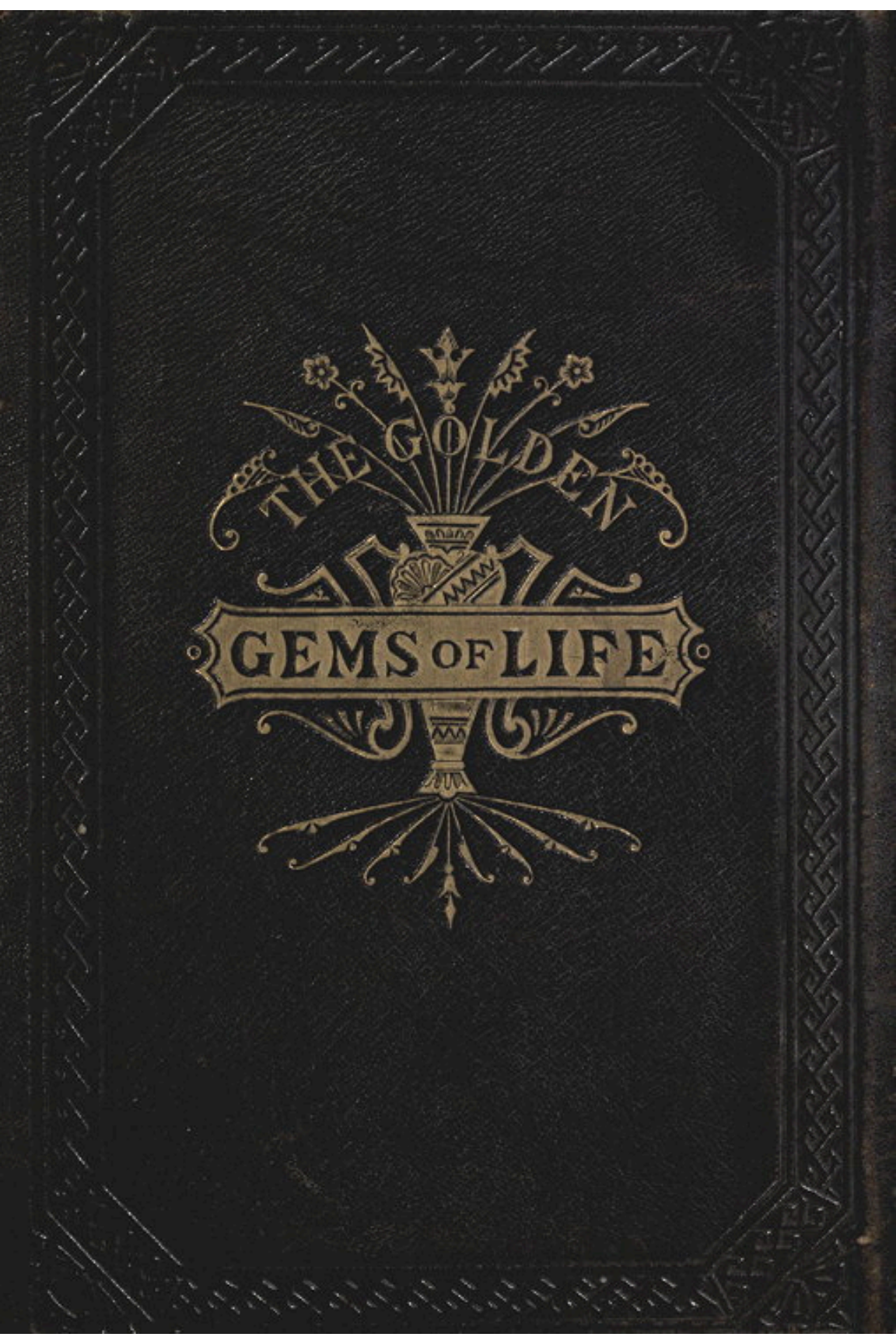

THE GOLDEN
GEMS OF LIFE

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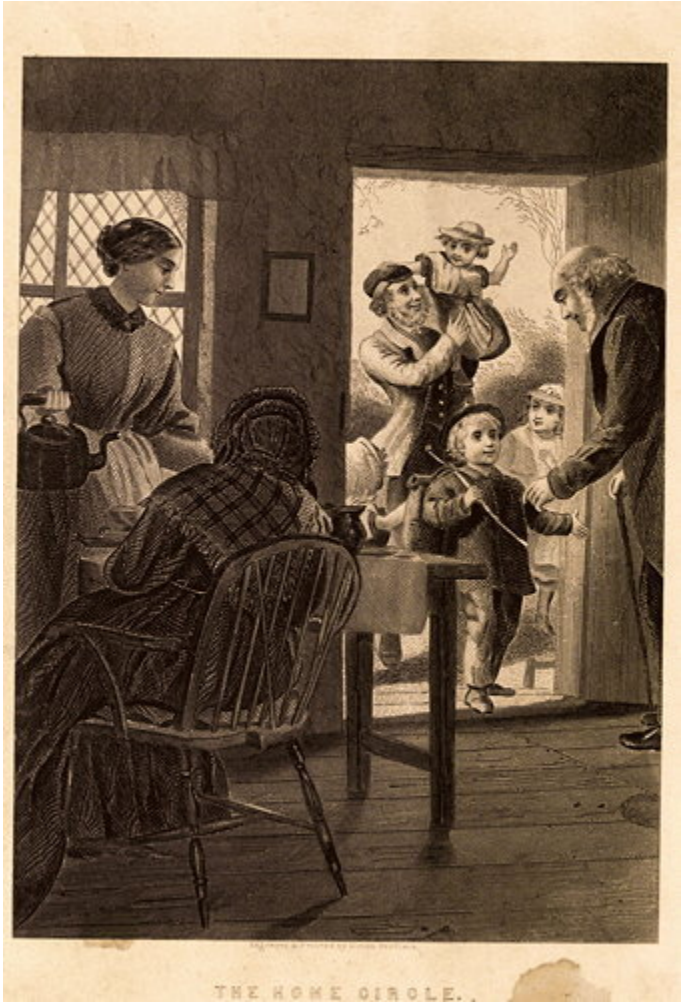
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THE HOME CIRCLE.



OR,

Gathered Jewels for the Home Circle.

BY

S. C. FERGUSON
AND
E. A. ALLEN.

CENTRAL PUBLISHING HOUSE,
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1884

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PREFACE.



The design of this work is to rouse to honorable effort those who are wasting their time and energies through indifference to life's prizes. In the furtherance of this aim the authors have endeavored to gather from all possible sources the thoughts of those wise and earnest men and women who have used their pens to delineate life and its possibilities, its joys and its sorrows. They do not claim to have furnished more than the setting in which are placed these "GEMS" of thought gathered thus from sources widely different.

Their hope is, that they may be able to rouse in the minds of the careless a sense of the value of existence. To those who are striving nobly for true manhood or womanhood, they would fain bring words of encouragement. They trust that many may derive from its pages inspirations which will serve to make real their hopes of success and happiness.

CINCINNATI, *January* 1, 1880.



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LIFE.

We can conceive of no spectacle better calculated to lead the mind to serious reflections than that of an aged person, who has misspent a long life, and who, when standing near the end of life's journey, looks down the long vista of his years, only to recall opportunities unimproved. Now that it is all too late, he can plainly see where he passed by in heedless haste the real "gems of life" in pursuit of the glittering gewgaws of pleasure, but which, when gained, like the apples of Sodom, turned to ashes in his very grasp. What a different course would he pursue would time but turn backwards in his flight and he be allowed to commence anew to weave the "tangled web of life." But this is not vouchsafed

him. Regrets are useless, save when they awaken in the minds of youth a wish to avoid errors and a desire to gather only the true "jewels of life."

Life, with its thousand voices wailing and exulting, reproving and exalting, is calling upon you. Arouse, and gird yourself for the race. Up and onward, and

"Waking,
Be awake to sleep no more."

Not alone by its ultimate destiny, but by its immediate obligations, uses, enjoyment, and advantages, must be estimated the infinite and untold value of life. It is a great mission on which you are sent. It is the choicest gift in the bounty of heaven committed to your wise and diligent keeping, and is associated with countless benefits and priceless boons which heaven alone has power to bestow. But, alas! its possibilities for woe are equal to those of weal.

It is a crowning triumph or a disastrous defeat, garlands or chains, a prison or a prize. We need the eloquence of Ulysses to plead in our behalf, the arrows of Hercules to do battle on our side. It is of the utmost importance to you to make the journey of life a successful one. To do so you must begin with right ideas. If you are mistaken in your present estimates it is best to be undeceived at the first, even though it cast a shadow on your brow. It is true, that life is not mean, but it is grand. It is also a real and earnest thing. It has homely details, painful passages, and a crown of care for every brow.

We seek to inspire you with a wish and a will to meet it with a brave spirit. We seek to point you to its nobler meanings and its higher results. The tinsel with which your imagination has invested it will all fall off of itself so soon as you have fairly entered on its experience. So we say to you, take up life's duties now, learn something of what life is before you take upon yourself its great responsibilities.

Great destinies lie shrouded in your swiftly passing hours; great responsibilities stand in the passages of every-day life; great dangers lie hidden in the by-paths of life's great highway; great uncertainty hangs over your future history. God has given you existence, with full power and opportunity to improve it and be happy; he has given you equal power to despise the gift and be wretched; which you will do is the great problem to be solved by your choice and conduct. Your bliss or misery in two worlds hangs pivoted in the balance.

With God and a wish to do right in human life it becomes essentially a noble and beautiful thing. Every youth should form at the outset of his career the solemn purpose to make the most and the best of the powers which God has given him, and to turn to the best possible account every outward advantage within his reach. This purpose must carry with it the assent of the reason, the approval of the conscience, the sober judgment of the intellect. It should thus embody within itself whatever is vehement in desire, inspiring in hope, thrilling in enthusiasm, and intense in desperate resolve. To live a life with such a purpose is a peerless

privilege, no matter at what cost of transient pain or unremitting toil.

It is a thing above professions, callings, and creeds. It is a thing which brings to its nourishment all good, and appropriates to its development of power all evil. It is the greatest and best thing under the whole heavens. Place can not enhance its honor; wealth can not add to its value. Its course lies through true manhood and womanhood; through true fatherhood and motherhood; through true friendship and relationship of all legitimate kinds—of all natural sorts whatever. It lies through sorrow and pain and poverty and all earthly discipline. It lies through unswerving trust in God and man. It lies through patient and self-denying heroism. It lies through all heaven prescribed and conscientious duty; and it leads as straight to heaven's brightest gate as the path of a sunbeam leads to the bosom of a flower.

Many of you to-day are just starting on the duties of active life. The volume of the future lies unopened before you. Its covers are illuminated by the pictures of fancy, and its edges are gleaming with the golden tints of hope. Vainly you strive to loosen its wondrous clasp; 'tis a task which none but the hand of Time can accomplish. Life is before you—not earthly life alone, but life; a thread running interminably through the warp of eternity. It is a sweet as well as a great and wondrous thing. Man may make life what he pleases and give it as much worth, both for himself and others, as he has energy for.

The journey is a laborious one, and you must not expect to find the road all smooth. And whether rich or poor, high or low, you will be disappointed if you build on any other foundation. Take life like a man; take it just as though it was as it is—an earnest, vital, essential affair. Take it just as though you personally were born to the task of performing a merry part in it—as though the world had waited for your coming. Live for something, and for something worthy of life and its capabilities and opportunities, for noble deeds and achievements. Every man and every woman has his or her assignments in the duties and responsibilities of daily life. We are in the world to make the world better, to lift it up to higher levels of enjoyment and progress, to make the hearts and homes brighter and happier by devoting to our fellows our best thoughts, activities, and influences.

It is the motto of every true heart and the genius of every noble life that no man liveth to himself—lives chiefly for his own selfish good. It is a law of our intellectual and moral being that we promote our own real happiness in the exact proportions we contribute to the comfort and happiness of others. Nothing worthy the name of happiness is the experience of those who live only for themselves, all oblivious to the welfare of their fellows. That only is the true philosophy which recognizes and works out the principle in daily life that—

"Life was lent for noble deeds."

Life embraces in its comprehensiveness a just return of failure and success as the result of

individual perseverance and labor. Live for something definite and practical; take hold of things with a will, and they will yield to you and become the ministers of your own happiness and that of others. Nothing within the realm of the possible can withstand the man or woman who is intelligently bent on success. Every person carries within the key that unlocks either door of success or failure. Which shall it be? All desire success; the problem of life is its winning.

Strength, bravery, dexterity, and unfaltering nerve and resolution must be the portion and attribute of those who resolve to pursue fortune along the rugged road of life. Their path will often lie amid rocks and crags, and not on lawns and among lilies. A great action is always preceded by a great purpose. History and daily life are full of examples to show us that the measure of human achievements has always been proportional to the amount of human daring and doing. Deal with questions and facts of life as they really are. What can be done, and is worth doing, do with dispatch; what can not be done, or would be worthless when done, leave for the idlers and dreamers along life's highway.

Life often presents us with a choice of evils instead of good; and if any one would get through life honorably and peacefully he must learn to bear as well as forbear, to hold the temper in subjection to the judgment, and to practice self-denial in small as well as great things. Human life is a watch-tower. It is the clear purpose of God that every one—the young

especially—should take their stand on this tower, to look, listen, learn, wherever they go and wherever they tarry. Life is short, and yet for you it may be long enough to lose your character, your constitution, or your estate; or, on the other hand, by diligence you can accomplish much within its limits.

If the sculptor's chisel can make impressions on marble in a few hours which distant eyes shall read and admire, if the man of genius can create work in life that shall speak the triumph of mind a thousand years hence, then may true men and women, alive to the duty and obligations of existence, do infinitely more. Working on human hearts and destinies, it is their prerogative to do imperishable work, to build within life's fleeting hours monuments that shall last forever. If such grand possibilities lie within the reach of our personal actions in the world how important that we live for something every hour of our existence, and for something that is harmonious with the dignity of our present being and the grandeur of our future destiny!

A steady aim, with a strong arm, willing hands, and a resolute will, are the necessary requisites to the conflict which begins anew each day and writes upon the scroll of yesterday the actions that form one mighty column wherefrom true worth is estimated. One day's work left undone causes a break in the great chain that years of toil may not be able to repair. Yesterday was ours, but it is gone; today is all we possess, for to-morrow we may never see; therefore, in the golden hour of the present

the seeds are planted whereby the harvest for good or evil is to be reaped.

To endure with cheerfulness, hoping for little, asking for much, is, perhaps, the true plan. Decide at once upon a noble purpose, then take it up bravely, bear it off joyfully, lay it down triumphantly. Be industrious, be frugal, be honest, deal with kindness with all who come in your way, and if you do not prosper as rapidly as you would wish depend upon it you will be happy.

The web of life is drawn into the loom for us, but we weave it ourselves. We throw our own shuttle and work our own treadle. The warp is given us, but the woof we furnish—find our own materials, and color and figure it to suit ourselves. Every man is the architect of his own house, his own temple of fame. If he builds one great, glorious, and honorable, the merit and the bliss are his; if he rears a polluted, unsightly, vice-haunted den, to himself the shame and misery belongs.

Life is often but a bitter struggle from first to last with many who wear smiling faces and are ever ready with a cheerful word, when there is scarcely a shred left of the hopes and opportunities which for years promised happiness and content. But it is human still to strive and yearn and grope for some unknown good that shall send all unrest and troubles to the winds and settle down over one's life with a halo of peace and satisfaction. The rainbow of hope is always visible in the future. Life is like a winding lane—on either side bright flowers and tempting fruits, which we scarcely pause to

admire or taste, so eager are we to pass to an opening in the distance, which we imagine will be more beautiful; but, alas! we find we have only hastened by these tempting scenes to arrive at a desert waste.

We creep into childhood, bound into youth, sober into manhood, and totter into old age. But through all let us so live that when in the evening of life the golden clouds rest sweetly and invitingly upon the golden mountains, and the light of heaven streams down through the gathering mists of death, we may have a peaceful and joyous entrance into that world of blessedness, where the great riddle of life, whose meaning we can only guess at here below, will be unfolded to us in the quick consciousness of a soul redeemed and purified.



HOME.

"Home is the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polished friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss."



Home! That word touches every fiber of the soul, and strikes every chord of the human heart with its angelic fingers. Nothing but death can break its spell. What tender associations are linked with home! What pleasing images and deep emotions it awakens! It calls up the fondest memories of life, and opens in our nature the purest, deepest, richest gush of consecrated thought and feeling.

To the little child, home is his world—he knows no other. The father's love, the mother's smile, the sister's embrace, the brother's welcome, throw about his home a heavenly halo, and make it as attractive to him as the home of angels. Home is the spot where the child pours out all his complaint, and it is the grave of all his sorrows. Childhood has its sorrows and its grievances; but home is the place where these are soothed and banished by the sweet lullaby of a fond mother's voice.

Ask the man of mature years, whose brow is furrowed by care, whose mind is engrossed in business,—ask him what is home. He will tell you: "It is a place of rest, a haven of content, where loved ones relieve him of the burden of every-day life, too heavy to be continuously borne, from whence, refreshed and invigorated, he goes forth to do battle again."

Ask the lone wanderer as he plods his weary way, bent with the weight of years and white with the frosts of age,—ask him what is home. He will tell you: "It is a green spot in memory, an oasis in the desert, a center about which the fondest recollection of his grief-oppressed heart clings with all the tenacity of youth's first love. It was once a glorious, a happy reality; but now it rests only as an image of the mind."

Wherever the heart wanders it carries the thought of home with it. Wherever by the rivers of Babylon the heart feels its loss and loneliness, it hangs its harp upon the willows, and weeps. It prefers home to its chief joy. It will never forget it; for there swelled its first throb, there were developed its first affections. There a mother's eye looked into it, there a father's prayer blessed it, there the love of parents and brothers and sisters gave it precious entertainment. There bubbled up, from unseen fountains, life's first effervescing hopes. There life took form and consistence. From that center went out all its young ambition. Towards that focus return its concentrating memories. There it took form and fitted itself to loving natures; and it will carry that impress wherever it may go, unless it becomes polluted by sin or makes to itself another home sanctified by a new and more precious affection.

There is one vision that never fades from the soul, and that is the vision of mother and of home. No man in all his weary wanderings ever goes out beyond the overshadowing arch of home. Let him stand on the surf-beaten coast of the Atlantic, or roam over western wilds, and

every dash of the wave or murmur of the breeze will whisper home, sweet home! Let him down amid the glaciers of the north, and even there thoughts of home, too warm to be chilled by the eternal frosts, will float in upon him. Let him rove through the green, waving groves and over the sunny slopes of the south, and in the smile of the soft skies, and in the kiss of the balmy breeze, home will live again. Let prosperity reward his every exertion, and wealth and affluence bring round him all the luxury of the earth, yet in his marble palace will rise unforbidden the vision of his childhood's home. Let misfortune overtake him; let poverty be his portion, and hunger press him; still in troubled dreams will his thoughts revert to his olden home.

If you wanted to gather up all tender memories, all lights and shadows of the heart, all banquetings and reunions, all filial, fraternal, paternal, conjugal affections, and had only just four letters to spell out all height and depth, and length and breadth, and magnitude and eternity of meaning, you would write it all out with the four letters that spell Home.

What beautiful and tender associations cluster thick around that word! Compared with it, wealth, mansion, palace, are cold, heartless terms. But home,—that word quickens every pulse, warms the heart, stirs the soul to its depths, makes age feel young again, rouses apathy into energy, sustains the sailor in his midnight watch, inspires the soldier with courage on the field of battle, and imparts patient endurance to the worn-out sons of toil.

The thought of it has proved a sevenfold shield to virtue; the very name of it has a spell to call back the wanderer from the path of vice; and, far away where myrtles bloom and palm-trees wave, and the ocean sleeps upon coral strands, to the exile's fond fancy it clothes the naked rock, or stormy shore, or barren moor, or wild height and mountain, with charms he weeps to think of, and longs once more to see.

Every home should be as a city set on a hill, that can not be hid. Into it should flock friends and friendship, bringing the light of the world, the stimulus and the modifying power of contact with various natures, the fresh flowers of feeling gathered from wide fields. Out of it should flow benign charities, pleasant amenities, and all those influences which are the natural offspring of a high and harmonious home-life.

The home is the fountain of civilization. Our laws are made in the home. The things said there give bias to character far more than do sermons and lectures, newspapers and books. No other audience are so susceptible and receptive as those gathered about the table and fireside; no other teachers have the acknowledged and divine right to instruct that is granted without challenge to parents. The foundation of our national life is under their hand. They can make it send forth waters bitter or sweet, for the death or the healing of the people.

The influences of home perpetuate themselves. The gentle graces of the mother live in the daughter long after her head is pillowed

in the dust of death; and the fatherly kindness finds its echoes in the nobility and character of sons who come to wear his mantle and fill his place. While, on the other hand, from an unhappy, misgoverned, and ill-ordered home, go forth persons who shall make other homes miserable, and perpetuate the sorrows and sadness, the contentions and strifes, which have made their own early lives miserable. In every proper sense in which home can be considered, it is a powerful stimulant to noble actions and a high and pure morality. So valuable is this love of home that every man should cherish it as the apple of his eye. As he values his own moral worth, as he prizes his country, the peace and happiness of the world; yea, more, as he values the immortal interests of man, he should cherish and cultivate a strong and abiding love of home.

Home has voices of experience and hearts of genuine holy love, to instruct you in the way of life, and to save you from a sense of loneliness as you gradually discover the selfishness of mankind. Home has its trials, in which are imaged forth the stern struggles of your after years, that your character may gain strength and manifestation, for which purpose they are necessary; they open the portals of his heart, that the jewels otherwise concealed in its hidden depths may shine forth and shed their luster on the world. Home has its duties, to teach you how to act on your own responsibilities. Home gradually and greatly increases its burdens, so that you may acquire strength to endure without being overtasked.

Home is a little world, in which the duties of the great world are daily rehearsed.

He who has no home has not the sweetest pleasures of life. He feels not the thousand endearments that cluster around that hallowed spot, to fill the void of his aching heart, and while away his leisure moments in the sweetest of life's enjoyments. Is misfortune your lot, you will find a friendly welcome from hearts beating true to your own. The chosen partner of your toil has a smile of approbation when others have deserted you, a hand of hope when all others refuse, and a heart to feel your sorrows as her own. No matter how humble that home may be, how destitute its stores, or how poorly its inmates may be clad, if true hearts dwell there, it is still a home.

Of all places on earth, home is the most delicate and sensitive. Its springs of action are subtle and secret. Its chords move with a breath. Its fires are kindled with a spark. Its flowers are bruised with the least rudeness. The influences of our homes strike so directly on our hearts that they make sharp impressions. In our intercourse with the world we are barricaded, and the arrows let fly at our hearts are warded off; but not so with us at home. Here our hearts wear no covering, no armor. Every arrow strikes them; every cold wind blows full upon them; every storm beats against them. What, in the world, we would pass by in sport, in our homes would wound us to the quick. Very little can we bear at home, for it is a sensitive place.

If we would have a true home, we must

guard well our thoughts and actions. A single bitter word may disquiet the home for a whole day; but, like unexpected flowers which spring up along our path full of freshness, fragrance, and beauty, so do kind words and gentle acts and sweet disposition make glad the home where peace and blessing dwell. No matter how humble the abode, if it be thus garnished with grace and sweetened by kindness and smiles, the heart will turn lovingly towards it from all the tumults of the world, and home, "be it ever so humble," will be the dearest spot under the sun.

There is no happiness in life, there is no misery, like that growing out of the disposition which consecrates or desecrates a home. "He is happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace at home." Home should be made so truly home that the weary, tempted heart could turn towards it anywhere on the dusty highways of life, and receive light and strength. It should be the sacred refuge of our lives, whether rich or poor.

The affections and loves of home are graceful things, especially among the poor. The ties that bind the wealthy and proud to home may be forged on earth, but those which link the poor man to his humble hearth are of the true metal, and bear the stamp of heaven. These affections and loves constitute the poetry of human life, and so far as our present existence is concerned, with all the domestic relations, are worth more than all other social ties. They give the first throb to the heart, and unseal the deep fountains of its love. Homes are not made up of

material things. It is not a fine house, rich furniture, a luxurious table, a flowery garden, and a superb carriage, that make a home. Vastly superior to this is a true home. Our ideal homes should be heart-homes, in which virtue lives and love-flowers bloom and peace-offerings are daily brought to its altars. It is made radiant within with every social virtue, and beautiful without by those simple adornments with which nature is every-where so prolific. The children born in such homes will leave them with regret, and come back to them in after life as pilgrims to a holy shrine. The towns on whose hills and in whose vales such homes are found will live forever in the hearts of its grateful children.

How easy it is to invest homes with true elegance, which resides not with the upholsterer or draper! It exists in the spirit presiding over the apartments of the dwelling. Contentment must be always most graceful; it sheds serenity over the scenes of its abode; it transforms a waste into a garden. The house lighted by those imitations of a nobler and brighter life may be wanting much which the discontented may desire, but to its inhabitants it will be a palace far outvying the Oriental in beauty.

There is music in the word Home. To the old it brings a bewitching strain from the harp of memory, to the middle-aged it brings up happy thoughts, while to the young it is a reminder of all that is near and dear to them. Our hearts turn with unchangeable love and longing to the dear old home which sheltered us in childhood.

Kind friends may beckon us to newer scenes, and loving hearts may bind us fast to other pleasant homes; but we love to return to the home of our childhood. It may be old and rickety to the eyes of strangers; the windows may have been broken and patched long ago, and the floor worn through; but it is still the old home from out of which we looked at life with hearts full of hope, building castles which faded long ago. Here we watched life come and go; here we folded still, cold hands over hearts as still, that once beat full of love for us.

Even as the sunbeam is composed of millions of minute rays, the home-life must be constituted of little tendernesses, kind looks, sweet laughter, gentle words, loving counsels. It must not be like the torch blaze of natural excitement, which is easily quenched, but like the serene, chastened light, which burns as safely in the dry east wind as in the stillest atmosphere. Let each bear the other's burden the while; let each cultivate the mutual confidence which is a gift capable of increase and improvement, and soon it will be found that kindness will spring up on every side, displacing unsuitability, want of mutual knowledge, even as we have seen sweet violets and primroses dispelling the gloom of the gray sea-rocks.

The sweetest type of heaven is home. Nay, heaven itself is the home for whose acquisition we are to strive most strongly. Home in one form or another is the great object of life. It stands at the end of every day's labor, and beckons us to its bosom; and life would be

cheerless and meaningless did we not discern across the river that divides it from the life beyond glimpses of the pleasant mansions prepared for us. Yes, heaven is the home towards which those who have lived aright direct their steps when wearied by the toils of life. There the members of the homes on earth, separated here, will meet again, to part no more.

HOME CIRCLE.

The home circle may be, ought to be, the most delightful place on earth, the center of the purest affections and most desirable associations, as well as of the most attractive and exalted beauties to be found this side of paradise. Nothing can excel in beauty and sublimity the quietude, peace, harmony, affection, and happiness of a well-ordered family, where virtue is nurtured and every good principle fostered and sustained.

The home circle is the nursery of affection. It is the Eden of young attachments, and here should be planted and tended all the germs of love, every seed that shall ever sprout in the heart; and how carefully should they be tended! how guarded against the frosts of jealousy, anger, envy, pride, vanity, and ambition! how rooted in the best soil of the heart, and nourished and cultivated by the soul's best husbandry!

Here is the heart's garden. Its sunshine and flowers are here. All its beautiful, all its lovely things are here. And here should be expended care, toil, effort, patience, and whatever may be necessary to make them still more lovely. It is around the memories of the home circle that cluster the happiest and sometimes the saddest of the recollections of youth. There is the thought of brother and sister, perhaps now gone forever; of childish sorrow and grief; of the mother's prayer and the father's blessing. Do you wonder that these memories, both bitter and sweet, linger in the chambers of the mind long after those of the busy years of maturity have faded away before the approach of age? With what assiduity ought all who have arrived at the years of maturity strive to make their homes pleasant—and especially is this true of parents—so that its members when they go from thence will carry with them thoughts that through all the weary years that are before them will afford a pleasant retreat for them when well-nigh wearied with the care which comes with increasing years.

We can not honor with too deep a reverence

the home affections; we can not cultivate them with too great a care; we can not cherish them with too much solicitude. There is the center of our present happiness, the springs of our deepest and strongest tides of joy. When the home affections are duly cultivated all others follow or grow out of them as a natural consequence. If any would have fervent and noble affections, such as give power and glory to the human heart, such as sanctify the soul and make it supremely beautiful, such as an angel might covet without shame, let him cultivate all the feelings that originate, as from a radiant point, in the home circle.

The true flower of home love requires for its development the aid of every member of the home circle. The tears of sympathy as well as the sunshine of domestic affection bring it to its glorious maturity. Ofttimes there are families the members of which are, without doubt, dear to each other. If sickness or sudden trouble fall on one all are afflicted, and make haste to help and sympathize and comfort. But in their daily life and ordinary intercourse there is not only no expression of affection, none of the pleasant and fond behavior that has, perhaps, little dignity, but which more than makes up for that in its sweetness, but there is an absolute hardness of language and actions which is shocking to every sensitive and tender feeling. Between father and mother, brother and sister, ofttimes pass rough and hasty words, and sometimes angry words, even more frequently than words of endearment. To judge from their actions they do not appear to love each other,

nor does it seem to have occurred to them that it is their duty, as it should be their best pleasure, to do and say all that they possibly can for each other's good and happiness.

It is in the home circle where we form many, if not the most, of our habits, both of action and speech. These habits we carry into the world. They cling to us. The vulgarities which we use at home we shall use abroad—the coarse sayings, the low jest, the vulgar speeches, the grammatical blunders. All the lingual imperfections which go to form a part of our home conversation will enter into our conversation at all times and in all places. The home circle should be held too sacred to be polluted with the vulgarities of languages, which could have originated nowhere but in low and groveling minds. It should be dedicated to love and truth, to all that is tender in feeling and noble and pure in thought, to holiest communion of soul with soul. In order that such a communion may be enjoyed it is requisite that language should there perform its most sacred office, even the office of transmitting unimpared the most tender and sacred affections that glow in the human heart.

If the dialects of angels could be used on earth its fittest place would be the home circle. The language of home should be such as would not stain the purest lips nor fall harshly on the most refined ear. It should abound in words of wisdom which are at once the glory of youth and the honor of age.

The home circle, what tender associations does it recall! How deeply interwoven are its

golden filaments with all the fiber of our affectionate natures, forming the glittering of the heart's golden life! Here are father, mother, child, brother, sister, companions, all the heart loves, all that makes earth lovely, all that enriches the mind with faith and the soul with hope. What language is most fitting for home use, to bear the messages of home feeling, to be freighted with the diamond treasure of home hearts? Should it be any other than the most refined and pure? any other than that breathing the sacred charity of affection?

Home is the great seeding-place of every affection that ever grows in the heart. Hence all should tend well to it, watch, prune, and cultivate with all prudence and wisdom, with all fervency of spirit. Let the music of the heart swell its notes here in one perpetual anthem of good will. Let praise and prayer and fervent good wishes and words and works hallow its sacred shrine. Let offices of love go round like smiles at a feast of joy. Let the whole soul devote its energies to making happy its home, and its rewards will be great.

If there be any tie formed in life which ought to be securely guarded from any thing which can put it in peril it is that which unites the members of a family. If there be a spot upon earth from which discord and strife should be banished it is the fireside. There center the fondest hopes and the most tender affections.

The great lever by which the heart is moved is love; it is the basis of all true excellence, of all excellent thought. How pleasing the spectacle of that home circle which is governed

by the spirit of love! Each one strives to avoid giving offense, and is studiously considerate of the others' happiness. Sweet, loving dispositions are cultivated by all, and each tries to surpass the other in his efforts for the common harmony. Each heart glows with love, and the benediction of heavenly peace seems to abide upon that dwelling with such power that no storm of passion is able to rise.

There is no pleasanter sight than that of a family of young folks who are quick to perform little acts of attention towards their elders. The placing of the big arm-chair for the mother, or kindly errands done for father, and scores of little deeds, show the tender sympathy of gentle, loving hearts. Parents should show their appreciation of these kindly acts. If they do not indicate that they are appreciated the habit is soon dropped.

Little children are imitative creatures, and quickly catch the spirit surrounding them. So, if the father shows kindly attention to the mother, bright eyes will see the act, and quick minds will make a note of it. By example much more than by precept can children be taught to speak kindly to each other, to acknowledge favors, to be gentle and unselfish, to be thoughtful and considerate of the comfort of the family.

The boys, with inward pride of the father's courteous demeanor, will be chivalrous and helpful to their sisters; and the girls, imitating the mother, will be patient and gentle, even when brothers are noisy and heedless.

In the homes where true courtesy prevails it

seems to meet you on the threshold. You feel the kindly welcome on entering. No angry voices are heard up stairs, no sullen children are sent from the room, no peremptory orders are given to cover the delinquencies of housekeeping or servants. A delightful atmosphere pervades the house, unmistakable, yet indescribable. Such a house, filled by the spirit of love, is a home indeed, to all who enter within its consecrated walls.

Members of the home circle lose nothing by mutual politeness; on the contrary, by maintaining not only its forms, but by inward cultivation of its spirit, they become contributors to that domestic feeling which is in itself a foretaste of heaven. The good-night and the good-morning salutation, though they may seem but trifles, have a sweet and softening influence on all its members. The little kiss and artless good-night of the smaller ones, as they retire to rest, have in them a heavenly melody.

Children are the pride and ornament of the family circle. They create sport and amusement and dissipate all sense of loneliness from the household. When intelligent and well trained they afford a spectacle which even indifferent persons contemplate with satisfaction and delight. Still these pleasurable emotions are not unalloyed with solicitude. It is an agreeable but changeable picture of human happiness. Time in advancing carries them forward, and erelong they will feel like exclaiming, with the older and more sad and serious ones around them, that their youth exists only in remembrance.

There is probably not an unpolluted man or

woman living who does not feel that the sweetest consolations and best rewards of life are found in the loves and delights of home. There are very few who do not feel themselves indebted to the influence that clustered around their cradles for whatever good there may be in their character and condition. The influence preceding from the home circle is either a blessing or a curse, either for good or for evil. It can not be neutral. In either case it is mighty, commencing with our birth, going with us through life, clinging to us in death, and reaching into the eternal world. It is that unitive power which arises out of the manifold relations and associations of domestic life. The specific influence of husband and wife, of parent and child, of brother and sister, of teacher and pupil, united and harmoniously blended, constitute the home influence. From this we may infer the character of home influence. It is great, silent, irresistible, and permanent. Like the calm, deep stream, it moves on in silent but overwhelming power. It strikes root deep into the human heart, and spreads its branches wide over our whole being. Like the lily that braves the tempest, and the "Alpine flower that leans its cheek on the bosom of eternal snow," it is exerted amid the wildest scenes of life, and breathes a softening spell in our bosom, even when a heartless world is freezing up the fountains of our sympathy and love. It is governing, restraining, attracting, and traditional. It holds the empire of the heart and rules the life. It restrains the wayward passions of the child and checks the man in his mad career of ruin.

But all pictures of earthly happiness are transient in duration. Where can you find an unbroken home circle? The time must soon come, if it has not already, when you must part from those who have surrounded the same parental board, who mingled with you in the gay-hearted joys of childhood and the opening promise of youth. New cares will attend you in new situations, and the relations you form and the business you pursue may call you far from the "play-place" of your youth. In the unseen future your brothers and sisters may be sundered from you, your lives may be spent apart, and in death you may be divided; and of you it may be said:

"They grew in beauty side by side,
They filled one home with glee;
Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mount and stream and sea."

FATHER AND MOTHER.

How can children repay parents for their watchings, anxieties, labors, toils, trials, patience, and love? Think of the utter helplessness of the long years of infancy, of the entire dependence of succeeding childhood, of the necessities and wants of youth, of the burning solicitude of parents, and their deep and inexhaustible love; think of the long years of unwearied toil, of their deep and soul-felt devotion to the interests of their offspring, of the majesty and matchless power of their unselfish affections—and then say whether it is possible for youth to repay too much love and gratitude for all this bestowal of parental anxiety.

Oh, what thankfulness should fill every child's heart! What a glorious return of love! Every day should they give them some token of love. Every hour should their own hearts glow with gratitude and holy respect for those who have given them being, and loved them so fervently and long. Nothing will so warm and quicken all the affections of the parent's heart as such respect. Who feels like trusting an ungrateful child? Who can believe that his affection for any object can be firm and pure? The child who has loved long and well his parents has thoroughly electrified his affections, has surcharged them with the sweet spirit of an affectionate tenderness, which will pervade his entire heart, and will make him better and purer forever. The affections of such a child are to be trusted. As well may one doubt an angel as such a one.

There is always a liability, where sons and

daughters have gone from the home of their childhood, and have formed homes of their own, gradually to lose the old attachments and cease to pay those attentions to parents which were so easy and natural in the olden time. New associations, new thoughts, new cares, all come in, filling the mind and heart, and, if special pains be not taken, they thrust out the old love. *This ought never to be.* Children should remember that the change is in them, and not with those they left behind. They have every thing that is new, much that is attractive in the present and bright in the future; but the parents' hearts cling to the past, and have most in memory. When children go away, they know not, and never will know until they experience it themselves, what it cost to give them up, nor what a vacancy they left behind.

The parents have not, if the children have, any new loves to take the place of the old. Do not, then, heartlessly deprive them of what you still can give of attention and love. If you live in the same place, let your step be—if possible, daily—a familiar one in the old home. Even when many miles away, make it your business to go to your parents. In this matter do not regard time or expense. They are well spent; and some day when the word reaches you, flashed over the wires, that your father or mother is gone, you will not regret then the many hours of travel spent in going to them while they were yet alive.

Keep up your intercourse with your parents. Do not deem it sufficient to write only when something important is to be told. Do not

believe that to them "no news is good news." If it be but a few lines, write them. Write, if it be only to say, "I am well;" if it be only to send the salutation which says they are "dear," or the farewell which tells them that you are "affectionate" still. These little messages will be like caskets of jewels, and the tear that falls fondly over them will be treasures for you. Let every child, having any pretense to heart, or manliness, or piety, and who is so fortunate as to have a father or mother living, consider it a sacred duty to consult, at any reasonable personal sacrifice, the known wishes of such a parent until that parent is no more; and, our word for it, the recollections of the same through the after pilgrimage of life will sweeten every sorrow, will brighten every gladness, will sparkle every tear-drop with a joy ineffable.

There is no period of life when our parents do not claim our attention, love, and warmest affections. From youth to manhood, from middle age to riper years, if our honored parents survive, it should be our constant study how we can best promote their welfare and happiness, and smooth the pillow of their declining years.

Nothing better recommends an individual than his attentions to his parents. There are some children whose highest ambition seems to be the promotion of their parents' interest. They watch over them with unwearied care, supply all their wants, and by their devotion and kindness remove all care and sorrow from their hearts. On the contrary, there are others who seem never to bestow a thought upon their

parents, and to care but little whether they are comfortably situated or not. By their conduct they increase their cares, embitter their lives, and bring their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Selfishness has steeled their hearts to the whispers of affection, and avarice denies to their parents those favors which would materially assist them in the down-hill of life.

Others, too, by a course of profligacy and vice, have drained to the very dregs their parents' cup of happiness, and made them anxious for death to release them from their sufferings. How bitter must be the doom of those children who have thus embittered the lives of their best earthly friends!

There can be no happier reflection than that derived from the thought of having contributed to the comfort and happiness of our parents. When called away from our presence, which sooner or later must happen, the thought will be sweet that our efforts and our care smoothed their declining years, so that they departed in comfort and peace. If we were otherwise, and we denied them what their circumstances and necessities required, and our hearts did not become like the nether millstone, our remorse must prove a thorn in our flesh, piercing us sharply, and filling our days with regret.

There is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to her son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory

in his fame, and exult in his prosperity. If misfortune overtake him, he will be the dearer to her from misfortune; and if disgrace settles upon his name, she will still love and cherish him in spite of his disgrace. If all the world besides cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

A father may turn his back on his child, brothers and sisters may become inveterate enemies, husbands may desert their wives, wives their husbands; but a mother's love endures through all. In good repute, in bad repute, in the face of the world's condemnation, a mother still lives on and still hopes that her child may turn from his evil ways and repent; still she remembers his infant smile that ever filled her bosom with rapture, the merry laugh, the joyful shout of his childhood, the opening promise of his youth; and thinking of these, she never can be brought to think him all unworthy.

Young man, speak kindly to your mother, and ever courteously and tenderly of her. But a little while and you shall see her no more forever. Her eye is dim, her form bent, and her shadow falls grave-ward. Others may love you when she has passed away—a kind-hearted sister, perhaps, or she whom of all the world you chose for a partner—she may love you warmly, passionately; children may love you fondly; but never again, never, while time is yours, shall the love of woman be to you as that of your old, trembling mother has been. Alas! how little do we appreciate a mother's tenderness while living! How heedless are we in youth of all her

anxious tenderness! But when she is dead and gone, when the cares and coldness of the world come withering to our hearts, when we experience how hard it is to find true sympathy, how few love us for ourselves, how few will befriend us in misfortune, then it is that we think of the mother we have lost.

The loss of a parent is always felt. Even though age and infirmities may have incapacitated them from taking an active part in the cares of the family, still they are rallying points around which affection and obedience, and a thousand tender endeavors to please, concentrate. They are like the lonely star before us: neither its heat nor light are any thing to us in themselves, yet the shepherd would feel his heart sad if he missed it when he lifts his eye to the brow of the mountains over which it rises when the sun descends.

Over the grave of a friend, of a brother or a sister we would plant the primrose, emblematical of youth; but over that of a mother we would let the green grass shoot up unmolested; for there is something in the simple covering which nature spreads upon the grave which well becomes the abiding place of decaying age. Oh, a mother's grave! It is indeed a sacred spot. It may be retired from the noise of business, and unnoticed by the stranger; but to our heart how dear!

The love we should bear to a parent is not to be measured by years, nor annihilated by distance, nor forgotten when they sleep in dust. Marks of age may appear in our homes and on our persons, but the memory of a beloved

parent is more enduring than that of time itself. Who has stood by the grave of a mother and not remembered her pleasant smiles, kind words, earnest prayer, and assurance expressed in a dying hour? Many years may have passed, memory may be treacherous in other things, but will reproduce with freshness the impressions once made by a mother's influence. Why may we not linger where rests all that was earthly of a beloved parent? It may have a restraining influence upon the wayward, prove a valuable incentive to increased faithfulness, encourage hope in the hour of depression, and give fresh inspiration to Christian life.

The mother's love is indeed the golden cord which binds youth to age; and he is still but a child, however time may have furrowed his cheek or silvered his brow, who can yet recall with a softened heart the fond devotion or the gentle chidings of the best friend that God ever gave us. Round the idea of mother the mind of a man clings with fond affection. It is the first deep thought stamped upon our infant heart, when yet soft and capable of receiving the most profound impressions; and the after feelings of the world are more or less light in comparison. Even in old age we look back to that feeling as the sweetest we have known through life.

Our passions and our willfulness may lead us far from the object of our filial love; we may come even to pain their heart, to oppose their wishes, to violate their commands. We may become wild, headstrong, or angry at their counsels or oppositions; but when death has stilled their monitory voices, and nothing but

silent memory remains to recapitulate their virtues and deeds, affection, like a flower broken to the ground by a past storm, lifts up her head and smiles away our tears. When the early period of our loss forces memory to be silent, fancy takes her place, and twines the image of our dead parents with a garland of graces, beauties, and virtues, which we doubt not they possessed.

INFANCY.



Infancy, the morning of life! How beautiful it is! How filled with great responsibilities! An immortal soul commences its existence. A life, beginning in time, but capable of growing brighter when time is ended and eternity begun, commences to note the passing hours.

We welcome the infant with joy, and

congratulate the parents, and we do well; but to an angel, who can clearly understand the infinite value of the life just commenced, the heights of happiness to which it may ascend, the depths of misery to which it may be brought, it must seem a moment so deeply freighted with solemn meaning as to dispel all expressions of joy, save only of a subdued and chastened kind.

Infancy has its hours of anxiety and trials for the parents, but it has also its hours of compensating joys. When sickness is in the midst, and it seems as if the cradle song would be exchanged for a dirge, what utter wretchedness of heart is the parent's portion! A mother watching the palpitating frame of her child as life ebbs slowly away evokes the sympathy of the sternest. A child dying dies but once, but the mother dies a hundred times. A mother mourning by the grave of her first-born, and strewing flowers over a coffined form instead of kisses on a warm brow, is one of the deepest spectacles of human woe. These are the dark shades, the night scenes of the parents' experience; but it has its richer, deeper, and more inspiring history, its seasons of comfort and delight, when the little child, insensibly, perhaps, draws the parents into a higher and a better life. What a sense of delicious responsibility fills the parents' hearts as they realize that in their hands and under their influence is to be molded a character, that they are the ones to carefully watch the unfolding of a human life, the development of a human soul.

How earnestly should they seek to set a

watch over their lips, to guard well their thoughts and actions, to surround the child with such an air of refined, intelligent, loving kindness that its young life shall as naturally grow into a youth of beauty and a noble manhood or true womanhood as that the bud on the rose-bush expands to the gorgeous flower that excites universal admiration. Welcome to the parents the puny struggler, strong in his weakness, his little arms more irresistible than the soldier's, his lips touched with persuasion which Chatham and Pericles in manhood had not. His unaffected lamentation when he lifts up his voice on high, or, more beautiful, the sobbing child—the face all liquid grief, as he tries to swallow his vexation—soften all hearts to pity and to mirthful and clamorous compassion.

The parent's duty commences at the birth of the child. There is importance even in the handling of infancy. If it is unchristian it will beget unchristian states and feelings. If it is gentle, even patient and loving, it prepares a mood and temper like its own. Then how careful to banish the cross word, the impatient gesture! Let kind and loving tones only fall on its ears, and only gentle hands assist it in its little wants. There is scarcely room to doubt that all most crabbed, resentful, passionate characters—all most even, lovely, firm, and true ones—are prepared in a great degree by the handling of the nursery. The biography of many persons, faithfully written, would ascribe to the training of early years the molding not only of youthful character, but the more matured forms

of mental and moral development of after years. The influence thus exerted in the early days of infancy is often the almost hopeless "casting of bread upon the waters"—often not found in any of its favorable developments until after "many days." The cares of the world and the evil example of others often choke the word of a good mother, and destroy its vitality; but not unfrequently it will be found, like seed long buried in the earth, to spring up to remembrance in active life, and the counsels imparted to the "infant of days" be found to influence and control the whole destiny of the man of mature years and gray hairs.

As it is a law of our being that all, even the most feeble and insignificant, exert a reciprocal influence on all around them, then an infant exerts a great modifying influence on the elder men and women around it. It recalls them from the contemplation of the stern realities of life to its innocent phases, from disdainful, self-reliant pride to trustful confidence. Hearts that but for the smile of innocence on the prattling lips of infancy had grown callous beat once more in sympathy with the distressed around them. The feeble clasp of well-nigh helpless hands is sometimes powerful enough to turn strong men from the road to ruin. An infant in his cradle is king, and wields his power over all who come near him.

Infants are the poetry of the world; the fresh flowers of our hearts and homes; little conjurers, with the magic of their natural ways, working by their spells what delights and enriches all ranks and equalizes the different

classes of society. Every infant comes into the world, like a delegated prophet, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is to make young again hearts well-nigh wearied with the cares of years. A child warms and softens the heart by its gentle presence; it enriches the soul by new feeling, and it awakens within it what is favorable to virtue. An infant is a beam of light, a fountain of love, a teacher, whose lessons few can resist. They recall us from much that engenders and encourages selfishness, that freezes the affections, roughens the manners, and indurates the heart. They brighten the home, deepen love, invigorate exertion, infuse courage, and vivify and sustain the charities of life.

An infant finds a place in the hearts of all people. The selfish and proud open their hearts to its silent influence. The aged, who are standing near the end of the journey of life, have the scenes of their younger days called up afresh by the child's artless ways, and in its company grow young again. The disconsolate seem to catch a fresh gleam of hope when they see the confiding ways of the little child, and take heart again.

It would seem fitting that nature should exempt little children from sickness and death, but, alas! impartial fate, which,

"With equal pace,
Knocks at the palace as the cottage gate,"

is no respecter of age. What a great hush falls on the ear, like a pall, and an untold sadness

settles over the heart when the little child is sick. Is it not strange that such a wee bit of a thing should have the power to change every thing, making the sunshine that but yesterday played in and out of the windows so merrily and bright seem such a mockery to-day, changing the joyous tones of the other children into funeral notes? Why is it that the soft winds, which but lately seemed burdened with joy, and came softly whispering of pleasant dells, of flowing streams, of flowery banks, to-day seem strangely sighing, to have exchanged its joy for sorrow?

But such is the spell that baby has woven, knitting itself into the very meshes of our hearts in such a quiet, subduing manner that we scarcely know how dear it is until the little form lies still and prostrate. Great as is the influence of the little child while living it has also a sweet and sacred influence when its brief life is over and the solemn "dust unto dust" and "ashes unto ashes" has been said over the little mound in the church-yard.

Sweet places for pure thought and holy meditation are these little graves. They are depositories of the mother's sweetest joy, unfolded buds of innocence, humanity nipped by the frosts of time ere yet a canker-worm of corruption has nestled among its embryo petals.

Callous, indeed, must be the heart of him who can stand by a little grave-side and not have the holiest emotions of the soul awakened to thoughts of purity and joy, which belong alone to God and heaven. The mute preacher at his feet tells of a life begun and ended without

a stain; and surely if this be vouchsafed to mortality, how much more pure and holier must be the spirit-land, enlightened by the sun of infinite goodness, from whence emanated the soul of that brief sojourner among us! How swells the soul with joy when standing by the earth-beds of lost little ones, sorrowful because a sweet treasure has been taken away, joyful because that sweet jewel glitters in the diadem of the redeemed.

Such, then, is infancy. 'Tis the brief morning hour which precedes the busy day. It may be grand and beautiful, while its after life may but be dark and lowering, going out at last with wailing winds and weeping storms. Or it may be bleak and dreary, only at last to break forth into the full glory of the beauteous Summer day. But whatever its present state care and trouble and sorrow are sure to await it. So train it, then, that it shall expect them and look to the only true source for aid and assistance for the trials that lie in store for it.

CHILDHOOD.



Childhood, after reason has begun her sway, seems to us the happiest season of life. It is also the critical period. At this time they receive those impressions and contract those habits which impel them towards the good and true or towards the evil and false.

The child's soul is without character. It is a rudimental existence, pure as the driven snow—beautiful as a cherub angel, spotless, guileless, and innocent. It is the chart of a man yet to be filled up with the elements of a character. These elements are first outlined by the parents. With what delicacy should they use the pencil of personal influence! The soul is soft, and the lines they make are deep and not easily erased. It is a man they form. Responsible work! It is an immortal soul they work upon, destined to survive the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, and to show in its character forever some distant trace, at least, of their work.



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MOTHER AND CHILD.

Never believe any thing that concerns children to be of no importance. A hasty word is of consequence. The little things that they see and hear about them mold them for eternity.

Observe how very quick the child's eye is to perceive the meaning of looks, voices, and motions. It peruses all faces, colors, and sounds. Every sentiment that looks into its eye is reflected therefrom, and plays in miniature on its countenance. The tear that steals down the cheek of a mother's suppressed grief gathers the little infantile face into a sob. With a wondering silence it studies the mother in her prayers, and looks up with her in that exploring watch which signifies unspoken prayer. If the child be tended with impatience, or coolly and with a lack of motherly gentleness, it straightway shows by its action that it, too, feels the sting of just that which is felt towards it. And thus it is angered by anger, fretted by fretfulness, irritated by irritation, having impressed upon it just that kind of impatience or ill-nature which is felt towards it, and growing faithfully into the bad mold as by a fixed law.

However apparently trivial the influences which contribute to form the character of the child, they endure through life. Those impulses to conduct which last the longest and are rooted the deepest always have their origin near our birth. It is there that the germs of virtue or vice, of feeling or sentiment, are first implanted which determine the character for life. It is in childhood that the mind is most open to impression, and ready to be kindled by the first spark that flies into it. The first thing continues always with the child. The first joy, the first failure, the first achievement, the first misadventure, paint the foreground of life.

Influence is as quiet and imperceptible on the

child's mind as the falling of snowflakes on the meadows. One can not tell the hour when the human mind is not in the condition of receiving impressions from exterior moral forces. In innumerable instances the most secret and unnoticed influences have been in operation for months, and even years, to break down the strongest barriers of the human heart, and work out its moral ruin while yet the fondest parents and friends have been unaware of the working of such unseen agents of evil.

Children are more easily led to be good by examples of loving kindness and tales of well-doing in others than threatened into obedience by records of sin, crime, and punishment. Then strive to impress on the child's mind sincerity, truth, honesty, benevolence, and their kindred virtues, and the welfare of your child, not only for this life, but for the life to come, will be assured. What a responsibility it is to form a creature, the frailest and feeblest that heaven has made, into the intelligent and fearless sovereign of the whole animated universe, the interpreter, adorer, and almost representative of Divinity!

There is much mistaken kindness in the management of children. The law of love is great, but it showeth not its full strength, save when united with kindness. Make your children helpful and useful, and you make them happy. Let them early form habits of neatness, and when you are weary you will not have to wait on their carelessness.

Teach them to give you courteous speech and manners, and they will live to honor you. Take

pains to have the home attractions stronger than can come from outside influences. It is a sad fact that few children confide in their parents. The parents must take an interest in them, and draw them to their hearts instead of repelling them away. There is no mystery in attaching children to one's self. If you love them, they will love you. If you make much of them, they will make much of you. They can readily pick out the children's friend among many. They have a quick way of discerning who really love them and who care for them.

Parents do not think how far a word of praise will ofttimes go with children. Praise is sunshine to a child, and there is no child who does not need it. It is the high reward of one's struggle to do right. Many a sensitive child hungers for commendation. Many a child, starving for the praise which parents should give, runs off eagerly after the designing flattery of others. To withhold praise where it is due is dishonest, and, in the case of a child, such a course often leaves a stinging sense of injustice. One may as well think to rear flowers in frost as to think of educating children successfully in rebuff and constant criticism. Judicious flattery is almost one of the necessities of existence with children. Indiscriminate flattery is, of course, bad. When it becomes necessary to reprove children, use the gentlest form of address under the circumstances. Reproof must not fall like a violent storm, breaking down and making those to droop whom it is meant to cherish and refresh. It must descend as the dew upon the

tender herb, or like melting flakes of snow. The softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into, the mind.

Never reprove the little ones before strangers; for children are as sensitive, if not more so, than older persons, and wish strangers to think well of them. When reproved before any one with whom they are not well acquainted, their vanity is wounded. They have self-respect, and such mortification of it is dangerous. Praise spurs a child on to earnest effort; blame, when administered before visitors, takes away the power of doing well.

It is the parents' duty to make their children's childhood full of love and childhood's proper joyousness. Not all the appliances that wealth can buy are necessary to the free and happy unfolding of childhood in body, mind, and heart. But children must have love inside the house, and fresh air and good play and companionship outside; otherwise young life runs the danger of withering and growing stunted, or, at best, prematurely old and turned inward on itself. There is something in loving dependent children, in tender care for them, which bestows upon the soul the most enriching of its experience. They make us tender and sympathetic, and a thousand times reward us for all we do for them. We are indebted to them for constant incentives to noble living; for the perpetual reminder that we do not live for ourselves alone. For their sake we are admonished to put from us the debasing appetite, the unworthy impulse; to gather into our lives every noble and heroic quality, every

tender and attractive grace. We owe them gratitude for the dark hour their presence has brightened; for the helplessness and dependence which have won us from ourselves; for the faith and trust which it is evermore their mission to renew; for their kisses, wet with tears, placed on brows that, but for their caressing, had furrowed into frowns.

The gleeful laugh of happy children is the best home music, and the graceful figures of childhood are the best statuary. They are well-springs of pleasure, messengers of peace and love, resting-places for innocence, links between angels and men. Their eyes, those clear wells of undefiled thought,—what is more beautiful? Full of hope, love, and curiosity, they meet your own. In prayer, how earnest; in joy, how sparkling; in sympathy, how tender! The man or woman who never tried the companionship of a little child has carelessly passed by one of the greatest pleasures of life, as one passes a rare flower without plucking or knowing its value. A home, and no children,—it is like a lantern, and no candle; a garden, and no flowers; a vine, and no grapes; a brook, and no water gurgling and gushing in its channels.

Nature affords striking proofs of foresight and wisdom in making the bonds of parental sympathy so invincibly strong and lasting. During childhood and youth, and even afterwards, when these charming epochs of life have passed away, the ties of constancy and attachment continue to prevail. Were not the chords of love thus strengthened, they would frequently be snapped asunder; for the severest

trials which the world knows are those which assail the parental heart and pierce it with the deepest sorrows.

How fleeting are the happiness and innocent guilelessness of childhood! The years as they come bring with them intelligence and experience; but they take with them, in their resistless course, the innocent pleasures of childhood's years. Then deal gently, patiently, and kindly with them. You may be nearly over the rough pathway of life yourselves; make the only time of life that they can call happy as pleasant as possible. "Our children," says Madame de Stael, "who are tenderly reared by us, are soon destined for others than ourselves. They soon stride rapidly forward in the career of life, while we fall slowly back. They soon begin to regard their parents in the light of memory and to look upon others in the light of hope."

They will not trouble you long. Children grow up; nothing on earth grows so fast as children. It was but yesterday and that lad was playing with tops, a buoyant boy. He is a man now. There is no more childhood for him or for us. Life has claimed him. When a beginning is made, it is like a raveling stocking; stitch by stitch gives way till all are gone. The house has not a child left in it; there is no more noise in the hall; no boys rush in, pell-mell; it is very orderly now. There are no more skates or sleds, bats, balls, or strings left scattered about. There are no more gleeful laughs of happy girls, or dolls left to litter the best room. There is no delay for sleeping folks; there is no longer any

task before you lie down. But the mother's heart is heavy, and the father's house is lonely.

BROTHER AND SISTER.



The affections that exist between the members of the same family afford a pleasing spectacle of human happiness. That which exists between brother and sister should be assiduously cultivated. It is a beautiful and lovely feeling, and seems to be wholly angelic in its thoughts and feelings. It must necessarily be a pure, spiritual love. It arises, not from a sense of gratitude, or for favors received, or from any thing save the endearing relationship of family. It rests not on any thing but a spiritual affinity of soul. It should be cultivated as one of the sweetest plants in the garden of the heart. It should be watered every morning and evening with the dews of good nature, and sunned all day with the light of kindness. It should hear nothing but loving and tender

words, even the dulcet music of home; see nothing but smiles and the tokens of confidence and sympathy, and know nothing but its own spirit of tenderness and unity.

How large and cherished a place does a good sister's love always hold in the grateful memory of one who has been blessed with the benefit of this relation! How many are there who, in the changes of mature years, have found a sister's love their ready and adequate resource! With what a sense of security is confidence reposed in a good sister, and with what assurance that it will be uprightly and considerately given is her counsel sought! How intimate is the friendship of such a brother and sister not widely separated in age from one another!

What a reliance for warning, caution, and sympathy has each secured in each! How many are the brothers who, when thrown into circumstances of temptation, have found the thought of a sister's love a constant, holy presence, rebuking every wayward thought! How many brothers are there from whom death separated the sister years ago who yet feel her influence thrown around them like sweet incense from an unseen censer; who are arrested, when just about to take a downward step, by the memory of a reproving look from eyes that have long been closed; who have pursued their weary path of duty, cheered by the remembrance of a smile from lips that will never smile again!

Who can tell the thoughts that cluster around the word sister? How ready she is to forgive the foibles of a brother! She never deserts him. In

adversity she clings closely to him, and in trial she cheers him. When the bitter voice of reproach is poured in his ears she is ever ready to hush its hard tones, and to turn his attention away from its painful notes. Let him move in pleasant paths, she hangs clusters of flowers about him.

In watching his favored career and listening to his eulogy she feels the purest satisfaction. The cold grave can not crush her affections for him—it outlives her tears and sighs; and hence she often wanders to the spot where he reposes with the fragrant rose-bush and creeping honeysuckle, and plants them on his tomb; and who will dare to affirm her love perishes when she passes away from earth? May it not live far off in the glorious land, increasing in fervor and intensity as the years of eternity pass away?

Affection does not beget weakness, nor is it effeminate for a brother to be firmly attached to a sister. Such a boy will make a noble and brave man. The young man who was accustomed to kiss his sweet, innocent sister night and morning as they met shows its influence upon him. He will never forget it, and when he shall take some one to his heart as his wife she shall reap the golden fruits thereof. The young man who is in the habit of giving his arm to his sister as they walk to and from church will never leave his wife to find her way as best she can. He who has been trained to see that his sister was seated before he sought his own will never mortify a neglected wife in the presence of strangers. And the young man who frequently handed his sister to her chair at the

table will never have cause to blush as he sees some gentleman extend to his wife the courtesy she knows is due from him.

The intercourse of brother and sister forms an important element in the happy influence of home. A boisterous or a selfish boy may try to domineer over the weaker or more dependent girl. But generally the latter exerts a softening influence. The brother animates and heartens; the sister modifies and refines. The vine-tree and its sustaining elm are the emblems of such a relation; and by such agencies our "sons may become like plants grown up in youth, and our daughters like corner-stones polished after the similitude of a temple."

Sisters scarcely know the influence they have over their brothers. A young man is pretty much what his sister and young lady friends choose to make him. If sisters are watchful and affectionate they may in various ways lead them along till their characters are formed, and then a high respect for ladies and a manly self-respect will keep them from mingling in low society.

Girls, especially those who are members of a large family, have a great influence at home, where brothers delight in their sisters, and where parents look fondly down on their daughters. Girls have much in their power with regard to those boys; they have in their power to make them gentler, truer, purer; to give them higher opinion of woman; to soften their manner and ways; to tone down rough places, and shape sharp, angular corners. They should interest themselves in their pursuits, and show

them by every means in their power that they do not consider them and their doings beneath their notice.

But few sisters realize how much they have to do with the welfare of their brothers—how much it is in their power to win them to the right modes of thoughts and actions by little acts of sisterly attentions. If they would but spare an hour now and then from their peculiar employment to their boyish sports, and not turn contemptuously away from the books and amusements in which they delight, they would soon find how a gentle word would turn off a sharp answer; how a genial look would effectually reprove an unfitting expression; how gratefully a small kindness would be received, and how unbounded would be the power for good they would obtain by a continuance of such conduct.

Fortunate is the family that possesses such an elder sister. The mother confides in her, the father takes pride in her ability to aid and cheer the household, and the younger ones lean upon her. By her counsels, her example, her influence, she may do as much as the parents to give to the family life. She is at once companion and counselor for the younger members, since separated by only a brief interval from the sports of childhood she can sympathize easily with the little wants and little griefs that fill the child's heart to overflowing, and show it how to compass its desires and forget its sorrows. A short girlhood is usually the allotment of the oldest daughter; but this is more than made up to her in the long and delightful companionship

she has with her mother, in the sense she is made to have of her own importance in the family, and the unusual capability she is obliged by the force of circumstances to acquire and display.

It is a law of our being that no improvement that takes place in either of the sexes is confined to itself; each is the universal mirror to each, and the refinements of the one will always be in reciprocal proportion to the polish of the other. The brother and sister should grow up together, be educated at the same school, engage in the same sports, and, as far as practicable, in the same labors. Their joys and sorrows, tastes and aims, should be mutual as far as possible. The same moral lessons, obligations, and duties should bear upon them. It is an error that the youths of our land are separated in so many of the most important duties of life.

Much evil is caused by mistaken opinions on this point. The girls are taught that it is not pretty to be with the boys and the boys that it is not manly to be with the girls, while at the same time the society of each is necessary for the best development of character in the other. When they do meet it is only for sport and nonsense, to cajole and deceive each other. Hence the good influence they should have upon each other is in a great measure lost. They are unacquainted with each other, know not each other's natures, and have but little interest in each other's business and duties.

We want the girls to rival the boys in all that is good, refined, and ennobling. We want them

to rival the boys, as they well can, in learning, in understanding, in all noble qualities of mind and heart, but not in any of the rougher qualities and traits. We want the girls to be gentle—not weak, but gentle—and kind and affectionate. We want to be sure that wherever a girl is there should be a sweet, subduing, and harmonizing influence of purity and truth and love pervading and hallowing from center to circumference the entire circle in which she moves. It is her mission to instruct the boys in all needful lessons of neatness and order, of patience and goodness.

We want the boys to be gentle, courteous, and considerate towards their younger sisters; to be the protector and emulator of their virtues. We want to be sure that where there is a boy there will go forth the influence inspired by the courage of manly self-respect—a respect that keeps him from mingling in low society. We want him to be every whit a man, a fit friend and companion for true womanhood. We want to see them both enjoy the Spring-time of life, for this is the season of joy, of bliss, of strength, of pride; it is the treasury of life, in which nature stores up those riches which are for our future employment and profit. Youth is to age what the flower is to the fruit, the leaf to the tree, the sand to the glass. Hence we want to see them both so using the golden age of youth as to be able to reap a rich harvest in the years of maturity.

MANHOOD.

Manhood is the isthmus between two extremes—the ripe, the fertile season of action, when alone we can hope to find the head to contrive united with the hand to execute.

Each age has its peculiar duties and privileges, pleasures and pains. When young we trust ourselves too much; when old we trust others too little. Rashness is the error of youth, timid caution of age. In youth we build castles and plan for ourselves a course of action through life. As we approach old age we see more and more plainly that we are simply carried forward by a mighty torrent, borne here and there against our will. We then perceive how little control we have had in reality over our course; that our actions, resolves, and endeavors, which seemed to give such a guiding course to our life,

"Are but eddies of the mighty stream
That rolls to its appointed end."

In childhood time goes by on leaden wings,—ten, twenty years, a life-time seems an endless period. At manhood we are surprised that time goes so rapidly; we then comprehend the fleeting period of life. In old age the years that are passed seem as a dream of the night, our life as a tale nearly told. Childhood is the season of dreams and high resolves; manhood, of plans and actions; age, of retrospection and regret.

There is certainly no age more potential for good or evil than that of early manhood. The young men have, with much propriety, been denominated the flower of a country. To be a man and seem to be one are two different things. All young men should carefully consider what is meant by manhood. It does not consist in years simply, nor in form and figure. It lies above and beyond these things. It is the product of the cultivation of every power of the soul, and of every high spiritual quality naturally inherent or graciously supplemented. It should be the great object of living to attain this true manhood. There is no higher pursuit for the youth to propose to himself. He is standing at the opening gates of active life. There he catches the first glimpse of the possibilities in store for him. There he first perceives the duties that will shortly devolve upon him. What higher aim can he propose to himself than to act his part in life as becomes a man who lives not only for time but for eternity? How earnestly should he resolve to walk worthily in

all that true manhood requires!

There are certain claims, great and weighty, resting upon all young men which they can not shake off if they would. They grow out of those indissoluble relations which they sustain to society, and those invaluable interests—social, civil, and religious—with all the duties and responsibilities connected with them, which are soon to be transferred to their shoulders from the venerable fathers who have borne the burden and heat of the day. The various departments of business and trust, the pulpit and the bar, our courts of justice and halls of legislation, our civil, religious, and literary institutions, all, in short, that constitute society and go to make life useful and happy, are to be in their hands and under their control.

Society, in committing to the young her interests and privileges, imposes upon them corresponding claims, and demands that they be prepared to fill with honor and usefulness the places which they are destined to occupy. Young men can not take a rational view of the station to which they are advancing, or of the duties that are coming upon them, without feeling deeply their need of high and peculiar qualifications.

Every young man should come forward in life with a determination to do all the good he can, and to leave the world the better for his having lived in it. He should consider that he was not made for himself alone, but for society, for mankind, and for God. He should consider that he is a constituent, responsible member of the great family of man, and, while he should pay

particular attention to the wants and welfare of those with whom he is immediately connected, he should accustom himself to send his thoughts abroad over the wide field of practical benevolence.

There is within the young man an uprising of lofty sentiments which contribute to his elevation, and though there are obstacles to be surmounted and difficulties to be vanquished, yet with truth for his watchword, and relying on his own noble purposes and exertions, he may crown his brow with imperishable honors. He may never wear the warrior's crimson wreath, the poet's chaplet of bays, or the statesman's laurels; though no grand, universal truth may at his bidding stand confessed to the world; though it may never be his to bring to a successful issue a great political revolution; to be the founder of a republic which shall be a distinguished star in the constellation of nations; even more, though his name may never be heard beyond the narrow limits of his own neighborhood, yet is his mission none the less a high and noble one.

In the moral and physical world not only the field of battle but also the cause of truth and virtue calls for champions, and the field for doing good is white unto the harvest. If he enlists in the ranks, and his spirits faint not, he may write his name among the stars of heaven. Beautiful lives have blossomed in the darkest places, as pure, white lilies, full of fragrance, sometimes bloom on the slimy, stagnant waters. No possession is so productive of real influence as a highly cultivated intellect. Wealth, birth,

and official station may and do secure an external, superficial courtesy, but they never did and never can secure the reverence of the heart. It is only to the man of large and noble soul—to him who blends a cultivated mind with an upright heart—that men yield the tribute of deep and genuine respect. A man should never glory in that which is common to a beast; nor a wise man in that which is common to a fool; nor a good man in that which is common to a wicked man.

Since it is in the intellect that we trace the source of all that is great and noble in man it follows that if any are ambitious to possess a true manhood they will be men of reflection, men whose daily acts are controlled by their judgment, men who recognize the fact that life is a real and earnest affair, that time is fleeting, and, consequently, resolve to waste none of it in frivolities; men whose life and conversation are indicative of that serious mien and deportment which well becomes those who have great interests committed to their charge, and who are determined that in so far as in them lies life with them shall be a success, who fully realize the importance of every step they may take, and, consequently, bring to it the careful consideration of a mind trained to think with precision.

The man who thinks, reads, studies, and meditates has intelligence cut in his features, stamped on his brow, and gleaming in his eye. Thinking, not growth, makes perfect manhood. There are some who, though they are done growing, are only boys. The constitution may

be fixed while the judgment is immature; the limbs may be strong while the reasoning is feeble. Many who can run and jump and bear any fatigue can not observe, can not examine, can not reason or judge, contrive or execute—they do not think. Such persons, though they may have the figure of a man and the years of a man, are not in possession of manhood; they will not acquire it until they learn to look beyond the present, and take broad and comprehensive views of their relations to society.

As we often mistake glittering tinsel for solid gold, so we often mistake specious appearances for true worth and manhood. We are too prone to take professions and words in lieu of actions; too easily impressed with good clothes and polite bearings to inquire into the character and doings of the individual. Man should be rated, not by his hoards of gold, not by the simple or temporary influence he may for a time exert, but by his unexceptionable principles relative both to character and religion. Strike out these and what is he? A savage without sympathy! Take them away, and his manship is gone; he no longer lives in the image of his Creator. No smile gladdens his lips, no look of sympathy illumes his countenance to tell of love and charity for the woes of others.

But let man go abroad with just principles, and what is he? An exhaustless fountain in a vast desert! A glorious sun, shining ever, dispelling every vestige of darkness. There is love animating his heart, sympathy breathing in every tone. Tears of pity—dew-drops of the soul

—gather in his eye, and gush impetuously down his cheek. A good man is abroad, and the world knows and feels it. Beneath his smile lurks no degrading passion; within his heart there slumbers no guile. He is not exalted in mortal pride, not elevated in his own views, but honest, moral, and virtuous before the world. He stands throned on truth; his fortress is wisdom, and his dominion is the vast and limitless universe. Always upright, kind, and sympathizing; always attached to just principles, and actuated by the same, governed by the highest motives in doing good; these constitute his only true manliness.

WOMANHOOD.

It should be the highest ambition of every young woman to possess a true womanhood. Earth presents no higher object of attainment.

To be a woman is the truest and best thing beneath the skies. A true woman exists independent of outward adornments. It is not wealth, or beauty of person, or connection, or station, or power of mind, or literary attainments, or variety and richness of outward accomplishments, that make the woman. These often adorn womanhood, as the ivy adorns the oak, but they should never be mistaken for the thing they adorn.

The great error of womankind is that they take the shadow for the substance, the glitter for the gold, the heraldry and trappings of the world for the priceless essence of womanly worth which exists within the mind. Every young man, as a general rule, has some purpose laid down for the grand object of his life—some plan, for the accomplishment of which all his other actions are made to serve as auxiliaries. It is to be regretted that every young woman does not also have a set purpose of life—some grand aim, grand in its character. She should, in the first place, know what she is, what power she possesses, what influences are to go out from her, what position in life she was designed to fill, what duties are resting upon her, what she is capable of being, what fields of profit and pleasure are open to her, how much joy and pleasure she may find in a true life of womanly activity.

When she has duly considered these things, she should then form the high purpose of being a true woman, and make every circumstance bend to her will for the accomplishment of this noble purpose. There can be no higher aim to

set before herself. There is no nobler attainment this side of the spirit-land than lofty womanhood. There is no ambition more pure than that which craves this crown for her mortal brow. To be a genuine woman, full of womanly instincts and power, forming the intuitive genius of her penetrative soul, the subduing authority of her gentle yet resolute will, is to be a peer of earth's highest intelligence. All young women have this noble prize before them. They may all put on the glorious crown of womanhood. They may make their lives grand in womanly virtues.

A true woman has a power, something peculiarly her own, in her moral influence, which, when duly developed, makes her queen over a wide realm of spirit. But this she can possess only as her powers are cultivated. It is cultivated women that wield the scepter of authority among men. Wherever cultivated woman dwells, there is refinement, intellect, moral power, life in its highest form. To be a cultivated woman she must commence early, and make this the grand aim of her life. Whether she work or play, travel or remain at home, converse with friends or study books, gaze at flowers or toil in the kitchen, visit the pleasure party or the sanctuary of God, she keeps this object before her mind, and taxes all her powers for its attainment.

Every young woman should also determine to do something for the honor and elevation of her sex. Her powers of mind and body should be applied to a good end. Let her resolve to help with the weight of her encouragement and

counsels her sisters who are striving nobly to be useful, to remove as far as possible the obstacles in their way. Let her call to her aid all the forces of character she can command to enable her to persist in being a woman of the true stamp. In every class of society the young women should awaken to their duty. They have a great work to do. It is not enough that they should be what their mothers were—they must be more. The spirit of the times calls on women for a higher order of character and life. Will they heed the call? Will they emancipate themselves from the fetters of custom and fashion, and come up, a glorious company, to the possession of a vigorous, virtuous, noble womanhood, that shall shed new light upon the world and point the way to a divine life?

Woman's influence is the chief anchor of society, and this influence is purifying the world, and the work she has already accomplished will last forever. No costly marble can build a more enduring monument to her memory than the impress she makes on her own household. The changing scenes of life may hurl the genius of man from eminence to utter ruin; for his life hangs on the fabric of public opinion. But the honest form of a true mother reigns *queen* in the hearts of her children forever.

Man's admirers may be greater, but woman holds her kindred by a silken cord of familiar kindness, strengthened and extended by each little courtesy of a life-time. Man may make his monument of granite or of marble, woman hers of immortality. Man may enjoy here, she will

enjoy hereafter. Man may move the rough crowd by his eloquence, woman will turn his coarseness into a cheerful life. Man may make laws and control legislatures, woman will mold their minds in the school-room and be the author of their grandest achievements. Cruelty she despises, and it lessens at her bidding; purity she admires, and it grows in her presence; music she loves, and her home is full of its melody; happiness is her herald, and she infuses a world with a desire for enjoyment. Without her, cabins would be fit for dwellings, furs fit for clothing, and all the arts and improvements would be wanting in stimulus and ambition; for the world is moved and civilization is advanced by the silent influence of woman.

This influence is due not exclusively to the fascination of her charms, but to the strength, uniformity, and consistency of her virtues, maintained under so many sacrifices and with so much fortitude and heroism. Without these endowments and qualifications, external attractions are nothing; but with them, their power is irresistible. Beauty and virtue are the crowning attributes bestowed by nature upon woman, and the bounty of Heaven more than compensates for the injustice of man. The possession of these advantages secures to her universally that degree of homage and consideration which renders her independent of the effect of unequal and arbitrary laws. But it is not the incense of idol-worship which is most acceptable to the heart of woman; it is the courtesy, and just appreciation of her proper

position, merit, and character. Woman surpasses man in the quickness of her perception and in the right direction of her sympathies; and thus it is justly due to her praise that the credit of her acknowledged ascendency is personal amidst the increasing degeneracy of man.

Woman is the conservator of morality and religion. Her moral worth holds man in some restraint, and preserves his ways from becoming inhumanly corrupt. Mighty is the power of woman in this respect. Every virtue in woman has its influence on the world. A brother, husband, friend, or son is touched by its sunshine. Its mild beneficence is not lost. A virtuous woman in the seclusion of her home, breathing the sweet influence of virtue into the hearts and lives of its loved ones, is an evangel of goodness to the world. She is a pillar of the external kingdom of right. She is a star, shining in the moral firmament. She is a priestess, administering at the fountain of life. Every prayer she breathes is answered, in a greater or less degree, in the hearts and lives of those she loves. Her heart is an altar-fire, where religion acquires strength to go out on its mission of mercy.

We can not overestimate the strength and power of woman's moral and religious character. The world would go to ruin without her. With all our ministers and Churches, and Bibles and sermons, man would be a prodigal without the restraint of woman's virtue and the consecration of her religion. Woman first lays her hand on our young faces; she plants the first

seeds; she makes the first impressions; and all along through life she scatters the good seeds of her kindness, and sprinkles them with the dews of her piety.

A woman of true intelligence is a blessing at home, in her circle of friends, and in society. Wherever she goes she carries with her a health-giving influence. There is a beautiful harmony about her character that at once inspires a respect which soon warms into love. The influence of such a woman upon society is of the most salutary kind. She strengthens right principles in the virtuous, incites the selfish and indifferent to good actions, and gives to the light and frivolous a taste after something more substantial than the frothy gossip with which they seek to recreate themselves.

Many a woman does the work of her life without being noticed or seen by the world. The world sees a family reared to virtue, one child after another growing into Christian manhood or womanhood, and at last it sees them gathered around the grave where the mother that bore them rests from her labors. But the world has never seen the quiet woman laboring for her children, making their clothes, providing them food, teaching them their prayers, and making their homes comfortable and happy.

A woman's happiness flows to her from sources and through channels different from those that give origin and conduct to the happiness of man, and in a measure will continue to do so forever. Her faculties bend their exercise toward different issues, her social

and spiritual notions demand a different aliment. Her powers are eminently practical. She has a rich store of practical good sense, an ample fund of tact, skill, shrewdness, inventiveness, and management. It is her work to form the young mind, to give it direction and instruction, to develop its love for the good and true. It is her work to make home happy, to nourish all the virtues, and instill all the sweetness which builds men up into good citizens. She is the consoler of the world, attending it in sickness; her society soothes the world after its toils, and rewards it for its perplexities. They receive the infant when it enters upon its existence, and drape the cold form of the aged when life is passed. They assuage the sorrows of childhood, and minister to the poor and distressed.

Loveliness of spirit is woman's scepter and sword; for it is both the emblem and the instrument of her conquest. Her influence flows from her sensibilities, her gentleness, and her tenderness. It is this which disarms prejudice, and awakens confidence and affection in all who come within her sphere, which makes her more powerful to accomplish what her will has resolved than if nature had endowed her with the strength of a giant. As a wife and mother, woman is seen in her most sacred and dignified aspect. As such she has great influence over the characters of individuals, over the condition of families, and over the destinies of empires.

How transitory are the days of girlhood! The time when the cheerful smile, the merry laugh, and the exulting voice were so many

expressions of happiness,—how quickly it passed! How time has multiplied its scores, and accumulated its unwelcome effects against the charms and attractions of youth! But if the heart be chilled, if the cheek be more pale, and the eye less bright; if the outward adornment of the temple of love have become faded and dimmed, there may be yet inwardly preserved the shrine where is laid up the sacred treasures of loveliness and purity, gentleness and grace, the attempered qualities of tried and perfected virtues: as if the blossoms of early childhood had ripened into the mellow and precious fruits of autumnal time.

But in another and better sense a good woman never grows old. Years may pass over her head, but if benevolence and virtue dwell in her heart she is as cheerful as when the spring of life first opened to her view. When we look at a good woman we never think of her age; she looks as happy as when the rose first bloomed on her cheek. In her neighborhood she is a friend and benefactor; in the Church, the devout worshiper and exemplary Christian. Who does not love and respect the woman who has spent her days in acts of kindness and mercy, who has been the friend of sorrowing ones, whose life has been a scene of kindness and love, devotion to truth and religion. Such a woman can not grow old; she will always be fresh and beautiful in her spirits and active in her humble deeds of mercy and benevolence.

If the young lady desires to retain the bloom and beauty of youth, let her not yield to the way of fashion and folly; let her love truth and

virtue; and to the close of her life will she retain those feelings which now make life appear a garden of sweets ever fresh and green.

HOME HARMONIES.



Can there be a more important theme to claim the attention of thinking parents than that of home harmonies, how to make the home life so pleasant and full of kindly courtesy that its members will look to it as the pleasantest spot on earth, and find their highest enjoyment in advancing the innocent pleasures of home? Is it not the duty of parents to make their homes as pleasant as they possibly can for their children and their mates? Should they not strive to have them resound with the fun and frolic of childhood, and enlivened with the cheerfulness of happy social life? For too many homes are like the frame of a harp that stands without strings. In form and outline they suggest music, but no melody arises from the empty spaces;

and thus it happens that home is unattractive, dreary, and dull.

And do you, fathers and mothers, you who have sons and daughters growing up around you, do you ever think of your responsibility of keeping alive the home feeling in the hearts of your children? Remember that within your means the obligation rests upon you of making their homes the pleasantest spot on earth, to make the word home to them the synonym of happiness. Go to as great length as you consistently can to provide for them those amusements, which, if not provided there, entice them elsewhere. You had better spend your money thus than in ostentation and luxury, and far better than to amass a fortune for your children to spend in the future. The richest legacy you can leave your child is a life-long, inextinguishable, and fragrant recollection of home when time and death have forever dissolved the enchantment.

Give him that, and on the strength of that will he make his way in the world; but let his recollection of home be repulsive, and the fortune you may leave him will be a poor compensation for the loss of that tenderness of heart and purity of life, which not only a pleasant home, but the memory of one would have secured. Remember, also, that while they will feel grateful to you for the money you may leave them, and will think of you when gone, they will go to your green graves and bless your very ashes for that sanctuary of quiet comfort and refinement, to which you may, if you possess the means, transform your home. The

memory of the beautiful and happy homes of childhood will in after years come to the weary mind like strains of low, sweet music, and in its silent influence for good will prove of infinite more value than houses, stocks, and money.

Too frequently the effect of prosperity is to render the heart cold and selfish; but the heart will never forget the hallowed influence of happy home memories. It will be an evening enjoyment to which the lapse of years will only add new sweetness. Such a home memory is a constant inspiration for good, and as constant a restraint from evil. A constant endeavor should be made to render every home cheerful. Innocent joy should reign in every heart. There should be found domestic amusements, fireside pleasures, quiet and simple they may be, but such as shall make home happy, and not leave it that irksome place that will oblige the youthful spirit to look elsewhere for joy.

There are a thousand unobtrusive ways in which we may add to the cheerfulness of home. The very modulations of the voice will often make a wonderful difference. How many shades of feeling are expressed by the voice! What a change comes over us by a change of tones! No delicately tuned harp-string can awaken more pleasures, no grating discord can pierce with more pain. It is practicable to make home so delightful that children shall have no disposition to wander from it or prefer any other place. It is possible to make it so attractive that it shall not only firmly hold its own loved ones, but shall draw others into its cheerful circle. Let the house all day long be the

scene of pleasant looks, pleasant words, kind and affectionate acts; let the table be the happy eating-place of a merry group, and not simply a dull board where the members come to eat. Let the sitting-room at evening be the place where a merry company settle themselves to books and games, till the round of good-night kisses are in order. Let there be some music in the household, not kept to show to company, but music in which all can join. Let the young companions be welcomed and made for the time a part of the group. In a word, let the home be surrounded by an air of cozy and cheerful good-will. Then children will not be exhorted to love it; you will not be able to tempt them away from it.

To the man of business home should be an earthly paradise, to the embellishment of which his leisure time and thoughts might well be devoted. Life is certainly a pleasanter thing if the inevitable daily drudgery be relieved by a little lightness, brightness, and intelligent enjoyment. The craving for amusement is a natural one, and within proper bounds it ought to be gratified. And there is surely no better entertainment for the spare hours of an intelligent man than the embellishment of his home, so that it will be an agreeable place for himself and his family to dwell in, and for his friends to visit. He may be assured that his children as they grow up will become better men and women, and more useful members of society, if they live in a home which is itself a work of art, and in which they are surrounded by objects stimulative to the intellect, the

imagination, and to all the better feelings of their natures.

This making home a work of art is not a piece of sentimentalism, but it is one which ought to address itself in the strongest manner to the minds of all practical people. There is nothing better worthy of adornment than the house we live in; and a home arranged and fitted up with taste will be better cared for, it will beget habits of greater neatness, it will inspire nobler thoughts, it will exert a pleasanter influence, not only on its inmates, but on the whole neighborhood, than one fitted with the costliest objects selected with indiscrimination, without plan, and merely for the purpose of ostentatious display.

It has been said that there is sure to be contentment in a home in the windows of which can be seen birds and flowers, and it may also be said that there will be the same conditions wherever there are pictures on the walls. A room without pictures is like a room without windows. Pictures are loop-holes of escape to the soul, leading to other scenes and other spheres. They are consolers of loneliness, they are books, they are histories and sermons which we can read without turning over the leaves. The sweet influence of flowers is no less than that of paintings. At all seasons of the year they are gladly welcomed. They are emblematic of both the joys and sorrows of life, and religion has associated them with the highest spiritual verities. Faded though they may sometimes be, they have the power to wake the chords of memory and make us children again. At the

sick-bed and marriage feast, on altar and cathedral walls they have a meaning, and the humblest home looks brighter where they bloom.

Many a child goes astray, not because there is a want of prayers or virtue at home, but simply because home lacks sunshine. A child needs smiles as much as flowers sunbeams. Children look little beyond the present moment. If a thing pleases them they are apt to seek it, if it displeases they are prone to avoid it. Children are great imitators, and are never so happy as when trying to do what they see other people do. Their plays consist in copying actual affairs of the older ones, and these amusements often really prepare the children for the actual business of life, so that they may sooner become helpful to their parents. They should be watched and encouraged, therefore, in their plays to habits of thoughtfulness and self-reliance. It is to be hoped that games of skill, which shall try the wit and patience of both parents and children, will become the fashion of the times, until every home in the land shall be supplied with these accessories of pleasure, until every child shall have in his father's house, be it humble or costly, such appliances and helps for his entertainment that he shall find his amusements under his father's roof and in his father's presence.

Among home amusements the best is the good old habit of conversation, the talking over the events of the day in bright and quick play of wit and fancy, the story which brings the laugh, and the speaking the good, kind, and true

things which all have in their hearts. Conversation is the sunshine of the mind, an intellectual orchestra where all the instruments should bear a part. Cultivate singing in the family. The songs and hymns your childhood sung, bring them all back to your memory; and teach them to the little ones. Mix them all together, to meet the varying moods as, in after life, they come over us so mysteriously. Is it not singular what trifles sometimes serve to wake the memories of youth? And what more often than snatches of olden songs not heard for many years, but which used to come from lips now closed forever? Thus the home songs not only serve to make the present home life happy and agreeable, but the very memory of it will serve as a shield of defense in times of trial and temptation. At times, amid the crushing mishaps of business, a song of the olden time breaks in upon the weary thoughts and guides the mind into another channel—light breaks from behind the cloud in the sky, and new courage is given us.

Parents do well to study the character of the younger ones. The majority of parents do not understand their children. They are kept under restraint, and are not properly developed; they live a life of fear rather than of love, which should not be. Home should be the bright sanctuary of our hearts, the repository of all our thoughts. Have confidence in each other, and the seeds properly sown will spring forth with fruits that will bud and blossom, but never die. What is comparable to a well regulated, happy home? It is our heaven below, where each

thought will vibrate in perfect unison.

In the great majority of cases it will be found that the frequenters of saloons and places of low resort have not pleasant homes. It should be the duty of all to strive to make home so happy that each evening will furnish pleasant memories to lighten the load of another day. Make it so happy that you do not tire of it, but long for the hour when your day's toil is over, and you desire to reach it as the happiest and dearest place on earth. Parents should more earnestly consider the importance of home culture, home happiness, home love. The latter should be the ruling element, for all the household is moved by the surrounding influences, and when a spirit of love broods over the household, how kind, gentle, and considerate do all its members become!

There are some persons who apparently live more for the admiration of others than for their own household, and have a smile for all but those who should be the nearest and dearest. This is almost criminally wrong; they could take no surer course to make a complete wreck of their own happiness and the home happiness. Whatever vexatious troubles parents meet in their daily life, it is their duty no less than it should be their chief pleasure to strive, as far as possible, to throw around the home an atmosphere of joy and happiness, to make home the dearest spot on earth, so that when, with the passage of years, the children go from thence to new and untried scenes, the memory of home will bring to the heart a thrill of joyful recollections, and thus give them a new courage

to take up the burden of life.

HOME DUTIES.

"And say to mothers what a holy charge
Is theirs; with what a kingly power their love
Might rule the fountains of the new-born mind;
Warn them to wake at early dawn and sow
Good seed before the world has sown its tares."
—MRS. SIGOURNEY.



Duty embraces man's whole existence. It begins in the home, where there is the duty which children owe to their parents on the one hand, and the duty which parents owe their children on the other. There surely can be no more important duties to ponder over long and earnestly than those relating to the home, the duty of patience, of courtesy one to the other, the interest in each other's welfare, the duty of self-control, of learning to bear and forbear.

One danger of home life springs from its familiarity. Kindred hearts at a common fireside are far too apt to relax from the proprieties of social life. Careless language and careless attire are too apt to be indulged in when the eye of the world is shut off, the ear of the world can not hear. There should be no stiffness of family etiquette, no sternness of family discipline, like that which prevailed in olden times—the day for that is passed. But the day for thorough civility and courtesy among the members of a home, the day for careful propriety of dress and address, will never pass away. It is here that the truest and most faultless social life is to be lived; it is here that such a life is to be learned. A home in which true courtesy and politeness reigns is a home from which polite men and women go forth, and they go out directly from no other. It should be remembered that it is at home, in the family, and among kindred, that an every-day politeness of manner is really most to be prized; there it confers substantial benefits and brings the sweetest returns. The little attentions which members of the same household may show towards one another, day by day, belong to what is styled "good manners." There can not be any ingrained gentility which does not exhibit itself first at home.

Children should be trained to behave at home as you would have them behave abroad. It is the home life which they act out when away. If this is rude, gruff, and lacking in civility, they will be lacking in all that constitutes true refinement, and thus most painfully reflect on

the home training when in the presence of strangers. In the actions of children strangers can read a history of the home life. It tells of duty undone, of turmoil and strife, of fretful women and impatient men; or, it speaks of a home of love and peace, where patience sits enthroned in the hearts of all its members, and each is mindful of his or her duty towards the other.

Let the wives and daughters of business men think of the toils, the anxieties, the mortification and wear that fathers undergo to secure for them comfortable homes. Is it not their duty to compensate them for these trials by making them happy at their own fireside? Happy is he who can find solace and comfort at home. And husbands, too, do not think enough of the thousand trials and petty, vexatious incidents of the daily home life to which wives are subject. True, they themselves feel the harassing incidents of business, which may be of more immediate importance than the cares of home. But one large worry is preferable to many small ones. Thus it is the duty of each to remember these facts, and strive to make the home life happy by mutual self-sacrifice.

Something is wrong in those homes where the little courtesies of speech are ignored in the everyday home life. When the family gather alone around the breakfast or dinner table the same courtesy should prevail as if guests were present. Reproof, complaint, unpleasant discussion, and sarcasm, no less than moody silence, should be banished. Let the conversation be genial and suited to the little

folks as far as possible. Interesting incidents of the day's experience may be mentioned at the evening meal, thus arousing the social element. If resources fail sometimes little extracts read from evening or morning papers will kindle the conversation. Scolding is never allowable; reproof and criticism from parents must have their time and place, but should never intrude so far upon the social life of the family as to render the home uncomfortable. A serious word in private will generally cure a fault more easily than many public criticisms. In some families a spirit of contradiction and discussion mars the harmony; every statement is, as it were, dissected, and the absolute correctness of every word calculated. It interferes seriously with social freedom where unimportant social inaccuracies are watched for and exposed for the sake of exposure.

Never think any thing which affects the happiness of your children too small a matter to claim your attention. Use every means in your power to win and retain their confidence. Do not rest satisfied without some account of each day's joys or sorrows. It is a source of great comfort to the innocent child to tell all its troubles to mother, and the mother should haste to lend a willing ear. Soothe and quiet its little heart after the experience of the day. It has had its disappointments and trials, as well as its plays and pleasures; it is ready to throw its arms around the mother's neck, and forgetting the one live again the other. Always send the little child to bed happy. Whatever cares may trouble your mind give the little one

a good-night kiss as it goes to its pillow. The memory of this in the stormy years which may be in store for it will be like Bethlehem's star to the bewildered shepherd, and the heart will receive a fresh inspiration of courage at the thrill of youthful memories.

The domestic fireside is a seminary of infinite importance. It is important because it is universal, and because the education it bestows, woven with the woof of childhood, gives color to the whole texture of life. Early impressions are not easily erased; the virgin wax is faithful to the signet, and subsequent impressions serve rather to indent the former one. There are but few who can receive the honors of a college education, but all are graduates of the heart. The learning of the university may fade from recollection, its classic lore may be lost from the halls of memory; but the simple lessons of home, enameled upon the heart of childhood, defy the rust of years, and outlive the more mature but less vivid pictures of after days. So deep, so lasting are the impressions of early life that you often see a man in the imbecility of age holding fresh in his recollection the events of childhood, while all the wide space between that and the present hour is a forgotten waste.

Those parents act most wisely who have forethought enough to provide not only for the youth, but for the age of their offspring; who teach them usefulness, and not to expect too much from the world; to become early familiarized with the stern and actual realities of life, and never to be apes of fashion nor parasites of greatness. Parents, then, should

educate their children not merely in scholastic acquirements, but in a knowledge of the respective positions they are to occupy when they become men and women. Educate them to the duties that the world will require of them when they arrive at that long looked for period when they will have reached maturity, and enter into the game that every person must play during his existence in the world. Educate the girl to the intricate duties that will be required of her as a wife and mother, and to the position she is to occupy in society, and that it rests with herself whether it shall be exalted or whether it shall be debased and lowly. Educate the boy to a knowledge of what the busy world will require of him; teach him self-reliance and all manly attributes.

A knowledge of the world is more than necessary to enable us to live in it wisely, and this knowledge should commence in the nursery. It must be remembered that the largest and most important part of the education of children, whether for good or evil, is carried on at home, often unconsciously in their amusements, and under the daily influence of what they see and hear about them. It is there that subtle brains and lissome fingers find scope and learn to promote the well-being of the community. One can not tell what duties their children may be called to perform in after life. They must teach them to cultivate their faculties, and to exercise all their senses to choose the good and refuse the evil.

Above all things, teach children what life is. It is not simply breathing and moving. Life is a

battle, and all thoughtful people see it so,—a battle between good and evil from childhood. Good influence drawing us up toward the divine, bad influence drawing us down to the brute. Teach children that they lead two lives, the life without and the life within; that the inside must be pure in the sight of God, as well as the outside in the sight of man. Educate them, then, to love the good and true, and remember that every word spoken within the hearing of little children tends toward the formation of character. Teach little children to love the beautiful. If you are able, give them a corner in the garden for flowers, allow them to have their favorite trees. Teach them to wander in the prettiest woodlets, show them where they best can view the sunset. Buy them pictures, and encourage them to deck their rooms in their childish way. Thus may the mother weave into the life of her children thoughts and feelings, rich, beautiful, grand, and noble, which will make all after life brighter and better.

The duties of children to parents are far too little considered. As the children grow up the parents lean on them much earlier than either imagine. In the passage of years the children gain experience and strength. But with the parents! The cares of a long life bow the form, and the strong are again made weak. It is now that the duties of children assume their grandest forms. It is not sufficient to simply give them a home to make their declining years comfortable. While supplying their physical wants, their hearts may be famishing for some

expression of love from you. If you think they have outgrown these desires, you are mistaken. Every little attention you can show your mother —your escort to Church or concert, or for a quiet walk—brings back the youth of her heart; her cheeks glow with pleasure, and she feels happy for such a dutiful son. The father, occupied and absorbed as he may be, is not wholly indifferent to the filial expressions of devoted love. He may pretend to care but very little for them; but, having faith in their sincerity, it would give him pain were they entirely withheld. Fathers need their sons quite as much as the sons need the fathers; but in how many deplorable instances do they fail to find in them a staff for their declining years!

You may disappoint the ambition of your parents, you may be unable to distinguish yourself as you fondly hoped; but let this not swerve you from a determination to be a son of whose moral character they need never be ashamed. Begin early to cultivate a habit of thoughtfulness and consideration for others, especially for those you are commanded to honor. Can you begrudge a few extra steps for the mother who never stopped to number those you demanded during your helpless infancy? Have you the heart to slight her requests or treat her remarks with indifference, when you can not begin to measure the patient devotion with which she bore your peculiarities? Anticipate her wants, invite her confidence, be prompt to offer assistance, express your affections as heartily as you did when a child, that the mother may never have occasion to

grieve in secret for the child she has lost.

AIM OF LIFE.



It is the aim that makes the man, and without this he is nothing as far as the utter destitution of force, weight, and even individuality among men can reduce him to nonentity. The strong gusts and currents of the world sweep him this way and that, without steam or sail to impel, or helm to guide him. If he be not speedily wrecked or run aground, it is more his good fortune than good management. We have never heard a more touching confession of utter weakness and misery than these words from one singularly blessed with the endowments of nature and of Providence: "My life is aimless."

Take heed, young man, of an aimless life. Take heed, too, of a low and sordid aim. A well-

ascertained and generous purpose gives vigor, direction, and perseverance to all man's efforts. Its concomitants are a well-disciplined intellect, character, influence, tranquillity, and cheerfulness within—success and honor without. Whatever a man's talents and advantages may be, with no aim, or a low one, he is weak and despicable; and he can not be otherwise than respectable and influential with a high one. Without some definite object before us, some standard which we are earnestly striving to reach, we can not expect to attain to any great height, either mentally or morally. Placing for ourselves high standards, and wishing to reach them without any further effort on our part, is not enough to elevate us in any very great degree.

Some one has said, "Nature holds for each of us all that we need to make us useful and happy; but she requires us to labor for all that we get." God gives nothing of value unto man unmatched by need of labor; and we can expect to overcome difficulties only by strong and determined efforts. Here is a great and noble work lying just before us, just as the blue ocean lies out beyond the rocks which line the shore. In our strivings for "something better than we have known" we should work for others' good rather than our own pleasure. Those whose object in life is their own happiness find at last that their lives are sad failures.

We need to do something each day that shall help us to a larger life of soul; and every word or deed which brings joy or gladness to other hearts lifts us nearer a perfect life; for a noble

deed is a step toward God. To live for something worthy of life involves the necessity of an intelligent and definite plan of action. More than splendid dreamings or magnificent resolves is necessary to success in the objects and ambitions of life. Men come to the best results in every department of effort only as they thoughtfully plan and earnestly toil in given directions. Purposes without work is dead. It were vain to hope for good results from mere plans. Random or spasmodic efforts, like aimless shoots, are generally no better than wasted time or strength. The purposes of shrewd men in the business of this life are always followed by careful plans, enforced by work. Whether the object is learning, honor, or wealth, the ways and means are always laid out according to the best rules and methods. The mariner has his chart, the architect his plans, the sculptor his model, and all as a means and condition of success. Inventive genius, or even what is called inspiration, can do little in any department of the theoretic or practical science except as it works by a well-formed plan; then every step is an advance towards the accomplishment of its object. Every tack of the ship made in accordance with nautical law keeps her steadily nearing the port. Each stroke of the chisel brings the marble into a clearer likeness to the model. No effort or time is lost; for nothing is done rashly or at random.

Thus, in the grand aim of life, if some worthy purpose be kept constantly in view, and for its accomplishment every effort be made every day of your life, you will, unconsciously, perhaps,

approach the goal of your ambition. There can be no question among the philosophic observers of men and events that fixedness of purpose is a grand element of human success. When a man has formed in his mind a great sovereign purpose, it governs his conduct as the laws of nature govern the operation of physical things.

Every one should have a mark in view, and pursue it steadily. He should not be turned from his course by other objects ever so attractive. Life is not long enough for any one man to accomplish every thing. Indeed, but few can at best accomplish more than one thing well. Many—alas! very many—accomplish nothing. Yet there is not a man, endowed with ordinary intellect or accomplishments, but can accomplish at least one useful, important, worthy purpose. It was not without reason that some of the greatest of men were trained from their youth to choose some definite object in life, to which they were required to direct their thoughts and to devote all their energies. It became, therefore, a sole and ruling purpose of their hearts, and was almost certainly the means of their future advancement and happiness in the world.

Of the thousands of men who are annually coming upon the stage of life there are few who escape the necessity of adopting some profession or calling; and there are fewer still who, if they knew the miseries of idleness—tenfold keener and more numerous than those of the most laborious profession—would ever desire such an escape. First of all, a choice of business or occupation should be made, and

made early, with a wise reference to capacity and taste. The youth should be educated for it and, as far as possible, in it; and when this is done it should be pursued with industry, energy, and enthusiasm, which will warrant success.

This choice of an occupation depends partly upon the individual preference and partly upon circumstances. It may be that you are debarred from entering upon that business for which you are best adapted. In that case make the best choice in your power, apply yourself faithfully and earnestly to whatever you undertake, and you can not well help achieving a success. Patient application sometimes leads to great results. No man should be discouraged because he does not get on rapidly in his calling from the start. In the more intellectual professions especially it should be remembered that a solid character is not the growth of a day, that the mental faculties are not matured except by long and laborious culture.

To refine the taste, to fortify the reasoning faculty with its appropriate discipline, to store the cells of memory with varied and useful learning, to train all the powers of the mind systematically, is the work of calm and studious years. A young man's education has been of but little use to him if it has not taught him to check the fretful impatience, the eager haste to drink the cup of life, the desire to exhaust the intoxicating draught of ambition. He should set his aim so high that it will require patient years of toil to reach it. If he can reach it at a bound it is unworthy of him. It should be of such a

nature that he feels the necessity of husbanding his resources.

You will receive all sorts of the most excellent advice, but you must do your own deciding. You have to take care of yourself in this world, and you may as well take your own way of doing it. But if a change of business is desired be sure the fault is with the business and not the individual. For running hither and thither generally makes sorry work, and brings to poverty ere the sands of life are half run. The North, South, East, and West furnish vast fields for enterprise; but of what avail for the seeker to visit the four corners of the world if he still is dissatisfied, and returns home with empty pockets and idle hands, thinking that the world is wrong and that he himself is a misused and shamefully imposed-on creature? The world, smiling at the rebuff, moves on, while he lags behind, groaning over misusage, without sufficient energy to roll up his sleeves and fight his way through.

A second profession seldom succeeds, not because a man may not make himself fully equal to its duties, but because the world will not readily believe he is so. The world argues thus: he that has failed in his first profession, to which he dedicated the morning of his life and the Spring-time of his exertion, is not the most likely person to master a second. To this it might be replied that a man's first profession is often chosen for him by others; his second he usually decides upon for himself; therefore, his failure in his first profession may, for what he knows, be mainly owing to the sincere but

mistaken attention he was constantly paying to his second.

Ever remember that it is not your trade or profession that makes you respectable. Manhood and profession or handicraft are entirely different things. An occupation is never an end of life. It is an instrument put into our hands by which to gain for the body the means of living until sickness or old age robs it of life, and we pass on to the world for which this is a preparation. The great purpose of living is twofold in character. The one should never change from the time reason takes the helm; it is to live a life of manliness, of purity and honor. To live such a life that, whether rich or poor, your neighbors will honor and respect you as a man of sterling principles. The other is to have some business, in the due performance of which you are to put forth all your exertions. It matters not so much what it is as whether it be honorable, and it may change to suit the varying change of circumstances. When these two objects—character and a high aim—are fairly before a youth, what then? He must strive to attain those objects. He must work as well as dream, labor as well as pray. His hand must be as stout as his heart, his arm as strong as his head. Purpose must be followed by action. Then is he living and acting worthily, as becomes a human being with great destinies in store for him.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE.



Mankind every-where are desirous of achieving a success, of making the most of life. At times, it is true, they act as if they little cared what was the outcome of their exertions. But even in the lives of the most abandoned and reckless there are moments when their good angel points out to them the heights to which they might ascend, that a wish arises for

"Something better than they have known."

But, alas! they have not the will to make the necessary exertions.

We are confronted with two ends—success or failure. To win the former it requires of us labor and perseverance. We must remember that those who start for glory must imitate the mettled hounds of Acton, and must pursue the game not only where there is a path, but where there is none. They must be able to simulate and to dissimulate; to leap and to creep; to conquer the earth like Cæsar; to fall down and kiss it like Brutus; to throw their sword, like Brennus, into the trembling scale; or, like Nelson, to snatch the laurels from the doubtful hand of victory while she is hesitating where to bestow them. He that would win success in life

must make Perseverance his bosom friend, Experience his wise counselor, Caution his elder brother, and Hope his guardian genius. He must not repine because the fates are sometimes against him, but when he trips or falls let him, like Cæsar when he stumbled on shore, stumble forward, and, by escaping the omen, change its nature and meaning. Remembering that those very circumstances which are apt to be abused as the palliatives of failure are the true tests of merit, let him gird up his loins for whatever in the mysterious economy of the future may await him. Thus will he rise superior to ill-fortune, and becoming daily more and more impassive to its attacks, will learn to force his way in spite of it, till, at last, he will be able to fashion his luck to his will.

"Life is too short," says a shrewd thinker, "for us to waste one moment in deploring our lot. We must go after success, since it will not come to us, and we have no time to spare." If you wish to succeed, you must do as you would to get in through a crowd to a gate all are anxious to reach—hold your ground and push hard; to stand still is to give up the battle. Give your energies to the highest employment of which your nature is capable. Be alive, be patient, work hard, watch opportunities, be rigidly honest, hope for the best; and if you are not able to reach the goal of your ambition, which is possible in spite of your utmost efforts, you will die with the consciousness of having done your best, which is after all the truest success to which man can aspire.

As manhood dawns and the young man

catches its first lights, the pinnacles of realized dreams, the golden domes of high possibilities, and the purpling hills of great delights, and then looks down upon the narrow, sinuous, long, and dusty paths by which others have reached them, he is apt to be disgusted with the passage, and to seek for success through broader channels and by quicker means. To begin at the foot of the hills and work slowly to the top seems a very discouraging process, and here it is that thousands of young men have made shipwreck of their lives. There is no royal road to success. The path lies through troubles and discouragements. It lies through fields of earnest, patient labor. It calls on the young man to put forth energy and determination. It bids him build well his foundation, but it promises in reward of this a crowning triumph.

There never was a time in the world's history when high success in any profession or calling demanded harder or more earnest labor than now. It is impossible to succeed in a hurry. Men can no longer go at a single leap into eminent positions. As those articles are most highly prized to attain which requires the greatest amount of labor, so the road that leads to success is long and rugged. What matter if a round does break or a foot slip; such things must be expected, and being expected, they must be overcome. Rome was not built in a day; but proofs of her magnificent temples are still to be seen. We each prepare a temple to last through all eternity. A structure to last so long, can it take but a day to build it? The days of a life-time are necessary to build the monument

mightier than Rome and more enduring than adamant. It is hard, earnest work, step by step, that secures success; and while energy and perseverance are securing the prize for steady workers, others, sitting down by the wayside, are wondering why they, too, can not be successful. They surely forget that the true key is labor, and that nothing but a strong, resolute will can turn it.

The secret of one's success or failure is usually contained in answer to the question, "How earnest is he?" Success is the child of confidence and perseverance. The talent of success is simply doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do, without a thought of fame. Success is the best test of capacity, and materially confirms us in a favorable opinion of ourselves. Success in life is the proper and harmonious development of those faculties which God has given us. Whatever you try to do in life, try with all your heart to do it well; whatever you devote yourself to, devote yourself to it completely. Never believe it possible that any natural ability can claim immunity from companionship of the steady, plain, hard-working qualities, and hope to gain its end. There can be no such fulfillment on this earth. Some happy talent and some fortunate opportunity may form the sides of the ladder on which some men mount; but the rounds of the ladder must be made of material to stand wear and tear, and there is no substitute for thorough-going, ardent, sincere earnestness. Never put your hand on any thing into which you can not throw your whole self;

never affect depreciation of your own work, whatever it is.

Although success is the guerdon for which all men toil, they have, nevertheless, often to labor on perseveringly without any glimmer of success in sight. They have to live, meanwhile, upon their courage. Sowing their seed, it may be in the dark, in the hope that it will yet take root and spring up in achieved result. The best of causes have had to fight their way to triumph through a long succession of failures, and many of the assailants have died in the breach before the fortune has been won. The heroism they have displayed is to be measured, not so much by their immediate successes, as by the opposition they have encountered and the courage with which they have maintained the struggle.

Among the habits required for the efficient prosecution of business of any kind, and consequent success, the most important are those of application, observation, method, accuracy, punctuality, and dispatch. Some persons sneer at these virtues as little things, trifles unworthy of their notice. It must be remembered that human life is made up of trifles. As the pence make the pound and the minutes the hour, so it is the repetition of little things, severally insignificant, that make up human character. In the majority of cases where men have failed of success, it has been owing to the neglect of little things deemed too microscopic to need attention. It is the result of practical, every-day experience, that steady attention to matter of detail is the mother of

good fortune. Accuracy is also of much importance, and an invariable mark of good training in a man—accuracy in observation, accuracy in speech, accuracy in the transaction of affairs. What is done in business must be done well if you would win the success desired.

Give a man power, and a field in which to use it, and he must accomplish something. He may not do and become all that he desires and dreams of, but his life can not well be a failure. God has given to all of us ability and opportunity enough to be moderately successful. If we utterly fail, in the majority of cases, it is our own fault. We have either neglected to improve the talents with which our Creator has endowed us, or we fail to enter the door that has opened for us. Such is the constitution of human society, that the wise person gradually learns not to expect too much from life; while he strives for success by worthy methods, he will be prepared for failure. He will keep his mind open to enjoyment, but submit patiently to suffering. Wailings and complainings in life are never of any use; only cheerful and continuous working in right paths are of real avail. In spite of our best efforts failures are in store for many of us. It remains, then, for you to do the best you can under all circumstances, remembering that the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong. It is by the right application of swiftness and strength that you are to make your way. It is not sufficient to do the right thing, it must be done in the right way, at the right time, if you would achieve success.

Young man, have you ever considered long and earnestly what you were best capable of doing in the world? If not put it off no longer. You expect to do something, you wish to achieve success. Have you ever thought of what success consisted? It does not consist in amassing a fortune; some of the most *unsuccessful* men have done that. Remember, too, that success and fame are not synonymous terms. You can not all be famous as lawyers, statesmen, or divines. You may or may not accumulate a fortune. But is it not true that wealth, position, and fame are but the accidents of success, that success may or may not be accompanied by them, that it is something above and beyond them? In this sense of the word you only are to blame if you fall. It is in your power to live a life of integrity and honor. You can so live that all will honor and respect you. You can speak words of cheer to the downhearted, a kindly word of caution to the erring one. You can help remove some obstacle from the paths of the weak. You can incite in the minds of those around you a desire to live a pure, straightforward life. You can bid those who are almost overwhelmed by the billows and waves of sorrow, to look up and see the sun shining through the rifts in the dark clouds passing o'er them. All this can you do, and a grand success will be your reward. Away, then, with your lethargy. You are a man; arise in your strength and your manhood. Resolve to be in this, its true sense, a successful man. And then if wealth or fame wait on you, and men delight to do you honor, these will be but added laurels to your brow, but the gilded frame

encasing success.

DIGNITY OF LABOR.

Labor, either of the head or the hand, is the lot of humanity. There are no exceptions to this general rule. The rich who have toiled early and late for a competence find their present ease more unendurable than their past exertions, and the round of pleasures to which, in other days, they looked for a reward of their toil in actual realization, resolve themselves into drudgeries, often worse than those from which they vainly fancied they had escaped. The king on his throne is beset with cares, and the labor he performs is ofttimes far heavier than any borne by the poorest peasant in his dominions. The high and low alike acknowledge the universal sway of labor. That which is thus the common lot of mankind and reigns with such universal sway can not be otherwise than

honorable in the highest degree.

Labor may be a burden and a chastisement, but it is also an honor and a glory. Without it nothing can be accomplished. All that to man is great and precious is acquired only through labor. Without it civilization would relapse into barbarism. It is the forerunner and indispensable requisite to all the sweet influence of refinement. It is the herald of happiness, and makes the desert to blossom as a garden of roses. It whitens the sea with sails, and stretches bands of iron across the continent. It is labor that drives the plow, scatters the seed, and causes the fields to wave in golden harvests for the good of man. It gathers the grain and sends it to different regions of the earth to feed other millions toiling in less favored channels there. Labor gathers the gossamer web of the caterpillar, the cotton from the field, and the fleece from the flock, and weaves them into raiment soft, warm, and beautiful. The purple robe of royalty, the plain man's sober suit, the fantastic dress of the painted savage, and the furry coverings of arctic lands are alike the results of its handiwork, and proofs of its universal sway and honor. Labor molds the brick, splits the slate, and quarries the stone. It shapes the column and rears not only the humble cottage but the gorgeous palace, the tapering spire and stately dome.

It is by labor that mankind have risen from a state of barbarism to the light of the present. It is only by labor that progression can continue. Labor, possessing such inherent dignity and being the grand measure of progress, it is most

fitting that man should not taste life's greatest happiness, or wield great influence for good, or reach the summit of his ambitious resolves, save only as the result of long and patient labor. Life is a short day; but it is a working day, and not a holiday. Man was made for action, and life is a mere scene for the exercise of the mind and engagement of the hand—a scene where the most important occupations are, in one sense, but species of amusement, and where so long as we take pleasure in the pursuit of an object it matters but little that we secure it not, or that it fades when acquired.

Life to some is drudgery; to some, pain; to some, art; to others, pleasure; but to *all*, work. Let none feel a sense of sore disappointment that life to them becomes routine. It is a necessary consequence of our natures that our work and our amusements, our business and our pleasures, should tend to become routine. The same wants, the same demands, and similar duties meet us on the threshold of every day. We look forward to some great occasion on which to display ourselves, some grand event in which to give proof of a heroic spirit, and complain of the petty routine of daily life. On the contrary, it is this succession of little duties —little works apparently of no account—which constitute the grand work of life; and we display true nobility when we cheerfully take these up and go forward, content to

"Labor and to wait."

Alas for the man or woman who has not learned to work! They are but poor creatures. They know not themselves. They depend on

others for support. Let them not fancy they have a monopoly of enjoyment. They have missed the sweetest pleasure of life, even the pleasure of self-reliant feeling, born of vanquished difficulties. They know not the thrill of pleasure experienced by him who carries difficult projects to a successful termination. Each rest owes its deliciousness to toil, and no toil is so burdensome as the rest of him who has nothing to task and quicken his powers. They do not realize, in their blind pride, what labor has done for them. It was labor that rocked them in their cradle and nourished their pampered life. Without it the very garments on their back would be unspun. He is indebted to toil for the meanest thing that ministers to his wants, save only the air of heaven, and even that, in God's wise providence, is breathed with labor.

Labor explores the rich veins of deeply buried rocks, extracting the gold and silver, the copper and tin. Labor smelts the iron, and molds it into a thousand shapes for use and ornaments, from the massive pillar to the tiniest needle, from the ponderous anchor to the wire gauze, from the mighty flywheel of the engine to the polished purse-ring or glittering bead. Labor hews down the gnarled oak, shapes the timbers, builds the ship, and guides it over the deep, bringing to our shores the produce of every clime.

But mere physical, manual labor is not the sole end of life. It must be joined with higher means of improvement, or it degrades instead of exalts. The poorest laborer has intellect, heart, imagination, tastes, as well as bones and

muscles, and he is grievously wronged when compelled to exclusive drudgery for bodily subsistence. It is the condition of all outward comforts and improvements, whilst, at the same time, it conspires with higher means and influences in ministering to the vigor and growth of the mind. Not only has labor inherent dignity, but it is almost a necessity for mind as well as body. Man is an intelligence, sustained and preserved by bodily organs, and their active exercise is necessary to the enjoyment of health. It is not work, but overwork, that is hurtful; it is not hard work that is injurious so much as monotonous, fagging, hopeless work. All hopeful work is healthful; and to be usefully and properly employed is one of the great secrets of happiness.

Most interesting is the contemplation of the victories achieved by the hand of labor—victories far grander than any achieved by physical force on the field of battle; for its conquests are wrested from nature. The very elements are brought under subjection, and made to contribute to the good of man. It displays its triumph in a thousand cities; it glories in shapes of beauty; it speaks in words of power; it makes the sinewy arm strong with liberty, the poor man's heart rich with content, crowns the swarthy and sweaty brow with honor, dignity, and peace. It is one of the best regulators of practical character. It evokes and disciplines obedience, self-control, attention, application, and perseverance, giving a man deftness and skill in his physical calling, and aptitude and dexterity in the affairs of ordinary

life. Work is the law of our being, the living principle that carries men and nations onward. Manual labor is a school in which men are placed to get energy of purpose and character—a vastly more important endowment than the learning of other schools.

The laborer is placed, indeed, under hard masters—the power of physical elements, physical sufferings, and want. But these stern teachers do a work which no compassionate, intelligent friend could do for us, and true wisdom will bless Providence for this sharp necessity. Labor is not merely the grand instrument by which the earth is overspread with fruitfulness and beauty, the ocean subdued, and matter wrought into innumerable forms for comfort and ornament; it has a far higher function, which is to give force to the will, efficiency, courage, the capacity of endurance and of devotion to far-reaching plans.

We must ever remember that it is the intention only that disgraces; that all honest work is honorable; and if your occupation be not so high-sounding as you would like, still it is better to work faithfully at this until opportunity opens the door to something higher. Because you do not find just what suits you, to refuse to labor at all, to play the drone, is to act unworthy of yourself and your destiny. Neither is it beneath you to make yourself useful, regardless of what your position and wealth may be. A gentleman by birth and education, however richly he may be endowed with worldly position, can not but feel that he

is in duty bound to contribute his quota of endeavor towards the general well-being in which he shares. He can not be satisfied with being fed, clad, and maintained by the labors of others, without making some suitable return to the society that upholds him. It matters not what a person's natural gifts may be, he can not expect to attain in any profession to a high degree of success without going through with a vast deal of work, which, taken by itself, would rightly be called drudgery. That quality in man which, for want of a better name, we call genius, does not consist in an ability to get along without work, but, on the contrary, is generally the faculty of doing an immense amount of work. Young men sometimes think that it is not respectable to be at work, and imagine that there is some character of disgrace or degradation belonging to toil. No greater mistake could be made. Instead of being disgraceful to engage in work, it is especially honorable. The most illustrious names in history were hard workers. No one whom posterity delights to honor ever dreamed or idled his way to fame. To be idle and useless is neither an honor nor a privilege. Though persons of small natures may be content merely to consume, men of average endowments, of manly expectations, and of honest purpose will feel such a condition to be incompatible with real honor and true dignity.

The noblest man on earth is he who puts his hands cheerfully and proudly to honest labor, and goes forth to conquer honor and worth. Labor is mighty and beautiful. The world has

long since learned that man can not be truly man without employment. Would that young men might judge of the dignity of labor by its usefulness rather than by the gloss it wears! We do not see a man's nobility in dress and toilet adornments, but in the sinewy arm, roughened, it may be, by hardy, honest toil under whose farmer's or mechanic's vest a kingly heart may beat. Exalt thine adopted calling or profession. Look on labor as honorable, and dignify the task before thee, whether it be in the study, office, counting-room, workshop, or furrowed field. There is equality in all, and the resolute will and pure heart may ennoble either.

PERSEVERANCE.



It is only by reflection that we derive a just appreciation of the value of perseverance. When we see how much can be accomplished in

any given direction by the man or woman of but average ability who resolutely perseveres in the course of action adopted as the ruling purpose of their lives, we then arrive at a just estimate of the value of perseverance as a factor in success. The old fable of the hare and the tortoise only exemplifies a truth which we are all ready to admit when we once stop to admire those stupendous works of nature and art, which proclaim in no uncertain tones the triumph of perseverance. All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance. It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid; it is by this the Coliseum of Rome was built; and this it was that inclosed in adamant the Chinese empire.

One man's individual exertion seems to go for nothing. If a person were to compare the result of one man's work with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion. Yet these petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties. Mountains are elevated and oceans bounded by the slender force of human beings. How many men, who have won well-nigh imperishable renown in the world of literature, science, or art, owe all their greatness to persevering efforts? How many of those whom the world calls geniuses can exclaim with Newton that they owe all their greatness to persevering efforts, and whatever they may have been able to accomplish more than ordinary has been solely by virtue of perseverance? They were the sons of

unremitting industry and toil. They were once as weak and helpless as any of us, once as destitute of wisdom and power as an infant. Once the very alphabet of that language which they have wielded with such magic effect was unknown to them. They toiled long to learn it, to get its sounds, understand its deeper fancies, and longer still to obtain the secret of its highest charm and mightiest power, and yet even longer for those living, glorious thoughts which they bade it bear to an astonished and admiring world.

Their characters, which are now given to the world and will be to millions yet unborn as patterns of greatness and goodness, were made by that untiring perseverance which marked their whole lives. From childhood to age they knew no such word as fail. Defeat only gave them power; difficulty only taught them the necessity of redoubled exertions; dangers gave them courage, and the sight of great labors inspired in them corresponding exertions. Their success has been wrought out by persevering industry. It has been said by shrewd observers that successful men owe more to their perseverance than to their natural powers, their friends, or the favorable circumstances around them. Genius will falter by the side of labor, great powers will give place to great industry. Talents are desirable, but perseverance is more so. It will make mental powers, or at least strengthen those already made. This should teach a great lesson of patience to those who are so nearly ready to sink in despair, and have grown weary in their strivings for better things.

For one who faints not, but resolutely takes up the work of life and perseveringly continues his exertion, it is possible for him to reach almost any height to which his ambition may point. Some of the great works of literature, in which are stored away great masses of information, are the results of persevering efforts, before which many minds would have quailed.

Gibbon consumed nineteen years in writing his masterpiece. How many would have had the courage to persevere that length of time, though certain of success at last? Courage, when combined with energy and perseverance, will overcome difficulties apparently insurmountable. Perseverance, working in the right direction and when steadily practiced, even by the most humble, will rarely fail of its reward. It inspires in the minds of all fair-minded people a friendly feeling. Who will not befriend the persevering, energetic youth, the fearless man of industry? Who is not a friend to him who is a friend to himself? He who perseveres in business, amidst hardships and discouragements, will always find ready and generous friends in time of need. He who will persevere in a course of wisdom, rectitude, and benevolence, is sure to gather round him friends who will be true and faithful.

Go to the men of business, of worth, of influence, and ask them who shall have their confidence and support. They will tell you "the men who falter not by the wayside, who toil on in their calling against every barrier, whose eyes are 'upward,' and whose motto is 'excelsior.'" These are the men to whom they

give their confidence. But they shun the lazy, the indolent, the fearful and faltering. They would as soon trust the wind as such men. If you would win friends, be steady and true to yourself. Be the unfailing friend of your own purposes, stand by your own character, and others will come to your aid.

Almost every portion of the earth teems with works which show what man has been able to effect in the physical world by means of perseverance. Calculate, if you can, the efforts required to build the pyramids of Egypt. Can you conceive of a more enduring monument to the triumph of perseverance than that? Look at nature. She has a thousand voices teaching lessons of perseverance. The lofty mountains are wearing down by slow degrees. The ocean is gradually, but surely, filling up, by deposits from its thousand rivers, and by the labors of a little insect so small as to be almost invisible to the naked eye. Every shower that sweeps over the surface of the country tends to bring the hills and the mountains to the level of the plains. Nature has but one lesson on this subject, and that is, "Persevere."

More depends upon active perseverance than upon genius. Says a common-sense author upon this subject: "Genius unexerted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns is a forest of oaks." There may be epics in men's brains, just as there are oaks in acorns, but the tree and the book must come out before we can measure them. Firmness of purpose is one of the most necessary sinews of character, and one of the best instruments of success. Without it, genius

wastes its efforts in a maze of inconsistencies. It gives power to weakness, and opens to poverty the world's mark. It spreads fertility over the barren landscape, and bids the choicest fruits and flowers spring up and flourish in the desert abode. There is, perhaps, nothing more conducive to success in any important and difficult undertaking than a firm, steady, unremitting spirit. In seasons of distress and difficulty, to abandon ourselves to dejection is evidence of a weak mind. Opposing circumstances often create strength, both mental and physical. Opposition gives us greater power of resistance. To overcome one barrier gives us greater ability to overcome the next. It is cowardice to grumble about circumstances. Instead of sinking under trouble, it becomes us, in the evil day, with perseverance to maintain our part, to bear up against the storm, to have recourse to those advantages, which, in the worst of times, are always left to integrity and virtue, and never to give up the hope that better days may come.

It is wonderful to see what miracles a resolute and unyielding will can achieve. Before its irresistible energy the most formidable obstacles become as cobweb barriers in the path. Difficulties, the terrors of which cause the irresolute to sink back with dismay, provoke from the man of lofty determination only a smile. The whole history of our race, all nature, indeed, teems with examples to show what wonders may be accomplished by resolute perseverance and patient toil. How many there are who, thinking of the immense amount of

work lying between them and the object of their desires, are almost ready to give up in despair! But do they not, when they view the work thus in mass, forget that there is time enough, if only rightly improved, to suffice for each effort?

One step after another, perseveringly continued, will enable you to arrive at your journey's end, however long it may be. It is only when you come to reckon up the aggregate number of steps that you are ready to sink under a feeling of despair. But you are not required to take them all at once; there is an allotted time for each individual step. Thus, in viewing any work that you may have marked out in life, only remember that you are not obliged to do the work all at once; that the regular daily portions performed quietly and systematically, day after day, will enable you to achieve almost any desired result. When we reflect on the wonderful results that perseverance has accomplished, we are led to believe that the man who wills, resolves, and perseveres can do almost any thing.

Every one, then, regardless of his condition in life, should set his aim high, and resolve to remit no labor necessary for its realization, but cheerfully take up the trials and burdens that life has in store for him, and carry them forward, be the discouragements what they may, to a glorious consummation. Only learn to carry a thing through in all of its details, and you have measured the secret of success. Only learn to persevere in carrying out any plan of work which an enlightened judgment decides is

the best, and you will force life to yield you its grandest triumphs. There is almost no limit to what you can achieve if you thus govern your actions, and make all your exertions contribute to the fulfilling of some great purpose of life, which you took up with a brave heart, and with a determination to persevere therein until success crowns your efforts.

ENTERPRISE.



Closely allied with the qualities of self-reliance and energy is that characteristic quality which so much conduces to success in life, and is generally expressed by the word "enterprise." It is distinct from energy, inasmuch as it is constantly active in discovering new fields for energy to exert itself in. We are familiar with examples of men who have won fortunes or gained renown, not because they pursued better or wiser courses, but because of some originality in their aims and methods, by which

they were enabled to command the attention of the busy world long enough to wrest from it the special object of their choice.

True enterprise is constantly on the alert to discover some new want of society, some fertile source of profit or honor, some unexplored field of business, and is ready to supply the one or to take advantage of the other. It is nearly an indispensable element in these days of fierce competition. Every avenue of business is crowded, and as soon as it is known that one party has made a success by one method there are scores of eager aspirants ready to try the successful plan, so that straightway it, too, ceases to be unique, and, in becoming common, loses the power it formerly possessed of compelling success. Hence the late-comers in the field are doomed to failure, while they may at the same time be the better fitted for the peculiar work in hand. What they should do is to aim at success by new plans and methods. Every one knows the enthusiastic glow that animates the whole being of him who feels the ardor of an explorer, who surmounts difficulties by new and, before, unthought-of expedients, who plans and projects enterprises that had previously escaped the active minds of his fellow men.

It is by virtue of this very enthusiasm that the man of enterprise, who is so ready to adopt new measures, plans, and projects, is enabled to carry into his business or profession an energy and inspiration which is totally lacking on the part of those who are followers. Hence the latter ofttimes fail of success which their talents

might almost be said to have promised them. Therefore, those who enter the lists to win life's battles must expect, if they would reach their goal, to wage the fight not only by the old methods but by the new. To use only those tactics which are sanctioned by usage is to invite defeat. Throw open the windows of your mind to new ideas, and keep at least abreast of the times, and, if possible, ahead of them. Nothing is more fatal to self-advancement than a stupid conservatism or a servile imitation. The days when a man could get rich by plodding on without enterprise and without taxing his brains have gone by. Mere industry and economy are not enough; there must be intelligence and original thought.

Whatever your calling, inventiveness, adaptability, promptness of decision, must direct and utilize your force, and if you do not find markets you must make them. In business you need not know many books, but you must know your trade and men. You may be slow at logic, but you must dart at chances. You may stick to your groove in politics, but in your business you must switch into new tracks, and shape yourself to every exigency. We emphasize this matter because in no country is the red-tapist so out of place as here. Every calling is filled with bold, keen, subtle-witted men, fertile in expedients and devices, who are perpetually inventing new ways of buying cheaply, underselling, or attracting custom; and the man who sticks doggedly to the old-fashioned methods—who runs in a perpetual rut—will find himself outstripped in the race of life, if he

is not stranded on the sands of popular indifference. Keep, then, your eyes open and your wits about you, and you may distance all competitors; but, if you ignore all new methods, you will find yourself like a lugger contending with an ocean steamer.

It is enterprise that oils the wheels of energy and industry. Industry gathers together, with a frugal hand, the means whereby we are enabled to develop our plans and purposes. Energy gives us force whereby we gather the courage to persevere in the lines decided on, bids us put on a bold mien and go forth to do valiant battle against opposing circumstances. But it is enterprise that suggests ways and means to overcome difficulties that threaten to overwhelm us. It is enterprise that bids us explore entirely new fields, discovering expedients that enable us to change what, by the force of circumstances, was fast becoming a failure into a glorious victory, bringing to us wealth, position, and fame. It is to enterprise that we are indebted for those rich discoveries in scientific fields by which we decipher the records of past ages, and unravel the secrets which nature surrounded with mystery, compelling them to serve us.

It was enterprise that harnessed steam, teaching it to do our bidding, and brought the lightning down from the heavens to carry our thoughts to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is the spirit of enterprise driving curious minds to work in new directions that has given us all those useful and curious inventions, which have done so much to make this nineteenth-century

civilization to shine with so lustrous a light. In short, it is enterprise that lifts the man of but mediocre abilities and attainments into the foremost ranks of the successful ones.

Enterprise is an inheritance and not an acquisition. But it can at the same time be improved by cultivation, the same as bodily strength or any mental faculty. He who would excel as a swimmer must be often in the water, and the gymnast does not spare himself long and fatiguing exertions. So of an enterprising spirit. Some men seem born with an overflow of this, while others possess it in a slight degree only. But if any would be known as enterprising men, they must not hesitate to show by their every-day actions that they rely upon themselves in cases of emergency, and the greater the necessity the better means of surmounting it are constantly discovered. They must not hesitate to try plans because they are new; but if sober judgment can discover no objection to it, they must seize upon the very novelty of the plan as an inducement, and be only the more eager to put it to the test. There is no life so routine but that it constantly affords scope for the exercise of enterprising energy. The very fact that you are finding it routine and commonplace should at once set you to work to devise some new way to change this.

Do not stand sighing, wishing, and waiting, but go to work with an energy and perseverance that will set every obstacle in the way of your success flying like leaves before a whirlwind. A weak and irresolute way of doing

business will shipwreck your plans as readily as effects follow causes. You may have ambition enough to wish yourself on the topmost round of the ladder of success; but if you have not the requisite energy to commence and enterprise enough to push ahead even when you know you are off the beaten track, you will always remain at the bottom, or at least on the lower rounds. Providence has hidden a charm in difficult undertakings which is appreciated only by those who dare to grapple with them. But this can only be true when you, by your own exertions and the strength of your own self-reliance and enterprise, have achieved the results. Nothing can be more distasteful than to see men of apparently good abilities waiting for some one to come and help them over difficulties.

Be your own helper. If a rock rises up before you, roll it along or climb over it. If you want money, earn it. If you want confidence, prove yourself worthy of it. Do not be content with doing what has been done; surpass it. Deserve success and it will come. The sun does not rise like a rocket or go down like a bullet fired from a gun; slowly and surely it makes its rounds, and never tires. It is as easy to be a lead horse as a wheel horse. If the job be long, the pay will be greater; if the task be hard, the more competent you must be to do it. We must apportion our strength and exertions to the requisite tasks and duties. He who weakly shrinks from the struggle, who will offer no resistance, who will endure no labor nor fatigue, can neither fulfill his own vocation, nor

contribute aught to the general welfare of mankind.

The spirit of the times demands that all who would rise in life shrink not back from labor, but it also demands that they exert themselves understandingly; that they spare no effort to master all the intricacies of the business or vocation in which they are engaged; that they be alert to discover new ways by which they may reach the desired goal easier than the old; that they bear in mind that sticking to the old ruts is only the right policy so long as no better way presents itself, and when that way is discovered, be not at all slow to improve it. If you do not, others more enterprising will rush forward to reap the profits it promises, and you will be left behind in the race. No matter what your position in life may be or the conditions which hem you in, there will be a "tide" in your affairs, "which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune." But you must be ready to accept the chance. While you are hesitating and deliberating the occasion goes by, in most cases never to return again. Therefore, be prompt to seize it as it flies. Cultivate as far as possible the spirit of enterprise, for on that in a great degree depends your success or failure.

ENERGY.



Energy is force of character, inward power. It imports such a concentration of the will upon the realization of an idea as to impel it onward over the next gigantic barrier, or to crush every opposing force that stands in the way of its triumph. Energy knows of nothing but success. It will not hearken to the voice of discouragement; it never yields its purpose. Though it may perish beneath an avalanche of difficulties, yet it dies contending for its ideal.

There is, perhaps, no mistake of a young man more common than that of supposing that, in the pursuits of life, extraordinary talents are necessary to one who would achieve more than ordinary success. There is no greater genius than the genius of energy and industry, It wins the prizes of life, which appeared destined to fall to those brilliantly constituted minds, who, to an artificial observer, seemed to be the favored sons of fortune. But they lacked energy, and in that want lacked all. Energy of temperament, with a moderate degree of wisdom, will carry a man farther than any amount of intellect without it. It gives him force, momentum. It is the active power of character, and, if combined with sagacity and self-possession, will enable a man to employ his power to the best advantage in all the affairs of

life. Hence it is that men of mediocre power, but impelled by energy of purpose, have often been able to accomplish such extraordinary results.

The men who have most powerfully influenced the world have not been so much men of genius as men of strong convictions and enduring capacity for work, impelled by irresistible energy and invincible determination. Energy of will, self-originating force, is the soul of every great character. Where it is, there is life; where it is not, there is faintness, helplessness, and despondency. There is a proverb which says that "the strong man and the waterfall channel their own path." The energetic leader of noble spirit not only wins a way for himself, but carries others with him. His very act has a personal signification, indicating vigor, independence, and self-reliance, and unconsciously commands respect, admiration, and homage. Such intrepidity is the attribute of all great leaders of men.

There is a difference between resolution and energy. Resolution is the purpose, energy is the quality, and it is possible to possess much resolution with comparatively very little energy. Energy implies a fixed, settled, and unswerving purpose; but resolution may vary its inclination a thousand ways and embrace a thousand objects, keeping up, perhaps, an air of steadiness and determination, while, in reality, nothing may be accomplished. There is observable the same difference between resolution and energy as there is between kindness and goodness—kindness being

displayed by occasional acts of good-will, whilst goodness exists always, by a principle of love. Do not make the mistake of confounding energy with rashness. Energy is a Bucephalus, guided by the hand of an Alexander. Rashness is a Mazeppa's fiery steed, unbridled and unrestrained, bearing its rider over hill and dale to probable destruction. The former is power guided by wisdom; the latter is power goaded to action by blind impulse.

Energy, to reach its highest development, must be controlled by wisdom. Many men now pining under discouragement have expended energy sufficient for the highest success. But they have failed of their reward because they have not sought counsel at the lips of wisdom. Rash enterprises impetuously begun hurry them on to ruin. True energy is ever the same; but the energy of many men is impulsive. It is to-day a destroying, roaring torrent; yesterday it was a stagnant pool. An accidental circumstance will call out every power of their soul, and for a season they will excel themselves and startle their friends. But they speedily expend their force, and lapse into stupid somnolency, till aroused by some bugle-blast of excitement. Such minds accomplish but little. They lose more in their slumbers than they gain in their fitful hours of action. The calm, steady energy of the snail, slow as are its movements, is better calculated to produce results than the spasmodic leaps of the hare. Hence, in the formation of character, it is of the utmost importance to cultivate a steady, uniform, unyielding energy. The quiet energy

that works to accomplishment is what rules the world. There is more energy shown in quietly doing your duty through years of patient toil than to rush with great clamor at the obstacles of life, only to relinquish the attempt if success does not immediately crown the effort. The game of life is won less by brilliant strokes than by energetic yet cautious play.

Energy of character has always a power to make energy in others. The zealous, energetic man unconsciously carries others along with him. His example is contagious, and compels imitation. He exercises a sort of electric power, which sends a thrill through every fiber, flows into the nature of those about him, and makes them throw out sparks of power. But such men are but few; and for one man that appears on the stage of human affairs that can rule events there are thousands who follow. The earnest men are so few in the world that their very earnestness becomes at once the badge of their nobility; and as the men in a crowd instinctively make room for one who seems to force his way through it, so mankind everywhere open their ranks to one who rushes valiantly toward some object lying beyond them.

Man is but a feeble being, but he belittles his high estate unless he puts forth his exertion, and forms a commendable and heroic resolution not to permit life to pass away in trifles, but to accomplish something in spite of obstacles. At difficulties be not dismayed. We may magnify them by weakness and despondency, when an heroic spirit would have

put them to flight. There are cobble-stones in every road and pebbles in every path. All have cares, disappointments, and stumbling-blocks. It were well to remember, though, that sobs and cries, groans and regrets are of no avail, but that high resolves and courageous actions may with safety be relied on to do much to lighten life's load. He who never grappled with the emergencies of life knows not what power lives in the soul to repel the rude shocks of time and destiny, nor is he conscious how much he is

"Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt
The edge of adverse circumstances."

All traditions current among young men that certain great characters have wrought their greatness by an inspiration, as it were, grows out of a sad mistake. There is no inspiration so potent for good as the inspiration of energy. There are none who wrest such conquests from fame as those earnest, determined minds, who reckon the value of every hour, and rely on their own strong arm to achieve their ambitious resolves. You can not dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and forge yourself one. But remember, there is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many. It is a Spanish proverb that "he who loseth wealth loseth much; he who loseth a friend loseth more; but he who loseth energy loseth all." It is folly for a man or woman to sit down in mid-life discouraged. True, it is a severe test of character calmly to reflect that life has thus far proved a failure, but it does no good to abandon one's self to despair. With energy and God's blessing it is possible they may yet win a

glorious victory. God in his wisdom has seen fit to so ordain that life with all shall be a scene of labor. To make the most of it, it is necessary to make the aim high and noble, the energy unflagging. No matter how apparently solid the foundations on which we stand, it often happens that by the remission of labor and energy, poverty and contempt, disaster and defeat steal a march upon prosperity and honor, and overwhelm us with remorse and shame.

It is energy that makes the difference in men. It is the genius of persevering energy that carries so many men straight to the goal of success. It is energy that sheds the light of hope on pathways that had been lost save for that, and thus enables so many men and women to persevere therein. It is energy that calls upon all—and calls upon you—to rouse yourself. Would you make a success of life? Would you acquire fortune or renown? It bids you take heart and hope for the best. It bids you walk in the paths of patience, to do with all your might what you have marked out as necessary to do. It bids you pursue it with resolution and vigor.

A young man is, in the true sense of the word, the architect of his own fortune. Rely upon your own strength of body and soul. Remember that the man who wills it can go almost anywhere or do almost any thing he determines to do. You must make yourself, or come to nothing. You must win by your own exertions, and not wait for some one to come to your assistance. Take for your star self-reliance, faith, honesty, and industry. Keep at the helm, and, above all, remember that the great art of

commanding is to do a fair share of the work yourself. The greater the difficulty the more the glory in surmounting it. Skillful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests. The soul of every great achievement is energy; but enervation and indolence sap its life, and doom the man to obscurity and ill-success. Men of feeble action are accustomed to attribute their misfortune to what is termed *ill luck*. They envy the men who climb the ladder of eminence, and call them lucky men and men of peculiar opportunity. This is a vain and foolish imagination. Energy produces good fortune and success, while enervation breeds misfortune and ill luck.

Fortune, success, fame, position are never gained but by determinedly and bravely persevering in any course until the plans are finally accomplished. In short, you must carry a thing through if you want to be any body or any thing, no matter if it does cost you the pleasure of society, the thousand pearly gratifications of life. Stick to the thing and carry it through. Believe you were made for the matter, and that no one else could do it. Put forth your whole energies. Be awake; electrify yourself; go forth to the task. Learn to carry it through, and you will be a hero. You will think better of yourself. Others will think better of you. The world in its very heart admires the stern, determined doer. It sees in him its best sights, its brightest objects, its richest treasures. Proceed with energy, then, in whatever you undertake. Consider yourself amply sufficient for the deed, and you will succeed.

PUNCTUALITY.



Amongst the elements which conduce to success in life there is one of rare value, which, by some strange oversight, is classed as of little account. We refer to punctuality. We regard it as a virtue. To be punctual in all of your appointments is a duty resting upon you no less obligatory than the duty of common honesty. An appointment is a contract, and if you do not keep it you are dishonestly using other people's time, and, consequently, their money. "Punctuality," says Louis XIV, "is the politeness of kings." He need not have confined his remarks to blood royal; it is politeness in every body; and know that whenever you fail to meet an engagement promptly, which by exertion you might have done, you are guilty of a gross breach of etiquette.

It is certainly impolite to do a wrong to others and when you have made an appointment with another person you owe him punctuality, and you have no right to waste his

time if you have your own. Success and happiness depend in a far higher degree on punctuality than many suppose. It is not sufficient to do the right thing, nor in the right way, but it must be done at the right time as well, if we would reap the rewards of our labor. But when so done its effect in the problem of success is great and efficacious. Lord Nelson attributed all his success in life to his habit of strict punctuality. Many of our most successful business men date their success from the time they commenced to practice this virtue. Thousands have failed in life from carelessness in this respect alone. Nothing inspires confidence in a business man sooner than this quality; nor is there any habit which sooner saps his reputation as a good business man than that of being always behind time.

Lack of punctuality is not only a serious vice in itself, but it is also the parent of a large progeny of other vices. Hence he who becomes its victim is the more and more involved in toils from which it is almost impossible to escape. He who needlessly breaks his appointments shows that he is as reckless of the waste of other people's time as of his own. His acquaintances readily conclude that the man who is not conscientious about his appointments will be equally careless about his other engagements, and they will refuse to trust him with matters of importance. To the busy man time is money, and he who robs him of it does him as great an injury, as far as loss of property is concerned, as if he had picked his pockets or paid him with a forged or counterfeit

bill.

It is a familiar truth that punctuality is the life of the universe. The planets keep exact time in their revolutions, each as it circles around the sun coming to its place yearly at the very moment it is due. So, in business, punctuality is the soul of industry, without which all its wheels come to a dead stand. If the time of a business man be properly occupied every hour will have its appropriate work. If the work of one hour be postponed to another it must encroach upon the time of some other duty, or remain undone, and thus the whole business of the day is thrown into disorder. If that which is first at hand be not instantly, steadily, and regularly dispatched other things accumulate behind, till affairs begin to accumulate all at once, and no human brain can stand the pressure.

Punctuality should be made not only a point of courtesy but a point of conscience. The beginner in business should make this virtue one of the first objects of professional acquisition. Let him not deceive himself with the idea that it is easy of attainment, or that he can practice it by and by, when the necessity of it shall be more cogent. If in youth it is not easy to be punctual, then in after life, when the character is fixed, when the mental and moral faculties have acquired a rigidity, to unlearn the habit of tardiness is almost an impossibility. It still holds a man enthralled, though the reason be fully convinced of its criminality and inconvenience.

A right estimate of the value of time is the

best and surest foundation for habits of punctuality, for you are not likely to economize time, either for yourself or others, unless you fully realize how valuable it is, and when lost how utterly irreclaimable. The successful men in every calling have had a keen sense of the value of time—they have been misers of minutes. Hence you must try and realize the value of time. Each hour, as it passes swiftly away, is gone *forever*. Lost wealth may be replaced by toil and industry; lost friends may be regained by consideration and patience; lost health may be recovered by medical skill and care; even lost happiness and peace of mind may be restored; but lost time, never. Whilst you read these lines it is being numbered with the dead past and dying present. There is no recalling it; there is no regaining it; there is no restoring it. You must make the most of time as it flies. You have no right to waste your own, still less, then, that of others, by your lack of punctuality.

Not only should a person be thus punctual in all his express engagements and appointments, but in all his implied ones as well. If he has a regular hour for his shop or office, let it find him there, at his desk and at work. Punctuality in the performance of known duties other than the keeping of appointments is also one of the chief promoters of success in life. If a certain work or other duty is to be performed, we are too prone to put it off for a more convenient season. Such delays are often a fruitful source of after troubles. How many business men have been brought to bankruptcy and ruin by the

failure of one man to meet his obligations promptly! How many times are we put to great work and expense because we neglected, or put off, the performance of admitted duties! It is easy to say, "Wait awhile;" so easy to let the burden of to-day's work and duties fall on to-morrow. But when to-morrow comes it has its own peculiar duties, and the result is, we simply have extra burdens to meet when the time finally comes that our work can no longer be delayed.

Punctuality is a virtue that can give force and power to an otherwise utterly insignificant character. Like charity, it covers a multitude of sins. It were easy to show by examples from the lives of great men that their success in life was owing in a large measure to their habits of punctuality. All great commanders have possessed this faculty in an eminent degree. The reason punctuality is such an invariable element of success is not hard to determine. The punctual person, one who always lives up to his engagements, and is prompt in fulfilling his implied duties as well, is just the person whose business is conducted after the most approved forms and methods. They are the ones who have time at their disposal to cast their eyes over the field of legitimate enterprise, and at once adopt whatever may seem to them to possess real excellence. Having met all their engagements promptly, their word is as good as their bond, their credit unshaken; in short, every avenue of success is open to them.

But with those persons who are habitually behind in the fulfillment of their duties, their

business is generally in a very unsettled state. They have not that freshness and business vivacity and life which is always observable in the man who drives his business instead of allowing it to drive him. What wonder, then, that they sink beneath the load of accumulated cares, give up the great battle of life in despair, and are content to fill a subordinate place in the economy of the world? Would that young men thought more of what is involved in punctuality! It is not merely the "being on time," but it imports such a habit that, carried into life, it is one of the main instruments in making real youthful dreams of success. It is that which makes business a pleasure instead of a drudgery. It is that which goes so far in building up a reputation of sagacity, skill, and integrity.

No one can have a high opinion of a person who is so regardless of punctuality, even in small matters, as to be continually breaking his word, under the impression that "it is of no consequence," as so many often say, to excuse their habit of being false to their word. There are some persons who seldom, or never, do as they promised. We know persons, who in other respects are worthy people, who can scarcely command confidence, because they are so slack in fulfilling their engagements and meeting their obligations in small matters. We know young men of promise who are daily losing ground among their acquaintances for a similar reason. A man will soon ruin himself this way. In all business transactions, in all engagements, let all do exactly as they say,—be punctual to

the minute; even a little beforehand is far preferable to being a little behind time. Such a habit secures a composure which is essential to happiness.

CONCENTRATION.



In this day, when so many things are clamoring for attention, the first law of success may be said to be concentration. It is impossible to be successful in every branch of business, or renowned in every department of a professional life. We must learn to bend our energies to one point, and to go directly to that point, looking neither to the right nor to the left. It has been said that a great deal of the wisdom of a man in this century is shown in leaving things unknown, and a great deal of his practical ability in leaving things undone. The day of universal scholarships is past. Life is short, and

art is long. The range of human wisdom has increased so enormously that no human brain can grapple with it, and the man who would know one thing well must have the courage to be ignorant of a thousand other things, however attractive or interesting. As with knowledge, so with work. The man who would get along must single out his specialty, and into that must pour the whole stream of his activity—all the energies of his hand, eye, tongue, heart, and brain. Broad culture, many-sidedness, are beautiful things to contemplate; but it is the narrow-edged men—the men of one single and intense purpose—who steel the soul against all things else, that accomplish the hard work of the world.

The great men of every age who have had the arduous task to shape human destiny have been men of one idea impelled by resolute energy. Take those names that are historic, and, with the exception of a few great creative minds, you find them to be men who are identified with some one achievement upon which their life force was spent. The great majority of men must concentrate their energies upon the complete mastery of some one profession, trade, or calling, or they will experience the disappointment of those whose empire has been lost in the ambition of universal conquest. A man may have the most dazzling talents, but if they are scattered upon many objects he will accomplish nothing. Strength is like gunpowder: to be effective it needs concentration and aim. The marksman who aims at the whole target will seldom hit the

center. The literary man or philosopher may revel among the sweetest and most beautiful flowers of thought, but unless he gathers or condenses these in the honeycomb of some great thought or work, his finest conceptions will be lost or useless.

The world has few universal geniuses who are capable of mastering a dozen languages, arts, or sciences, or driving a dozen callings abreast. Beginners in life are perpetually complaining of the disadvantages under which they labor; but it is an indisputable fact that more persons fail from a multiplicity of pursuits and pretensions than from a poverty of resources. "The one prudence in life," says a shrewd American essayist, "is concentration, the one evil is dissipation; and it makes no difference whether our dissipations are coarse or fine, property and its cares, friends and a social habit, politics, music, or feasting. Every thing is good which takes away one plaything and delusion more, and drives us home to add one stroke of faithful work." The gardener does not suffer the sap to be driven into a thousand channels merely to develop a myriad of profitless twigs. He prunes the branches, and leaves the vital juices to be absorbed by a few vigorous, fruit-bearing branches.

While the highest ability accomplishes but little if scattered on a multiplicity of objects, on the other hand, if one has but a thimbleful of brains, and concentrates them upon the thing he has in hand, he may achieve miracles. Momentum in physics, if properly directed, will drive a tallow candle through an inch board.

Just so will oneness of aim and the direction of the energies to a single pursuit, while all others are waived, enable the veriest weakling to make his mark where he strikes. The general who scatters his soldiers all about the country insures defeat; so does he whose attention is diffused through innumerable channels, so that it can not gather in force on any one point. The human mind, in short, resembles a burning-glass, whose rays are intense only as they are concentrated. As the glass burns only when its rays are converged to a focal point, so the former illumes the world of science, literature, or business only when it is directed to a solitary object. What is more powerless than the scattered clouds of steam as they rise to the sky? They are as impotent as the dew-drop that falls nightly upon the earth; but concentrated and condensed in a steam boiler they are able to cut through solid rock, to hurl mountains into the sea, and to bring the antipodes to our doors.

It is the lack of concentration and wholeness which distinguishes the shabby, half-hearted, and blundering—the men who make the mob of life—from those who win victories. In slower times success might have been won by the man who gave but a corner of his brain to the work in hand, but in these days of keen competition it demands the intensest application of the thinking faculty. Exclusive dealings in worldly pursuits is a principle of hundred-headed power. By dividing his time among too many objects, a man of genius often becomes diamond dust instead of diamond. The time

spent by many persons in profitless, desultory reading would, if concentrated upon a single line of study, have made them masters of an entire branch of literature or science. Distraction of pursuits is the rock upon which most unsuccessful persons split in early life. In law, in medicine, in trade, in the mechanical professions the most successful persons have been those who have stuck to one thing. Nine out of ten men lay out their plans on too vast a scale, and they who are competent to do almost any thing do nothing, because they never make up their minds distinctly as to what they want or what they intend to be.

We are often compelled to a choice of acquisitions, for there are some things the possession of which is incompatible with the possession of others, and the sooner this truth is known and recognized the better the chances of success and happiness. Much material good must be resigned if we would attain the highest degree of moral excellence, and many spiritual joys must be foregone if we resolve at all risks to win great material advantages. To strive for a high personal position, and yet expect to have all the delights of leisure; to labor for vast riches, and yet to ask for freedom from anxiety and care, and all the happiness which flows from a contented mind; to indulge in sensual gratifications, and yet demand health, strength, and vigor; to live for self, and yet to look for the joys that spring from a virtuous and self-denying life—is to ask for impossibilities.

If you start for success you must expect to pay its price. It can not be won by feeble, half-

way efforts, neither is it to be acquired because sought for in a dozen different directions. It demands that you bring to your chosen profession or calling energy, industry, and, above all, that singleness of purpose which is willing to devote the energies of a life-time to its accomplishment. Mere wishing and sighing brings it not. Many little calls of society on your time must pass unheeded. You can not expect to live tranquilly and at your ease, but to be up and doing, with all your energies devoted to the one point kept constantly in view. Cultivate this habit of concentration if you would succeed in business; make it a second nature. Have a work for every moment, and mind the moment's work. Whatever your calling, master all its bearings and details, all its principles, instruments, and applications. We have so much work ahead of us that must be done if we would reach the point desired that we must save our strength as much as possible. Concentration affords a great safe-guard against exhaustion. He who scatters himself on many objects soon loses his energy, and with his energy his enthusiasm—and how is success possible without enthusiasm?

It becomes, then, of importance to be sure we have started right in the race for distinction. Every beginner in life should strive early to ascertain the strong faculty of his mind or body fitting him for some special pursuit, and direct his utmost energies to bring it to perfection. There is no adaptation or universal applicability in man; but each has his special talent, and the mastery of successful men is in adroitly keeping

themselves where and when that turn shall need oftenest to be practiced.

Though one must be wholly absorbed to win success, still singleness of aim by no means implies monotony of action; but if we would be felt on this stirring planet, if we would strike the world with lasting force, we must be men of one thing. Having found the thing we have to do we must throw into it all the energies of our being, seeking its accomplishment at whatever hazard or sacrifice. But that does not prevent us from participating in the enjoyments of life. If you are sent on business to some foreign land, though bent on business, still you can admire, as you hurry along, the beautiful scenery from the car windows; you can note the strange places through which you pass; you can observe the wondrous sublimity of the ocean without being distracted from the main objects of your travels. So it is not to be inferred from what has been said that concentration means isolation or self-absorption. There may be a hundred accessories in life, provided they contribute to one result.

In urging the importance of concentration, and of sticking to one thing, we do not mean that any man should be a mere lawyer, a mere doctor, or a mere merchant or mechanic, and nothing more. These are cases of one-sidedness pushed too far. There is no more pitiable wreck than the man whose one giant faculty has drowned the rest. Man dwarfs himself if he pushes too far the doctrine of the subdivision of labor. Success is purchased too dear if to attain it one has subordinated all his faculties and

tastes to one master passion, and become transformed into a head, a hand, or an arm, instead of a man. Every man ought to be something more than a factor in some grand formula of social or economical science, a cog or pulley in some grand machine.

Let every one take care, first of all, to be a man, cultivating and developing, as far as possible, all of his powers on a symmetrical plan; and then let him expend his chief labors on the one faculty, which nature, by making it prominent, has given a hint should be especially cultivated. There is, indeed, no profession upon which a high degree of knowledge will not continually bear. Things which, at first glance, seem most remote from it will often be brought into close approximation to it, and acquisitions which the narrow-minded might deem a hindrance will sooner or later yield something serviceable. Nothing is more beautiful than to see a man hold his art, trade, or calling in an easy, disengaged way, wearing it as the soldier does his sword, which, once laid aside, the accomplished soldier gives you no hint that he has ever worn. Too often this is not the case, and the shop-keeper irresistibly reminds you of the shop, and the scholar, who should remind you that he has been on Parnassus only by the odors of the flowers he has crushed, which cling to his feet, affronts you with a huge nosegay stuck in his bosom.

One can make all his energies bear on one important point and yet show himself a man among men by his interest in matters of public concern. He can endear himself to the

community by kindly acts to the distressed, as well as completely mastering, in all its bearings, the one great work which he has taken upon himself as his life's work. Then take up your task. Remember that you must marshall all your forces at one point, and move in one direction, if you would accomplish what your desires have painted; but also remember that you are a human being, and not a machine, and that as you pass on the journey of life you should, as far as possible, without insuring defeat, take note of the wonders which nature has spread before you, should ponder on what history says of the past, should muse over the solemn import of life, and thus, while winning laurels for your brow, and achieving your heart's desire, develop in you the faculties which go to make, in its complete meaning, a man or woman.

DECISION.

There is one quality of mind which of all others is most likely to make our fortunes if combined with talents, or to ruin them without it. We allude to that quality of the mind which under given circumstances acts with a mathematical precision. With such minds to resolve and to act is instantaneous. They seem to precede the march of events, to foresee results in the chrysalis of their causes, and to seize that moment for exertion which others use in deliberation. There are occasions when action must be taken at once. There is no time to long and carefully calculate the chances. The occasion calls for immediate action; and the call must be met, or the time goes by, and our utmost exertions can not bring it back. At such times is seen the triumph of those who have carefully trained all their faculties to a habit of prompt decision. They seize the occasion, and

make the thought start into instant action; they at once plan and perform, resolve and execute.

It is but a truism to say that there can be no success in life without decision of character. Even brains are secondary in importance to will. The intellect is but the half of a man; the will is the driving-wheel, the spring of motive power. A vacillating man, no matter what his abilities, is invariably pushed aside in the race of life by one of determined will. It is he who resolves to succeed, and at every fresh rebuff begins resolutely again, that reaches the goal. The shores of fortune are covered with the stranded wrecks of men of brilliant abilities, but who have wanted courage, faith, and decision, and have therefore perished in sight of more resolute, but less capable adventurers, who succeeded in making port. Hundreds of men go to their graves in obscurity who have remained obscure only because they lacked the pluck to make the first effort, and who, could they only have resolved to begin, would have astonished the world by their achievements and successes.

To do any thing in this world that is worth doing we must not stand shivering on the bank, and thinking of the cold and the danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can. The world was not made for slow, squeamish, fastidious men, but for those who act promptly and with power. Obstacles and perplexities every man must meet, and he must either conquer them or they will conquer *him*. Hesitation is a sign of weakness, for inasmuch as the comparative good and evil of the different modes of action about which we

hesitate are seldom equally balanced, a strong mind should perceive the slightest inclination of the beam with the glance of an eagle, particularly as there will be cases where the preponderance will be very *minute*, even though there should be life in one scale and death in the other. It is better occasionally to decide wrong than to be forever wavering and hesitating, now veering to this side and then to that, with all the misery and disaster that follow from continual doubt.

It has been truly said that the great moral victories and defeats of the world often turn on minutes. Fortune is proverbially a fickle jade, and there is nothing like promptness of action, the timing of things at the lucky moment, to force her to surrender her favors. Crises come, the seizing of which is triumph, the neglect of which is ruin. It is this lack of promptness, so characteristic of the gladiatorial intellect, of this readiness to meet every attack of ill-fortune with counter resources of evasion, which causes so many defeats of life.

There is a race of narrow wits that never succeed for want of courage. Their understanding is of that halting, hesitating kind, which gives just light enough to see difficulties and start doubts, but not enough to surmount the one or remove the other. They do not know what force of character means. They seem to have no backbone, but only the mockery of a vertebral column made of india-rubber, equally pliant in all directions. They come and go like shadows, sandwich their sentences with apologies, are overtaken by events while still

irresolute, and let the tide ebb before they feebly push off. Always brooding over their plans, but never executing them. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a more unhappy man than one afflicted with this infirmity. It has been remarked that there are persons who lack decision to such a degree that they seem never to have made up their mind which leg to stand upon; who deliberate in an agony of choice when not a grain's weight depends upon the decision, or the question what road to walk upon, what bundle of hay to munch first; to be undetermined where the case is plain and the necessity so urgent; to be always intending to lead a new life, but never finding time to set about it. There is nothing more pitiable in the world than such an irresolute man thus oscillating between extremes, who would willingly join the two, but does not perceive that nothing can unite them.

Indecision is a slatternly housewife, by whose fault the moth and rust are allowed to make such dull work of life. "A man without decision," says John Foster, "can never be said to belong to himself, since if he dared to assert that he did the puny force of some cause about as powerful, you would have supposed, as a spider, may make a seizure of the unhappy boaster the very next minute, and contemptuously exhibit the futility of the determinations by which he was to have proved the independence of his understanding and will." He belongs to whatever can make capture of him; and one thing after another vindicates its right to him by arresting him while he is

trying to proceed, as twigs and chips floating near the edge of a river are intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every little eddy. Having concluded on a design, he may pledge himself to accomplish it, if the hundred diversities of feeling which may come within the week will let him. His character precludes all foresight of his conduct. He may sit and wonder what form and direction his views and actions are destined to take to-morrow, as a farmer has often to acknowledge that next day's proceedings are at the disposal of its winds and clouds.

A great deal of the unhappiness and much of the vice of the world is owing to weakness and indecision of purpose. The will, which is the central force of character, must be trained to habits of decision; otherwise it will neither be able to resist evil nor to follow good. Decision gives the power of standing firmly when to yield, however slightly, might be only the first step in a down-hill course to ruin. Calling upon others for help in forming a decision is worse than useless. A man must so train his habits as to rely upon his own powers, and to depend upon his own courage in moments of emergency. Many are the valiant purposes formed that end merely in words; deeds intended that are never done; designs projected that are never begun; and all for the want of a little courageous decision. Better far the silent tongue, but the eloquent deed; and the most decisive answer of all is *doing*. There is nothing more to be admired than a manly firmness and decision of character. We admire a person who

knows his own mind and sticks to it, who sees at once what is to be done in given circumstances, and does it.

There never was a time in the world's history that called more earnestly upon all persons to cultivate a firm, manly decision of character, to be able to say No to the seductive power of temptation. There is no more beautiful trait of character to be found than that of a determined will guided by right motives. To talk beautifully is one thing, but to act with promptitude when the time of action has fully come is as far superior to the former as the brilliant sunlight surpasses the reflection of the moon. To train the mind to act with decision is of no less consequence than of acting promptly when the decision is reached. Of all intellectual gifts bestowed upon man there is nothing more intoxicating than readiness—the power of calling all the resources of the mind into simultaneous action at a moment's notice. Nothing strikes the unready as so miraculous as this promptitude in others; nothing impresses him with so dull and envious a sense of contrast with himself. This want of decision is to be laid on the shelf, to creep where others fly, to fall into permanent discouragement. To possess decision is to have the mind's intellectual property put out at fifty or one hundred per cent; to be uncertain at the moment of trial is to be dimly conscious of faculties tied up somewhere in a napkin. Decision of mind, like vigor of body, is a gift of God. It can not be created by human effort; it can only be cultivated. But every mind has the germ of this

quality, which can be strengthened by favorable circumstances and motives presented to the mind, and by method and order in the prosecution of duties or tasks.

But with all that has been urged in favor of decision and dispatch, we would not be understood as advising undue haste. There are occasions when caution and delay are necessary, when to act without long and careful deliberation would be madness. But when the way is clear, when there is no doubt as to what ought to be done, then it is that decision demands that an instant choice be made between the two—not to hesitate too long as to which, but to decide promptly, and then move ahead. Even in cases where deliberation and caution are necessary, decision demands that the mind acts quickly. In a word, decision finds us engaged in a life-battle. If the victory is ours, success and fortune wait upon us; if we are overthrown, want and misery stare us in the face; it is well to make our movements only with caution, but when we see a chance we must at once improve it, or it is gone. Occasions also arise when we must rouse our forces on an instant's warning, and to make movements for which we have no time to calculate the chances. Then is seen the triumph of the decisive, ready man. To falter is to be lost; to move with dispatch is the only safety.



SELF-CONFIDENCE.



Both poetry and philosophy are prodigal of eulogy over the mind which rescues itself, by its own energy, from a captivity to custom, which breaks the common bonds of empire and cuts a Simplon over mountains of difficulty for its own purposes, whether of good or of evil. We can not help admiring such a character. It is a positive relief to turn from the contemplation of those relying on some one else for a solution of the difficulties that surround them to those who are strong in their own self-reliance, who, when confronted with fresh trials and difficulties, only put on a more determined mien, and more resolutely apply their own powers to remove the obstacle so unexpectedly put in their way. There is no surer sign of an unmanly and cowardly spirit than a vague desire for help, a wish to depend, to lean upon somebody and enjoy the fruits of the industry of others.

In the assurance of strength there is strength, and they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers. Men often conquer difficulties because they think they can. Their confidence in themselves

inspires confidence in others. The man who makes every thing that conduces to happiness to depend upon himself, and not upon other men, on whose good or evil actions his own doings are compelled to hinge, has adopted the very best plan for living happily. This is the man of moderation, the possessor of manly character and wisdom. By self-reliance is not meant self-conceit. The two are widely different. Self-reliance is cognizant of all the ills of earthly existence, and it rests on a rational consciousness of power to contend with them. It counts the cost of the conflict with real life, and calmly concludes that it is able to meet the foes which stand in frowning array on the world's great battle-field. Self-conceit, on the other hand, is a vainglorious assertion of power. It knows not the real difficulties it has to contend with, and is too supercilious to inquire into them. It rejects well-meant offers of counsel or assistance. It feels above taking advice. The unhappy possessor of such a trait of character is far from being a self-reliant man.

It has been said God never intended that strong, independent beings should be reared by clinging to others, like the ivy to the oak, for support. The difficulties, hardships, and trials of life—the obstacles one encounters on the road to fortune—are positive blessings. They knit his muscles more firmly, and teach him self-reliance, just as by wrestling with an athlete who is superior to us we increase our own strength and learn the secret of his skill. All difficulties come to us, as Bunyan says of temptation, like the lion which met Sampson,

the first time we encounter them they roar and gnash their teeth, but once subdued we find a nest of honey in them. Peril is the very element in which power is developed. Don't rely upon your friends, nor rely upon the name of your ancestor. Thousands have spent the prime of life in the vain hope of help from those whom they called friends, and many thousands have starved because they had a rich father.

Rely upon the good name which is made by your own exertions, and know that better than the best friend you can have is unconquerable determination of spirit, united with decision of character. Seek such attainments as will enable you to confide in yourself, to rise equal to your emergencies. Strive to acquire an inward principle of self-support. Help yourself and heaven will help you, should be the motto of every man who would make himself useful in the world or carve his way to riches and honor. It is an old saying, "He who has lost confidence can lose nothing more." The man who dares not follow his own independent judgment, but runs perpetually to others for advice, becomes at last a moral weakling and an intellectual dwarf. Such a man has not self within him, and believes in no self, but goes as a suppliant to others and entreats of them, one after another, to lend him theirs. He is, in fact, a mere element of a human being, and is borne about the world an insignificant cipher, unless he desperately fastens to other floating and supplementary elements, with which he may form a species of incorporation resembling a man. Any young man who will thus part with

freedom and the self-respect that grows out of self-reliance and self-support is unmanly, neither deserving of assistance nor capable of making good use of it.

Hardship is the native soil of manhood and self-reliance. Opposition is what we want and must have to be good for any thing. Men seem neither to understand their riches nor their own strength. Of the former they believe greater things than they should; of the latter, much less. Self-reliance and self-denial will teach a man to drink of his own cistern, and eat bread from his own kitchen, and learn to labor truly to get his living, and carefully to expend the good things committed to his care. Every youth should be made to feel that if he would get through the world usefully and happily he must rely mainly upon himself and his own independent energies. Young men should never hear any language but this: "You have your own way to make, and it depends upon your exertion whether you starve or not. Outside help is your greatest curse. It handicaps efforts, stifles aspirations, shuts the door upon emulation, turns the key upon energy." The custom of making provisions to assist worthy young men in obtaining an education is often a positive evil to the recipient. The germ of self-reliant energy, which else would have done so much for his material good, is stifled in its growth by the mistaken kindness of benevolent beings. And no mental acquisitions can compensate any young man for loss of self-reliance.

It is not the men who have been reared in

affluence who have left the most enduring traces on the world. It is not in the sheltered garden or the hothouse, but on the rugged Alpine cliffs, where the storms beat most violently, that the toughest plants are reared. Men who are trained to self-reliance are ready to go out and contend in the sternest conflicts of life, while those who have always leaned for support on others around them are never prepared to breast the storms of adversity that arise. Self-reliance is more than a passive trust in one's own powers. It shows itself in an active manner; it demonstrates itself in works. It is not ashamed of its pretentions, but invites inspection and asks recognition. Because there is danger of invoicing yourself above your real value, it does not follow that you should always underrate your worth. Because to be conspicuous, honored, and known you should not retire upon the center of your own conscious resources, you need not necessarily be always at the circumference. An excess of modesty is well-nigh as bad as an excess of pride, for it is, in fact, an excess of pride in another form, though it is questionable if this be not more hurtful to the individual and less beneficial to society than gross and unblushing vanity.

It is true, we all patronize humility in the abstract, and, when enshrined in another, we admire it. It is a pleasure to meet a man who does not pique our vanity, or thrust himself between us and the object of our pretensions. There is no one who, if questioned, would not be found in the depths of his heart secretly to

prefer the modest man, proportionally despising the swaggerer "who goes unbidden to the head of the feast." But while such is our deliberate verdict when taken to task in the matter, it is not the one we practically give. The man who entertains a good, stout opinion of himself always contrives somehow to cheat us out of a corresponding one, and we are too apt to acquiesce in his assumption, even though they may strike us unpleasantly. Nor need this excite our surprise. The great mass of men have no time to examine the merits of others. They are busy about their own affairs, which claim all their attention. They can not go about hunting modest worth in every nook and corner. Those who would secure their good opinion must come forward with their claims, and at least show their own confidence by backing them with vigorous assertions.

If, therefore, a man of fair talents arrays his pretensions before us, if he duns and pesters us for an admission of his merits, obtruding them upon us, we are forced at last to notice them, and, unless he fairly disgusts us by the extravagance of his claims, shocking all sense of decency, we are inclined to admit them, even in preference to superior merits, which their possessor by his own actions seem to underrate. It is too often cant by which indolent and irresolute men seek to lay their want of success at the door of the public. Well-matured and well-disciplined talent is always sure of a market, provided it exerts itself; but it must not cower at home and expect to be sought after. There is a good deal of cant, too, about the

successes of forward and impudent men, while men of retiring worth are overlooked. But it usually happens that those forward men have that valuable quality of promptness and activity, without which worth is a mere inoperative quality.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that in this busy, bustling period of the world's history self-confidence is almost an essential trait of character in one who means to get along well and win his way to success and fortune. This may exist entirely independent of self-conceit, the two being by no means necessarily concomitant. He must remember that he can not expect to have people repose confidence in his ability unless he displays confidence in them himself. If poverty be his lot, and troubles and discouragements of all kinds press upon him, let him take heart and push resolutely ahead, cultivating a strong, self-reliant disposition. By so doing he will rise superior to misfortune. He will learn to rely on his own resources, to look within himself for the means wherewith to combat the ills that press upon him. By such a course of action he takes the road which most surely leads to success.

PRACTICAL TALENTS.



It is a common saying that the man of practical ability far surpasses the theorist. Just what is meant by practical ability is, perhaps, hard to explain. It is more easy to tell what it is not than what it is. It recognizes the fact that life is action; that mere thoughts and schemes will avail nothing unless subsequently wrought out in action. It is an indescribable quality which results from a union of worldly knowledge with shrewdness and tact. He that sets out on the journey of life with a profound knowledge of books, but with a shallow knowledge of men, with much of the sense of others, but with little of his own, will find himself completely at a loss on occasions of common and constant recurrence.

Speculative ability is one thing, and practical ability is another; and the man who in his study or with his pen in hand shows himself capable of forming large views of life and policy, may in the outer world be found altogether unfitted for carrying them into practical effect. Speculative ability depends on vigorous thinking, practical ability in vigorous acting, and the two qualities are usually found combined in very unequal proportions. The speculative man is prone to

indecision; he sees all sides of a question, and his action becomes suspended in nicely weighing the arguments for and against, which are often found nearly to balance each other; whereas the practical man overleaps logical preliminaries and arrives at certain definite convictions, and proceeds forthwith to carry his policy into action. The mere theorist rarely displays practical ability; and, conversely, the practical man rarely displays a high degree of speculative wisdom. If you try to carve a stone with a razor, the razor will lose its edge, and the stone remain uncut. A high education, unless it is practical as well as classical, often unfits a man for contest with his fellow-man. Intellectual culture, if carried beyond a certain point, is too often purchased at the expense of moral vigor. It gives edge and splendor to a man, but draws out all his temper.

In all affairs of life, but more especially in those great enterprises which require the co-operation of others, a knowledge of men is indispensable. This knowledge implies not only quickness of penetration and sagacity, but many other superior elements of character; for it is important to perceive not merely in whom we can confide, but to maintain that influence over them which secures their good faith and defeats the unworthy purpose of a wavering and dishonest mind. The world always laughs at those failures which arise from weakness of judgment and defects of penetration. Practical wisdom is only to be learned in the school of experience. Precepts and instruction are useful so far as they go; but without the discipline of

real life they remain of the nature of theories only. The hard facts of existence give that touch of truth to character which can never be imparted by reading or tuition, but only by contact with the broad instincts of common men and women.

Intellectual training is to be prized, but practical knowledge is necessary to make it available. Experience gained from books, however valuable, is of the nature of learning; experience gained from outward life is wisdom; and an ounce of the latter is worth a pound of the former. Rich mental endowments, thorough culture, great genius, brilliant parts have often existed in company with very glaring deficiencies in what may be called good judgment; while there is a certain stability of judgment and soundness of understanding often displayed by those who have not an extensive education. The old sailor knows nothing of nautical astronomy. Azimuths, right ascensions, and the solution of spherical triangles have no charm and little meaning to him. But he can scan the seas and skies and warn of coming danger with a natural wisdom which all the keen intellect and ready mathematics of the young lieutenant do not afford. The man who has traveled much accumulates a store of useful information, and can give hints of practical wisdom which no deep study of geological lore or of antiquarian research could afford. The student of life rather than of books gains an understanding by experience for which no store of erudition can prove an adequate compensation. The true order of learning

should be, first, what is necessary; second, what is useful; and third, what is ornamental. To reverse this arrangement is like beginning to build at the top of the edifice. Practical ability depends in a large measure on the employment of what is known as common sense, which is the average sensibility and intelligence of men undisturbed by individual peculiarities. Fine sense and exalted sense are not half as useful as common sense. There are forty men of wit for one man of sense, and he that will carry nothing but gold will be every day at a loss for readier change.

The height of ability consists in a thorough knowledge of the real value of things and of the genius of the age we live in, and could we know by what strange circumstances a man's genius becomes prepared for practical success, we should discover that the most serviceable items in his education were never entered in the bills his father paid for. That knowledge of the world which inculcates strict vigilance in regard to our individual interests and representation, which recommends the mastery of things to be held in our own hands, or which enables us to live undamaged by the skillful maneuvers and crafty plots of plausible men on the one hand or uncontaminated by the depravities of unprincipled ones on the other, is of daily acquisition and equally accessible to all.

The most learned of men do not always make the best of teachers; the lawyer who has achieved a classical education is not always the most successful. The men who have wielded power have not always been graduates.

Brindley and Stephenson did not learn to read and write until they were twenty years old; yet the one gave England her railroads, and the other her canals. The great inventor is one who has walked forth upon the industrial world, not from universities, but from hovels; not as clad in silks and decked with honors, but as clad in fustian and grimed with soot and oil. It is not known where he who invented the plow was born, or where he died; yet he has effected more for the happiness of the world than the whole race of heroes and conquerors who drenched it in tears and blood, whose birth, parentage, and education have been handed down to us with a precision proportionate to the mischief they have done. Mankind owes more of its real happiness to this humble inventor than to some of the most acute minds in the realm of literature.

Education, indeed, accomplishes wonders in fitting a man for the work of success, but we sometimes forget that it is of more consequence to have the mind well disciplined rather than richly stored,—strong rather than full. Every day we see men of high culture distanced in the race of life by the upstart who can not spell. The practical dunce outstrips the theorizing genius. Life teems with such illustrations. Men have ruled well who could not define a commonwealth; and they who did not understand the shape of the earth have commanded a greater portion of it. The want of practical talent in men of fine intellectual powers has often excited the wonder of the crowd. They are astonished that one who has

grasped, perhaps, the mightiest themes, and shed a light on the path to be pursued by others, should be unable to manage his own affairs with dexterity. But this is not strange. Deep thinking and practical talents require habits of mind almost entirely dissimilar, and though they may, and often do, exist conjointly, and while it is the duty of all to strive to cultivate both, yet such is the constitution of the human mind that it is apt to go to extremes. And he who accustoms himself to deep prying into nature's secrets, to exploring the hidden mysteries of the past, is too apt to forget the practical details of every-day life, to pass them by with disgust, as altogether beneath his attention. This is an error, and none the less reprehensible on that account than is the conduct of those who become so engrossed with the practical affairs of their calling or profession as to forget that they have a higher nature, and sink the man in the pursuit of their ambitious dreams.

A man who sees limitedly and clearly is both more sure of himself and is more direct in dealing with circumstances and with men than is a man who has a large horizon of thought, whose many-sided capacity embraces an immense extent of objects, just as the somnambulist treads with safety where the wide-awake man could not hope to follow. Practical men cut the knots which they can not untie, and, overleaping all preliminaries, come at once to a conclusion. Men of theoretical knowledge, on the other hand, are tempted to waste time in comparing and meditating when

they should be up and doing. Practical knowledge will not always of itself raise a man to eminence, but for want of it many a man has fallen short of distinction. Without it the best runner, straining for the prize, finds himself suddenly tripped up and lying on his back in the midst of the race. Without it the subtlest theologian will live and die in an obscure country village, and the acutest legal mind fail of adorning the bench. The man who lacks it may be a great thinker or a great worker. He may be an acute reasoner and an eloquent speaker, and yet, in spite of all this, fail of success. There is a hitch, a stand-still, a mysterious want somewhere. Little, impalpable trifles weave themselves into a web which holds him back. The fact is, he is not sufficiently in accord with his surroundings. He has never seen the importance of adjusting his scale of weights and measures to the popular standard. In a word, he is not a man of the world, in a popular sense.

While it may be very difficult to define this practical ability, which is so all-important, yet the path to be pursued by him who would advance therein is visible to all. It requires a shrewd and careful observance of men and things rather than of books. It requires that the judgment be strengthened by being called upon in apparently trivial affairs. The memory must be trained to recall principles rather than statements. All the faculties of the mind must be trained to act with decision and dispatch. Education must be regarded as a means and not as an end. By these means, while admitting that

practical talents are, in their true sense, a gift of God, still we can cultivate and bring them to perfection, and by education and experience convert that which before lay dormant in the rough pebble into a dazzling diamond.

EDUCATION.



From time immemorial intellectual endowments have been crowned with bays of honor. Men have worshiped at the shrine of intellect with an almost Eastern idolatry. Men of more than an average endowment of intellect have been regarded as superior beings. The multitude have looked upon them with wonder. With reverent hands the world at large has crowned intellect with its richest honors. Its pathway has been strewn with flowers; its brow has worn the loftiest plume; it has held the mightiest scepter of power, and sat upon the proudest throne. Evidence mightier than the plaudits of admiring multitudes is every-where

found in the universe proclaiming the worth and power of the human intellect. There can not be a grander theme to engross the attention of all classes than that subject which has to do with the training of the intellect. The subject of education is fraught with a deep interest to all who have a just appreciation of its merits. It should be of interest to all within the pale of civilization, inasmuch as the happiness of all classes is connected with the subject of education.

Education is development. It is not simply instruction, facts, and rules communicated by the teacher, but it is discipline, a waking up, a development of latent powers, a growth of the mind. It finds the child's mind passive; it trains it to think independently; it awakens its powers to observe, to reflect, to combine. It aims to bring into harmonious action all the powers of the mind, not, as some suppose, a cultivation of a few to the neglect of all the rest. Education should have reference to the whole man—the body, the mind, and the heart. Its object, and, when rightly conducted, its effect, is to make him a complete creature of his kind. To his frame it would give vigor, activity, and beauty; to his heart virtue; to his senses correctness and acuteness. The educated man is not the gladiator, nor the scholar, nor the upright man alone, but a well balanced combination of the three. The well-developed tree is not one simply well rooted, nor with giant branches, nor resplendent with rich foliage, but all of these together. If you mark the perfect man you must not look for him in the gymnasium, the

university, or the Church exclusively, but you look for the healthful mind in the healthful body, with a virtuous heart. The being in whom you find this union is the only one worthy to be called educated.

Education, strictly speaking, covers the whole area of life. It is the word which means all that God asks of us, all we owe the world or ourselves. It expresses the sum total of human duty. Nor is it confined to the present period of life. For aught we know education may be continued in heaven. Reason may continue to widen its powers and deepen its sanctities there. The affections may grow in beauty and fervor through innumerable ages. Mind may expand and intensify through eternity. Education is a work of progress. It begins in life, but has no end. Death does not terminate it. We learn the elements of things below; above, we will study their essence. We progress only by efforts. Whatever expands the affection or enlarges the sphere of our sympathies, whatever makes us feel our relation to the universe, to the great and beneficial cause of all, must unquestionably refine our nature and elevate us in the scale of being.

It requires extensive observation to enable us even partially to appreciate the wonderful extent to which all the faculties are developed by mental cultivation. The nervous system grows more vigorous and active, the touch is more sensitive, and there is greater mobility to the hand. Men are often like knives with many blades. They know how to open one and only one; the rest are buried in the handle, and from

misuse become useless. Education is the knowledge of how to use the whole of one's self. He is educated who knows how to make a tool of every faculty, how to open it, how to keep it sharp, and how to apply it to all practical purposes. Education is of three parts, —from nature, from man, and from things. The development of our faculties and organs is the education of nature; that of man is the application we learn to make of this very developing; and that of things is the experience we acquire in regard to different objects by which we are affected. All that we have not at our birth, and all that we have acquired in the years of our maturity, shows the need and effect of education. The power of education is shown in that it hath power to give to children resources that will endure as long as life endures, habits that time will ameliorate but not destroy, in that it renders sickness tolerable, solitude pleasant, age venerable, life more dignified and useful, and death less terrible.

Education may be right or wrong, good or bad. Reason may grow strong in error and revel in falsities. The heart may grow in vice, and the passions expand in misrule. It has been wisely ordained that light should have no color, water no taste, and air no odor; so knowledge should be equally pure and without admixture. If it comes to us through the medium of prejudice it will be discolored; through the channels of custom, it will be adulterated; through the Gothic walls of the college or of the cloister, it will smell of the lamp. It is not what a man eats, but what he digests that makes him strong;

not what he gains, but what he saves that makes him rich; so it is not what he reads or hears, but what he remembers and applies that makes him learned. He who knows men and how to deal with them, whose mind by any means whatever has received that discipline which gives to its action power and facility, has been educated.

We can not be too careful to have our education proceed in the right direction. It is almost as difficult to make a man unlearn his errors as to acquire his knowledge. Error is more hopeless than ignorance, for error is always the more busy. Ignorance is a blank sheet, on which we can write, but error is a scribbled one, from which we must first erase. Ignorance is content to stand still without advancing towards wisdom, but error, more presumptuous, proceeds in the contrary direction. Ignorance has no light to guide her, but error follows a false one. The consequences are that error, when she retraces her footsteps, has a long distance to go before she is in as good condition for the acquiring of truth as ignorance.

A right conception of the value and power of wisdom is a great incentive in stimulating us to proceed in the work of educating ourselves. It is knowledge that has converted the world from a desert abode of savage men to the beautiful homes of civilization. Human knowledge is permitted to approximate, in some degree and on certain occasions, with that of the Deity—its pure and primary source. And this assimilation is never more conspicuous than when from evil

it gathers its opposite good. What, at first sight, appears to be so insurmountable an obstacle to the intercourse of nations as the ocean? But knowledge has converted it into the best and most expeditious means by which they may supply their mutual wants and carry on their intimate communications. What so violent as steam, or so destructive as fire? What so uncertain as the winds, or so uncontrollable as the wave? Yet wisdom has rendered these unmanageable things instrumental and subsidiary to the necessities, the comforts, and even the elegancies of life. What so hard, so cold, so insensible as marble? Yet the sculptors can warm it into life and bid it breathe an eternity of love. What so variable as color, so swift as light, or so empty as shade? Yet the painter's pencil can give these fleeting fancies both a body and a soul; can confer upon them an imperishable vigor, a beauty which increases with age, and which will continue to captivate generations. In short, wisdom can draw expedients from obstacles, invention from difficulties, remedies from poisons. In her hands all things become beautiful by adaptation, subservient by their use, and salutary by their application.

Since, then, intellectual attainments are so precious and wisdom so grand in its achievements, he who neglects to improve his mental faculties, or fails to train all his powers of mind and body, is not walking in those paths that, under God's guidance, conduce most surely to happiness and content. This can be done by all, since education is within the reach

of all, even the most humble. The youth who believes it is impossible for him to get an education is deficient in courage and energy. Too many have imbibed the idea that to obtain a sufficient education to enable a man to appear advantageously upon the theater of public life his boyhood and youth must be spent within the walls of some classical seminary of learning, that he may commence his career under the banner of a collegiate diploma, and with it win the first round in the ladder of fame. That a refined, classical education is desirable all will admit; that it is indispensably necessary does not follow. He who has been incarcerated from his childhood to majority within the limited circumference of his school and boarding room, though he may have mastered all the classics, is destitute of that knowledge of men and things indispensably necessary to enable him to act with vigor and dispatch either in public or private life.

Classical lore and polite literature are very different from that vast amount of practical intelligence, fit for every-day use, that one *must have* to render his intercourse with society pleasing to himself or agreeable to others. Let boys and girls be taught first what is necessary to prepare them for the common duties of life; then all that can be gained from fields of classic lore or works of polite erudition is of the utmost value. In this enlightened age ignorance is a voluntary misfortune, for all who will may drink deeply at the fountain of knowledge. By the proper improvement of time the mechanic's apprentice may lay in a store of information

that will enable him to take a stand by the side of those persons who have grown up in the full blaze of a collegiate education.

Learn thoroughly what you learn, be it ever so little, and you may speak of it with confidence. A few well-defined facts and ideas are worth a whole library of uncertain knowledge. We are frequently placed in position where we can learn with scarcely an effort on our part, and yet we hang back because it takes so long to acquire a mastery of any thing. Let the end alone! Begin at the beginning, and though, after all, it prove but a mere smattering, you are informed on one point more, and your life will be happier for making the effort. By gaining an education you shall have your reward in the rich stores of knowledge you have thus collected, and which shall ever be at your command, more valuable than material treasures. While fleets may sink, storehouses consume, and riches fade, the intellectual stores you have thus gathered will be permanent and enduring, as unfailing as the constant flow of Niagara—a bank whose dividends are perpetual, whose wealth is undiminished, however frequent the drafts upon it. How wise, then, to secure, as far as possible, a complete and lasting education.

MENTAL TRAINING.



The mind has a certain vegetative power which can not be wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a beautiful garden, it will shoot up in weeds and flowers of a wild growth. From this, then, is seen the necessity of careful mental cultivation—a training of all the faculties in the right direction. This should be the first great object in any system of education, public or private. The value of an education depends far less upon varied and extensive acquirements than upon the cultivation of just powers of thought and the general regulation of the faculties of the understanding. That it is not the amount of knowledge, but the capacity to apply it, which promises success and usefulness in life, is a truth which can not be too often inculcated by instructors and recollected by pupils. If youths are taught *how* to think, they will soon learn *what* to think. Exercise is not more necessary to a healthful state of the body than is the employment of the various faculties of the mind to mental efficiency. The practical sciences are as barren of useful products as the speculative where facts only are the objects of knowledge, and the understanding is not habituated to a continual process of examination and reflection.

It is the trained and disciplined intellect

which rules the world of literature, science, and art. It is knowledge put in action by trained mental faculties which is powerful. Knowledge merely gathered together, whether in books or in brains, is devoid of power, unless quickened into life by the thoughts and reflections of some practical worker. But when this is supplied knowledge becomes an engine of power. It is this which forms the philosopher's stone, the true alchemy, that converts every thing it touches into gold. It is the scepter that gives us our dominion over nature; the key that unlocks the storehouse of creation, and opens to us the treasures of the universe. It is this which forms the difference between savage and civilized nations, and marks the distinction between men as they appear in society. It is this which has raised men from the humblest walks of life to positions of influence and power.

The lack of mental training and discipline explains, in a large measure, why we so often meet with men who are the possessors of vast stores of erudition, and yet make a failure of every thing they try. We shall at all times chance upon men of profound and recondite acquirements, but whose qualifications, from a lack of practical application on their owners' part, are as utterly useless to them as though they had them not. A person of this class may be compared to a fine chronometer which has no hands to its dial; both are constantly right without correcting any that are wrong, and may be carried around the world without assisting one individual either in making a discovery or taking an observation. Every faculty of the

mind is worthy of cultivation; indeed, all must be cultivated, if we would round and perfect our mental powers as to secure therefrom the greatest good. Memory must be ready with her stores of useful knowledge, gathered from fields far and near. She must be trained to classify and arrange them, so as to hold them in her grasp. Observation must be quick to perceive the apparently trivial events which are constantly occurring, and diligent to ascertain the cause. The judgment must pronounce its decision without undue delay; the will move to execution in accordance with the fiat of an enlightened understanding.

This work of mental training, apparently so vast, is really so pleasant and easy that it sweetens every day's life. There is no excuse for the youth who is content to grow up to mature life and its duties with a mind whose powers are untrained, and which has not received the advantages of a practical education. Some may think they are excused by poverty; but lack of means has not robbed them of a single intellectual power. On the contrary, it sharpens them all. Has poverty shut them out from nature, from truth, or from God? Wealth can not convert a dunce into a genius. Gold will not store a mind with wisdom; more likely it will fill it with folly. It may decorate the body, but it can not adorn the soul. No business is so urgent but that time may be spent in mental training. One can not well help thinking and studying; for the mind is ever active. What is needful is to direct it to proper objects and in proper channels, and it will cultivate itself. There is

nothing to prevent but the will. Whoever forms a resolute determination to cultivate his mind will find nothing in his way sufficient to stop him. If he finds barriers they only strengthen him by overcoming them. Whoever lives to thirty years of age without cultivating his mind is guilty of a great waste of time. If during that period he does not form a habit of reading, of observation, and reflection, he will never form such a habit, but go through the world none the wiser for all the wonders that are spread around him. A small portion of that leisure time which by too many is given to dissipation and idleness, would enable any young man to acquire a very general knowledge of men and things. One can live a life-time and get no instruction; but as soon as he begins to look for wisdom it is given him. Even in the pursuits of practical, every-day life numberless instances are constantly arising to aid in mental training. There are few persons so engrossed by the cares and labors of their calling that they can not give thirty minutes a day to mental training; and even that time, wisely spent, will tell at the end of a year. The affections, it is well known, sometimes crowd years into moments; and the intellect has something of the same power. If you really prize mental cultivation, or are deeply anxious to do any good thing, you will *find* time or *make* time for it sooner or later, however, engrossed with other employments. A failure to accomplish it can only demonstrate the feebleness of your will, not that you lacked time for its execution.

It is impossible to overestimate the

importance of reading as a means of training the mental faculties. It is by this means that you gather food for thoughts, principles, and actions. If your books are wisely selected and properly studied, they will enlighten your minds, improve your hearts, and establish your character. To acquire useful information, to improve the mind in knowledge and the heart in goodness, to become qualified to perform with honor and usefulness the duties of life, and prepare for immortality beyond the grave, are the great objects which ought to be kept in view in reading.

There are four classes of readers. The first is like the hour-glass, and, their reading being on the sand, it runs in and runs out, and leaves no vestige behind. A second is like a sponge, which imbibes every thing, and returns it in the same state, only a little dirtier. A third is like a jelly-bag, allowing all that is pure to pass away, retaining only the refuse and the dregs. The fourth is like the slaves in the diamond-mines of Golconda, who, casting away all that is worthless, obtain only pure gems.

We should read with discrimination. The world is full of books, no small portion of which are either worthless or decidedly hurtful in their tendency. And as no man has time to read every thing, he ought to make a selection of the ablest and best writers on the subjects which he wishes to investigate, and dismiss wholly from his attention the entire crowd of unworthy and useless ones. Always read with your thoughts concentrated, and your mind entirely engaged on the subject you are pursuing. Any other

course tends to form a habit of desultory, indolent thought, and incapacitate the mind from confining its attention to close and accurate investigation. One book read thoroughly and with careful reflection will do more to improve the mind and enrich the understanding than skimming over the surface of a whole library. The more one reads in a busy, superficial manner, the worse. It is like loading the stomach with a great quantity of food, which lies there undigested. It enfeebles the intellect, and sheds darkness and confusion over all the operations of the mind. The mind, like the body, is strengthened by exercise, and the severer the exercise the greater the increase of strength. One hour of thorough, close application to study does more to invigorate and improve the mind than a week spent in the ordinary exercise of its powers. We should read slowly, carefully, and with reflection. We sometimes rush over pages of valuable matter because at a glance they seem to be dull, and we hurry along to see how the story, if it be a story, is to end.

At every action and enterprise ask yourself this question: What shall the consequences of this be to me? Am I not likely to repent of it? Whatever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss. Take time to deliberate and advise, but lose no time in executing your resolution. To perceive accurately and to think correctly is the aim of all mental training. Heart and conscience are more than the mere intellect. Yet we know not how much the clear, clean-cut thought, the

intellectual vision, sharp and true, may aid even these. Undigested learning is as oppressive as undigested food; and, as with the dyspeptic patient, the appetite for food often grows with the inability to digest it, so in the unthinking patient an overweening desire to know often accompanies the inability to know to any purpose. To learn merely for the sake of learning is like eating merely for the taste of the food. To learn in order to become wise makes the mind active and powerful, like the body of one who is temperate and judicious in meat and drink.

Thought is to the brain what gastric juice is to the stomach—a solvent to reduce whatever is received to a condition in which all that is wholesome and nutritive may be appropriated, and that alone. Learning is healthfully digested by the mind when it reflects upon what is learned, classifies and arranges facts and circumstances, considers the relations of one to another, and places what is taken into the mind at different times in relation to the same subjects under their appropriate heads, so that the various stores are not heterogeneously piled up, but laid away in order, and may be examined with ease when wanted. This is the perfection of mental training and discipline,—memory well trained, judgment quick to act, and attention sharp to observe. We invite and urge all to turn their attention to this subject as something worthy of those endowed with reasoning powers. It is not a wearying task, but one which repays for its undertaking by making much more rich in its joys and inspiring in its

hopes all the after-life of the man or woman who went forth bravely to the work which heaven has decreed as the lot of all who would enjoy the greatest good of life.

SELF-CULTURE.

Man is a wonderful union of mind and body, and to form a perfect being a high degree of cultivation is required for each component part. Those who cultivate the mental to the exclusion of the mere bodily, or at least carelessly pass by its claims, are no less in error than those who cultivate the bodily faculties to the exclusion of the mental. The aim of all attempts at self-cultivation should be the highest and most appropriate development of the entire being—physical, intellectual, and moral. It comprehends the health of the body, the expansion of the intellect, the purification of the heart. It guards the health, because a feeble body acts powerfully on the mind, and is a clog

to its progress. It cherishes the intellect, because it is the glory of the human being. It trains the moral nature, because if that is weak and misdirected a blight falls upon the soul and a curse rests upon the body. As each faculty reacts upon all the others, true self-culture attends with a due proportion of care to each. It strives to retain one power whose action is too intense, and to stimulate another which is torpid, until they act in delightful harmony with each other, and the result is the healthful progress toward the highest point of attainable good.

Self-culture includes a proper care of the health of the body. To be careless of your health is to be stunted in intellect and miserable in feelings. You might as well expect to enjoy life in a dilapidated and ruined habitation, which affords free admission to the freezing blast and the pitiless rain, as to be happy in a body ruined by self-indulgence. The body is the home of the soul. Can its mysterious tenant find rest and unmixed joy within its chambers if daily exposed to sharp and shivering shocks through its aching joints or quivering nerves? How many bright intellects have failed of making any impression upon the world simply because they neglected the most obvious of hygienic laws! If God has bestowed upon you the inestimable gift of good health and a good constitution, it is your duty, as a rational creature, to preserve it. To expect vigorous health and the enjoyment which it brings, and at the same time live in open defiance of the laws of health, is to expect what can not take

place. Not only is good health thus of value and one of the most important ends of self-cultivation, but we would impress on all the fact that the body is just as important a factor as the mind in the work of success, that it is just as worthy to be cultivated, so as to grow in strength and beauty, and the development of all those faculties which go to make a physically perfect man or woman.

It is a sad sight to see a brilliant mind that has dragged down a strong body, because it has been so imperious in its demands, leaving its companion to suffer for lack of attention to some of its plainest wants. It reminds one of a crazy building, tottering under its own weight, yet full of the most costly machinery, which can be run, if at all, only with the greatest caution, or the entire fabric will crumble to ruins. The lesson can not be too soon learned that, while the human body is most wonderfully complex in its organization, still such is the perfection of all nature's works that all that is demanded of us is compliance with simple rules, to enable us to enjoy health. That it is our duty as well as our privilege to so train and cultivate the body that it will answer readily all demands made upon it by an enlightened mind, and will perform all its appropriate functions in the great work of life.

Self-culture also implies suitable efforts to expand and strengthen the intellect by reading, by reflection, and by writing down your thoughts. The strength and vigor given to the mind by self-culture is not materially different from that expressed by the term education in its

broad and comprehensive meaning. Intellect being the crowning glory and chief attribute of man, there can be no nobler aim to set before one's self than that of expanding and quickening all of its powers. Rightly lived our every-day life and actions conduce to this result. Our education is by no means entirely the product of organized schools. Our hired teachers and printed books are not all that act on our powers to develop them. Life is one grand school, and its every circumstance a teacher. Society pours in its influence upon us like the thousand streams that flood the ocean.

Scholastic men and women speak of book education; there is also a life education—that great, common arena where men and women do battle with the forces around them. Our duty is so to guide and control these influences as to be educated in the right direction. We should recognize the fact that we are educating all the time, and the great question for us to settle is, "What manner of education are we receiving?" Some are educated in vice, some in folly, some in selfishness, some in deception, some in goodness, some in truth. Every day gives us many lessons in life. Every thought leaves its impression on the mind. Every feeling weaves a garment for the spirit. Every passion plows a furrow in the soul. It is our duty as sentient, moral beings so to guide and direct these thoughts, feelings, and passions that they shall educate us in the right direction. We are lax in duty to ourselves to let the world educate us as it will, for we are running a great risk to yield ourselves up to the circumstances life has

thrown about us, to plunge into the stream of popular custom and allow ourselves to drift with the current.

But aside from the practical education of everyday life we are to remember, in our efforts after self-culture, that it is also obligatory upon us to seek the discipline afforded by books and study. In the pursuit of knowledge follow it wherever it is to be found; like fern, it is the product of all climates, and, like air, its circulation is not restricted to any particular class. Any and every legitimate means of acquiring information is to be pursued, and all the odds and bits of time pressed into use. Set a high price upon your leisure moments. They are sands of precious gold; properly expended they will procure for you a stock of great thoughts—thoughts that will fill, stir, invigorate, and expand the soul. As the magnificent river, rolling in the pride of its mighty waters, owes its greatness to the hidden springs of the mountain nook, so does the wide, sweeping influence of distinguished men date its origin from hours of privacy resolutely employed in efforts after self-development.

We should esteem those moments best improved which are employed in developing our own thoughts, rather than in acquiring those of others, since in this kind of intellectual exercise our powers are best brought into action and disciplined for use. Knowledge acquired by labor becomes a possession—a property entirely our own. A greater vividness of impression is secured, and facts thus acquired become registered in the mind in a way that mere

imparted information fails of securing. A habit of observation and reflection is well-nigh every thing. He who has spent his whole life in traveling may live and die a thorough novice in most of the important affairs of life, while, on the other hand, a man may be confined to a narrow sphere and be engrossed in the prosaic affairs of every-day life, and yet have very correct ideas of the manners and customs of other nations. He that studies only men will get the body of knowledge without the soul; he that studies only books, the soul without the body. He that to what he sees adds observation, and to what he reads, reflection, is in the right road to knowledge, provided that in scrutinizing the hearts of others he neglects not his own. Be not dismayed at doubts, for remember that doubt is the vestibule through which all must pass before they can enter into the temple of wisdom; therefore, when we are in doubt and puzzle out the truth by our own exertions, we have gained a something which will stay by us and serve us again. But if to avoid the trouble of a search we avail ourselves of the superior information of a friend, such knowledge will not remain with us; we have *borrowed* it and not *bought* it.

But man possesses something more than a mere body and intellect; he is the possessor of moral faculties as well. A true self-culture will be none the less careful to have the actions of these refined and pure than it is to possess physical health on the one hand and mental vigor on the other. Indeed, since your happiness depends upon their healthful condition more

than upon the state of your body and intellect, your first care should be devoted to giving careful attention to your moral nature. With disordered moral faculties you will be as a ship without a helm, dashed on bars and rocks at the will of winds and waves. It is the vice of the age to substitute learning for wisdom, to educate the head, and to forget that there is a more important education necessary for the heart. Let the heart be opened and a thousand virtues rush in. There is dew in one flower and not in another, because one opens its cup and takes it in, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off. God rains his goodness and mercy as widespread as the dew, and if we lack them it is because we know not how to open our hearts to receive them. No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich or poor according to what he is, and not what he has. Cultivate your moral nature, then, as well as bodily strength and mental vigor. The heart is the center of vitality in the physical body; so the moral senses seem to give vitality to all the various faculties of the mind. If the moral nature becomes stunted in its development the mind is apt to become chaotic in its action. How often we meet with examples of this character in the common walks of life! Many lose their balance of mind and become wrecks from want of *heart culture*. Is the *head* of more importance than the *heart*? It is true that wealth is the child of the one, but it is equally true that happiness is the offspring of the other.

Such, then, is an outline of the great problem

of self-culture. We can not escape its claims; from the time reason dawns until death closes the scene they are pressing upon you. Much of the happiness of life, both here and hereafter, depends on how you meet its demands. You can, if you but will it, grow apace in all that is manly or womanly in life; or, by neglecting the claims of your manifold nature, as utterly fail of so doing as the stunted shrub fails of being the stately tree with waving branches and luxuriant foliage.

LITERATURE.



The influence of literature upon a country is well-nigh incalculable. The Druid warriors were incited to deeds of desperate valor by the songs of their bards; and in modern times victories are achieved by the writers of books no less important than many won on tented fields. The literature of a nation molds the thoughts of a whole people, guides their actions, and

impresses its indelible mark upon the lives and conduct of its citizens. Who can estimate the effect of Voltaire's writings on the French people? The results for which many philanthropists toiled in vain were achieved by the works of Dickens. The power of books and literature is no less marked in the individual than in the mass. To the weak, and to the strong in their times of weakness, books are inspiring friends and teachers. Against the feebleness of individual efforts they proclaim the victory of faith and patience, and against the uncertainties and discouragement of one day's work they set forth the richer and more complete life that results from perseverance in right actions. It sets the mind more and more in harmony with the noblest aims, and holds before it a crown of honor and power.

There is a certain monotony in daily life, and there are those whose aims are high, but who lack the inherent strength to stand true to them amid adverse influences, and so gradually drop out of the ever-thinning ranks of those who would wrest from Fame her richest trophies. They are conquered by routine, and disheartened by the discipline and labor that guard the prizes of life. Even to the resolute, persevering ones there are hours of weakness and weariness. To all such literature comes with its helping hand in hours of discouragement. It revives hope in the minds of those almost discouraged, and brings the comforts of philosophy to the cast-down. Books are a guide to youth and an inspiration for age. They support us under solitude, and keep us from

becoming a burden to ourselves. They lessen our cares, compose our passions, and lay our disappointments asleep. When weary of the living, we may, by their aid, repair to the dead, who have nothing of peevishness, pride, or design in their conversation.

In books we live continually in the decisive moments of history, and in the deepest experience of individual lives. The flowers which we cull painfully and at long intervals in our personal history blossom in profusion here, and the air is full of fragrance which touches our own life only in its happier times. In our libraries we meet great minds on an equality, and feel at ease with them. We come to know them better, perhaps, than those who bear their names and sit at their tables. The reserve that makes so many fine natures difficult of access is here entirely lost. No carelessness of manner, no poverty of speech or unfortunate personal peculiarity, mars the intercourse of author and reader. It is a relation in which the exchange of thought is undisturbed by outward conditions. We lose our narrow selves in the broader life that is open to us. We forget the hindrance and limitation of our own work in the full comprehension of that stronger life that can not be bound nor confined, but grows in all soils, and climbs heavenward under every sky.

Literature is the soul of action, the only sensible articulate voice of the accomplished facts of the past. The men of antiquity are dead; their cities are ruins; their temples are dust; their fleets and armies have disappeared; yet all these exist in magic preservation in the

literature which they have bequeathed to us, and their manners and their deeds are as familiar to us as the events of yesterday. Papers and books are really the teachers, guides, and lawgivers of the world to-day. Their influence is very much like that of a companion to whom we are attached. Hence it is of more consequence to know what class to avoid than what to choose; for good books are as scarce as good companions, and in both instances all we can learn from bad ones is that so much time has been worse than thrown away.

We should choose our books as we do our friends, for their sterling and intrinsic merit, not for the accidental circumstances in their favor. For, with books as with men, it seldom happens that their performances are fully equal to their pretensions, nor their capital to their credit. As we should always seek the companionship of the best class of people, so we should always seek the companionship of the best books. He that will have no books but such as are scarce evinces about as correct a taste in literature as he would do in friendship who should have no friends but those whom the rest of the world have discarded. Some books we should make our constant companions and associates; others we should receive only as occasional acquaintances and visitors. Some we should take with us wherever we go; others we should leave behind us forever. Some, of gilded outsides, are full of depravity, and we should shun them as we would the actual vices which they represent. Some books we should keep in our hands and lay on our hearts, while the best

we could dispose of others would be to throw them in the fire.

You may judge a man more truly by the books and papers that he reads than by the company which he keeps, for his associates are in a measure imposed upon him; but his reading is the result of choice; and the man who chooses a certain class of books and papers unconsciously becomes more colored in their views, more rooted in their opinions, and the mind becomes trained to their way of thinking. All the life and feeling of a young girl fascinated by some glowing love romance is colored and shaped by the page she reads. If it is false and weak and foolish, she is false and weak and foolish too; but if it is true and tender and inspiring, then something of its truth and tenderness and inspiration will grow into her soul, and will become a part of her very self. The boy who reads of deeds of manliness, of bravery and noble doing, feels the spirit of emulation grow within him, and the seed is planted which will bring forth fruit of heroic endeavor and exalted life.

In literature our tastes will be discovered by what we give, our judgment by that which we withhold. That writer does the most who gives his readers the most knowledge and takes from them the least time, for that period of existence is alone deserving the name of life which is rationally employed. Those books are most profitable to read which make the readers think most. Diminutive books, like diminutive men and women, may be of greater value than they seem to be; but great tomes are greatly

dreaded. It is a saying that "books file away the mind." Much reading is certainly not profitable without much meditation, and many vigorous and profound thinkers have read comparatively little, though it must be admitted most great minds have been very devout and ardent readers. There is scarcely any thing that is not to be found in books, but it does not follow that we shall find every thing in them unless we handle them with great care.

A beautiful literature springs from the depths and fullness of intellectual and moral life, from an energy of thought and feeling. It deals with questions of life in a plain, practical manner. It holds up the past for your inspection. It brings to light the secrets of nature. It enables us to discover the infinity of things, the immensity of nature, the wonders of the heavens, the earth, and the seas. Works of fiction are the ornamental parts of literature and learning. They are agreeable embellishments of the edifice, but poor foundations for it to rest upon. The literature of the day is largely composed of newspapers and periodicals. No one can too highly appreciate the magic power of the press or too highly depreciate its abuse. Newspapers have become the great highway of that intelligence which exerts a controlling power over a nation, catering the every-day food of the mind. Show us an intelligent family of boys and girls, and we will show you a family where newspapers and periodicals are plenty. Nobody who has been without these private tutors can know their educating power for good or for evil. Think of the innumerable topics of

discussion which they suggest at the table; the important public measures with which the children thus early become acquainted; of the great philanthropic questions to which, unconsciously perhaps, their attention is called, and the general spirit of intelligence which is evoked by these quiet visitors. This vast world moves along lines of thought and sentiment and principles, and the press gives to these wings to fly and tongues to speak.

MENTAL POWER.

"My mind to me a kingdom is;
Such perfect joy therein I find
As far exceeds all earthly bliss.
Though much I want that most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave."

—SIR EDMUND DYER.



The triumph of cultivated intellect over the forces of nature is indeed a wonderful subject for contemplation. The most deadly poisons are

made to conduce to human health and welfare. Electricity does the writing and talking, and annihilates space. Steam and iron are made to do the work of nerves and muscles, and lay the four corners of the world under contribution for our benefit. In view of these and many similar facts, how full of meaning becomes the old saying, "Knowledge is power!" Reason, like the magnetic influence imparted to iron, may be said to give to matter properties and powers which it did not possess before; but, without extending its bulk, augmenting its weight, or altering its organization, it is visible only by its effects and perceptible only by its operations.

Unlike those of the warriors, the triumphs of intellect derive all their luster, not from the evil they have produced, but from the good. Her successes and her conquests are the common property of the world, and succeeding ages will be the watchful guardians of the rich legacies she bequeathes. The trophies and titles of the conqueror are on the quick march to oblivion, and amid that desolation where they were planted will decay. As the mind must govern the hand, so in every society the man of intelligence must direct and govern the man of ignorance. There is no exception to this law. It is the natural sequence of the dominion of mind over matter—a dominion so strong that for a time it can make flesh and nerves impregnable, and string the sinews like steel, so that the weak become strong. Some men of a secluded and studious life have sent forth from their closet or cloister rays of intellectual light that have agitated courts and revolutionized

kingdoms, as the moon, that far removed from the ocean, and shining upon it with a serene and sober light, is the chief cause of all those ebbings and flowings which incessantly disturb that world of waters.

The triumph of mind is shown in various ways. It enables us to surmount difficulties with facility. Like imprisoned steam, the more it is pressed, the more it rises to resist the pressure. The more we are obliged to do, the more we are able to accomplish. Perhaps in no other respect is the power of mind more signally shown than when it opens to our view avenues of pleasure before unthought of. Happiness is the great aim of life. In one form or another we are all striving for it. There are no pleasures so pure as mental pleasures. We never tire of them. A lofty mind always thinks loftily. It easily creates vivid, agreeable, and natural fancies, places them in their best light, clothes them with all appropriate adornments, studies others' tastes, and clears away from its own thoughts all that is useless and disagreeable. Mental force or power is not the inheritance of birth, nor the result of a few years' spasmodic study; it is only acquired as the result of long and patient exertion. There is no age at which it can not be increased. There is absolutely no branch of literature which, when properly digested and stowed away in the mind, will not show its effect in after life by increased vigor in the whole mind. Those intellectually strong men and women who have left their influence on the world's history are almost without exception found to be those who have possessed broad

and deep acquirements; who have permitted no opportunity for obtaining information to pass unimproved; who have been content for years to store away knowledge, confident that in the fullness of time they would reap the reward.

If any one would be the possessor of mental power he must be willing to do his duty in obtaining it. There is a tendency to make the acquisition of knowledge, at the present day, as easy as possible. The end proposed is good, but the means employed are of doubtful utility. Instead of toiling painfully on foot up the rugged steeps of learning the student of to-day flies along a railway track, finding every cliff cut through and every valley bridged. In this world nothing of value is to be obtained without labor. So there are some who will question the value of that education which is not born of patient perseverance and hard work. As in the exercises of the gymnasium the value consists in the exertions required to perform them, so that knowledge and mental power acquired by arduous exertion is of the most lasting and real value. Let patient toilers find a lesson of encouragement in this. What you thus painfully acquire will prove of lasting benefit to you.

Mental power is seen in its best form only when all of the mental faculties have been properly drilled and disciplined. The mind can not grow to its full stature, nor be rounded into just proportions, nor acquire that blended litheness, toughness, and elasticity which it needs, if fed on one aliment. There is no profession or calling which, if too exclusively

followed, will not warp and contract the mind. Just as if, in the body, a person resolves to be a rower, and only a rower, the chances are that he will have, indeed, strong arms, but weak legs, and eyes blinded by the glare of water. Or, if he desires to become an athlete, he may be all muscles, with few brains. So, in the mind, if he exercises but one set of faculties and neglects the rest, he may become a subtle theologian or a sharp lawyer, a keen man of business, or a practical mechanic, and though the possessor of power it is not power in its highest and best form.

But for those who are anxious to obtain mental power, and for that purpose devote the years of a life-time to patient study and reflection, the rewards it offers are full compensation for all the hours of weary, self-denying labor. Not only does it afford the best assurance of success in life's battles and point out to its possessor means of happiness denied to others, but it is so peculiarly the highest form of power to which men can aspire that it commands the homage of all, and reposes as a jewel in the crown of the true man or woman.

CHOICE OF COMPANIONS.



The chameleon changes its color to agree with that of surrounding objects. We all of us by nature possess this quality to such a degree that our character, habits, and principles take their form and color from those of our intimate associates. Association with persons wiser, better, and more experienced than ourselves is always more or less inspiring and invigorating. They enhance our knowledge of life. We correct our estimate by theirs, and become partners in their wisdom. We enlarge our field of observation through their eyes, profit by their experience, and learn not only by what they have enjoyed, but—which is still more instructive—from what they have suffered. If they are stronger than ourselves, we become participators in their strength. Hence companionship with the wise and energetic never fails to have a most valuable influence on the formation of character—increasing our resources, strengthening our resolves, elevating our aims, and enabling us to exercise greater dexterity and ability in our own affairs, as well as more effective helpfulness in those of others.

Young men are in general but little aware how much their reputation is affected in the view of the public by the company they keep. The character of their associates is soon

regarded as their own. If they seek the society of the worthy and the respectable, it elevates them in the public estimation, as it is an evidence that they respect themselves, and are desirous to secure the respect of others. On the contrary, intimacy with persons of bad character always sinks a young man in the eyes of the public. While he, in intercourse with such persons, thinks but little of the consequences, others are making their remarks. They learn what his taste is, what sort of company he prefers, and predict, on no doubtful ground, what will be the result to his own principles and character. It is they only who are elevated in mind, character, and position, who can lift us up; while the ignoble, degraded, and debased only drag us down. We may be deprived of the advantages of better and superior associations at some time or another, but, unless we seek for them, we shall not profit by them, nor be acknowledged to be worthy of them.

No man of position can allow himself to associate, without prejudice, with the profane, the Sabbath-breaking, the drunken, and the licentious; for he lowers himself, without elevating them. The sweep is not made the less black by rubbing against the well-dressed and the clean, while they are inevitably defiled. Keep company with persons rather above than below yourself; for gold in the same pocket with silver loseth both of its weight and color. Nothing elevates us so much as the presence of a spirit similar, yet superior, to our own. What is companionship where nothing that improves the intellect is communicated, and where the

larger heart contracts itself to the mold and dimensions of the smaller? In all society it is advisable to associate, if possible, with the highest; not that the highest are always the best, but because, if disgusted there, you can at any time descend; but if we begin at the lowest, to ascend is impossible. It should be the aim of the young man to seek the society of the wise, the intelligent, and the good. It is always safe to be found in the society of those who, with a good heart, combine intelligence and an ability to impart information. If you wish to be respected, if you desire happiness and not misery, associate only with the intelligent and good. Once habituate yourself to a virtuous course, once secure a love of good society, and no punishment would be greater than, by accident, to be obliged to associate, even for a short time, with the low and vulgar.

He that sinks into familiarity with persons much below his own level will be constantly weighed down by his base connections, and, though he may easily sink lower, he will find it hard to rise again. Better be alone than in bad company. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Ill qualities are catching as well as diseases, and the mind is at least as much, if not a great deal more, liable to infections than the body. Go with mean people and you think life is mean. Society is the atmosphere of souls, and we necessarily imbibe something which is either infectious or salubrious. The society of virtuous persons is enjoyed beyond their company, and vice carries a sting even into solitude. The society you keep is both the

indicator and former of your character. In company, when the pores of the mind are all opened, there requires more guard than usual, because the mind is then passive. In vicious company you will feel your reverence for the dictates of conscience wear off. The name at which angels bow and devils tremble you will hear contemned and abused. The Bible will supply materials for unmeaning jests or impious buffoonery. The consequences will be a practical deviation into vice—the principle will become sapped and the fences of conscience broken down.

It is not alone the low and dissipated, the vulgar and profane, from whose example and society you are in danger. These persons of reputation will despise and shun. But there are persons of apparently decent morals, of polished manners and interesting talents, but who, at the same time, are unprincipled and wicked, who make light of sacred things, scoff at religion, and deride the suggestions and scruples of a tender conscience as superstition, —these are the persons whose society and influence are most to be feared. Their breath is pollution; their embrace, death. Unhappily there are many of this description. They mark out their unwary victims: they gradually draw them into their toils; they strike the deadly fang, infuse the poison, and exult to see youthful virtue and parental hope wither and expire under their ruffian example. Many a young man has thus been led on by his elders in iniquity till he has been initiated into all the mysteries of debauchery and crime, and ended

his days a poor, outcast wretch.

Live with the culpable and you will be apt to die with the criminal. Bad company is like a nail driven into a post, which, after the first or second blow, may be drawn out with little difficulty, but, being driven in to the head, it can only be withdrawn by the destruction of the wood. Be you ever so pure-minded yourself you can not associate with bad companions without falling into bad odor. Evil company is like tobacco smoke—you can not be long in its presence without carrying away a taint of it. "Let no man deceive himself," says Petrarch, "by thinking that the contagions of the soul are less than those of the body. They are yet greater; they sink deeper and come on more unsuspectedly." From impure air we take diseases; from bad company, vice and imperfections. Avoid, as far as you can, the company of all vicious persons whatsoever, for no vice is alone, and all are infectious.

Good company not only improves our manners, but also our minds, and intelligent associates will become a source of enjoyment as well as of edification. Good company is that which is composed of intelligent and well-bred persons, whose language is chaste and good, whose sentiments are pure and edifying, whose deportment is such as pure and well-regulated education and correct morals dictate, and whose conduct is directed and restrained by the pure precepts of religion. When we have the advantages of such company it should then be the object of our zeal to imitate their real excellencies, copy their politeness, their

carriage, their address, and the easy, well-bred turn of their conversation; but we should remember that, let them shine ever so bright, their vices are so many blemishes upon their character which we should no more think of endeavoring to imitate than we should to make artificial warts upon our faces because some distinguished person happened to have one there by nature.

Water will seek its level. So do the various elements of society. Tell us whom you prefer as companions and we can tell who you are like. Do you love the society of the vulgar? Then you are already debased in your sentiments. Do you seek to be with the profane? In your heart you are like them. Are jesters and buffoons your choice companions? He who loves to laugh at folly is himself a fool. Do you love and seek the society of the wise and good? Is this your habit? Had you rather take the lowest seat among these than the highest seat with others? Then you have already learned to be good. You may not make very rapid progress, but even a good beginning is not to be despised. Hold on your way, and seek to be the companion of those that fear God. So shall you be wise for yourself and wise for eternity.



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FRIENDSHIP.

FRIENDS.

"There are a thousand nameless ties,
Which only such as feel them know,
Of kindred thoughts, deep sympathies,
And untold fancy spells, which throw
O'er ardent minds and faithful hearts
A chain whose charmed links so blend
That the bright circlet but imparts
Its force in these fond words—'*My Friend!*'"



Friendship is the sweetest and most satisfactory connection in life. It has notable effect upon all states and conditions. It relieves our cares, raises our hopes, and abates our fears. A friend who relates his successes talks himself into a new pleasure, and by opening his misfortunes leaves a part of them behind him. Friendship improves happiness and abates misery, by doubling our joys and dividing our griefs. Charity is friendship in common, and friendship is charity inclosed. It is a sweet attraction of the heart towards the merit we esteem or the perfection we admire, and produces a mutual inclination between two or more persons to promote each others' interests, knowledge, virtue, and happiness.

The language of friendship is as varied as the wants and weaknesses of humanity. To the timid and cautious it speaks words of encouragement. To the weak it is ready to

extend a helping hand. To the bold and venturesome it whispers words of caution. It is ready to sympathize with the sorrowing one, and to rejoice with those of good cheer. Friendship is not confined to any particular class of society or any particular geographical locality. No surveyed chart, no natural boundary line, no rugged mountain or steep declining vale puts a limit to its growth. Wherever it is watered with the dews of kindness and affection, there you may be sure to find it. Allied in closest companionship with its twin sister, Charity, it enters the abode of sorrow and wretchedness, and causes happiness and peace. Its influence dispels every poisoned thought of envy, and spreads abroad in the mind a contentment which all the powers of the mind could not otherwise bestow. True friendship will bloom only in the soil of a noble and self-sacrificing heart. There it enjoys perpetual Summer, diffusing a sweet atmosphere of love, peace, and joy to all around.

No man can go very far with strength and courage, if he goes alone through the weary struggles of life. We are made to be happier and better by each other's notice and appreciation, and the hearts that are debarred from those influences invariably contract and harden. Here and there we find persons who, from pride or singularity of disposition, affect to be altogether independent of the notice or regard of their fellow-beings; but never yet was there constituted a human heart that did not at some time, in some tender and yearning hour, long

for the sympathy of other hearts. Instead of striving to conceal this feeling, it should be regarded as one possessing true nobility. True friendship can only be molded by the experience of time. The attractive face, the winning tongue, or the strong need of some passer-by, is not the permanent test of the union of hearts. We want a more substantial proof than any of these. A thousand transitory friends meet us along the crowded thoroughfares of life; but when we come to try their durability in the sieve of experience, alas, how many fall through! There have been times in the life of every man when he has been willing to stake reputation, credit, *all*, on the true friendship of some companion; but he turns to find his idol clay, the gold but dross. Few persons are so fortunate as to secure in the course of life the happiness and advantages of one efficient and devoted friend. It is all that many aim at, seek, and ask to have, and is worth a whole caravan of those lukewarm and treacherous souls who, indeed, profess to be attached to us, but whose affection is so uncertain and unstable that we fear to put it to the test of trial lest we lose it forever.

Concerning the one you call your friend, tell us, will he weep with you in your hours of distress? Will he faithfully reprove you to your face for actions for which others are ridiculing and censuring you behind your back? Will he dare to stand forth in your defense when detraction is secretly aiming its weapon at your reputation? Will he acknowledge you with the same cordiality and behave to you with the

same friendly attention in the company of your superiors in rank and fortune as when the claims of pride do not interfere with those of friendship? If misfortune and loss should oblige you to retire into a walk of life in which you can not appear with the same liberality as formerly, will he still think himself happy in your society, and instead of withdrawing himself from an unprofitable connection, take pleasure in professing himself your friend, and cheerfully assist you to support the burden of your afflictions? When sickness shall call you to retire from the busy world, will he follow you to your gloomy retreat, listen with attention to your tale of suffering, and administer the balm of consolation to your fainting spirit? And, lastly, when death shall burst asunder every earthly tie, will he shed a tear upon your grave, and lodge the dear remembrance of your mutual friendship in his heart? If so, then grapple him to your heart with hooks of steel; and you shall know the privilege of having one true friend.

Friendship is a vase which, when it is flawed by violence or accident, may as well be broken at once; it never can be trusted after. The more graceful and ornamental it was, the more clearly do we discern the hopelessness of restoring it to its former state. Coarse stones, if they are fractured, may be cemented again; precious ones never. It is a great thing to cover the blemishes and to excuse the faults of a friend; to draw a curtain before his stains; to bury his weakness in silence, but to proclaim his virtues upon the housetop. Prosperity is no

just scale; adversity is the only true balance to weigh friends in. True friendship must withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the name, since friendships which are born in adversity are more firm and lasting than those formed in happiness, as iron is more strongly united the fiercer the flames. One has never the least difficulty in finding a devoted friend except when he needs one. Real friends are wont to visit us in prosperity only when invited, but in adversity they come of their own accord. A friend is not known in prosperity, but can not be hidden in adversity. If we lack the sagacity to discriminate wisely between our acquaintances and our friends, misfortune will readily do it for us. Prosperity gains friends, and adversity tries them. False friends are like our shadows—keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine, but leaving us the instant we cross into the shade. False friendship, like the ivy, decays and ruins the walls it embraces; but true friendship gives new life and animation to the object it supports.

The hardest trials of those who fall from affluence to poverty and obscurity is the discovery that the attachment of so many in whom they confided was a pretense, a mask to gain their own ends, or was a miserable shallowness. Sometimes, doubtless, it is with regret that these frivolous followers of the world desert those upon whom they have fawned; but they soon forget them. Flies leave the kitchen when the dishes are empty. The parasites that cluster about the favorites of fortune to gather his gifts and climb by his aid,

linger with the sunshine, but scatter at the approach of a storm, as the leaves cling to a tree in Summer weather, but drop off at the breath of Winter. Like ravens settled down for a banquet and suddenly scared away by a noise, how quickly at the first sound of calamity the superficial friends are up and away. Cling to your friends after having chosen them with proper caution. If they reprove you, thank them; if they grieve you, forgive them; if circumstances have torn them from you, circumstances may change and make them yours again. Be very slow to give up an old and tried friend. A true friend is such a rare thing to have that you are blessed beyond the majority of men if you possess but one such. The first law of friendship is sincerity, and he who violates this law will soon find himself destitute of that which he sought.

The death of a friendship is always a tragical affair. Sometimes it cools from day to day, warm confidence gradually giving place to cold civility, and these in turn swiftly becoming icy husks of neglect and repugnance. Sometimes its remembrances touch us with a pang, or we stand at its grave sobbing, wounded with a grief whose balsam never grew. The hardest draught in the cup of life is wrung from betrayed affection, when the guiding light of friendship is quenched in deception, and the gloom that surrounds our path grows palpable. Let one find cold repulse or mocking treachery where he expected the greeting of friendship, and it is not strange that he feels crushed with the discovery.

Old friends! What a multitude of deep and varied emotions are called up from the soul by the utterance of these two words! What thronging memories of other days crowd the brain when they are spoken! Oh, there is magic in their sound, and the spell it evokes is both sad and pleasing. When reverie brings before us in quick succession the scenes of by-gone years, how do the features of olden friends, dim and shadowy as the grave in which many of them are laid, flit before us! How they carry us to other scenes and other places! The thoughts which fill the mind when thus musing on the past are always of a chastened kind. In the scenes of the past we behold a type of the future. The fate of our friends shadows forth our own, and we are indeed dull if we fail to arise from fancied communication with old friends wiser and better men and women.

POWER OF CUSTOM.

There are many who find themselves in the toils of an evil custom who would most willingly give money and time to be free from its control. Montaigne says, "Custom is a violent and treacherous school-mistress. She, by little and little, slyly and unperceivedly slips in the foot of her authority; but having by this gentle and humble beginning, with the benefit of time, fixed and established it, she then unmasks a furious and tyrannic countenance, against which we have no more the courage or the power to lift up our eyes." Custom is the law of one class of people and fashion of another; but the two parties often clash, for precedence is the legislator of the first and novelty of the second. Custom, therefore, looks to things that are past, and fashion to things that are present; but both are somewhat purblind as to things that are to come. Of the two, fashion imposes the heaviest burdens, for she cheats her votaries of their time, their fortune, and their comforts, and she repays them only with the celebrity of being ridiculed and despised—a very paradoxical mode of payment, yet always most thankfully received.

It is surprising to what an extent our likes and dislikes are creatures of custom. Our modes of belief, thoughts, and opinions are molded and shaped by what has been the prevailing mode of thinking heretofore. Though we are, indeed, not so given to the worship of past institutions as some people, yet we all acknowledge the prevailing power of custom, of personal habits, and of fashions. We dare not stand alone in any matter of concern, but wish

to be in company of those similarly minded. The law of opinion goes forth. We do not ask who promulgates it, but fall into the ranks of its followers and worshipers. We are whirled in the giddy ranks and blinded by the dazzling lights. Novelty is the show, conformity is the law—and life a trance, until at last we awake from it to find that we have been the victims of a fatal folly and a bewildering dream.

Habit is man's best friend or worst enemy. It can exalt him to the highest pinnacle of virtue, honor, or happiness, or sink him to the lowest depths of vice, shame, and misery. If we look back upon the usual course of our feelings we shall find that we are more influenced by the frequent recurrence of objects than by their weight and importance, and that habit has more force in forming our character than our opinions. The mind naturally takes its tone and complexion from what it habitually contemplates. "Whatever may be the cause," says Lord Kames, "it is an established fact that we are much influenced by custom. It hath an effect upon our pleasures, upon our actions, and even upon our thoughts and sentiments." Habit makes no figure during the vivacity of youth, in middle age it gains ground, and in old age governs without control. In that period of life, generally speaking, we eat at a certain hour, take exercise at a certain time, all by the direction of habit; nay, a particular seat, table, and bed comes to be essential, and a habit in any of these can not be contradicted without uneasiness. Man, it has been said, is a bundle of habits, and habit is a second nature. Metastasio

entertained so strong an opinion as to the power of repetition in act and thought that he said, "All is habit in mankind, even virtue itself."

Beginning with single acts habit is formed slowly at first, and it is not till its spider's thread is woven in a thick cable that its existence is suspected. Then it is found that beginning in cobwebs it ends in chains. Gulliver was bound as fast by the Lilliputians with multiplied threads as if they had used ropes. "Like flakes of snow that fall unperceivedly upon the earth," says Jeremy Bentham, "the seemingly unimportant events of life succeed one another." As the snow gathers so are our habits formed; no single flake that is added to the pile produces a sensible change; no single action creates, however it may exhibit, a man's character. But as the tempest hurls the avalanche down the mountain and overwhelms the inhabitant and his habitation, so passion, acting upon the elements of mischief which pernicious habits have brought together by imperceptible accumulation, may overthrow the edifice of truth and virtue.

The force of habit renders pleasant many things which at first were intensely disagreeable or even painful. Walking upon the quarter-deck of a vessel, though felt at first to be intolerably confined, becomes, by repetition, so agreeable to the sailor that, in his walks on shore, he often hems himself within the same bounds. Arctic explorers become so accustomed to the hardships incident to such a life that they do not enjoy the comforts of home when they

return. So powerful is the effect of constant repetition of action that men whose habits are fixed may almost be said to have lost their free agency. Their actions become of the nature of fate, and they are so bound by the chains which they have woven for themselves that they do that which they have been accustomed to do even when they know it can yield neither pleasure nor profit.

Those who are in the power of an evil habit must conquer it as they can, and conquered it must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be obtained; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom. They may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant whom they will vainly resolve to conquer. Be not slow in the breaking of a sinful custom; a quick, courageous resolution is better than a gradual deliberation; in such a combat he is the bravest soldier who lays about him without fear or wit. Wit pleads; fear disheartens. He who would kill hydra had better strike off one neck than five heads,—fell the tree and the branches are soon cut off. Vicious habits are so great a strain on human nature, said Cicero, and so odious in themselves that every person actuated by right reason would avoid them, though he were sure they would always be concealed both from God and man and had no future punishment entailed on them. Vicious habits, when opposed, offer the most vigorous resistance on the first attack; at each successive encounter this resistance grows weaker, until, finally, it ceases altogether, and the victory is achieved.

Such being the power of habit all can plainly see the importance of forming habits of such a nature that they shall constantly tend to increase our happiness, and to render more sure and certain that success the attaining of which is the object of all our endeavors. We may form habits of honesty or knavery, frugality or extravagance, of patience or impatience, self-denial or self-indulgence. In short, there is not a virtue nor a vice, not an act of body nor of mind, to which we may not be chained by this despotic power. It has been truly said that even happiness may become habitual. One may acquire the habit of looking upon the sunny side of things, or of looking upon the gloomy side. He may accustom himself, by a happy alchemy, to transmute the darkest events into materials for hopes. Hume, the historian, said that the habit of looking at the bright side of things was better than an income of a thousand pounds a year.

Habits which are to be commended are not to be formed in a day, nor by a few faint resolutions, not by accident, not by fits and starts—being one moment in a paroxysm of attention and the next falling into the sleep of indifference—are they to be obtained, but by steady, persistent efforts. Above all, it is necessary that they should be acquired in youth, for then do they cost the least effort. Like letters cut in the bark of a tree, they grow and widen with age. Once obtained they are a fortune of themselves, for their possessor has disposed thereby of the heavier end of the load of life; all the remaining he can carry easily and

pleasantly. On the other hand, bad habits, once formed, will hang forever on the wheels of enterprise, and in the end will assert their supremacy, to the ruin and shame of their victim.

PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

"I shot an arrow in the air;
It fell on earth, I knew not where.
.....
I breathed a song into the air;
It fell on earth, I knew not where.
.....
Long, long afterwards, in an oak,
I found the arrow still unbroke,
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend."

—H. W. LONGFELLOW.



Influence is to a man what flavor is to fruit,

or fragrance to the flower. It does not develop strength or determine character, but it is the measure of his interior richness and worth, and as the blossom can not tell what becomes of the odor which is wafted away from it by every wind, so no man knows the limit of that influence which constantly and imperceptibly escapes from his daily life, and goes out far beyond his conscious knowledge or remotest thought. Influence is a power we exert over others by our thoughts, words, and actions; by our lives, in short. It is a silent, a pervading, a magnetic, a most wonderful thing. It works in inexplicable ways. We neither see nor hear it, yet, consciously or unconsciously, we exert it.

Your influence is not confined to yourself or to the scene of your immediate actions; it extends to others, and will reach to succeeding ages. Future generations will feel the influence of your conduct. We all of us at times lose sight of this principle, and apparently act on the assumption that what we do or think or say can affect no one but ourselves. But we are so connected with the immortal beings around us, and with those who are to come after us, that we can not avoid exerting a most important influence over their character and final condition; and thus, long after we shall be no more—nay, after the world itself shall be no more—the consequences of our conduct to thousands of our fellow-men will be nothing less than everlasting destruction or eternal life. What we do is transacted on a stage of which all in the universe are spectators. What we say is transmitted in echoes that will never cease.

What we are is influencing and acting on the rest of mankind. Neutral we can not be. Living we act, and dead we speak; and the whole universe is the mighty company, forever looking and listening; and all nature the tablets, forever recording the words, the deeds, the thoughts, the passions of mankind.

It is a high, solemn, almost awful thought for every individual man, that his earthly influence, which has a commencement, will never through all ages have an end! What is done, is done—has already blended itself with the boundless, ever-living, ever-working universe, and will work there for good or evil, openly or secretly, throughout all time. The life of every man is as the well-spring of a stream, whose small beginnings are, indeed, plain to all, but whose course and destination, as it winds through the expanse of infinite years, only the Omniscient can discern. God has written upon the flower that sweetens the air, upon the breeze that rocks the flower upon its stem, upon the rain-drop that swells the mighty river, upon the dew-drops that refresh the smallest sprig of moss that rears its head in the desert, upon the ocean that rocks every swimmer in its channel, upon every penciled shell that sleeps in the caverns of the deep, as well as upon the mighty sun which warms and cheers the millions of creatures that live in its light,—upon all he has written, "None of us liveth to himself."

The babe that perished on the bosom of its mother, like a flower that bowed its head and drooped amid the death-frosts of time,—that babe, not only in its image, but in its influence,

still lives and speaks in the chambers of the mother's heart. The friend with whom we took sweet counsel is removed visibly from the outward eye; but the lessons that he taught, the grand sentiments that he uttered, the deeds of generosity by which he was characterized, the moral lineaments and likeness of the man, still survive, and appear in the silence of eventide, and on the tablets of memory, and in the light of noon and dewy eve; and, though dead, he yet speaketh eloquently and in the midst of us. Every thing leaves a history and an influence. The pebble, as well as the planet, goes attended by its shadow. The rolling rock leaves its scratches on the mountains, the river its channel in the soil, the animal its bones in the stratum, the fern and leaf their modest epitaph in the coal. The falling drop marks its sculpture in the sand or the stone. Not a foot steps into the snow or along the ground but prints, in characters more or less lasting, a map of its march. Every act of man inscribes itself in the memories of its fellows, and in his own manners and face. The air is full of sounds, the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures, and every object covered over with hints which speak to the intelligent.

The sun sets beyond the western hills, but the trail of light he leaves behind him guides the pilgrim to his distant home. The tree falls in the forest; but in the lapse of ages it is turned into coal, and our fires burn now the brighter because it grew and fell. The coral insect dies; but the reef it raised breaks the surge on the shores of great continents, or has formed an isle

on the bosom of the ocean, to wave with harvests for the good of man. We live and we die, but the good or evil that we do lives after us, and is not "buried with our bones."

The career of great men remains an enduring monument of human energy. The man dies and disappears; but the thoughts and acts survive and leave an indelible stamp on his race. And thus the spirit of his life is prolonged, and thus perpetuated, molding the thought and will, and thereby contributing to form the character of the future. It is the men who advance in the highest and best directions who are the true beacons of human progress. They are as lights set upon a hill, illuminating the moral atmosphere around them; and the light of their spirit continues to shine upon all succeeding generations. The golden words that good men have uttered, the examples they have set, live through all time; they pass into the thoughts and hearts of their successors, help them on the road of life, and often console them in the hour of death. They live a universal life, speak to us from their graves, and beckon us on in the paths which they trod. Their example is still with us, to guide, to influence, and to direct us. Nobility of character is a perpetual bequest, living from age to age, and constantly tending to reproduce its like.

It is what man *was* that lives and acts after him. What he said sounds along the years like voices amid the mountain gorges, and what he did is repeated after him in ever multiplying and never ceasing reverberations. Every man has left behind him influences for good or evil

that will never exhaust themselves. The sphere in which he acts may be small or it may be great, it may be his fireside or it may be a kingdom, a village or a great nation, it may be a parish or broad Europe—but act he does, ceaselessly and forever. His friends, his family, his successors in office, his relatives are all receptive of an influence, a moral influence, which he has transmitted to mankind—either a blessing which will repeat itself in showers of benediction, or a curse which will multiply itself in ever-accumulating evil.

We see not in life the end of human actions. Their influence never dies. In ever-widening circles it reaches beyond the grave. Death removes us from this to an eternal world. Every morning when we go forth we lay the molding hand on our destiny, and every evening when we have done, we have left a deathless impress on eternity. "We touch not a wire but that it vibrates to God."

Since we all have a personal influence, and our words and actions leave a well-nigh indelible trace, it is our duty to make that influence as potential for good as possible. In order to do this you must show yourself a man among men. It is through the invisible lines which you are able to attach to the minds with which you are brought into association that you can influence society in the direction of the greatest good. You can not move men until you are one of them. They will not follow you until they have heard your voice, shaken your hand, and fully learned your principles and your sympathies. It makes no difference how much

you know, nor how much you are capable of doing. You may pile accomplishments upon acquisitions mountain high; but if you fail to be a social man, demonstrating to society that your lot is with the rest, a little child with a song in its mouth and a kiss for all and a pair of innocent hands to lay upon the knees shall lead more hearts and change the directions of more lives than you.

A just appreciation of the power of personal influence leads to a sense of duty resting upon all to see to it that their influence is exerted in inculcating a proper sense of right in the community in which they live; to be sure that their weight is constantly cast in the scale of right against wrong; that they be found furthering all matters of enlightened public concern. They should as far as possible walk through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasures on every side through the air to all, far and near, that can listen. Some men fill the air with their presence and sweetness, as orchards in October days fill the air with the perfume of ripe fruits. Some women cling to their own homes like the honeysuckle over the door, yet, like it, sweeten all the region with the subtle fragrance of their goodness. Such men and women are trees of righteousness, which are ever dropping precious fruits around them. Their lives shine like starbeams, or charm the heart like songs sung upon a holy day.

How great a beauty and blessing it is to hold the royal gifts of the soul, so that they shall be music to some and fragrance to others, and life

to all! It would be a most worthy object of life to make the power which we have within us the breath of other men's joys; to scatter sunshine where only clouds and shadows reign; to fill the atmosphere where earth's weary toilers must stand with a brightness which they can not create for themselves, but long for, enjoy, and appreciate. There is an energy of moral suasion in a good man's life passing the highest efforts of the orator's genius. The seen but silent beauty of holiness speaks more eloquently of God and duty than the tongues of men and angels. Let parents remember this. The best inheritance a parent can bequeathe to a child is a virtuous example, a legacy of hallowed remembrance and associations. The beauty of holiness beaming through the life of a loved relative or friend is more effectual to strengthen such as do stand in virtue's ways, and raise up those that are bowed down, than precept or command, entreaty or warning.

Shall our influence be for good or for evil? For good? Then let no act of ours be such as could lead a fellow mortal astray. It is a terrible thought that some careless word, uttered it may be in jest, may start some soul upon the downward road. Oh, it is terrible power that we have—the power of influence—and it clings to us. We can not shake it off. It is born with us, and it has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength. It speaks, it walks, it moves; it is powerful in every look of our eye, in every word of our mouth, in every act of our lives. We can not live to ourselves. We must be either a light to illumine or a

tempest to destroy. We must bear constantly in mind that there is one record we can not interline—our lives written on others' hearts. How gladly we would review and write a kind word there, a generous act here, erase a frown and put in a loving word, a bright smile, and a tender expression. Harshness would be erased, and gentleness written. But, alas! what is written is written. Clotho will not begin anew to spin the threads of life, and our actions go forth into the world freighted with their burden of good or evil influence.

CHARACTER.

Character is one of the greatest motive powers in the world. In its noblest embodiments it exemplifies human nature in its highest forms, for it exhibits man at his best. It is the corner-stone of individual greatness—the Doric and splendid column of the majestic structure of a true and dignified man, who is at once a

subject and a king. Character is to a man what the fly-wheel is to the engine. By the force of its momentum it carries him through times of temptation and trial; it steadies him in times of popular excitement and tumult, and exerts a guiding and controlling influence over his life.

There are trying and perilous circumstances in life which show how valuable and important a good character is. It is a strong and sure staff of support when every thing else fails. In the crisis of temptation, in the battle of life, when the struggle comes either from within or without, it is our strength, heroism, virtue, and consistency—our character, in short—which defends and secures our happiness and honor. And if they fail us in the hour of need—in the season of danger—all may be irretrievably lost, and nothing left us except vain regrets and penitential tears.

Character is power, character is influence, and he who has character, though he may have nothing else, has the means of being eminently useful, not only to his immediate friends, but to society, to the Church of God, and to the world. When a person has lost his character all is lost —all peace of mind, all complacency in himself, are fled forever. He despises himself; he is despised by his fellow-men. Within is shame and remorse; without, neglect and reproach. He is of necessity a miserable and useless man, and he is so even though he be clad in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day. It is better to be poor; it is better to be reduced to beggary; it is better to be cast into prison, or condemned to perpetual slavery than to be

destitute of a good name, or endure the pains and evils of a conscious worthlessness of character. The value of character is the standard of human progress. The individual, the community, the nation, tell of their standing, their advancement, their worth, their true wealth and glory, in the eye of God, by their estimation of character. That man or nation that lightly esteems character is low, groveling, and barbarous.

Wherever character is made a secondary object sensualism and crime prevail. He who would prostitute character to reputation is base. He who lives for any thing less than character is mean. He who enters upon any study, pursuit, amusement, pleasure, habit, or course of life, without considering its effect upon his character is not a trusty or an honest man. He whose modes of thought, states of feeling, every-day acts, common language, and whole outward life, are not directed by a wise reference to their influence upon his character is a man always to be watched. Just as a man prizes his character so is he.

There is a difference between character and reputation. Character is what a man is; reputation is what he is thought to be. Character is within; reputation is without. Character is always real; reputation may be false. Character is substantial and enduring; reputation may be vapory and fleeting. Character is at home; reputation is abroad. Character is in a man's own soul; reputation is in the minds of others. Character is the solid food of life; reputation is the dessert. Character

is what gives a man value in his own eyes; reputation is what he is valued at in the eyes of others. Character is his real worth; reputation is his market price. A man may have a good character and a bad reputation; or, a man may have a good reputation and a bad character, as we form our opinion of men from what they appear to be, and not from what they really are. Most men are more anxious about their reputation than they are about their character. This is not right. While every man should endeavor to maintain a good reputation, he should especially labor to possess a good character. Our true happiness depends not so much on what is thought of us by others as on what we really are in ourselves. Men of good character are generally men of good reputation, but this is not always the case, as the motives and actions of the best of men are sometimes misunderstood and misrepresented. But it is important, above every thing, else that we be right and do right, whether our motives and actions are properly understood and appreciated or not. Nothing can be so important to any man as the formation and possession of a good character.

Character is of slow but steady growth, and the smallest child and the humblest and weakest individual may attain heights that now seem inaccessible by the constant and patient exercise of just as much moral power as, from time to time, they possess. The faithful discharge of daily duty, the simple integrity of purpose and power of life that all can attain with effort, contribute silently but surely to the

building up of a moral character that knows no limit to its power, no bounds to its heroism. The influences which operate in the formation of character are numerous, and however trivial some of them may appear they are not to be despised. The most powerful forces in nature are those that operate silently and imperceptibly. This is equally true of those moral forces which exert the greatest influence on our minds and give complexion to our character. Among the most powerful are early impressions, examples, and habits. Early impressions, although they may appear to be but slight, are the most enduring, and exert a great influence on life. The tiniest bit of public opinion sown in the minds of children in private life afterwards issue forth to the world and become its public opinions, for nations are gathered out of nurseries. By repetition of acts the character becomes slowly but decidedly formed. The several acts may seem in themselves trivial, but so are the continuous acts of daily life.

Our minds are given us, but our characters we make. The full measure of all the powers necessary to make a man are no more a character than a handful of seeds is an orchard of fruits. Plant the seeds, and tend them well, and they will make an orchard. Cultivate the powers, and harmonize them well, and they will make a noble character. The germ is not the tree, the acorn is not the oak; neither is the mind a character. God gives the mind; man makes the character. Mind is the garden; character is the fruit. Mind is the white page;

character is the writing we put on it. Mind is the metallic plate; character is our engraving thereon. Mind is the shop, the counting-room; character is our profits on the trade. Large profits are made from quick sales and small percentage; so great characters are made by many little acts and efforts. A dollar is composed of a thousand mills; so is a character of a thousand thoughts and acts. The secret thought never expressed, the inward indulgence in imaginary wrong, the lie never told for want of courage, the licentiousness never indulged in for fear of public rebuke, the irreverence of the heart, are just as effectual in staining the heart as though the world knew all about them.

A subtle thing is character, and a constant work is its formation. Whether it be good or bad, it has been long in its growth and is the aggregate of millions of little mental acts. A good character is a precious thing, above rubies, gold, crowns, or kingdoms, and the work of making it is the noblest labor on earth. A good character is in all cases the fruit of personal exertion. It is not an inheritance from parents; it is not created by external advantages; it is no necessary appendage of birth, wealth, talents, or station; but it is the result of one's own endeavors. All the variety of minute circumstances which go to form character are more or less under the control of the individual. Not a day passes without its discipline, whether for good or for evil. There is no act, however trivial, but has its train of consequences, as there is no hair, however small, but casts its shadow.

Not only is character of importance to its possessor as the means of conferring upon him true dignity and worth, but it exerts an influence upon the lives of all within its pale, the importance of which can never be overestimated. It might better be called an effluence; for it is constantly radiating from a man, and then most of all when he is least conscious of its emanation. We are molding others wherever we are. Books are only useful when they are read; sermons are only influential when they are listened to; but character keeps itself at all times before men's attention, and its weight is felt by every one who comes within its sphere.

Other agencies are intermittent, like the revolving light, which, after a time of brightness, goes out into a period of darkness; but character is continuous in its operations, and shines with the steady radiance of a star. A good character is therefore to be carefully maintained for the sake of others, if possible, more than ourselves. It is a coat of triple steel, giving security to the wearer, protection to the oppressed, and inspiring the oppressor with awe. Every man is bound to aim at the possession of a good character as one of the highest objects of his life. His very effort to secure it by worthy means will furnish him with a motive for exertion, and his idea of manhood, in proportion as it is elevated, will steady and animate his motives. The pursuit of it will prove no obstacle to the acquisition of wealth or fame; but, on the contrary, not only is the attainment of a good character an almost

indispensable thing for him who would make his mark in the world, but such is the nature of character that the control over the acts and thoughts of an individual, which must be acquired before character can exhibit inherent strength, conduces, in a very great degree, to the very condition which produces success.

Character is the grandest thing man can live for; it is to have worth of soul, wealth of heart, diamond-dust of mind. He who has this aim lives to be what he ought to be, and to do what duty requires. To him comes fame, delighted to crown him with her wreaths of honor. Sum it up as we will, character is the great desideratum of human life. This truth, sublime in its simplicity and powerful in its beauty, is the highest lesson of religion, the first that youth should learn, and the last that age should forget.

PRUDENCE.

"Prudence, thou virtue of the mind, by which
We do consult of all that's good or ill."



Amongst the milder virtues which contribute to round out and perfect life is to be found Prudence. It is a mild and pleasing quality. It counsels moderation and guidance by wisdom. It is practical wisdom, and comes of the cultivated judgment. It has reference in all things to fitness, to propriety, judging wisely of the right thing to be done and the right way of doing it. It calculates the means, order, time, and method of doing. Prudence learns from experience quickened by knowledge. It seeks to keep the practical path rather than that which, indeed, promises brilliant results, but takes the traveler along dangerous precipices and through places where there is a risk of his losing all.

The most brilliant attainments are rendered nugatory for want of prudence, as the giant deprived of his eyes is only the more exposed by reason of his enormous strength and stature. Prudence is the perfection of reason, and a guide to us in all the duties of life. It is invariably found in men of good sound sense, and is, indeed, their most shining quality, giving value as it does to all the rest, sets them to work in their proper time and places, and turns them to the advantage of the person who is possessed of them. Without it learning is pedantry and wit impertinence; virtue itself looks like weakness. The best parts only qualify a man to be more sprightly in errors and active to his own principles. Prudence is a quality incompatible with vice, and can never be effectually enlisted in its cause, and he who deliberately gives himself over to the power of vice and evil habits can never be said to be acting according to the dictates of the highest reason, wherein prudence is always distinguished.

It is difficult to define wherein prudence doth consist, inasmuch as the rules of prudence in general, like the laws of the stone tablet, are for the most part prohibitive. "Thou shalt not," is their characteristic formula. It is easier to state what is forbidden under certain circumstances than what is required. It is shown in practical every-day life by thoughtful actions on the thousand petty questions which are constantly claiming attention. It is hesitating and slow to believe what is not sanctioned by past experience, and prefers not to run any very

great risks in testing new plans for gaining the great object of life, preferring the sure to the doubtful, even though the latter may seem to have many advantages. It recognizes that there is a necessity for a certain amount of caution in all the transactions of business; hence the old saying, "Prudent men lock up their motives, letting familiars have a key to their hearts as to their garden." It weighs long and carefully the reasons for or against any proposed line of conduct, and calls upon the will to act only in accordance with the result of such reasoning.

In nothing does prudence display itself more than in relation to the little affairs of life. There are those who in the confidence of superior capacities or attainments neglect the common maxims of life. But this is a fatal delusion, as nothing will supply the want of prudence in the ordinary vocations of business, no matter how superior the other qualities. Negligence and irregularity long continued will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible. The merchant may, indeed, win thousands by speculations; but the only sure way of attaining to fortune, place, or honor is by obedience to well-known laws of business prudence, which discountenance speculation unbased on substantial facts.

Such are the vicissitudes of human life that, whatever the calling may be, scarcely a day passes that does not call upon all to exercise this quality in some of the common every-day occurrences, as well as in the unexpected emergencies which fate is constantly presenting to us. The triumph of its long exercise is to be

seen in those moments when to come at a wrong decision means disastrous defeat, the fatal overthrow of the hopes of a life-time. It by degrees forms for itself a standard of duty and propriety, accumulates rules and maxims of conduct, and materials for reflection and meditation.

The tongue of prudence knows when to speak and when to be silent. It is not cowardly; it dares to say all that need be said, but it does not tell all that it knows. It is careful what it speaks, when it speaks, and to whom it speaks. When you have need of a needle you move your fingers delicately with a wise caution. Use the same prudence with the inevitable affairs of life; give attention, and keep yourself from undue precipitation, otherwise it will fare hardly with you.

TEMPERANCE.

There is beauty in temperance like that which is portrayed in virtue and in truth. It is a close ally of both, and, like them, has that all-pervading essence and quality which chastens the feelings, invigorates the mind, and displays the perfection of the soul in the very aspect. Like water from the rill, rain from the cloud, or light from the heavenly bodies, the thought issues pure from within, refreshing, unsullied, and radiant. There is no grossness, no dross, no corruption, for temperance, when effectually realized, is full of loveliness and joy, and virtue and purity are the lineaments in which it lives. Temperance is a virtue without pride, and fortune without envy; the best guardian of youth and support of old age; the preceptor of reason as well as of religion, and physician of the soul as well as the body; the tutelar goddess of health and universal medicine of life.

Temperance keeps the senses clear and unembarrassed, and makes them seize the object with more keenness and satisfaction. It appears with life in the face and decorum in the person. It gives you the command of your head, secures you health, and preserves you in a condition for business. Temperance is a virtue which casts the truest luster upon the person it is lodged in, and has the most general influence upon all other particular virtues of any that the soul of man is capable of; indeed, so general is it that there is hardly any noble quality or endowment of the mind but must own temperance either for its parent or its nurse; it is the greatest strengthener and clearer of reason, and the best preparer of it for religion;

it is the sister of prudence and the handmaid to devotion.

Pleasure has been aptly compared to a sea. Intemperance is a maelstrom situated in the very center of this great sea. Not one path alone leads to this gulf of woe; not one only current, as too many have supposed, hurries down this dark abyss, but all around, on every side, the waters tend downward. There are a thousand currents leading in. Some, it is true, are more rapid than others. Some rush in quickly and bear down all who ride upon their waters to quick and certain ruin. Others glide more slowly, but none the less surely, to the same end. The streams of intemperance are legions. The allurements that lead downward are equally numerous. Every appetite, lust, passion, and feeling holds out various allurements to intemperate indulgence. There is not a power of the mind, affection of the heart, nor desire of the body that may not dispose to some form of intemperance which may injure the physical being or paralyze the energies of the mind. All forms of intemperance are evil and destroy some function of mind or body—some member or faculty, the disease of which spreads inharmony through the whole. The dangers from this source are imminent and fearful, and spread on every hand.

Temperance conduces to health; indeed, it may be said that health can only be acquired or maintained by temperance. This is the law primary and essential which every youth should know, and know by heart. Bodily pains and aches tell of intemperance in some directions.

Pain means penalty, and penalty means that its sufferer should reform. The most of our pains are occasioned by intemperance. This is the fruitful mother of nine-tenths of the diseases that flesh is heir to and the sins that the soul doth commit. We sin by excess of anger, lust, appetite, affection, love of gain, authority, or praise. Few, if any, are the sins that grow not out of intemperance in some form. Intemperance means excess. A thing is good as long as it is necessary. All beyond necessity, or what is necessary, is evil. Money is good; more than what is necessary to the ends of life is evil. Food is good; too much is evil. Light is good; too much will put out our eyes. Water is good; too much will destroy us. Heat is good; too much will burn us. The praise of men is good; too much will ruin us. The love of life is good; too much will make us miserable. Fear is good; too much hath torment. Prayer is good; too much cheats labor of its life and is evil. Sympathy is good; too much floods us with perpetual grief. Reason is good; too much pressed with labor it dethrones the mind and spreads ruin abroad. Any excess in the use or activity of a good thing is intemperance and, therefore, evil, and to be avoided.

Temperance as a virtue dwells in the heart. It consists in a rigid subjection of every inward feeling and power to the rule of right reason. He who would be thoroughly temperate must master himself. His passions must be his subjects obeying his will. From the heart he must be temperate. He must remember that the intemperance slope is an almost imperceptible

one, and that he may be gliding down it when he dreams of naught but safety. He must remember, too, that the field of temperance is a broad one, covering the whole area of life. It is not simply against one form of appetite, one species of indulgence that he is to guard, but against all. There are other species of intemperate indulgence, of which we are all more or less guilty, than indulgence in drink. Indeed, the indulgence of appetite carries away more victims from the earth than does drunkenness, and spreads a wider devastation and a more general blight.

All species of intemperance grow of a want of self-control. To be a temperance man a man must master himself, must be a brave, noble conqueror of every enemy within his own bosom. It is no small matter. It is the masterpiece of human attainments. The laws of temperance can never be broken with impunity. The excess is committed to-day, but the effect is experienced to-morrow. The law of nature, invariable in its operation, is, that penalty shall follow excess. The punishment is mild at first, but afterwards more and more severe, until, when nature's warning voice has been unheeded and her punishments disregarded, the final penalty is death. If an admonitory sign-board were hung out for the benefit of the young, there should be inscribed upon it in prominent characters "*no excess*." It is to be remembered that the best principles, if pushed too far, degenerate into fatal vices. Generosity is nearly allied to extravagance; charity itself may lead to ruin; the sternness of justice is but

one step removed from the severity of oppression.

If one would make the most of life he must be temperate in all things. It is the application of reason to all the daily acts of life. It is the highest and best form of life that one can attain to. It leads not only to the greatest happiness, but also to honor and position. By abstaining from most things it is surprising how many things we enjoy. To establish thoroughly and widely the principles of temperance we must begin with the youth. They have a high aspiration to be good and true. They see a glory in the path of right. Freedom is a word of power in their ears. Virtue has many charms not only for their hearts, but for their imaginations. They have health, competency, and happiness. They are ambitious of every good. When the true principles of temperance are established in early life and made the controlling power through life, they insure health, freedom from pain, competency, respectability, honor, virtue, usefulness, and happiness—all for which true men have or hope in this life. Happy would it be if they were general and all youths would practice them. Then would religion assert her mild and gentle sway, peace plant her olive wreath in every nation, wisdom, divine and time-honored, shed every-where her glorious light. A race of men and women, full of rosy health, strong, active, symmetrical, beautiful as the artist's model: pure, virtuous, wise, affectionate, full of honor and lofty principles, would grow up into communities and nations, and make the earth

bloom and rejoice in more than Eden gladness. A new heaven and a new earth would surround us with beauty and arch us over with glory, for the old would have passed away.

FRUGALITY.



Frugality may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty and Ease. It is synonymous with economy, and is a sound understanding brought into action. It is calculation realized; it is the doctrine of proportion educed to practice. It is foreseeing contingencies and providing against them. Its other and less reputable sisters are Avarice and Prodigality. She alone keeps the straight and safe path, while Avarice sneers at her as profuse, and Prodigality scorns at her as penurious. To the poor she is indispensable; to those of moderate means she is found the representative of wisdom. Joined to industry and sobriety, she is a better outfit to business

than a dowry. She conducts her votaries to competence and honor, while Profuseness is a cruel and crafty demon, that gradually involves her followers in dependence and debt.

Frugality shineth in her best light when joined to liberality. The first consists in leaving off superfluous expense; the last is bestowing them to the benefit of those that need. The first without the last begets covetousness; the last without the first begets prodigality. There is ever a golden mean between frugality and stinginess, or closeness. He that spareth in every thing is an inexcusable niggard; he that spareth in nothing is an inexcusable madman. The golden mean of frugality is to spare in what is least necessary, and to lay out more liberally in what is most required in our several circumstances. It is no man's duty to deny himself every amusement, every recreation, every comfort, that he may get rich. It is no man's duty to make an iceberg of himself, and to deny himself the enjoyment that results from his generous actions, merely that he may hoard wealth for his heirs to quarrel about. But there is an economy which is especially commendable in the man who struggles with poverty, and is every man's duty—an economy which is consistent with happiness, and which must be practiced if the poor man would secure independence.

When one is blessed with good sense and fair opportunities, this spirit of economy is one of the most beneficial of all secular gifts, and takes high rank among the minor virtues. It is by this mysterious power that the loaf is multiplied,

that using does not waste, that little becomes much, that scattered fragments grow to unity, and that out of nothing, or next to nothing, comes the miracle of something. Frugality is not merely saving, still less parsimony. It is foresight and combination. It is insight and arrangement. It is a subtle philosophy of things, by which new uses, new compositions, are discovered. It causes inert things to labor, useless things to serve our necessities, perishing things to renew their vigor, and all things to exert themselves for human comfort.

As the acquisition of knowledge depends more upon what a man *remembers* than upon the quantity of his reading, so the acquisition of property depends more upon what is *saved* than upon what is earned. The largest reservoir, though fed by abundant and living springs, will fail to supply their owners with water if secret leaking-places are permitted to drain off their contents. In like manner, though by his skill and energy a man may convert his business into a flowing Pactolus, ever depositing its golden sands in his coffers, yet, through the numerous wants of unfrugal habits, he may live embarrassed and die poor. Economy is the guardian of property, the good genius whose presence guides the footsteps of every prosperous and successful man.

Either a man must be content with poverty all his life, or else be willing to deny himself some luxuries, and save to lay the base of independence in the future. But if a man defies the future, and spends all that he earns, whether it be much or little, let him look for

lean and hungry want at some future time; for it will surely come, no matter what he thinks. To economize and be frugal is absolutely the only way to get a solid fortune; there is no other certain mode on earth. Those who shut their eyes and ears to these plain facts will be forever poor. Fortune does not give away her real and substantial goods. She sells them to the highest bidder, to the hardest, wisest worker for the boon. Men never make so fatal a mistake as when they think they are mere creatures of fate; it is the sheerest folly in the world. Every man may make or mar his life, whichever he may choose. Fortune is for those who, by diligence, honesty and frugality, place themselves in a position to grasp hold of fortune when it appears in view.

Simple industry and thrift will go far towards making any person of ordinary working faculties comparatively independent in his means. Almost any working-man may be so, provided he will carefully husband his resources and watch the little outlets of useless expenditures. A penny is a very small matter, yet the comfort of thousands of families depends upon the proper saving and spending of pennies. If a man allows the little pennies—the results of his hard work—to slip out of his fingers he will find that his life is little raised above one of mere animal drudgery.

One way in which true economy is shown consists in living within one's income. This is the grand element of success in acquiring property. To carry it out requires resolution, self-denial, self-reliance. But it must be done, or

grinding poverty will accompany you through life. We urge upon all young men who are just starting in life to make it an invariable rule to lay aside a certain proportion of their income, whatever that income may be. Extravagant expenditures occasion a large part of the suffering of a great majority of people. And extravagance is wholly a relative term. What is not at all extravagant for one person may be very much so for another. Expenditures, no matter how small in themselves they may be, are always extravagant when they come fully up to the entire amount of a person's income.

On every hand we see people living on credit, putting off pay-day to the last, making, in the end, some desperate effort—generally by borrowing—to scrape the money together, and then struggling on again with the canker of care eating at their hearts; but their exertions are vain; they land at last in the inevitable goal of bankruptcy. If they would only be content to make the push in the beginning, instead of the end, they would save themselves all this misery. The great secret of being solvent and well-to-do and comfortable is to get ahead of your expenses. Eat and drink this month what you earned last month, not what you are going to earn next month. It is unsafe to draw drafts on the future, for hope is deceitful, and your paper is liable to go to protest. When one is once weighed down with a load of debt he loses the sense of being free and independent. The man with his fine house, his glittering carriage, and his rich banquets, for which he is in debt, is a slave, a prisoner, dragging his chains behind

him through all the grandeur of the false world through which he moves.

In urging a course of strict economy we admit that it is hard, embarrassing, perplexing, onerous, but it is by no means impracticable. A cool survey of one's expenditures, compared with his income; a wise balancing of ends to be gained; a firm and calm determination to break with custom wherever it is opposed to good sense, and a patience that does not chafe at small and gradual results, will do much towards establishing the principle of economy and securing its benefits. Economy has, however, deeper roots than even this—in the desires. It is there, after all, that we control our expenditures. As a general rule we may be sure that we shall spend our money for what we most earnestly crave. If it be luxury and display then it will melt into costly viands and soft clothing, handsome dwellings and rich furniture. If, on the other hand, our desires are for higher enjoyments, or for benevolent purposes, our money will flow into these channels. Every one, then, who cherishes in himself, or excites in others, a desire more pure and noble than existed before, who draws the heart from the craving of sense to those of soul, from self to others, from what is low, sensual, and wrong to what is pure, elevating, and right, in so far establishes, on the firmest of all foundations, a wise economy.

A true economy appears to induce the exertion of almost every laudable emotion; a strict regard to honesty; a laudable spirit of independence; a judicious prudence in

providing for the wants, and a steady benevolence in preparing for the claims of the future. Such an economy can but appeal to the good sense of all who candidly ponder over life and its realities. To spend all that you acquire as soon as you gain it is to lead a butterfly existence. Were you always to be young and free from sickness and care, and life were to pass as one perpetual Summer, it would do no harm to so live; but care will come, sickness may strike you at any time, and, if you escape these, yet you know life has its Autumnal and Winter seasons as well as its Summer. And, alas! for the veteran who finds himself obliged to learn in his latter years the lessons of strict economy for the first time, having lived in utter defiance of them in the season of youth and strength.

PATIENCE.

Patience is the ballast of the soul, that will keep it from rolling and tumbling in the greatest storms. All life is but one vast representation of the beauty and value of patience. Troubles and sorrows are in store for all. It is useless to try to escape them, and, indeed, it is well we can not, as they seem essential to the perfection and development of character into its highest and best form. But their disciplinary value arises from the great lesson of patience they are constantly inculcating.

Either patience must be a quality graciously inherent in the heart of man, or it must be acquired as the lesson of years' experience, if he would enjoy the greatest good of life. Without it prosperity will be continually disturbed, and adversity will be clouded with double darkness. The loud complaint, the querulous temper and fretful spirit disgrace every character. We weaken thereby the sympathy of others, and estrange them from offices of kindness and comfort. But to maintain a steady and unbroken mind amidst all the shocks of adversity forms the highest honor of man. Afflictions supported by patience and surmounted by fortitude give the last finishing stroke to the heroic and virtuous character. Patience produces unity in the Church, loyalty in the state, harmony in families and societies. She comforts the poor and moderates the rich; she makes us humble in prosperity, cheerful in adversity, unmoved by calumny, and above reproach; she teaches us to forgive those who have injured us, and to be the first in asking the forgiveness of those

whom we have injured; she delights the faithful, and invites the unbelieving; she adorns the woman and approves the man; she is beautiful in either sex and every age.

Patience has been defined as the "courage of virtue;" the principle which enables us to lessen the pains of mind or body; an emotion that does not so much add to the number of our joys as it tends to diminish the number of our sufferings. If life is made to abound with pains and troubles by the errors and the crimes of man, it is no small advantage to have a faculty that enables us to soften these pains and ameliorate these troubles. He that has patience can have what he will. There is no road too long to the man who advances deliberately and without undue haste. There are no honors too distant for the man who prepares himself for them with patience. Nature herself abounds with examples of patience. Day follows the murkiest night, and when the time comes the latest fruits also ripen. Its most beneficent operations, and those which take place on a grand scale, are the results of patience. The great works of human power, achieved by the hand of genius, are but eloquent examples of what may be achieved by the exercise of this virtue. History and biography abound with examples of signal patience shown by great men under trying circumstances.

In the pursuit of worldly success patience or a willingness to bide one's time is no less necessary as a factor than perseverance. Says De Maistre, "To know how to wait is the great secret of success." And of all the lessons that

humanity teaches in this school of the world, the hardest is to wait. Not to wait with folded hands that claim life's prizes without previous effort, but having toiled and struggled and crowded the slow years with trial to see then no results, or, perhaps, disastrous results, and yet to stand firm, to preserve one's poise, and relax no effort,—this, it has been truly said, *is* greatness, whether achieved by man or woman. The world can not be circumnavigated by one wind. The grandest results can not be achieved in a day. The fruits that are best worth plucking usually ripen the most slowly, and, therefore, every one who would gain a solid success must learn "to labor and to wait." What a world of meaning in those few words! And how many are possessed of the moral courage to live in that state? It is the tendency of the times to be in a hurry when there is any object to be accomplished. In the pursuit of riches it is only the exceptional persons who are content with slow gains, willing to acquire wealth by adding penny to penny, dollar to dollar; the mass of business men are too apt to despise such a tedious and laborious means of ascent, and they rush headlong into schemes for the sudden acquisition of wealth. Or, in the field of professional life, we are too prone to forget there is no royal road to great acquirements, and feel an unwillingness to lay broad and deep, by years of patient study and laborious research, the foundation whereon to build an enduring monument worthy of public credit and renown.

The history of all who are honored in the

world of literature, arts, or science is the history of patient study for years, and its final triumph. Elihu Burritt says: "All that I have accomplished, or expect or hope to accomplish, has been, and will be, by that patient, persevering process of accretion which builds the ant-heap, particle by particle, thought by thought, fact by fact." Labor still is, and ever will be, the inevitable price set upon every thing which is valuable. Hence, if we would acquire wisdom, we must diligently apply ourselves, and confront the same continuous application which our forefathers did. We must be satisfied to work energetically with a purpose, and wait the results with patience. All progress, of the best kind, is slow; but to him who works faithfully and in a right spirit, be sure that the reward will be vouchsafed in its own good time. Courage must have sunk in despair, and the world must have remained unimproved and unornamented if man had merely compared the effect of a single stroke of the chisel with the pyramid to be raised, or of a single impression of the spade with the mountain to be leveled. We must continuously apply ourselves to right pursuits, and we can not fail to advance steadily, though it may be unconsciously.

In all evils which admit a remedy impatience should be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. In cases that admit of no remedy it is worse than useless to give way to impatience, both because of the utter uselessness of so doing as well as that the

time thus spent could be better employed in the furtherance of useful designs. Since, then, these two classes of ills comprise all to which human nature is subject, why not make a determined struggle against impatience in every form? It accomplishes nothing that is of value, divides our efforts, frustrates our plans, and generally succeeds in making our lives miserable not only to ourselves, but to all around us.

How much of home happiness and comfort depends upon the exercise of patience! Not a day passes but calls for its exercise from those who sustain the nearest and dearest relations to each other. Let patience have her perfect work in the home circle. Let parents be patient with their children. They are weak, and you are strong. They stand at the eastern gate of life. Experience has not taught them to speak carefully and to go softly. What if their plays and amusements do grate upon your nerves. Bear with them patiently. Care and time will soon enough check their childish impulses. Be patient with your friends. They are neither omniscient nor omnipotent. They can not see your heart, and may misunderstand you. They do not know what is best for you, and may select what is worst. What if, also, they lack purity of purpose or tenacity of affection; do not you lack these graces? Patience is your refuge. Endure, and in enduring conquer them; and if not them, then at least yourself. Be patient with pains and cares. These things are killed by enduring them, but made strong to bite and sting by feeding them with your frets and fears. There is no pain or cure that can last

long. None of them shall enter the city of God. A little while, and you shall leave behind you all your troubles, and forget, in your first hour of rest, that such things were on earth. Above all, be patient with your beloved. Love is the best thing on earth; but it is to be handled tenderly, and impatience is the nurse that kills it. Try to smooth life's weary way each for the other, and in the exercise of the heaven-born virtue of patience will you find the sweetest pleasure of life.

SELF-CONTROL.

Self-control is the highest form of courage. It is the base of all the virtues. It is one of the most important but one of the most difficult things for a powerful mind to be its own master. If he reigns within himself, and rules passions, desires, and fears, he is more than a king.

Too often self-control is made to mean only the control of angry passions, but that is simply one form of self-control; in another—a higher and more complete sense—it means the control over all the passions, appetites, and impulses. True wisdom ever seeks to restrain one from blindly following his own impulses and appetites, even those which are moral and intellectual, as well as those which are animal and sensual. In the supremacy of self-control consists one of the perfections of the ideal man. Not to be impulsive, not to be spurred hither and thither by each desire that in turn comes uppermost, but to be self-restrained, self-balanced, governed by the joined decision of the feelings in council assembled, before whom every action shall have been fully debated and calmly determined,—this is true strength and wisdom.

Mankind are endowed by the Creator with qualities which raise them infinitely higher in the scale of importance than any other members of the animal world. They are given reason as a guide to follow rather than instinct. But if men give the reins to their impulses and passions, from that moment they surrender this high prerogative. They are carried along the current of their life and become the slaves of their strongest desires for the time being. To be morally free—to be more than an animal—man must be able to resist instinctive impulses. This can only be done by the exercise of self-control. Thus it is this power that constitutes the real distinction between a physical and a moral life, and that forms the primary basis of individual

character. Nine-tenths of the vicious desires that degrade society, and the crimes that disgrace it, would shrink into insignificance before the advance of valiant self-discipline, self-respect, and self-control.

It is necessary to one's personal happiness to exercise control over his words as well as his acts, for there are words that strike even harder than blows, and men may "speak daggers," even though they use none. Character exhibits itself in control of speech as much as in any thing else. The wise and forbearant man will restrain his desire to say a smart or severe thing at the expense of another's feelings, while the fool speaks out what he thinks, and will sacrifice his friend rather than his joke. There are men who are headlong in their language as in their actions because of the want of forbearance and self-restraining patience.

Government is at the bottom of all progress. The state or nation that has the best government progresses most; so the individual who governs best himself makes the most rapid progress. The native energies of the human soul press it to activity; controlled they bear it forward in right paths; uncontrolled they urge it on to probable destruction. No man is free who has not the command over himself, but allows his appetites or his temper to control him; and to triumph over these is of all conquests the most glorious. He who is enslaved to his passions is worse governed than Athens was by her thirty tyrants. He who indulges his sense in any excesses renders himself obnoxious to his own reason, and to gratify the brute in him

displeases the man and sets his two natures at variance. We ought not to sacrifice the sentiments of the soul to gratify the appetites of the body. Passions are excellent servants, and when properly trained and disciplined are capable of being applied to noble purposes; but when allowed to become masters they are dangerous in the extreme.

To resist strong impulses, to subdue powerful passions, to silence the voice of vehement desire, is a strong and noble virtue. And the virtue rises in height, beauty, and grandeur in proportion to the strength of the impulses subdued. True virtue is not always visible to the gaze of the world. It is often still and calm. Composure is often the highest result of power, and there are seasons when to be still demands immeasurably higher strength than to act. Think you it demands no power to calm the stormy elements of passions, to throw off the load of dejection, to repress every repining thought when the dearest hopes are withered, and to turn the wounded spirit from dangerous reveries and wasting grief to the quiet discharge of ordinary duties? Is there no power put forth when a man, stripped of his property—of the fruits of a life's labor—quells discontent and gloomy forebodings, and serenely and patiently returns to the task which providence assigns? We doubt not that the all-seeing eye of God sometimes discerns the sublimest human energy under a form and countenance which, by their composure and tranquillity, indicate to the human spectator only passive virtues. Individuals who have attained such power are

among the great ones of earth.

Strength of character consists in two things, —power of will and power of self-restraint. It requires two things, therefore, for its existence, —strong feelings and strong command over them. Ofttimes we mistake strong feelings for strong character. He is not a strong man who bears all before him, at whose frown domestics tremble and the children of the household quake; on the contrary, he is a weak man. It is his passions that are strong; he, mastered by them, is weak. You must measure the strength of a man by the power of the feelings he subdues, not by the power of those that subdue him. Did we ever see a man receive a flagrant injury, and then reply calmly? That is a man spiritually strong. Or did we ever see a man in anguish stand as if carved out of solid rock mastering himself, or one bearing a hopeless daily trial remain silent and never tell the world what cankered his peace? That is strength. He who with strong passions remains chaste, he who, keenly sensitive, with manly powers of indignation in him, can be provoked and yet restrain himself and forgive, these are strong men, the spiritual heroes.

A strong temper is not necessarily a bad temper. But the stronger the temper the greater is the need of self-discipline and self-control. Strong temper may only mean a strong and excitable will. Uncontrolled it displays itself in fitful outbreaks of passion; but controlled and held in subjection, like steam pent up within the mechanism of a steam engine, it becomes the source of energetic power and usefulness.

Some of the greatest characters in history have been men of strong tempers, but with equal strength of determination to hold their motive power under strict regulation and control. He is usually a moral weakling who has no strong desires or strong temper to overcome; but he who with these fails to subdue them is speedily ruined by them.

Man is born for dominion; but he must enter it by conquest, and continue to do battle for every inch of ground added to his sway. His infant exertions are put forth to establish the authority of his will over his physical powers. His after efforts are for the subjection of the will to the judgment. There are times which come to all of us when our will is not completely fashioned to our hands, and the restless passions of the mind hold us in sway—seasons when all of us do and say things which are unbecoming, unseemly, and which lower and debase us in the opinion of others and also of ourselves. Self-control, however, is a virtue which will become ours if we cultivate it properly, if we strive right manfully for its possession; fight a bitter warfare against irritability, nervousness, jealousy, and all unkindness of heart and soul. But it must be cultivated properly. One exercise of it will not win us the victory. We must, by constant repetition of efforts, obtain at last the victory which will bring us repose, which will enable us to say to the raging waves of passion, "Thus far canst thou come, and no farther." We must be faithful to ourselves, faithful in our watch and ward over tongue, eye, and hand. It is only

by so doing that man comes to the full development of his powers. It is alike the duty and the birthright of man. Moderation in all things, and regulating the actions only by the judgment, are the most eminent parts of wisdom. "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

COURAGE.

"Prithee, peace!
I dare do all that may become a man.
Who dares do more is none."
—SHAKSPEARE.



Courage consists not in hazarding without fear, but being resolutely minded in a just cause. The brave man is not he who feels no fear—for that were stupid and irrational—but he whose noble soul subdues its fears, and bravely dares the danger nature shrinks from. True courage is cool and calm. The bravest of men have the least of a brutal, bullying

insolence, and in the very time of danger are found the most serene and free. Rage can make a coward forget himself and fight. But what is done in fury or anger can never be placed to the account of courage.

Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources. In desperate straits the fears of the timid aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave. For cowards the road of desertion should be kept open. They will carry over to the enemy nothing but their fears. The poltroon, like the scabbard, is an incumbrance when once the sword is drawn. It is the same in the every-day battles of life: to believe a business impossible is the way to make it so. How many feasible projects have miscarried through despondency, and been strangled in the birth by a cowardly imagination! It is better to meet danger than to wait for it. A ship on a lee shore stands out to sea in a storm to escape shipwreck. Impossibilities, like vicious dogs, fly before him who is not afraid of them. Should misfortune overtake, retrench, work harder; but never fly the track. Confront difficulties with unflinching perseverance. Should you then fail, you will be honored; but shrink and you will be despised. When you put your hands to a work, let the fact of your doing so constitute the evidence that you mean to prosecute it to the end. They that fear an overthrow are half conquered.

No one can tell who the heroes are, and who the cowards, until some crisis comes to put us to the test. And no crisis puts us to the test that does not bring us up, alone and single-handed, to face danger. It is comparatively nothing to

make a rush with the multitude, even into the jaws of destruction. Sheep will do that. Armies can be picked from the gutters, and marched up as food for powder. But when some crisis singles one out from the multitude, pointing at him the particular finger of fate, and telling him, "Stand or run," and he faces about with steady nerve, with nobody else to stand behind, we may be sure the hero stuff is in him. When such crises come, the true courage is just as likely to be found in people of shrinking nerves, or in weak and timid women, as in great, burly people. It is a moral, not a physical trait. Its seat is not in the temperament, but the will.

Some people imagine that courage is confined to the field of battle. There could be no greater mistake. Even contentious men—unavoidably contentious—are not by any means limited to the battlefield. And there are other struggles with adverse circumstances—struggles, it may be, with habits or appetites or passions—all of which require as much courage and more perseverance than the brief encounter of battle. Enough to contend with, enough to overcome, lies in the pathway of every individual. It may be one kind of difficulties, or it may be another, but plenty of difficulties of some kind or other every one may be sure of finding through life. There is but one way of looking at fate, whatever that may be, whether blessings or afflictions,—to behave with dignity under both. We must not lose heart, or it will be the worse both for ourselves and for those whom we love. To struggle, and again and again to renew the conflict,—*this* is life's inheritance. He who never

falters, no matter how adverse may be the circumstances, always enjoys the consciousness of a perpetual spiritual triumph, of which nothing can deprive him.

Though the occasions of high heroic daring seldom occur but in the history of the great, the less obtrusive opportunities for the exercise of private energy are continually offering themselves. With these domestic scenes as much abound as does the tented field. Pain may be as firmly endured in the lonely chamber as amid the din of arms. Difficulties can be manfully combated, misfortune bravely sustained, poverty nobly supported, disappointments courageously encountered. Thus courage diffuses a wide and succoring influence, and bestows energy apportioned to the trial. It takes from calamity its dejecting quality, and enables the soul to possess itself under every vicissitude. It rescues the unhappy from degradation and the feeble from contempt.

The greater part of the courage that is needed in the world is not of an heroic kind. There needs the common courage to be honest, the courage to resist temptation, the courage to speak the truth, the courage to be what we really are, and not to pretend to be what we are not, the courage to live honestly within our own means, and not dishonestly upon the means of others. The courage that dares to display itself in silent effort and endeavor, that dares to endure all and suffer all for truth and duty, is more truly heroic than the achievements of physical valor, which are rewarded by honors and titles, or by laurels,

sometimes steeped in blood. It is moral courage that characterizes the highest order of manhood and womanhood. Intellectual intrepidity is one of the vital conditions of independence and self-reliance of character. A man must have the courage to be himself, and not the shadow or the echo of another. He must exercise his own powers, think his own thoughts, and speak his own sentiments. He must elaborate his own opinions, and form his own convictions.

It has been said that he who dares not form an opinion must be a coward; he who will not must be an idler; he who can not must be a fool. Every enlargement of the domain of knowledge which has made us better acquainted with the heavens, with the earth, and with ourselves, has been established by the energy, the devotion, the self-sacrifice, and the courage of the great spirits of past times, who, however much they may have been oppressed or reviled by their contemporaries, now rank among those whom the enlightened of the human race most delight to honor.

The passive endurance of the man or woman who for conscience' sake is found ready to suffer and endure in solitude, without so much as the encouragement of even a single sympathizing voice, is an exhibition of courage of a far higher kind than that displayed in the roar of battle, where even the weakest feels encouraged and inspired by the enthusiasm of sympathy and the power of numbers. Time would fail to tell of the names of those who through faith in principles, and in the face of difficulties, dangers, and sufferings, have fought

a good fight in the moral warfare of the world, and been content to lay down their lives rather than prove false to their conscientious convictions of the truth.

The patriot who fights an always losing battle, the martyr who goes to death amid the triumphant shouts of his enemies, the discoverer, like Columbus, whose heart remains undaunted through years of failure, are examples of the moral sublime which excites a profounder interest in the hearts of men than even the most complete and conspicuous success. By the side of such instances as these, how small by comparison seem the greatest deeds of valor, inciting men to rush upon death and die amid the frenzied excitement of physical warfare.



CHARITY.

"The primal duties shine aloft like stars,
The charities that soothe and heal and bless
Lie scattered at the feet of man like flowers."
—WORDSWORTH.



Charity, like the dew from heaven, falls gently on the drooping flowers in the stillness of night. Its refreshing and revivifying effects are felt, seen, and admired. It flows from a good heart and looks beyond the skies for approval and reward. It never opens, but seeks to heal, the wounds inflicted by misfortune. It never harrows up, but strives to calm, the troubled mind.

Charity is another name for disinterested love —the humane, sympathetic feeling—that which seeks the good of others; that which would pour out from the treasures of its munificence gifts of good things upon all. It is that feeling that gave the world a Howard, a Fenelon, a Fry. It is that feeling that leads on the reformer, which inspires the philanthropists, which blesses, and curses not. It is the good Samaritan of the heart. It is that which thinketh no evil, and is kind, which hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. It is the angel of mercy, which forgives seventy and seven times, and still is rich in the treasures of pardon. It visits the sick, soothes the pillow of the dying, drops a tear with the mourner, buries the dead, cares for the orphan. It delights to do offices of good to those cast down, to relieve the suffering of the oppressed and distressed, to proclaim the

Gospel to the poor. Its words are more precious than rubies; its voice is sweeter than honey; its hand is softer than down; its step as gentle as love.

Whoever would be respected and beloved; whoever would be useful and remembered with pleasure when life is over, must cherish this virtue. Whoever would be truly happy and feel the real charms of goodness must cultivate this affection. It becomes, if possible, more glorious when we consider the number and extent of its objects. It is as wide as the world of suffering, deep as the heart of sorrow, extensive as the wants of creation, and boundless as the kingdom of need. Its spirit is the messenger of peace, holding out to quarreling humanity the flag of truce. It is needed every-where, in all times and places, in all trades, professions, and callings of profit or honor which men can pursue. In the home life there is too often a lack of charity; it should be considered as a sacred duty to long and well cultivate it, to exercise it daily, and to guard well its growth. The peace and happiness of the world depends greatly upon it. Nothing gives a sweeter charm to youth than an active charity, a disposition kind to all. Who can properly estimate the powers and sweetness of an active charity?

He who carries ever with him the spirit of boundless charity to man often does good when he knows not of it. An influence seems to go forth from him which soothes the distressed, encourages the drooping, stimulates afresh the love of virtue, and begets its own image and likeness in all beholders. Without the exercise

of this grace it is impossible to make domestic and social life delightful. Deeds and words of conventional courtesy grown familiar are comparatively empty forms. The charitable soul carries with it a charmed atmosphere of peace and love, breathing which all who come within its benign influence unfold their noblest qualities, and develop their most amiable traits. Inharmonious influences are neutralized, the harsh discipline of life is changed to wholesome training, the crooked places are made straight, and the rough smooth.

The uncharitable and censorious are generally found among the narrow and bigoted, and those who have never read the full page of their own heart or been subject to various and crucial tests. How can a man whose temper is phlegmatic judge justly of him whose blood is fiery, whose nature is tropical, and whose passions mount in an instant, and as quickly subside? How can one in the seclusion of private life accurately measure the force of the influence those are subjected to who live and act in the center of vast and powerful civil and social circles? The more you mix with men the less you will be disposed to quarrel, and the more charitable and liberal will you become. The fact that you do not understand another is quite as likely to be your fault as his. There are many chances in favor of the conclusion that when you feel a lack of charitable feeling it is through your own ignorance and illiberality. This will disappear as your knowledge of men grows more and more complete. Hence keep your heart open for every body, and be sure

that you shall have your reward. You will find a jewel under the most uncouth exterior, and associated with comeliest manners and the oddest ways and the ugliest faces you will find rare virtues, fragrant little humanities, and inspiring heroisms.

How glorious the thought of the universal triumph of charity! How grand and comprehensive the theme! The subject commands the profound attention of good men and of angels. Under the direful influence of its antagonistic principle man has trampled upon the rights of fellow-man, and waded through rivers of human blood, to satisfy his thirst for vengeance. Its footsteps have been marked with the blood of slaughtered millions. Its power has shivered kingdoms and destroyed empires. When men shall be brought into subjection to the law of charity the angel of peace will take up its abode with the children of men. Wars and rumors of wars will cease. Envy and revenge will hide their diminished heads. Falsehood and slander will be unknown. Sectarian walls will crumble to dust. Then this world will be transformed into a paradise, in which every thing that is beautiful and lovely shall grow and bloom. Disinterested and benevolent acts will abound. Sorrow and disappointments will flee away, and peace, sunshine, and joy will beautify and adorn life.

Death always makes a beautiful appeal to charity. When we look upon the dead form, so composed and still, the kindness and the love that are in us all come forth. The grave covers every error, buries every defect, extinguishes

every resentment. From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look upon the grave even of an enemy and not feel a compunctious throb that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of dust that lies moldering before him?

Charity stowed away in the heart, like rose leaves in a drawer, sweetens all the daily acts of life. Little drops of rain brighten the meadow; acts of charity brighten the world. We can conceive of nothing more attractive than the heart when filled with the spirit of charity. Certainly nothing so embellishes human nature as the practice of this virtue; a sentiment so genial and so excellent ought to be emblazoned upon every thought and act of our life. This principle underlies the whole theory of Christianity, and in no other person do we find it more happily exemplified than in the life of our Savior who, while on earth, "went about doing good."

KINDNESS.



Kindness is the music of good-will to men, and on this harp the smallest fingers in the world may play heaven's sweetest tunes on earth. Kindness is one of the purest traits that find a place in the human heart. It gives us friends wherever we may chance to wander. Whether we dwell with the savage tribes of the forest or with civilized races, kindness is a language understood by the former as well as the latter. Its influence never ceases. Started once, it flows onward like the little mountain rivulet in a pure and increasing stream. To show kindness it is not necessary to give large sums of money, or to perform some wonderful deed that will immortalize your name. It is the tear dropped with the mother as she weeps over the bier of her departed child; it is the word of sympathy to the discouraged and the disheartened, the cup of cold water and the slice of bread to the hungry one.

Kindness makes sunshine wherever it goes. It finds its way into the hidden chambers of the heart, and brings forth golden treasures, which harshness would have sealed up forever. Kindness makes the mother's lullaby sweeter than the song of the lark, and renders the care-worn brow of the father and man of business less severe in its expression. It is the water of Lethe to the laborer, who straightway forgets

his weariness born of the burden and heat of the day. Kindness is the real law of life, the link that connects earth with heaven, the true philosopher's stone, for all it touches it turns into virgin gold; the true gold, wherewith we purchase contentment, peace, and love. Would you live in the remembrance of others after you shall have passed away? Write your name on the tablets of their hearts by acts of kindness, love, and mercy.

Kindness is an emotion of which we ought never to feel ashamed. Graceful, especially in youth, is the tear of sympathy and the heart that melts at the tale of woe. We should not permit ease and indulgence to contract our affection, and wrap us up in a selfish enjoyment; but we should accustom ourselves to think of the distresses of human life and how to relieve them. Think of the solitary cottage, the dying parent, and the weeping child. A tender-hearted and compassionate disposition, which inclines men to pity and to feel the misfortunes of others as its own, is of all dispositions the most amiable, and though it may not receive much honor, is worthy of the highest. Kindness is the very principle of love, an emanation of the heart, which softens and gladdens, and should be inculcated and encouraged in all our intercourse with our fellow beings.

Kindness does not consist in gifts, but in gentleness and generosity of spirit. Men may give their money, which comes from their purse, and withhold their kindness, which comes from the heart. The kindness which

displays itself in giving money does not amount to much, and often does quite as much harm as good; but the kindness of true sympathy, of thoughtful help, is never without beneficent results. The good temper that displays itself in kindness must not be confounded with passive goodness. It is not by any means indifferent, but largely sympathetic. It does not characterize the lowest, but the highest classes of society.

True kindness cherishes and actively promotes all reasonable instrumentalities for doing practical good in its own time, and, looking into futurity, sees the same spirit working on for the eventual elevation and happiness of the race. It is the kindly disposed men who are the active men of the world, while the selfish and the skeptical, who have no love but for themselves, are its idlers. How easy it is for one benevolent being to diffuse pleasure around him, and how truly is one fond heart a fountain of gladness, making every thing in its vicinity to freshen into smiles. Its effect on stern natures is like the Spring rain, which melts the icy covering of the earth, and causes it to open to the beams of heaven.

In the intercourse of social life it is by little acts of watchful kindness recurring daily and hourly—and opportunities of doing kindness if sought for are constantly starting up—it is by words, by tones, by gestures, by looks that affection is won and preserved. He who neglects these trifles, yet boasts that, whenever a great sacrifice is called for, he shall be ready to make it, will rarely be loved. The likelihood is he will not make it, and if he does, it will be

much rather for his own sake than for his neighbor's. Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness and small obligations, given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart and secure comfort. The little unremembered acts of kindness and of love are the best portion of a good man's life. Those little nameless acts which manifest themselves by tender and affectionate looks and little kind acts of attention do much to increase the happiness of life.

Little kindnesses are great ones. They drive away sadness, and cheer up the soul beyond all common appreciation. They are centers of influence over others, which may accomplish much good. When such kindnesses are administered in times of need, they are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver," and will be long remembered. A word of kindness in a desperate strait is as welcome as the smile of an angel, and a helpful hand-grasp is worth a hundred-fold its cost, for it may have rescued for all future the most kingly thing on earth—*the manhood of a man.*

It should not discourage us if our kindness is unacknowledged; it has its influence still. Good and worthy conduct may meet with an unworthy or ungrateful return; but the absence of gratitude on the part of the receiver can not destroy the self-approbation which recompenses the giver. The seeds of courtesy and kindness may be scattered around with so little trouble and expense that it seems strange that more do not endeavor to spread them abroad. Could

they but know the inward peace which requites the giver for a kindly act, even though coldly received by the one to be benefited, they would not hesitate to let the kindly feelings, latent in us all, have free expression. Kindly efforts are not lost. Some of them will inevitably fall on good ground, and grow up into benevolence in the minds of others, and all of them will bear fruit of happiness in the bosom whence they spring. It is better never to receive a kindness than not to bestow one. Not to return a benefit is the greater sin, but not to confer it is the earlier.

The noblest revenge we can take upon our enemies is to do them a kindness. To return malice for malice and injury for injury will afford but a temporary gratification to our evil passions, and our enemies will only be rendered more and more bitter against us. But to take the first opportunity of showing how superior we are to them by doing them a kindness, or by rendering them a service, is not only the nobler way, but the sting of reproach will enter deeply into their souls, and while unto us it will be a noble retaliation, our triumph will not unfrequently be rendered complete, not only by beating out the malice that had otherwise stood against us, but by bringing repentant hearts to offer themselves at the shrine of friendship. A more glorious victory can not be gained over another man than this, that when the injury began on his part the kindness should begin on ours.

The tongue of kindness is full of pity, love, and comfort. It speaks a word of comfort to the

desponding, a word of encouragement to the faint-hearted, of sympathy to the bereaved, of consolation to the dying. Urged on by a benevolent heart, it loves to cheer, console, and invigorate the sons and daughters of sorrow. Kind words do not cost much. They never blister the tongue or lips, and no mental trouble ever arises therefrom. Be not saving of kind words and pleasing acts; for such are fragrant gifts, whose perfume will gladden the heart and sweeten the life of all who hear or receive them. Words of kindness fitly spoken are indeed both precious and beautiful; they are worth much and cost little.

Kind words are like the breath of the dew upon the tender plants, falling gently upon the drooping heart, refreshing its withered tendrils, and soothing its woes. Bright oases are they in life's great desert. Who can estimate the pangs they have alleviated, or the good works they have accomplished? Long after they are uttered do they reverberate in the soul's inner chamber, and, like low, sweet strains of music, they serve to quell the memory of bitterness or of personal wrong, to lead the heart to the sunnier paths of life. And when the heart is sad, and, like a broken harp, the chords of pleasure cease to vibrate, how peculiarly acceptable then are kind words from others!

Who can rightly estimate the ultimate effect of one kind word fitly spoken? One little word of tenderness gushing in upon the soul will sweep long-neglected chords and awaken the most pleasant strains. Kind words are like jewels in the heart, never to be forgotten, but

perhaps to cheer by their memory a long, sad life, while words of cruelty are like darts in the bosom, wounding and leaving scars that will be borne to the grave by their victim. Speak kindly in the morning; it lightens all the cares of the day, and makes the household and other affairs move along more smoothly. Speak kindly at night; for it may be that before dawn some loved one may finish his or her space of life, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness. Speak kindly at all times; it encourages the downcast, cheers the sorrowing, and very likely awakens the erring to earnest resolves to do better, with strength to keep them. Always leave home with kind words; for they may be the last. Kind words are the bright flowers of earthly existence; use them, and especially around the fireside circle. They are jewels beyond price, and powerful to heal the wounded heart, and make the weighed-down spirit glad.

BENEVOLENCE.



Doing good is the only certain happy action of a man's life. The very consciousness of well-doing is in itself ample reward for the trouble we have been put to. The enjoyment of benevolent acts grows upon reflection. Experience teaches this so truly, that never did any soul do good but he came readier to do the same again with more enjoyment. Never was love or gratitude or bounty practiced but with increasing joy, which made the practicer more in love with the fair act.

If there be a pleasure on earth which angels can not enjoy, and which they might almost envy man the possession of, it is the power of relieving distress. If there be a pain which devils might almost pity man for enduring, it is the death-bed reflection that we have possessed the power of doing good, but that we have abused and perverted it to purposed ill. He who has never denied himself for the sake of giving has but glanced at the joys of benevolence. We owe our superfluity, and to be happy in the performance of our duty we must exceed it. The joy resulting from the diffusion of blessings to all around us is the purest and sublimest that can ever enter the human mind, and can be understood only by those who have experienced

it. Next to the consolation of divine grace it is the most sovereign balm to the miseries of life, both in him who is the object of it, and in him who exercises it.

In all other human gifts and possessions, though they advance nature, yet they are subject to excess. For so we see, that by aspiring to be like God in power, the angels transgressed and fell; by aspiring to be like God in knowledge man transgressed and fell; but by aspiring to be like God in goodness or love neither man nor angels ever did or shall transgress, for unto that imitation we are called. A life of passionate gratification is not to be compared with a life of active benevolence. God has so constituted our natures that a man can not be happy unless he is or thinks he is a means of doing good. We can not conceive of a picture of more unutterable wretchedness than is furnished by one who knows that he is wholly useless in the world.

A man or woman without benevolence is not a perfect being; they are only a deformed personality of true manhood or womanhood. In every heart there are many tendencies to selfishness; but the spirit of benevolence counteracts them all. In a world like this, where we are all so needy and dependent, where our interests are so interlocked, where our lives and hearts overlap each other and often grow together, we can not live without a good degree of benevolence. We do most for ourselves when we do most for others; hence our highest interests, even from a purely selfish point of view, are in the paths of benevolence. And in a

moral sense we know "that it is more blessed to give than to receive." Good deeds double in the doing, and the larger half comes back to the donor. A large heart of charity is a noble thing, and the most benevolent soul lives nearest to God. Selfishness is the root of evil; benevolence is its cure. In no heart is benevolence more beautiful than in youth; in no heart is selfishness more ugly. To do good is noble; to be good is more noble. This should be the aim Of all the young. The poor and the needy should occupy a large place in their hearts. The sick and suffering should claim their attention. The sinful and criminal should awaken their deepest pity. The oppressed and downtrodden should find a large place in their compassion.

Woman appears in her best estate in the exercise of benevolent deeds. How sweet are her soothing words to the disconsolate! How consoling her tears of sympathy to the mourning! How fresh her spirit of hope to the discouraged! How balmy the breath of her love to the oppressed! Man, too, appears in his best light and grandest aspect when he appears as the practical follower of Him who went about doing good. He who does these works of practical benevolence is educating his moral powers in the school of earnest and glorious life. He is laying the foundation for a noble and useful career. He is planting the seeds of a charity that will grow to bless and save the sufferings of our fellow-men.

Liberality consists less in giving profusely than in giving judiciously, for there is nothing that requires so strict an economy as our

benevolence. Liberality, if spread over too large a surface, produces no crop. If over one too small it exuberates in rankness and in weeds. And yet it requires care to avoid the other extreme. It is better to be sometimes mistaken than not to exercise charity at all. Though we may chance sometimes to bestow our beneficence on the unworthy it does not take from the merit of the act. It is not the true spirit of charity which is ever rigid and circumspect, and which always mistrusts the truth of the necessities laid open to it. Be not frightened at the hard word, "impostor." "Cast thy bread upon the waters." Some have unawares entertained angels.

A man should fear when he enjoys only what good he does publicly, lest it should prove to be the publicity rather than the charity that he loves. We have more confidence in that benevolence which begins in the home and diverges into a large humanity than in the world-wide philanthropy which begins at the outside and converges into egotism. A man should, indeed, have a generous feeling for the welfare of the whole world, and should live in the world as a citizen of the world. But he may have a preference for that particular part in which he lives. Charity begins at home, but it may and *ought* to go abroad; still we have no respect for self-boasting charity which neglects all objects of commiseration near and around it, but goes to the end of the world in search of misery for the sake of talking about it.

Generosity during life is a very different thing from generosity in the hour of death. One

proceeds from genuine liberality and benevolence; the other from pride or fear. He that will not permit his wealth to do any good to others while he is living prevents it from doing any good to himself when he is gone. By an egotism that is suicidal and has a double edge he cuts himself off from the truest pleasures here, and the highest pleasures hereafter. To pass a whole life-time without performing a single generous action till the dying hour, when death unlocks the grasp upon earthly possessions, is to live like the Talipat palm-tree of the East, which blossoms not till the last year of its life. It then suddenly bursts into a mass of flowers, but emits such an odor that the tree is frequently cut down to be rid of it. Even such is the life of those who postpone their munificence until the close of their days, when they exhibit a late efflorescence of generosity, which lacks the sweet-smelling perfume which good deeds should possess. And when it appears, like the Talipat flower, it is a sure sign that death is at hand. They surrender every thing when they see they can not continue to keep possession, and are at last liberal when they can no longer be parsimonious. The truly generous man does not wish to leave enough to build an imposing monument, since there is so much sorrow and suffering to be alleviated. They enjoy the pleasure of what they give by giving it when alive and seeing others benefited thereby.

A conqueror is regarded with awe, the wise man commands our esteem, but it is the benevolent man who wins our affection. A

beneficent person is like a fountain watering the earth and spreading fertility; it is, therefore, more delightful and more honorable to give than to receive. The last, best fruit which comes to late perfection, even in the kindliest soul, is tenderness towards the hard, forbearance towards the unforbearant, warmth of heart towards the cold, philanthropy towards the misanthropic.

VERACITY.



Veracity, or the habitual observance of truth, is a bright and shining quality on the part of any one who strives to make the most of life's possibilities. It irradiates all of his surroundings, making plain the path of duty, and hence the path which leads to the most enduring success. It is the bond of union and the basis of human happiness. Without this virtue, there is no reliance upon language, no confidence in friendship, no security in promises and oaths.

Truth is always consistent with itself, and needs nothing to help it out. It is always near at hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware; whereas a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention upon the rack; and one trick needs many more to make it good. It is dangerous to deviate far from the strict rule of veracity, even on the most trifling occasions. However guileless may be our intentions, the habit, if indulged, may take root, and gain on us under the cover of various pretenses, till it usurps a leading influence. Nothing appears so low and mean as lying and dissimulation; and it is observable that only weak animals endeavor to supply by craft the defects of strength which nature has given them. Dissimulation in youth is the forerunner of perfidy in old age. Its first appearance is the fatal omen of growing depravity and future shame. It degrades parts and learning, obscures the luster of every accomplishment, and sinks us into contempt.

The path of falsehood is a perplexing maze. After the first departure from sincerity, it is not in our power to stop. One artifice unavoidably leads on to another, till, as the intricacies of the labyrinth increase, we are left entangled in our snare. Falsehood is difficult to be maintained. When the materials of a building are solid stone, very rude architecture will suffice; but a structure of rotten materials needs the most careful adjustment to make it stand at all. The love of truth and right is the grand spring source of integrity. The study of truth is perpetually joined with the love of virtue. For

there is no virtue which derives not its original from truth; as, on the contrary, there is no vice which has not its beginning in a lie. Truth is the foundation of all knowledge and the cement of all society.

Strict veracity requires something more than merely the speaking of truth. There are lying looks as well as lying words; dissembling smiles, deceiving signs, and even a lying silence. Not to intend what you speak is to give your heart the lie with your tongue; and not to perform what you promise is to give your tongue the lie with your actions. Deception exhibits itself in many forms—in reticency on the one hand or exaggeration on the other; in disguise or concealment; in pretended concurrence in others' opinions; in assuming an attitude of conformity which is deceptive; in making promises, or in allowing them to be implied, which are never intended to be performed; or even in refraining from speaking the truth when to do so is a duty. There are also those who are all things to all men, who say one thing and do another. But those who are essentially insincere fail to evoke confidence, and, in the end discover that they have only deceived themselves while thinking they were deceiving others.

Lying is in some cases the offspring of perversity and vice, and in many others of sheer moral cowardice. Plutarch calls lying the vice of a slave. There is no vice, says Lord Bacon, that so covers a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. Every lie, great or small, is the brink of a precipice, the depth of which nothing

but Omniscience can fathom. Denying a fault always doubles it. All that a man can get by lying and dissembling is that he will not be believed when he speaks the truth. A liar is subject to two misfortunes, neither to believe nor to be believed. If falsehood, says Montaigne, like truth, had but one face, we should be upon better terms; for we should then take the contrary of what the liar says for certain truth.

We are not called upon to speak all that we know; that would be folly. But what a man says should be what he thinks; otherwise it is knavery. No wrong is ever made better, but always worse, by a falsehood. Even when detection does not follow, suspicion is always created. Wrong is but falsehood put in practice. The Chinese have a proverb which says, "A lie has no legs, and can not stand;" but it has wings and can fly far and wide. You never can unite, though you may try ever so hard, the antagonistic elements of truth and falsehood. The man who forgets a great deal that has happened has a better memory than he who remembers a great deal that never happened.

After all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth; for all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of a face, and true proportions the beauty of architecture, as true measure that of harmony and music. In poetry, truth still is the perfection. Fiction must be governed by truth, and can only please by its resemblance to truth. The appearance of reality is necessary to agreeably represent any passion, and to be able

to move others we must be moved ourselves, or at least seem to be so upon some probable ground. Falsehood itself is never so susceptible as when she baits her hook with truth, and no opinions so fatally mislead us as those that are not wholly wrong. No watch so effectually deceives the wearer as those that are sometimes right.

Such are the imperfections of mankind that the duplicities, the temptations, and the infirmities that surround us have rendered the truth, and nothing but the truth, as hazardous and contraband a commodity as a man can possibly deal in. Colton says that "pure truth, like pure gold, has been found unfit for circulation;" and another has said, "It is dangerous to follow truth too near lest she should kick out your teeth." The trouble consists not in obeying the behests of strict veracity, but in lack of prudence and ordinary caution. While all we tell should be the truth, it is not always necessary to tell all the truth, unless the other one have a right to know. Silence is always an alternative with truth. Remember that the silken cords of love must ever be linked with those of truth; otherwise they will but gall and irritate, instead of guiding into paths of rectitude.



HONOR.



A man of honor! What a glorious title is that! Who would not rather have it than any that kings can bestow? It is worth all the gold and silver in the world. He who merits it wears a jewel within his soul and needs none upon his bosom. "His word is as good as his bond," and if there were no law in the land one might deal just as safely with him. To take unfair advantage is not in him. To quibble and guard his speech so that he leads others to suppose that he means something that he does not mean, even while they can never prove that it is so, would be impossible to his frank nature. His speeches are never riddles. He looks you in the eye and says straight out the things he has to say, and he does unto others the things he would that they should do to him.

He is a good son and a good brother. Who ever heard him betray the faults and follies of his near kindred? And with his friends he proves himself true, and will not betray the trust friendship imposes on him. And with strangers you do not find him too curious about the affairs of others, or too eager to impart information accidentally gleaned by him. Real honor and esteem are not difficult to be obtained in the world. They are best won by actual worth and merit rather than by art and intrigue, which runs a long and ruinous race,

and seldom seizes upon the prize at last. Clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it.

Honor, like reputation and character, displays itself in little acts. It is of slow growth. Anciently the Romans worshiped virtue and honor as gods; they built two temples, which were so seated that none could enter the temple of honor without passing through the temple of virtue, thus symbolizing the truth that all honor is founded on virtue. He whose soul is set to do right finds himself more firmly bound by the principle of honor than by legal restraints—much more at ease when bound by the law than when bound by his conscience. He who is actuated by false principles of honor does not feel thus. True honor is internal, false honor external. The one is founded on principles, the other on interests. The one does not ostentatiously proclaim its lofty aims; it prefers that its conduct and actions demonstrate its purposes. He who is moved by false honor is constantly worried lest some one should doubt that he was a man of honor. He is so busily engaged in sustaining his reputation against fancied attacks on his honor that he finds but little time to devote to the exercise of those acts which a fine sense of honor would impel him to do. Such a one may be a libertine, penurious, proud—may insult his inferiors and defraud his creditors—but it is impossible for one possessed of true honor to be any of these.

Honor and virtue are not the same, though

true honor is always founded on virtue. Honor may take her tones and texture from the prevailing manners and customs of those around us; this renders her vacillating unless allied to virtue, which is the same in both hemispheres, yesterday as to-day. When honor is not founded on virtue she becomes essentially selfish in design, and is unworthy of her name. She is then unstable and seldom the same, for she feeds upon opinion, and will be as fickle as her food. She builds a lofty structure on the sandy foundation of the esteem of those who are, of all beings, the most subject to change. Combined with virtue she is uniform and fixed, because she looks for approbation only from Him who is the same at all times. Honor by herself is capricious in her rewards. She feeds us upon air, and often pulls down our house to build our monument. She is contracted in her views, inasmuch as her hopes are rooted on to earth, bounded by time, and terminated by death. But, when directed by virtue, her hopes become enlarged and magnified, inasmuch as they extend beyond present things—even to things eternal. In the storms and tempests of life mere honor is not to be depended on, because she herself partakes of the tumult; she also is buffeted by the waves and borne along by the whirlwind. But virtue is above the storm, and gives to honor a sure and steadfast anchor, since it is cast into heaven.



POLICY.



What is called policy is sometimes spoken of in the same sense as prudence, but its nature is cunning. It is a thing of many aspects and of many tongues; it can appear in any form and speak in any language. It is sometimes called management, but is not worthy of that good name, inasmuch as it is but a compound of sagacity and deceit, of duplicity and of meanness. It puts on the semblance of kindness and concern for your good, but its heart is treachery and selfishness.

This principle, strange as it may seem, is of very extensive influence. It is adopted and acted upon by multitudes, who claim to be respectable and intelligent men, and is not confined to the few or those of the baser sort. Its devotees may not be aware that this is their ruling principle of action. They mistake its meaning by giving it a wrong name. They call it prudence, discretion, wisdom. Alas! it is not guided by the high principles of integrity, which beautify and adorn those noble attributes of perfect manhood. Its appropriate name is policy, the sister of cunning, the child of deception and duplicity.

This principle of double dealing, of artful

accommodation and management, is eminently characteristic of the present age. It meets every man on his blind side, and by stratagem makes a tool of him to accomplish its own wily and selfish purposes. If he is weak, it deceives him by its artifices; if he is vain, it puffs up his vanity by flattery; if he is avaricious, it allures him with the prospect of gain; if he is ambitious, it promises him promotion; if he is timid, it threatens him. Its leading maxim is, "The end justifies the means," and, in pursuing its end, it sticks at nothing that promises success. It may be traced in all departments of business and through all grades of society, from the grand councils of the nation to the little town or parish meeting. Instead of acting in open daylight, pursuing the direct and straightforward path of rectitude and duty, you see men extensively putting on false appearances, working in the dark, and carrying their plans by stratagem and deceit; nothing open, nothing direct and honest; one thing is said, and another thing is meant. When you look for a man in one place, you find him in another. With flattering lips and a double heart do they speak. Their language and conduct do not proceed from fixed principles and open-hearted sincerity, but from a spirit of duplicity and selfish policy.

Prudence, caution, and business management are not only a necessity, but are commended as the price of success in worldly affairs. They have the sanction of our best judgment, and offend no moral sense of right. But against mere policy every young man who has any desire of

lasting respectability and influence ought most carefully be on his guard. Nothing can be more fatal to reputation and success in life than to acquire the character of an artful intriguer, one who does all things with the ulterior design of furthering his own ends. He may succeed for a time; but he will soon be found out, and when found out will be despised. He who acts on this principle thinks that nobody knows it; but he is wretchedly mistaken. The thin disguise that is thrown over the inner man is soon seen through by every one, and while he prides himself on being very wise and keeping his designs out of sight, all persons of the least discernment perfectly understand him, and despise him for thinking he could make fools of them.

People often mistake policy for discretion. There is a wide difference between the two traits. Policy is only the mimic of discretion, but may pass current with the mass in the same manner as vivacity is often mistaken for wit and gravity for wisdom. Policy has only private, selfish aims, and stops at nothing which may render these successful. Discretion has large and extended views, and, like a well-formed eye, commands a wide horizon. Policy is a kind of short insight that discovers the minutest objects that are close at hand, but is not able to discover things at a distance. The whole power of policy is private; to say nothing and to do nothing is the utmost of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature and mean by art are sometimes able to rise by the miscarriage of bravery and openness of integrity, and, watching failures and snatching opportunities,

obtain advantages which belong to higher characters.

The observant man will not calculate any essential difference from mere appearances. The light laughter that bubbles on the lips, often mantles over brackish depths of sadness, and the serious look may be the sober veil that covers a divine peace. The bosom may ache beneath diamond broaches, or a blithe heart dance under coarse wool sacks. By a kind of fashionable discipline the eye is taught to brighten, the lip to smile, and the whole countenance to emanate the semblance of friendly welcome, while the bosom is unwarmed by a single spark of genuine kindness and good-will. Grief and anxiety lie hidden under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is often cheered by the secret radiations of hope and comfort, as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers and the mine concealed in barren crags. Beware, so long as you live, of judging men by the outward appearance.

But nothing feigned or violent can last long. Life becomes manifest. It will declare itself, and at last the worthless disguises are worn off. Hence, the lesson that the wise man should learn is to guard against mere appearances in others, but for himself to pursue the straightforward, open course, and in a world of deceit and intrigue show himself a man that can be relied on. Thus will his life be influential for good, and after he is gone his memory will be revered as that of an upright man.

EGOTISM.

There is one quality which brings to its possessor naught but ridicule, or, what is still worse, positive dislike: it is sometimes called self-conceit, but more commonly and more forcibly expressed by egotism.

Egotism and skepticism are always miserable companions in life, and are especially unlovable in youth. The egotist is next door to a fanatic. Constantly occupied with self, he has no thoughts to spare for others. He refers to himself in all things, thinks of himself, and studies himself, until his own little self becomes his ruling principle of action. The pests of society are egotists. There are some men whose opposition can be reckoned upon against every thing that has not emanated from themselves. He that falls in love with himself will have no rivals. The egotist's code is, Every thing for himself, nothing for others. Hence it is by reason of their selfishness that they find the

world so ugly, because they can only see themselves in it.

An egotist is seldom a man of brilliant parts. A talented or sensible man is apt to drop out of his narration every allusion to himself. He is content with putting his theme on its own ground. You shall not tell me you have learned to know most men. Your saying so disproves it. You shall not tell me by their titles what books you have read. You shall not tell me your house is the best and your pictures the finest. You shall make me feel it. I am not to infer it from your conversation. It is a false principle, because we are entirely occupied with ourselves, we must equally occupy the thoughts of others. The contrary inference is but the fair one. We are such hypocrites that whatever we talk of ourselves, though our words may sound humble, our hearts are nearly always proud. When all is summed up, a man never speaks of himself without loss; his accusation of himself is always believed, his praises never. This love of talking of self is a disease that, like influenza, falls on all constitutions. It is allowable to speak of yourself, provided you do not continually advance new arguments in your favor. But abuse of self is nearly as bad, since we can not help suspecting that those who abuse themselves are, in reality, angling for approbation.

Ofttimes we dislike egotism in others simply because of our own. We feel it a slight, when we are by, that one should talk of himself, or seek to entertain us with his own interests instead of asking us ours. He who thinks he can

find in himself the means of doing without others is much mistaken. But he who thinks others can not do without him is still more mistaken. Conceit is the most contemptible and one of the most odious qualities in the world. It is vanity drawn from all other shifts, and forced to appeal to itself for admiration. It is to nature what paint is to beauty; it is not only needless, but it impairs what it would improve. He who gives himself airs of importance exhibits the credentials of impotence. He that fancies himself very enlightened because he sees the deficiency of others may be very ignorant because he has not studied his own. In the same degree as we overrate ourselves we shall underrate others; for injustice allowed at home is not likely to be corrected abroad.

It is this unquiet love of self that renders us so sensitive. It is an instrument useful, but dangerous. It often wounds the hand that makes use of it, and seldom does good without doing harm. The sick man who sleeps ill thinks the night long. We exaggerate all the evils which we encounter; they are great, but our sensibility increases them. Man should not prize himself by what he has; neither should others prize him by what he professes to have, or what he by vigorous talk constantly lays claim to possess. We should seek the more valuable qualities which lie hidden in his true self. He mistakes who values a jewel by its golden frame, or a book by its silver clasps, or a man by reason of his estates or profession.

The true measure of success always lies between two extremes. Egotism and

overweening self-conceit are indeed deplorable blemishes in any character; but we, perhaps, forget that he who is totally destitute of them presents but a sorry figure in the world's battle-field. He lacks individuality, and lacks the courage to push forward his own interests. In this aggressive age it will not do to be destitute of a right degree of self-confidence. Lacking this, men are too often deterred from taking that position for which their talents eminently fit them, and at last have only vain regrets as they contemplate life's failures. Egotism is as distinct and separate from a manly self-confidence in one's own powers as the unsightly block of marble is to the finished statuette, which consists, indeed, of the same materials as the former, but so softened and modified as to be an object of admiration to all. Nor is it difficult to draw the dividing lines. Egotism exultingly proclaims to all, "Look at me. What strength, what ability, what talents are mine! Who so graceful? who so gifted? who so competent to be placed in position of honor or authority as I? I am sure of success. Behold my triumph!" The man who is withal modest, yet feels that he possesses acquisitions and gifts, says: "True, the way is long, the time discouraging, but what has been done can be done. I can but make the effort, and go forward to the best of my ability; and if so be I fail, with a brave heart and a cheerful face I will do what duty points out; but if success crowns my efforts, I will so use my advantages that all may be benefited."

VANITY.

There is no vice or folly that requires so much nicety and skill to manage as vanity, nor any which, by ill-management, makes so contemptible a figure. The desire of being thought wise is often a hindrance to being so, for such a one is often more desirous of letting the world see what knowledge he hath than to learn of others that which he wants. Men are more apt to be vain on account of those qualities which they fondly believe they have than of those which they really possess Some would be thought to do great things who are but tools or instruments, like the fool who fancied he played upon the organ when he only blew the bellows.

Be not so greedy of popular applause as to forget that the same breath which blows up a fire may blow it out again. Vanity, like laudanum and other poisonous medicines, is beneficial in small, though injurious in large,

quantities. Be not vain of your want of vanity. When you hear the phrase, "I may say without vanity," you may be sure some characteristic vanity will follow in the same breath. The most worthless things are sometimes most esteemed. It is not all the world that can pull an humble man down, because God will exalt him. Nor is it all the world that can keep a proud man up, because God will debase him.

Vanity feeds voraciously and abundantly on the richest food that can be served up, or can live on less and meaner diet than any thing of which we can form a conception. The rich and the poor, learned and ignorant, strong and weak,—all have a share in vanity. The humblest Christian is not free from it, and when he is most humble the devil will flatter his vanity by telling him of it. On the other hand, it is with equal relish that it feeds upon vulgarity, coarseness, and fulsome eccentricity,—every thing, in short, by which a person can attract attention. It often takes liberality by the hand, prompts advice, administers reproof, and sometimes perches visibly and gayly on the prayers and sermons in the pulpit. It is an ever-present principle of human nature—a wen on the heart of man; less painful, but equally loathsome as a cancer. It is of all others the most baseless propensity.

O vanity, how little is thy force acknowledged or thine operations discerned! How wantonly dost thou deceive mankind under different disguises! Sometimes thou dost wear the face of pity; sometimes of generosity; nay, thou hast the assurance to put on the robes

of religion and the glorious ornaments that belong only to heroic virtue. Vanity is the fruit of ignorance. It thrives most in those places never reached by the air of heaven or the light of the sun. It is a deceitful sweetness, a fruitless labor, a perpetual fear, a dangerous honor; her beginning is without providence, but her end not without repentance. Vanity is so constantly solicitous of self that even where its own claims are not interested it indirectly seeks the aliment which it loves by showing how little is deserved by others.

Charms which, like flowers, lie on the surface —such as preserve figure and dress—conduce to vanity. On the contrary, those excellencies which lie down, like gold, and are discovered with difficulty—such as profoundness of intellect and morality—leave their possessors modest and humble. Vanity ceases to be blameless, even if it is not ennobled, when it is directed to laudable objects, when it prompts us to great and generous actions. Vanity is, indeed, the poison of agreeableness, yet even a poison, when skillfully employed, has a salutary effect in medicine; so has vanity in the commerce and society of the world.

Some intermixture of vainglorious tempers puts life into business, and makes a fit composition for grand enterprises and hazardous endeavors; for men of solid and sober natures have more of the ballast than the sail. Vanity is, in one sense, the antidote to conceit, for, while the former makes us all nerve to the opinions of others, the latter is perfectly satisfied with its opinion of itself. A

vain man can not be altogether rude. Desirous as he is of pleasing he fashions his manners after those of others. Therefore, let us give vanity fair quarter wherever we meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to its possessor, and to others who are within its sphere of action.

Vanity pervades the whole human family to a greater or less degree, as the atmosphere does the globe. It is so anchored in the heart of man that not only in the lower walks of life but in the higher all wish to have their admirers. Those who write against it wish to have the glory of writing well, and those who read it wish the glory of reading well. Vanity calculates but poorly on the vanity of others. What a virtue we should distill from frailty! what a world of pain we would save our brethren, if we would suffer our weakness to be the measure of theirs!

We would rather contend with pride than vanity, because pride has a stand-up way of fighting. You know where it is. It throws its black shadow on you, and you are not at a loss where to strike. But vanity is such a delusive and multified failing that men who fight vanities are like men who fight midgets and butterflies. It is much easier to chase them than to hit them. Vanity may be likened to the mouse nibbling about in the expectation of a crumb; while pride is apt to be like the butcher's dog, who carries off your steak and growls at you as he goes. Pride is never more offensive than when it condescends to be civil; whereas vanity, whenever it forgets itself,

naturally assumes good humor.

Extinguish vanity in the mind, and you naturally retrench the little superfluities of garniture and equipage. The flowers will fall of themselves when the root that nourishes them is destroyed. We have nothing of which we should be vain, but much to induce humility. If we have any good qualities they are the gift of God. Let every one guard against this all-pervading principle, and teach their children that it is the shadow of a shade.

SELFISHNESS.

There is nothing in the world so malignant and destructive in its nature and tendency as selfishness. It has done all the mischief of the past, and is destined to do all the mischief of the unseen future. It has destroyed the temporal and eternal interests of millions in times past, and it is morally certain that it will destroy the

interests of millions yet to come. It is the source of all the sins of omission and commission which are found in the world. We shall not see a wrong take place but that the actor is moved by his own private, personal, and selfish nature.

Selfishness is a vice utterly at variance with the happiness of him who harbors it, for the selfish man suffers more from his selfishness than he from whom that selfishness withholds some important benefit. He that sympathizes in all the happiness of others perhaps himself enjoys the safest happiness, and he who is warned by all the folly of others has perhaps attained the soundest wisdom. But such is the blindness and suicidal selfishness of mankind that things so desirable are seldom pursued, things so accessible seldom attained. The selfish person lives as if the world were made altogether for him, and not he for the world; to take in every thing, and part with nothing.

Selfishness contracts and narrows our benevolence, and causes us, like serpents, to infold ourselves within ourselves, and to turn out our stings to all the world besides. As frost to the bud and blight to the blossom, even such is self-interest to friendship, for confidence can not dwell where selfishness is porter at the gate. The essence of true nobility is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower. Selfishness is the bane of all life. It can not enter into any life—individual, family, or social—without cursing it. It maintains its ground by tenacity and contention, and engenders strife and discord

where all before was peace and harmony.

Few sins in the world are punished more constantly or more certainly than that of selfishness. It dwarfs all the better nature of man. It takes from him that feeling of kindly sympathy for others' good, which is one of the most pleasing traits of manhood, and in its stead sets up self as the one whose good is to be chiefly sought. It makes self the vortex instead of the fountain, so that, instead of throwing out, he learns only to draw in. These withering effects are to be seen not only in the high roads and public places of life, but in the nooks and by-lanes as well. Not alone among conquerors and kings, but among the humble and obscure; in the dissembling artifices of trade; in the unsanctified lust of wealth; in the devoted pursuit of station and power; confederated with the worst feelings and most depraved designs.

In proportion as we contract and curtail our feelings, so do we confine and limit our minds. If all our thoughts, plans, and purposes tend only to the advancement of self, we may be sure they will become as insignificant as their object, and instead of embracing in their scope the welfare of many, rendering us an object of endearment to others, they will become dwarfed and conceited, and fall far short of the liberality and public spirit by which we attach others to our cause. Unselfish and noble acts are the most radiant epochs in the history of souls, points from which we date a larger growth of thought and feeling. When wrought in earliest youth, they lie in the memory of age, like the coral islands, green and sunny, waving

with the fruits of a southern clime amidst the melancholy waste of water.

The vice of selfishness displays itself in many ways. In an extreme form it is termed avarice, and shows itself in an insatiable desire to gather wealth. As heat changes the hitherto brittle metal into the elastic, yielding, yet deadly Damascus blade, so, when the demon of avarice finds lodgment in the heart of man, it changes all his better nature. It may find him delighting to do good and relieving the wants of others; it leaves him one whose whole energy and power are turned to the advancement of self alone. This is the grand center to which all his efforts tend. There is no length to which an avaricious man will not go in his mad career. In order that wealth may be his he will run almost any risks, stand any privation, and will sacrifice not only his own comfort and happiness, but that also of his friends and associates, or even of his own family circle. His mind is never expanded beyond the circumference of the almighty dollar. He thinks not of his immortal soul, his accountability to God, or of his final destiny. Selfishness in its worst form has complete possession of his heart. It is the ruling principle of his life. One strange feature about this form of selfishness is that it ultimately defeats its own ends. Its possessor is an Ishmael in the community. He passes to the grave without tasting the sweets of friendship or the comforts of life. Striving for wealth in order that he may have wherewith to procure happiness, he ends with the sacrifice of all the means of enjoyment in order that he may augment his wealth more

rapidly.

The closing hours of a life of selfishness must be clouded with many painful thoughts. Chances for doing good passed unimproved. In order that some slight personal advantage might be gained kindly feelings were suppressed. The heart, which was intended to beat with compassion for others, has become contracted to a narrow circle, and life, that inestimable gift of Providence, instead of drawing to its close a rounded and complete whole, has been stinted and dwarfed, and passes on to the other world but illy prepared for the great changes wrought by the hand of death.

OBSTINACY.



Obstinacy and contention are common qualities, most appearing in and best becoming a mean and illiterate soul. They arise not so much from a conscious defect of voluntary

power, as foolhardiness is not seldom the disguise of conscious timidity. Obstinacy must not be confounded with perseverance; for obstinacy presumptuously declines to listen to reason, but perseverance only continues its exertion while satisfied that good judgment sustains its course. There are few things more singular than that obstinacy which, in matters of the highest importance to ourselves, often prevents us from acknowledging the truth that is perfectly plain to all.

There is something in obstinacy which differs from every other passion. Whenever it fails it never recovers, but either breaks like iron or crumbles sulkily away like a fractured arch. Most other passions have their periods of fatigue and rest, their suffering and their care; but obstinacy has no resources, and the first wound is mortal. Narrowness of mind is often the cause of obstinacy; we do not easily believe beyond what we see. Hence it is that the more extensive one's knowledge of mankind becomes, the less inclined is he to the vice of obstinacy; and an obstinate disposition, instead of denoting a mind of superior ability, always denotes a dwarfed, ignorant, and selfish disposition. An obstinate, ungovernable self-sufficiency plainly points out to us that state of imperfect maturity at which the graceful levity of youth is lost and the solidity of experience not yet acquired.

Obstinacy is not only a result of a narrow, illiberal judgment, but it is a barrier to all improvements. It casts the mind in a mold, and as utterly prevents it from expanding as though

it were a material substance encased in iron. A stubborn mind conduces as little to wisdom, or even to knowledge, as a stubborn temper to happiness. Whosoever perversely resolves to adhere to plans or opinions, be they right or be they wrong, because they have adopted them, raises an impassable bar to information. The wiser we are the more we are aware of the extent of our ignorance. Those who have but just entered the vestibule of the temple of knowledge invariably feel themselves much wiser than those who meekly worship in the inner sanctuary. Positiveness is much more apt to accompany the statement of the superficial observer than him whose experience has been vast and profound. Sir Isaac Newton, who might have spoken with authority, felt as a child on the shore of the great sea of human knowledge. Doubtless many of his followers feel as though far out on the tossing waves; for they act as if their opinion could by no possibility be wrong.

Sometimes obstinacy is confounded with firmness, and under this misnomer is practiced as a virtue. But the line between obstinacy and firmness is strong and decisive. Firmness of purpose is one of the most necessary sinews of character, and one of the best instruments of success. Without it, genius wastes its efforts in a maze of inconsistencies. Firmness, while not suffering itself to be easily driven from its course, recognizes the fact that it is only perfection that is immutable, but that for things imperfect change is the way to perfect them. It gets the name of obstinacy when it will not

admit of a change for the better. Firmness without knowledge can not be always good. In things ill it is not virtue, but an absolute vice. It is a noble quality; but unguided by knowledge or humility, it falls into obstinacy, and so loses the traits whereby we before admired it.

Society is often dragged down to low standards by two or three who propose, in every case, to fight every thing and every idea of which they are not the instigators. There is nothing harder for a man with a strong will than to make up his mind not always to have his own way; to submit, in many cases, rather than to quarrel with his neighbors. One must certainly make up his mind to lose much of happiness who is not willing to give way at times to the wishes of others. We must learn to turn sharp corners quietly, or we shall be constantly hurting ourselves.

But we must not, in decrying obstinacy, overlook the fact that, while it certainly is a great vice and frequently the cause of great mischief, yet it has closely allied with it the whole line of masculine virtues, constancy, fidelity, and fortitude, and that in their excess all the virtues easily fall into it. Yet it is ever easy to determine the line of demarkation where these virtues end and obstinacy begins. The smallest share of common sense will suffice to detect it, and there is little doubt that few people pass this boundary without being conscious of the fault. The business of constancy chiefly is bravely to stand by and stoutly to suffer those inconveniences which are not otherwise possible to be avoided. But

constancy does not adhere to an opinion merely for the sake of having its own way, wherein it differs from obstinacy.

There are situations in which the proper opinions and modes of action are not evident. In such cases we must maturely reflect ere we decide; we must seek for the opinions of those wiser and better acquainted with the subject than ourselves; we must candidly hear all that can be said on both sides; then, and then only, can we in such cases hope to determine wisely. But the decision once so deliberately adopted we must firmly sustain, and never yield but to the most unbiased conviction of our former errors. But when such conviction is secured, it is the part of true manliness to acknowledge it, and of true wisdom to make the required change. There is no principle of constancy or of perseverance or of fortitude that requires us to continue in our former course when convinced that it is wrong.

SLANDER.



There is nothing which wings its flight so swiftly as calumny; nothing which is uttered with more ease; nothing which is listened to with more readiness, or dispersed more widely. Slander soaks into the mind as water soaks into low and marshy places, where it becomes stagnant and offensive. Slander is like the Greek fire, which burned unquenched beneath the water; or, like the weeds which, when you have extirpated them in one place, are sprouting vigorously in another; or, it is like the wheel which catches fire as it goes, and burns with fiercer conflagration as its own speed increases.

The tongue of slander is never tired; in one form or another it manages to keep itself in constant employment. Sometimes it drips honey and sometimes gall. It is bitter now, and then sweet. It insinuates or assails directly, according to circumstances. It will hide a curse under a smooth word and administer poison in the phrases of love. Like death, it "loves a shining mark," and is never so available and eloquent as when it can blight the hopes of the noble-minded, soil the reputation of the pure, and break down or destroy the character of the brave and strong.

No soul of high estate can take delight in slander. It indicates lapse, tendency toward

chaos, utter depravity. It proves that somewhere in the soul there is a weakness—a waste, evil nature. Education and refinement are no proof against it. They often serve only to polish the slanderous tongue, increase its tact, and give it suppleness and strategy.

He that shoots at the stars may hurt himself, but not endanger them. When any man speaks ill of us we are to make use of it as a caution, without troubling ourselves at the calumny. He is in a wretched case that values himself upon the opinions of others, and depends upon their judgment for the peace of his life. The contempt of injurious words stifles them, but resentment revives them. He that values himself upon conscience, not opinion, never heeds reproaches. When ill-spoken of take it thus: If you have not deserved it you are none the worse; if you have, then mend. Flee home to your own conscience, and examine your own heart. If you are guilty it is a just correction; if not guilty it is a fair instruction; make use of both; so shall you distill honey out of gall, and out of an open enemy create a secret friend.

That man who attempts to bring down and depreciate those who are above him does not thereby elevate himself. He rather sinks himself, while those whom he traduces are benefited rather than injured by the slander of one so base as he. He who indulges in slander is like one who throws ashes to the windward, which come back to the same place and cover him all over. To be continually subject to the breath of slander will tarnish the purest virtue as a constant exposure to the atmosphere will

obscure the luster of the finest gold; but in either the real value of both continues the same, although the currency may be somewhat impeded. Dirt on the character, if unjustly thrown, like dirt on the clothes, should be let alone awhile until it dries, and then it will rub off easily enough. Slander, like other poisons, when administered in very heavy doses, is often thrown off by the intended victim, and thus relieves where it was meant to kill. Dirt sometimes acts like fuller's earth—defiling for the moment, but purifying in the end.

How small a matter will start a slanderous report! How frequently is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or a shrug! How many good and generous actions have been sunk in oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputation of proceeding from bad motives by a mysterious and seasonable whisper! A mere hint, a significant look, a mysterious countenance, directing attention to a particular person, is often amply sufficient to start the tongue of slander.

Never does a man portray his own character more vividly than in his manner of portraying another's. There is something unsound about the man whom you have never heard say a good word about any mortal, but who can say much of evil of nearly all he is acquainted with. Never speak evil of another, even with a cause. Remember we all have our faults, and if we expect charity from the world we must be charitable ourselves. Most persons have visible faults, and most are sometimes inconsistent; upon these faults and mistakes petty scandal

delights to feast. And even where free from external blemishes envy and jealousy can start the bloodhound of suspicion—create a noise that will attract attention, and many may be led to suppose there is game where there is nothing but thin air.

A word once spoken can never be recalled; therefore it is prudent to think twice before we speak, especially when ill is the burden of our talk. Give no heed to an infamous story handed you by a person known to be an enemy to the one he is defaming; neither condemn your neighbor unheard, for there are always two sides of a story. Hear no ill of a friend, nor speak any of an enemy. Believe not all you hear, nor report all you believe. Be cautious in believing ill of others, and more cautious in reporting it.

There is seldom any thing uttered in malice which returns not to the heart of the speaker. Believe nothing against another but on good authority, nor report what may hurt another, unless it be a greater hurt to others to conceal it. It is a sign of bad reputation to take pleasure in hearing ill of our neighbors. He who sells his neighbor's credit at a low rate makes the market for another to buy his at the same rate. He that indulges himself in calumniating or ridiculing the absent plainly shows his company what they may expect from him after he leaves them.

Deal tenderly with the absent. Say nothing to inflict a wound on their reputation. They may be wrong and wicked, yet your knowledge of it does not oblige you to disclose their character, except to save others from injury. Then do it in

a way that bespeaks a spirit of kindness for the absent offender. Evil reports are often the results of misunderstanding or of evil designs, or they proceed from an exaggerated or partial disclosure of facts. Wait, learn the whole story before you decide; then believe what the evidence compels you to, and no more. But even then take heed not to indulge the least unkindness, else you dissipate all the spirit of prayer for them, and unnerve yourself for doing them good.

On many a mind and many a heart there are sad inscriptions deeply engraved by the tongue of slander, which no effort can erase. They are more durable than the impression of the diamond on the glass, for the inscription on the glass may be destroyed by a blow, but the impression on the heart will last forever. Let not the sting of calumny sink too deeply in your soul. He who is never subject to slander is generally of too little mental account to be worthy of it. Remember that it is always the best fruits that the birds pick at, that wasps light on the finest flowers, and that slanderers are like flies, that overlook all a man's good parts in order to light upon his sores. Know that slander is not long-lived, provided that your conduct does not justify them, and that truth, the child of time, erelong will appear to vindicate thee.

IRRITABILITY.

Few characteristics are more unfortunate in their effects on the character of their possessor than irritability, few more repulsive and annoying to those with whom circumstances bring him in contact. Irritable people are always unjust, always exacting, always dissatisfied. They claim every thing of others, yet receive their best efforts with petulance and disdain. This habit has an unfortunate tendency of growth, until it renders a person wholly incapable of conferring happiness upon others. As the morning fog renders the most familiar objects uncouth in appearance, so it distorts the imagination and disorders the mental faculties, so that truth can not be distinguished from falsehood or friendship from enmity.

It is one great spring-source of envy and discontent, poisoning the fountain of life; it is a

moral Upas-tree, scattering ruin and desolation on every side. Its origin is not difficult to trace; activity and energy are its correctives. Those who habitually occupy their minds about things serviceable to others and to themselves are seldom peevish or irritable; but those whose powers are enervated by inertia, whose mental pabulum is fiction generated in a disordered fancy, become misanthropic or grumblers, and speedily give way to incessant fault-finding, as annoying as it is unjust. Did irritable people know or could they feel the effect of their conduct upon others, they would doubtless seek to refrain from the habit; but the possessor of such a turn of mind is as selfish as he is unjust, and cares for no one but himself. For others he cares nothing. While he claims the greatest deference for himself, he will not defer to the wishes of others in the slightest degree.

The personal sin of fretting is almost as extensive as any other evil, and if not universal, it is at least very general. It is as vain and useless a habit as any one can harbor. It is a direct violation of the law of God, and its direful effects are fearful to contemplate. Nothing so warps a man's nature, sours his disposition, and, sooner or later, breaks up the friendly relationship of the domestic circle. It is sinful in its beginning, sinful in its progress, and disastrous in its results. Such a spirit in the family, in the school or Church is sure to become contagious, and result in great injury.

A fretting, irritable disposition will not fail of finding frequent opportunities for indulgence. It is not particular as to time, place, or cause.

Occasions literally multiply as the habit increases in strength. Nothing seems to go right with its possessor. Instead of conquering circumstances they control and conquer him. Fretting weakens one's self-respect, dissipates the regards of others, and breaks asunder the bonds of affection. If a scolder should, through deception and ignorance of his true character, be for a time loved, still the canker is there, the mine is sapped, and, sooner or later, the affections will be sundered. Such a habit too frequently indulged in has drawn the best of husbands into dissipation, rendered the most affectionate of wives miserable, and estranged members of the same family circle. It ruins all the relationships of life, it is a most pernicious disposition, a dreadful inheritance.

It is ever the disposition of human nature to pattern more easily after the evils by which we are surrounded than the good. There is also an unfortunate disposition on our part to criticise the faults of those around us which displease us. Did we always do this in a spirit of true kindness it were well; but a confirmed grumbler is at heart so thoroughly selfish that the spirit of charity is utterly foreign to his complaints. Instead of earnest endeavor to discover and pattern after the perfection of those by whom they are surrounded, they seem bent only on learning the faults of others, and to take positive pleasure in making them public. Such a spirit only displays our own weakness; it shows to all keen observers that we have not patience enough to bear with our neighbor's weakness. It defeats its own ends, and instead of exposing

the faults of our neighbors, serves only to call attention to our own irritable, peevish, unlovable disposition.

It is an unfailing sign of moral weakness to be constantly giving way to fitful outbreaks of ill-temper. Fools, lunarians, the weak-minded, and the ignorant are irascible, impatient, and possess an ungovernable disposition; great hearts and wise are calm, forgiving, and serene. To hear one perpetual round of complaint and murmuring, to have every pleasant thought scared away by this evil spirit, is a sore trial. It is, like the sting of a scorpion, a perpetual nettle destroying your peace, rendering life a burden. Its influence is deadly, and the purest and sweetest atmosphere is contaminated into a deadly miasma wherever this evil genius prevails. It has been truly said that, while we ought not to let the bad temper of others influence us, it would be as reasonable to spread a blister upon the skin and not expect it to draw, as to think a family not suffering because of the bad temper of any of its inmates. One string out of tune will destroy the music of an instrument otherwise perfect, so if all the members of a family do not cultivate a kind and affectionate disposition there will be discord and every evil work.

To say the least, such a disposition is a most unfortunate one. It bespeaks littleness of soul and ignorance of mankind. It is far wiser to take the more charitable view of our fellow-men. Life takes its hue in a great degree from the color of our own minds. If we are frank and generous the world treats us kindly. If, on the

contrary, we are suspicious, men learn to be cold and cautious toward us. Let a person get the reputation of being touchy, and every body is under more or less restraint in his or her presence. The people who fire up easily miss a deal of happiness. Their jaundiced tempers destroy their own comfort as well as that of their friends. They always have some fancied slight to brood over. The sunny, serene moments of less selfish dispositions never visit them. True wisdom inculcates the necessity of self-control in all instances. Much may be affected by cultivation. We should learn to command our feelings, and act prudently in all the ordinary concerns of life. This will better prepare us to meet sudden emergencies with calmness and fortitude.

ENVY.



Envy is the daughter of Pride, the author of murder and revenge, the beginner of secret

sedition, and the perpetual tormentor of virtue. Envy is the slime of the soul, a venom, a poison or quicksilver, which consumeth the flesh and dryeth up the marrow of the bones. It is composed of odious ingredients, in which are found meanness, vice, and malice, in about equal proportions. It wishes the force of goodness to be strained, and that the measure of happiness be abated. It laments over prosperity, pines at the visit of success, is sick at the sight of health. Like death, it loves a shining mark; like the worm, it never runs but to the fairest fruits; like a cunning bloodhound, it singles out the fattest deer in the flock.

Envy is no less foolish than it is detestable. It is a vice which keeps no holiday, but is always in the wheel and working out its own disquiet. It loves darkness rather than light, because its deeds are evil. Scorpions can be made to sting themselves to death when confined within a circle of fire. Even such is envy; for when surrounded on all sides by the brightness of another's prosperity it speedily destroys itself. He whose heart is imbued with the spirit of envy loseth much of the pleasures of life. The envious man is in pain upon all occasions which ought to give him pleasure.

It were not possible for one to adopt a more suicidal course as far as his own happiness is concerned. The relish of his life is inverted, and the objects which administer the highest satisfaction to those who are exempt from this passion give the quickest pangs to those subject to it. As when we look through glasses colored all objects partake of the glasses' color, so one

moved and influenced by envy sees not the perfection of his fellow-creatures, but that they are to him odious. Youth, beauty, valor, and wisdom are, to their perverted view, but objects calculated to provoke their displeasure. What a wretched and apostate state is this—to be offended with excellence, and to hate a man because we approve him! Were not its effects so disastrous to personal character, the fit weapon wherewith to meet it were the ridicule of all sensible people. But the evil is too deeply seated to be spoken of lightly. As its cause is situated deep in the character of the individual, so its effects are far-reaching in his life.

He that is under the dominion of envy can not see perfections. He is so blinded that he is always degrading or misrepresenting things which are excellent. This brings out strongly the difference between the envious man and him who is moved by the spirit of benevolence. The envious man is tormented, not only by all the ills that befall himself, but by all the good that happens to another; whereas the benevolent man is better prepared to bear his own calamities unruffled, from the complacency and serenity he has secured from contemplating the prosperity of all around him. For the man of true benevolence the sun of happiness must be totally eclipsed before it can be darkness around him. But the envious man is made gloomy, not only by his own cloud of sorrow, but by the sunshine around the heart of another.

Other passions have objects to flatter them, and seem to content and satisfy them for a

while. There is power in ambition, pleasure in luxury, and pelf in covetousness; but envy can give nothing but vexation. Envy is so base and detestable, so vile in its origin, and so pernicious in its effects, that the predominance of almost any other quality is to be preferred. It is a passion so full of cowardice and shame that nobody ever had the confidence to own it. He that envieth maketh another man's virtue his vice, and another man's happiness his torment; whereas he that rejoiceth at the prosperity of another is partaker of the same.

Envy is a sentiment that desires to equal, or excel, the efforts of its compeers, not so much by increasing our own toil and ingenuity as by diminishing the merits due to the efforts of others. It seeks to elevate itself by the degradation of others; it detests the sound of another's praise, and deems no renown acceptable that must be shared. Hence, when disappointments occur, they fall with unrelieved violence, and the consciousness of discomfited rivalry gives poignancy to the blow. Whoever feels pain in learning the good character of his neighbors will feel a pleasure in the reverse; and those who despair to rise to distinction by their virtues are happy if others can be depressed to a level with themselves.

Envy is so cruel in its pursuit that, when once hounded on, it rests not till the grave closes over its victim. There is a secure refuge against defamation, and one redeeming trait of human nature is that there every man's well-earned honors defend him against calumny. Honors bestowed upon the illustrious dead have in

them no admixture of envy; but these are about the only kind of honors administered free from envy. Though the fact is to be deeply lamented, it is unfortunately true, that such is the perversion of the human heart that ofttimes the only reward of those whose merits have raised them above the common level is to acquire the hatred and aversion of their compeers. He who would acquire lasting fame, and would be remembered as one who did his duty well, must resolve to submit to the shafts of envy for the sake of noble objects.

Envy is a weed that grows in all soils and climates, and is no less luxuriant in the country than in the court. It is not confined to any rank of men or extent of fortune, but rages in the breast of those of every degree. We are as apt to find it in the humble walks of life as in the proud; as much in the sordid, affected dress as in all the silks and embroideries which the excess of age and folly of youth delight to be adorned with. Since, then, it keeps all sorts of company, and infuses itself into the most contrary natures and dispositions, and yet carries so much poison and venom with it that it ruins any life in which it finds lodgment—alienating the affections from heaven, and raising rebellion against God himself—it is worth our utmost care to watch it in all its disguises and approaches, that we may discover it at its first entrance, and dislodge it before it procures a shelter to conceal itself, and work to our confusion and shame.

DISCONTENT.

"Thinkest thou the man whose mansions hold
The worldling's pomp and miser's gold
Obtains a richer prize
Than he who, in his cot at rest,
Finds heavenly peace a willing guest,
And bears the promise in his breast
Of treasures in the skies?"

—MRS. SIGOURNEY.



The lot of the discontented is, indeed, wretched; and truly miserable are those who live but to repine and lament, who have less resolution to resent than to complain, or else, mingling resentment and complaint together, perceive no harmony and happiness around them. They discover in the bounty and beauty of nature nothing to admire, and in the virtues and capabilities of man nothing to love and respect. A contented mind sees something good in every thing, and in every wind sees a sign of fair weather; but a discontented spirit distorts and misconstrues all things, resolutely refusing to see aught but ill in its surroundings.

The spirit of discontent is very unfortunate; it

is even worse, for it is wicked as well as weak. The very entertainment of the thought is enervating, paralyzing, destructive of all that is worthy of success, in the present business of the entertainer. To accomplish any thing beyond what the common run of business or professional men perform requires the utmost concentration of the mind on the matter in hand. There is no room in the thoughts for repining over the misfortunes of one's self, or wishes for an exchange of places with another. Indeed, it might be truthfully predicated that the indulgers of such wishes would fail utterly in the new sphere, could they achieve their desires.

Nearly every one we meet wishes to be what he is not, and every man thinks his neighbor's lot happier than his own. Through all the ramifications of society all are complaining of their condition, finding fault with their particular calling. "If I were only this, or that, or the other, I should be content," is the universal cry. Open the door to one discontented wish and you know not how many will follow. The boy apes the man; the man affects the ways of boyhood. The sailor envies the landsman; the landsman goes to sea for pleasure. The business man who has to travel about wishes for the day to come when he can "settle down," whilst the sedentary man is always wanting a chance to flit about and travel, which he thinks would be his greatest pleasure. Town people think the country glorious; country people are always wishing that they might live in town.

We are told that it is one property required of

those who seek the philosopher's stone that they must not do it with any covetous desire to be rich, for otherwise they shall never find it. But most true it is, that whosoever would have this jewel of contentment (which turns all into gold; yea, want into wealth), must come with minds divested of all ambitious and covetous thoughts, else they are never likely to obtain it. The foundation of content must spring up in a man's own mind, and he who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing aught but his own disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he proposes to remove.

Contentment is felicity. Few are the real wants of man. Like a majority of his troubles they are more imaginary than real. If the world knew how much felicity dwells in the cottage of the poor, but contented, man—how sound he sleeps, how quiet his rest, how composed his mind, how free from care, and how joyful his heart—they would never more admire the noises and diseases, the throngs of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites that fill the houses of the luxurious, and the hearts of the ambitious.

Enjoy the blessings if God sends them, and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly, for this day is ours. Always something of good can yet be found, however apparently hopeless the situation. There is scarcely any lot so low but there is something in it to satisfy the man whom it has befallen, Providence having so ordered things that in every man's cup, how

bitter soever, there are some cordial drops—some good circumstances—which, if wisely extracted, are sufficient for the purpose he wants them—that is, to make him contented and, if not happy, resigned.

Contentment often abides with little, and rarely dwells with abundance. "Peace and few things are preferable to great professions and great cares." Such was the maxim of the Stoics. Nature teaches us to live, but wisdom teaches us to live contented. Contentment is the wealth of nature, for it gives every thing we either want or need. A quiet and contented mind is the supreme good; it is the utmost felicity a man is capable of in this world; and the maintaining of such an uninterrupted tranquillity of spirit is the very crown and glory of wisdom. The point of aim for our vigilance to hold in view is to dwell upon the brightest parts in every prospect, to call off the thoughts when running upon disagreeable objects, and strive to be pleased with the present circumstances surrounding us.

Half the discontent in the world arises from men regarding themselves as centers instead of the infinitesimal elements of circles. When you feel dissatisfied with your circumstances contemplate the condition of those beneath you. One who wielded as much influence as was possible in this republic of ours says: "There are minds which can be pleased by honors and preferments, but I can see nothing in them save envy and enmity. It is only necessary to possess them to know how little they contribute to happiness. I had rather be in

a cottage with my books, my family, and a few old friends, dining upon simple bacon and hominy, and letting the world roll on as it likes, than to occupy the highest place which human power can give."

Some make the sorry mistake of confounding under the term contentment that fatal lack of energy which repels all efforts for the improvement of one's condition. Improvement can only be won by continuous efforts for advancement, and a true contentment is not to rest satisfied, to hope for nothing, to strive for nothing, or to rest in inglorious ease, doing nothing for your own or other's intellectual or moral good. Such a state of feeling is only allowable where nature has fixed an impassable and well-ascertained barrier to all further progress, or where we are troubled by ills past remedying. In such cases it is the highest philosophy not to fret or grumble when, by all our worrying, we can not help ourselves a jot or tittle, but only aggravate an affliction that is incurable. To soothe the mind to patience is, then, the only resource left us, and thrice happy is he who has thus schooled himself to meet all reverses and disappointments.

When ills admit of a remedy it is the veriest sarcasm upon contentment to bid you suffer them. It is a mockery of content not to strive to improve your condition as much as possible. True contentment bids you be content with what you have, not with what you are; not to be sighing and wishing for things unattainable, but to cheerfully and contentedly accept the facts of your position, and then, if the way

opens for improvement, to accept it at once; not to sit moping over your ill luck and many misfortunes, but, having done the best you can, rest content with the result; not to be murmuring because your lines are not cast in as pleasant places as your neighbor's, but strive to discover the pleasures and happiness to be found in your present condition, and with a manly and contented spirit dwell therein until providence opens a more excellent way, when it is your duty to embrace it. But do not make the fatal mistake of hiding behind the word contentment your lack of energy and pluck.

Contentment is the true gold which passes current among the wise the world over, while supine satisfaction is but the base counterfeit of the nobler metal, and brings its possessor into scorn and contempt.

DECEPTION.



Deceit and falsehood, whatever conveniences they may for a time promise or produce, are in the sum of life obstacles to happiness. Those who profit by the cheat distrust the deceiver, and the act by which kindness was sought puts an end to confidence. Nothing can compete with human deceitfulness. Its origin is always to be found in the motives of those who are actuated only by a spirit of thorough selfishness. When men have some personal end to accomplish, then is seen the full flower of deceit. When they have some enemy, opponent, or rival to punish, then deceit puts on its most sturdy appearance.

That form of deceit which is cunningly laid and unworthily carried on under the disguise of friendship is, of all others, the most detestable. There can be no greater treachery than first to raise a confidence, and then deceive it. A man can not be justified in deceiving, misleading, or overreaching his neighbors. Still less, then, is he justified in inspiring confidence by smooth words and a gracious manner, only that he may further his own selfish end by breaking the trust placed in him. Nothing can be more unjust than to play upon the belief of a confiding person, to make him suffer for his good opinion, and fare the worse for thinking you an honest man.

A course of deception always defeats the true end of society. Society is a great compact designed to promote the good of man, and to elevate him in dignity, refinement, and intelligence. But too often it is understood solely as a cunning contrivance to palm off unreal virtues and to conceal real defects.

Dignity is too often only pretension, refinement an artificial gloss, and intelligence only verbal display, based upon knowledge barely sufficient to make a show. All is vanity and disguises, empty mockeries and hollow-hearted nullities. But the heart of man is such a sorry mixture of good and bad that we are only too willing to urge on the race, striving to see who can be the most deceitful of all. Those whom we live with are like actors on a stage; they assume whatever dress and appearance may suit their present purpose, and they speak and act in keeping with this character.

Man is as naturally set on ambition as the bee is to gather honey. In the mad haste to stand well in the eyes of the public and third parties, they are prone to assume any disguise or counterfeit any virtue by which they may accomplish their selfish ends. They are afraid of slight outward acts which will injure them in the eyes of others, but are utterly heedless of the tide of evil, of hatred, jealousy, and revenge, which throb in their souls to their own condemnation and shame. They are more troubled by the outward and external effects of an evil course of life than by the evil itself. It is the love of approbation and not the conscience that enacts the part of a moral sense in this case.

Though a man may never give them outward expression, still, if he harbors in his breast all manner of evil thoughts, they will be potent in shaping his character. Though he may disguise them by artful words and a gracious bearing, still they are there, and their effect is as direful

as though their expression was open and plain to all. Society at large may be less injured by the latent existence of evil than by its public expression; but the man himself is as much injured by the cherished thoughts of evil as by the open commission of it, and sometimes even more. For evil brought out ceases to disguise itself, and appears as hideous as it is in reality; but the evil that lurks and glances through the soul avoids analysis and evades detection.

Hypocrisy and deception are so near akin to each other that you can not wound the one without touching the sensibilities of the other. A hypocrite lives in society in the same apprehension as the thief who lies concealed in the midst of the family he is to rob, for he fancies himself perceived when he is least so; every motion alarms him; he is suspicious that every one who enters the room knows where he is hid and is coming to seize him. Thus, as nothing hates so valiantly as fear, many an innocent person who suspects no evil intended him is detested by him who intends it.

This multitudinous vice of deception takes on many forms. Hypocrisy is but one, though it is perhaps as much detested as any. But it is a lamentable fact that scarcely any thing is really what it is represented to be. As there are so many strange anomalies in human nature, we are not surprised when we discover the shallowness of so many apparently sincere pretensions, the worthlessness of what appears so fair. When it is all carefully summed up, it is found always easier to be than merely appear to be. He who pretends to great acquirements is

worse put to it to conceal his ignorance than would have sufficed to have made him master of many sciences.

Those who strive by outward appearances to carry an impression of wealth and station beyond their real income are compelled, by their lavish expenditures in aid of the deception, to a strict economy in seclusion, whereas, were they content to exercise a judicious economy at all times, they would soon be placed in that position they so much long for. As for the hypocrite, surely this is the most foolish deception of all, since the hypocrite is at pains to put on the appearance of virtue, he pretends to morality, to pure friendship and esteem, and is more anxious that his outward walk and conversation shall savor of these virtues than if he were at heart possessed of them.

Since, then, a course of deception puts us to more straits than ever the open course, is it not true, then, in every-day life as well as individual acts, "honesty is the best policy?" Why purchase the base imitation of noble virtues, and derive from them naught but ridicule and dislike, when no greater outlay would procure for us the true metals, which bring peace of mind and the honor and esteem of all.

INTERMEDDLING.



We all of us scorn a busybody, and scarcely have words of contempt strong enough to express our feelings towards one who is constantly meddling in what in no way concerns him. There are some persons so unfortunately disposed that they can not rest easy until they have investigated their neighbors' business in all of its bearings, and even neglect their own to attend to his.

This trait of character is directly allied to envy on the one hand and to slander on the other. Envy incites in us a desire to possess the good fortune that we discover falling to others. Meddling is satisfied when it discovers all the minutiæ of others' affairs, and may be so utterly devoid of energy as to care but little whether it can acquire the good or not. Meddling is directly incited by egotism; for that unfortunately leads not only to undue confidence in one's own abilities, but, what is worse, to a feeling that you are a little better able to attend to the affairs of others than they themselves.

Slander, too, oft takes its rise in the curious busyings of those who are interfering where there is no call for their services. There is such

a tendency in human nature to flaunt abroad the faults of others, that no sooner does one who systematically intermeddles, discover some failing—and he or she is sure to do this, since it is human to err—than they straightway hasten to lay before others the fruits of their investigations. And thus is given to the public the petty defects of some home life, which, by constant repetition, soon assumes gigantic size, as snow-balls rolled over and over by boys; and so, at length, the happiness of some home circle is destroyed by the malicious and poison-giving officiousness of busybodies.

Neglecting our own affairs and meddling with those of others is the source of many troubles. Those who blow the coals of others' strife may chance to have the sparks fly in their own face. We think more of ourselves than of others, but sometimes more for others than ourselves. People are often incited to meddling by the desire of having "something to tell;" but, if you notice, they are but narrow-minded and ignorant people, who talk about persons and not things. Mere gossip is always a personal confession either of malice or imbecility, and the refined should not only shun it, but by the most thorough culture relieve themselves of all temptation to indulge in it. It is a low, frivolous, and too often a dirty business. There are neighborhoods in which it rages like a pest. Churches are split in pieces by it; neighbors are made enemies by it for life. In many persons it degenerates into a chronic disease, which is practically incurable. Be on your guard against contracting so pernicious a habit.

A person who constantly meddles means to do harm, and is not sorry to find he has succeeded. He is a treacherous supplanter and underminer of the peace of all families and societies. This being a maxim of unfailing truth, that nobody ever pries into another man's concerns but with a design to do, or to be able to do, him a mischief. His tongue, like the tails of Samson's foxes, carries firebrands, and is enough to set the whole field of the world in a flame. To meddle with another's privileges and prerogatives is vexatious; to meddle with his interests is injurious; to meddle with his good name unites and aggravates both evils.

There is, perhaps, not a more odious character in the world than a go-between, by which we mean the creature who carries to the ear of one neighbor every injurious observation that happens to drop from the mouth of another. Such a person is the slanderer's herald, and is altogether more odious than the slanderer himself. By this vile officiousness he makes that poison effective which else would be inert; for three-fourths of the slanderers in the world would never injure their object except by the malice of go-betweens, who, under the mask of a double friendship, act the part of a double traitor. The less business a man has of his own, the more he attends to the business of his neighbors.

Do not cultivate curiosity; every man has in his own life follies enough, in his own mind troubles enough, in the performance of his own duties difficulties enough, without being curious about the affairs of others. Of all the

faculties of the human mind, curiosity is that which is most fruitful or the most barren in effective results, according as it is well or badly directed. The curiosity of an honorable man willingly rests where the love of truth does not urge it further onward, and the love of his neighbor bids it stop. In other words, it willingly stops at the point where the interests of truth do not beckon it onward and charity cries halt. But the busybody in others' affairs is not apt to hold his curiosity in such reasonable limits. The slightest appearance of mystery is sufficient to incite them to great exertions in endeavor to gratify a curiosity as idle as it is useless, and entirely out of his business.

A meddler in the affairs of others is seldom moved by the spirit of charity. He is not curious to discover where he can lend a hand of assistance. If such were the case, it were a trait to be admired rather than despised; but, allied as it is to envy and slander, to idle curiosity and inquisitiveness, it can but be detested by all honest seekers for others' good, and shunned by the truly enlightened and refined. And if one would be honored and respected, he will strive to be as free from the spirit of meddling as possible. He will relegate that to the low and frivolous, and respect himself too highly to be classed among them.



ANGER.



Anger is the most impotent passion that accompanies the mind of man. It affects nothing it sets about, and hurts the man who is possessed by it more than the other against whom it is directed.

The disadvantages arising from anger, which are its unfailing concomicants under all circumstances, should prove a panacea for the complaint. In moments of cool reflection the man who indulges it views with a deep disgust the desolation wrought by passion. Friendship, domestic happiness, self-respect, the esteem of others, are swept away as by a whirlwind, and one brief fit of anger sometimes suffices to lay in wreck the home happiness which years have been cementing together. What crimes have not been committed in the paroxysms of anger! Has not the friend murdered his friend? the son massacred his parent? the creature blasphemed his Creator. When, indeed, the nature of this passion is considered what crimes may it not commit? Is it not the storm of the human mind which wrecks every better affection—wrecks reason and conscience, and, as a ship driven without helm or compass before the rushing gale, is not the mind borne away without guide

or government by the tempest of unbounded rage?

To be angry about trifles is low and childish; to rage and be furious is brutish; and to maintain perpetual wrath is akin to the practice and temper of devils. The round of a passionate man's life is in contracting future debts in his passionate moments which he may have to pay in the future, and when it is most inconvenient to make payment. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, in injury and reparation; for anger begins in folly, but ends in repentance. Anger may be looked for in the character of weak-minded people, children not yet learned to govern themselves, and those who, for any reason, are not expected to have full command over their faculties; but no sensible man or woman in the full possession of their powers will suffer the degradation of allowing themselves to be overcome by anger without afterwards experiencing the utmost mortification.

A passionate temper renders a man unfit for advice, deprives him of his reason, robs him of all that is really great or noble in his nature; it makes him unfit for conversation, destroys friendship, changes justice into cruelty, and turns all order into confusion. Man was born to reason, to reflection, and to do all things quietly and in order. Anger takes from him this prerogative, transforms his manship into childish petulance, his reasoning powers into brute instinct. Consider, then, how much more you often suffer from your anger than from those things for which you are angry. Consider,

further, whether that for which you give way to angry outbreaks is any fit compensation whatever for the degradation and loss you suffer by giving way to passion.

No man is obliged to live so free from passion as not to show some sentiment; on fit occasions it were rather stoical stupidity than virtue to do otherwise. There are times and occasions when the expression of indignation is not only justifiable but necessary. We are bound to be indignant at falsehood, selfishness, and cruelty. A man of true feeling fires up naturally at baseness or meanness of any sort, even in cases where he may be under no obligation to speak out. But then his anger is as reasonable in its outward expression as in its origin.

We must, however, be careful how we indulge in virtuous indignation. It is the handsome brother of anger and hatred. Anger may glance into the breast of a wise man, but rests only in the bosom of fools. A wise man hath no more anger than is necessary to show that he can apprehend the first wrong, nor any more revenge than justly to prevent a second.

If anger proceeds from a great cause it turns to fury; if from a small cause it is peevishness; and so it is always either terrible or ridiculous. Sinful anger, when it becomes strong, is called wrath; when it makes outrage it is fury; when it becomes fixed it is termed hatred; and when it intends to injure any one it is called malice. All these wicked passions spring from anger. The intoxication of anger, like that of the grape, shows us to others, but conceals us from ourselves, and we injure our own cause in the

eyes of the world when we too passionately and eagerly defend it.

There is many a man whose tongue might govern multitudes if he could only govern his tongue. He is the man of power who controls the storms and tempests of his mind. How sweet the serenity of habitual self-control! How many stinging self-reproaches it spares us! When does a man feel more at ease with himself than when he has passed through a sudden and strong provocation without speaking a word, or in undisturbed good humor? When, on the contrary, does he feel a deeper humiliation than when he is conscious that anger has made him betray himself? How many there are who check passion with passion, and are very angry in reproving anger! Thus to lay one devil they raise another, and leave more work to be done than they found undone. Such a reproof of anger is a vice to be reproved. Reproof either hardens or softens its object. The sword of reproof should be drawn against the offense and not against the offender.

It is not falling in the water, but remaining in it, that drowns a man. So it is not the possession of a strong and hasty temper, but the submission to it, that produces the evils incident to anger. In no other way does a man show genuine nobility more than in resolutely holding his temper subject to reason. In no other way can he so effectually attain success, for a strong temper indicates a good amount of energy; passion serves to dissipate this, so that its good effects are not perceived; whereas, under the guiding reins of self-control, this

energy is gathered into a "central glow," which renders success in any predetermined line not only a possibility but a very probable sequence.

AMBITION.



There is a large element of deception in all ambitious schemes, for ofttimes, when at the summit of ambition, one is at the depths of despair, and the showy results of a successful pursuit of ambition are sometimes but gilded misery, the casing of despair. The history of ambition is written in characters of blood. It may be designated as one of the vices of small minds, illiberal and unacquainted with mankind. It is a solitary vice. The road ambition travels is too narrow for friendship, too crooked for love, too rugged for honesty, too dark for science, and too hilly for happiness.

Those who pursue ambition as a means of happiness awake to a far different reality. The

wear and tear of hearts is never recompensed. It steals away the freshness of life; it deadens its vivid and social enjoyments; it shuts our souls to our own youth, and we are old ere we remember that we have made a fever and a labor of our raciest years. The happiness promised by ambition dissolves in sorrow just as we are about to grasp it. It makes the same mistake concerning power that avarice makes concerning wealth. She begins by accumulating power as a means of happiness, but she finishes by continuing to accumulate it as an end.

A thoroughly ambitious man will never make a true friend, for he who makes ambition his god tramples upon every thing else. What cares he if in his onward march he treads upon the hearts of those who love him best. In his eyes your only value lies in the use you may be to him. Personally one is nothing to him. If you are not rich or famous or powerful enough to advance his interests, after he has got above you he cares no more for you. It is the nature of ambition to make men liars and cheats, to hide the truth in their breast, and show, like jugglers, another thing in their mouth; to cut all friendships and enmities to the measure of their interests, and to make a good countenance without the help of a good will.

If, as one says, "ambition is but a shadow's shadow," it were well to remember that a shadow, wherever it passes, leaves a track behind. It would conduce to humility also to remember that of the greatest personages in the world when once they are dead there remains no monument of their selfish ambition except

the empty renown of their boasted name. It is a very indiscreet and troublesome ambition which cares so much about fame, about what the world will say of us, to be always looking in the faces of others for approval, to be always anxious about the effect of what we do or say, to be always shouting to hear the echo of our own voices. To be famous? What does this profit a year hence, when other names sound louder than yours?

The desire to be thought well of, to desire to be great in goodness, is in itself a noble quality of the mind, and is often termed ambition, though it lacks the element of selfishness which renders ambition so odious to all right-minded people. It seems an abuse of language to confound such a trait of the mind with ambition. It were better to call it aspiration, which becomes ambition only when carried to an extreme, or when the objects for the attainment of which ambition incites us to put forth our utmost exertions are unworthy the attention of sentient moral beings, who live not only for time, but for eternity. A worthy aspiration may be a great incentive to advancement and civilization, a great teacher to morality and wisdom; but an unworthy ambition, unworthy because of its ends or the zeal with which they are pursued, is often the instrument of crime and iniquity, the instigator of intemperance and rashness.

Ambition is an excessive quality, and, as such, is apt to lead us to the most extraordinary results. If our ambition leads us to excel or seek to excel in that which is good, the currents it

may induce us to support will be none but legitimate ones. But if it is stimulated by pride, envy, avariciousness, or vanity, we will confine our support principally to the counter currents of life, and thus leave behind us misery and destruction. An *ambition* to appear to be thought great in noble qualities may lead us to *appear* good; but where we only act from ambition, and not from aspiration, we are subject to fall at any moment, since it were vain to expect selfishness to long continue in any right action.

If it is our ambition to gain distinction, we will rob the weak and flatter the strong, and become the fawning slave of those who are able to foist us above our betters, and deck us with the titles and honors of the great without any regard to our own merit of respectability. But if we are ambitious to do good, without any regard for the fame we may win or the praise we may command, our course will be honorable and just, our acts and deeds most worthy and good. When we have done with the world the prints of our worthy ambition will still remain as a legacy to those who come after us to enjoy and reap the benefits, for which they will revere our memory, and retain our names in the lists of those whose labors have aided in enriching the world and exalting the general interests of mankind.

To be ambitious of true honor, of the true glory and perfection of our nature is the very principle and incentive of virtue; but to be ambitious of titles, of place, of ceremonial respects and civil pageantry is as vain and little

as the things are which we court. Much of the advancement of the world can be traced to the efforts of those who were moved by ambition to become famous. Like fire, ambition is an excellent servant, but a poor master. As long as it is held subservient to integrity and honor, and made to conform to the requirements of justice, there is but little danger of a man's having too much of it. But, beware! it is such an insatiate passion that you must be continually on your guard lest it speedily become the ruling principle of your being.

POLITENESS.



Among the qualities of mind and heart which conduce to worldly success, there is no one the importance of which is more real, yet which is more generally underrated at this day by the young, than courtesy—that feeling of kindness, of love for our fellows, which expresses itself in pleasing manners. Owing to that spirit of self-

reliance and self-assertion, they are too apt to despise those nameless and exquisite tendernesses of thought and manner that mark the true gentleman. Yet history is crowded with examples showing that, as in literature it is the delicate, indefinable charm of style, not the thought, that makes a work immortal, so it is the bearing of a man towards his fellows that ofttimes, more than any other circumstance, promotes or obstructs his advancement in life.

Manner has a great deal to do with the estimation in which men are held by the world; and it has often more influence in the government of others than qualities of much greater depth and substance. We may complain that our fellow-men are more for form than substance, for the superficial rather than the solid contents of a man, but the fact remains, and it is a clew to many of the seeming anomalies and freaks of fortune which surprise us in the matter of worldly prosperity. The success or failure of one's plans have often turned upon the address and manner of the man. Though there are a few people who can look beyond the rough husk or shell of a fellow-being to the finer qualities hidden within, yet the vast majority, not so keen-visaged nor tolerant, judge a person by his outward bearings and conduct.

Grace, agreeable manners, and fascinating powers are one thing, while politeness is another. The two points are often mistaken in the occasional meeting, but the true gentleman always rises to the surface at last. Nothing will develop a spirit of true politeness except a mind

imbued with goodness, justness, and generosity. Manners are different in every country; but true politeness is every-where the same. Manners which take up so much of our attention are only artificial helps which ignorance assumes in order to imitate politeness, which is the result of much good sense, some good-nature, and a little self-denial for the sake of others, but with no design of obtaining the same indulgence from them. A person possessed of those qualities, though he had never seen a court, is truly agreeable; and if without them would continue a clown, though he had been all his life a gentleman usher.

He is truly well-bred who knows when to value and when to despise those national peculiarities which are regarded by some with so much observance. A traveler of taste at once perceives that the wise are polite all the world over, but that fools are polite only at home. Since circumstances always alter cases, the polite man must know when to violate the conventional forms which common practice has established, and when to respect them. To be a slave to any set code of actions is as bad as to despise them. Perceptiveness, adaptation, penetration, and a happy faculty of suiting manners to circumstances, is one of the principles upon which one must work; for the etiquette of the drawing-room differs from that of the office or railroad-car, and what may be downright rudeness in one case may be gentility in the other.

Benevolence and charity, with a true spirit of meekness, must be one of the ruling motives of

the understanding; for without this no man can be polite. Politeness must know no classification; the rich and the poor must alike share its justice and humanity. Exclusive spirits, that shun those whose level in life is not on the same extravagant platform as themselves, can not aspire to the high honor of wearing the name of gentleman. The truly polite man acts from the highest and noblest ideas of what is right.

True politeness ever hath regard for the comfort and happiness of others. "It is," says Witherspoon, "real kindness kindly expressed." Viewed in this light, how devoid of the virtue are some who pride themselves on a strict observance of all its rules! Many a man who now stands ranked as a gentleman, because his smile is ready and his bow exquisite, is, in reality, unworthy of such an honor, since he cares more for the least incident pertaining to his own comfort than he does for the greatest occasion of discomfort to others.

The true gentleman is recognized by his regard for the rights and feelings of others, even in matters the most trivial. He respects the individuality of others, just as he wishes others to respect his own. In society he is quiet, easy, unobtrusive, putting on no airs nor hinting by word or manner that he deems himself better, wiser, or richer than any one about him. He is never "stuck up," nor looks down upon others because they have not titles, honors, or social position equal to his own. He never boasts of his achievements or angles for compliments by affecting to underrate what he has done. He

prefers to act rather than to talk, to be rather than to seem, and, above all things, is distinguished by his deep insight and sympathy, his quick perception of and attention to those little and apparently insignificant things that may cause pleasure or pain to others. In giving his opinions he does not dogmatize; he listens patiently and respectfully to other men, and, if compelled to dissent from their opinions, acknowledges his fallibility, and asserts his own views in such a manner as to command the respect of all who hear him. Frankness and cordiality mark all his intercourse with his fellows, and, however high his station, the humblest man feels instantly at ease in his presence.

The truest politeness comes of sincerity. It must be the outcome of the heart or it will make no lasting impression, for no amount of polish will dispense with truthfulness. The natural character must be allowed to appear freed of its angularities and asperities. To acquire that ease and grace of manners which distinguishes and is possessed by every well-bred person one must think of others rather than of one's self, and study to please them even at one's own inconvenience. "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you"—the golden rule of life—is also the law of politeness, and such politeness implies self-sacrifice, many struggles and conflicts. It is an art and tact rather than an instinct and inspiration.

Daily experience shows that civility is not only one of the essentials of success, but it is

almost a fortune in itself, and that he who has this quality in perfection, though a blockhead, is almost sure to rise where, without it, men of high ability fail. "Give a boy address and accomplishment," says Emerson, "and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes. Wherever he goes he has not the trouble of earning or owning them; they solicit him to enter and possess." Genuine politeness is almost as necessary to enjoyable success as integrity or industry.

We despise servility, but true and uniform politeness is the glory of any young man. It should be a politeness full of frankness and good nature, unobtrusive, constant, and uniform in its exhibition to every class of men. He who is overwhelmingly polite to a celebrity or a nabob and rude to a laborer because he is a laborer deserves to be despised. That style of manners which combines self-respect with respect for the rights and feelings of others, especially if it be warmed up by the fires of a genial heart, is a thing to be coveted and cultivated, and it is a thing that pays alike in cash and comfort.

What a man says or does is often an uncertain test of what he is. It is the way in which he says or does it that furnishes the best index of his character. It is by the incidental expression given to his thoughts and feelings by his looks, tones, and gestures, rather than by his deeds and words, that we prefer to judge him. One may do certain deeds from design, or repeat certain professions by rote; honeyed words may mask feelings of hate, and kindly acts may be

formed expressly to veil sinister ends, but the "manner of the man" is not so easily controlled.

The mode in which a kindness is done often affects us more than the deed itself. The act may have been prompted by one of many questionable motives, as vanity, pride, or interests; but the warmth or coldness of address is less likely to deceive. A favor may be conferred so grudgingly as to prevent any feeling of obligation, or it may be refused so courteously as to awaken more kindly feelings than if it had been ungraciously granted.

Good manners are well-nigh an essential part of life education, and their importance can not be too largely magnified when we consider that they are the outward expressions of an inward virtue. Social courtesies should emanate from the heart, for remember always that the worth of manner consists in being the sincere expression of feelings. Like the dial of a watch they should indicate that the works within are good and true. True civility needs no false lights to show its points. It is the embodiment of truth, the mere opening out of the inner self. The arts and artifices of a polished exterior are well enough, but if they are any thing more or less than a fair exponent of inward rectitude their hollowness can not long escape detection.

The cultivation of manner, though in excess it is foppish and foolish, is highly necessary in a person who has occasion to negotiate with others in matters of business. Affability and good-breeding may even be regarded as essential to the success of a man in any eminent station and enlarged sphere of life, for the want

of it has not unfrequently been found, in a great measure, to neutralize the results of much industry, integrity, and honesty of character. There are, no doubt, a few strong, tolerant minds which can bear with defects and angularities of manner, and look only to the more genuine qualities; but the world at large is not so forbearant, and can not help forming its judgments and likings mainly according to outward conduct.

It has been well remarked that whoever imagines legitimate manners can be taken up and laid aside, put on and off, for the moment, has missed their deepest law. A noble and attractive every-day bearing comes of goodness, of sincerity, of refinement, and these are bred in years, not moments. It is the fruit of years of earnest, kindly endeavors to please. It is the last touch, the crowning perfection of a noble character; it has been truly described as the gold on the spire, the sunlight on the corn-field, and results only from the truest balance and harmony of soul.

SOCIABILITY.



Society has been apply compared to a heap of embers, which, when separated, soon languish, darken, and expire, but, if placed together, glow with a ruddy and intense heat, a just emblem of the strength, happiness, and security derived from society. The savage who never knew the blessings of combination, and he who quits society from apathy or misanthropic spleen, are like the separate embers, dark, dead, useless; they neither give nor receive heat, neither love nor are beloved.

From social intercourse are derived some of the highest enjoyments of life. Where there is a free interchange of opinion, the mind acquires new ideas, and, by a frequent exercise of its powers, the understanding gains fresh vigor. The true sphere of human virtue is found in society. This is the school of human faith and trials. In social, active life difficulties will perpetually be met with. Restraints of many kinds will be necessary, and studying to behave right in respect to these is a discipline of the human heart useful to others and improving to itself. It is good to meet in friendly intercourse and pour out that social cheer which so vivifies the weary and desponding heart. It elevates the feelings, and makes us all the better for the

world.

Society is the balm of life. Should any one be entirely excluded from all human intercourse he would be wretched. Men were formed for society. It is one important end for which they were made rational creatures. No man was made solely for himself, and no man is capable of living in the world totally independent of others. The wants and weaknesses of mankind render society necessary for their convenience, safety, and support. God has formed men with different powers and faculties, and placed them under different circumstances, that they might be able to promote each others' good. Some are wiser, richer, and stronger than others that they may direct the conduct, supply the wants, and bear the burdens of others. Some are formed for one and some are formed for another employment, and all are qualified for some useful business, conducive to the general good of society. The whole frame and texture of mankind make it appear that they were designed to live in society. The longer men live in society the more terrible is the thought of being excluded from it.

Society is the only field where the sexes meet on the terms of equality, the arena where character is formed and studied, the cradle and the realm of public opinion, the crucible of ideas, the world's university, at once a school and a theater, the spur and the crown of ambition, the tribunal which unmasks pretensions and stamps real merit, the power that gives government leave to be, and outruns the Church in fixing the moral sense of the

people.

Many young men fail for years to get hold of the idea that they are subject to social duties. They act as though the social machinery of the world were self-operating. They see around them social organizations in active existence. The parish, the Church, and other bodies that embrace in some form of society all men, are successfully operated, and yet they take no part nor lot in the matter. They do not think it necessary for them to devote either time or money to society. Sometimes they are apt to get into a morbid state of mind, which disinclines them to social intercourse. They become so devoted to business that all social intercourse is irksome. They go out to tea as if they were going to jail, and drag themselves to a party as to an execution. This disposition is thoroughly selfish, and is to be overcome by going where you are invited, always and at any sacrifice of mere feeling. Do not shrink from contact with any thing except bad morals. Men who affect your unhealthy mind with antipathy will prove themselves very frequently on mature acquaintance your best friends and wisest counselors.

It is to be noticed with what apparent ease some men enter society, and how others remain away always. Such are apt to think that society has not discharged its duties as to them. But all social duties are reciprocal. Society is far more apt to pay its dues to the individual than the individual to society. Have you, who complain of the cold selfishness of society, done any thing to give you a claim to social recognition? What

kind of coin do you propose to pay in the discharge of the obligations which come upon you with social recognition? In other words, as a return for what you wish society to do, what will you do for society? Will you be a member of society by right or by courtesy? If you have so mean a spirit as to be content to be a beneficiary of society, to receive favors and confer none, you have no business in the social circle to which you aspire.

The spirit of life is society; that of society is freedom; that of freedom the discreet and modest use of it. A man may contemplate virtue in solitude and retirement; but the practical part consists in its participation and the society it hath with others; for whatever is good is better for being communicated. As too long a retirement weakens the mind, so too much company dissipates it. Too much society is nearly as bad as none. A man secluded from company can have none but the devil and himself to tempt him; but he that converses much in the world has almost as many snares as he has companions. The great object of society is refreshment of spirit. This is not to be obtained by luxury or by the cankerous habit of speaking against others, but by a bright and easy interchange of ideas on subjects which, even in their brightest and most playful aspects, are worthy to engage the thoughts of men.

There is an essential vulgarity in one phase of social life,—that which considers the welfare of the guest's stomach to be the essential part of the host's duty, and the great question of the guests to relate to the decorating of their own

backs. Such views elevate nobody; they refine nobody; they inspire and instruct nobody; they satisfy nobody. This view loses sight of the great end and aim of society, which is to refine and elevate mankind, not to feed them upon dainties, or to enable them to show off good clothes. Dean Swift had a better relish for good society than for choice viands. When invited to the houses of great men he sometimes insisted upon knowing what persons he was likely to meet. "I don't want your bill of fare, but your bill of company."

It is this losing sight of the true end of society which causes it to present so many strange anomalies. Yet with all its defects it is well-nigh indispensable to one who would wield power and influence in the world's arena. There is no way to act out the promptings of your better nature, and to move men in the right direction, so potential as that offered to the social man. You can not move men until you show yourself one among them. You can not know their wants and needs until you have mingled with them. By refusing to cast your lot with others socially, you are as powerless to do good as the mountain peak is to raise tropical flowers.

It is the manner of some to forego meeting others socially. There will certainly come a time when they will regret it; for the human heart is like a millstone in a mill: When you put wheat under it, it turns and bruises the wheat into flour. If you put no wheat in it, it still grinds on; but then it grinds away itself. In society the sorrows and griefs of others are the object from which we extract the flour of charity and loving

kindness; but to the hermit from society his own griefs and sorrows have the effect to render him cold and selfish. Man in society is like a flower-bud on its native stalk. It is there alone his faculties, expanded in full bloom, shine out; there only reach their proper use. "It is not safe for man to be alone." In the midst of the loudest vauntings of philosophy, nature will have her yearning for society and friendship. A good heart wants something to be kind to; and the best part of our nature suffers most when deprived of congenial society.

It becomes all men to seek the general good of society in return for the benefits they receive from it. Though the general good of society sometimes requires the individual members to give up private good for that of the public, yet it is always to be supposed that individuals receive more advantage than disadvantage from society, on the whole. Indeed, there is scarcely any comparison in this case. The public blessings are always immensely great and numerous. They are more in number than can be reckoned up, and greater in worth than can be easily described.

The most independent individuals in society owe their principal independence to society, and the most retired and inactive persons feel the happy influence of society, though they may seem to be detached from it. No man can reflect upon that constant stream of good which is perpetually flowing down to him from well-regulated society, without feeling his obligation to maintain and support it. Should this stream of happiness cease to flow, the most careless

and indifferent would feel their loss, and feel a sense of their duty to uphold the good of society. Let the head of society cease to direct and the hands to execute, and the other members of the public body would soon find themselves in a forlorn and wretched state.

DIGNITY.

"The dignity of man into your hands is given,
Oh keep it well, with you it sinks or lifts itself to heaven."
—SCHILLER.



Dignity denotes that propriety of mien and carriage which is appropriate to the different walks and ranks of life. In regard to our intercourse with men we should often reflect, not only whether our conduct is proper and correct, but whether it is urbane and dignified. Dignity of carriage is nearly always associated with high endowments; the reverse is, at any

rate, true, that high endowments are associated with dignity. "A trifling air and manner bespeaks a thoughtless and silly mind," saith a Chinese proverb, "but a grave and majestic outside is, as it were, the palace of the soul."

True dignity is never gained by place, and never lost when honors are withdrawn. There may be dignity in a hovel as well as in a court; in one who depends on the sweat of his brow as well as one who is placed, by reason of his wealth, in a position of independence. In all ranks and classes it is equally acceptable and worthy of esteem. True dignity is without arms. It does not deal in vain and ostentatious parade. In proportion as we gratify our own self-esteem by a love of display we commonly forfeit to the same degree the respect of those whose good opinion is worth possessing. A dignified manner is not necessarily an imposing manner; for true dignity is but the outward expression of inherent worth of character, but an imposing manner is generally ostentatious in degree, and as such may be taken as an evidence of imposition. That dignity which seeks to make an ostentatious display is often only a veil between us and the real truth of things. It is only the false mask of appearance put on to conceal inherent defects.

The ennobling quality of all politeness is dignity. Have you not noticed that there are some persons who possess an inexpressible charm of manner—a something which attracts our love instantaneously, when they have neither wealth, position, nor talents? You will find that a dignity of manner characterizes their

actions, and that a spirit of dignity hovers around them. On the other hand, have you not seen persons of wealth who were surrounded by luxury and all the comforts of affluence, yet, in lacking a spirit of dignity, lacked the essential to render their lives influential for good? Where there is an inherent want of dignity in the character, how many distinguished and even noble acquisitions are required to supply its place! But when a natural dignity of character exists, what a prepossession does it enlist in its favor, and with how few substantial and real excellencies are we able to pass creditably through the world!

There are three kinds of dignity which either adorn or deface human character. There is the dignity of etiquette and good manners, which is often of an artificial kind, and is a creature of rules and ceremonies, and not of the heart. The second is the dignity of pride and arrogance. This is a presumptuous dignity arising from self-conceit and egotism. It is thoroughly selfish in its nature. It is more a spirit of haughtiness and cold reserve than of true dignity. Then there is the dignity of compassion and kindness. This is that true dignity which ennobles life. It arises, not from selfishness, but from kindness of heart, and from a sense of the importance of life.

Some men find it almost impossible to discover the line which separates dignity from conceit. Dignity is a splendid personal quality if it be of the right sort. To possess it is to be above meanness, above cringing, above any thing that is low and unseemly. It holds up its

head, even among poverty and outward shabbiness, and looks the world bravely in the face. It is innate manliness that outward garb can not change. But conceit is a very different quality, and its possessor is very far from being dignified, though he doubtlessly considers himself to be so. He looks upon himself as the grand center of his social system, and upon all others as satellites, whose particular business is to revolve around him. The assumption may not take shape in words, but it comes out in his manner all the same. Let him undertake to be amiable, and there is a sort of royal condescension; he takes the attitude of stooping rather than that of one reaching out friendly hands to his equals. All this would be offensive and somewhat exasperating were it not ridiculous. But we laugh in charitable good nature, and pity his absurdities. There is little use in trying to point them out to him. He is so hoodwinked by his overshadowing self-esteem that he can not see. True dignity does not consist in haughty self-assurance. In resolving to be dignified let us see to it that we strive for the true kind.

In counseling dignity we advise no spirit of cold hauteur and pride, but we do counsel such outward walk and conversations as shall become one who has a just appreciation of life and its possibilities. One who is always given to light and flippant remarks, and always assuming a free and easy style in his demeanor, can not carry such an impression of power as one who bears about him the impression of a man among men by his dignified and decorous

bearing. True dignity exists independent of—

"Studied gestures or well-practiced smiles."

Its seat should be in the mind, and then it will not be found wanting in the manner. It is often strikingly and eloquently displayed in the bearings of those utterly unacquainted with the strict rules of etiquette. If one has a modest consciousness of his own worth, and a sincere desire to be of worth to others, he must necessarily display true dignity in his manner and bearing towards others.

AFFABILITY.



Affability is a real ornament, the most beautiful dress that man or woman can wear, and worth far more as a means of winning favor than the finest clothes and jewels ever were. The exercise of affability creates an instantaneous impression in your behalf, while the opposite quality excites as quick a prejudice against you. So true is this that were we asked

to name any one quality which, aside from mere mental powers, contributed largely to success, we would mention affability.

Apart from its worth as an agreeable trait of character, affability is a valuable commodity. Every one who has business to transact should add this to his stock in trade. It costs nothing, while it vastly facilitates trade and profit. There are business men and women who make fortunes simply by their affable and polite manners. Their wares or their services are no better, perhaps, than the stock in trade of their crusty neighbors; but having undertaken a business or adopted a profession, they are wise enough to know that whatever is to be done successfully must be done in a pleasing manner and with a good will.

Their acts appear to be based on the conviction that every body may be made a friend, which is every way preferable to acting as if every body were an intruder. They do not treat people as though they were in a hurry to be done with them, but as though they might be cultivated into an acquaintance and grow into a friend. To neglect the small courtesies of life is to insure neglect for yourself. And the reason that some persons are successful where others fail is that they invite strangers to become friends by civility, while the others repel even friends by the want of courtesy.

The world at best is extremely selfish. We are too much taken up with our own personal aims to notice how others are thriving. We little think how others may be wishing for some friendly recognition, how far with them the

friendly shake of the hand may go. The world is full of suffering and sorrow, and it is at these seasons that kindly words come with far more than their usual force. The human heart was formed for sympathy as naturally as the flower for sunshine. Hence it is no wonder that the man of affable and kind manners should be the one who would make friends wherever he goes.

It is good to meet in friendly intercourse, and pour out that social cheer which so vivifies the weary and desponding heart. Give to all the hearty grasp and the sunny smile. They send sunshine to the soul, and make the heart leap as with new life and joy. Thus may we become brothers in every good word and deed, and peace and good-will spread in the world. We long for friendly intercourse, and when deprived of the society of others we pine and grow sick at heart, we become misanthropic and gloomy. The Summer of the heart changes to dreary Winter, and our lives seem overcast and gloomy.

We are not well enough acquainted each with each, and all with all. We are not social enough. We are not found often enough at one another's houses. We are especially delinquent in the duty of calling upon such as come among us and connect themselves with us. We do not welcome them, and seek to make their stay as pleasant as possible. We do not take the kindly notice we should of such as come to our places of public and social gatherings. This is wrong. It is incumbent on us as members of society to cultivate a spirit of affability, to strive to make all within our influence happy by our kind

solicitude for their welfare. Says Daniel Webster: "We should make it a principle to extend the hand of fellowship to every man who discharges faithfully his duties and maintains good order, who manifests a deep interest in the general welfare of society, whose deportment is upright, and whose mind is intelligent, without stopping to ascertain whether he swings a hammer or draws a thread."

As there is nothing to be lost and so much to be gained by the exercise of affability, it is deeply to be regretted that so few use it. To be affable does not imply an indiscriminate taking into confidence, and imparting to third persons the secrets of your business, at the same time expecting to be informed of his. To do thus is mere simplicity, and is an utter disregard of all cautious rules. But the friendly conversation, the hearty grasp of the hand, the feeling of kindness and good-will which finds expression in the tones, the willingness to do a favor cheerfully,—these constitute true affability, which is not only of value to the possessor, but may almost claim a place among the Christian graces.

How many there are who are not in want of assistance of material things, but who are yearning for social recognition, who feel themselves shut out from intercourse with their fellow-beings by the spirit of selfishness which shows itself in a refusal of social privileges! It is so easy to become thoughtless in this matter that each one should strive against the feeling, and should constantly strive to make all around

him feel that he recognizes in them the man or woman, an equal being with himself, and to meet them with kindness by no means devoid of dignity, but to let them see that he is moved by a spirit of good-will towards all, and desires, as far as possible, to do away with the distinction of rank or wealth, and to meet with them on the plane of equality.

In urging affability we do not ignore the fact that there are many to be found in every walk of life with whom the less one has to do the better, that you would as soon think of taking a serpent into the bosom of your family as some people who infest society. But this lamentable fact does not lessen the claims of affability, since, because you are fond of fruit, you are not required to eat indiscriminately all kinds of fruits, the good and also the bad, the nutritious as well as the poisonous, but you are to exercise a judicious elimination. So you are not required to be frank, open-hearted, and sociable with villains and blacklegs, the depraved and licentious. To do this is to sink yourself to their level. But a man may be a gentleman, and as such entitled to recognition, though his coat be not of broadcloth or of the most fashionable make. And a real lady, though clad in calico, is as worthy of frank and courteous treatment as though robed in silk and satins.



THE TOILET.

"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy;
Rich, not gaudy,
For the apparel oft proclaims the man."
—SHAKESPEARE.



As the index tells us the contents of books, and directs to the particular chapter, even so does the outward habit and superficial order of garment denote the spirit and demonstratively point out, like to a marginal note, the internal qualities of the soul.

We believe it to be the duty of all, young and old, to make their persons, as far as possible, agreeable to those with whom they are associated. If possible, dress yourself fine where others are fine, and plain where the apparel of others is plain. A man who finds himself badly dressed amongst well-dressed people feels awkward and ill at ease. He stammers and is confused in speech. He makes all manner of ridiculous blunders, and it is well-nigh impossible for him to assume that air of simple dignity which should characterize the bearing of a gentleman. But it should be remembered that this feeling should have nothing to do with

dress proper; it is only when there is a manifest impropriety in the mode of dress. The dress should suit the time and the occasion. The man in his workshop or field, or the lady, busied with the household duties, should have no occasion to feel ill at ease, because not so finely dressed as the casual caller. Such a feeling should be instantly checked, since it is born of pride, not of an innate desire to please others.

The love of beauty and refinement belongs to every true woman. She ought to desire in moderation pretty dresses, and delight in beautiful colors and graceful fabrics. She ought to take a certain, not too expensive, pride, in herself, and be solicitous to have all belonging to her well chosen and in good style. Many fail to understand the true object and importance of this sentiment. Let no woman suppose that any man, much less her husband, is indifferent to her appearance. But women should constantly beware lest what was meant as a means of influence becomes a ruling passion. And let it be ever remembered that beauty of dress does not reside in the material; that time, place, and circumstances are all to be considered; that they may look far more bewitching in the eyes of those whom they are desirous to please when clad in neat calico than if robed in silks and satins. And depend upon it that the husband, wearied with his day's work, had far rather find the wife neatly clad, doing or superintending household duties, than, when dressed in the height of fashion, she greets him to a home that sadly needs an efficient, willing housekeeper.

Through dress the mind may be read, as

through the delicate tissue the lettered page. Women are more like flowers than we think. In their dress and adornments they express their natures, as the flowers in their petals and colors. Some women are like the modest daisies and violets—they never look or feel better than when dressed in a morning wrapper. When women are free to dress as they like, uncontrolled by others and not limited by their circumstances, they do not fail to express their true characters. A modest woman will dress modestly; a really refined and intelligent woman will bear the marks of careful selections and faultless taste.

It is to be feared that many, both ladies and gentlemen, fail to recognize the beauty which always accompanies simplicity. The stern simplicity of the classic taste is seen in the statues and pictures of the old masters. In Athens the ladies were not gaudily, but simply arrayed, and we doubt whether any ladies have ever excited more admiration. Female loveliness never appears to so good advantage as when set off by simplicity of dress. Tinselries may serve to give effect on the stage or upon the ball-room floor, but in daily life there is no substitute for the charm of simplicity. A vulgar taste is not to be disguised by gold and diamonds. The absence of a true taste and refinement of delicacy can not be compensated by the possession of the most princely trousseau. Mind measures gold, but gold can not measure mind. Those who think that in order to dress well it is necessary to dress extravagantly or gaudily make a great mistake.

Elegance of dress does not depend upon expense. A lady might wear the costliest silks that Italy could produce, adorn herself with laces from Brussels which years of patient toil are required to fabricate; she might carry the jewels of an Eastern princess around her neck and upon her wrists and fingers, yet still in appearance be essentially vulgar. These are as nothing without grace, without adaptation, without an harmonious development of colors, without the exercise of discrimination and good taste.

God has implanted in the minds of all, but especially in the female breast, the love of beauty, and one way that this feeling finds expression is in the matter of dress and personal adornment. We think that it is the duty of all to clothe themselves in that style of dress which most becomes them, provided that it does not conflict with hygienic rules, and is warranted by their circumstances. It is their duty, since when in choice personal adornment they have a dignity and sense of personal elevation which they do not experience when in uncouth attire. Pride, of course, often enters into fine dressing, and many women are fond of flaunting their fine feathers in people's eyes; but a great majority love handsome dressing in obedience to an instinct of refinement, in consequence of that sense of personal purity which accompanies the wearing of choice apparel.

To advise a young lady to dress herself with any serious departure from the prevailing fashion of her day and class is to advise her to incur a penalty which may very probably be the

wreck of her whole life's happiness. But it is only the fault of public opinion that any penalties at all follow innovations in themselves sensible and modest. To train this public opinion by degrees to bear with more variation of costume, and especially to insist upon the principle of fitness as the first requisite of beauty, should be the aim of all sensible women. Nothing can be in worse taste than for sensible women to wear clothes by which their natural movements are impeded, and their purposes, of whatever sort, thwarted by their habiliments.

The styles of dress are so many and varied that it would be a vain, as well as useless, attempt to classify them. There is one principle running through all which every woman should carefully consider. Are your modes of dress in accordance with the rules of hygiene? This question you ought carefully to consider, ever remembering that nature will allow none of her laws to be violated in the name of fashion with impunity, and that every style of dress that does not conform to the plainest of nature's teaching should be frowned down upon by all sensible people.

Dress, to be in perfect taste, need not be costly. It is to be regretted that in this age too much attention is paid to dress by those who have neither the excuse of ample means nor of social culture. The wife of a poorly paid clerk or of a young man just starting in business aims at dressing as stylishly as does the wealthiest among her acquaintances. Consistency in regard to station and fortune is the first matter to be

considered. A woman of good sense will not wish to expend in unnecessary extravagance money wrung from an anxious husband; or, if her husband be a man of fortune, she will not even then encroach upon her allowance. In the early years of married life, when the income is moderate, it should be the pride of a woman to see how little she can spend upon her dress and yet present that tasteful and creditable appearance which is desirable.

The dress of a gentleman never appears more creditable than when characterized by simplicity. A gentleman's taste in dress is shown in the avoidance of all extravagance. A man of wit may sometimes be a coxcomb, but a man of judgment and sense never can be. A beau dressed out is like a cinnamon tree—the bark is worth more than the body. A dandy is said to be the mercer's friend, the tailor's fool, and his own foe. There are a thousand fops made by art for one fool made by nature.

To judge from the actions of many of our young men one would suppose that dress was their highest aim in life. Elegance of attire is, indeed, well, and, when suitable to the surroundings, bespeaks the gentleman. But men of sterling worth and character are apt to have a feeling of contempt for the one who, by his faultless attire and spruce manner, conclusively shows that he is actuated by a dandy's view of life. A coat that has the mark of use upon it is a recommendation to people of sense, and a hat with too much nap and too high a luster a derogatory circumstance. The best coats in our streets are worn on the backs of penniless fops,

broken-down merchants, clerks with pitiful salaries, and men that do not pay up.

Dandies and fops are like a body without soul, powder without ball, lightning without thunderbolt, paint on sand. There is much of this in the world. We see it exemplified in every thing considered valuable. The counterfeiter gives the show of gold to his base coin, and the show of value to his lying bank note. The thief hangs out the appearance of honesty in his face, and the liar is thunderstruck if any body suspects him of equivocation. The bankrupt carries about with him the appearance of wealth. The fop puts on the masquerade of dignity and importance. The poor belle, whose mother washes to buy her plumes, outshines the peeress of the court. Many a table steams with costly viands for which the last cent was paid; and many a coat, sleek and black, is worn on the street on which the tailor has a moral mortgage.

In the matter of dress, then, when we sum it all up, we find that the love of dress is inherent in all true men and women, and that it would be as unwise as it would be useless to strive against it; that, while no man or woman should allow themselves to become a slave to dress and fashion, still it is no less a duty than it is a privilege to cultivate this love of adornment, ever keeping it within due bounds, remembering that outward adornment should be but secondary to the adornment of the soul with all noble and great qualities.

GENTLENESS.

We may admire proofs of hardiness and assurance, but we involuntarily attach ourselves to simplicity and gentleness. Gentleness is like the silent influence of light, which gives color to all nature. It is far more powerful than loudness or force, and far more beautiful. It pushes its way silently and persistently, like the tiniest daffodil in Spring, which raises the clod and thrusts it aside by the simple persistence of growing.

It is to be feared that in this stirring age, when we enumerate the elements of success, that we do not lay stress enough on the milder virtues of simplicity and gentleness. While fond of applauding the hardier virtues of energy, self-reliance, perseverance, and others of a similar nature, we are in danger of losing sight of the fact that ofttimes an exhibition of gentleness and courtesy is not only extremely pleasing in itself, but is not infrequently one of the most expeditious and efficacious modes of

advancing present interests.

It is singular what power gentleness and courtesy bestows on him who practices them. The most boisterous winds only cause the traveler to wrap his cloak the closer to him, while the gentle rays of the sun speedily induce him to discard it. And thus it is with many of the pursuits of life, where sheer force of intellect or intensity of application would ofttimes end only in a failure of plans and purposes, gentleness, by its silent but powerful influence, will not only excite a feeling of good will in the minds of others, but as oil removes friction from a machine and causes it to move smoothly, so will gentleness remove apparently insurmountable objects from the pathway of our success.

Gentleness belongs to virtue, and is to be carefully distinguished from the spirit of cowardice or the fawning assents of sycophants. It removes no just right from fear; it gives no important truth to flattery; it is, indeed, not only consistent with a firm mind, but it necessarily requires a manly spirit and a fixed principle in order to give it any real value. An able man shows his spirit by gentle words but resolute actions. How often experience convinces us that a bold and brazen loudness of tones and roughness of manner cover only a vacillating spirit and irresolute actions! And on the other hand, do not history and observation show that quietness and gentleness ofttimes mark the most determined of actions? The rarest bravery of all in the world is found actively engaged accompanied by an exhibition

of gentleness. And ought we not so to expect it? The person moved by a spirit of gentleness throws all the energy of his nature into action. It is not allowed to waste in boisterousness, but is guided and directed in the most appropriate channels by an understanding calm and collected.

In the captain of a canal-boat we generally expect gruffness of manner, loudness of tones, and a general lack of refinement, dignity, and gentleness; but in the commander of an ocean steamer we shall always find the quietness, gentleness, and dignity that we all recognize as such a proper accompaniment of power. So true it is that gentleness of manner is the most appropriate and general expression of true greatness and worth that we use the expression "a gentle man" to express the highest type of worth in man.

In the mechanical world do we not always find that the greater the exhibition of power the steadier and quieter the movement becomes? It is the rickety engine of but few horse-powers that goes with a fizz and a clatter, while the massive engine that supplies the motive power for acres of machinery goes almost noiselessly; and the sublimest exhibition of power in the universe—the movement of the heavenly bodies —proceeds in absolute quiet. We observe the same effect in the moral world; the master minds who have moved kingdoms and swayed the thoughts of millions are uniformly gentle and dignified in their bearings. The loud-tongued and clatter-brained fanatics merely cause a movement in their immediate vicinity.

There is a magic power in gentle words, the potency of which but few natures are so icy as to wholly resist. Would you have your home a cheerful, hallowed spot, within which may be found that happiness and peace which the world denies to its votaries? Let not loud, harsh words be uttered within its walls. Let only gentle, quiet actions there be found. Speak gently to the wearied husband, who, with anxious brow, returns from the perplexities of his daily avocations; and let him, in his turn, speak gently to the care-worn woman and wife, who, amid her never-ending round of little duties, finds rest and encouragement in the sympathy of him she loves. Speak gently to the wayward child. A pleasant smile and a word of kindness will often restore good humor and playfulness. Human nature is the same with it. It has its joys and sorrows as well as those of mature growth, and its little heart will quickly yield to the power of gentle, loving kindness.

Hearts of children are, after all, much like flowers; they remain open to the softly falling dew, but shut up in the violent downfalls of rain. Therefore, when you have occasion to rebuke children, be careful to do it with manifest kindness and gentleness. The effect will be incalculably better. Speak gently to the dependent who lightens your daily toil; kind words insure respect and affection, while the angry rebuke provokes impertinence and dislike. Speak gently to the aged ones; many are the trials through which they have passed, and now, in a little while, they will be missed from their accustomed places—the spirit will have

passed to its rest. The remembrance of an unkind word will then bring with it a bitter sting. Speak gently to the erring one; are we not all weak and liable to err? Temptation, of which we can not judge, may have surrounded him. Harshness will drive him on the sinful way; gentleness may win him back to virtue.

True gentleness is founded on a sense of what we owe to Him who made us, and to the common nature of which we all share. It arises from reflection on our own failings and wants, and from just views of the condition and duty of man. It is native feelings, heightened and improved by principle. It is not deficient in a sense of true worth and dignity, but it recognizes in all men the possessors of infinite possibilities, even the possibilities of eternal life; and it treats them as brethren. It summons to its highest and best form of expression all that is noble in manhood, inspiring in purpose, grand in aim, and walks proudly therein; humbly, yet with an air of conscious dignity; quietly, yet with the insignia of power.

Since, then, true gentleness is thus significant of power, thus potential for good, and is the high and distinctive test of a gentleman, ought not all the young earnestly strive to learn that spirit of self-control, and accustom themselves to speak and act gently at all times, and, by so doing, to act as becomes a man and responsible being?



MODESTY.



It has been remarked that the modest deportment of really wise men, when contrasted to the assuming air of the vain and ignorant, may be compared to the difference of wheat, which, while its ear is empty, holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain bends modestly down and withdraws from observation. Thus with true worth and merit: it is uniformly modest in deportment. It is only the shallow-pated who strive to attract attention by pretentious claims. The ocean depths are mute; it is only along shallow shores that the roar of the breakers is heard.

It is not difficult to draw the line between self-reliance and modesty on the one hand, and self-esteem and arrogant pretensions on the other. True self-reliance does not call on all men to witness its exploits. It displays itself in action. It may be reserved in deportment, but quietly and modestly proceeds in the path that wisdom points out, with a steady reliance on its

own powers. Not so self-esteem. Its boast is that it is sufficient for all things; which, to be sure, were not so bad, were it not for the fact that, when put to the test by necessity, it so quickly abandons its pretentious claims, and, forgetting to use its own powers, is anxious only for the aid of others.

Modesty is a beautiful setting to the diamond of talents and genius. The mark of the truly successful man is absence of pretensions. He talks in only ordinary business style, avoids all brag, dresses plainly, promises not at all, performs much, speaks monosyllables, hugs his fact. He calls his employment by its lowest name, and so takes from evil tongues their sharpest weapon. Who made more wide and sweeping discoveries, of more far-reaching consequences, than Newton? Yet listen to his modest confession: "I know not what the world may think of my labors, but to myself it seems as though I had been but a child playing on the seashore, now finding some pebble rather more polished, and now some shell rather more agreeably variegated than another, while the immense ocean of truth extended itself unexplored before me." Thus it is always found that modesty accompanies great merit, and it has even been said that merit without modesty is generally insolent in expression.

The greatest events in the world's history dawned with no more noise than the morning star makes in rising. All great developments complete themselves in the world, and modestly wait in silence, praising themselves never, and announcing themselves not at all. If "honesty be

the best policy," we can not deny that modesty, as a matter of policy even, hath a rare virtue. What so quickly commands our good wishes as modesty struggling under discouragement? what our sympathy more than modesty struck down by affliction? or what our respect and love more than modesty ministering to the distresses of others? There is no surer passport to the favors of others than modesty of deportment. It will succeed where all else has failed to waken in the minds of others an interest in our affairs. It is to merit as shades to figures in a picture, giving it strength and beauty.

Modesty is not bashfulness, though the two are often confounded. The bashfulness of timidity is constitutional, the bashfulness of credulity is pitiable, the bashfulness of ignorance is disreputable, but the bashfulness allied to modesty is a charm. There are two distinct sorts of bashfulness. The one is awkwardness joined to pride, which, on a further acquaintance with the world, will be converted into the pertness of a coxcomb. The other is closely allied to modesty. It is a painful consciousness of self, which is produced by our most delicate feelings, and which the most extensive knowledge can not always remove. In undermining and removing bashfulness, due regard is to be had to the adjacent modesty, good nature, and humanity, as those who pull down private houses adjoining imposing buildings are careful to prop up such parts as are endangered by the removal.

Bashfulness in itself can not be admired. It

completely distrusts its own powers, whereas we have seen that a proper reliance on self is at all times highly commendable. Bashfulness in man is never to be allowed as a good quality, but a weakness, inasmuch as it suppresses his virtues and hides them from the world, when, had he a mind to exert himself, he might accomplish much good. We doubt not but there are many fine intellects passing for naught by reason of their bashfulness.

Modesty is far different from reserve. Reserve partakes more of the nature of sullen pride. It is haughty in demeanor, and hath not the sweet, retiring disposition of modesty. A reserved man is in continual conflict with the social part of his nature, and even grudges himself the laugh into which he is sometimes betrayed. The modest man does not refuse to perform his part socially. His only dread is that others may think he is trying to center attention on himself. The really modest man may be the most social of men. The reserved man thinks it is beneath him to mingle with the mass of the people.

Modesty never counsels real merit to conceal itself. It never bids one refuse to act when action is necessary, and the person is conscious that his powers are adequate for the performance of the task. Nor when a good deed is to be done should the modest man hesitate to come forward to do it, providing he is capable of so doing. Modesty counsels none to be backwards where duty points the way; but modesty strictly forbids that when a good or meritorious action is done that the performer should spread abroad the story of his doings.

Leave that for others to do.

Modesty is the crowning ornament of womanly beauty, and the honor of manly powers. It alike becomes every age, giving new grace to youthful figures, and imparting a pleasing virtue to years. It softens the asperities of poverty and is a beautiful setting for wealth and fortune. It gives additional charms to the possessor of genius and talents, or cunningly conceals the want of the same. It is the key that unlocks alike the gate to success or the door of love and respect. It makes life pleasant to the one who exercises the virtue, and charities bestowed by its hand are worth far more to the recipient than their mere pecuniary value.



LOVE.

"Life without love! Oh, it would be
A world without a sun—
Cold as the snow-capped mountain, dark
As myriad nights in one;
A barren scene, without one spot
Amidst the waste,
Without one blossom of delight,
Of feeling, or of taste!"



Love in one form or another is the ruling element in life. It is the primary source from whence springs all that possesses any real value to man. It may be the love of dominion or power which, though utterly selfish in its aims and methods, has been most marvelously overruled for good in the world's history. It may be the love of knowledge, in the pursuit of which lives have been lost and fortunes spent; but grand secrets have been wrung from nature —secrets which have contributed much for the advancement of human interests. But the love grander than any other, before which all the other elements of civilization pale and dwarf to utter insignificance, which is as powerful to-day as in the morning of time, which will continue to rule until time is ended, is that indefinable, indescribable, ever fresh and beautiful love betwixt man and woman—that love which has the power to tame the savage's heart; which finds man rough, uncultivated, and selfish; which leaves him a refined and courteous gentleman; which transforms the timid, bashful girl to the woman of matchless power for good.

Love is an actual need, an urgent requirement of the heart. Every properly constituted human being who entertains an appreciation of

loneliness and wretchedness, and looks forward to happiness and content, feels a necessity of loving. Without it life is unfinished and hope is without aim, nature is defective and man miserable; nor does he come to comprehend the end and glory of existence until he has experienced the fullness of a love that actualizes all indefinite cravings and expectations. Love is the great instrument of nature, the bond and cement of society, the spirit and spring of the universe. It is such an affection as can not so properly be said to be in the soul as the soul to be in that. It is the whole nature wrapped up in one desire. Love is the sun of life, most beautiful in the morning and evening, but warmest and steadiest at noon.

Love blends young hearts in blissful unity, and for the time so ignores past ties and affections as to make a willing separation of the son from his father's house, and the daughter from all the sweet endearments of her childhood's home, to go out together and rear for themselves an altar, around which shall cluster all the cares and delights, the anxieties and sympathies of the family relationship. This love, if pure, unselfish, and discreet, constitutes the chief usefulness and happiness of human life. Without it there would be no organized households, and, consequently, none of that earnest endeavor for a competence and respectability, which is the mainspring to human efforts, none of those sweet, softening, restraining, and elevating influences of domestic life, which can alone fill the earth with the happy influences of refinement.

Love, it has been said, in the common acceptance of the term is folly; but love in its purity, its loftiness, its unselfishness is not only a consequence, but a proof of our moral excellence. The sensibility to moral beauty, the forgetfulness of self in the admiration engendered by it, all prove its claim to a high moral influence. It is the triumph of the unselfish over the selfish part of our nature. No man and no woman can be regarded as complete in their experience of life until they have been subdued into union with the world through their affections. As woman is not woman until she has known love, neither is man a complete man. Both are requisite to each other's completeness.

Love is the weapon which Omnipotence reserved to conquer rebel man when all the rest had failed. Reason he parries; fear he answers blow to blow; future interests he meets with present pleasure; but love, that sun against whose melting beams Winter can not stand, that soft, subduing slumber which brings down the giant, there is not one human soul in a million, not a thousand men in all earth's domain whose earthly hearts are hardened against love. There needs no other proof that happiness is the most wholesome moral atmosphere, and that in which the morality of man is destined ultimately to thrive, than the elevation of soul, the religious aspirations which attend the first assurance, the first sober certainty of true love.

Love is the perpetual melody of humanity. It sheds its effulgence upon youth, and throws a

halo around age. It glorifies the present by the light it casts backward, and it lightens the future by the gleams sent forward. The love which is the outcome of esteem has the most elevating and purifying effect on the character. It tends to emancipate one from the slavery of self. It is altogether unsordid; itself is the only price. It inspires gentleness, sympathy, mutual faith, and confidence. True love also in a manner elevates the intellect. "All love renders wise in a degree," says the poet Browning, and the most gifted minds have been the truest lovers. Great souls make all affections great; they elevate and consecrate all true delights. Love even brings to light qualities before lying dormant and unsuspected. It elevates the aspirations, expands the soul, and stimulates the mental powers.

It were fitting that the nature of this affection, which has such power for good or ill, be thoroughly understood, and endeavors made to guide it in right channels. For love, as it is of the first enjoyment, so it is frequently of the deepest distress. If it is placed upon an unworthy object, and the discovery is made too late, the heart can never know peace. Every hour increases the torments of reflection, and hope, that soothes the severest ills, is here turned into deep despair. But, strange to say, though it is one of universal and engrossing interest to humanity, the moralist avoids it, the educator shuns it, and parents taboo it. It is considered almost indelicate to refer to love as between the sexes, and young persons are left to gather their only notions of it from the

impossible love stories that fill the shelves of circulating libraries. This strong and absorbing feeling, which nature has for wise purposes made so strong in woman that it colors her whole life and history, though it may form but an episode in the life of man, is usually left to follow its own inclination, and to grow up for the most part unchecked, without any guidance or direction whatever.

Although nature spurns all formal rules and directions in affairs of love; though love triumphs over reason, resists all persuasion, and scorns every dictate of philosophy; and though, like a fabled tree or plant, it may be cut down at night, but ere morning it will be found to have sprouted up again in renewed freshness and beauty, with its leaves and branches re-expanded to the air and laden with blossoms and fruits; still, at all events, it were best to instill in young minds such views of character as should enable them to discriminate between the true and the false, and to accustom them to hold in esteem those qualities of moral purity and integrity without which life is but a scene of folly and misery. It may not be possible to teach young people to love wisely, but they may at least be guarded by parental advice against the frivolous and despicable passions which so often usurp its name.

Genuine love is founded on esteem and respect. You can not long love one for whom you have not these feelings. The most beautiful may be the most admired and caressed, but they are not always the most esteemed and loved. We discover great beauty in those who

are not beautiful, if they possess genuine truthfulness, simplicity, and sincerity. No deformity is present where vanity and affectation is absent, and we are unconscious of the want of charms in those who have the power of fascinating us by something more real and permanent than external attractions and transitory shows.

Remember that love is dependent upon forms; courtesy of etiquette must guard and protect courtesy of heart. How many hearts have been lost irrecoverably and how many averted eyes and cold looks have been gained from what seemed, perhaps, but a trifling negligence of forms. Love is a tender plant and can not bear cold neglect. It requires kind acts and thoughtful attentions, one to the other, and thrives at its best only when surrounded by an atmosphere of disinterested courtesy.

The love of woman is a stronger power and a sweeter thing than that of man. Men and women can not be judged by the same rules. There are many radical differences in their affectional natures. Man is the creature of interest and ambition. His nature leads him forth into the struggle and bustle of the great world. Love is but the embellishment of his early life, or a song piped in the interval of the acts. He seeks for fame, for fortune, for space in the world's thoughts, and dominion over his fellow-men. But a woman's whole life is a history of the affections. The heart is her world; it is there her ambition strives for empire; it is there her nature seeks for love and kindness. She sends forth her sympathies on adventure;

she embarks her whole soul in the traffic of affection, and if shipwrecked her case is hopeless, for it is the bankruptcy of a heart.

Woman's love is stronger than man's because she sacrifices more. For every woman is with the food of the heart as with the food of her body; it is possible to exist on a very small quantity, but this small quantity is an absolute necessity. The love of a pure, true woman has brightened some of the darkest scenes in the world's history. It inspires them with courage and incites them to actions utterly foreign to their shrinking dispositions. Who can estimate the value of a woman's affections? Gold can not purchase a gem so precious. In our most cheerless moments, when disappointments and care crowd round the heart, and even the gaunt form of poverty menaces with his skeleton fingers, it gleams round the soul like sunlight in dark places. It follows the prisoner into the gloomy cell, and in the silence of midnight it plays around his heart, and in his dreams he folds to his bosom the form of her who loves him still, though the world has turned coldly from him.

Love purifies the heart from self; it strengthens and ennobles the character, gives higher motives and a nobler aim to every action of life, and makes both man and woman strong, noble, and courageous; and the power to love truly and devotedly is the noblest gift with which a human being can be endowed, but it is a sacred fire and not to be burned before idols. Disinterested love is beautiful and noble. How high will it not rise! How many injuries will it

not forgive! What obstacles will it not overcome, and what sacrifices will it not make rather than give up the being upon which it has been once wholly and truthfully fixed!

It is difficult to know at what moment love begins; it is less difficult to know it has begun. A thousand messengers betray it to the eye. Tone, act, attitude, and look, the signals upon the countenance, the electric telegraph of touch, all betray the yielding citadel. And there is nothing holier in this life of ours than the first consciousness of love, the first fluttering of its silken wings, the first rising sound of that wind which is so soon to sweep through the soul to purify or to destroy. Love is thus a power, potent for good, but, debased and corrupted, is as potent for evil. If it brings joys it may also conduce to exquisite anguish. A disappointment in love is more hard to get over than any other; the passion itself so softens and subdues the heart that it disables it from struggling or bearing up against the woes and distresses which befall it. The mind meets with other misfortune in her whole strength; she stands collected within herself and sustains the shock with all the force which is natural to her. But a heart crossed in love has its foundation sapped, and immediately sinks under the weight of accidents that are disagreeable to its favorite passion.

When time brings us to the resting-places of life—and we all expect them, and, in some measure, attain them—when we pause to consider its ways and to study its import, we then look back over the waste ground which we

have left behind us. Is a bright spot to be seen there? It is where the star of love has shed its beams. Is there a plant, a flower, or any beautiful thing visible? It is where the smiles and tears of affection have been spent—where some fond eye met our own, some endearing heart was clasped to ours. Take these away and what joy has memory in retrospection, or what delight has hope in future prospects? The bosom which does not feel love is cold; the mind which does not conceive it is dull; the philosophy which does not accept it is false; and the only true religion in the world has pure, reciprocal, and undying love for its basis. The loves that make memory happy and home beautiful are those which form the sunlight of our earlier years; they beam gratefully along the pathway of our mature years, and their radiance lingers till the shadows of death darken them all together.



COURTSHIP.



There is an unfortunate tendency in human nature to treat with levity many questions most vitally affecting man's real happiness. Thus in the questions of love, courtship, and marriage—questions than which none could be more important—it is to be deeply regretted that men and women do not more carefully consider the wisdom of their course, do not reflect whether they are guided by the light of calm, sober sense or are leaving things to impulse.

It has been wisely but sadly said that years are necessary to cement a friendship; but months, and sometimes weeks, and even days, are sufficient to prepare for that holier state of matrimony. From false regard to public opinion, or as a matter of convenience, or for the mere purpose of securing a home and being settled in life, thousands enter into the most sacred of human relationships with no such feelings as will enable them to bear the burdens which it brings.



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THE VOW.

Love and courtship should be to wedded love what a blossom is to the perfected fruit. The power of this love must be measured, not by its intensity, but by its effects—by its beneficence

in bringing into play a higher range of motives, by the facilities it unfolds, by its skill in harmonizing different natures. Not once in a hundred times do two natures brought side by side harmonize in every part. Of nothing are people more ignorant than of human nature. Very rich and fruitful natures are often side by side with very barren ones; noble ones, with those that are sordid; exquisitely sensitive, with those coarse and rude. This is a consequence to be foreseen from the want of thought evinced by people when about to marry.

Many counsel the young not to expect too much from love. That is an evil philosophy, however, which advises to moderation by undervaluing the possibilities of a true and glorious love. Happiness in this life depends more upon the capacity of loving than on any other single quality. If men lose all the treasures of love, it does not prove that the treasure is not to be found, but that they have not sought aright. In love there are many apartments; but not to selfishness, sensuality, or arrogance will love yield its richest treasures. True love is social regeneration. It is a revolution ending with a new king, and a reconstruction of the soul.

The way of selfishness is self-seeking; that of love, self-sacrifice. It is this self-sacrificing spirit of love that can alone perpetuate its influence and establish its worth and blessedness. True wisdom, then, will say to the young, Love, but love not blindly. Justice is represented as blind, in order that, under no circumstances, can she swerve one hair's-breadth from the right, from

personal favor or prejudice; but Love, on the contrary, should use his eyes to the fullest extent, in order that, in days of courtship, no stumbling-block may be left to become a torment after marriage.

A moment's consideration will show how utterly repugnant it is to all manly feelings to jest in this matter. It is one of the most serious concerns of life. Your weal or woe and the weal or woe of those who shall come after you, and the influence you shall exert upon the world, depend, in a great measure, upon the wisdom and virtue with which you conduct your preparation for marriage. All true minds see the manifest impropriety of jesting about the most delicate, serious, and sacred relation and feeling of human experience. The whole tendency of such lightness is to cause the marriage relation to be lightly esteemed and the true aim of courtship to be lost sight of. Until it is viewed in its true light, with that sober earnestness which the subject demands, courtship will be nothing else than a grand game of hypocrisy, resulting in misery the most deplorable.

Courtships are sweet and dreamy thresholds of unseen temples, where half the world has paused in couples, talked in whispers under the moonlight, passed on, but never returned. It should be to all but the entrance to scenes of happiness and content. But, alas! in the history of many we know that such is not the case. We have been but poor observers if we fail to recognize that marriage is not necessarily a blessing. It may be the bitterest curse; it may sting like an adder and bite like a serpent. Its

bower is as often made of thorns as of roses. It blasts as many sunny expectations as it realizes, and an illy mated human pair is the most woeful picture of wretchedness that is presented in the book of life; and yet such pictures are plenty.

It becomes all young men and women, who are standing where the radiant beams of love are just beginning to gild the pathway before them, to endeavor to ascertain, with the aid of others' experience, with calm and careful consideration, with an appeal for guidance from on high, whether the person he or she proposes to unite their destiny to is the one with whom, of all the world, they are best adapted to make the journey. If, as the result of such reflection, they are convinced that the choice is wise, they may with confidence proceed to take upon themselves the duties and privileges of the marriage relation. But if such observation shows that they have heretofore erred, as they value their future happiness and the happiness of others, let them stop before the vow is said that indissolubly unites their fate with another's.

Marriage should be made a study. Every youth, both male and female, should so consider it. It is the grand social institution of humanity. Its laws and relations are of momentous importance to the race. Should it be entered blindly, in total ignorance of what it is, what its conditions of happiness are? The object of courtship is not to woo; it is not to charm, gratify, or please, simply for the present pleasure. It is simply for the selection of a life

companion—one who must bear, suffer, and enjoy life with us in all of its forms; in its frowns as well as smiles, joys, and sorrows—one who will walk pleasantly, willingly, and confidingly by our side through all the intricate and changing vicissitudes incident to mortal life.

What is to be sought is a companion, a congenial spirit, one possessed of an interior constitution of soul similar to our own, of similar age, opinions, tastes, habits, modes of thought and feeling. A congenial spirit is one who, under any given combination of circumstances, would be affected, feel, and act as we ourselves would; it is one who would approve what we approve and condemn what we condemn, not for the purpose of agreeing with us, but of his or her own free will. This is a companion who is already united to us by the ties of spiritual harmony, which union it is the object of courtship to discover.

Courtship, then, is a voyage of discovery or a court of inquiry, established by mutual consent of the parties, to see wherein and to what extent there is a harmony existing. If in all these they honestly and harmoniously agree, and find a deep and thrilling pleasure in their agreement, find their union of sentiment to give a charm to their social intercourse; if now they feel that their hearts are bound as well as their sentiments in a holy unity, and that for each other they would live and labor and make every personal sacrifice with gladness, and that without each other they know not how to live, it is their privilege, yes, their *duty* to form a

matrimonial alliance.

The true companion has to be sought for. She does not parade herself as store goods. She is not fashionable. Generally she is not rich. But, oh! what a heart she has when you find her—so large and pure and womanly. When you see it you wonder if those showy things outside were really women. Courtship is the brilliant scene in the maiden life of a woman. It is to her a garden where no weeds mingle with the flowers, but all is lovely and beautiful to the sense. It is a dish of nightingales served up by moonlight to the mingled music of many tendernesses and gentle whisperings and eagerness, that does not outstep the bounds of delicacy.

Courtship is the first turning point in the life of a woman, crowded with perils and temptation. The rose tints of affection dazzle and bewilder the imagination, and while always bearing in mind that life without love is a wilderness, it should not be overlooked that true affection requires solid support. Discretion tempers passion, and it is precisely this quality which oftener than any other is found to be absent in courtship. Young persons require wise counselors. They should not trust too much to the impulse of the heart, nor be too easily captivated by a winning exterior.

In the selection of a wife a pure, loving heart and good common sense are many times more valuable than personal beauty or wealth. Once installed in the affections of such a lady, you have a life claim on her good offices. No sacrifice she can make is too great, no adversity

so stern that it can shake her firmness or hopefulness. Such a woman is a helpmeet as the Creator designed a wife to be. It is an error, which has proved fatal to many young lives, to marry one whom you consider your inferior in mind or body. A wife has the power to make or destroy the home, and a weak heart and shallow brain can never have the former effect.

There can be no such a thing as interchange of sentiment where she does not appreciate your highest thoughts. Can you reveal to her the sacred treasures of mind, which lie hidden from the careless gaze of others, and be assured of her sympathy? Can she walk hand in hand with you as her equal, honored above all women? Is she fit to sit in your household as a shining light, respected for her gentle dignity and the wisdom of her management and conversation? The quiet, reserved girl does not always possess these qualifications; neither does the bright, gay creature, whose presence throws a halo over her surroundings. The poor are no more likely to have the proper gifts and trainings than those who never knew a wish ungratified. But any woman of noble principles, a warm heart, and good common sense to guide her can easily reach the standard.

There is equal danger before the young lady in her choice of a husband. Young men inclined to intemperate habits, even but slightly so, as they have not sufficient moral stamina to enable them to resist temptation even in its incipient stages, and are consequently deficient in self-respect, can not possess that pure, uncontaminated feeling which alone capacitates

a man for rightly appreciating the tender and loving nature of a true woman.

It is equally fatal for a woman to marry a man who is her inferior. She of necessity descends to his level. Being his superior in every good sense of the word, she can not have for him that high feeling of regard which every wife should have for her husband. Lacking that, love too soon fades away, and only the duties of married life remain; its pleasures are all gone. What is wanted in both is a true companion; not one who possesses wealth, not necessarily the possessor of a scholastic education, but one who has a pure, warm heart and good common sense.

A true courtship is with all a beautiful sight. Only the coarse and illiterate can there see aught for ridicule or unseemly jest. It is the flowing together of two separate lives that have heretofore been divided, now mysteriously brought together to flow on through all time, and only God in his infinite wisdom knows how far in the shadowy hereafter.

MARRIAGE.

The marriage ceremony is one of the most interesting and solemn spectacles that social life presents. To see two rational creatures, in the glow of youth and hope which invests life in a halo of happiness, appear together and acknowledge their preference for each other, voluntarily enter into a league of perpetual friendship and amity, and call on all to witness the sanctity of their vows, awakens deep feeling in the hearts of all beholders. A holy influence is felt to pervade the place; the spirit of the hour is sacramental.

Though mirth may abound before and after the irrevocable formula is spoken, yet at that particular point of time there is a shadow on the most laughing lip, a moisture in the firmest eye; and it may well be so. To think of the endearing relations, and the important

consequences which are to flow from it as the couple walk side by side through life, participating in the same joys and sharing the same sorrows, two weak, frail human natures thus taking upon themselves, in the sight of God and man, the weighty duties of a new and untried state of existence, exerts a solemn influence on all.

All pictures of human happiness represent sorrow in the background. Thus the wedding ceremony. True, it is considered an occasion of great joy; but there remains the thought, the smile that kindles to ecstasy at their union will at last be quenched in the tears of the survivor. Man may unite, but death only separates. If from this proceed some of the deepest joys of life, from hence also come not unfrequently the deepest sorrows.

There is no one thing more lovely in this life, more full of the divinest courage, than when a young maiden—from her past life; from her happy childhood, when she rambled over every field and moor around her home; when a mother anticipated her wants and soothed her little cares; when brothers and sisters grew from merry playmates to loving, trustful friends; from the Christmas gatherings and romps, the festival in bower or garden; from the rooms sanctified by the death of relatives; from the holy and secure background of her early life—looks out into a dark and unknown future, away from all that, and yet unterrified, undaunted, undertakes the journey, with a trusting confidence in the one beside her. Buoyed up with the confidence of requited love,

she bids a fond and grateful adieu to the life that is passed, she turns with excited hopes and joyful anticipations of happiness to what is to come.

Then woe to the man who can blast such hopes, who can break the illusions that have won her, and destroy the confidence which his love inspired! Marriage offers the most effective opportunity for spoiling the life of another. Nobody can debase, harass, and ruin a woman as her own husband, and nobody can do a tithe as much to chill a man's aspiration for good, to paralyze his energies, as his wife; and a man is never irretrievably ruined in his prospects till he marries a bad woman. Perhaps there is no hour in the life of a man or woman more potential for weal or woe than the marriage hour. That is the hour from whence most men can date their success or failure; for while nothing is a greater incentive to a man to put forth all his exertions than for the sake of his wife, and while her society is the place where he forgets the cares of the world, and in its quiet rest finds new courage to take up life's load, yet has a wife equal power for ill.

Be a man ever so ambitious, energetic, or industrious, yet with a careless or spendthrift wife his best efforts for success are vain. And nothing will sooner discourage a man than a wife too ignorant or too careless to understand, appreciate, and sympathize with his efforts. And for the woman, too, it is at once the happiest and saddest hour of her life. It is the promise of future bliss, raised on the death of all present enjoyment. She quits her home, her

parents, her companions, her occupation, her amusements, her every thing upon which she has hitherto depended for comfort, for affection, for kindness, for pleasure.

With the marriage ceremony she enters a new world; but it is with her a world from whence she can not return. If the man of her choice be an upright, pure man, with manly traits of character, industrious and honest, in the majority of cases she is to blame if it be not to her a world of happiness. But if she has erred, and she finds herself bound for life with one inferior to her, or who is enslaved to habit or temper, or destitute of manly attributes, God help her! Her future is full of misery.

A man's moral character is necessarily powerfully influenced by his wife. A lower nature will drag him down, as a higher one will lift him up. The former will deaden his sympathies, dissipate his energies, and distort his life, while the latter, by satisfying his affections, will strengthen his moral nature, and, by giving him repose, tend to energize his intellect. Not only so, but a woman of high principle will insensibly elevate the aim and purpose of her husband, as one of low principles will unconsciously degrade them. In the course of life we may see even a weak man display real public virtue, because he had by his side a woman of noble character, who sustained him in his career, and exercised a fortifying influence on his views of public duty; while, on the contrary, all have often witnessed men of grand and generous instincts transformed into vulgar self-seekers by contact with women of

narrow natures, devoted to an imbecile love of pleasure, and from whose minds the grand motive of duty was altogether absent. As wives may exercise a great moral influence upon their husbands, so, on the other hand, there are few men strong enough to resist the influence of a lower character in a wife. If she does not sustain and elevate what is highest in his nature, she will speedily reduce him to her own level. Thus a wife may be the making or unmaking of the best of men.

It is by the regimen of the domestic affections that the heart of man is best composed and regulated. The home is the woman's kingdom, her state, her world where she governs by affection, by kindness, by the power of gentleness. There is nothing which so settles the turbulence of a man's nature as his union in life with a high-minded woman. There he finds rest, contentment, and happiness—rest of brain and peace of spirit. He will also often find in her his best counselor; for her instinctive tact will usually lead him right, where his own unaided reason might be apt to go wrong.

The true wife is a staff to lean upon in times of trial and difficulty, and she is never wanting in sympathy and solace when distress occurs or fortune frowns. In the time of youth she is a comfort and an ornament of man's life, and she remains a faithful helpmate in maturer years, when life has ceased to be in anticipation, and we live in its realities. Of all the institutions that effect human weal or woe on earth none is more important than marriage. It is the foundation of the great social fabric, and

conceals within its mystic relations the coiled secrets of the largest proportion of happiness and misery connected with the lot of man.

Marriage, to be a blessing, must be properly entered. It has its fundamental laws, which must be obeyed. It is not a mysterious, wonder-working institution of the Almighty, which can not be studied by the common mind, but a simple necessity laid in man's social nature, which may be read and understood of all men who will investigate that nature. The reasons for every enjoyment of the matrimonial life may be understood before entering upon its relations. The conditions upon which its joys and advantages are realized may be learned beforehand. It should not be entered in blindness, but rather in the daylight of a perfect knowledge of its rules and regulations, its promises and conditions, its laws and privileges, so that no uncertainty shall attend its realization, no unhappy revealments shall follow a knowledge of its reality.

Marriage, then, should be made a study. Every youth, both male and female, should so consider it. It is the grand social institution of humanity. Its laws and relations are of momentous importance to the race. Shall it be entered blindly, in total ignorance of what it is, what its conditions of happiness are? Its relations involve some of the most stern duties and acts of self-denial that men are called upon to perform. Shall youth enter upon its relations without a knowledge of these duties? For all the professions, trades, and callings in life men and women prepare themselves by previous

attention to their principles and duties. They study them,—devote time and money to them. Every imaginable case of difficulty or trial is considered and duly disposed of according to the general principles of the trade or profession. But marriage—incomparably the most important and holy relation of life, involving the most sacred responsibilities and influences, social, civil, and religious, that bear upon men —is entered upon in hot haste or blind stupidity, by a great majority of youth.

No young man has any right to ask a young woman to enter the matrimonial bonds with him till he is thoroughly acquainted with the female constitution and character. Woman loves the strong, the resolute, and the vigorous in man. To these qualities she looks for protection. Under the shadow of their wings she feels secure. But she wants them blended with the tender, the sensitive, and the lofty in sentiment. Her companionship, her joy, she finds in these sentiments. Where she finds these she pours the full tides of her loving soul, and willingly enters the bower of conjugal felicity. He who knows not her nature knows not how to gratify and satisfy that nature. So woman should know the nature of man. The rough world often makes him appear what he is not. He has a vein of tenderness below the sternness of his worldly manners which woman should know how to penetrate and bring for her own, as well as for his, proper enjoyment. It is in this strata of tenderness that she finds her true companionship with him, and he with her. If she is ignorant of his nature she knows not how

to supply his wants or answer the calls of that nature. Thus we see most clearly the necessity of a thorough study of this whole subject by every youth. It is ignorance in these matters that causes a great amount of matrimonial infelicity.

Some are disappointed in marriage because they expect too much from it; but many more because they do not bring into the copartnership their fair share of cheerfulness, kindness, forbearance, and common sense. Their imagination has pictured a condition of things never experienced on this side of heaven, and when real life comes with its troubles and cares there is a sudden wakening up as from a dream. Or, they look for something approaching perfection in their chosen companion, and discover by experience that the fairest of characters have their weaknesses. Yet it is often the very imperfection of human nature, rather than its perfections, that makes the strongest claims on the forbearance and sympathy of others and, in affectionate and sensible natures, tends to produce the closest unions.

Marriage is the source from whence originates, as from a radiant point, the most beautiful glories of life, and also the deepest cares. Talk as we will of marriage, it is a real affair—it abounds in homely details. The joys of the wedding morn are quickly followed by the anxious cares of daily life. But if entered understandingly, and lived as becomes thoughtful, considerate human beings, each of whom tries to bear with the other's infirmities,

and to consider the other's happiness as paramount with their own, it then becomes a delightful scene of domestic happiness, to which all true men and women look forward as the condition of life most consonant to their true happiness.

SINGLE LIFE.



In the minds of nearly all properly constituted individuals there exists the hope and expectation of marriage. This is in accordance with the law of God as written in our physical being, and the young man who marries not, save in a few exceptional cases, arising out of ill health, deformity, or eccentricity of character, fails in one of the most palpable duties of life. He deprives himself of life's most refined and exalted pleasures, of some of its strongest incentives to virtue and

activity, sets an example unworthy of imitation, and fails to do much good that he might do in society. Moreover, he leaves one who might have made him a happy and useful companion to pine in maidenhood of heart through all the weary days of life.

A single life is not without its advantages, while a married one that fails of accomplishing its true end is the acme of earthly wretchedness. It is eminently proper to prepare for marriage, since this is designed by the Almighty Author to promote the health, happiness, purity, and real greatness of our species. But it is an error to fancy that you can not be truly happy in a single state, or hastily to assume the responsibilities of married life without due consideration. There is many a wife who, having married hastily and with a lack of due caution, has buried her hopes even of happiness deep in a grave of despair. And many a man who married without due thought and consideration can date from that hour the death of his ambitious purposes, and in the disappointments of married life lose sight of the glorious hopes which inspired him while single.

If the greatest happiness, and perhaps the only real and genuine kind, is to be found in the blessings of chaste and devoted love, yet matrimony, it must be acknowledged, is chargeable with numberless solicitudes and responsibilities; and if it often causes the heart to exult in joy, it as frequently makes it throb with pain. If it does not fall to your lot to participate in the delights and pleasures of a happy and reciprocal union of hearts; if destiny

has restricted your sympathies and thwarted your desires, and consigned you, perhaps unwillingly, to solitude and celibacy; if you are only a neutral spectator of those scenes wherein great artifice and deception, unfairness and insincerity are too often practiced, and often hearts are won, but happiness lost, you may console yourself that there are many positive advantages in being alone. The command of time and freedom from many cares should open the way to new and beneficial sources of pastime and usefulness sufficient to reconcile you to your condition, and to make it as enviable as that of those who have more incumbrances but less ease, and who sometimes act as if the world was made for matrimony and nothing else.

From the actions and conversations of some people you would suppose that marriage was the chief end of life, which view is altogether degrading and debasing in its tendency. For while admitting that it is, indeed, that state of life most becoming the dignity and happiness of man, yet it is not true that single life does not present fields of usefulness and honor, and that, above all things, it is true wisdom to remain single to the end of your days, unless you are satisfied that it is advisable to unite your destiny with that of another.

Marriage has a great refining and moralizing tendency. When a man marries early and uses prudence in choosing a suitable companion, he is likely to lead a virtuous, happy life; but in an unmarried state all alluring vices have a tendency to draw him away. Marriage renders a

man more virtuous and more wise. An unmarried man is but half of a perfect being, and it requires the other half to make things right; and it can not be expected that in this imperfect state he can keep straight in the path of rectitude any more than that a boat with one oar can keep a straight course. Marriage changes the current of a man's feelings, and gives him a center for his thoughts, his affections, and his acts.

There are exceptions to every rule; but the chances are that the young man who marries will make a stronger and better fight all through life than he who remains single. The reason of this is not difficult to find. A man will not put forth all his energies who has not something outside of self to draw him on and to incite him to put forth his best exertions. He also feels the lack of a home, which tends to round out life. He may, indeed, have a place to eat, a place to sleep, and, for that matter, all the luxury that money can buy; but we have long since learned that money will not buy every thing. It is utterly beyond its power to purchase a home and the treasures of love. This the unmarried man can not obtain. He may be courted for his money; he may eat, drink, and revel; and he may sicken and die in a hotel or a garret, with plenty of attendants about him. But, alas! what are attendants, waiting like so many cormorants for their prey, as compared with those whose hearts are knit to him by the strong ties of family relationship.

If marriage increases the cares it also heightens the pleasures of life. If it, in some

instances, dampens the enthusiasm and seems a hindrance to success in countless instances it has proved to be the incentive which has called forth the best part of man's nature, roused him from selfish apathy, and inspired in him those generous principles and high resolves which have caused all his after life to be replete with kindly acts, and himself to develop into a character known, loved, and honored by all within the sphere of its influence.

Jeremy Taylor, in contrasting single life with married life, says, in his quaint style: "Marriage is a school and exercise of virtue, and though marriage hath cares, yet single life hath desires which are more troublesome and more dangerous, and often end in sin; while the cares are but exercises of piety, and therefore, if single life hath more privacy of devotion, yet marriage hath more variety of it, and is an exercise of more grace. Marriage is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents, and the charity of relations; here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a center.

"Marriage is the nursery of heaven. The virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to him; but the state of marriage fills up the number of the elect, and hath in it the labor of love and the delicacies of friendship, the blessings of society, and the union of hearts and hands. It hath in it more safety than single life hath; it hath more care; it is more merry and more sad; it is fuller of joys and sorrows; it lies under more burdens, but it is supported by all the strength of love and charity, which makes

those burdens delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches and heaven itself, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world."

Though a great deal can be urged against marriage at too early an age, or against hasty and injudicious marriages, still there arrives a time in the life of every individual when it would be a great deal wiser for him to marry than to remain single. And we suppose that the number of bachelors who remain single all their life is exceedingly small; comparatively few of them die unmarried. When least expected they contract matrimonial alliances, thereby ofttimes disappointing numerous *protégés*, who have been confidently expecting that they would come in for the property. And the chances are against such marriages being happy, for it is more one of convenience, both on his part and that of his wife. She probably takes him because he is wealthy and can provide her with a first-rate establishment. He probably marries her because he is insufferably lonely and wishes to have a home of his own, where, if he can not do every thing as he likes, he is certain of a real welcome.

Though many of the most pathetic sorrows of life are caused by the endearing relations existing, by marriage, between the suffering one and another, yet deep in the heart of many who walk through life alone, unattended by the sympathy of a loving companion,

"Lies
Deeply buried from human eyes"

some of the deepest and most soul-pervading griefs that humanity knows of. Perhaps that old man, now so cross and fretful, whom we call "old bachelor," even now has a mistiness come in his eye and a pathetic tremor in his tongue as he looks at a faded picture, to him too sacred for the curious gaze of others—a picture whose limning has faded as the real one faded long ago under the coffin lid. And there are, no doubt, many whom we call selfish, proud, cold-hearted men who once were as warm-hearted and generous as any could wish, who once poured out all the wealth of their affections on one unworthy of them, the discovery of which changed their whole nature.

There are women whom the world calls single, who are as truly wedded to a tear-stained package as if it really were the being it represents to them—who live in the old, sweet time those missives once belonged to, and who keep their hearts apart from the dull reality that makes up the present world. Years may have passed, and nothing remains the same except the dear dream that never knew reality, yet, held in their love-life by their fragile paper bonds, they still dwell in that fair, unsubstantial Spring-time, while Autumn fades and Winter, cold and dreary, reigns in all the outer world.

MARRIED LIFE.



The marriage institution is the bond of social order, and if treated with due respect, care, and consideration greatly enhances individual happiness and consequently general good. The Spartan law punished those who did not marry, those who married too late, and those who married improperly. Though positive law has long since ceased to exercise any discretion as to whether a person marries or remains single, yet, as the foundation of marriage is fixed in the law of God, written in our physical being, it follows that it is none the less true now than in the morning of time that it is "not good for man to be alone." For ages history has shown that the permanent union of one man with one woman establishes a relation of affection and interest which can in no other way be made to exist between two human beings. Hence marriage, both from a theoretical and a practical point of view, becomes to him an aid in the stern conflicts of life.

Many a man has risen from obscurity to fame who in the days of his triumphant victory has freely and gracefully acknowledged that to the sympathy and encouragement of his wife

during the long and weary years of toil he owed very much of his achieved success. The good wife! How much of this world's happiness and prosperity is contained in the compass of these two short words! Her influence is immense. The power of a wife for good or for evil is altogether irresistible. Home must be the seat of happiness or it must be forever unknown. A good wife is to a man wisdom and courage, strength and endurance; a bad one is confusion and weakness, discomfiture and despair. No condition in life is hopeless when the wife possesses firmness, decision, energy, and economy. There is no outward prosperity which can counteract indolence, folly, and extravagance at home. No spirit can long resist bad domestic influences.

Man is strong, but his strength is not adamant. He delights in enterprise and action; but to sustain him he needs a tranquil mind and a whole heart. He expends his moral force in the conflicts of the world. In the true wife the husband finds not affection only, but companionship—a companionship with which no other can compare. The family relationship gives retirement with solitude, and society without the rough intrusion of the world. It plants in the husband's dwelling a friend who can bear his silence without weariness; who can listen to the details that affect his interests or sympathy; who can appreciate his repetition of events, only important as they are embalmed in the heart.

Common friends are linked to us by a slender thread. We must reclaim them by ministering to

their interests or their enjoyments. What a luxury it is for a man to feel that in his home there is a true and devoted being, in whose presence he may throw off restraint without danger to his dignity, he may confide without fear of treachery, and be poor or unfortunate without fear of being abandoned. If in the outer world he grows weary of human selfishness, his heart can safely trust in one whose indulgence overlooks his defects.

The treasure of a wife's affection, like the grace of God, is given, not bought. Gold is power. It can sweep down forests, raise cities, build roads, and deck houses; but wealth can not purchase love and the affections of a wife. If any husband has failed to estimate the affections of a true wife, he will be likely to mark their value in his loss, when the heart that loved him is stilled by death. Is man the child of sorrow, and do afflictions and distresses pour their bitternesses into his cup? How are his trials alleviated, his sighs suppressed, his corroding thoughts dissipated, his anxieties and fears relieved, his gloom and depression chased away by her cheerfulness and love! Is he overwhelmed by disappointments and mortified by reproaches? There is one who can hide his faults from her eyes, and can love without upbraiding.

A judicious wife is constantly exerting an influence for good over her husband. She is, so to speak, the wielder of the moral pruning knife, and is constantly snipping off from her husband's moral nature little twigs that are growing in the wrong direction. Intellectual

beings of different sexes were surely intended by their Creator to go through the world thus together, united not only in hand and heart, but in principles, in intellect, in views, and in dispositions, each pursuing one common and noble end—their own improvement and the happiness of those around them by the different means appropriate to their situation, mutually correcting, sustaining, and strengthening each other, undegraded by all practices of tyranny on the one hand and deceit on the other, each finding a candid but severe judge in the understanding, and a warm and partial advocate in the heart, of their companion.

A great deal has been said in a cynical way about the immense number of unhappy marriages. There is so much said on this subject that it is easy to forget that for every instance of complaint there are thousands of beneficent and prosperous unions of which the world never hears. It is natural that the evil attracts the most attention. Men and women whose married life is full of good and helpfulness do not often feel an impulse to defend the system under which they live. Sometimes we hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn others against the infatuation. But it is to be remembered that the days which they so much wish to call back are the days not only of celibacy, but of youth —the days of novelty and of improvement, of ardor and of hope, of health and vigor of body, of gayety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which

youth will not be delightful; and we are afraid that, whether married or single, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbersome the longer it is worn.

It is human to see only the good side of any thing that is past and gone. Life is so full of disappointments that whenever in mature years we recall past days, our present state, being present reality, always suffers by comparison with the past. It would be well to calmly reflect on what happiness in married life depends. There is a great deal of mischief wrought in the world by the common understanding of the phrase "mismated." Many apparently act as if all the ills of married life could be explained by a convenient use of that word.

It is arrogant folly to suppose that so much misery and wrong, so much selfishness and cruelty, so much that is low, animal, and unlovely in the lives of men and women, results from their being "mismated." They have, in the majority of cases, mistaken the cause of their trouble. These men and women are undeveloped, exacting, selfish, proud. They have undisciplined tempers, and they are accustomed to think of happiness for themselves as the chief end of marriage. No magic of "mating" would make the lives of such people very high or perfect.

Nowhere does it prove so powerfully true as in married life, that your happiness is found in consulting the happiness of another. We are too prone to trust to specific treatment for particular evils. The real problem of happiness in married life is not difficult of solution if only

sought with a spirit of willingness to learn the truths. There are no short roads to happiness. The men and women who marry must somehow acquire thoughtfulness, self-control, consideration for others, patience, and the other qualities, without which life is unendurable in any relations we know of. All candid persons will so readily admit this, that marriage speedily becomes a school for the exercise of virtue, and is the source and nurse of many of the best qualities in the life of man or woman.

It is indeed wonderful that marriage does so much for them, and has such power to lift up their lives to light and beauty. The man who remains single to the end of his days can not well help growing cynical, cold, and selfish. By nature he may be as warm-hearted, as full of generous impulses, as any, but he has only himself to care for. He has never felt the necessity of striving to make happy the life of another. He has never known what it is to have a woman's heart, full of womanly tenderness and strength, affection, sympathy, and encouragement, looking to him for love and happiness, for protection and comfort; has never learned the lesson of patience as it is learned in bearing with the faults of a loved one. He has never known what it is to have a little child turn to him as the source of consolation for its childish troubles and sorrows. It can not but follow that, lacking all the bitter-sweet experience of married life, he shall in that degree fail of being a complete man.

True, there are natures that, whether married

or single, would only develop into the cold, hard-hearted disposition; but that does not at all detract from the fact that marriage does thus tend to make life more replete with kindness and manly attributes than celibacy. Every man feels the need of a home, and there is no more sorrowful sight than to see a man bent with the weight of years, who is homeless and has no friends united to him by family ties. There can not be a home without the institution of marriage. Think for a moment how much of the joy and sorrow of life is connected with the word home. What visions of hopes, what days of joy, what seasons of sorrow, does it not recall? All the lights and shades of life originate from thence. How, then, can a man or woman lacking the experience of home and married life possess the strength of character, the full and complete development, expected from those who have taken upon themselves the joys and sorrows, the cross and crown of matrimony?

DUTIES OF MARRIED LIFE.



Happiness in life is of such momentous importance that it becomes all to study well the conditions of happiness, and to none does this truth apply itself with greater force than to those who have taken upon themselves the duties of matrimony. It is vain and useless now to ponder the wisdom and propriety of the choice. The step has been taken, and it only remains now to take up the duties thus voluntarily assumed, and, in the due performance of the same, do what is in their power to gather the happiness with which God, in his goodness, has invested the marriage relation.

Husbands and wives should learn to live happily together, for the lesson *can* be learned. By living happily together we do not understand a calm, passive existence, unbroken by a single dissenting word or look, because persons are incapacitated for happiness who can adapt themselves to such an impotent existence. Occasional differences of opinion indicate mutual vitality, and, when backed by common sense and self-control, are no drawbacks to a peaceful life. But in all vital points of mutual interest husband and wife should agree perfectly, understanding that their interests are mutual, and that in every sense of

the word they are one.

Life is real, and our every-day wants and desires remain the same after as before marriage. All the infirmities of our nature must still be fought against. The marriage ceremony does not do away with the necessity of self-control; the passions still have to be subdued, and a careful watch maintained against hasty words and actions. Many, in failing to recognize these truths, are laying the foundation for future unhappiness. It is so easy to imagine that the loved one is all perfection, and when the soul is filled with the sweet influence of love it is so easy to think that this is sufficient for all the ills of life, that now these two "harps of a thousand strings" will henceforth always be attuned to each other, and thus, ignoring the fact that human nature is extremely frail, forget to strengthen it by the exercise of reflection and judgment, fail to summon to their aid consideration and a disposition to bear and forbear, suddenly awaken to the fact that life has ever its trials, and that—

"For the busiest day some duty waits."

They then learn that happiness comes only as the result of persistent following in the paths of duty, that no ceremony or rite can change their nature, that the plain rules of courtesy and kindness, consideration and respect, are as necessary now as in the Spring-time of love.

Love on both sides and all things equal in outward circumstances are not all the requisites of domestic felicity. Young people seldom court in their every-day dress, but they must put it on

after marriage. As in other bargains but few expose defects. They are apt to marry faultless. Love is blind, but faults are there and will come out. The fastidious attentions of wooing are like Spring flowers—they make pretty nosegays, but poor greens. The beautiful romance with which so many have invested the morning-time of wedded life is apt to wear off under the burden and heat of its noon. That this should not be so all will admit; that wedded love, like the river running to the ocean, should grow in magnitude as it rolls through life should, no doubt, be the result of all well-lived matrimonial lives. But, from the constitution and nature of man, such, unfortunately, is not always the case. The honeymoon, at times, gets an unexpected dash of vinegar, and at last it disappears altogether in the prosaic duties of home life. This is the trying hour of married life. Between the parties there can be no more illusions. The deceptions of courtship are no longer of avail.

Right here is the chance to make or mar the happiness of life. Why not look the matter plainly in the face? Why not recognize the fact that life is not romance? It is a real thing, and altogether too precious to be thrown away in secret regrets or open indifference. It is your duty now to begin the duty or adaptation. If you have neglected to study the conditions of happiness heretofore begin at once to do so. If you have been derelict in duty resolve to do your share now. If you find you do not love each other as you thought you did double your attentions to each other, and be zealous of any

thing which tends in the slightest way to separate you. Acknowledge your faults to one another, and determine that henceforth you will be all in all to each other. There is no other way for you to do. It is not too late for you to look for happiness. You are yet young. It is folly to expect naught but disappointment the rest of your life.

The fault is in human nature, and, like most faults, has a remedy. It is well to study for the remedy, for the man or woman who has settled down on the conviction that he or she is attached for life to an uncongenial mate, and that there is no way of escape, has lost life; there is no effort too costly to make which can restore the missing pearl to its setting upon the bosom. No doubt much of the unhappiness of married life would be saved if only the sober views of life and duty were more carefully considered before marriage. If only every couple would consider that over against every joy stands a duty, and that tears and smiles alternate with each other through life, they would save themselves much disappointments. It is not too late, however, to begin; and so, if this truth be not recognized before marriage, do not delay an instant when once stern facts have withdrawn the pleasing illusions with which an untaught fancy invested matrimony, and life, with its duties as well as its pleasures, appears to your view.

It has always seemed to us that much of the danger of home life springs from its familiarity; that in the intimate relations of husband and wife the parties are too apt to forget the claims

of courtesy which are constantly pressing upon them. While there should be no strictness of formal etiquette between the parties, it is none the less true that, since life is made up of forms and ceremonies, and much of the pleasures of life depend on the due observance of the same, that a spirit of courtesy should constantly exist between husband and wife. Before marriage each would be cautious of a breach of manners, and would strive to demean themselves as became ladies and gentlemen. Are not the claims of courtesy just as pressing now as ever? Has the marriage ceremony given you any right to be less than polite? And, in a still higher sense, when you reflect that true courtesy is ever accompanied by the spirit of kindness and a dignity of carriage the more pressing are its claims.

It is difficult to conceive of any station in life where the exercise of patience is not imperatively demanded. All life is effectually teaching and emphasizing this lesson of patience. But marriage affords a field where too great an importance can not be attached to it. Its claims are fresh every morning and new every evening, and it were difficult to conceive of any thing which had more to do with home happiness than bearing patiently the innumerable vexations which are constantly thrown in your path. Every coupled pair flatter themselves that their experience will be better aid more excellent than that of many who have gone before them. They look with amazement at the coldness, complainings, and dissatisfaction which spoil the comfort of so

many, homes as at things which can not by any possibility fall to their happier lot. But like causes produce like effects, and to avoid the misfortune of others we must avoid their mistakes.

The acquaintance of courtship is a very one-sided affair, both parties seeing through the peculiar atmosphere which magnifies virtue, changes defects into beauties, and makes the discovery of faults impossible. The discovery will certainly come, and those who had thought each other next to perfection will soon discover that some few imperfections and the common weaknesses of humanity remain. Disappointment is felt where there is no just reason for it. They had thought they were perfectly adapted to each other, and that mutual concessions would involve no self-denial, and that whatever either desired the other would instantly yield. But experience teaches that the work of mutual adaptation is precisely what they have to learn, to understand each other's peculiarities and tastes, weaknesses and excellencies, and by self-discipline and kindness of construction on both sides to receive and impart a modifying influence, bringing them nearer each other all the time, until through this interchangeable moral and spiritual culture the hopes of happiness are fully realized.

But this happy result, which is unquestionably the highest earth affords, depends in a great degree upon the manner in which the first few years of married life are spent, and the success with which its first

unavoidable trials are met and overcome. Some allow themselves to lose sight of the great truth that happiness is surest found in consulting the happiness of others. The husband should have as his great object and rule of conduct the happiness of his wife. Of that happiness the confidence in his affection is the chief element; and the proofs of this affection on his part, therefore, constitute his chief duty. An affection that shows itself not in caresses alone, as if these were the only demonstration of love, but of that respect which distinguishes love as a principle, from that brief passion which assumes, and only assumes, the name—a respect which consults the judgment as well as the wishes of the object beloved, which considers her who is worthy of being taken to the heart as worthy of being admitted to all the counsels of the head.

Do not forget that your happiness both here and hereafter depends upon each other's influence. An unkind word or look, or an unintentional neglect sometimes lead to thoughts which ripen into the ruin of body and soul. A spirit of forbearance, patience, and kindness, and a determination to keep the chain of love bright, are likely to develop corresponding qualities, and to make the rough places of life smooth and pleasant. Have you seriously reflected that it is in the power of either of you to make the other utterly miserable? And when the storms and trials of life come, for come they will, how much either of you can do to calm, to elevate, to purify the troubled spirit of the other, and change clouds

for sunshine!

It is emphatically the duty of all who have entered into marriage to strive to forget self, and in furthering the happiness of the other to advance their own; ever remembering that, even though attended with the fairest of outward prospects, infirmity is inseparably bound up with your very nature, and that in bearing one another's burdens you are fulfilling one of the highest duties of the union. Love in marriage can not subsist unless it be mutual; and where love can not be there can be left of wedlock nothing but the empty husk of an outside matrimony, as undelightful and as unpleasing to God as any other kind of hypocrisy.

TRIALS OF MARRIED LIFE.

We celebrate the wedding and make merry over the honeymoon. The poet paints the beauties and blushes of the blooming bride; and

the bark of matrimony, with its freight of untested love, is launched on the sea of experiment, amid kind wishes and rejoicing. But on that precarious sea are many storms, and even the calm has its perils; and only when the bark has weathered these, and landed its cargo in the haven of domestic peace, can we pronounce the voyage prosperous and congratulate on their merited and enviable reward.

As long as human nature is what it is, we must expect that life of any kind will abound in trials. To conceive of a life utterly devoid of these is to conceive of a vegetative kind of existence. Trials, then, are to be expected, and they must be overcome. This is none the less true of married life. Marriages may be celebrated in bowers as fair as those of Eden, but they must be proved and put to test in the workshops of the world. And as each state of existence has its peculiar trials and cares, we need not be disappointed when experience teaches that, though marriage hath indeed great joys, it has also its trials and vexations.

In prosaic, every-day life romantic minds are speedily sobered down, and the gloss of pretension is soon worn off. Hands that have heretofore seen no harder work than to entice strains of music from ivory keys, perhaps find themselves engaged in the less poetical, but equally as praiseworthy, occupation of mixing bread, or in the performance of other plain household duties which require to be dispatched, not by angels, but by women. And the possessor of faultless clothes and a silken

mustache finds himself weighed down with altogether different burdens than those of holding fans and carrying parasols; and he is called upon to solve other questions than those relating to social etiquette.

Courtship is to many a dreamy resting-place betwixt the joys of youth and the cares of maturity. Under the light of hope married life is nearly always a land of rainbows to the youth; but, as to produce the rainbow it requires the falling rain as well as the shining sun, so, when the nature of these prospective joys is carefully investigated, it will not surprise one to find that trials and duties are interposed between their present stand-point and the pure happiness of domestic life.

To many a young couple, when life's realities come, come also the discovery of traits of character in each other which perfectly astonish them. Every day reveals something new and something unpleasant. The courtship character slowly fades away, and, with sorrow be it said, too often the courtship love as well. Now comes disappointment, sorrow, regret. They find that their characters are entirely dissimilar; they also awake to the fact that married life is full of cares, vexations, and disappointments. This, indeed, should have been expected; but it is human to see naught but joys in the future, especially from the stand-point of youth. This discovery often shipwrecks the happiness of the unfortunate couple.

We have all seen the trees die in Summer-time. But the tree, with its whispering leaves and swaying limbs, its greenness, its umbrage,

where the shadows lie hidden all the day, does not die all at once. First a dimness creeps over its brightness; next a leaf sickens here and there, and fades; next a whole bough feels the palsying touch of coming death; and finally the feeble signs of sickly life, visible here and there, all disappear, and the dead trunk holds out its stripped, stark limbs, a melancholy ruin. Just so does wedded love sometimes die. Wedded love, blessed with the prayers of friends, hallowed by the sanction of God, rosy with present joys, and radiant with future hopes, it dies not all at once. A hasty word casts a shadow upon it, and the shadow deepens with the sharp reply. A little thoughtlessness misconstrued, a little unintentional negligence, deemed real, a little word misinterpreted,—through such small channels do dissension and sorrow enter the family circle. Love becomes reticent, confidence is chilled, and noiselessly but surely the work of separation goes on, until the two are left as isolated as the pyramids, nothing remaining of the union but the legal form—the dead trunk of the tree, whose branches once waved in the sunlight. Is it not a melancholy reflection on human nature that petty trials and difficulties, from which no life is free, should have wrought such a startling effect?

The great secret is to learn to bear with each other's failings; not to be blind to them—that were either an impossibility or a folly. We must see and feel them; if we do neither, they are not evils to us, and there is obviously no need of forbearance. We are to throw the mantle of charity around them, concealing them from the

curious gaze of others; to determine not to let them chill the affections. Surely it is not the perfections, but the imperfections, of human character that make the strongest claims on our love.

All the world must approve and even enemies must admire the good and the estimable in human nature. If husband and wife estimate only that in each which all must be constrained to value, what do they more than others? It is the infirmities of character, imperfections of nature, that call for pitying sympathy, the tender compassion that makes each the comforter, the monitor of the other. Forbearance helps each to attain command over themselves. This forbearance is not a weak and wicked indulgence of each other's faults, but such a calm, tender observation of them as excludes all harshness and anger, and takes the best and fullest method of pointing them out in the full confidence of affection.

It should be remembered that trials and sufferings are the real test of merit in all life, as they bring out the real character. In married life husband and wife are often adapted to each other through trials, and the closest union is often wrought by suffering, even as iron is welded by heat. As much of the happiness of real life is artificial, so many things in wedded life that to third persons must seem as trials are, after all, only the sweetness of domestic life. How many couples, now in mature life and surrounded by luxury and all the comforts of wealth, look back to the days of early privation as amongst the happiest days of their life!

Succeeding years have brought them wealth, but it took with them their domestic happiness.

Marriage is too frequently the end instead of the beginning of love. The dreams of courtship vanish too often into thin air soon after the wedding ring is put on. The realization of that perfect and unalloyed happiness that each partner anticipated is seldom found in the holy bonds of matrimony. Cool and distant, with a feeling that the sweet courtesies of wooing-time are now out of place, they treat each other with an indifference that ends in mutual aversion and contempt. This is altogether wrong. As reasoning men and women they have entered the relation; it is vain to suppose it is one of unmixed delights. It has its trials. You must expect to meet them. The conditions of happiness there are much the same as elsewhere, therefore the only sure way of finding it is to forget self in the furtherance of the happiness of others. The trials of wedded life are seen to be but the approaches to its joys when once the spirit of kindly forbearance is spread abroad in the heart.

It must seem to all who seriously meditate on this subject that many of the trials of married life arise from mistaken notions of economy and the right use of money. Every wife knows her husband's income or ought to know it. That knowledge should be the guide of her conduct. A clear understanding respecting the domestic expenses is necessary to the peace of every dwelling. If it be little, "better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." If it be ample, let it be

enjoyed with all thankfulness. Partners in privation are more to each other than partners in wealth. Those who have suffered together love more than those who have rejoiced together. Where a wife, seeing her duty, has made up her mind to this, she will brighten her little home with smiles that will make it a region of perpetual sunshine.

We account these two things essential to the happiness of married life,—to have a home of your own, and to live distinctly and honestly within your means. A great proportion of the failures in wedlock may be traced directly to the neglect of the latter rule. No man can feel happy or enjoy the sweets of domestic life who is spending more than he earns. No sensible person will account it a hardship to begin on a moderate scale; and those who do thus begin, and afterwards attain to the possession of wealth, always look back to the days of "small things" with peculiar satisfaction as the golden days of their hearts, if not of their purses. True affection delights in the opportunities of self-denial and in the little acts of personal service, for which there is scarcely any place in the house of the rich.

At the shrine of domestic ambition much of the comfort and happiness of home life is immolated, and, for the sake of appearance, happiness and content are exchanged for wearying cares. To regulate our expenses by other people's income is the height of folly, and to contract debts for a style of living which is of our neighbor's choosing rather than our own is nearly akin to insanity. There is no happiness,

social, domestic, or individual, without independence; and no dependence is so bitter as that of debt. And when you reflect how needless this is, you can readily see that in this instance, as in many others, the trials are of our own choosing, and might be avoided by consideration and care.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

"O let us walk the world, so that our love
Burns like a blessed beacon, beautiful,
Upon the walls of life's surrounding dark."
—MASSEY.



The true marriage is the result of years of mutual endeavor to please, and comes of patient efforts to learn each other's disposition and taste. This can be done by all who cherish right views of the duties and pleasures of the marriage relation.

You have but one life to live, and no amount

of money or influence or fame can pay you for a life of unhappiness. You can not afford to quarrel with one another. You can not afford to cherish a single thought, to harbor a single desire, to gratify a single passion, nor indulge a single selfish feeling, that will tend to make this union any thing but a source of happiness to you. So it becomes you at starting to have a perfect understanding with one another. It becomes you to resolve that you will be happy together at any rate, or that if you suffer it shall be from the same cause and in perfect sympathy. You are not to let any human being step between you under any circumstances.

Human character, by a wise provision of Providence, is infinitely varied, and there are not two individuals in existence so entirely alike in their tastes, habits of thought, and natural aptitude that they can keep step with one another over all the rough places in the journey of life. There must be a leaning to one another. The compromise can not be all on one side. You can be happy together if you will, but the agreement to be happy must be mutual. Draw your souls closer and closer together from year to year. Get all obstacles out of the way. Just as soon as one arises attend to it, and get rid of it. At last they will all disappear. You will have become wonted to one another's habits and frames of mind and peculiarities of disposition, and love, respect, and charity will take care of the rest.

If you observe faults in your companion keep them to yourself. What right have you, who should be the very one to kindly conceal faults,

to inform others of their presence? Neither father nor mother, neither brother nor sister, have any right to be informed of the secrets of your domestic life. A husband and wife have no business to tell one another's faults to any body but themselves. They can not do it without shame. Their grievances are to be settled in private between themselves, and in all public places and among friends they are to preserve towards one another that nice consideration and entire respectfulness which their relations enjoin. With a true wife the husband's faults should be secret. A wife forgets when she condescends to that refuge of weakness, a female confidant. A wife's bosom should be the tomb of her husband's failings, and his character far more valuable in her estimation than life.

Happiness between husband and wife can only be secured by that constant tenderness and care of the parties for each other which are based upon warm and demonstrative love. The heart demands that the man shall not sit silent, reticent, and self-absorbed in the midst of his family. The wife who forgets to provide for her husband's tastes and wishes renders her home undesirable for him. In a word, ever-present and ever-demonstrative gentleness must reign, or else the heart starves.

There is propriety in all things, and though public displays of affection, familiarity of touch, and half-concealed caresses are always distasteful to men and women of sense, yet love is of such a nature that you must give it expression or it languishes. There are husbands

so cold and formal that they have no kiss or caress for the wives whom they really love. There are wives to whom a single demonstration that shall tell to their hearts how inexpressibly pleasant their faces and their society are, and how fondly they are loved, would be better than untold gold.

The affection that should link together man and wife is a far holier and more enduring passion than the enthusiasm of young love. It may want its gorgeousness or its imaginative character, but it is far richer in its attributes. It should not call for such daily proofs of existence as is demanded of the lover, but it is human to wish for the freshness of morning to continue far into the day and evening. True, it is vain to expect this, but humanity continually wishes for what can not be; and, though the glow and sparkle of the morning of love will fade away, yet it should be as fades the bewitching charm of morning into the quiet splendor of the Summer day; and, though recognizing that exhibitions of tenderness so appropriate for the morning of life are out of place in its noon, yet, as long as it is human to love, so long are exhibitions of it, quiet though they may be, gratifying to the one beloved.

We exhort you who are a husband to love your wife even as you love yourself. Continue through life the same manly tenderness that in youth gained her affections. Reflect that though her bodily charms may not now be so great as then, yet that habit and a thousand acts of kindness have strengthened your mutual friendship. Devote yourself to her, and after the

hours of business let the pleasures which you most highly prize be found in her society. The true wife wishes to feel sure that she is precious to her husband—not useful, not valuable, not convenient simply, but that she is dear to him; let her be the recipient of his polite and hearty attentions; let her notice that her cares and loves are noticed, appreciated, and returned, her opinions asked, her approval sought, and her judgment respected; in short, let her only be loved, honored, and cherished in fulfillment of the marriage vow, and she will be to her husband a well-spring of pleasure.

We exhort you who are wife to be gentle and considerate to your husband. Let the influence which you possess over him arise from the mildness of your manner and the discretion of your conduct. Whilst you are careful to adorn your person with new and clean apparel—for no woman can long preserve affections if she is negligent on this point—be still more attentive in ornamenting your mind with meekness and peace, with cheerfulness and good humor. Lighten the cares and chase away the vexations to which he is inevitably exposed in his commerce with the world by rendering, as far as is in your power, his home pleasant. Keep at home. Let your employment and pleasures be domestic.

What a man desires in a wife is her companionship, sympathy, and love. The way of life has many dreary places in it, and man needs a companion to go with him. A man is sometimes overtaken by misfortune; he meets with failure and defeat, trials and temptation

beset him, and he needs one to stand by and sympathize. All through life, through storms and through sunshine, conflicts and victory, man needs a woman's love. Let him think upon his duty in return for this love. You who have taken a wife from a happy home of kindred hearts and kind companionship, have you done what you could to make amends for the loss of those friends and companions? Remember what your wife was when you took her, not from compulsion, but from your own choice—a choice based on what you then considered her superiority to all others. She was young—perhaps the idol of her happy home; she was as gay and blithe as the lark, and the brothers and sisters at her father's cherished her as an object of endearment. Yet she left all to join her destiny with yours—to make your home happy, and to do all that womanly ingenuity could do to meet your wishes, and to lighten the burdens which might press upon you.

Consult the tastes and disposition of your husband, and endeavor to give him high and noble thoughts, lofty aims, and temporal comforts. Let the husband see that you really have a strong desire to make him happy, and to retain the warmest place in his respect, his admiration, and his affection. Enter into all his plans with interest. Sweeten all his troubles with your sympathy. Make him feel that there is one ear always open to the revelation of his experiences, that there is one heart that never misconstrues him, that there is one refuge for him in all circumstances, and that in all weariness of body and soul there is one warm

pillow for his head, beneath which a heart is beating with the same unvarying truth and affection, through all gladness and sadness, as the faithful chronometer suffers no perturbation of its rhythm, whether in storm or shine.

JEALOUSY.

"Trifles light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmation strongx
As proofs of holy writ."

—SHAKESPEARE.



There is no passion more base, nor one which seeks to hide itself more than jealousy. It is ashamed of it itself when it appears. It carries its stain and disgrace on its forehead. We do not wish to acknowledge it ourselves, it is so ignominious, but hidden in the character we would be confused and disconcerted if it appeared; by the which we are convinced of our bad minds and debased courage.

It is difficult sometimes to distinguish between jealousy and envy, for they often run into one another, and are blended together. The most valid distinction seems to be that jealousy is always personal. The envious man desires some good which another possesses; the jealous man suspects another of seeking to deprive him of some good that he already possesses.

Jealousy is, in many respects, preferable to envy, since it aims at the preservation of some good which we think belongs to us; whereas envy is a frenzy that can not endure, even in idea, the good of others. Jealousy is such a headstrong passion, that therein doth consist its danger. All the other passions condescend at times to accept the inexorable logic of facts. But jealousy looks facts straight in the face, ignores them utterly, and says she knows a great deal better than they can tell her.

Jealousy violates contracts, dissolves society, breaks wedlock, betrays friends and neighbors, thinks nobody is good, and that every one is either doing or designing them an injury. Its rise is in guilt or ill-nature; as he that is overrun with the jaundice takes others to be yellow. If jealousy were not a hardened offender, he must have disappeared ere this by the abuse which poets and moralists have alike delighted to heap upon him. Yet he still lives and flourishes, exerts his influence and displays his power, as though he were a favored friend or a welcome guest.

Did jealousy always make its appearance in its ordinary form of detraction, it would be, comparatively speaking, harmless; but it is

surprising how many different masks it can assume, and how it lurks and tries to conceal itself under some less mean and unlovable quality. Sometimes it appears in the character of injustice; sometimes it takes the form of rudeness and want of courtesy; occasionally a bitter or sarcastic way of speaking. At other times it borrows the garb of a virtue, and shows itself under what might be mistaken for humility or sincerity; lying coiled up like a serpent under some flower, and darting forth its venemous sting where and when you least expect to find it.

No stronger proof is needed to show how contemptible a fault jealousy is than that no one is willing to acknowledge that they are jealous. It is jealousy that is the root and foundation of many offenses, but they are charged to other causes. Jealousy is singular in this: every trifling circumstance is regarded as confirming and strengthening the previously aroused suspicions. It is a sorer curse, a more certain and fatal blight to the heart on which it seizes, than it can be to those against whom its spite is hurled. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave; not the grave that opens its deep bosom to receive and shelter from further storms the worn and forlorn pilgrim, who rejoices exceedingly and is glad when he can find its repose; but cruel as the grave is when it yawns and swallows down from the lap of luxury, from the summit of fame, from the bosom of love, the desire of many eyes and hearts.

Among the deadly things upon the earth, or in the sea, or flying through malarial regions,

few are more noxious than jealousy. And of all mad passions there is not one that has a vision more distorted or a more unreasonable fury. To the jealous eye white looks black, yellow looks green, and the very sunshine turns deadly lurid. There is no innocence, no justice, no generosity that is not touched with suspicions save just the jealous person's own. Once lodged within the heart, for life it rules ascendant and alone. It sports in solitude. It pants for blood, and rivers will not sate its thirst. Minds strongest in worth and valor stoop to meanness and disgrace before it. The meanest soul, the weakest, it can give courage to beyond the daring of despair. No balm can assuage its sting. Death alone can heal its wound. When it has once possessed a man he has no ear but for the tale that falls like molten lead upon the heart.

In nothing is jealousy more commonly shown than when under the fear that some one will supplant us in the affections of another. Here it assumes its most malignant form, here its greatest distress is wrought. The gamester, whose last piece is lost; the merchant, whose whole risk the sea has swallowed up; the child, whose air bubble has burst—may each create a bauble like the former. But he whose treasure was in woman's love, who trusted as man once trusts and was deceived—that hope once gone, there is no finding it again, no restoring it. Let not any too rigorously judge the conduct of a jealous woman or a jealous man. Remember that the maniac suffers. To be sure, the suffering is from selfishness, often it is without the shadow of a cause; but still it is suffering,

and it is intense. Pity it, bear with it; you may yourself fall into temptation.

It is said that jealousy is love. This is not true; for, though jealousy may be procured by love, as ashes are by fire, yet jealousy extinguishes love, as ashes smother the flame. Jealousy may exist without love, and this is common, for jealousy can feed on that which is bitter no less than on that which is sweet, and is sustained by pride as often as by affection.

The unfortunate habit of mind which makes one prone to jealousy can not be too strenuously fought against. It were well to constantly remember that jealousy injures and pains no one so much as the person feeling it. It is a self-consuming fire, a self-inflicted torment, an arrow that falls back and wounds only the archer. It becomes one to cultivate a spirit of magnanimity toward all, and to strive to allay, by every means in his power, a too suspicious nature. It has been well said that there are occasions on which a man would have been ashamed of himself not to have been deceived. A man to be genuine to himself must believe and be believed, must trust and be trusted.

Suspicion is no less an enemy to virtue than to happiness. He that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly become corrupt. Suspicion is the child of guilt, the virtue of a coward. It is a vain and foolish pride which would teach that every one is conspiring against your happiness or has designs on your reputation and business. The fact is, probably no one is thinking of you. Yet your jealous

disposition magnifies every little circumstance, and thus you are continually making yourself unhappy when no real cause exists. You are to strive against such an unfortunate disposition at all times. And it can be eradicated. It is not the liberally educated, those who have read much and thought more, who are thus suspicious and jealous in disposition; but it is the narrow-minded, the illiterate, and the vulgar.

REGRET.

"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"
—WHITTIER.



There is not a word in the English tongue which signifies more than the word regret. It expresses every degree of pain in the gamut of sorrow, from the childish regret for a lost plaything, to the remorse which, when the sands of life are almost run, contemplates a

wasted life.

There are none who have not felt its potency; no age escapes it, and such will ever be the case as long as it is human to err. But as pain and sickness are the sentinels which guard the life and health of the body, so it is regret which keeps conscience alive in man and sustains the moral faculties in the discharge of duty. Life is full of sorrowful scenes, so much that could not have been avoided; but how much added force there is to sorrow when we reflect that we are to blame—that we knew at the time that we were doing wrong—that we disregarded the warning voice of conscience, contemptuously rejected the proffered advice of others, and have nothing to extenuate the keen regret gathered with the harvest of sorrow sown by our own negligence.

The profoundest sorrow is not brought upon us by the world, by its bitterness, its malice, its injustice, or its persecution. These, indeed, affect us, and make us wiser, more weak, or more brave. We can, if we choose, repel the world's wrongs. We can laugh at the injuries inflicted upon us, and hurl defiance upon them; or, if we can not command this spirit, we may patiently endure what we do not resent. But the sorrows we bring upon ourselves by our own lack of discretion, or heedless obstinacy, when regret adds its sting, then it is that we experience what real sorrow is. We can not then repel its attacks with indifference.

Regret is the heart's sorrow for past offenses, —the soul's prompting to better actions. Have you ever stood by the grave of one dear to you,

and been compelled to remember how much happier you might have made that life which has now passed beyond your reach? Has the hasty or unkind word ever come back to you and repeated itself over and over, until you would gladly have given a year of your own life to have recalled it, and made it as if it had never been? Let us remember that those who are now living may soon be dead, and beware of adding to the things done that ought not to have been done, the things undone that ought to have been done. Many a heart has languished for the tenderness withheld in life, but poured out too late in remorse and unavailing regret.

Let us be tender to our friends while they are with us,—not wait till they are gone to find out their good qualities. Let us be kind and gentle now, and not wait for regret to tell us of duty undone. The way of life is so full of occasions that call forth real regret, that it would seem that there was little danger of manifesting regret where it was uncalled for and useless. Yet such spectacles are of daily occurrence. When one has done the best he can, he should let that fact console him, and not give way to causeless regret and a wish that he had done differently.

Under the guiding light of the present it is easy enough to discover the mistakes of the past; and it would be easy to make advantageous changes were we allowed to go back and commence anew in the journey of life. But alas! this is vain. What we should do is so to learn by reason of regret from the lessons of

the past that we become fully fitted for the duties of the present. Regret, if deep and hopeless, becomes remorse, which settles down over the heart with a crushing weight, driving from thence all hope, unless, indeed, the angel of forgiveness brings consolation to the soul.

There are many walking the earth whose lives are shadowed by some great sorrow, to which is added the pain of regret caused by their own heedless and inconsiderate actions. With one, it is the sorrow of a reputation gone, —some act of folly swept away the fair name founded on years of honest living. With another, it is the shadow of a grave dark and deep which covers the form of one whom death claimed before he had redressed some wrong done, carelessly perhaps, and with no intention of lasting injury. Hasty and inconsiderate marriages cause much vain repining and regret. The happiness of life is gone; the hopes of a home, endearing companionship, are fled, because hasty and inconsiderate action was taken where care and study was required. Of all regrets, the remorse that must accompany the closing moments of a misspent life must possess the sharpest sting. Life and its possibilities allowed to go to waste from a lack of consideration on our part! Oh, that the young would give heed to the warning voice of experience, and thus escape the vain regrets of later years!

To escape regret, it is necessary to form the habit of doing your whole duty and avoiding impulsive actions. Pause before you say a hasty or a cruel thing. Human life is so uncertain, are

you sure that you will have a chance to make it right before death will have claimed the object of your momentary anger? Tears and expressions of regret are of no avail when addressed to cold clay. Pause before doing a hasty or inconsiderate action. It may be of such a nature that you can not undo its effects. It may embitter your whole after life. Reflection is your good angel; give heed to her warning voice. How are you spending your life? Are you living as becomes a man and immortal being? Are you striving to make the most of life and its possibilities? If not, be warned in time, and turn from your ways. When life is nearly ended you will think of the past,—wonder at your actions, and sigh for the days of youth. They will not come to you again; therefore, make the most of them *now*. Thus will you spare yourself many vain regrets, and your closing days will be days of peace.

MEMORY.

"Lull'd in the countless chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are linked by many a hidden chain.
Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise!
Each stamps its image as the other flies."

—POPE.



Some one has said that of all the gifts with which a beneficent Providence has endowed man the gift of memory is the noblest. Without it life would be a blank, a dreary void, an inextricable chaos, an unlettered page cast upon the vast ocean of uncertainty. Memory is the cabinet of the imagination, the treasury of reason, the registry of conscience, and the council chamber of thought. It is the only paradise we are sure of always possessing. Even our first parents could not be driven out of it. The memory of good actions is the starlight of the soul. Memory tempers prosperity by recalling past distresses, mitigates adversity by bringing up the thoughts of past joys, it controls youth and delights old age.

Memory is the golden cord binding all the natural gifts and excellences together, and though it is not wisdom in itself, still it is the primary and fundamental power without which there could be no other intellectual operations. Memory is often accused of treachery and inconstancy, when, if inquired into, the fault will be found to rest with ourselves. Although nature has wisely proportioned the strength and liberality of this gift to various intellects, yet all have it in their power to improve it by classing,

by analyzing and arranging the different subjects which successively occupy their minds. By these means habits of thought and reflection are required, which will materially conduce to the invigorating of the understanding, the improvement of the mind, and the strengthening and correction of the mental powers.

A quick and retentive memory both of words and things is an invaluable treasure, and may be had by any one who will take the necessary pains. Educators sometimes in their anxiety to secure a wide range of studies fail to sufficiently impress on their scholars' minds the value of memory. This memory is one of the most valuable gifts God has bestowed upon us, and one of the most mysterious. The more it is called upon to exercise its proper function the more it is able to do, and there seems to be no limit to its power. It is not what one has learned, but what he remembers and applies that makes him wise. Still memory should be used as the storehouse, not as a lumber-room. The mind must be trained to think as well as remember, and to remember principles and outlines rather than words and sentences.

It is an old saying that we forget nothing, as people in fever begin suddenly to talk the language of their infancy. We are stricken by memory sometimes, and old reflections rush back to us as vivid as in the time when they were our daily talk. We think of faces, and they return to us as plainly as when their presence gladdened our eyes and their accents thrilled in our ears. Many an affection that apparently

came to an end, and dropped out of life one way or another, was only lying dormant. A scent, a note of music, a voice long unheard, the stirring of the Summer breeze may startle us with the sudden revival of long forgotten feelings and thoughts.

Memory can glean, but can never renew. It brings us joys faint as the perfume of the flowers, faded and dried of the Summer that is gone. Who is there whose heart is dead to the memories of his childhood days? Old times steal upon us, quietly making us young again, even amid the din of business and the whirl of household cares! The care-worn face relaxes its tension and the saddened brow clears for a time as some well-remembered scene rushes through the mind, bringing back the childhood home and the loved faces which met around the daily board.

We love to think of days that are past if they were days of happiness, and even experience a sad pleasure in recalling days of sadness. The man or woman who loves to look back upon the direction and counsel of a wise father and faithful mother will seldom do an unworthy or unjust act. And we find the most degraded at times marveling as to what led them into sin, because the remembrance of a happy home is theirs—a home of purity, of a father's and mother's loving counsel and upright example.

When sorrow and trial, care and temptation, surround us how often do we gain courage and renewed strength by thinking of the past. The bankrupt loves to think that he started on a fair basis from the cradle. And the worldly woman,

who seems plunged in the vortex of fashionable pleasure, stops to think that it was not always thus, that a devoted mother taught her nobler things, and an earnest father bade her live for some real object in life. Just that moment's reflection may sow the seed which will develop into a life of charity and good works among her fellow-mortals. And that condemned criminal—who knows what memory recalls to his view? Perhaps it was a home from whence the incense of daily prayer ascended to God—where kind words enforced a cheerful obedience to wise counsels. Disturb him not; the influence is holy—'tis memory's voice urging him to final repentance.

We love to think of the unbroken circle; the curly heads of the children, and the various dispositions that marked them; the childish employments and aspirations; the mischievous pranks and merited punishment; and the quiet hour when the mother, gathering the little ones about her, told them of the better life to come, and sought earnestly to teach them that here below we live as school children, gaining an education that shall fit us for the brighter home hereafter. But these thoughts are not altogether of joyous scenes. Change and death appeared on the scene, and strangers came to dwell in the home of our childhood.

It is strange what slight things suffice to recall the scenes of childhood. A fallen tree, a house in ruins, a pebbly bank, or the flowers by the wayside, arrest our steps, and carry the thoughts back to other days. In fancy we again visit the mossy bank by the wayside, where we

so often sat for hours drinking in the beauty of the primrose with our eyes; the sheltered glen, darkly green, filled with the perfume of violets that shone in their intense blue like another sky spread upon the earth; the laughter of merry voices, are all brought back to memory by the simplest causes.

The reminiscences of youth are a trite theme, but it possesses an interest which the world can not dislodge from our breasts. If all then was not uninterrupted sunshine, yet the clouds flew rapidly by, and left no permanent shade behind them, as do those of mature years. From the covenants of friendship then we thought in after days to enjoy the benefits and treasures of love. But the forces of life have driven us asunder, and swept away all but the memory of the past. How different the contrast in thoughts and feelings then and now! Then it was the trusting confidence of childhood; now it is the doubting mind that hath tasted of the world's insincerity. We had *faith* then, but we have *doubts* now.

The heart must, nay, it has, grown old, and is full of cares. It will relate at length the history of its sorrows, but it has few joys to communicate. Memory seldom fails When its office is to show us the tomb of our buried hopes. Joy's recollection is no longer joy, but sorrow's memory is a sorrow still. The memory of past favors is like a rainbow—bright, beautiful, and vivid—but it soon fades away; the memory of injuries is engraved on the heart, and remains forever. The course of none has been along so beaten a road that they

remember not fondly some resting-places in their journey, some turns in their path in which lovely prospects broke in upon them, some plats of green refreshing to their weary feet.

Some one has said: "Memory is ever active, ever true; alas, if it were only as easy to forget!" Memory is a faithful steward, and holds to view many scenes over which we would fain drop the curtain of oblivion and let the dust of forgetfulness cover them from view. What a relief could we but forget that angry word! The uncalled-for harshness and the passionate outbreak that went unrecalled so long that death intervened—O could we but erase their remembrance! But no, with a retaliative justice memory summons us to review them! Words which can never be recalled, deeds whose effect on others can never be effaced, how they come, one by one, showing us how useless our lives have been—how vain! Still, these memories are friends in disguise, for they are faithful monitors, and are experience's ready prompters. How much is spoken which deserves no remembrance, and which does not serve as a single link in one's existence, not calling forth one result for others' weal, or thrilling one chord with nobler impulses!

How beautiful to distinguish the pearls in the rush of events—this torrent of scenes both sad and pleasing! The gift of memory is diversified to different people, some having a taste for history, some for literature; others delight in politics, and so on through all the different phases of existence, with its diversity of thought and feeling. Memory has been compared to a

vast storehouse. How important, then, that we inure the mind to healthful actions instead of feeding it on poisons until it will produce naught but poisonous thoughts! Look at the world of literature and science. Why not delve in its mines of glittering, genuine treasures? Inasmuch as the mind derives much of its pleasures from thoughts of the past it becomes all to provide, as far as possible, for happy reminiscences. This is the reward of right living. An aged person whose thoughts revert to a life of self-denial and exertion in virtue's ways has a source of happiness, pure and unalloyed, which is denied to him whose guiding rule of life has been selfishness.

Memory has a strange power of crowding years into moments. This is observed ofttimes when death is about to close the scene. As the sunlight breaks from the clouds and across the hills at the close of a stormy day, lighting up the distant horizon, even so does memory, when the light of life is fast disappearing in the darkness of death, break forth and illume the most distant scenes and incidents of past years. And the very clouds of sorrow which have drifted between are lighted up with a glorious light. As the soft, clear chimes of the silvery bells at the vesper hour float down on the shadowy wings of evening, even so are the thoughts of old age. They recall scenes past, their memory being all that is left now. It may be the face of a mother, the smile of a sister, a father's kind voice, all stilled by death. Many of these thoughts are too sacred to expose to the gaze of the curious; they are their only

treasures; beware of drawing back the curtain which conceals them from your view.

HOPE.

"Auspicious hope! in thy sweet gardens grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe."

All that happens in the world is directly or indirectly brought about by hope. Not a stroke of work would be done were it not in hopes of some glorious reward. It matters not that it generally paves the way to disappointment. Ph[oe]nix-like it rises from its ashes and bids us forget the disappointment of the present in the contemplation of future delights. Hope, then, is the principal antidote which keeps our hearts from bursting under the pressure of evils.

Some call hope the manna from heaven that comforts us in all extremities; others the pleasant flatterer that caresses the unhappy with expectations of happiness in the bosom of

futurity. But if hope be a flatterer she is the most upright of all the flattering parasites, since she frequents the poor man's hut as well as the palace of his superiors. It is common to all men; those who possess nothing more are still cheered by hope. When all else fails us hope still abides with us.

Used with a due prudence hope acts as a healthful tonic; intemperately indulged, as an enervating opiate. The vision of future triumph, which at first animates exertion, if dwelt upon too strongly, will usurp the place of the reality, and noble objects will be contemplated, not for their own inherent worth, or with a design of compassing their execution, but for the day-dreams they engender. Hope sheds a sweet radiance on the stream of life, and never exerts her magic except to our advantage. We seldom attain what she beckons us to pursue, but her deceptions resemble those which the dying husbandman in the fable practiced upon his sons, who, by telling them of a hidden mass of wealth which he had buried in his vineyard, led them so carefully to delve the ground that they found, indeed, a treasure, though not in gold, in wine.

Reasonable hope is endowed with a vigorous principle; it sets the head and heart to work, and animates one to do his utmost, and thus, by perpetually pushing and assuring, it puts a difficulty out of countenance, and makes a seeming impossibility give way. Human life hath not a surer friend nor, many times, a greater enemy than hope. It is the miserable man's god, which, in the hardest grip of

calamity, never fails to yield him beams of comfort. It is the presumptuous man's devil, which leads him awhile in a smooth way, and then lets him break his neck on the sudden.

How many would die did not hope sustain them! How many have died by hoping too much! This wonder may we find in hope—that she is both a flatterer and a true friend. True hope is based on energy of character. A strong mind always hopes, and has always cause to hope, because it knows the mutability of human affairs, and how slight a circumstance may change the whole course of events. Such a spirit, too, rests upon itself; it is not confined to partial views, or to one particular object, and if at last all should be lost it has saved itself its own integrity and worth.

It is best to hope only for things possible and probable; he that hopes too much shall deceive himself at last, especially if his industry does not go along with his hopes, for hope without action is a barren undoer. Hope awakens courage, but despondency is the last of all evils; it is the abandonment of good—the giving up of the battle of life with dead nothingness. When the other emotions are controlled by events hope remains buoyant and undismayed,—unchanged, amidst the most adverse circumstances. Causes that effect, with depression, every other emotion appear to give fresh elasticity to hope. No oppression can crush its buoyancy; from under every weight it rebounds; amid the most depressing circumstances it preserves its cheering influence; no disappointment can annihilate its

power; no experience can deter us from listening to its sweet illusions; it seems a counterpoise for misfortune, an equivalent for every disappointment.

It springs early into existence; it abides through all the changes of life, and reaches into the futurity of time. In the midst of disappointments it whispers consolation, and in all the arduous trials of life it is a strong staff and support. If, in the warmth of anticipation, it prepares the way for the very disappointments to which it afterwards administers relief it must be confessed that, in the severer inflictions of adversity, which come upon us unlooked for, and where previously the voice of sorrow was never heard, it then appears like an angel of mercy, and frequently assuages the anguish of suffering, and wipes the dropping tears from the eyes.

Hope lives in the future, but dies in the present. Its estate is one of expectancy. It draws large drafts on a small credit, which are seldom honored when presented at the bank of experience, but have the rare faculty of passing readily elsewhere. Hope calculates its schemes for a long and durable life, presses forward to imaginary points of bliss, and grasps at impossibilities, and, consequently, very often ensnares men into beggary, ruin, and dishonor. Hope is a great calculator, but a poor mathematician. Its problems are seldom based on true data, and their demonstration is more often fictitious than otherwise.

There is a morality in every true hope which is a source of consolation to all who rightly seek

it. It is a good angel within that whispers of triumph over evil, of the success of good, of the victory of truth, of the achievement of right. "It hopeth all things." It is a strong ingredient of courage. Under its guiding light what great events have been wrought to a successful completion! It is a friend of virtue. Its religion is full of glorious anticipations. It encourages all things good, great, and noble.

It is not surprising when we reflect on the nature of hope that we find it to be such a mainspring to human action. It is the parent of all effort and endeavor, and "every gift of noble origin is breathed upon by hope's perpetual breath." It may be said to be the moral engine that moves the world and keeps it in action. Every true hope which has for its object some great and noble design is an unexpressed prayer, which flies on angel's wings to the throne of God, and returns to the struggling one a precious benison of inspiration to go forth on his errand of good.

A true hope we can touch somehow through all the lights and shadows of life. It is a prophecy fulfilled in part—God's earnest money paid into our hands, that he will be ready with the whole when we are ready for it. It is the sunlight on the hill-top when the valley is dark as death; the spirit touching us, all through our pilgrimage, and then soaring away with us into the blessed life where we may expect either that the fruition will be entirely equal to the hope, or that the old glamour will come over us again, and beckon us on forever as the choicest gift heaven has to give.

"Hope deferred," saith the proverb, "maketh the heart sick." But we are prone to be too dictatorial as to how we enjoy life; too positive. We must not determine that their fulfillment must come in just the way we wish, or else we will be miserable in the grief of disappointment. It is not for man wholly to determine his steps. Sometimes what he thinks for his good turns out ill; and what he thinks a great evil develops a great blessing in disguise. It is folly, almost madness, to be miserable because things are not as we would have them, or because we are disappointed in our plans. Many of our plans must be defeated for our own good. A multitude of little hopes must every day be crushed, and now and then a great one.

But while we may be all wrong in our thoughts of the special form in which our blessing will come, we need not fail of the blessing. It may be like the mirage, shifting from horizon to horizon as we plod wearily along; but in the fullness of God's own time we shall reap if we faint not. There is always a sadness in the dying of a great hope. It is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone, shadows of the evening fall behind us, and the world seems but a dim reflection of itself—a broader shadow. We look forward into the lonely night. The soul withdraws itself. Then stars arise, and the night is holy.

Hopes and fears checker human life. The one serves to keep us from presumption, the other from despair. Hope is the last thing that dieth in man. Though it may be deceptive, yet it is of this good use to us, that while we are traveling

through this life it conducts us in an easier and more pleasant way to our journey's end. There is no one so fallen but that he may have hopes; nor is any so exalted as to be beyond the reach of fears. "When faith, temperance, and other celestial powers left the earth," says one of the ancient writers, "Hope was the only goddess that stayed behind."

The man who carries a lantern in a dark night can have friends walking safely by the light of its rays, and not be defrauded himself. So he who is of cheerful disposition, and has the light of hope in his breast, can help on many others in this world's darkness, not to his own loss, but to their gain. Hope is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, that will restrain our frail bark and enable us to outride the storms of time.

There are so many humiliations in this world! The secret is to rise above them, to throw off dissatisfaction, and to grasp some pleasing hope, grateful and beneficial to the mind. We are encompassed by illusions and delusions. We need the comforting promises of the heart—a steadfast faith in the good and true, and hopefulness in all things, especially of futurity. Hope is rich and glorious, and faithfully should it be cultivated. Let its inspiring influence grow in the heart; it will give strength and courage.

Let the cheerful word fall from the lips, and the smile play upon the countenance. The way of the world is dark enough even to the most favored ones among us. Why not, then, gather all the happiness out of life that you can? Why not strive to cultivate the cheerful, hopeful

disposition that will enable you to see the silver lining to every cloud? By such a course you will do much to assuage the sorrows and to increase the joys and pleasures of life.

PROSPERITY.



Prosperity is the great test of human character. Many are not able to endure prosperity. It is like the light of the sun to a weak eye—glorious, indeed, in itself, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Greatness stands upon a precipice, and if prosperity carries a man ever so little beyond his poise, it overbears and dashes him to pieces.

Moderate prosperity is not only to be hopefully expected as the proper reward of a life's exertion, but to bring the best human qualities to any thing like perfection, to fill them with the sweet juices of courtesy and

charity, prosperity, or a moderate amount of it, is required, just as sunshine is needed for the ripening of peaches and apricots. But prosperity, if it be good for the encouragement of humanity, is full of danger as well. There is ever a certain languor attending the fullness. When the heart has no more to wish, it yawns over its possession, and the energy of the soul goes out like a flame that has no more to devour. A smooth sea never made skillful mariners, neither do uninterrupted prosperity and success qualify men for usefulness and happiness. The storms of adversity, like those of the ocean, rouse the faculties and excite the invention, prudence, and skill of the voyager. The martyrs of ancient times, in bracing their minds to outward calamities, acquired a loftiness of purpose and a moral heroism worth a life-time of softness and security.

It seems as if man were like the earth. It can not bask forever in the sunshine. The snows of Winter and its frosts must come and work in the ground, and mellow it to make it fruitful. A man upon whom continuous sunshine falls is like the earth in August—he becomes parched, hard, and close-grained. To some men the Winter and Spring come when they are young. Others are born in Summer, and made fit to live only by a Winter of sorrow coming to them when they are middle-aged or old. But come it must, and under its softening influence the mind is fitted for the routine of life, and then the warm, shining sun of prosperity spreads abroad in the heart its vivifying influence, and the best powers of man are developed.

The way to prosperity is as plain as the way to market. It depends chiefly on two words—industry and frugality; that is, waste neither time nor money, but make the best use of both. Without industry and frugality nothing will do, and with them every thing. There is no other way to arrive at a true prosperity. It is gained only by diligent application to the business of life. The men who may be said to be prosperous are seldom men who have been rocked in the cradle of indulgence or caressed in the lap of luxury, but they are men whom necessity has called from the shade of retirement to contend under the scorching rays of the sun with the stern realities of life, with all of its vicissitudes.

Many make the mistake of supposing that prosperity and happiness are identical terms. The most prosperous are often the most miserable, while happiness may dwell with him whose every effort has failed, provided only that he hath done his best. There is, therefore, a true and a false prosperity, much resembling each other. But the similarity is in resemblance only, for they differ in constitution. The one is true and substantial, and is the result of a well-lived life. Its rewards are inward content and surroundings of comfort; the enjoyment of the real blessings of life and the unfolding of all the better nature of man. Its imitation is the reward gained by unjust or dishonest means. It may have the luster, but it lacketh the ring and weight of the true metal. It may have the outward adornment, but can not bring its possessor the inward peace of him who hath the former. Instead of unfolding and expanding the

heart of man, it hardens it and dries up the better nature.

Engage in one kind of business only, and stick to it until you succeed, or until your experience shows that you should abandon it. A constant hammering will generally drive it home at last so that it can be clinched. When a man's undivided attention is centered on one object his mind will be constantly suggesting improvements of value, which would escape him were his brain occupied by a dozen different objects at once. Many a fortune has slipped through a man's fingers because of attention thus engaged; there is good sense in the old caution against having too many irons in the fire at once.

Adversity in early life often lays the foundation for future prosperity. The hand of adversity is cold, but it is the hand of a friend. It dispels from the youthful mind the pleasing, but vain, illusions of untaught fancy, and shows that the road to success and prosperity is always a road requiring energetic action to surmount its difficulties. There is something sublime in the resolute, fixed purpose of him who determines to rise superior to ill-fortune. "At thy first entrance upon thy estate," saith a wise man, "keep a low sail that thou mayest rise with honor; thou canst not decline without shame; he that begins where his father ends will generally end where his father began."

As full ears load and lay corn so does too much fortune bend and break the mind. It deserves to be considered, too, as another advantage, that affliction moves pity and

reconciles our enemies; but prosperity provokes envy and loses us even our friends. Again, adversity is a desolate and abandoned state, and, as rats and mice forsake a tottering house, so do the generality of men forsake him who is cast down by adversity. As a consequence, he who has never known adversity is but half acquainted with others or with himself, and can not be expected to put forth full measure of his powers.

The patient conquest of difficulties which rise in the regular and legitimate channels of business and enterprise is not only essential in securing the ultimate prosperity which you seek, but it is requisite to prepare your mind for enjoying your prosperity. Every-where in human experience, as frequently as in nature, hardship is essential to ultimate success. That magnificent oak was detained twenty years in its upward growth while its roots took a great turn around a bowlder, by which the tree was anchored to withstand the storms of centuries. They who are eminently prosperous, or who achieve greatness or even notoriety in any pursuit, must expect to make enemies. Whoever becomes distinguished is sure to be a mark for the malicious spite of those who, not deserving success themselves, are galled by the merited triumph of the more worthy. Moreover, the opposition which originates in such despicable motives is sure to be of the most unscrupulous character, hesitating at no iniquity, descending to the shabbiest littleness. Opposition, if it is honest and manly, is not in itself undesirable. It is the whetstone by which a highly tempered

nature is polished and sharpened. Uninterrupted prosperity shows us but one side of the world. For, as it surrounds us with friends who will tell us only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone we can learn our defects.

PROSPERITY.



It is to the contempt of details that many men may trace the cause of their present misfortune. The world is full of those who languish, not from a lack of talents, but because, in spite of their many brilliant parts, they lack the power of properly estimating the value of trifles. Their souls fire with lofty conceptions of some work to be achieved, their minds warm with enthusiasm as they contemplate the objects already attained; but when they begin to put the scheme into execution they turn away in

disgust from the dry minutiæ and vulgar drudgery which are requisite for its accomplishment. Such men bewail their fate. Failing to do the small tasks of life, they have no calls to higher ones, and so complain of neglect.

As the universe itself is composed of minute atoms, so it is little details, mere trifles, which go to make success in any calling. Attention to details is an element of effectiveness which no reach of plan, no loftiness of design, no enthusiasm of purpose can dispense with. It is this which makes the difference between the practical man, who pushes his thoughts to a useful result, and the mere dreamer. If we would do much good in the world we must be willing to do good in little things, in little acts of benevolence one after another; speaking a timely and good word here, doing an act of kindness there, and setting a good example always. We must do the first good thing we can, and then the next. This is the only way to accomplish much in one's lifetime. He who waits to do a great deal of good at once will never do any thing.

The disposition of mankind is to despise the little incidents of every-day life. This is a lamentable mistake, since nothing in this life is really small. In the complicated and marvelous machinery of circumstances it is absolutely impossible to decide what would have happened as to some event if the smallest deviation had taken place in the march of those that preceded them. In a factory we may observe the revolving wheel in one room and in

another, many yards distant, the silk issuing from the loom, rivaling in its tints the colors of the rainbow. There are many events in our lives, the distance between which was much greater than that between the wheel and ribbon, yet the connection was much closer. It is, indeed, strange on what petty trifles the crises of life are decided. A chance meeting with some friend, an unexpected delay in some business venture, may be the source from which you date the rise of good or ill fortune.

There are properly no trifles in the biography of life. The little things in youth accumulate into character in age and destiny in eternity. Little sums make up the grand total of life. Each day is brightened or clouded by trifles. Great things come but seldom, and are often unrecognized until they are passed. It has been said that if a man conceives the idea of becoming eminent in learning, and can not toil through the many little drudgeries necessary to carry him on, his learning will soon be told. Or if one undertakes to become rich, but despises the small and gradual advances by which wealth is ordinarily acquired, his expectations will be the sum of his riches.

The difference between first and second class work in every department of labor lies chiefly in the degree of care with which the minutiæ are executed. No matter whether born king or peasant, our inevitable accompaniment through life is a succession of small duties, which must be met and overcome, or else they will defeat our plans. When we reflect that no matter what profession or business we may follow, it

demands the closest attention to a mass of little and apparently insignificant details, then we comprehend why it is that the patient plodder, the slow but sure man, so universally surpasses the genius who had such a brilliant career in college. It is all very well to form vast schemes. It is, however, the homely details of their execution that furnish the crucial tests of character. The successful business man at home, surrounded by articles of luxury, is a spectacle calculated to spur on the toiler. But the merchant at his office has had to work with trifles, to toil over columns of figures to post his ledger; and while you were carelessly spending a dollar, he has ransacked his books to discover what has become of a stray shilling.

In short, success in any pursuit can not be obtained unless the trifling details of the business are attended to. No one need hope to rise above his present situation who suffers small things to pass unimproved, or who, metaphorically speaking, neglects to pick up a cent because it is not a shilling. All successful men have been remarkable, not only for general scope and vigor, but for their attention to minute details. Like the steam hammer, they can forge ponderous bolts or fashion a pin. It is singular that in view of these facts men will neglect details. Many even consider them beneath their notice, and when they hear of the success of a business man who is, perhaps, more "solid" than brilliant, sneeringly remark that he is "great in little things." But with character, fortune, and the concerns of life, it is the littles combined that form the great whole. If we look

well to the disposition of these, the sum total will be cared for. It is the pennies neglected that squander the dollars. It is the minutes wasted that wound the hours, and mar the day.

Much of the unhappiness of life is caused by trifles. It is not the great bowlders, but the small pebbles on the road, that bring the traveling horse on his knees; and it is the petty annoyances of life, to be met and conquered afresh each day, that try most severely the metal of which we are made. Small miseries, like small debts, hit us in so many places and meet us at so many turns and corners, that what they lack in weight they make up in number, and render it less hazardous to stand the fire of one cannon ball than a volley composed of such a shower of bullets. The great sorrows of life are mercifully few, but the innumerable petty ones of every day occurrence cause many to grow weary of the burden of life.

Those acts which go to form a person's influence are little things, but they are potential for good or evil in the lives of others. From the little rivulets we trace the onward flowing of majestic rivers, constantly widening until lost in the ocean; and so the little things of an individual life, in their ever-widening influence for good or evil, diffusing misery or happiness around them, are borne onward to swell the joys or sorrows of the boundless ocean of eternity, and should be noted and guarded the more carefully from their infinitely higher importance. Words may seem to us but little things, but they possess a power beyond calculation. They swiftly fly from us to others,

and though we scarcely give them a passing thought, their spirit lives. Though they are as fleeting as the breath that gave them, their influence is as enduring as the heart they reach. Ah, well may we guard our lips so that none grieve in silence over words we have carelessly dropped. Well may we strive to scatter loving, cheering, encouraging words, to soothe the weary, and awaken the nobler, finer feelings of those with whom we daily come in contact.

The happiness, also, of life is largely composed of trifles. The occasions of great joys, like those of great sorrows, are few and far between, but every day brings us much of good if we will but gather it. "One principal reason," says Jeremy Bentham, "why our existence has so much less of happiness crowded into it than is accessible to us, is that we neglect to gather up those minute particles of pleasure which every moment offers for our acceptance. In striving after a sum total, we forget the ciphers of which it is composed; struggling against inevitable results which he can not control, too often man is heedless of those accessible pleasures whose amount is by no means inconsiderable when collected together; stretching out his hands to catch the stars, man forgets the flowers at his feet, so beautiful, so fragrant, so multitudinous, so various."

LEISURE.

"Time *was* is past—thou canst not it recall;
Time *is* thou hast—employ the portion small;
Time *future* is not, and may never be;
Time *present* is the only time for thee."



Spare moments are the gold-dust of time—the portion of life most fruitful in good or evil. When gathered up and pressed into use important results flow from thence; when neglected they are gaps through which temptation finds a ready entrance. They are a treasure when rightly used, but a terrible curse when abused. There are three obligations resting upon us in regard to the use and application of time. There is the duty to ourselves, in the care of our happiness, our improvement, and providing for our necessities; the duty to those dependent upon ourselves, and to society; and, lastly, our accountability to God, who bestows upon us this valuable gift, not without its being accompanied with the greatest inducements and the strongest and most cogent motives to improve it to advantage in these different respects.

A celebrated Italian was wont to call his time

his estate; and it is true of this, as of other estates of which the young come into possession, that it is rarely prized till it is nearly squandered, and then, when life is fast waning, they begin to think of spending the hours wisely, and even of husbanding the moments. But habits of idleness, listlessness, and procrastination once firmly fixed can not be suddenly thrown off, and the man who has wasted the precious hours of life's seed-time finds that he can not reap a harvest in life's Autumn. The value of time is not realized. It is the most precious thing in all the world; the only thing of which it is a virtue to be covetous, and yet the only thing of which all men are prodigal. Time is so precious that there is never but one moment in the world at once, and that is always taken away before another is given.

It is astonishing what can be done in any department of life when once the will is fired with a determination to use the leisure time rightly. Only take care to gather up your fragments of leisure time, and employ them judiciously, and you will find time for the accomplishment of almost any desired purpose. Men who have the highest ambition to accomplish something of importance in this life frequently complain of a lack of leisure. But the truth is, there is no condition in which the chances of accomplishing great results are less than in that of leisure. Life is composed of an elastic material, and wherever a solid piece of business is removed the surrounding atmosphere of trifles rushes in as certainly as the air into a bottle when you pour out its

contents. If you would not have your hours of leisure frittered away on trifles you must guard it by barriers of resolution and precaution as strong as are needed for hours of study and business.

The people who, in any community, have done the most for their own and the general good are not the wealthy, leisurely people who have nothing to do, but are almost uniformly the overworked class, who seem well-nigh swamped with cares, and are in a paroxysm of activity from January to December. Persons of this class have learned how to economize time, and, however crowded with business, are always found capable of doing a little more; and you may rely upon them in their busiest season with far more assurance than upon the idle man. It is much easier for one who is always exerting himself to exert himself a little more for an extra purpose than for him who does nothing to get up steam for the same end. Give a busy man ten minutes in which to write a letter, and he will dash it off at once; give an idle man a day, and he will put it off till to-morrow or next week. There is a momentum in an active man which of itself almost carries him to the mark, just as a very light stroke will keep a hoop going when a smart one was required to set it in motion.

The men who do the greatest things achieved on this globe do them not so much by fitful efforts as by steady, unremitting toil—by turning even the moments to account. They have the genius of hard work—the most desirable kind of genius. The time men often

waste in needless slumber, in lounging, or in idle visits, would enable them, were it employed, to execute undertakings which seem to their hurried and worried life to be impossible. Much may be done in those little shreds and patches of time which every day produces, and which most men throw away, but which, nevertheless, will make, at the end of life, no small deduction from the sum total.

Time, like life, can never be recalled. It is the material out of which all great workers have secured a rich inheritance of thoughts and deeds for their successors. It has been written, "The hours perish, and are laid to our charge." How many of these there are upon the records of the past! How many hours wasted, worse than wasted in frivolous conversation, useless employment—hours of which we can give no account, and in which we benefited neither ourselves nor others! There are few such hours in the busiest lives, but they make up the whole sum in the lives of many. Many live without accomplishing any good; squander their time away in petty, trifling things, as if the only object in life were to kill time, as if the earth were not a place for probation, but our abiding residence. We do not value time as we should, but let many golden hours pass by unimproved. We loiter during the day-time of life, and ere we know it the night draws near "when no man can work." Oh, hours misspent and wasted! How we wish we could live them over again!

It requires no small degree of effort to resolutely employ one's time so as to allow none of it to go to waste. There are a thousand

causes tending to the loss of time, and any one who imagines that they would do great things if they only had leisure are mistaken. They can find time if they only set about doing it. Complain not, then, of your want of leisure. Rather thank God that you are not cursed with leisure, for a curse it is in nine cases out of ten. What, if to achieve some good work which you have deeply at heart, you can never command an entire month, a week, or even a day? Shall you, therefore, bid it an eternal adieu, and fold your arms in despair? The thought should only the more keenly spur you on to do what you can in this swiftly passing life of yours. Endeavor to compass its solution by gathering up the broken fragments of your time, rendered more precious by their brevity.

Where they work much in gold the very dust of the room is carefully gathered up for the few grains of gold that may thus be saved. Learn from this the nobler economy of time. Glean up its golden dust, economize with tenfold care those raspings and parings of existence, those leavings of days and bits of hours, so valueless singly, so inestimable in the aggregate, and you will be rich in leisure. Rely upon it, if you are a miser of moments, if you hoard up and turn to account odd minutes and half-hours and unexpected holidays, the five-minute gaps while the table is spreading, your careful gleanings at the end of life will have formed a colossal and solid block of time, and you will die wealthier in good deeds harvested than thousands whose time is all their own.

It has been written that "he who toys with

time trifles with a frozen serpent, which afterwards turns upon the hand which indulged the sport, and inflicts a deadly wound." There are many persons who sadly realize this in their own lives. When age with its frosts of years has come their reflections can not be otherwise than of the saddest kind as they ponder over wasted time, the hours they spent in a worse than foolish manner. Death often touches with a terrible emphasis the value of time. But, alas! the lesson comes too late. It is for the living wisely to consider the end of their existence, to reflect on the possibilities of life, to resolve to waste no time in idleness, but to be up and doing in a manner befitting one who lives here a life preparatory simply to another and better existence.

HAPPINESS.

Happiness is that single and glorious thing which is the very light and sun of the whole animated universe, and where she is not it were better that nothing should be. Without her wisdom is but a shadow, and virtue a name.

It is in the pursuit of happiness that the energies of man are put forth. It matters not that we are generally disappointed in the ultimate results of our endeavors. Earthly happiness is a phantom of which we hear much, but see little, whose promises are constantly given and constantly broken, but as constantly believed. She cheats us with the sound instead of the substance, and with the blossom instead of the fruit. Anticipation is her herald, but disappointment is her companion. In the ideal scene every thing is painted in bright colors. There are no drawbacks, no disappointments, in

that picture, but in the reality they are sure to appear. The anticipation of a pleasure may have lasted for weeks in the mind, and have been dwelt on in all the endless variety of possibilities, while the reality lasts but a short time. Hence the feeling of disappointment ensues. Hope immediately rallies the powers. We turn to new plans, and begin again the round of anticipation, ending in disappointments.

Happiness is much like to-morrow—only one day from us, yet never arriving. It is, in a word, hope or anticipation. In this life we pursue it; in the future life we hope to overtake it. It is the experience of all that, having realized our hopes, of whatever nature they may be, we are not satisfied. And it is well for man that he is so constituted, since satisfaction would be a bar to future efforts. We at once form new plans, grander and more comprehensive in their scope; we renew the struggle, press forward to their accomplishment, finding pleasure in the pursuit, if not in the possession. Perhaps nothing more plainly shows the diversity of the human mind than the different methods employed in this pursuit. Some seek it in the acquisition of wealth; others, of power; others, of fame. Some, by plunging into society, endeavor, by a giddy round of pleasure, to catch the same evanescent shadow that others seek by a life of solitude. No class or race of people exist but that have some characteristic mode in which they trust to secure happiness. The savage seeks it in hunting and fishing, in barbarous warfare, or in the rude war dance.

National peculiarities are strongly shown in their ideas of what constitutes happiness; the light-hearted nations of the sunny south differing in this respect from their more serious northern neighbors. To be happy is the summing up of all the ends and aims on earth. It is a noble desire, implanted in the human breast by the Creator for purposes known only to his wisdom.

We talk of wealth, fame, and power as undeniable sources of enjoyment; and limited fortune, obscurity, and insignificance as incompatible with felicity. This is an instance of the remarkable distinction between theoretic conclusions and experience. However brilliant in speculation wealth, fame, and power are found in possession impotent to confer happiness. However decried in prospect limited fortune, obscurity, and insignificance are, by experience, found most friendly to real and lasting pleasure. It is not this or that or the other peculiar mode of life, nor in any particulars of outward circumstances, nor in any definite kind of labor or duty, that we may positively expect happiness. If we do we shall be disappointed, for it is not in our power to have things just our way, or to control our outward life just as we would.

We live amid a multitude of influences we can not altogether control. Nor is it best we should. We must seek happiness in the right state of mind, in the legitimate labors, duties, and pleasures of life, and then we shall find what we seek, yet we may find it under very different circumstances from what we expected.

It is much more equally divided than some of us imagine. One man may possess most of the materials, but little of the thing; another may possess much of the thing, but few of the materials. In this particular view happiness has been compared to the manna in the desert—"he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." Therefore, to diminish envy, let us consider not what others possess, but what they enjoy.

We may look for happiness in one direction, but find it in another, and sometimes where we expect the least we may find the most, and where we look for the most we shall find the least. We are shortsighted, and fail to see the ends of things. A great deal of the misery of life comes from this disposition to have things our own way, as though we could not be happy under any circumstances except those we have framed to meet our own wants. Circumstances are not half so essential to our happiness as most people imagine. A cabin is often the seat of more true happiness than a palace. Kings may bid higher for happiness than their subjects, but it is more apt to fall to the lot of the private citizen than the monarch. She sends to the palace her equipage, her pomp, and her train, but she herself is traveling *incognita* to keep a private appointment with contentment, and to partake of a dinner of herbs in a cottage.

The disposition to make the best of life is what we want to make us happy. Those who are so willful and seemingly perverse about their outward circumstances are often intensely affected by the merest trifles. A little thing

shadows their life for days. The want of some convenience, some personal gratification, some outward form or ornament will blight a day's joy. They can often bear a great calamity better than a small disappointment, because they nerve themselves to meet the former, and yield to the latter without an effort to resist. Molehills are magnified into mountains, and in the shadow of these mountains they sit down and weep. The very things they ought to have sometimes come unasked, and because they are not ready for them they will not enjoy them, but rather make them the cause of misery. There is also a disposition in such minds to multiply their troubles as well as magnify them. They make troubles of many things which should really be regarded as privileges, opportunities for self-sacrifice, for culture, for improving effort. They make troubles of the ordinary allotments of life; its duties, charities, changes, unavoidable accidents, reverses, and experiences. This can be considered in no other light than morally wrong, for these common allotments and experiences were, beyond all question, ordained by infinite wisdom as a healthy discipline for the soul of man.

Some spend life determined to be vastly happy at some future time, but for the present put off all enjoyment even of passing pleasures, seemingly for fear lest all such present comfort detracts from the sum total of future enjoyments. They, indeed, acquire wealth or fame or the outward surroundings of happiness; but, alas! too often the palmy days of life are gone, and the acquisitions from which they

fondly hoped to gather much of human happiness form but the stately surroundings of real and heart-felt wretchedness. Happiness, then, should be as a modest mansion, which we can inhabit while we have our health and vigor to enjoy it; not a fabric so vast and expensive that it has cost us the best part of our lives to build it, and which we can enjoy only when we have less occasion for a habitation than for a tomb.

Happiness is a mosaic composed of many small stones. Each taken apart and viewed singly may be of little value; but when all are grouped together, judiciously combined, and set they form a pleasing and graceful whole, a costly jewel. Trample not under foot, then, the little pleasures which a gracious Providence scatters in the daily path while in search after some great and exciting joy. Happiness, after all, is a state of the mind. It can not consist in things. It follows thence that in the right discipline of the mind is the secret of true happiness. In vain do they talk of happiness who never subdued an impulse in obedience to a principle. He who never sacrificed a present to a future good, or a personal to a general one, can speak of happiness only as the blind do of colors.

The fountain of content must spring up in the mind, and he who seeks happiness by changing any thing but his own disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he seeks to remove. The trouble often is, we are too selfish, too unyielding in our arrangements for life's best good. Because we

can not find happiness in our own way we will not accept it in its appointed way, and so make ourselves miserable. Some excellent people are very unhappy from a kind of stubborn adherence to their settled convictions of just what they must have and what they must do to be happy. They lose sight of the fact that God rules above them, and a thousand influences work around them, partly, at least, beyond their control. They have not determined to accept life cheerfully in whatever form it may come, and seek for good under all circumstances.

We must seek for happiness in heaven-appointed ways, in study, duty, labor, exalted pleasures, with a constant effort to find it. We must seek it in domestic and business life, in the relations we hold to our fellow-men, and in the daily opportunities afforded us for discipline and self-sacrifice. If, then, you would be happy, possessing at least that measure of happiness which is vouchsafed to mortals, we must *intelligently* seek happiness, not by way of impulse, not seeking selfishly our own good, but with a forgetfulness of self doing all the good we can, and with a thorough consecration of soul to the good of what we seek.

TRUE NOBILITY.

"Greatness, thou gaudy torment of our souls,
The wise man's fetters, and the rage of fools."



There is so much in this world that is artificial, so much that glitters in borrowed light, that it is not singular that moral greatness and nobility are often counterfeited by some baser metal—so much so that it is no slight task to discriminate rightly between the true and the false, and to determine wherein true nobility doth consist. When we carefully consider the nature of man we readily admit that it is in the possession of moral and intellectual powers that his superiority over the brute world consists.

In the society of his fellow-men man ought not to be rated by his possessions, by his stores of gold, by his office of honor or trust; these are but temporary and accidental advantages, and the next turn of fortune may tear them from his grasp. The light of fame, though it shines with ever so clear a light, is able to dispel the darkness of death but a little ways. The greatest characters of antiquity are but little known. Curiosity follows them in vain, for the veil of oblivion successfully hides the greater portion of their lives.

The world ofttimes knows nothing of its greatest men. Their lives were passed in

obscurity, but real nobility of character was theirs, and this is nearly always unseen and unknown. He who in tattered garments toils on the way may, and often does, possess more real nobility of spirit than he who is driven past in a chariot. It is the mind that makes the heart rich; and as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds, so honor peereth in the meanest habit. Public martyrdom of every shade has a certain *éclat* and popularity connected with it that will often bear men up to endure its trials with courage; but those who suffer alone, without sympathy, for truth or principle—those who, unnoticed by men, maintain their part, and, in obscurity and amid discouragement, patiently fulfill their trust—these are the real heroes of the age, and the suffering they bear is real greatness.

It is refreshing to read the account of some of the truly great men and women, whose lives of usefulness have done much for the alleviation of the world's misery. And, after all, there is no true nobility except as it displays itself in good deeds. Says Matthew Henry: "Nothing can make a man truly great but being truly good, and partaking of God's holiness." That which constitutes human goodness, human greatness, and human nobleness is not the degree of enlightenment with which men pursue their own advantages, but it is self-forgetfulness, self-sacrifice, and the disregard of personal advantages, remote or contingent, because some other line of conduct is nearer right. The greatest man is he who chooses right with the most invincible resolution; who resists the

sorest temptations from within and without; who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully; who is calmest in storms, and most fearless under menaces and frowns.

Some persons are great only in their ability to do evil. Such appears to have constituted the greatness of many of those individuals who drenched the world in blood that their ambition might be satisfied. They may possess the most astonishing mental qualities, yet may be overruled for evil instead of good. Men of the most brilliant qualities need only a due admixture of pride, ambition, and selfishness to be great only in evil ways. Energy without integrity of character and a soul of goodness may only represent the embodied principle of evil. But when the elements of character are brought into action by a determinate will, and influenced by high purposes, man enters upon, and courageously perseveres in, the path of duty at whatever cost of worldly interests, he may be said to approach the summit of his being—to possess true nobility of character; he is the embodiment of the highest idea of manliness.

The life of such a man becomes repeated in the life and actions of others. He is just and upright in his business dealings, in his public actions, and in his family life. He will be honest in all things—in his works and in his words. He will be generous and merciful to his opponent—to those who are weaker as well as those stronger than himself. "The man of noble spirit converts all occurrences into experience, between which experience and his reason there

is marriage, and the issue are his actions. He moves by affection, not for affection; he loves glory, scorns shame, and governeth and obeyeth with one countenance, for it comes from one consideration. Knowing reason to be no idle gift of nature he is the steersman of his own destiny. Truth is his goddess, and he takes pains to get her, not to look like her. Unto the society of men he is a sun whose clearness directs in a regular motion. He is the wise man's friend, the example of the indifferent, the medicine of the vicious. Thus time goeth not from him, but with him, and he feels age more by the strength of his soul than by the weakness of his body. Thus feels he no pain, but esteems all such things as friends that desire to file off his fetters and help him out of prison."

True nobility of spirit is always modest in expression. The grace of an action is gone as soon as we are convinced that it was done only that third persons might applaud the act. But he who is truly great, and does good because it is his duty, is not at all anxious that others should witness his acts. His aim is to do good because it is right. His nobility does not show itself in waiting and watching for some chance to do a great good at once. Greatness can only be rightly estimated when minuteness is justly reverenced. Greatness is the aggregation of minuteness; nor can its sublimity be felt truthfully by any mind unaccustomed to the watching of what is least. His nobility consists in being great in little things. All the little details of life are attended to, and thus the soul is prepared for great ones. There is more true

nobility in duty faithfully done than in any one great act when others are looking on and signifying their approval, and thus by their sympathy spurring the soul on to greater exertions.

It is impossible to conceive of a truly great character, and not think of one imbued with the spirit of kindness. Nobility of spirit will not dwell with the haughty in manner. It delights to take up its abode with the generous and tender-hearted, those who seek to relieve the misery of others as they would their own. If you contrast the career of Napoleon Bonaparte and Florence Nightingale, though one filled all Europe with the terror of his name, doubt not that in the scale of moral greatness the latter far outweighs the former. Kindness is the most powerful instrument in the world to move men's hearts, and a word in kindness spoken will often do more for the furtherance of your cause than any amount of angry reasoning. Therefore, it is not singular that one whose whole life is spent in the exercise of kindness should possess a peculiar power over the lives of others—in effect, wield such an influence over them as marks him as one of the truly great.

Nobility of character is also reverential. The possession of this quality marks the noblest and highest type of manhood and womanhood. Reverence for things consecrated by the homage of generations, for high objects, pure thoughts, and noble aims, for the great men of former times and the high-minded workers among our contemporaries. Reverence is alike indispensable to the happiness of individuals, of

families, and of nations. Without it there can be no trust, no faith, no confidence, either in God or man—neither social peace nor social progress. Reverence is but another name for love, which binds men to each other, and all to God.

The rewards of a life of moral greatness rests with posterity. Great men are like the oaks, under the branches of which men are happy in finding a refuge in times of storm and rain. But when the danger is past they take pleasure in cutting the bark and breaking the branches. As long as human nature is such a mass of contradictions this is not to be wondered at. But the influence of such men is ever working, and will sooner or later show itself. Men such as these are the true life-blood of the country to which they belong. They elevate and uphold it, fortify and ennoble it, and shed a glory over it by the example of life and character which they have bequeathed to it. "The names and manners of great men," says an able writer, "are the dowry of a nation." Whenever national life begins to quicken, the dead heroes rise in the memory of men. These men of noble principles are the salt of the earth. In death, as well as life, their example lives in their country, a stimulus and encouragement to all who have the soul to adopt it.

Nobility of character is within the reach of all. It is the result of patient endeavors after a life of goodness, and, when acquired, can not be swept away unless by the consent of its possessor. Wealth may be lost by no fault of its possessor, but greatness of soul is an abiding

quality. One may fail in his other aims; the many accidents of life may bring to naught his most patient endeavors after worldly fame or success; but he who strives for nobility of character will not fail of reward, if he but diligently seek the same by earnest resolve and patient labor. Is there not in this a lesson of patience for many who are almost weary of striving for better things? If success does not crown their ambitious efforts, will they not be sustained by the smile of an approving conscience? Strong in this, they can wait with patience till, in the fullness of time, their reward cometh.

A GOOD NAME.

"He that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which ne'er enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

—SHAKESPEARE.

A good name is the richest possession we

have while living, and the best legacy we leave behind us when dead. It survives when we are no more; it endures when our bodies and the marbles which cover them have crumbled into dust. How can we obtain it? What means will secure it to us with the free consent of mankind and the acknowledged suffrages of the world? It is won by virtue, by skill, by industry, by patience and perseverance, and by humble and consistent trust and confidence in a high and overruling power. It is lost by folly, by ignorance, by ignominy and crime, by excessive ambition and avarice.

That good name, which is to be chosen rather than great riches, does not depend on the variable and shifting wind of popular opinion. It is based on permanent excellence, and is as immutable as virtue and truth. It consists in a fair and unsullied reputation—a reputation formed under the influence of virtuous principles, and awarded to us, not by the ignorant and the vicious, but by the intelligent and the good.

In such a name we look first of all for integrity, or an unbending regard to rectitude; we look for independence, or a determination to be governed by an enlightened consideration of truth and duty; for benevolence or a spirit of kindness and good-will toward men; and, finally, for a reverent regard for all moral qualities. These are the essential proper ties of a good character, the living, breathing lineaments of that good name which commends itself to the careful consideration of the truly good every-where.

It is ever to be kept in mind that a good name is in all cases the fruit of personal exertions. It is not inherited from parents; it is not created by external advantages. It is no necessary appendage of birth or wealth or talents or station, but the result of one's own endeavors, the fruit and reward of good principles manifested in a course of virtuous and honorable actions. Hence the attainment of a good name, however humble the station, is within the reach of all. No young man is excluded from this invaluable boon. He has only to fix his eye on the prize, and to press toward it in a course of virtuous and useful conduct, and it is his. It may be said that in the formation of a good name personal exertion is the first, the second, and the last virtue. Nothing great or excellent can be acquired without it. All the virtues of which it is composed are the result of untiring application and industry. Nothing can be more fatal to the attainment of a good character than a confidence in external advantages. These, if not seconded by your own endeavors, will drop you midway, or perhaps you will not have started when the diligent traveler will have won the race.

Life will inevitably take much of its shape and coloring from the plastic powers that operate in youth. Much will depend on taking a proper course at the outset of life. The principles then adopted and the habits then formed, whether good or bad, become a kind of second nature, fixed and permanent. The most critical period of life is that which elapses from

fourteen to twenty-one years of age. More is done during this period to mold and settle the character of the future man than in all the other years of life. If a young man passes this period with pure morals and a fair reputation, a good name is almost sure to crown his years and to descend with him to the close of his days. On the other hand, if a young man in the Spring season of life neglects his mind and heart, if he indulges himself in vicious courses, and forms habits of inefficiency and slothfulness, he inflicts an injury on his good name which time will not efface, and brings a stain upon his character which no tears can wash away.

The two most precious things this side the grave are our reputation and our life. But it is to be lamented that the most contemptible whisper may deprive us of the one and the weakest weapon of the other. A wise man, therefore, will be more anxious to deserve a fair reputation than to possess it; and this will teach him so to live as not to be afraid to die. A fair reputation, it should be remembered, is a plant delicate in its growth. It will not shoot up in a night, like the gourd that sheltered the prophet's head; but, like that gourd, it may perish in a night. A name which it has cost many years to establish is often destroyed in a single hour. A good name, like good-will, is gained by many actions, but lost by one.

One of the most essential elements of a good name is the possession of good moral principles. Such principles fill the soul with the noblest views and the purest sentiments, and direct all the energies, desires, and purposes to their

proper use and end. Such principles impart new light and vigor to the mind, and secure to its possessor a safe passage through all the temptations of the world to the abodes of eternal purity and blessedness. A character without fixed moral principles has impressed on it the deformity of a great and palpable defect. Whatever virtues it does not possess are like flowers planted in the snow or withered by the drought—wanting the life vigor and beauty which principles alone can impart. Lacking such principles one would in vain seek to acquire a good name. As well expect a vessel to traverse broad oceans to a destined harbor with no rudder whereby to control its course.

Though a good name is won only by a life of constant activity and exertion, by self-denial, and an outflow of charity, yet its rewards are great and enduring, and to fail of its possession is to be without the best thing on earth. Without it gold has no value, birth no distinction, station no dignity, beauty no charms, age no reverence. Without it every treasure impoverishes, every grace deforms, every dignity degrades, and all the arts, the decorations, and accomplishments of life stand like the beacon blaze upon a rock, warning that its approach is dangerous, that its contact is death. He who has it not is under eternal quarantine—no friend to greet him, no home to harbor him. And in the midst of all that ambition can achieve, or avarice amass, or rapacity plunder, he feels himself alone, destitute of the sympathy of others.

A good character is a sure protection against

suspicion and evil reports. A man of bad or doubtful character is suspected of a thousand acts of which he may not be guilty. And if he does a good deed it is apt to be ascribed to a bad motive. He has lost the confidence of his fellow-men. They know him to be unprincipled and hollow-hearted, and are therefore ready to believe all the evil that is thought or said of him, but none of the good. On the other hand, a man of fair character, of tried and established reputation, stands out to the eyes of the public as one who is above suspicion, and above reproach. The envious may attempt to tarnish his fair name, but their efforts recoil upon their own heads. He is conscious of acting from correct principles, and being known to the public as a man of integrity and worth he need never give himself much concern as to any unfavorable reports that may be circulated respecting him. They acquit him without trial, and believe his innocence without the judgment of a court. Slander may, indeed, for a moment, fix its fangs on a spotless character, but such a character has within itself an antidote to the poison, and emerges from the temporary shadow with invigorated strength and heightened beauty.

While a good name will secure for you the esteem and confidence of your fellow-men, how will it increase your capacity and extend the sphere of your usefulness! Who are the men whose friendship is most highly valued, whose opinions have greatest weight, whose patronage is most eagerly sought, and whose influence is most extensively sought in the country? Are

they not men of principle—men of known worth and established reputation? A good name draws round its possessor warm friends, and opens for him a sure and easy way to wealth, to honor, and happiness. Reverse the picture, and think of the direful evils of a ruined character. It will expose you to a thousand painful suspicions and blasting reports; it will deprive you of all self-respect and peace of mind; it will exclude you from the confidence and esteem of your fellow-men, and bring upon you their neglect and contempt; it will cut you off from all means of usefulness, and degrade you to a mere cipher in society, rendering your ultimate success impossible.

A good name is thus a protection against suspicion and evil reports; it is the source of the purest and most lasting enjoyment; it secures for us the esteem and confidence of our fellow-men; it increases the power and enlarges the sphere of our usefulness; it has the most direct and happy bearing on our success in life; it stands connected with the happiness of our families and friends, with the welfare of society; with the temporal and eternal happiness of thousands.

MEDITATION.



Meditation is the soul's perspective glass, whereby, in her long removes, she discerns God as if he were near at hand. It is thinking, not growth, that makes the perfect man or woman. Hence life may be said to have commenced when the mind learns to meditate upon its nature, its powers, and its possibilities. This is the commencement of true soul-growth. To live without thought is not life; it is simple, barren existence. There is in youth a natural impulsiveness which is highly detrimental to their best interests. In itself this is not wrong; but personal usefulness depends upon its being controlled and brought into subjection to the judgment.

The first and hardest lesson of life to learn is to subdue and chasten the inborn impulses of the soul. His soaring ambition, his reckless hopes, his daring courage must be held in check by the rein of sober sense. The curb and bit must be put on and drawn tightly, and this must be done by his own hand. In his hours of meditation he must form his plans, lay out his work, breathe his prayer for victory, and swear eternal fealty to his purpose of right. In the still chambers of thought he must rally his moral forces, pledge them to duty, and call aid from above in his solemn work. Others may assist

him by encouragement, by advice and solemn warning; but the work is his own. If he has learned to think, he has within an element of safety found nowhere else.

What can be more distasteful than the actions of impulsive people? To-day they are borne on the gale of the wildest pleasure—they are more giddy than the feather tossed in the breeze; to-morrow, in darkness of spirit, despairing and wretched, because their hot-brained fancies failed to give them peace and joy. To-day they thoughtlessly act as their impulses lead them; to-morrow they are full of regrets about the mistakes and blunders of yesterday. They give full vent to whatever impulsive feeling happens to come uppermost, changing more often than the wind, and reflecting as little upon their variations. It is the office of meditation to train and subdue these impulses.

The fault is not in the joyousness of spirit which accompanies youthful action, but in the impulsiveness with which they are indulged. The feelings come forth as masters, whereas they should be servants, subdued, but joyous. They should be submissive and obedient children of the will, doing its dictates with alacrity and power. They should make the intellect more active, the affections more warm and deep, and the moral sense more varied and strong. The fruit of meditation is propriety of action. There is a simple and beautiful propriety, pleasing to all, which gives grace to the manners and loveliness to the whole being, which all should strive to possess. It is neither too grave nor too gay, too gleesome nor too

sad, nor either of these at improper places. It is to be mirthful without being silly, joyous without being foolish, sober without being despondent, to speak plainly without giving offense, grave without casting a shadow over others.

Meditation should sit on the throne of the mind as the counselor of the mental powers; and thus, by early habits of obedience, even the passions will become powers of noble import, contributing an energy and determination that will wrest victory out of every conflict and success out of every struggle. To secure this blessing, one must early learn to hold counsel within himself over every desire and impulse that rises within him, over every action of the soul, and see that at all times obedience is yielded to the dictates of this counsel. To be successful in this he must be always watchful, always guarded, always striving for the more perfect attainment of the great object before him.

He who can not command his thoughts must not hope to control his actions. All mental superiority originates in habits of thought. Take away thought from the life of a man and what remains? You may glean knowledge by reading, but you must separate the chaff from the wheat by thinking. The value of our thoughts depend much upon the course they take, whether the subject in hand be examined fully and carefully, or only given an undecided glance, whence our thoughts revert to other matters to be treated in the same desultory way. Many minds from want of training can not really *think*. It is of great

importance that right habits of thought be formed and fostered in early life. A person may see, hear, read, and learn whatever he pleases; but he will know very little beyond that which he has thought over and made the property of his mind.

Become master of your thoughts so that you can command them at your pleasure. Whenever you read have your thoughts about you. Make careful observations as you pass along, and select subjects upon which your thoughts shall dwell when your book shall have been laid aside. He who reads only for present gratification, and neglects to digest what he reads, nor calls it up for future contemplation, will not be likely to ever know the extent of his own powers, for the best test calculated to make them known will remain unemployed. Consider the great field which is open before you. Into whichever department you take your way, you will be amazed at the magnitude and grandeur of the objects by which you are surrounded, and your mind will be filled with the most exalted conceptions of the goodness, wisdom, and power of the Creator.

We can not guard too much against indulgence in thoughts, which, trivial as they may at first appear, would give a cast to our whole character should they become settled habits. Impure thoughts are seeds of sin. If dropped into the soil of the mind, they should be cast out immediately; otherwise they will germinate, spring up, and bear fruits of sinful words and acts. Few consider the power and magnitude of thought. Man is not as he seems,

nor as he acts, but as he thinks. It is the thoughts of a man, and not his deeds, that are the true exponent of his character. Deeds make reputation, thought makes character. Deeds are the paper currency of thought stamped in the mint of purity. Thoughts surpass deeds in power and grandeur in the same ratio as character surpasses reputation.

Many lives are wrecked through thoughtlessness alone. If you find yourself in low company do not sit carelessly by till you are gradually drawn into the whirlpool, but *think* of the consequences of such a course. Rational thought will lead you to seek the society of your superiors, and you must improve by the association. A benevolent use of your example and influence for the elevation of the fallen is a noble thing. Even the most depraved are not beyond such help. But the young man of impressible character must at least think and beware lest he fall himself a victim. *Think* before you touch the wine cup. Remember its effects upon thousands, and know that you are no stronger than they were in their youth. *Think* before you allow angry passions to overcome your reason. It is thus that murder is wrought. *Think* before, in a dark hour of temptation, you allow yourself to drift into crime. *Think* well ere a lie or an oath passes your lips, for a man of pure speech only can merit respect. Think of things pure and lovely and of good report; think of God and of heaven, of life and duty, and your thoughts being thus elevating and inspiring, your life will be full of good deeds and pleasant memories.

PRINCIPLES.



Our principles are the springs of our actions; our actions, the springs of our happiness or misery. Too much care, therefore, can not be taken in forming our principles. Men of genuine excellence in every station of life—men of industry, of integrity, of high principles, of sterling honesty of purpose—command the spontaneous homage of mankind. It is natural to believe in such men, to have confidence in them, and to imitate them. All that is good in the world is upheld by them, and without their presence in it, the world would scarcely be worth the living in.

That young man is sure to become a worthless character and a pernicious member of society, who is loose in his principles and habits, who lives without plan and without object, spending his time in idleness and pleasure. He forgets his high destination as a rational, immortal being; he degrades himself to

a level with the brute, and is not only disqualified for all the serious duties of life, but proves himself a nuisance and a curse to all with whom he is connected. Every unprincipled man is an enemy to society, and richly merits its condemnation. They are not respected, they are not patronized; confidence and support are withheld from them, and they are left, neglected and despised, to float down the stream of life.

No young man can hope to rise in society, or act worthily his part in life, without a fair moral character. The basis of such a character is virtuous principles, or a deep, fixed sense of moral obligation. The man who possesses such character can be trusted. Integrity and justice are to him words of meaning, and he aims to exemplify the virtues they express in his outward life. Such a man has decision of character; he knows what is right, and is firm in doing it. He has independence of character; he thinks and acts for himself, and is not to be made a tool to serve the purpose of party. He has consistency of purpose, pursuing a straightforward course; and what he is to-day he will be to-morrow. Such a man has true worth of character, and his life is a blessing to himself, to his family, to society, and to the world. To have a character founded on good principles is the first and indispensable qualification of a good citizen. It imparts life and strength and beauty not only to individual character, but to all social institutions. It is, indeed, the dew and the rain that nourish the vine and the fig-tree by which we are shaded

and refreshed.

Deportment, honesty, caution, and a desire to do right, carried out in practice, are to human character what truth, reverence, and love are to religion. They are the constant elements of a good character. Let the vulgar and the degraded scoff at such virtues if they will, a strict, upright, onward course will evince to the world that there is more manly independence in one forgiving smile than in all their fictitious rules of honor. Virtue must have its admirers, and firmness of principle, both moral and religious, will ever command the proudest encomiums of the intelligent world. The auspicious bearing of such principles on the formation of your character and on your best interests can not be too highly estimated. These are the mainspring of purpose and action. Their formation can not be begun too early in life, since they will remain with you as long as you live, and exert a decisive influence on your condition of success or failure.

There is no brighter jewel in any young man's character than to be firmly established on principles of unyielding rectitude. They change not with times and circumstances. They are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. They extend their sway to all beings and to all classes, to the man of learning and the ignorant peasant, to the beggar and the prince; they are the bond of union and the source of blessedness to all subjects of God's empire. It is always easy to know what is right, but often difficult to decide what is best for our present interests or popularity. He who acts from false principles is

often perplexed in deciding on any plan of action. He knows not what course to pursue, or how to avoid the difficulties that are ever thickening around him. His way is dark and crooked, and full of snares and pitfalls. But the way is light as day to him whose ruling principle is duty. He is not perplexed as to questions of interest or popularity.

Such a man, whether rich or poor, has those solid and excellent traits of character which are certain to secure for him the esteem and confidence of all good men; and even those who are too weak to imitate his virtues are obliged to yield to him the secret homage of their respect. But the greatest boon of all is the self-respect he thus secures. He is not degraded in his own eyes by acting from unworthy and criminal motives. And it is only when once lost that you fully realize how valuable is this boon of self-respect. It is the fruit of exertion in right ways.

There are false principles, to embrace which is certain defeat to hopes of future usefulness. There are some who make pleasure the aim of their lives, and who seem to live only for their own enjoyment. Man was made for action, for duty, and usefulness; and it is only when he lives in accordance with this great design of his being that he attains his highest dignity and truest happiness. To make pleasure his ultimate aim is certainly to fail of it. No matter what a young man's situation and prospects are—no matter if he is perfectly independent in his circumstances and heir to millions—he will certainly become a worthless character if he

does not aim at something higher than his own selfish enjoyment. A life thus spent is a life lost. It is utterly inconsistent with all manliness of thought and action. It forms a character of effeminacy and feebleness, and entails on its possessor, not only the contempt of all worthy and good men, but embitters the decline of life with shame and self-reproach.

Another principle of evil import is the love of money, which exerts a mighty and powerful influence over the children of men. When once the love of money becomes in any man a dominant principle of action there is an end of all hope of his ever attaining the true excellence of an intelligent moral being. Money is the supreme and governing motive of his conduct, and, where this is the case, it is not to be expected that a man will be very scrupulous as to the means of obtaining it. Put a piece of gold too close to the eye and it is large enough to blind you to home, to love, to death, and to heaven itself.



OPPORTUNITY.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

—SHAKESPEARE.



Many fail in life from the want, as they are too ready to suppose, of those great occasions wherein they might have shown their trustworthiness and their integrity. But in order to find whether a vessel be leaky we first prove it with water before we trust it with wine. The more minute and trivial opportunities of being just and upright are constantly occurring to every one. It is the proper employment of these smaller opportunities that occasion the great ones. It is one of the common mistakes of life, and one of the most radical sources of evil, to wait for opportunities. Many persons are looking for some marked event or some grand opening through which they hope to develop what may be in them, and thus make potent a character which now, for lack of motives, is barren and unfruitful.

The real materials out of which our characters are forming are the hourly occurrences of every-day life. Every claim of duty, the employment of each minute, the daily vexations or trials we are called upon to bear, the momentary decisions that must be made, the casual interview, the contact with sin or sorrow in every-day dress—all, these and many others as small and as constant, are the real

opportunities of life. These we are continually embracing or neglecting, and out of them we are forming a character that is fast consolidating into the shape we gave it for good or for evil. If we watch through a single day we shall doubtless discover hundreds of opportunities of both doing and receiving good that we have, perhaps, hitherto passed by with indifference, and by diligent assiduity in seeking for and embracing these we shall be prepared to encounter the fiercer storms of life that may await us, or to take advantage of future opportunities that may offer for our good.

A man's opportunity usually has some relation to his ability. It is an opening for a man of his talents and means. It is an opening for him to use what he has faithfully and to the utmost. It requires toil, self-denial, faith. If he says, "I want a better opportunity than that; I am worthy of a higher position than that," or if he thinks the opportunity too insignificant to be embraced, he is very likely in after years to see the folly of his course. There are scores of young men all over the land who want to acquire wealth, and yet every day scorn such opportunities as our really rich men would have improved. They want to begin, not as others do, at the foot of the ladder, but half way up. They want somebody to give them a lift or to carry them up in a balloon, so that they can avoid the early and arduous struggles of the majority of those who have been successful.

The most unsuccessful men are usually the ones who think they could do great things if

they only had the opportunity. But something has always prevented them. Providence has hedged them in so that they could not carry out their plan. They knew just how to get rich, but they lacked opportunity. A man can not expect that great opportunities will meet him all along through his life like milestones by the wayside. Usually he has one or two; if he neglects them he is like the man who takes the wrong course where several meet. The farther he goes the worse he fares. In the life of the most unlucky persons there are always some occasions when by prompt and vigorous action he may win the thing he has at heart. "There is nobody," says a Roman cardinal, "whom fortune does not visit once in his life. But when she finds he is not ready to receive her, she goes in at the door and out through the window." Opportunity is coy. The careless, the slow, the unobservant, the lazy fail to see her, or clutch at her when she has gone. The sharp fellows detect her instantly, and seize her on the wing.

It is ofttimes not sufficient to wait for opportunity, even though improved when it has come. We must not only strike the iron while it is hot, but make it hot by striking. In other words, if opportunity does not present herself we must try our best to compel her attendance. Opportunity is in respect to time in some sense as time is in respect to eternity; it is the small moment, the exact point, the critical minute on which every good work so much depends. Hesitation is in some instances a sign of weakness, and an exhibition of caution instead of an aid is a hinderance. At the critical

moment there is no time for over-squeamishness; else the opportunity slips away beyond recall, even as the spoken word or the sped arrow. The period of life during which a man *must* venture, if ever, is so limited that it is no bad rule to preach up the necessity in such instances of a little violence done to the feelings, and of efforts made in defiance of strict and sober calculation, rather than to pass one opportunity after another. It is not accident that helps a man in the world, but purpose and persistent industry. These make a man sharp to discover opportunities and to turn them to account. To the feeble, the sluggish and purposeless the happiest opportunities avail nothing. They pass them by, seeing no meaning in them. But to the energetic, wide-awake man they are occasions of great moment, the improvement of which contribute in no small degree to his ultimate success.



DUTY.

"I slept, and dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke, and found that life was duty."



Duty rounds out the whole of life, from our entrance into it until our exit from it. There is the duty to superiors, to inferiors, to equals, to God and to man. Wherever there is power to use or to direct, there is a duty devolving upon us. Duty is a thing that is due and must be paid by every man who would avoid present discredit, and eventual moral insolvency. It is an obligation, a debt, which can only be discharged by voluntary effort and resolute action in the affairs of life. The abiding sense of duty is the very crown of character. It is the upholding law of man in his highest attitudes. Without it the individual totters and falls before the first puff of adversity or temptation; whereas, inspired by it, the weakest become strong and full of courage.

"Duty," says Mrs. Jameson, "is the cement which binds the whole moral edifice together, without which all power, goodness, intellect, truth, happiness, love itself, can have no permanence, but all the fabric of existence crumble away from under us, and leave us at last sitting in the midst of a ruin, astonished at our own desolation." Take man from the lowest depths of poverty or from the downy beds of wealth, and you will find that to act well his

part in life he must recognize and live up to the rule of duty. As the ship is safely guided across the ocean by a helm, so on the ocean of existence duty is the helm, without which life is lost. It is the lesson of history, no less than the experience of the present age, that an attention to duty in all of its details is the only sure road to real greatness, whether individual or national.

Duty is based upon a sense of justice—justice inspired by love—which is the most perfect form of goodness. Duty is not a sentiment, but a principle pervading the life, and it exhibits itself in conduct and in action. Duty is above all consequences, and often, at a crisis of difficulty, commands us to throw them overboard. It commands us to look neither to the right nor to the left, but straight forward. Every signal act of duty is an act of faith. It is performed in the assurance that God will take care of the consequences, and will so order the course of the world that, whatever the immediate results may be, his word shall not return to him empty. The voice of conscience speaks in duty done, and without its regulating and controlling influence the brightest and greatest intellect may be merely as a light that leads astray. Conscience sets a man upon his feet, while his will holds him upright. Conscience is the moral governor of the heart, and only through its dominating influence can a noble and upright character be fully developed. That we ought to do an action is of itself a sufficient and ultimate answer to the question *why* we should do it.

The conscience may speak never so loudly,

but without energetic will it may speak in vain. The will is free to choose between the right course and the wrong one; but the choice is nothing unless followed by immediate and decisive action. If the sense of duty be strong and the course of action clear, the courageous will, upheld by the conscience, enables a man to proceed on his course bravely, and to accomplish his purposes in the face of all opposition and difficulty; and should failure be the issue, there will remain at least the satisfaction that it has been in the cause of duty. There is a sublimity in conscious rectitude, a pleasure in the approval of one's own mind, in comparison with which the treasures of earth are not worth mentioning. The peace and happiness arising from this are above all change and beyond all decay. Disappointment and trials do but improve them; they go with us into all places and attend us through every changing scene of life. They sustain and delight at home and abroad, by day and by night, in solitude and in society, in sickness and in health, in time and eternity. All this is sure to be the reward of him who knows his duty and does it, regardless as to what others say or as to the immediate results flowing from thence.

We all have good and bad in us. The good would do what it ought to do; the bad does what it can. The good dwells in the kingdom of duty; the bad sits on the throne of might. Duty is a loyal subject; might is a royal tyrant. Duty is the evangel of God that proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord; might is the

scourge of the world that riots in carnage, groans, and blood. Duty gains its victories by peace; might conquers only by war. Duty is a moralist resting on principle; might is a worldling seeking for pleasure. These are the inward principles contending with each other in every human soul.

To live truly and nobly is to act energetically. Life is a battle to be fought valiantly. Inspired by high and honorable resolves a man must stand to his post, and die there if necessary. Like the hero of old his determination should be "to dare nobly, to will strongly, and never to falter in the path of duty." It has been truly said that man's real greatness consists, not in seeking his own pleasure or fame, but that every man shall do his duty. What most stands in the way of the performance of duty is irresolution, weakness of purpose, and indecision. On the one side are conscience and the knowledge of good and evil; on the other are indolence, selfishness, and love of pleasure. The weak and ill-disciplined will may remained suspended for a time between these influences, but at length the balance inclines one way or another, as the voice of conscience is heeded or passed by. If its warning voice is unheeded the lower influence of selfishness will prevail; thus character is degraded, and manhood abdicates its throne as ruler, and sinks to the level of slave to the senses.

Be not diverted from your duty by any idle reflections the silly world may make upon you. Their censures have no power over you, and, consequently, should not be any part of your

concern. No man's spirits were ever hurt by doing his duty; on the contrary, one good action done, one temptation resisted and overcome, one sacrifice of desire or interest, purely for conscience's sake, will prove a cordial for weak souls most salutary for their real good; conducing not less to their present happiness and welfare than to their eternal and unending good.

TRIALS.



Life, no matter in what aspects it has been presented before us, when we come to the reality, is full of pitfalls and entanglements, into which our unwary feet often stumble. Day after day, as we watch the different vicissitudes of life, we are reminded of the frailty of human hopes and aspirations. As the leaves of the tree, once flourishing, once verdant, lose their vitality and finally waste away, so it is with our

desires and anticipations.

In youth we look forward; the future appears calm and tranquil; as we approach manhood and womanhood life changes its appearance and becomes tempestuous and rough, as the ocean changes before the advancing storm. In the changes of real life joy and grief are never far apart. In the same street the shutters of one house are closed, while the curtains of the next are brushed by the passing dancers. A wedding party returns from church, and a funeral train leaves from the adjacent house. Gladness and sighs brighten and dim the mirror of daily life. Tears and laughter are twin-born. Like two children sleeping in one cradle, when one wakes and stirs the other wakes also.

Be not dismayed at the trials of life; they are sent for your good. God knows what keys in the human soul to touch in order to draw out its sweetest and most perfect harmonies. These may be the strains of sadness and sorrow as well as the loftier notes of joy and gladness. Think not that uninterrupted joy is good. The sunshine lies upon the mountain top all day, and lingers there latest and longest at eventide. Yet is the valley green and fertile, while the peak is barren and unfruitful.

Trials come in a thousand different forms, and as many avenues are open to their approach. They come with the warm throbbing of our youthful lives, keep pace with the measured tread of manhood's noon, and depart not from the descending footsteps of decrepitude and age. We may not hope to be entirely free from either disciplinary trials or

the fiery darts of the enemy until we are through with life's burdens. Men may be so old that ambition has no charm, pleasures may pale on the senses, but they are never too old to experience trials.

Life all sunshine without shade, all happiness without sorrow, all pleasure without pain, were not life at all—at least not human life. Take the life of the happiest. It is a tangled yarn. It is made up of joys and sorrows, and the joys are all the sweeter because of the sorrows. Even death itself makes life more loving; it binds us more closely together while living. The severer trials and hazardous enterprises of life call into exercise the latent faculties of the soul of man. They are for the purpose of putting his manhood to the test, and rouse in him strength, hardihood, and valor. They may be hard to take, though they strengthen the soul. Tonics are always bitter.

Heaven, in its mercy, has placed the fountain of wisdom in the hidden and concealed depths of the soul, that the children of misfortune might seek and find in its healthful waters the antidote and cordial of their cares and calamities. Knowledge and sorrow are blended together, and as closely and inseparably so as ignorance and folly, and for reasons equally as salutary and just. Such is the established course of nature; such is her best and wisest law. When she leads us from what is frivolous and vain in the land of darkness, and brings us to the impressive and true in the land of light, the first act she performs is to remove the scales from our eyes that we may see and weep. We must

first learn to mourn and feel before we can know and think. And the deeper we shall go into the depths below the higher shall we ascend into the heights above.

Man is like a sword in a shop window. Men that look upon the perfect blade do not dream of the process by which it was completed. Man is a sword, daily life is the workshop, and God is the artificer, and the trials and sorrows of life the very things that fashion the man. We should remember when borne down by trials that they are sent to us only for our instructions, even as we darken the cages of our birds when we wish them to sing. Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls, the most massive characters are seamed with cares, martyrs have put on their coronation robes glittering with fire, and through tears many caught their first glimpse of heaven.

Never meet trouble half-way, but let him have the whole walk for his pains. Perhaps he will give up his visit even in sight of your house. If misfortune comes be patient, and he will soon stalk out again, for he can not bear cheerful company. Do not think you are fated to be miserable, because you are disappointed in your expectation and baffled in your pursuits. Do not declare that God has forsaken you when your way is hedged about with thorns, when trials and troubles meet you on every side. No man's life is free from struggles and mortifications, not even the happiest; but every one may build up his own happiness by seeking mental pleasures, and thus making himself independent of outward fortune.

The greatest misfortune of all is not to be able to bear misfortune. Not to feel misfortune is not the part of a mortal; but not to bear it is not becoming in a man. Calamity never leaves us where it finds us; it either softens or hardens the heart of its victim. Misfortune is never mournful to the soul that accepts it, for such do always see in every cloud an angel's face. Every man deems that he has precisely the trials and temptations which are the hardest of all others for him to bear. From the manner in which men bear their conditions we should ofttimes pity the prosperous and envy the unfortunate.

The simplest and most obvious use of sorrow is to remind us of God. It would seem that a certain shock is needed to bring us in contact with reality. We are not conscious of breathing till obstruction makes it felt. So we are not conscious of the mighty cravings of our half divine humanity, we are not aware of the God within us, till some chasm yawns which must be filled, or till the rending asunder of our affection brings us to a consciousness of our need.

To mourn without measure is folly; not to mourn at all is insensibility. God says to the fruit-tree bloom and bear, and to the human heart bear and bloom. The soul's great blooming is the flower of suffering. As the sun converts clouds into a glorious drapery, firing them with gorgeous hues, draping the whole horizon with its glorious costume, and writing victory along their front, so sometimes a radiant heart lets forth its hopes upon its sorrows, and all blackness flies, and troubles that trooped to

appall seem to crowd around as a triumphant procession following the steps of a victor.

SICKNESS.

Sickness takes us aside and sets us alone with God. We are taken into his private chamber, and there he converses with us face to face. The world is afar off, our relish for it is gone, and we are alone with Him. Many are the words of grace and truth which he then speaks to us. All our former props are struck away, and now we must lean on God alone. The things of earth are felt to be vanity. Man's sympathy deserts us. We are cast wholly upon God, that we may learn that his praise and his sympathy are enough.

There is something in sickness that lowers the pride of manhood, that softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy. Who that has languished, even in advanced life, in

sickness, but has thought of the mother who watched over his childhood, who smoothed his pillow, and administered to his helplessness? When a man is laboring under the pain of any distemper, it is then that he recollects there is a God, and that he himself is but a man. No mortal is then the object of his envy, his admiration, or his contempt, and, having no malice to gratify, the tales of slander excite him not. But it unveils to him his own heart. It shows him the need there is for sympathy and love between man and man. Thus disease, opening our eyes to the realities of life, is an indirect blessing. One who has never known a day's illness is lacking in one department, at least, of moral culture. He has lost the greatest lesson of his life; he has missed the finest lecture in that great school of humanity, the sick chamber.

Disease generally begins that equality which death completes. The distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing of real worth left him but the consciousness of innocence.

Sickness brings a share of blessings with it. What stores of human love and sympathy it reveals! What constant, affectionate care is ours! what kindly greetings from friends and associates! This very loosening of our hold upon

life calls out such wealth of human sympathy that life seems richer than before. Then, it teaches humility. Our absence is scarcely noticed. From the noisy, wrestling world we are separated completely; yet our place is filled, and all moves on without us. So we learn that when at last we shall sink forever beneath the waves of the sea of life, there will be but one ripple, and the current will move steadily on.

It is on the bed of sickness that we fully realize the value of good health. The first wealth is health. Sickness is poor-spirited, and can not serve any one; but health is one of the greatest blessings we are capable of enjoying. Money can not buy it; therefore, value it, and be thankful for it. Health is above all gold and treasure. It enlarges the soul, and opens all its powers to receive instruction and to relish virtue. He that has health has but little more to wish for; and he that has it not, in the want of it wants every thing. It is beyond price, since it is by health that money is procured. Thousands, and even millions, are small recompense for the loss of health. Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to one still more implacable, which is assuredly the lot of those who exchange poverty for sickness, though accompanied by wealth.

In no situation and under no circumstances does human character appear to better advantage than when watching by the side of sickness. The helplessness and weakness of the sick chamber makes a most effective appeal to the charity and natural kindness inherent in the

hearts of all, even of the most degraded. Thus it appears that sickness is not only of discipline to the sick one, but it serves also to bring to a more perfect growth the flowers of charity and kindness in the hearts of those who care for the sick one.

It is on the sick-bed that the heart learns most completely the value of self-examination. Life passes before the sick one as a gliding panorama. How strong are the resolutions formed for future guidance! And only God and the angels know how many lives have been turned from evil courses to the right, have been snatched as brands from the burning, who can date their progress in the good and true modes of living from some bed of sickness. Then, let us be patient in sickness. Let us turn it to account in the bettering of our hearts, and thus may we reap from seeming evil what will conduce in no small degree to our ultimate happiness.

SORROW.



Sorrows gather around great souls as storms do around great mountains, but, like them, they break the storms and purify the air. Those who have suffered much are like those who know many languages—they have learned to understand and be understood by all.

Sorrows sober us and make the mind genial. In sorrows we love and trust our friends more tenderly, and the dead become dearer to us. Just as the stars shine out in the night, so there are faces that look at us in our grief, though before they were fading from our recollections. Suffering! Let no man dread it too much, because it is better for him, and will help make him sure of being immortal. Just as it is only at night that other worlds are to be seen shining in the distance, so it is in sorrow—the night of the soul—that we see the farthest, and know ourselves natives of infinity, sons and daughters of immortality.

The path of life meanders through a bright and beautiful world—a world where the fragrant flowers of friendship, nourished by the gentle dews of sympathy and the warm sunlight of affection, bloom in perennial beauty. But through this bright world there flows a stream whose turbid waters cross and recross the path

of every pilgrim. It is the stream of human suffering. As the rose-tree is composed of the sweetest flowers and the sharpest thorns; as the heavens are sometimes overcast, alternately tempestuous and serene, so is the life of man intermingled with hopes and fears, with joy and sorrow, with pleasures, and with pains.

Life is beset with unavoidable annoyances, vexatious cares, and harassing events. But we endure them—we strive to forget them—or, like the dustworn garment, or the soil on our shoes, we brush them off, and, if possible, scarcely bestow a thought on the trouble it requires. But when we have once been called upon to feel and undergo a great sorrow, to bend the back and bow the head, to endure the yoke and suffer the agony, to abide the pelting of the storm of adversity and sorrow, when few, perhaps none, sympathize with us—these are the days of anguish and of darkness, these the nights of desolation and despair; and when they have once come upon us with their appalling weight, their remorseless power, we can never be beguiled into a forgetfulness of them. The memory of them will endure as long as life shall last. We may again behold the beams of a cheerful sun throwing a delusive coloring over the landscape around us, but while our eyes may rest upon the lights they will dwell upon the shadows of the picture.

"Time is the rider that breaks youth." To the young how bright the new world looks! how full of novelty! of enjoyment! of pleasure! But as years pass on they are found to abound in sorrowful scenes as well as those pleasant—

scenes of toil, suffering, difficulty, perhaps misfortune and failure. Happy they who can pass through such trials with a firm mind and a pure heart, encountering trials with cheerfulness, and standing erect beneath even the heaviest burdens.

Sorrow is the noblest of all discipline. Our nature shrinks from it, but it is not the less a discipline. It is a scourge, but there is healing in its stripes. It is a chalice, and the draught is bitter, but health proceeds from the bitterness. It is a crown of thorns, but it becomes a wreath of light on the brow which it has lacerated. It is a cross on which the spirit groans, but every Calvary has an Olivet. To every place of crucifixion there is likewise a place of ascension. The sun that is shrouded is unveiled, and the heavens open with hopes eternal to the soul which was nigh unto despair. Even in guilt sorrow has a sanctity within it. Place a bad man beside the death-bed, or the grave, where all that he loved is cold—we are moved, we are won, by his affection, and we find the divine spark yet alive, which no vice could quench.

Christianity itself is a religion of sorrow. It was born in sorrow, in sorrow it was tried, and by sorrow it was made perfect. The Author of Christianity was a "man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Sorrow is exalting, and a baptism of sorrow is awarded to every one who strives for the higher life. Since Christ wept over Jerusalem the best, the bravest, who have followed him in good will and good deeds have commenced their mission alike in suffering. Sorrow is not to be complained of; it is the

passport by which we are to be made acceptable in that house where all tears shall be wiped away. It has power for good; it has joy within its gloom, and, though Christianity is a religion of trials and suffering, it is not less a religion of hope; it casts down in order to exalt, and if it tries the spirit by affliction it is to prepare it for a future great reward.

All mankind must taste the cup which destiny has mixed, be it bitter or be it sweet. Be not impatient under suffering. It is for the correction of thy soul. It is better to suffer than to injure. It is better to suffer without a cause than that there should be cause for our suffering. By experiencing distress an arrogant insensibility of temper is most effectually corrected. Endeavor to extract a blessing from the remembrance of thy own sufferings. If so be that Providence has so ordered your life that you are not subject to much of the discipline of sorrow, strive to extract this discipline from the consideration of the lot of those less favored than you are. Step aside occasionally from the flowers and smooth paths which it is permitted you to walk in, in order to view the toilsome march of your fellow creatures through the thorny desert. The designed end of temporal afflictions is to cause men to consider their spiritual wants, and to seek the good of their higher natures.

Often suffering not only fails to purify the soul from sin, but aggravates and intensifies its selfish and malignant passions. This is always the case where the heart fails to accept the lesson taught. By submission to sorrow the

sweetest traits of character are developed, as some fruits are brought to perfection only by frost. Misfortune should act upon us or upon our feelings like fire upon old tenements, which are consumed only to be rebuilt with greater perfection. The winds of adversity sweep over the soul and scatter the fairest blossoms of hope. But the blossoms fall that the fruit may appear. So with us, when the flowers of hope are gone, there come the fruits of long-suffering, patience, faith, and love. Thus the darkest clouds which overhang human destiny may often appear the brightest to the angels who behold them with prophetic ken from heaven.

The damps of Autumn sink into the leaves and prepare them for decay, and thus are we, insensibly perhaps, detached from our hold on life by the gentle pressure of recorded sorrows. Who is not familiar with the fact that life, which to the young promises so much, but to the middle-aged presents a stern reality, seems to the old as a day's labor now closing; and even as the laborer, worn by the burdens and heat of the day, looks forward to rest, so does the aged pilgrim, oppressed by the accumulated griefs and sorrows of a life-time, look forward to the rest of death?

The first thing to be conquered in grief is the pleasure we feel in indulging it. Persons may acquire a morbid and unhealthy state of feeling on this subject, and by a constant giving way to feelings of grief become at last so constituted that on the slightest occasions they give way to apparently uncontrollable sorrow, converting

thus what was intended as a means of discipline necessary to soul growth into an evil which contracts life. Remember, then, that in the matter of giving expression to sorrow self-control is no less necessary than in the other affairs of life. There is but one pardonable grief —that for the departed. This pleasing grief is but a variety of comfort, the sighs are but a mournful mode of loving them.

There are sorrows too sacred to be babbled to the world, griefs which one would forbear to whisper even to a friend. Real sorrow is not clamorous. It seeks to shun every eye, and breathes in solitude and silence the sighs that come from the heart. Every heart has also its secret sorrows, of which the world knows nothing, and ofttimes we call a man cold when he is only sorrowful. Sorrow may be divided into two classes—that which really comes from the heart and is for the bettering of man, and that which comes from wounded selfishness, egotism, and pride. It is our duty to strive against giving vent to the latter kind of sorrow. It is, after all, only selfish in feeling and expression. It is the duty of all to cultivate cheerfulness of manner and disposition. Another hath said, "Give not thy mind to heaviness. The gladness of heart is the life of man, and the joyfulness of a man prolongeth his days. Remove sorrow far from thee, for sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein; and carefulness bringeth age before the time."

As limbs which are wrenched violently asunder do not bleed, so the sudden shocks of overwhelming sorrow are unrelieved by tears.

The heart is benumbed. The eyes are dry, and the very fountain of feeling obstructed and stagnant. Our lighter afflictions find relief in lamentations and weeping, and the voice of sympathy and compassion brings some consolation and peace. But when the heart has been deeply and powerfully struck by some cruel blow of destiny, the intensity of suffering exceeds the bounds of sensibility and emotion.

Those who work hard seldom yield themselves entirely up to real or fancied sorrow. When grief sits down, folds its hands, and mournfully feeds upon its own tears, weaving the dim shadows that a little exertion might sweep away into oblivion, the strong spirit is shorn of its might, and sorrow becomes our master. When sorrow, then, pours upon you, instead of giving way to it, rather seek by occupation to divert the dark waters that threaten to overwhelm you into the thousand channels which the duties of life always present. Before you dream of it those waters will fertilize the present and give birth to flowers that may brighten the future—flowers that will become pure and holy in the sunshine which illumes the path of duty, in spite of every obstacle.

POVERTY.



It can not be too often repeated that it is not the so-called blessings of life, its sunshine and calms, that makes men, but its rugged experiences, its storms, tempests, and trials. Early poverty, especially, is emphatically a blessing in disguise. The school of poverty graduates the ablest pupils. It does more, perhaps, than any thing else to develop the energetic, self-reliant traits of character, without which the highest ability makes but sorry work of life's battles. Thousands of men are bemoaning present indigence and obscurity who might have won riches and honor had they only been compelled by early poverty to develop their manhood. As well expect the oak to grow strong in the atmosphere of the hot-house as that man would reach his best estate surrounded from earliest years by the comforts and luxury of wealth.

Many of the evils of poverty are imaginary, arising from mistaken notions we may entertain as to what constitutes happiness and comfort. There is not such a difference as some men imagine between the poor and the rich. In pomp, show, and opinion there is a great deal, but little as to the real pleasures and joys of life.

No man is poor who does not think himself so. But if in a full fortune, with impatience he desires more, he proclaims his wants and his beggarly condition. We are more and more impressed that the poor are only they who feel poor. He whom we esteem wealthy in a true scale would perhaps be found very indigent. Of what avail the wealth of Cr[oe]sus if the heart feels pinched and poor?

It is one of the mysteries of our life that genius, the noblest gift of God to man, is nourished by poverty. Its noblest works have been achieved by the sorrowing ones of the world in tears and despair. Not in the brilliant saloon, furnished with every comfort and elegance; not in the library, well-fitted, softly carpeted, and looking out upon a smooth, green lawn or a broad expanse of scenery; not in ease and competence,—is genius born and nurtured. More frequently in adversity and destitution, amidst the harassing cares of a straitened household, in bare and fireless garrets, is genius born and reared. This is its birthplace, and with such surroundings have men labored, studied, and trained themselves, until they have at last emanated out of the gloom of that obscurity, the shining lights of their time, and exercised an influence upon the thoughts of the world amounting to a species of intellectual legislation.

If there is any thing in the world that a young man should be more grateful for than another, it is the poverty which necessitates his starting in life under very great disadvantages. Poverty is one of the best tests of human quality in

existence. A triumph over it is like graduating with honor from West Point. It demonstrates stuff and stamina. It is a certificate of worthy labor faithfully performed. A young man who can not stand this test is not good for any thing. He can never rise above a drudge or a pauper. If he can not feel his will harden as the yoke of poverty presses upon him, and his pluck rise with every difficulty that poverty throws in his way, he may as well withdraw from the conflict, since his defeat is already assured. Poverty saves a thousand times more men than it ruins; for it only ruins those who are not worth saving, while it saves multitudes of those whom wealth would have ruined.

It is of decided advantage for a man to be under the necessity of having to struggle with poverty, and conquer it. "He who has battled," says Carlyle, "were it only with poverty and toil, will be found stronger and more expert than he who could stay at home from the battle." It is not prosperity so much as adversity, not wealth so much as poverty, that stimulates the perseverance of strong and healthy natures, rouses their energy, and develops their character. Indeed, misfortune and poverty have frequently converted the indolent votary of society into a useful member of the community, and made him a moving power in the great workshop of the world, teaching men, and developing the powers which nature has bestowed on them.

Poverty is the great test of civility and the touchstone of friendship. Amid the poverty and privation of the humblest homes are often

found scenes of magnanimity and self-denial as utterly beyond the belief as it is the practices of the great and rich—acts of self-denial, kindness, and generosity, which borrow no support either from the gaze of the many or the admiration of the few, yet giving daily exhibitions of its strength and constancy. It is the great privilege of poverty to be happy and unenvied, to be healthy without physic, secure without a guard, and to obtain from the bounty of nature what the great and wealthy are compelled to procure by the help of art.

Few are the real wants and necessities of mankind. Some men with thousands a year suffer more for want of means than others with only hundreds. The reason is found in the artificial wants of the former. Though his income is great his wants are still greater, and, as a consequence, his income is not equal to his outgo. There are many wealthy people who, of course, enjoy their wealth, but there are thousands who never know a moment's peace because they live above their means. He who earns but a dollar a day, and does not run in debt, is a happier man. The great secret of being solvent and well-to-do and comfortable is to get ahead of your expenses. Eat and drink this month what you earned last month, not what you are going to earn the next.

Poverty may be a bitter draught, yet it often is a tonic, strengthening all the powers of manhood. Though the drinker makes a wry face there is, after all, a wholesome goodness in the cup. But debt, however courteously it may be offered, is the cup of a siren, and the wine,

spiced and delicious though it be, is poison. The man out of debt, though with a flaw in his jerkin and a hole in his hat, is still the son of liberty, free as the singing bird above him; but the debtor, although clothed in the utmost bravery, what is he but a serf out upon a holiday? a slave to be reclaimed at every instant by his owner, the creditor?

Poverty is never felt so severely as by those who have seen better days. The poverty of the poor has

many elements of hardness, but it is endurable, and is developing their strength and endurance. The poverty of the formerly affluent is, indeed, hard; it avoids the light of the day and shuns the sympathy of those who would relieve its wants; it preys upon the heart and corrodes the mind; the sunshine of life is gone, and it requires a strong mind to resolutely set about to mend the impaired fortune.

It is the misfortune of many young persons today that they begin life with too many advantages. Every possible want of their many-sided nature is supplied before it is consciously felt. Books, teachers, mental and religious training, lectures, amusements, clothes, and food, all of the best quality, and without stint in quantity—in short, the pick of the world's good things—and help of every kind are lavished upon them, till satiety results, and all ambition is extinguished. What motive has a young man for whom life is thus "thrice winnowed" to exert himself? Having supped full of life's sweets he finds them palling on his taste; having done nothing to earn its good things he can not

appreciate their value. Like a hot-house plant, grown weak and spindling through too much shelter and watching, he needs nothing so much as to be set in the open air of the world, and to grow strong with struggling for existence.

It is a fact that the working, successful men of to-day were once industrious, self-reliant boys. And the same thing will be repeated, for from the ranks of the hard-working, economical, temperate, and self-reliant boys of to-day will emanate the progressive, prominent men of the future. All boys should grow up strong as steel bars, fighting their way to an education, and then, when they are all ready, plunging into real life. The majority of the men of mark in this country are not the sons of those whose fathers could give them all they want, and much more than they should have, but are those who were brought up in cottages and cabins, cutting their way through difficulties on every side to their present commanding position.

Of all poverty that of the mind is the most deplorable. And it is, at the same time, without excuse. Every one who wills it can lay in a rich store of mental wealth. The poor man's purse may be empty, but he has as much gold in the sunset, and as much silver in the moon, as any body. Wealth of heart is not dependent upon wealth of purse. Home comfort and happiness does not depend upon elegance of surroundings. But it is found in the spirit presiding over the household; this is the spirit of loving kindness, and is as apt to dwell with poverty as with wealth. Thus the evils of

poverty are much exaggerated. And the evils, if evils they be, are, after all, for our own ultimate good.

AFFLICTION.

There is an elasticity to the human mind capable of bearing much, but which will not show itself until a certain weight of affliction be put upon it. "Fear not the darkness," saith the Persian proverb; "it conceals perhaps the springs of the water of life." Experience is often bitter, but wholesome. Only by its teachings can we learn to suffer and be strong. Character in its highest forms is disciplined by trial and made perfect through suffering. Even from the deepest sorrow the patient and thoughtful mind will gather a richer mead than pleasure ever yielded.



BEREAVEMENT.

Think it not unkind when afflictions befall thee; it is all for the best that they are sent. God calls those whom he loveth, and why should he not claim his own jewels to shine in his house, though our own be made dreary? It may seem hard under such circumstances to say that it is

"all for the best." The human heart is prone to give over to grief and lamentations; but wait, soon, when like the tired pilgrim thou shalt fall sick and weary, He will take you home to rejoice in finding friends from whom you have been separated. Then how true will be the saying that "it was all for the best!"

Sad accidents and a state of affliction are a school of virtue. It reduces our spirits to soberness and our counsels to moderation; it corrects levity. God, who governs the world in mercy and wisdom, never would have suffered the virtuous ones to endure so many keen afflictions did he not intend that they should be the seminary of comfort, the nursery of virtue, the exercise of wisdom, and the trial of patience, the venturing for a crown and the gate of glory. Much of the most useful work done by men and women has been done amidst afflictions—sometimes as a relief from it, sometimes as a sense of duty overpowering personal sorrow.

Adversity is the touch-stone of character. As some herbs need to be crushed to give forth their sweetest odors, so some natures need to be tried by suffering to evoke the excellence that is in them. Grief is a common bond that unites hearts. It can knit hearts closer than happiness can, and common sufferings are far stronger links than common joys. The visitations of sorrow are universal. There beats not a heart but that it has felt the force of affliction. There is not an eye but has witnessed many scenes of sorrow.

They are always impaired by sorrow who are

not thereby improved. Some natures are like grapes—the more they are downtrodden the richer tribute they supply. It may be affirmed substantially that good men reap more real benefit from their affliction than bad men do from their prosperities; for what they lose in wealth, pleasure, or honor they gain in wisdom and tranquillity of mind. "No creature would be more unhappy," said Demetrius, "than a man who had never known affliction." The best need afflictions for the trial of their virtue. How can we exercise the grace of contentment if all things succeed well? or that of forgiveness if we have no enemies?

At a superficial view it appears that adversity happens to all alike, without regard to rank or condition. The good are apparently as little favored by fortune in this respect as the bad, the high as the humble. People are continually rising and falling in all the grades of society. We often see men of high expectations suddenly cut down, and left to struggle with despair and ruin. If the happiness of mankind depended upon the caprice of fortune, their condition would be wretched. But it is possible to possess a mind which will not lose its tranquillity in the severest adversity, or at least such a one as, being disturbed and deprived of its wonted serenity by a sudden calamity, will recover in a short period, and assume its native buoyancy by the shock which it has experienced.

How uncertain is human life! There is but a breath of air and a beat of a heart betwixt this world and the next. In the brief interval of painful and awful suspense, while we feel that

death is present with us, we are powerless and he all powerful. The last faint pulsation here is but the prelude of endless joys hereafter. In the midst of the stunning calamity about to befall us, when death is in the family circle, and some loved one is about to be taken from us, we feel as if earth had no compensating good to mitigate the severity of our loss. But we forget that there is no grief without some beneficent provisions to soften its intensities. Thus in the presence of death there is also a consolation. Has the life been stormy? There is now rest; rest for the troubled heart and the weary head. And it can be known only by experience with what a longing many hearts thus look forward to the rest of death. Many whom the world regards as peculiarly blessed by Providence carry with them such corroding, anxious cares that it is with a feeling of relief that they contemplate the approach of death. To them death comes in its most beautiful form. He borrows the garb of gentle sleep, lays down his iron scepter, and his cold hand falls as warm as the hand of friendship over the weary heart now ceasing to beat.

Grief or misfortune seems to be indispensable to the development of intelligence, energy, and virtue. The trials to which humanity are subject are necessary to draw them from their lethargy, to disclose their character. Afflictions even have the effect of eliciting talents which, in prosperous circumstances, would have lain dormant. Suffering, indeed, seems to have been as divinely appointed as joy, while it is much more influential as a discipline of character.

Suffering may be the appointed means by which the highest nature of man is to be disciplined and developed. Sometimes a heart-break rouses an impassive nature to life. "What does he know," said a sage, "who has not suffered?"

No soul is so obscure that God does not take thought for its schooling. The sun is the central light of the solar system; but it has a mission to the ripening corn and the purpling clusters on the vine, as well as the ponderous planet. The sunshine that comes filtering through the morning mists with healing on its wings, and charming all the birds to singing, should have also a message from God to sad hearts. No soul is so grief-laden that it may not be lifted to sources of heavenly comfort by recognizing the Divine love in the perpetual recurrence of earthly blessings.

Afflictions sent by Providence must be submitted to in a humble spirit. Otherwise they will not conduce to lasting good. The same furnace that hardens clay liquefies gold; and the manifestation of Divine power Pharaoh found his punishment, but David his pardon. As the musician straineth at his strings, and yet breaketh none of them, but maketh thereby a sweeter melody and better concord, so God, through affliction, makes his own better unto the fruition and enjoyment of the life to come. Afflictions are the medicine of the mind. If they are not toothsome, let it suffice that they are wholesome. It is not required in physic that it should please, but that it should heal.

Let one of our loved ones be taken away, and

memory recalls a thousand sayings to regret. Death quickens recollection painfully. The grave can not hide the white face of the one who sleeps. The coffin and the green mound are cruel magnets. They draw us further than we would go. They force us to remember. A man never sees so far into human life as when he looks over a wife's or a mother's grave. His eyes get wondrous clear then, and he sees as never before what it is to love and be loved, what it is to injure the feelings of the beloved.

When death comes into a household, we do not philosophize; we only feel. The eyes that are full of tears do not see, though, in the course of time, they come to see more clearly and brightly than those that have never known sorrow. Perhaps the heaviest affliction of life is that of the mother who has lost a child. As the waters roll in on shore with incessant throbs—not alone when storms prevail, but in calms as well—so it is with a mother's heart, bereaved of her children. Death always speaks with a voice of instruction and reproof; but when the first death happens in a home it speaks with a voice which scarcely any other form of tribulation can equal.

Some of the saddest experiences of life come without premonition. Yesterday life went well; hope was in the ascendant; it was easy to be content. To-day all is reversed. The crushed heart can scarcely lift itself to pray; speech seems paralyzed. It seems cruel that such calamity should be permitted, when we might have been so happy. Was there not some way by which it could have been avoided? What are

life's compensations now? What are its ambitions worth in the face of this? In a great affliction there is no light, either in the mind or in the sun; for when the inward light is fed with fragrant oil, there can be no darkness, though clouds should cover the sun. But when, like a sacred lamp in the temple, the inward light is quenched, there is no light outwardly, though a thousand suns should preside in the heavens.

Why should body and soul be plunged into sorrow's dungeon when God sees fit to afflict? Is not the world as bright as of yore? Are there not still some happy phases to life's weary pilgrimage? We should not complain of oppression, but, with submission and love, perform the duties of life; and though sorrow and grief come, we must not let darkness obscure the talents which God has given to promote our own and others' happiness, or bury them with the brighter past, but nobly use them, and count all sorrow as naught in comparison with the future great reward of right actions. After this life of sorrow and pain, where we are continually weighed down with care, there is a home of perpetual rest, the streets of which are thronged with an angelic host, who, "with songs on their lips and with harps in their hands," tell neither the sorrow nor grief which perhaps wasted their lives. To bear the ills of life patiently is one of the noblest virtues, and one that requires as vigorous an exercise of the will as to resent the encroachments of wrong.



DISAPPOINTMENTS.



It is sometimes of God's mercy that men in the eager pursuit of ambitious plans are baffled; for they are very like a train on down grade—pulling on the brake is not pleasant, but it keeps the car on the track. We mount to heaven mostly on the ruins of our cherished schemes, finding in our failures our real successes.

Disappointments seem to be the lot of man. From the little child with golden hair attempting to catch the glancing sunbeams to the old man who, with whitened locks and bent frame, pursues some scheme of wealth, disappointment is the almost inevitable consequence. Well it is for us that the future is veiled from our eyes, else we would weary of the trials and allurements that make up the sum of our existence. The child looks forward to manhood; his dreams are speculative; the man looks back to childhood, and thinks of the happy days of old. From the time he sits on his mother's knee, with the sunlight streaming in

through the open window, until the last hours of life, when the sunlight glances in through closed shutters, he is playing with shadows.

And one of the saddest thoughts that come to us in life is the thought that in this bright, beautiful, joy-giving world of ours there are so many shadowed lives. If disappointment came only to the lot of the sinning, even then we might drop a tear over him whose errors wrought their own recompense. But it is not so. The most pure lives are sometimes those that are the fullest of disappointments. With one it is the wreck of a great ambition. He has builded his ship, and launched it on the sea of life freighted with the richest jewels of his strength and manhood. Behold, it comes back to him beaten, battered, and torn by the fury of the gale—the wreck of a first trial.

Many are disappointed because they do not look for happiness and success either in the right spirit or by the proper methods. There is a legend told of a knight who,—

"In the brave days of old,"

journeyed far away in search of the Holy Grail. He engaged in great pursuits. He sought the most arduous undertakings. But failing to seek in the right spirit his search and his efforts were in vain. At length, wearied and disappointed, he sought his native land. Here, in the work of daily, trifling duties, humbly seeking to do what was right, he unexpectedly found that for which he had so long searched. In life we all seek happiness and success. There is but one way in which we can succeed; when we admit that

happiness is but a state of the mind, and that success is the faithful performance of known duties, then shall we acquire both. Though we may wander the wide world over, and gather wealth and fame, they will be found impotent to confer happiness, and life to us will seem full of disappointments; but it is so simply because we failed to seek for life in that spirit of quiet content which alone conducts us to its portals.

It never yet happened to any man since the beginning of the world, nor ever will, to have all things according to his desires. And there never was any one yet to whom fortune was not at some time opposite and adverse. Those who risk nothing can, of course, lose nothing; sowing no hopes they can not suffer from the blight of disappointment. But let him who is enlisted for the war expect to meet the foe. It is with life's troubles as with the risks of the battle-field; there is always less of aggregate danger to the party who stands firm than to the one who gives way. To give way to disappointments is to invite defeat. To bravely cast about for means to resist them is to put them to flight, and out of temporary misfortune to lay the foundation of a more glorious success. Send disappointments to the winds; take life as it is, and, with a strong will, make it as near what it should be as possible.

Dark and full of disappointments may be our lot, and we may not be able to fathom the reason for them; but if we can only bring ourselves to see that they are for our good, that we need their chastening influence, all will be well in the end. In the trials of life we must

look more for consolation within than from without. The surest consolations of life are those which we thus derive from our own thoughts. For this end it matters not so much whether we spend time in study or toil; the thoughts of the mind should go out and reach after higher good. In this manner we may improve ourselves till our thoughts come to be sweet companions that shall lead us along the paths of virtue. Thus we may grow better within, whilst the cares of life, the losses and the disappointments lose their sharp thorns, and the journey of life be made comparatively pleasant and happy.

It is generally known that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectations. It is human to err; so it is the lot of mortals to be disappointed, for never yet did error secure the end wished. It is, however, the better philosophy to take things calmly and endeavor to be content with our lot. We may at least add some rays of sunshine to our path if we earnestly endeavor to dispel the clouds of discontent that may arise in our bosom, and by so doing enjoy more fully the bountiful blessing that God gives to his humblest creatures. The great secret of avoiding disappointment is not to expect too much. Despair follows immoderate hopes, as the higher a body rises the heavier it falls to the ground.

Time is the great consoler of the world, inasmuch as he heals our sorrows and trials. But time, in dashing to pieces our most cherished plans and brightest dreams, also

brings us to many disappointments which in turn disappear with the passage of years. While sagacity contrives, patience matures, and labor industriously executes, disappointment laughs at the curious fabric formed by so many efforts and gay with so many brilliant colors, and when the artist imagines the work arrived at the moment of completion, brushes away the beautiful fabric, and leaves nothing behind.

We thus see that life is, indeed, a variegated scene, full of trials and full of joys—bright dreams, some fulfilled, more disappointed. What is the lesson for us to learn from this? Perhaps the truest philosophy is not to expect much, to be moderate in our plans and hopes. In youth especially are we apt to be over sanguine. Reflect that life is full of disappointments, that it is vain for you to expect to escape them. But also learn to go forward with a brave face. You may fail, but from this failure you can organize future success. Because disappointed in one particular plan, it is no reason why you should abandon all plans, and settle down to the conviction that life itself is a failure. Show yourself a man, and rise superior to misfortune, and you will be rewarded by a final victory made more glorious by temporary discouragement, just as the sun bursting from behind the clouds lights up the landscape with a more glorious light because of the storms of the morning.



FAILURE.



It is a mistake to suppose that men succeed through success; they much oftener succeed through failure. By far the best experience of men, experience from which they gain the most of lasting value, is gathered from their failures in their dealings with others in the affairs of life. Such failures, for sensible men, incite to better self-management and greater tact and self-control, as a means of avoiding them in the future. Ask the successful business man, and he will tell you that he learned the secret of success through being baffled, defeated, thwarted, and circumvented, far more than from his successes. Precept, study, advice, and example could never have taught them so well as failure has done. It has disciplined and taught them what to do as well as what *not* to do. And this latter is often of more importance than the former.

Many have to make up their minds to encounter failure again and again before they finally succeed; but if they have pluck, the failure will only serve to rouse their energies,

and stimulate them to renewed efforts. Failure in one direction has sometimes had the effect of forcing the far-seeing student to apply himself in another, which latter application has in many instances proven to be in just the line that they were fitted for. No one can tell how many of the world's most brilliant geniuses have succeeded because of their first failures. Failures in many instances are only means that Providence takes to work an otherwise too pliable disposition into one fitted to confront the stern duties of life. Even as steel is tempered by heat, and, through much hammering and changing of original form, is at last wrought into useful articles, so in the history of many men do we find that they were attempered in the furnace of trials and affliction, and only through failures in first attempts were at length fitted for the ultimate success that crowned their efforts.

They are doubly in error who suffer themselves to give up the battle at one, or even two successive, failures. As in the military field he is the greater general who from defeat organizes ultimate victory, so in the battle of life he is the true hero who, even while smarting under the sting of present failure, lays his plans and summons his forces for a triumphant victory. We must not allow our jaundiced views to prevail over our knowledge of men and affairs. The world is not coming to an end, nor society going to destruction, because our petty plans have miscarried. The present failure should only teach you to be more wary in the future, and thus will you

gather a rich harvest as the final outcome of your efforts.

Above all, do not sink into apathy and despair. Rouse yourself, and do not allow your best years to slip past because you have not succeeded as you thought you would. Is not the sun as bright, nature as smiling as before? Why, then, do you go about as if all hope had fled? Know you not that

"In the reproof of chance
Lies the true proof of men."

As in the physical world, disease is but the effort nature makes to remove some pressing evil, so failure should be but the methods whereby we are enabled to eliminate those traits of character which are a hindrance to our lasting success. As the inventor subjects his production to the most rigorous tests in order that inherent defects may become known and, if possible, remedied, even so does Providence, in subjecting us to great trials, discover to us by our failures wherein we lack; and we are remiss in duty to ourselves do we not most earnestly endeavor to improve by these tests?

The man who never failed is a myth. Such a one never lived, and is never likely to. All success is a series of efforts in which, when closely viewed, are to be seen more or less failures. These efforts are ofttimes not visible to the naked eye, but each individual heart is painfully conscious of how many of its most cherished plans ended only in failures. If you fail now and then, do not be discouraged; bear in mind that it is only the part and experience

of every successful man. We might even go farther, and say that the most successful men often have the most failures. These failures, which to the feeble are mere stumbling-blocks, to the strong serve to remove the scales from their eyes, so that they now see clearer, and go on their way with a firmer tread and a more determined mien, and compel life to yield to them its most enduring trophies.

The weakling goes no farther than his first failure; he lags behind, and subsides into a life of discontent and vain regrets; and so by this winnowing process the number of the athletes is restricted to few, and there is clear space in the arena for those who determinedly press on. There can hardly be found a successful man who will not admit that he was made so by failure, and that what he once thought his hard fate was in reality his good fortune. Success can not be gained by a hop, skip, and a jump, but by arduous passages of gallant perseverance, toilsome efforts long sustained, and, most of all, by repeated failure; for the failures are but stepping-stones, or, at the worst, non-attainment of the desired end before the time.

If success were to crown your efforts now, where would be the great success of the future? It is the brave resolution to do better next time that lays the substrata of all real greatness. Many a prominent reputation has been destroyed by early success. Too often the effect of such success is to sap the energies. Imagining fame or fortune to be won, future efforts are remitted; relying on the fame of past achievements, the fact is overlooked that it is

labor alone that renders any success certain; and so by the remission of labor and energy, disgrace or failure awakens him from his delusive dreams; but, alas! in how many instances the awakening comes too late!

There is no more prolific source of repining and discontent in life than that found in looking back upon past mistakes. We are fond of persuading ourselves and others that had others acted differently our whole course in life would have been one of unmixed success instead of the partial failure that it so often appears. If we would only look on past mistakes in the right spirit—in the spirit of humility, and with a desire to learn from past errors—it would be well; but the error men make in this review is in attributing the failures to circumstances instead of to character. They see the mistakes which lie on the surface, but fail to trace them back to the source from whence they spring. The truth is, that even trifling circumstances are the occasions for bringing out the predominant traits of character. They are tests of the nature and quality of the man rather than the causes of future success or failure.

None can tell how weighty may be the results of even trivial actions, nor how much of the future is bound up in our every-day decisions. Chances are lost, opportunities wasted, advisers ill-chosen, and disastrous speculations undertaken, but there is nothing properly accidental in these steps. They are to be regarded as the results of unbalanced characters, as much as the cause of future misery. The disposition of mind that led to

these errors would certainly, under other circumstances, have led to different, but not less lamentable results.

We see clearly in judging others. We attribute their mischances without compunction to the faults we see in them, and sometimes even make cruel mistakes in our investigation; but in reviewing our own course self draws a veil over our imperfections, and we persuade ourselves that mistakes or unfortunate circumstances are the entire cause of all our misfortunes. It is true that no circumstances are always favorable, no training perfectly judicious, no friend wholly wise, yet he who is always shifting the blame of his failures upon these external causes is the very man who has the most reason to trace them to his own inherent weakness or demerits.

It is questionable whether the habit of looking much at mistakes, even of our own, is a very profitable one. It might be rendered of use were we only to do so in the proper spirit. Certainly the practice of mourning over and bewailing them, and charging upon them all the evils that afflict us, is the most injurious to our future course, and the greatest hindrance to any real improvement of character. Acting from impulse, and not from reason, is one of the chief causes of these mistakes; and if any would avoid them in the future they must test all their sudden impulses by the searching and penetrating ordeal of their best judgment before acting upon them. Above all, the steady formation of virtuous habits, the subjection of all actions to principles rather than to policy, the firm and unyielding adherence to duty, as

far as it is known, are the best safeguards against mistakes in life.

Who lives that has not, during his life, aspired to something that he was unable to reach? The sorrows of mankind may all be traced to blighted hopes; like frost upon the green leaves comes the chilling conviction that our hopes are forever dead. We may live, but he who has placed his whole mind on the attainment of some object and fails to reach it, life to him seems a burden—a weary burden. To youth blighted hopes come like the cold dew of evening upon the flowers. The sun next morning banishes the dew, and the flower is brighter and purer from its momentary affliction. Sorrow purifies the heart of youth as the rain purifies the growing plant. But to the man of mature years the blighting of cherished hopes falls with a chilling effect. 'T is hard to proceed as though nothing had happened—to cheerfully take up life's load, yet such is the course of true manhood; this is the inheritance of life—the test of character.

Our world presents a strangely different aspect according to the different moods in which it is viewed. To him whose efforts have been crowned with success it is superlatively beautiful; to him whose life has known no care it appears to be filled with all manner of comfortable things; to those who pine in sickness and suffering, the unfortunate, and those whose efforts have ended only in failure, it most truthfully seems to be "a vale of tears," and human life itself a bubble raised from those tears and inflated with sighs, which, after

floating a little while, decked, it may be, with a few gaudy colors from the hand of fortune, is at last touched by the hand of death, and dissolves.

He who has a stout heart will do stout-hearted actions—actions which, however unconscious the doer may be of the fact, can not fail to have something of immortality in their essence—something that in all coming time will preserve alive their memory long after the valiant doer has lain in dust. Such a man will not be daunted by difficulties. Opposition will but serve as fuel to the fire which feeds the spirit of self-reliance within him, stimulating him to still greater efforts, and, in fact, creating opportunities for them. And though, in the nature of things, failure must often be his portion, still they will nerve him anew for the struggles of active life, and endow him with courage to meet the further disappointments which past experience will have taught him are likely to be his lot.

Neither will he, in his efforts to attain some great end, to bring to happy accomplishment some noble work, be daunted by the reflection that he can never be sure of success even in enterprises springing from the highest motives and steadfastly pursued at the cost of all that is dearest. To him it will suffice that the end he has in view is the right one, and that if he is not destined to accomplish it eventually it must triumph. With prophetic eye he looks forward to the dawning of the time when, long after he has been called hence, posterity shall enter into his labor and eat of the fruit of the tree that he

has planted.

DESPONDENCY.

"The darkest day,
Live till to-morrow, will have passed away."

There are dark hours that mark the history of the brightest years. For not a whole month in any one of the thousand of the past, perhaps, has the sun shone brilliantly all the time. And there have been cold and stormy days in every year, and yet the mists and shadows of the darkest hours were dissipated and flitted heedlessly away. In the wide world also we have the overshadowing of dark hours. There were hours of despondency when Shakespeare thought himself no poet and Raphael no painter, when the greatest wits doubted the excellence of their happiest efforts.

But we have also bright days to offset the sad ones. Though there are the dark ones, when the

fire will neither burn on our hearths nor our hearts, and all without and within is dismal and dark, there come days when we rejoice in the brightness of hope and prosperity. It is human nature to look upon only the bright and cheery scenes of life, to forget its trials and storms in the light of the present. But let us not forget that there will come other moments, when the eye will be less calm, the cheek less bright, and the tongue less silent; the brain will be full of imaginings, pensive and sad, its inmost springs less elastic and buoyant.

Despondency too long continued gives place to despair. No calamity can produce such a paralysis of the mind. It is the capstone of the climax of human misery. The mental powers are frozen with indifference, the heart becomes ossified with melancholy, the soul is shrouded in a cloud of gloom. No words of consolation, no cheerful repartee can break the death-like calm; no love can warm the pent-up heart, no sunbeam dispel the dark cloud. Time may effect a change; death will break the monotony. We can extend our kindness, but can not relieve the victim. We may trace the cause of this awful disease; God only can effect a cure. We may speculate upon its nature, but can not feel its force until its iron hand is laid upon us. We may call it weakness, but can not prove or demonstrate the proposition. We may call it folly, but can point to no frivolity to sustain our position. We may call it madness, but can discover no maniac action. We may call it stubborness, but can see no exhibition of indocility. We may call it lunacy, but can not

perceive the incoherence of that unfortunate condition. We can properly call it nothing but dark, gloomy despair, an inexpressible numbness of all the sensibilities rendering a man happy.

It is, indeed, a happy providence that has given to mankind the bright, shining sun of hope to dispel the gloom of despondency. We have all seen the sun burst from behind the clouds and light up a storm-swept landscape. Even so, when the hand of misfortune has darkened our brightest prospects and swept away our sunlit dreams of future happiness, has some unseen monitor inspired our drooping spirit with hope and bid us struggle on; and as we look forward into the future fancy points us to a brighter day's dawning. When the soul is often bowed down with the weight of its own sorrows and the heart is well-nigh crushed, even then some faint glimmering of a happier future steals upon it like a rainbow of light.

It is to be feared that many do not as resolutely fight against fits of despondency as they might. Many fits of the blues need but to be resolutely contended against, and they will disappear; harbored, they will grow into despondency and despair. It is worth while to remember that fortune is like the skies in April, sometimes clouded and sometimes clear and favorable, and it would be folly to despair of again seeing the sun because to-day is stormy. So it is equally unwise to sink into despondency when fortune frowns, since in the common course of things she may be surely expected to smile again.

Life is a warfare, and he who easily desponds deserts a double duty—he betrays the noblest property of man, his dauntless resolution, and he rejects the providence of God, who guides and rules the universe. There is but one way of looking at fate—whatever that may be, whether blessings or afflictions—to behave with dignity under both. We must not lose heart, or it will be the worse, both for ourselves and for those whom we love. To struggle, and again and again to renew the conflict—*this* is life's inheritance.

Do not, then, allow yourself to sink into despondency. Man is born a hero, and it is only by darkness and storms that heroism gains its greatest and best development and illustrations; then it kindles the black cloud into a blaze of glory, and the storm bears it to its destiny. Despair not, then. Mortifying failures may attend this effort and that one, but only be honest and struggle on, and it will all work out right in the end. Do not make the mistake, either, of supposing that despondency is a state of humility; on the contrary, it is the vexation and despair of a cowardly pride; nothing is worse; whether we stumble or whether we fall, we must only think of rising again, and going on in our course.

Do your work, then; only let it be a noble one. Be faithful to your trust. If you have but one talent improve it; do not bury it in the earth because you have not ten. Toil steadily and hopefully on, for life is too short to admit of delay or despondency. Let those who are in sorrow remember that deliverance may be

coming, though they see it not. Your days may wear more gold in the morning, and more at night, though the midday be full of snow. God may be gracious, though he comes to us robed in darkness and clothed in storms. It is a journey of release towards the Spring when Winter is coldest and darkest. Despondency is but the shadow of too much happiness thrown by our spirits upon the sunshiny side of life. Look up, and God will give you a song in your heart instead of a tear in your eye.

Causeless depression of spirits is not to be reasoned with, nor can even David's harp charm it away by sweet discoursings. As well fight with the mists as with this shapeless, undefinable, yet all-beclouding, hopelessness. Yet we are familiar with many such instances in practical, every-day life. Many who have much to be thankful for are full of complaint. Such disposition is no less unfortunate than it is reprehensible. They make miserable not only their own life, but also the lives of those with whom they are in daily contact. No doubt the one given over to causeless melancholy feels a full weight of sorrow, and those who laugh at his grief, could they but experience it, would quickly be sobered into compassion. What is wanted is a firm reliance on Providence, and a determination to do your duty; then go forward bravely and cheerfully, resolutely fight against this disposition. Your life will be much happier.

The trouble is, that many of us, when we are under any affliction, are troubled with a certain malicious melancholy. We only dwell and pore upon the sad and dark occurrences of

Providence, but never take notice of the more benign and bright ones. Our way in this world is, like a walk under a row of trees, checkered with light and shade, and, because we can not all along walk in the sunshine, we, therefore, perversely fix upon the darker passages, and so lose all the comfort of the cheering ones. We are like froward children, who, if you take one of their playthings from them, throw away all the rest in spite. What a pitiable confession is this of human weakness! Let us, then, strive against such a spirit of despondency. Even when the way before us is both dark and dreary it still is worse than useless to give way to despondency. Think not that you are forsaken; you have much still to make life enjoyable. Energy and proper application may recover what you have lost; take heart; pluck up courage; give not over to despondency; by resolutely confronting the evils of life they will lose their force.

FAITH.

"Faith is the subtle chain
That binds us to the infinite; the voice
Of a deep life within, that will remain
Until we crowd it thence."



Faith is the true prophet of the soul, and ever beholds a spiritual life, spiritual relations, labors, and joys. Its office is to teach man that he is a spiritual being, that he has an inward life enshrined in this material encasement—an immortal gem set now in an earthly casket. It assures man that he lives not for this life alone, but for another superior to this, more glorious and real. It teaches that God is a spirit, and seeks to worship him as such. It dignifies humanity with immortality. It dwells ever upon an unseen world, announcing always that unseen realities are eternal.

A living, active faith is not only a necessity, if

we would reap great good, but it is so founded on the nature of things that it is natural for men to have a faith in the promises of others. It is only from experience that the little child learns to distrust others. Then, there is the faith in one's own powers. This is as necessary a form of faith as any, and where not allowed to degenerate into egotism is a most beneficent form of faith. Its true foundation is the same as any faith; that is, reliance on God's promises. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Hence, relying on this, and putting forth the necessary exertions, why not confidently expect a fulfillment of the promise? This is the germ of all true self-reliance.

A true faith we can somehow reach all through life, and it will bring to the soul a rich meed of consolation, even in the shades of life. We can cherish a sure hope about our future and the future of those that belong to us—a sunny, eager onlooking toward the fulfillment of all the promises God has written on our nature. We should have faith in the ultimate triumph of the good and the true. It is quite the fashion of the times to lament over the degeneracy of the present, and to think of the palmy day long since past. We have indeed read history to but little account do we not realize that the world is growing better, and feel confident of the ultimate triumph of the forces of good.

Life grows darker as we go on, till only one pure light is left shining on it, and that is faith. Old age, like solitude and sorrow, has its revelations. It is then that we perceive the

hollowness and emptiness of many of the bubbles we have been pursuing. Fortunate is he who in that hour can rest down on the promise of God with a steadfast faith. When in your last hour all faculty in your broken spirit shall fade away, and sink into inanity—imagination, thought, effort, enjoyment, all fade away—then will the flower of belief, which blossoms even in the night, remain to refresh you with its fragrance in the last darkness.

Morality as a guiding light to man sometimes conduces to noble ends. It is sometimes so resplendent as to make a man walk through life amid glory and acclamation; but it is apt to burn very dimly and low when carried into the "valley of the shadow of death." But faith is like the evening star, shining into our souls, the more gloomy is the night of death in which they sink. Surrounded by friends and the comforts of life, morality appears sufficient; but when the storms of life blow upon us, then we see how necessary to us is a faith in God's Word and his promises. Its light only is capable of dispelling the gloom of our surroundings.

Never yet did there exist a full faith which did not expand the intellect while it purified the heart, which did not multiply the aims and objects of the understanding while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions. Faith often builds in the dungeon and lazar-house its sublimest shrine, and up through roofs of stone, that shut out the eye of heaven, ascends the ladder of prayer, where the angels glide to and fro. Faith is the key that unlocks the cabinet of God's treasures, the messenger

from the celestial world to bring all the supplies that we need. It converses with angels and antedates the hymns of glory. To every man this grace is certain that there are glories for him if he walks by faith and perseveres in duty. Faith is a homely, private capital, as there are public savings-banks and poor funds, out of which in times of need we can relieve the necessities of individuals; so here the faithful take their coin in peace.

A Christian builds his fortitude on a better foundation than stoicism. He is pleased with every thing that happens, because he knows it could not have happened unless it first pleased God, and that which pleases him must be the best. He is assured that no new thing can befall him, and that he is in the hands of a Father who will prove him with no affliction that resignation can not conquer or that death can not cure. In the darkest night faith sees a star, in the times of greatest need finds a helping hand, and in the times of sorest trouble hears a sympathizing voice.

Judge not a man by his outward manifestation of faith, for some there are who tremblingly reach out shaking hands to the guidance of faith; others who stoutly venture in the dark their human confidence, the leader which they mistake for faith; some whose hope totters upon crutches; others who stalk into futurity upon stilts. Faith is not an exotic that grows in but one clime. The snows of an eternal Winter can not quench its fire, neither can the glow of a tropical sun destroy its life and freshness. In the palace of the king or the hut of

the peasant, in the homes of the rich or the cabins of the poor it emits its fragrance with equal powers to please. It is as necessary to the learned as to the ignorant, and comforts alike the declining years of the sage and him who never knew the value of education.

As the flower is before the fruit, so is faith before good works. He who has strong faith will show his faith by his works. If he has faith in himself he shows it by ambitious plans, resolves, and endeavors. A true faith is necessary to enable us to make the most of life and its possibilities. We need a faith in our fellow-men. In all the ordinary business transactions we must exercise this virtue or accomplish nothing. Did you ever reflect what this world would be were all faith destroyed? Faith and confidence are synonymous terms. What a wilderness would this be were the confidence which exists between husband and wife destroyed or did not mutual confidence exist between the members of the same family circle! Home would cease to be home; family ties would prove to be bonds of straw; communities could not be held together; the vast fabric of society would dissolve, and smiling countries would once more be the abode of savages. Too great a confidence bespeaks a trusting simplicity suited only for childish years. But an utterly incredulous nature, refusing to believe unless supported by the evidence of his own senses, as certainly portrays the selfish, narrow, and bigoted nature as that fields of waving grain are proof positive of fertile soil, the shining sun, and the early and

later rain.

WORSHIP.



Prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the sky drops the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass, yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great shower at certain seasons did supply the rest, so the customary devotion of prayer twice a day is the falling of the early and the latter dew. But if you will increase and flourish in works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let fall in a full shower of prayer. Choose out seasons when prayer shall overflow like Jordan in times of harvest.

Real inward devotion knows no prayer but that arising from the depths of its own feeling. Perfect prayer, without a spot or blemish,

though not a word be spoken and no phrases known to mankind be uttered, always plucks the heart out of the earth, and moves it softly, like a censer, to and fro beneath the face of heaven. A good man's prayer will, from the deepest dungeon, climb heaven's height, and bring a blessing down. Prayer is the wing wherewith the soul flies to heaven, and meditation the eye wherewith we see God.

He that acts toward men as if God saw him, and prays to God as if men heard him, although he may not obtain all that he asks, or succeed in all that he undertakes, will most probably deserve to do so; for, with respect to his actions toward men, however much he may fail with regard to others, yet if pure and good, with regard to himself and his highest interests they can not fail. And with respect to his prayers to God, though they can not make the Deity more *willing* to give, yet they will, and must, make the suppliant more *worthy* to receive.

Between the humble and contrite heart and the Majesty of heaven there are no barriers. The only password is prayer. Prayer is a shield to the sword, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan. Prayer has a right to the word "ineffable." It is an hour of outpouring which words can not express—of that interior speech which we do not articulate even when we employ it. The very cry of distress is an involuntary appeal to that invisible Power whose aid the soul invokes. Our prayer and God's mercy are like two buckets in a well; while one ascends the other descends.

For the most part, we should pray rather in

aspiration than petition, rather by hoping than requesting; in which spirit, also, we may breathe a devout wish for a blessing on others upon occasions when it might be presumptuous to beg it. Prayer is not eloquence, but earnestness: not the definition of helplessness, but the feeling it; not figures of speech, but compunction of soul. When the heart is full, when bitter thoughts come crowding thickly up for utterance, and the poor common words of courtesy are such a very mockery, how much the bursting heart may relieve itself in prayer!

The dullest observer must be sensible of the order and serenity prevalent in those households where the occasional exercise of a beautiful form of worship in the morning gives, as it were, the keynote to every temper for the day, and attunes every spirit to harmony. Family worship embodies a hallowing influence that pleads for its observance. It must needs be that trials will enter a household. The conflict of wishes, the clashing of views, and a thousand other causes, will ruffle the temper, and produce jar and friction in the machinery of the family.

There is needed some daily agency that shall softly enfold the homestead with its hallowed, soothing power, and restore the fine harmonious play of its various parts. The father needs that which shall gently lift away from his thoughts the disquieting burden of his daily business; the mother, which will smooth down the fretting irritation of her unceasing toil and trial; and the child and domestic, that which shall neutralize the countless agencies of evil

that ever beset them. And what so well adapted to do this as, when the day is done, to gather around the holy page, and pour a united supplication and acknowledgment to that sleepless Power whose protection and security are ever around their path, and who will bring all things at last into judgment?

And when darker and sadder days begin to shadow the home, what can cheer and brighten the sinking heart so finely as this daily resort to the fatherly One, who can make the tears of the lowliest sorrow to be the seed-pearls of the brightest crown? The mind is thus expanded, the heart softened, sentiments refined, passions subdued, hopes elevated, and pursuits ennobled. The greatest want of our intellectual and moral nature is here met, and home education becomes impregnated with the spirit and elements of our preparation for eternity.

The custom of having family prayers is held in honor wherever there is real Christian life, and it is the one thing which more than any other knits together the loose threads of a home, and unites its various members before God. The religious service in which parents, children, and friends daily join in praise and prayer is at once an acknowledgment of dependence on the Heavenly Father and a renewal of consecration to his work in the world. The Bible is read, the hymn is sung, the petition is offered, and unless all has been done as a mere formality and without hearty assent, those who have gathered at the family altar leave it helped, soothed, strengthened, and armored as they were not before they met

there. The sick and the absent are remembered, the tempted and the tried are commended to God, and, as the Israelites in the desert were attended by the pillar and cloud, so in life's wilderness the family who inquire of the Lord are constantly overshadowed by his presence and love.

We, ignorant of ourselves, may ask in prayer for what would be to our injury, which the Father denies as for our own good; so find we profit by losing of our prayers. Or we may even pray for trifles, without so much as a thought of the greatest blessings. And, with sorrow be it said, we are not ashamed many times to ask God for that which we should blush to own to our neighbors. It is by reason of the worthlessness of so many of our petitions that they remain unanswered. Good prayers never come creeping home. We are sure we shall receive either what we ask or what we should ask. Prayer is a study of truth, a sally of the soul into the infinite. No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.

It is for the sake of man, not of God, that worship and prayer are required. Not that God may be rendered more gracious, but that man may be made better, that he may be confirmed in a proper sense of his dependent state, and acquire those pious and virtuous dispositions in which his highest improvement consists. When we pray for any virtues we should cultivate the virtue as well as pray for it. The form of your life, every petition to God, is a precept to man. Our thoughts, like the waters of the sea, when exhaled toward heaven lose all their bitterness

and saltness, and sweeten into an amiable humanity, until they descend in gentle showers of love and kindness upon our fellow-men.

God respecteth not the arithmetic of our prayers, how many they are; nor the rhetoric of our prayers, how neat they are; nor the geometry of our prayers, how long they are; nor the music prayers, how melodious they are; nor the logic prayers, how methodical they are: but the divinity of our prayers, how heart-sprung they are—not gifts, but graces prevail in prayer. We should pray with as much earnestness as those who expect every thing from God, and act with as much energy as those who expect every thing from themselves.

It is possible to have a daily worship which shall be earnest, vivifying, tender and reverential, and yet a weariness to nobody. Only let the one who conducts it *mean* toward the Father the sweet obedience of the grateful child, and maintain the attitude of one who goes about earthly affairs with a soul looking beyond and above them to the rest that remaineth in heaven. It is not every one who is able to pray in the hearing of others with ease. The timid tongue falters, and the thoughts struggle in vain for utterance. But who is there who can not read a psalm or a chapter or a cluster of verses, and kneeling repeat in accents of tender trust the Lord's prayer? When we think of it that includes every thing.

RELIGION.



Religion is the moral link that binds man most closely with his God—the spiritual garden where the creature walks in companionship with his Maker. This sentiment is the highest that man is capable of cherishing, since it binds him to a being fitted as no other being is to impart to the soul the highest moral grandeur that created beings can enjoy. It is the upper window of the soul, which opens into the clear, radiant light of God's eternal home. Its influence in every department of the mind is salutary and holy; no faculty can rise to its most exalted state without the sanctifying power of this sentiment. Neglect it not; the highest beauties of your souls, the finishing touch of your character, the sweetest charm of your life, will be given by due attention to this, your first and last duty.

If men have been termed pilgrims, and life a journey, then we may add that the Christian pilgrimage far surpasses all others in the following important particulars: In the goodness of the road; in the beauty of the prospect; in the

excellence of the company, and in the rich rewards waiting the traveler at the journey's end. All who have been great and good without Christianity would have been much greater and better with it. True religion is the poetry of the heart; it has enchantment, useful to our manners; it gives us both happiness and virtue.

True religion hath in it nothing weak, nothing sad, nothing constrained. It enlarges the heart, is simple, free, and attractive. It enables us to bear the sorrows of life, and it lessens the pangs of death. It is the coronet by token of which God makes you a princess in his family and an heir to his brightest glories, the sweetest pleasures, the noblest privileges, and the brightest honors of his kingdom. It is a star which beams the brighter in heaven the darker on earth grows the night.

When the rising sun shed its rays on Memnon's statue it awakened music in the heart of stone. Religion does the same with nature. Without religion you are a wandering star. You are a voiceless bird. You are a motionless brook. The strings of your heart are not in tune with the chords which the Infinite hand sweeps as he evolves the music of the universe. Your being does not respond to the touch of Providence, and if beauty and truth and goodness come down to you like angels out of heaven and sing you their sweetest songs, you do not see their wings, nor recognize their home and parentage.

True religion and virtue give a cheerful and happy turn to the mind, admit of all real joys, and even procure for us the highest pleasures.

While it seems to have no other object than the felicity of another life it constitutes the chief happiness of the present. There are no principles but those of religion to be depended on in cases of real distress, and these are able to encounter the worst emergencies and to bear us up under all the changes and chances to which our life is subject. The difficulties of life teach us wisdom, its vainglories humility, its calumnies pity, its hopes resignation, its sufferings charity, its afflictions fortitude, its necessities prudence, its brevity the value of time, and its dangers and uncertainties a constant dependence upon a higher and all-protecting power.

All natural results are spontaneous. The diamond sparkles without effort, and the flowers open naturally beneath the Summer rain. Religion is also a natural thing—as spontaneous as it is to weep, to love, or to rejoice. There is not a heart but has its moments of longing—yearning for something better, nobler, holier, than it knows now; this bespeaks the religious aspiration of every heart. Genius without religion is only a lamp on the outer gate of a palace. It may serve to cast a gleam of light on those that are without, while the inhabitant sits in darkness.

Religion is not proved and established by logic. It is, of all the mysteries of nature and the human mind, the most mysterious and most inexplicable. It is of instinct, and not of reason. It is a matter of feeling, and not of opinion. Religion is placing the soul in harmony with God and his laws. God is the perfect supreme

soul, and your souls are made in the image of his, and, like all created things, are subject to certain mutable laws. The transgression of these laws damages your souls—warps them, stunts their growth, outrages them.

You can only be manly or attain to a manly growth by preserving your true relations and strict obedience to the laws of your being. God has given you appetites, and he meant that they should be to you a source of happiness, but always in a way which shall not interfere with your spiritual growth and development. He gave you desires for earthly happiness. He planted in you the love of human praise, enjoyment of society, the faculty of finding happiness in all of his works. He gave you his works to enjoy, but you can only enjoy them truly when you regard them as blessings from the great Giver to feed, and not starve, your higher nature. There is not a true joy in life which you are required to deprive yourself of in being faithful to him and his laws. Without obedience to law your soul can not be healthful, and it is only to a healthful soul that pleasure comes with its natural, its divine, aroma.

Some well-meaning Christians tremble for their salvation, because they have never gone through that valley of tears and of sorrow which they have been taught to consider as an ordeal that must be passed through before they can arrive at regeneration. We can but think that such souls mistake the nature of religion. The slightest sorrow for sins is sufficient if it produces amendment, but the greatest is insufficient if it do not. By their own fruits let

them prove themselves, for some soils will take the good seed without being watered by tears or harrowed up by afflictions.

There are three modes of bearing the ills of life—by indifference, which is the most common; by philosophy, which is the most ostentatious; and by religion, which is the most effectual. It has been said, "Philosophy readily triumphs over past or future evils, but that present evils triumph over philosophy." Philosophy is a goddess whose head is, indeed, in heaven, but whose feet are upon earth; attempts more than she accomplishes and promises more than she performs. She can teach us to hear of the calamities of others with magnanimity, but it is religion only that can teach us to bear our own with resignation.

Whoever thinks of life as something that could exist in its best form without religion is in ignorance of both. Life and religion is one, or neither is any thing. Religion is the good to which all things tend; which gives to life all its importance, to eternity all its glory. Apart from religion man is a shadow, his very existence a riddle, and the stupendous scenes around him as incoherent and unmeaning as the leaves which the sibyl scattered in the wind.

We are surrounded by motives to religion and devotion if we would but mind them. The poor are designed to excite our liberality, the miserable our pity, the sick our assistance, the ignorant our instruction, those that are fallen our helping hand. In those who are vain we see the vanity of the world, in those who are wicked our own frailty. When we see good men

rewarded it confirms our hopes, and when evil men are punished it excites our fears. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into age, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding him, falls into a gulf of misery, in which every reflection must plague him deeper and deeper.

It is the property of the religious spirit to be the most refining of all influences. It has been termed the social religion, and society is as properly the sphere of all its duties, privileges, and enjoyments as the ecliptic is the course of the earth. No external advantage, no culture of the tastes, no habit of command, no association with the elegant, or even depths of affection can bestow, that delicacy and that grandeur of bearing which belong only to the mind which has experienced the discipline of religious thought and feeling. All else, all superficial aids to etiquette, manner, and refinement as expressed in look and gesture, is but as gilt and cosmetic.

Your personal value depends entirely upon your possession of religion. You are worth to yourself what you are capable of enjoying, you are worth to society the happiness you are capable of imparting. A man whose aims are low, whose motives are selfish, who has in his heart no adoration of God, whose will is not subordinate to the supreme will, who has no hope, no tenable faith in a happy immortality, no strong-armed trust that with his soul it shall be well in all the future, can not be worth very much to himself. Neither can such a man be worth very much to society, because he has not

that to bestow which society most needs for its prosperity and happiness.

Christianity teaches the beauty and dignity of common and private life. It makes it valuable, not for the cares from which it frees us, but for the constant duties through which we may train the soul to perfect sympathy with the design of the Creator. It shows that the humblest lot possesses opportunities which require the energies of the most exalted virtues to meet and satisfy. It impresses upon us the solemn truth that life itself, however humble its condition, is always holy; that every moment has its duty and its responsibility, which Christian strength alone, the crown of power, can do and bear. It teaches that the simplest experience may become radiant with a heavenly beauty when hallowed by a spirit of constant love to God and man.

Another of the lessons of Christianity is that of the inestimable worth of common duties as manifesting the greatest principles. It bids us to attain perfection, not striving to do dazzling deeds, but by making our experience divine. It shows us that the Christian hero will ennoble the humblest field of labor, that nothing is mean which can be performed as a duty, but that religion, like the touch of Midas, converts the humblest call of duty into spiritual gold.

GOD IN NATURE.

The day is Thine, the night also is Thine;
Thou hast prepared the light and the sun;
Thou hast set all the borders of the earth;
Thou hast made Summer and Winter.
—PSALMS.



The height of the heavens should remind us of the infinite distance between us and God, the brightness of the firmament of his glory, majesty, and holiness, the vastness of the heavens and their influence upon the earth, of his immensity and universal providence. Hill and valley, seas and constellations are but stereotypes of divine ideas, appealing to and answered by the living soul of man. The works of nature and the works of revelation display religion to mankind in characters so large and visible that those who are not quite blind may in them see and read the first principles and most necessary parts of religion, and from thence penetrate into those infinite depths filled with the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars. All nature, in short, speaks in language plain to be understood of the majesty and power of its

Author. Nature is man's religious book, with lessons for every day. Nature is the chart of God, marking out all his attributes. A man finds in the production of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself without any temptation to envy or malevolence, and has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe. What profusion is there in his work! When trees blossom, there is not simply one, but a whole collection of gems; and of leaves, they have so many that they can throw them away to the winds all Summer long. What unnumbered cathedrals has he reared in the forest shades, vast and grand, full of curious carvings, and haunted evermore by tremulous music; and in the heavens above, how do stars seem to have flown out of his hand faster than sparks out of a mighty forge!

These insignia of wisdom and power are impressed upon the works of God, which distinguishes them from the feeble imitation of men. Not only the splendor of the sun, but the glimmering light of the glow-worm, proclaim his glory. God has placed nature by the side of man as a friend, who remains always to guide and console him in life; as a protecting genius, who conducts him, as well as all species, to a harmonious unity with himself. The earth is the material bosom which bears all the races. Nature arouses man from the sleep in which he would remain without thought of himself, inspires him with noble designs, and preserves thus in humanity activity and life.

The best of all books is the book of nature. It is full of variety, interest, novelty, and instruction. It is ever open before us. It invites us to read, and all that it requires of us is the will to do it; with eyes to see, with ears to hear, with hearts and souls to feel, and with minds and understandings to comprehend. Infinite intelligence was required to compose this mighty volume, which never fails to impart the highest wisdom to those who peruse it attentively and rightly, with willing hearts and humble minds. Nature has perfection, in order to show that she is the image of God; and defects, in order to show that she is only his image.

The study of nature must ever lead to true religion; hence let there be no fear that the issues of natural science shall be skepticism or anarchy. Through all God's works there runs a beautiful harmony. The remotest truth in his universe is linked to that which lies nearest the throne. It has been said that "an undevout astronomer is mad." With still greater force might it be said that he who attentively studies nature and fails to see in her ways the workings of Providence must, indeed, be blind. Who the guide of nature, but only the God of nature? In him we live, move, and have our being. Those things which nature is said to do are by divine art performed, using nature as an instrument. Nor is there any such divine knowledge working in nature herself, but in the guide of nature's work.

Examine what department of nature that we will, we are speedily convinced of an intelligent

plan running throughout all the works, which eloquently proclaims a divine author. In the rock-ribbed strata of the earth we can read as intelligently as though it were written on parchment the story of the creation. And what so interesting as this rock-written history of the world slowly fitting for mankind? Read of the coal stored away for future use; of whole continents plowed by glaciers, and made fertile for man. Think of the æons of ages that this earth swung in space, all the types of creation prophecying of the coming of man! Who can ponder these o'er without coming to the belief of an author and finisher of all this glory? Thus does a devout study of nature discover to us the God of nature.

Go stand upon the heights at Niagara, and listen in awe-struck silence to that boldest, most earnest, and most eloquent of all nature's oracles! And what is Niagara, with its plunging waters and its mighty roar, but the oracle of God—the whisper of his voice is revealed in the Bible as sitting above the waterfloods forever! Or view the stupendous scenery of Alpine countries, and there, amid rock and snow, overlooking the valleys below, we feel a sense of the presence of Divinity. Or, wandering on ocean beach, watching the play of the waves, or listening to the roar of the breakers, our hearts are impressed with a sense of the power and majesty of God. In short, wherever we contemplate the vast or wonderful in nature, there we experience a religious exaltation of spirit. It is the soul within us placing itself *en rapport* with the soul of nature, the great first

cause.

Go stand upon the Areopagus of Athens, where Paul stood so long ago. In thoughtful silence look around upon the site of all that ancient greatness; look upward to those still glorious skies of Greece, and what conceptions of wisdom and power will all those memorable scenes of nature and art convey to your mind, now more than they did to an ancient worshiper of Jupiter and Apollo! They will tell of Him who made the worlds, "by whom, through whom, and for whom are all things." To you that landscape of exceeding beauty, so rich in the monuments of departed genius, with its distant classic mountains, its deep, blue sea, and its bright, bending skies will be telling a tale of glory that the Grecian never learned; for it will speak to you no more of its thousand contending deities, but of the one living and everlasting God.

THE BIBLE.



The Bible is a book whose words live in the ear like music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church-bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be things rather than mere words. It is a part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it; the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments, and all that has been around him of the highest and best speaks to him out of his Bible.

The Bible is the oldest surviving monument of the springtime of the human intellect. It reveals to us the character and intellect of our great Creator and Final Judge. It opens before us the way of salvation through a Redeemer, unveils to our view the invisible world, and shows us the final destiny of our race. God's Word is, in fact, much like God's world, varied, very rich, very beautiful. You never know when you have exhausted all its merits. The Bible, like nature, has something for every class of minds. Look at the Bible in a new light, and straightway you see some new charm. The Bible goes equally to the cottage of the poor man and

the palace of the king. It is woven into literature, and it colors the talk of the street. The bark of the merchant can not sail to sea without it. No ship of war goes to the conflict but the Bible is there. It enters men's closets, mingling in all the grief and cheerfulness of life.

The Bible is adapted to every possible variety of taste, temperament, culture, and condition. It has strong reasoning for the intellectual. It takes the calm and contemplative to the well-balanced James, and the affectionate to the loving and beloved John. Not only is this book precious to the poor and unlearned, not only is it the consoler of the great middle class of society, both spiritually and mentally speaking, but the scholar and the sage, the intellectual monarch of the age, bow to its authority.

To multitudes of our race it is not only the foundation of their religious faith, but it is their daily practical guide as well. It has taken hold of the world as no other book ever did. Not only is it read in all Christian pulpits, but it enters every habitation, from the palace to the cottage. It is the golden chain which binds hearts together at the marriage altar; it contains the sacred formula for the baptismal rite. It blends itself with our daily conversation, and is the silver thread of all our best reading, giving its hue, more or less distinctly, to book, periodical, and daily paper. On the seas it goes with the mariner as his spiritual chart and compass, and on the land it is to untold millions their pillar cloud by day and their fire column by night.

In the closet and in the streets, amid

temptation and trials, this is man's most faithful attendant and his strongest shield. It is our lamp through the dark valley, and the radiator of our best light from the solemn and unseen future. Stand before it as before a mirror, and you will see there not only your good traits, but your errors, follies, and sins, which you did not imagine were until you thus examined yourself. If you desire to make constant improvement, go to the Bible. It not only shows the way of all progress, but it incites you to go forward. It opens before you a path leading up and still onward, along which good angels will cheer you, and all that is good will lend you a helping hand.

There is no book so well adapted to improve both the head and the heart as the Bible. It is a *tried* book. Its utility is demonstrated by experience; its necessity is confessed by all who have studied the wants of human nature; it has wrung reluctant praise even from the lips of its foes. Other books bespeak their own age; the Bible was made for all ages. Uninspired authors speculate upon truths before made known, and often upon delusive imaginations; the Bible reveals truths before unknown, and otherwise unknowable. It is distinguished for its exact and universal truth. Time and criticism only illustrate and confirm its pages. Successive ages reveal nothing to change the Bible representations of God, nothing to correct the Bible representation of human nature. Passing events fulfill its prophecies, but fail to impeach its allegations.

The Scriptures teach us the best way of

living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying. A mind rightly disposed will easily discover the image of God's wisdom in the depths of its mysteries, the image of God's sovereignty in the commanding majesty of its style, the image of his unity in the wonderful harmony and symmetry of all its parts, the image of his holiness in the unspotted purity of its precepts, and the image of his goodness in the wonderful tendency of the whole to the welfare of mankind in both worlds. We should use the Scriptures not as an arsenal, to be resorted to only for arms and weapons, but as a matchless temple where we delight to contemplate the beauty, the symmetry, and the magnificence of the structure, and to increase our awe and excite our devotion to the Deity there proclaimed.

The cheerless gloom which broods over the understandings of men had never been chased away but for the beams of a supernatural revelation. Men may look with an unfriendly eye on that system of truth which reproves and condemns them; but they little know the loss the world would sustain by subverting its foundations. We have tried paganism, we have tried Mohammedanism, we have tried Deism and philosophy, and we can not look upon them even with respect. The Scriptures contain the only system of truth which is left us. If we give up these, we have no others to which we can repair.

FUTURE LIFE.



There are two questions, one of which is the most important, the other the most interesting that can be proposed in language: Are we to live after death? and if we are, in what state? These are questions confined to no climate, creed, or community. The savage is as deeply interested in them as the sage, and they are of equal import under every meridian where there are men.

Among the most effectual and most beautiful modes of reasoning that the universe affords for the hope that is within us of a life beyond the tomb there is none more beautiful or exquisite than that derived from the change of the seasons, from the second life that bursts forth in Spring in objects apparently dead, and from the shadowing forth in the renovation of every thing around us of that destiny which divine revelation calls upon our faith to believe shall be ours. The trees that have faded and remained dark and gray through the long, dreary life of Winter clothe themselves again with green in the Spring sunshine, and every

hue speaks of life. The buds that were trampled down and faded burst forth once more in freshness and beauty, the streams break from the icy chains that held them, and the glorious sun himself comes wandering from his far-off journey, giving warmth to the atmosphere and renewed beauty and grace to every thing around, and every thing we see rekindles into life.

At all times and in all places men have contemplated the questions of death and immortality. The one is a stern reality from which they know there is no escaping. Every day they see friends and acquaintances drooping and dying. Their pleasure drives are interrupted by the funeral cortege of strangers. There is not a soul but what in reflective moments has pondered the question of immortality. If they see clearly under the guiding light of Christianity the future is full of hope to them. It matters but little their present surroundings. If poverty and pain be their lot, they know that rest will come to them later. Those who do not possess this pleasing hope of immortality feel at times a painful longing, a vague unrest. Philosophize as they will, the future is dark and uncertain, and there are times when they would willingly give all could they but see a beacon light or feel the strong assurance of faith that they would live again.

Surely, there is tenable ground for this hope! It can not be that earth is man's only abiding place. It can not be that our life is a bubble cast up by the ocean of eternity to float for a moment upon its surface, and then sink into

nothingness and darkness forever. Else why is it that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temples of our hearts, are forever wandering abroad satisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse on their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which hold their festival around the midnight throne are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, and are forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? Finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to the view, and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of affection to flow back upon our hearts? We are from a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before us like the islands on the bosom of the ocean, and where the beautiful beings that here pass before us like visions will remain with us forever.

As death approaches and earth recedes do we not more clearly see that spiritual world in which we have all along been living, though we knew it not? The dying man tells us of attendant angels hovering around him. Perchance it is no vision. They might have been with him through life. They may attend us all through life, only our inward eyes are dim and we see them not. What is that mysterious expression, so holy and so strange, so beautiful yet so fearful, on the countenance of one whose soul has just departed? May it not be the glorious light of attendant seraphs, the

luminous shadow of which rests awhile on the countenance of the dead?

TIME AND ETERNITY.

"Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'T is the divinity that stirs within us;
'T is heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity, thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Thro' what variety of untried being,
Thro' what new scenes and changes must we pass?
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."
—ADDISON.

Alas! what is man? Whether he be deprived of that light which is from on high, or whether he discards it, he is a frail and trembling creature, standing on time, that bleak and narrow isthmus between two eternities; he sees nothing but impenetrable darkness on the one hand, and doubt, distrust, and conjecture still

more perplexing on the other. Most gladly would he take an observation as to whence he has come, or whither he is going; alas! he has not the means; his telescope is too dim, his compass too wavering, his plummet too short; nor is that little spot, his present state, one whit more intelligible, since it may prove a quicksand that may sink in a moment from his feet. It can afford him no certain reckonings as to that immeasurable ocean on which he must soon spread his sail—an awful expedition, from which the mind shrinks from contemplating. Nor is the gloom relieved by the outfit in which the voyage must be undertaken. The bark is a coffin, the destination is doubt, and the helmsman is death. Faith alone can see the star which is to guide him to a better land.

The hour-glass is truly emblematical of the world. As its sands run out at the termination of a given period, so it shows that all things must have an end. It shows that man may devise—may even execute—but that erelong time, that restless destroyer, comes, and mows all before him, and leaves naught but a wreck, a barren waste behind him. Surely all will give credence to this who watch the daily dying of cherished hopes, of delightful anticipations. The flame burns brightly at first, but it soon fluctuates, and finally dies without restriction.

We must, some time or other, enter on the last year of our life; fifty or one hundred years may yet come, and the procession may seem interminable, but the closing year of our life must come. There are many years memorable in history, as in them died men of renown; but the

year of our death will be more memorable to us than any. Eighteen hundred and fifteen was a memorable year, for in that Waterloo was fought; but there will be a more memorable year for us—the year in which we fight the battle with the last enemy. That year will open with the usual New-year's congratulations; it will rejoice in the same orchard blossoming, and the sweet influences of Spring. It will witness the golden glory of the harvest, and the merry-makings of Christmas. And yet to us it will be vastly different, from the fact that it will be our closing year. The Spring grass may be broken by the spade to let us down to our resting-place; or, while the Summer grain is falling to the sickle, we may be harvested for another world; or, while the Autumnal leaves are flying in the November gale, we may fade and fall; or, the driving sleet may cut the faces of the black-tasseled horses that take us on our last ride. But it will be the year in which our body and soul part—the year in which, for us, time ends and eternity begins. All other years fade away as nothing. The year in which we were born, the year in which we began business, the year in which our father died, are all of them of less importance to us than the year of our death.

It is only when on the border of eternity that the fleeting period of life is comprehended. Human life, what is it? It is vapor gilded by a sunbeam—the reflection of heaven in the waters of the earth. In youth the other world seems a great way off, but later we feel and realize that it is close at hand. We come, like

the ocean wave, to the shore, but scarcely strike the strand before we roll back into forgetfulness, whence we came.

In the light of eternity, how vain and foolish appear the contentions and strifes of mankind! Addison most beautifully expresses this thought in these lines: "When I look upon the tombs of the great every emotion of envy dies; when I read the epitaph of the beautiful every inordinate desire forsakes me; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tombs of the parents themselves I reflect how vain it is to grieve for those we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying beside those who deposed them, when I see rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men who divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the frivolous competitions, factions, and debates of mankind."

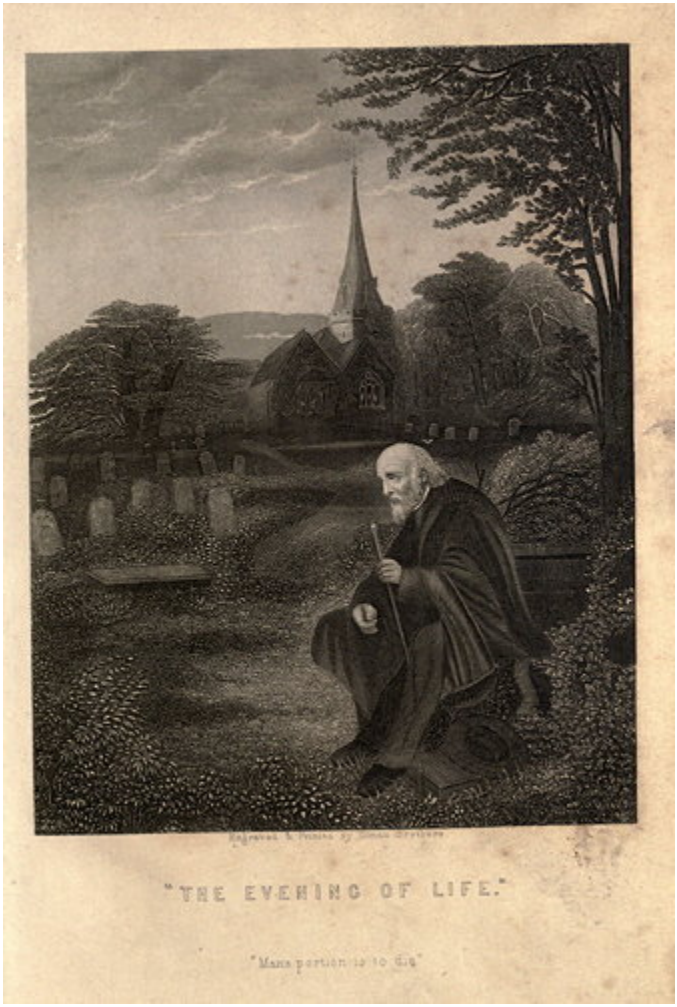
THE EVENING OF LIFE

"Old age, serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave."

—WORDSWORTH.



There is a beauty in age. The morning of life may be glowing with the expectations of youth; the noon may be fruitful in endeavors and works; but the evening of life is the time of calm repose and holy meditation. When young and standing where the glow of youthful hopes irradiates the future how natural to lay out brilliant plans! to form ambitious resolves! How easy it seems to achieve any wished-for thing! Wealth, fame, or any temporal good—surely we can attain them! Experience soon shows us the futility of these hopes and plans. Before many milestones are passed in the journey of life we learn that God, in his wisdom, has so apportioned trial and suffering that it matters little the external surroundings; to all it is full of work and anxieties and painful scenes, and that it is in struggling against these that the best development of power is acquired.



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"THE EVENING OF LIFE."

"Man's portion is to die"

It is no wonder that when once confronted by the stern realities of life we should lose sight of the dreams of youth. Manhood's days are the

days of reflection, of judgment, a wise adaptation of means to the end desired, and, if but used aright, we need have little occasion for regret that childhood's days are passed. We are no longer children; we are men and women. We are no longer engaged in childish dreams; we are up and doing what God has assigned to us. This is the period of life that we would most willingly see prolonged. But time stops not in his rapid flight. In vain our protests. The sun as swiftly descends to its setting as it rose to its noon. The form that so rapidly matured into one of grace, strength, and manly attributes of character, is bowed by the weight of years. The elasticity of youth gives way to the measured step and careful tread of age, and on the head time sprinkles his snow.

It is now that the thoughts of man should assume their most valued characteristics. They can muse over the events of past years. They can contemplate the mysteries of the future. The most momentous period of life is about at hand—that time when they will exchange this life for another. What age can there be more important than this? It is natural for youth to regard old age as a dreary season—one that admits of nothing that can be called pleasure, and very little that deserves the name even of comfort. They look forward to it as in Autumn we anticipate the approach of Winter, forgetting that Winter, when it arrives, brings with it much of pleasure. Its enjoyments are of different kinds, but we find it not less pleasant than any other season of the year.

In like manner age has no terror to those who

see it near; but experience proves that it abounds with consolations, and even with delights. The world in general bows down to age, gives it preference, and listens with deference to its opinions. Such reverence must be soothing to age, and compensate it for the loss of many of the enjoyments of youth. "The true man does not wish to be a child again." In individual experience how many have wished to live again the past? Could we return, and carry with us our present experience, all would wish to do so, but to go over the same old round we are afraid that the number of those whose life has been so happy that they would wish to live it over again is exceedingly small. Your present experience will remain with you through life. And hence, old age, as devoid of pleasure as it may appear to us now, we will find that when the passage of years brings us to that point we will not willingly exchange it for any of the stages of life gone by.

As there is nothing unlovely in age, when once at its threshold, so death, when viewed in the right spirit, is found to be but the pleasant transition stage to a more glorious and perfect life. From the days of Plato to the present men have doubted and wondered as to the questions of immortality and its nature. But none have approached the question in the right spirit but what always the result has been the same. Revelation and analogical reasoning both point to the same glorious hope. What, then, shall we view it with terror? Ought we not to look forward to it longingly as the final triumph of a well-lived life? Though success and fortune may

have been ours here, are they any thing more or less than the accidental circumstances surrounding an ephemeral existence? In the light of eternity does it make any great difference whether that existence was passed surrounded with the comforts of wealth or struggling for the necessities of life?

We are all equal in death; the king and the peasant, the rich and the poor are all alike in this respect. Surely, that which is thus the common lot of humanity must be for the common good. The universal dread of death is, then, the effect of erroneous habits of thought. It is the entrance to the harbor. We fear not the peaceful rest within. We can not do better, then, than to cultivate cheerful thoughts in regard to age and death. The one is the beautiful closing scene of earthly life, the other the entrance to life immortal.



He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends.

Faithful friends! *It* lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdallah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this—
"*I* am not the thing you kiss:
Cease your tears and let it lie;
It *was* mine, it is not 'I.'"

Sweet friends! what the women lave,
For its last bed of the grave,
Is but a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage, from which at last,
Like a hawk, my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room—
The wearer, not the garb—the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from the splendid stars;

Loving friends! Be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye:
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell—one
Out of which the pearl has gone;
The shell is broken—it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul is here.
'T is an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
The treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him; let it lie?
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends;
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 't is true,
By such a light as shines for you;
But in the light ye can not see
Of unfulfilled felicity—
In enlarging paradise
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell

Where I am ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space;
When ye come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all and there is naught.

Weep awhile, if ye are fain—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death—for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life center.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La Allah illa Allah! yea!
Thou Love divine! Thou Love alway!

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.



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