

First, I should have an early conversation with my parents. I should bring my later wisdom to bear on them. I am older now than my father was when I was a boy, and I might give a word of advice even to him. If I were a boy, I should want a thorough discipline, early begun and never relaxed, on the great doctrine of will-force as the secret of character. Faith in God is, I know, the foundation. But it must be a true fear, and not a wretched terror—the fear which is a reverent and holy love for a loving King who is a Father, and who is as gentle as a mother, and who loathes selfishness, falsehood, and meanness. If I were a boy, I should want my teacher to put weight of responsibility upon me—to make me know and feel that God furnishes the material and the conditions, but that I must do the work of building my character—to fill me with the thought that I am not a “thing,” a stick, a stone, a lump of clay or putty, but a “person,” a “power,” a “cause,” a “creator,” and that what I am in the long run, in the final outcome I am to make myself.

Father and mother, older brother and sister, pastor and teacher, neighbour and best friend, books and periodicals are good teachers. Classes for letter-picking and word building, for difficult spelling and reading, are very good. Classes in numbers, for mental problems and drawing geometrical lines, are excellent. But the best class to be earliest organized and longest sustained, the class in which a two-year-old should be an advanced pupil, the class that never graduates, is the class in which a boy is trained to say, “I ought : I can ; I will.”

If I were a boy with my man's wisdom, I should eat wholesome food and no other. I should chew it well and never “bolt it down.” I should eat at regular hours. I should never touch tobacco, chewing-gum, or patent medicines ; never once go to bed without cleaning my teeth ; never let

a year go by without a dentist's inspection and treatment ; never sit up late at night, unless a great emergency demanded it, never linger one moment in bed when the time came for getting up ; never fail to rub every part of my body every morning with a wet towel, and then with a dry one ; and never drink more than three or four table-spoonfuls of ice-water at one time. But all this takes will power. Yes, but that is all it does take.

I should never speak a word to any one who might be worried about it, and only kind words of others, even of enemies, in their absence. I should put no unclean thoughts, pictures, sights, or stories in my memory and imagination. I should want to be able to say like Dr. George H. Whitney, “I have never pronounced a word which I ought not to speak in the presence of the purest woman in the world.” I should treat little folks kindly, and not tease them, show respect to servants, and be kind to the unfortunate. I should play and romp, sing and shout, climb trees, explore caves, swim rivers, and be able to do in reason all the manly things that belong to manly sports, love and study nature ; travel as widely and observe as wisely as I could ; study with a will when the time came for study : read the best books, try to speak accurately and pronounce distinctly ; go to college and go through college, even if I expected to be a clerk, a farmer, or a mechanic ; try to be a practical everyday Christian ; help every good cause ; “use the world, and not abuse it” ; treat older men and women as fathers and mothers, the young as brethren and sisters in all purity. Thus I should try to be a Christian gentleman, wholesome, sensible, cheerful, independent, courteous, a boy with a will ; a boy without cant or cowardice ; a man's will and wisdom in me, and God's grace, beauty, and blessing abiding with me.

Ah, if I were a boy !—*Success.*