

On Being Thorough.

A few days ago I came across a magazine published some eighteen months ago, upon a special article of which I had put a mark which always signifies to me "worth keeping, worth re-reading, or worth passing on," and it is because, after re-reading it, I have found it so full of wisdom, and so likely to be helpful, that, although it must necessarily be condensed, I am offering the pith of it to you to-day.

Please take it as a postscript to my own little series of articles, "Manners Maketh Man," which, you may recall, closed with the words, "Faithfulness must be the keynote to all successful work."

It was with this thought fresh in my mind that I came across the article from which I am going to quote freely, and, although not knowing whether the author gives his own or a pen-name, I cannot ask his permission, I feel very sure that he will be willing that his message should be passed on to the readers of our "Farmer's Advocate."

The writer, in Success, October, 1909, under the caption, "Do it to a Finish," begins thus:

"Years ago a relief life-boat sprung a leak, and while being repaired a hammer was found in the bottom that had been left there by the builders thirteen years before. From the constant motion of the boat, the hammer had worn through the planking, clear down to the plating."

"Not long since, it was discovered that a girl had served twenty years for a twenty months' sentence, in an Alabama prison, because of the mistake of a court clerk who wrote 'years,' instead of 'months,' in the record of the prisoner's sentence."

"The history of the human race is full of the most horrible tragedies caused by carelessness and the inexcusable blunders of those who never formed the habit of accuracy, of thoroughness, of doing things to a finish."

"Multitudes of people are hobbling around on one leg, have lost an eye or an arm, or are otherwise maimed, because dishonest workmen wrought deception into the articles they manufactured, slighted their work, covered up defects and weak places with paint and varnish."

"How many have lost their lives because of dishonest work, carelessness, criminal blundering in railroad construction? Think of the tragedies caused by lies packed in car-wheels, locomotives, steamboat boilers, and engines; lies in defective rails, ties, or switches; lies in dishonest labor put into manufactured material by workmen who said it was good enough for the meager wages they got! Because people were not conscientious in their work, there were flaws in the steel, which caused the rail or pillar to snap, the locomotive or other machinery to break. The steel shaft broke in mid-ocean, and the lives of a thousand passengers were jeopardized because of somebody's carelessness."

"How many serious accidents have occurred because of lack of care in the casting of steel girders and all sorts of iron building material! Even before they are completed, buildings often fall and bury the workmen under their ruins, because somebody was dishonest—either employer or employee—and worked lies, deceptions, into the building."

"The majority of railroad wrecks, of disasters on land and sea, which cause so much misery and cost so

many lives, are the result of carelessness, thoughtlessness, or half-done, botched, blundering work. They are the evil fruit of the low ideals of slovenly, careless, indifferent workers."

"Everywhere over this broad earth we see the tragic results of botched work. Wooden legs, armless sleeves, numberless graves, fatherless and motherless homes everywhere speak of somebody's carelessness, somebody's blunders, somebody's habit of inaccuracy."

"The worst crimes are not punishable by law. Carelessness, slipshodness, lack of thoroughness, are crimes against self, against humanity, that often do more harm than the crimes that make the perpetrator an outcast from society. Where a tiny flaw or the slightest defect may cost a precious life. Carelessness itself is a crime."

He goes on to say: "If everybody put his conscience into his work, did it to a complete finish, it would not only reduce the loss of human life, the maiming and maiming of men and women to a fraction of what it is at present, but it would also give us a higher quality of manhood and womanhood."

"It takes honest work to make an honest character. The habit of doing poor, slovenly work will, after a while, make the worker dishonest in other things. The man who habitually slight his work, slight his character. Botched work makes a botched life. Our work is a part of us. Every botched job you let go through your hands diminishes your competence, your efficiency, your ability to do good work. It is an offence against your self-respect, an in-

ferior way of doing things. The habit of precision and accuracy affects the entire mentality, improves the whole character."

"On the contrary, doing things in a loose-jointed, slipshod, careless manner deteriorates the whole mentality, demoralizes the entire mental processes, and brings down the whole life."

"Every half-done or slovenly job that goes out of your hands leaves its trace of demoralization behind, takes a bit from your self-respect. After slighting your work, after doing a poor job, you are not quite the same man you were before. You are not so likely to try to keep up the quality of your work, not so likely to regard your work as sacred as before. You incapacitate yourself from doing your best in proportion to the number of times you allow yourself to do inferior, slipshod work."

"The mental and moral effect of half doing, or carelessly doing things, its power to drag down, to demoralize, can hardly be estimated, because the processes are so gradual, so subtle. No one can respect himself who habitually botches his work, and when self-respect drops, confidence goes with it; and when confidence and self-respect have gone, excellence is impossible."

"The introduction of inferiority into our work is like introducing subtle poison into the system. It paralyzes the normal functions. It dulls ideals, and causes deterioration all along the line."

"And here are some definite financial results, outside the injury done

tween 'good' and 'better,' between 'fairly good' and 'excellent,' between what others call 'good' and 'the best that can be done.'"

"The secret of success is to do the common duty uncommonly well."

"It is in doing things a little better than those about you do them; being a little neater, a little quicker, a little more accurate, a little more observant; it is ingenuity in finding new and more progressive ways of doing old things; it is being a little more polite, a little more obliging, a little more tactful, a little more cheerful, a little more energetic, a little more helpful, than those about you, that attracts the attention of an employer."

And finally: "You cannot afford to give the dregs of yourself and your efforts to your employer. If you do so, it will bring only dregs back to you. . . . Never allow yourself to dwell too much upon what you are getting for your work. You have something of infinitely greater importance, greater value, at stake. Your honor, your whole career, your future success, will be affected by the way you do your work, by the conscience or lack of it you put into your job. . . . Make it a life-rule to give of your best to whatever passes through your hands. Let superiority be your trade-mark, and characterize all you touch. . . . Reach to the highest, cling to it, for whatever the mind holds, the life copies. What we think, that we become."

Although not recorded in actual words, yet ever present in the mind of the writer must have been the golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you," a maxim which, if made the keynote of our lives, cannot fail, by God's enabling grace, to bring a rich blessing upon whatever we may undertake. H. A. B.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

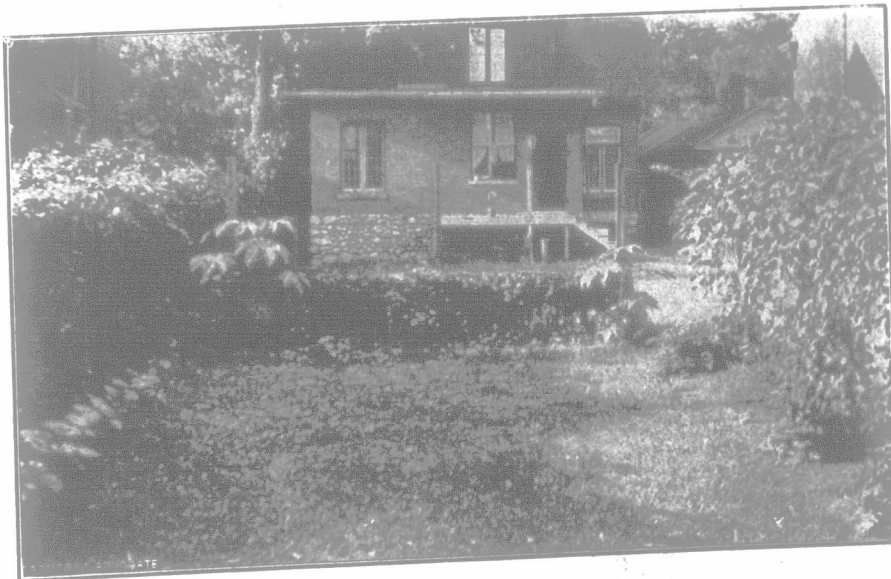
Grandmother's Stocking.

"Life is a stocking," Grandma says,
"And your's is just begun,
But I am knitting the toe of mine,
And my work is almost done.
With merry hearts we begin to knit,
And the ribbing is almost play,
Some are gay-colored and some are white,
While some are ashen grey.
But most are made of many a hue,
With many a stitch set wrong,
And many a row to be sadly ripped
Ere the whole is fair and strong.
There are long, plain spaces, without a break,
Which in youth are hard to bear,
And many a weary tear is dropped
As we fashion the heel with care.
But the saddest, happiest time is that
Which we court and yet would shun,
When our Heavenly Father breaks the thread
And says that our work is done."
The children come to say "Good night!"
With tears in their bright young eyes,
For in Grandma's lap, with a broken thread,
The finished stocking lies.

ANON.

Who Can Hinder Him.

"If He cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder Him?" said Zophar to Job, "For He knoweth vain men: He seeth wickedness also; will He not then consider it?" Considerable surprise has been expressed at the strange



An Attractive Back Yard.

Grapevines, hollyhocks, nasturtiums, asters, verbenas and castor beans contributed to this effect.

sult to your highest ideal. Every inferior piece of work you do is an enemy which pulls you down, keeps you back."

"Nothing kills ambition or lowers the life-standard quicker than familiarity with inferiority—that which is cheap, the 'cheap John' method of doing things. We unconsciously become like that with which we are habitually associated. It becomes part of us, and the habit of doing things in an inferior, slovenly way weaves its fatal defects into the very texture of the character."

"We are so constituted that the life-quality which we put into our work affects everything else in our lives, and tends to bring our whole conduct to the same level. The whole person takes on the characteristics of

by slipshod methods to the individual himself:

"A prominent business man says that the careless, inaccuracy, and blundering of employees cost Chicago one million dollars a day. The manager of a large Chicago houses says that he has to station pickets here and there through the establishment in order to neutralize the evils of inaccuracy and the blundering habit. Blunders and inaccuracies cost a New York concern twenty-five thousand dollars a year."

Amongst the nuggets of advice offered by the writer to boys and wage-earners generally occur the following: "Many a boy is marked for a higher position by his employer long before he is aware of it himself, because he appreciates the difference be-