

eaer, straining effort, and concentration of thought upon the one thing—the crown.

There is no turning aside to examine the beautiful sculptures and altars by the side of the course; no stopping to exchange greetings with the friends among the spectators. The racer's progress is possessed by one idea, "the prize," "the crown." He sees nothing but that. Everything is made to bend to that. Everything that will not help progress is discounted or dismissed. All must help to the goal and to the judge's award. So our life is a "walk-over," the course, no lounging parade towards the goal, but racing with all the eagerness of competition where the racers are companions but not competitors. The Christian man knows his ideal, and makes that the serious ruling business of his life—the ideal of being found in Christ with all the depth of its meaning; the ideal of awaking up in his likeness, and of being satisfied with it.

STRONG DRINK.

Few forms of self-indulgence, says one, are more widespread or more baneful than intemperance in the use of intoxicating liquors. The figures which represent the extent of the evil are appalling. Think of the thousands of young men whose prospects have been blighted and whose lives have been made utter failures; think of the hundreds of desolate homes and the scores of starving and neglected children; think of the broken-hearted mothers and wives who weep in silence and in shame over those who were once their idols and the hope of their lives; think of the defalcations, the ruined business houses, the lost fortunes, and the suicides; think of the jails and almshouses, the asylums and the prisons which are filled, all through the influence of strong drink, and then ask yourself, why the bondage of the black man more powerful in rousing a nation against slavery? Why was the awful conditions of prisons in England before the days of John Howard more appalling? Why do we not arise in our might and drive this terrible appetite from our own lives, and scourge the infernal traffic from our land?

A CASTAWAY!

Paul realized that even he might become a castaway. The word refers, says Nicholson, to the double scrutiny to which the contestant in the game was subjected. The first decided whether he was worthy to enter; the second, whether he had so run as to be entitled to the evergreen chaplet. The writer has the latter more particularly in mind. Who shall tell the degradation and misery of one who has offered a mercy to others which he himself has at last despised; urged truths on the credence of others which he has come to reject; enforced laws on others which he has at last transgressed? Have you ever known a powerful preacher who fell by sensuality, intemperance or crime, until he became a castaway? Have you ever known a man who once stood high in the Church, who was loved for his usefulness, revered for his wisdom, trusted for his righteousness, and admired for his piety, but who became a castaway, the slave of his passions, the tempter of youth, the hater of religion? There are such, and there is nothing which more forcefully reminds one of the words of the Saviour: "Beware, lest after all your present attainments you become a castaway."

SIDE-LIGHTS.

1. "Not in the clamor of the crowded street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat."
2. "Real glory springs from the conquest of ourselves,
And without that the conqueror is naught
But the veriest slave."
3. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

4. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

5. "The bravest trophy ever man obtained
Is that which o'er himself himself hath gained."

6. Strength of character consists of 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.

7. Self-control is at the root of all the virtues. Let a man yield to his impulses and promises, and from that moment he gives up his moral freedom.

8. Young people of Methodism, be alert, be thoughtful, be active, be prayerful. Take to yourselves the whole armor of God. Summon every ally into this holy war. Remember Mansoul never fell save by the treachery of the townsmen within her walls. Heaven's King is on our side. Above the clash of battle he cries to us: "Fight, I'll help thee; conquer, I'll crown thee."

POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Arrange for a paper to be read on the Isthmian games, which illustrates the topic so precisely. Have another one on "Self-Mastery," and still another on "The Castaway"—all brief and pointed.

THEY NEED GUIDANCE.

There is nothing in which our young people so much need guidance as in the selection of their reading. A Board of Counsel, who shall advise for them, is a great help. There is such a confusing multiplicity of books of all sorts that they are bewildered. New publications in a constant stream push out those approved by time. Young people are apt to read only that which is the talk of the hour. Too generally it is some work of fiction of only passing interest and worth, if even that. Biographies, histories, books of travel, and scientific exposition—works of entrancing interest, educational as well as entertaining—are rarely opened, the latest sensational story having the right of way. Christian young people must find some worthier occupation for their time and brains.—*Western Christian Advocate.*

HOW TO READ.

Try to carry something from every book you read. If a book is worth reading, it is worth remembering. One cannot remember everything; and to each person the things worth remembering will differ according to his tastes and the amount of insight he brings with him. But every one may carry away something, and may thus feel that the book leaves him to some degree richer than it found him; that it has helped him to add to his stock-in-trade, so to speak, of facts or of ideas. If it has not done this, why should one have spent so much eyesight upon it? Why not have given the time to bicycling or baseball, or have lain down upon the grass and watched white clouds drift across the sky?

How to remember the contents of a good book, or at least the best part of them, is a difficult problem, and one which becomes more difficult the older one grows, for the memory is less retentive in middle life than in youth, and the pressure of daily work in a profession or business tends to clog the free play of intellectual movement in spheres distinct from that work. The most obvious plan is to make notes of the things that strike you most. This involves time and trouble, yet the time and trouble are not lost, for the mere effort of selecting the salient facts, or of putting into a concise form the salient ideas, helps to impress them on the mind, so that they have more chance of being remembered, even should the notes be lost.

If the book belongs to you, it is not a bad device to use the blank sheet or two which one often finds inside the covers for making brief notes, adding references to the pages; or if there are no blank sheets pasted in two or three and use them for this purpose. I have a friend, one of the most learned in Europe, who copies out on slips of paper of a uniform size the best things he finds in the books he peruses, and arranges them in cardboard boxes also of a uniform size, which form a part of his library, and are a sort of distilled quintessence of his vast reading. Others find it better to use notebooks for the same purpose.—*The Youth's Companion.*

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE.

The novel method adopted by an English bicyclist in Africa, Mr. A. B. Lloyd, to escape from a lion, is thus narrated:

One fine morning Mr. Lloyd started on his wheel for a village a few miles from the mission station. He took the main road to Uganda, which was a good thoroughfare about five feet wide. After climbing a long hill he came to the descent on the other side, a long, gentle slope, where he knew the road was smooth.

Up went his feet to the coasters, and away he flew down the hill, going faster every minute. Near the bottom of the hill was a turn. On approaching this, he again put his feet to the pedals.

As he rounded the curve a terrible sight burst upon him. In the middle of the narrow path lay a full-grown lion, its head down upon its paws, facing up the hill.

Mr. Lloyd could not stop, or if he did stop, it would be for the very jaws of the king of the forest. To the left was a wall of rock twenty feet high, and to the right a steep embankment with the river a hundred feet below. Escape seemed impossible.

Suddenly he remembered that the wild men he had met were always afraid of his bicycle. Perhaps a wild beast might be affected in the same way. Therefore he did the only thing he could do. Releasing his check on the wheel, ringing his bell, and shouting with all the power of his lungs, he forced the bicycle at its best speed directly toward the couchant lion.

The beast raised its head. Then, seeing this unearthly creature, with so strange a voice, rushing fearlessly upon it, it gave a blood-curdling yell, and sprang to one side just as the rider flew past.

NO WONDER.

The explanation given below of the cause of a singer's distressing cough is so simple that it might readily have occurred to anyone. But then, the man that thought of it was from Ireland.

"And how is Mishur Brown?" he inquired of one of the singer's friends, who was hoping he'd be giving a concert in the town hall whilst he was here, so Mrs. Casey and me could be favored to hear some more of his foine songs."

"He has a bad cough just now," said the friend.

"Oh, now, that's too bad," said Mr. Casey, with feeling. "But it's a wonder, all the same. The strong voice he has, passing on his lungs, would be apt to give him a cough now and then, its likely."

An Ohio farmer went to the city to buy his wife a Christmas present. When he returned to his home he tossed a luncheon to his wife's lap, saying, "There is your Christmas gift, dear; it is some cotton to make me night shirts out of." Of course, she was glad to know her husband had such good sense and exquisite taste.