individuals. The choice of pleasures is a revelation of character. This is not merely a theory ; it is a practical test. A wise employer becomes acquainted with the lives of his employees. He desires to know every man's habits, not only in business hours, but in the evenings and on Sundays. It is his business to know if a clerk is in his home, or among boon companions. If his habits are good, if his companions are well chosen, the employer is satisfied. But woe to that man who frequents the race-track or the gambler's room, who spends money more freely than his income would justify, who gives himself unwisely to any form of pleasure. His employer cannot be satisfied with his character as thus revealed.

A passenger on a street-car overheard two young men telling of their plans for the evening. They spoke of visiting haunts of sin. They recounted experiences in evil. The passenger did not know the speakers. But if he is ever brought into touch with them he will beware of trusting them. Their character was too plainly revealed by their choice of pleasures.

A number of shoppers, waiting at the transfer desk in a department store, were amused by the questions of a stranger in the city. It was easy to tell that he was from the country. With eager

curiosity he spoke to the attendant. When told the size of the store, he exclaimed: "Why, you could put a dozen churches inside!" And when he was informed that fourteen hundred people were employed, he beamed again: "What a churchful of folks that would make!" was his comment. Then there was a laugh, and the careless remark was made: "You wouldn't get many of these people inside a church." The countryman looked his surprise, but did not seem to notice the sneer. "Well, it's time I was goin'," he said. Then, with a childlike smile which included a dozen people, he added: "God bless you all!"

A laugh followed him down the aisle. But there were those whose hearts were tender. It had been their privilege to look into the heart of a simple, honest man whose greatest pleasure was, manifestly, church life and church work and Christian service. And one listener, as he turned away, was heard to remark: "I'd trust that man anywhere, with anything." The judgment was sound. It was based on character—character revealed by the man's choice of pleasures.

Daily the lives of men are unfolded before us. Daily we make our estimates of those we meet, and frequently the estimate is formed in consequence of just such disclosures as those made by the young men in the car and by the countryman in the store.

What judgment do men make of us as they note our choice of pleasures?

**IX**

**Ourselves and Others**



## LI

### HELPLEFULNESS

**C**LINTON LOCKE once wrote of a pompous epitaph in Westminster Abbey. "The poor crumbling dust," he said, "had been Duke of this, Marquis of that, Earl of the other. He had been so many times Lord-Lieutenant. He had been ambassador to this court and that court. He was brave, he was pious, he was generous. He was, in fact, the model of all the virtues, and it took a big slab of marble to tell it all."

What a contrast the words of Scripture about Christ: "He went about doing good." All the boastful words on the tombs of earth's great men amount to nothing when compared with the majestic simplicity of this epitaph of the Man of Galilee.

That sentence has a pleasant sound for us. Most of us feel our dependence upon others for daily comfort and happiness. We are well aware that we cannot do everything for ourselves. We want help from those among whom our lot is cast. We hail with gratitude the service of any one who satisfies our needs.

If, however, our constant thought should be of the help we hope to receive from others, and never of the help we can give to those about us, there

would be little helpfulness in the world. But because the world has a great many people in it who are not thinking so much of what they can get from others as of what they can give to others, the world is a pleasant place to live in. There are, alas ! many who never permit a thought of the comfort of others to enter their minds ; but there are many more who seem to be completely saturated with the spirit of helpfulness. It appears to be a positive necessity to such people to hunt for opportunities of giving help. They can go without a meal or a night's sleep more easily than they can omit the day's kindness. That day seems lost in which no act of helpfulness has been performed.

Some time ago a statesman told of an Indiana banker who "saw to it that at least once a week he hunted up some young man, bravely struggling, bravely fighting, and gave him some little assistance—a piece of business, an opportunity, needed and kindly counsel—something that moistened his parched lips, hot and dry from running the hard race that all youth must run for success." He did so because it was a necessity of his nature. He could not be content until he had helped some one in the hard battle of life. And he was helped himself in consequence of the assistance given the struggling young man. His moral nature was strengthened by the experience precisely as his muscles were strengthened by daily exercise.

A visitor to a lighthouse located on a dangerous

rock in the Atlantic illustrates how readiness to help others proves helpful to oneself. The lighthouse seemed so lonely and unsafe that the visitor asked of the keeper :

“Are you not afraid to live here?”

“No,” was the reply. “I am not afraid. I have no time for that. My time is so taken up with keeping my lamps burning that any possible danger to myself is forgotten.”

That was philosophy—the philosophy of helpfulness—helpfulness which reacts upon the giver and includes him in the blessing he plans for others.

Those who have helped their fellows have often found that the rewards of their deeds come to them in more striking manner than this. Their helpfulness has proven to be bread cast upon the waters which has returned to them after many days. Once the papers told of an ex-millionaire and railroad king who, after years of poverty, reaped the reward of a forgotten act of helpfulness. When at the height of his power in the industrial world, he befriended a young man who was just beginning life. In 1900 the ex-millionaire was earning his bread in an Indiana factory, while the young man whom he had helped was wealthy and powerful. Learning of his benefactor's misfortunes, he sought him out and put him on his feet, opening the way for him to regain something, at least, of his lost wealth.

There are many who refuse to give help of any kind unless they see a chance to receive some

return in kind. This is not true helpfulness ; it is merely selfishness under another name. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the experience of helpful men and women of all ages that their greatest reward is that received in the very act of helping. Ex-Senator Beveridge gives wholesome advice when he says that he who seeks the pleasure that comes from helping young men who are just beginning life must beware of saying in his heart : " I will help this man, and when he succeeds I will reap my reward." The act of kindness is vitiated by such a thought—at least so far as it can be called an act of kindness.

## LII

### “MOTES AND BEAMS”

“**I**N all the years I have known him I have not heard him speak a single word of criticism of another,” was a man’s praise of a friend. “Somehow it seemed impossible for him to see any but the best side of any one. I remember a day when some of us tried to trap him into making a disparaging remark about man, woman, or child—we didn’t care who, just so he would break his record. Somehow he always avoided the traps we set for him. Perhaps he would change the subject, or, after listening to our words of faultfinding, he would say, ‘But what a winning way he has with children,’ or, ‘I’d like to know the secret of his influence on the boys of his Sunday-school class.’ At last we gave up the attempt. We found we might as well try to dam a rushing river by throwing dirt in the water.”

Isn’t it a pity we are not all like that friend? The world would be a pleasanter dwelling-place if we would lay aside our critical attitude, and look on the best side of the men and women about us. Instead, however, it sometimes seems as if we are determined to forget all the good, and remember only the evil. Our additions to the comments of

others are not praise, but blame. We do not seek to correct an unfavourable comment by saying, "But think of the good there is in his life"; we insist on drowning merited praise by saying, "But think how selfish he is; how careless of the comfort of others."

The worst thing about the maker of such comments is that the readier he is to see—or imagine—faults in another, the blinder he is apt to become to faults in himself. This inability to see his own shortcomings would be ludicrous, if it were not so pitiful. Yet these shortcomings are apparent to all who know him.

A business man entered a crowded street-car. There was just one vacant seat, by the side of a foreigner who was holding a child. When asked if he would make room the stolid man in the seat made no motion. The newcomer sat down as well as he could, though he had only a few inches of space. As soon as another half seat was vacated he moved across the aisle. At once his new seat-mate addressed him: "What is wrong with that foreigner over there? Why didn't he give you your half of the seat? I am in favour of teaching such folks their proper place. The conductor should have authority to make them do the right thing or leave the car."

While the remark was made the speaker, lounging in the seat, was taking two-thirds of the entire space. And the business man was no more comfortable than he had been by the side of the

foreigner. The critic had not the excuse of the man criticized, who was holding the child on his knee.

“ Did you see that man who just stepped off the car ? ” a garrulous passenger on the front platform said to a stranger, who had to listen to him or leave the car. “ If you ride on this car very often, it would be an interesting thing to keep your eye on him. He’s the man who always gets a seat, no matter how large the crowd. He seems to be absolutely unmindful of the comfort of other people. He may have to stand for a minute or two ; but at the first opportunity he slides into a seat, even if he has to tread on the toes of one or two women who are hurrying to get to it, never thinking that a man will push in ahead of them. I have my opinion of any one who will take a seat away from a woman.”

And in three separate ways the critic was showing himself just as unmindful of the comfort of others : by talking to a stranger who had his own thoughts of the day’s work to occupy him, or who wished to glance at the morning paper ; by leaning against the end of the car, with his feet stretched out in the path of alighting passengers ; and by standing in the way of women who sought to grasp the hand-rail while stepping from the car.

It was a young minister who was guilty of a similar readiness to criticize a brother minister when there was just as much reason to criticize himself for the very same reason. An acquaintance, meeting him on the suburban train late in the evening,

began to speak warmly of a mutual friend who, by careful study of literature during his hours of recreation, had made himself a master whose opinions on literary matters were widely quoted. "That's all very well, if he sees his way clear to devote so much time to subjects outside the range of his regular work," was his unfavourable comment. "He must put in at least one evening each week on literature. I do not feel that this is treating fairly the church whose pastor he is; the time might be used to good advantage in calling on some families who may not be able to see him in the daytime. As for me, it is impossible to devote valuable time to any such selfish purpose."

A minute or two later he explained that he was just returning from a suburban town, where he made it a habit to go once a week, to spend an evening with friends. "A bit of recreation which I find invaluable in my busy life," he declared. "I must get entirely away from my work, periodically, if I would be up to the mark the rest of the time." But he severely criticized another for taking the same amount of time for *his* recreation.

The injunction spoken by One who knew what was in man is not yet out of date: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then

shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”

And that other message, sent by Paul to the Romans of the first century, is just as applicable to Americans of the twentieth century: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.”

The only safe course, and the course that will bring most happiness not only to others but to ourselves, is to hunt for the best things in other people, and to be relentless in our scrutiny of our own lives, that no evil thing may escape unseen.

## COURTESY AND DISCOURTESY

“**T**HERE goes Old Russell!”

A lad of fifteen was looking from the window, and was announcing the passage of a village character, a man who, while peculiar, was respected by all who knew him for his honourable life and Christian character.

“Do you think that a courteous way to speak of him, Mark?” his father asked. “He is not so old, and as he is the only man of his name in town he needs no distinguishing adjective. Why not call him ‘Mr. Russell’ when you have occasion to speak of him?”

Mark hung his head; he did not know what to say.

“I am eager to have you treat everybody with respect, Mark,” continued the father. “You cannot afford to fail in courtesy to any one you meet. Your discourteous words do not do so much harm to the person to whom they are spoken as to yourself. And courteous words have never done any harm. In fact, they frequently help those who hear them. Sometimes, too, they bring an unlooked-for reward to the speaker.

“Did you ever hear the story of how a man once well known in Washington got his start in

life? In 1871 he was an assistant doorkeeper in the House of Representatives. One day he overheard a stranger ask another doorkeeper for assistance in finding one of the senators from California. The doorkeeper very surlily answered that it was none of his business where the senators were; they could be found at the other end of the Capitol.

“‘But can’t you help me?’ the stranger urged. ‘I was sent over here because he was seen to come this way.’

“‘No, I can’t,’ was the answer. ‘I have trouble enough looking after the representatives.’

“The stranger was about to turn away when the assistant, who had overheard the conversation, said: ‘If you are from California, you have come a long way. I will try to help you.’ Then he asked him to take a seat, and hurried off in search of the senator.

“Soon he found his man and piloted him to the Californian, who, as he turned away, gave his card to the courteous doorkeeper, and said:

“‘I wish you would call at my hotel this evening; I want to talk to you.’

“The card bore the name of Collis P. Huntington, the railroad magnate. At the interview that night he offered the assistant a position at nearly twice the salary the young man was receiving from the government.

“‘My fortune was made from that time on,’ the ex-doorkeeper said, recently, as he told the story to a group of friends in his beautiful home.

"You have no doubt read of the reward of the courtesy of the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to an unassuming old gentleman who, for years, was in the habit of visiting the museum and asking questions as to the methods and conduct of the institution. He was particularly insistent in requesting information regarding its financial affairs. Sometimes the questions seemed intrusive; they must have become quite monotonous, as the same questions were asked again and again. But the director answered with unvarying courtesy. At length the curious visitor died. When his will was opened it was found that he had left the bulk of his enormous estate to the museum.

"That experience reminds me of the conductor on the Chicago and Alton Railway who once carried a passenger who asked all manner of questions about the farm lands adjacent to the railway line. The conductor answered as fully as he could. Again and again, he found the man on his train. Always he asked questions; always he was courteously answered. Then he was seen no more. After some time, a letter came for the conductor, containing one thousand dollars, and a message of thanks for valuable information given to an investor who had used the conductor to learn all he could of Illinois farm lands.

"I recently read of a man who had a like opportunity. He was young and ambitious, and had long cast his eye on a position paying twice the

salary he had been receiving. If he could only secure it, he would be fixed for life, he thought. But there seemed to be no prospect of gaining the coveted prize. One morning he received a letter from a stranger which asked two questions, to which an early reply was sought. No hint was given why the questions were asked. Under ordinary circumstances, the letter would have been answered courteously. But that morning the recipient had missed a train, he had heard a bit of bad news, and he had a headache. Thus he allowed himself to feel resentful to the unknown correspondent, although the questions asked were perfectly proper even between strangers. Giving way to his feelings, he wrote and mailed a reply which—two hours later—he bitterly regretted. He heard nothing further from his correspondent. But, some weeks after, he was informed that the letter had been sent by a man commissioned to seek a suitable man for just such a position as he had been longing for. His name had been so favourably considered that it was decided to appoint him—provided the answer to a letter, the purpose of which did not appear, was satisfactory. The discourtesy of the letter received in reply was too great to be borne; no further consideration was given the writer. He was passed by for another. When he learned the result of his discourtesy, he told the story as a warning to others, and said: ‘I am thankful that the experience came to me at a time when I could stand the disappointment best.

And I shall see to it that the mistake is never repeated.'

"Now, Mark," the father concluded, "I have not repeated these stories to make you feel that we should be courteous simply because it may pay us well ; or that we should avoid discourtesy because it may bring disaster to our plans or loss to our pockets. We are to be courteous, not in a coldly calculating way, but because courteous treatment is due everybody we meet."

## TAKING SECOND PLACE

**I**N his book, "My Dogs in the Northland," Rev. Egerton R. Young has told of a dog which was for many years a matchless leader in the frequent journeys by sledge across the trackless snows. Other dogs required an Indian guide to run before them. But when once Voyageur was told to make for a certain point on the horizon, he required no further directions. Though often momentarily turned from his course by obstructions, he invariably returned to the direct line.

Not only was he efficient in his leadership, he was proud of his position, and was unwilling to give place to another dog. After some years, however, the master determined to have a second leader trained in case of need. The dog selected for the purpose was harnessed in front of Voyageur. When, after a few minutes' delay, the missionary gave the command to start, the young dog which had been placed in the lead fell back, and Voyageur took his place. Investigation showed that the delay had been utilized by him in gnawing the thongs by which his supplanter was bound in front of him.

Once more the young dog was fastened at the head of the train. Voyageur was indignant, and showed his rage by attempts to bite the new leader. Not succeeding in this, he finally gave up. "His

proud, eager, ambitious spirit was completely broken. His high head went down and the long tail tried to disappear between his legs."

Thereupon his master restored him to the leading place. "But it was too late. Voyageur's heart was broken. He never held up his head again with the old-time dash and vigour. He skulked along home, hardly dragging a pound of the load." Next day he cried and moaned like a disconsolate child. It was not long till he went out on the frozen lake, and, after a series of mournful howls, lay down on the ice. An Indian, who went to him at once, found him dead. He had tasted the joys of leadership, and he could not content himself with second place.

A pastor was puzzled by the small attendance at the gatherings of a society of young people, which, for several years, had done splendid work in his church. Where forty or fifty had been accustomed to assemble for an enthusiastic meeting, barely a dozen were in their places. Interest was waning. After careful inquiry, he learned the reason. A young Christian had been president of the society for two years. Under his leadership all went well. At length it seemed best to elect a new president. Instead of acquiescing in this arrangement, the retiring officer, angry and rebellious, resolved to break up the society. He declared if he could not be leader, he would not be anything. So he did all he could to hamper the new president. Rallying his friends about him, he succeeded in dividing the society. Quarrels were frequent, and the organ-

ization was in danger of dying a violent death—all because one member proposed to rule or ruin. Then the pastor sorrowfully recalled the story of Voyageur, the dog which refused to work when he could no longer lead.

There is a lesson for retiring officers in the action of a speaker at a banquet a few years ago, in a Western city. He was the editor of a leading daily, prominent in the state, and the company assembled were attentively listening to his witty talk. During a burst of applause which greeted a brilliant period, ex-President Cleveland entered the room. Instantly the speaker was forgotten and the banqueters were on their feet, shouting welcome to their guest and clamouring for a speech. Mr. Cleveland responded at once, and among those who applauded his every point no one was more enthusiastic than the editor whose speech had been cut short by the unexpected arrival of the more distinguished politician. At the conclusion of the toast, when the company had quieted down, calls were once more made for the editor. Some men, in his position, would have sulked in their seats, scornfully refusing to heed the demand. But the editor was above such childishness. Without a thought he resumed his talk, just where it had been broken off.

Why not? We all cannot be leaders, nor is it wise for the same individual to lead all the time. The true man is just as ready to take a position of minor importance as he is to step to the front when duty calls.

## MAKING A CHUM OF FATHER

“ I HAVE my opinion of a boy who seems to have no use for his father,” a successful man said not long ago. Then he continued: “ My opinion is the more unfavourable because I know what a mistake I made myself when I was a boy. Father wanted to make me his companion, but I kept away from him. Again and again he would try to get me alone with him ; just as often I would balk him. I remember a day when he asked me to take a long walk with him. I was suspicious, and made an excuse to go by myself. To-day I would give a great deal for the chance to walk and talk with him, for now I know what I missed in the days when I was at home.”

It is worthy of note that many of the men who have been leaders in the life of the last generation did not wait until it was too late to appreciate their fathers at something like their true worth.

As boys they rejoiced to be in the company of their fathers, to talk with them, to chum with them, to learn from them ; and as men they were proud to acknowledge the benefits received from their fathers.

Some men declare proudly that they have made themselves, that they owe no part of their success

to any one. The truth of the matter is, in many cases, that from the father was received the inspiration that led to success, or the encouragement to persevere in difficult tasks, or the help that made their later achievements possible.

For instance, there is Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, who does not hesitate to tell how to-day he stands on the shoulders of his father as he does the work. That father, who was long professor of vocal physiology in Boston University, taught the son many of the intricate wonders of the human voice, disclosing to him, during frequent familiar conferences, all he had learned and many things he hoped to be able to do. Many of them he did not do ; but the son, instructed by the father, is now proving that the father did not live in vain.

It was fortunate for Henry Clay Trumbull that his father made a companion of him, and that he had the desire to respond to the advances made by his father. In the years when the son was at home the father was looked upon as the greatest of heroes, and every word of advice from his lips was treasured. When, at fourteen years of age, the boy went away to school, he looked forward to his father's letters as his chief joy. Many of these letters were preserved. One extract, in particular, he remembered as long as he lived. The message had a marked effect on him, not only when he was at school, but when he went out into the world. Here it is :

" If I were to offer advice to you, I should urge you to make use of the present hour, to lose no opportunity of doing good and getting good. I would have you lay a foundation strong and deep for your future happiness, and to sacrifice present ease and gratification in prosecuting this work. I would seriously caution you against indulging discontent and impatience. They will poison your peace if not subdued. Contentment and complacency depend more upon ourselves than upon circumstances, and if you would enjoy your present position or any other in which you may hereafter find yourself, you must strive to make the best of it."

When Robert Louis Stevenson was a boy in Edinburgh (he was a semi-invalid), he knew no greater joy than his father's presence. Frequently his father would come to him at night when the horror and pain of the wakeful hours seemed more than he could bear. He always remembered the tender way in which the strong man talked to him, until he forgot everything but the loved presence. Once his father helped him when he inadvertently turned the key that shut him, alone, in a dark room. He could not open the door, and he was terrified until his father came, talked to him through the door, and remained until the locksmith was called and the prisoner was released. But Louis had long since ceased to think of the darkness, so great was the charm of the father's conversation.

Another Scotch lad, Robert Carter, learned many

life lessons from his father, a simple Edinburgh weaver. Of two of these he frequently told his children as they gathered about the fireside in his home in New York City. One day father and son were walking together along a dusty road. They were thirsty, for the day was sultry. Turning a corner, Robert saw a little roadside spring. He ran to the water and stooped to drink, but his father paused a moment, and raised his bonnet, and his lips moved in thanksgiving to God who had given them the needed refreshment.

Another trip with his father was also long remembered. It was dark, and a thunder-storm came on. The father, noticing how the lad shrank and shuddered at the lightning, drew him close to his side, threw over his head the skirts of his loose mantle, and led him through the darkness. How the boy loved his strong father for that hour's loving ministry!

Louis Agassiz, the naturalist, was fortunate in his willingness to listen to the sage counsel of a father who sought to keep him from making mistakes. When the son seemed a little too precipitate in choosing science as a life-work, the father wrote to him, urging the wisdom of having also something on which he could depend for a livelihood:

“Let the sciences be the balloon in which you prepare to travel through higher regions, but let medicine and surgery be your parachutes. The natural sciences offer nothing certain in the future. Some adverse fortune, and unexpected loss of popu-

ularity, or, perhaps, some revolutions fatal to your philosophy, may bring you down with a somersault, and then you would not be sorry to find in your quiver the means of gaining your bread."

Another letter of counsel mildly reproved him for his "mania of rushing full gallop into the future." "If it is absolutely essential to your happiness that you should break the ice of the two poles in order to find the bones of a mammoth, or that you should dry your shirt in the sun of the tropics, at least wait until your trunk is packed and your passports are signed before you talk with us about it. Begin by reaching your first aim, a physician's and surgeon's diploma. I will not for the present hear of anything else."

Think what those men would have missed if they had avoided their fathers, and then stop to consider whether you are not yourself missing something of incalculable value simply because you are not appreciating your father at his true worth. Don't be afraid of him. Make him your companion. Then see whether you do not find new joy in life.

## BEING A GENTLEMAN

“**M**ARSE TUMLIN was a gentleman,” were the words spoken by a plantation negress, as reported in a quotation which went the rounds of the papers some years ago. “Dey ain’t never been a time in dat man’s life when he ain’t think mo’ er somebody else dan what he think er hisse’f. Dat’s what I call de quality, suh. ’Tain’t money, ’tain’t land, ’tain’t fine duds, ’tain’t nawthin’ ’t all like dat. I tell you, suh, dem what wants to be de quality is got ter have a long line er big graveyards behind ’em, and dem graveyards is got ter be full er folks what use ter know how to treat yuther folks.”

The old mammy was right in one thing. A prime test of gentility is the ability to take thought for others. But she was wrong in declaring that to be a gentleman, a man must be descended through generations of considerate people. The rough soldier of whom General Lawton delighted to tell had the unselfish instincts of a gentleman, even if he was unable to point with pride to a long line of genteel ancestors. It was after a long, hard day, when a battle had followed a forced night march, and a second march had followed the battle, that a trooper—already

heavily burdened with blankets and haversack—was seen carrying in addition a dog—the mascot of the regiment. Asked why he bothered with a mere dog, he replied, simply, "Why, the dog's tired!" The general's delight in telling the story came from his appreciation of the character of a man who could forget his own utter weariness for the sake of a dumb beast. Surely, according to the old plantation test, there was in him the making of a gentleman.

Just as spontaneous and as unselfish was the act of ex-Senator Cockrell, of Missouri, in the state convention of 1874. He was a candidate for the nomination for governor, and had every expectation of success. However, he was defeated by one-sixth of a vote. Instantly, when the result had been announced, he was on his feet. Throwing his hat to the ceiling with a shout, he called for three cheers for his successful antagonist. Mr. Cockrell's friends knew him well enough to be sure that this was not done because he thought it good politics. He did it because it was second nature to forget his own chagrin in thinking of the joy of his opponent.

A story of self-forgetfulness is told by W. L. Wylie, in the life of J. M. W. Turner. Speaking of "The Cologne," painted by Turner in 1826, he says, "This picture, remarkable for a very brilliant sky, happened to be hung next to two portraits by Lawrence, which, not being painted in so high a key, were very much injured by the juxtaposition.

Sir Thomas was in despair; the works that had seemed so bright in his studio now seemed dull and earthy. Turner listened, and at last got to work on his sky. He took some water-colour lampblack and went all over it. 'Why, Turner, what have you done to your picture?' said a friend, who had seen it before the alteration. 'Oh, it's all right; it will all wash off after the close of the exhibition. And poor Lawrence was so unhappy!'"

Nor are such incidents as this exceptional. Much is said of the selfishness of men in this hustling, bustling age when "one must keep his eyes open, or be pushed to the wall." There is a surprise in store for those who are accustomed to look on the dark side of life when they begin to look for the good as well as for the evil.

Years ago, in one of the large universities, some students were discussing a classmate who seemed to be a thorough gentleman. No fault was found with him by any one—until a cynic proposed that his courtesy would not stand the severe test of being aroused from sleep at two o'clock in the morning, after a hard day's work in preparation for examinations, to help a mere speaking acquaintance with a problem in mathematics. It was resolved to make the test. The sleeper was awakened, and the request was preferred, while the listening students prepared for the wrathful explosion they felt sure would follow. But they were disappointed. "Why, certainly, Jones! Come in!" was the hearty response. And Jones entered

the room where, for an hour, the problem was patiently explained. The story is told in the university to this day.

The same spirit of readiness to sink self in thought for another was recently shown by a young man employed in a banking-house of a Western city. Friends who knew the valuable work he was doing urged him to apply for an increased salary. They assured him that he would surely receive this recognition of his merits from superiors who were notably attentive to their employees. But the clerk would not agree. " You see, there is a man working in the same department who has not been able to do the amount of work that I have. If I receive an increase, it will mean—almost inevitably—a decrease for him. For the head of the department will then have to take notice of what he seems to be ignorant of. And he will not feel justified in paying the larger salary to two men. If only one is to have it, let the other man have the preference ; he has a large family to support, and it is a struggle for them to live, as it is."

Fortunate the boy who early learns to stand this test of a gentleman. Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, the missionary to Turkey who died some years ago after years of unselfish service, once told the story of his rude awakening to the realization of the ugliness of selfishness. When he was eighteen, he was adding to his meagre income as an apprentice by collecting bills. " A pump-and-block-maker promised to pay his bill of twenty-five dollars the next day," he said.

“My commission would be one dollar and a half. That evening his great establishment took fire and burned up. I went up to the flat roof of our store, and saw at once just where the fire was. ‘There goes my dollar and a half,’ I thought.” And then he adds shamefacedly, “Very wonderful is the personal pronoun, first person singular !”

What a difference it would make in happiness—our own and that of others—if we should pay less heed to the first personal pronoun, and more to the second personal pronoun !



**X**

**Getting a Vision**



## LVII

### CUI BONO ?

**I**N 1904, Miss Helen Gould, the philanthropist, whose constant thought is to be of use to those she meets, was a visitor at the Woman's Headquarters of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. Those in charge gleefully told her of plans for the entertaining of guests and for the expenditure of the \$100,000 received from Exposition funds. The visitor listened courteously to her entertainers, then quietly asked: "But what will this accomplish? What real good do you think will come of this expenditure?" The question was not answered; it was unanswerable.

In "Working with the Hands," Booker T. Washington tells this story: "I shall never forget a remark I once heard made by a lady of foreign birth. She had recently arrived in America, and by chance had landed in one of our largest cities. As she was a woman of considerable importance, she received lavish social attention. For weeks her life was spent in a round of fashionable dressing, driving, automobiling, balls, theatres, art museums, card parties, and what not. When she was quite worn out a friend took her to visit the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. There she saw teachers and students at work in the soil, in wood, in metal, in leather, at work cooking, sewing, laundering. She saw a company of the most devoted men and women in the world giving their lives in the most

unselfish way that they might help to put a race on its feet. It was then that she exclaimed in my presence: 'What a relief! Here I have found a reality. And I am so glad I did not leave America before I saw it.' At last she had seen something worth while.

It is told of Jules Verne that he was once congratulated by a friend on the vast amount of work he had accomplished during his life. He was reminded of the stories he had written and of the millions who had been amused as they read his productions. The French author smiled sadly as he listened to the praises of his well-meaning acquaintance, but shook his head. "I have done nothing worth while," he said.

A young man once wrote a breezy, humorous sketch. His friends praised it, and he wished to print it. First, however, he submitted it to a candid critic. A few days later, the paper was returned, with these lines which are worth remembering. "The story is quite fetching. But what good end its publication would serve I cannot quite see. You know we should test each production by the query, *Cui bono?* precisely what do I seek to accomplish by this?"

Why not ask that question before engaging in any work or attempting to carry out any plan, "What will this amount to? Who will be benefited? Will the world be better off?" Too often the question is rather: "Is there a dollar to be gained?" or "Will this work out for *my* temporal benefit?"

## LVIII

### TO-DAY OR TO-MORROW

**W**HEN Pizarro was making the journey to South America, the country of his dreams, he landed on the way with his ship's company, when nearly there. These men, who only a little while before were burning with desire to reach Peru, in order that they might satisfy their hunger for treasure, were now dismayed because of the hardships of the voyage. They were weary and they were homesick. The goal which they had set before their eyes seemed too difficult of attainment, and they "ran down to the ship and demanded to be conveyed to Panama. Pizarro joined them, gathered them about him, and drawing a line in the sand with his sword, said: 'Comrades, on this side,' pointing to the south, 'are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, battle, and it may be death. On this side,'—to the north—'are ease and safety. But on that side lies Peru, with its wealth. On this side is Panama and its poverty. Choose each man what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south.' And he stepped to the southern side of the line. A moment, and twelve soldiers joined him. The rest went on board the ship and returned to Panama."

Just a bit of history—a bit so trifling that it is not considered worthy of mention in many sketches of Pizarro's career. But it is more than a bit of

history to those who think twice; it is a picture of life.

For life is made up of just such choices. Everywhere the line is drawn. The individual who steps to one side chooses the ease of the moment and elusive pleasures. His companion who steps the other way does so because he is willing to undergo present difficulty and discomfort for future and more lasting joy and satisfaction. How frequently they fail in life who choose the moment's ease, refusing to regard the future!

Every teacher has had trying experiences with the lad who dislikes study. He says he is too old to go to school, and that he ought to be at work. He heeds not the adviser who warns him of the time when he will vainly regret that he ever left school. He thinks so much of to-day's freedom from the demands of the schoolroom that the future has no terrors for him. And before he knows it he is distanced in the race for position. Then he realizes his mistake. There was a line drawn for him—he stepped to the wrong side.

In like manner the young man in business has a choice to make. Shall he choose indolent satisfaction, the seeking of his own pleasure in the midst of his work—or shall he give that careful attention to business which brings success? Shall he be as careful of his employer's interests as of his own? Shall he be always anxious to learn—or shall he be content to know just as little as possible, and draw his salary?

Such workers have been compared to the moun-

tain whites of the South. They were born in the mountains, and they never leave the mountains. The mountains are their horizon, and they care for nothing more. Just so men sometimes insist that to-night shall be the horizon of their lives. There is a to-morrow, of course. But they let to-morrow alone. They want to be happy to-day, so they do the things which they think will bring happiness to-day, no matter what the future consequences may be. They say the future is too far away to be considered—it looks dull, and is uninviting.

A young man stood on an afternoon in late October on a high bluff, overlooking a stream a mile distant. It was an inviting spot. So long as he looked at the bluff, he was pleased. When he raised his eyes to the distant river, saw the unattractive fringe of trees and shrubbery on the bank, and noted the slimy pools and the hot sands which lay between, he was content to remain where he stood. But when the field-glasses brought the fringe of trees nearer, there was a transformation. The scrub was beautiful. The afternoon sunlight sparkled on the tinted leaves. The water was like silver. And he forgot the long walk, the slimy pools, the hot sands—and was off for the distant river.

Just suppose we keep a magnifying glass by us, to look at the future! Then these present hardships will be forgotten, because of the promise of joys to follow. And we would be always ready to heed the advice of Pythagoras: "Choose the way that seemeth best, however rough it be."

## LIX

### POVERTY AND RICHES

I KNOW a man who ought to be happy. He is strong and well, has regular work and good pay, a pleasant little home, and a wife and children there. But he is not happy, because he is always finding fault with the world. He owns he has many reasons to be glad. But there are others who have more than he has—better homes, better pay, more money in the bank. And he cannot be happy for thinking of them. Goods ought to be divided more evenly, he thinks. He has just as much right to the larger possessions as any one; perhaps, if the truth were known, just a little more right. The world is sadly out of joint. Because he cannot set it right, his face wears a constant frown, and he is not only unhappy himself, but he does his best to make everybody else miserable.

My neighbour is a refreshing contrast. He is a clerk on a small salary. He goes to business early in the morning and works hard all day. He has few holidays, and there is very little of what the world calls pleasure in his life. But he is happy. For he knows how to extract the keenest pleasure from his surroundings. He lives in a little flat, whose back porch overlooks the beautiful grounds

of a large home. In the evening, with his family, he sits on the porch and feasts his eyes on stately trees and beautiful flowers.

“Isn’t this splendid? Am I not a fortunate man?” he asked me, one evening. “What rich man could have a better outlook than mine? These trees, these flowers, the entire picture, I can enjoy as well as the owner of that large property. To tell the truth, I am better off than he is. For does he not have to care for the lawn, and trim the trees, and cultivate the flowers? But all I have to do is to sit here and enjoy it all. Then, in the morning, I wake to hear the birds in these same trees singing as if their lives depended on it. It pleases me to think they are singing for me. And why not for me as much as for the man who owns the trees? Yes, you must agree with me that I am a very fortunate man.”

What is back of this contrast between these two men? There is little difference in their outward circumstances. The only difference is in their manner of looking at life. The one is always expecting disappointment and vexation; the other is ever on the lookout for pleasant things to think and say and do. The first is daily grovelling in the dust of his own discontent; the second is continually rising to new heights of joy and appreciation of the good things of life. He has learned that a man’s wealth consists not in the abundance of the things that he possesses; and he is content in whatsoever state he is. But his fellow, longing

for the things he has not, finds neither wealth nor contentment, but only sorrow and pain and woe.

An old English poet told the secret of the contrast when he wrote :

**"There is a jewel which no Indian mines can buy,  
No chemic art can counterfeit.  
It makes men rich in greatest poverty ;  
Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold ;  
The homely whistle to sweet music's strain.  
Seldom it comes ; to few from heaven sent,  
That much in little, all in naught, content."**

This message was sent to his countrymen by Ming Sum Paou Ke-en, a Chinese sage whom experience had made content with small possessions : "Content," he said, "furnishes constant joy ; much covetousness, constant grief. To the contented, even poverty is joy. To the discontented, even wealth is a vexation."

But, as always, it is the Bible which speaks the most impressive word, and gives the conclusion to the whole matter : "Let your conversation be without covetousness ; and be content with such things as ye have ; for He hath said, I will never leave you nor forsake you."

## LX

### THE GAIN OF LOOKING CLOSELY

**I**T is a complaint frequently heard that life is humdrum, narrow, monotonous. "If I could only get away from this place, and live at the county seat, how happy I would be!" the boy on the farm says. "What relief it would be to leave this town where one sees the same folks every day, and the same houses, and horses, and hitching-posts," the dweller in the county seat says. "The city is the place for me. I want to be where I can see something new, and can get some variety in life."

But the complainers are not apt to find relief from the monotony either in county town or in city, for the fault is not in their surroundings, but in themselves. They do not see new things, just because they do not look for them. New things there are—in nature and in people alike—but they do not observe closely.

It would be a good thing for all of us if we would remember in daily life a game popular among the children. "Try how much you can see in half a minute." A store window is selected. It is crowded with toys and knickknacks. All look closely at the contents; then face the other way,

and write a list of the articles recalled. It is a training for both eyes and mind. When one has looked at a few windows he is ready for a room with a little furniture, and then for an empty room. It is astonishing the number of things one can see in an empty room.

Many years ago, a busy father in San Francisco several times a month took a day from his business and led his children into the woods. There, under the trees, he would mark out a square yard of ground for each child, with instructions to study the spot closely, and later, to tell him what was seen. At first the children could not understand. What was there to see in a little bit of bare ground? But they had confidence in their father, and they did as he told them. The first day they saw everything, as they thought, in a minute. But, with practice, they learned to spend a half hour, an hour, two hours, in the engrossing study. What wonderful things they saw! How excitedly they told of the tiny plants; the little insects; the bits of stone; and the scores of other wonderful things which had attracted their attention. The father smiled as he listened to their exclamations; and he thought how much more life would mean to them in after years.

In the charming narrative of the life of Isabella Bird Bishop, a story is told of her own training. Because of delicate health she began, when only five years old, to ride a horse by the side of her father on his daily rounds about his English parish.

“To those outings she owed far more than lifelong familiarity with the art of riding, although that was no small gain for one who was afterwards to mount, as necessity urged, ox, horse, mule, or yak in distant lands. As they rode, Mr. Bird would draw her attention to every feature of the wayside—to the fields far and near, in grass, or crops, or fallow; to the farmhouses, their dairies and press houses—telling her the use of all and each, questioning her minutely as to what she saw. Long after, a friend asked her to what she traced her habit of accurate observation. ‘To my father’s questioning me on everything,’ she answered. ‘If we rode, he made me tell him about the crops in such and such fields; whether a water-wheel were undershot or overshot; how each gate we passed through was hung; about animals seen, and parishioners met.’ And so she learned to measure distance and space with her eye; to look for changes in the crops, and to know their purpose.” No wonder she was able to enrich the literature of travel by her records of observation in many lands!

If we would thus train ourselves our world would be transformed. There would be no more monotony. The street-car ride, so tedious to the average worker; the walk along the country road; the labour of following the plough or of washing the dishes; the look from the home window which has been taken every day for five, ten, or fifteen years, all would be different, teeming with life, full of ever-varying delights. Then we would understand

more of the meaning of the poet, who told of  
finding

**" Sermons in stones, books in the running brooks."**

Who says life is narrow and humdrum speaks  
heedlessly. There is nothing so narrow as the man  
who will not look closely; no life so humdrum as  
that of the man who will not see.

## LXI

### “BLIND LEADS”

**W**HEN the Ziegler expedition ship *America* was pushing towards the north pole in July, 1903, it became necessary to charge at full steam the seemingly solid mass of the ice-floe in order to break the way to the coveted stretch of clear water. The story is told in the official account of the expedition.

“The ice had to be carefully watched, and the course of every little water lead traced from the crow’s-nest before the ship’s nose was pushed into it.

“In going south, towards the open sea, almost every lane of water can be trusted as leading towards safety ; but, in forcing a way north, it is like going towards the small end of a funnel, and in a close season many an opening that from the limited view-circle of deck and rigging seemed to stretch to the very edge of the earth resolved itself into what is technically termed a ‘blind lead,’ ending in solid ice.

“Captain Coffin, through the knowledge gained in many years of arctic whaling, kept carefully out of these traps, which had caused the destruction of the *Jeannette*, the *Tegethooft*, and many another arctic-going ship ; and we did very little useless steaming.

“Under the influence of the winds and currents

the ice-fields were either closing and under pressure, or separating and relaxing. At the time of pressure it was useless to attempt to force a way, and we could only stand by and wait.

"Every halt of the ship was accepted with impatience by some of the company, who, though it was their first experience on a polar sea, freely gave their opinions as to how the ship should be managed in the ice.

"The captain at first thought it amusing, and often asked me to look down over the edge of the crow's-nest to see his 'ice pilots' standing in the rigging and on the forecastle head, with their eyes glued to the sea.

"On July 20th we had stopped the ship in a little open hole of water from which two blind leads of water extended, one threading its narrow way in a northwest, the other in a northeasterly direction. Captain Coffin and I in the crow's-nest anxiously examined both through our binoculars and with the long ship's telescope, but could find no other evidence of water; and the horizon was white with the 'ice blink' (the reflection from the ice which proved the absence of open water).

"The captain said to me: 'We can enter either lead; but it would be foolish, for we can only steam about three miles in one, or about four miles in the other. If we wait here, the chances are that one of the leads will close and the other open; we will then be in a position to take the one that is open, and push on.'

“I saw the wisdom of his judgment at once, and agreed that waiting was the only thing to do.

“On my way down from the crow’s-nest I could see from the lower level one of the leads showing water almost to the horizon, and could understand the critical comments made by some of my comrades at the seemingly unnecessary delay.

“The following day, under the influence of a twenty-five-mile-an-hour wind, one of the leads closed into a small pressure-ridge; the other opened, and through it we eventually escaped from our pool.”

What a picture of life!

So many men and women take the surface view. If they look ahead at all, they are so often satisfied with first impressions. They depend on themselves and their own unaided vision. So their undertakings frequently involve them in disasters which might have been avoided by a more careful and determined study of the problems before them.

Other men and women who make this study; who do not depend on their own judgment alone, but take counsel with friends; who seek to look through God’s eyes as they plan their work, not only save themselves from the disappointments and vexations which hinder progress, but are able to keep pushing slowly but steadily ahead. They are not so apt to be under the necessity of regretfully looking back, because the path which looked so promising proved to be only a blind lead, while their only comfort is the sigh, “Hindsight is bet-

ter than foresight any day." But because the foresight has been thoroughgoing the hindsight is more likely to be satisfying. Having looked before leaping, they have not leaped into uncertainty.

Suppose such looking does take time. It saves time, too.

Suppose impatient observers do urge us to hasten, saying that we are overcautious, and that opportunities are passing us by. We can afford to let them pass, if they are doubtful opportunities, that we may be ready for the real opportunity.

It is necessary only that we be prepared for advance when our view from aloft, from the mountain top where we look through God's eyes, shows us that advance is wise, and that we be content to wait until the way for advance is open before us.

And, no matter how much of tumult there may be around us, we can be unmindful of it all as we realize that God's hand is upon us, His providence is over us, His thought is for us.