

he one day met Mr. Carlyle, and asked him whether he could offer him any hints as to the best way in which he might use his new position for the good of his fellow-men. He could not have been quite unprepared, he certainly could not be surprised at the answer which he received: "Whatever thy hands findeth to do, do it with thy might." It is but little help that one man can give to another in a matter of this kind. Every one who is really willing to work will find out for himself the best way of turning his work to account. "Do the duty which lies nearest to you," says the Eastern proverb, "the next will have already become clearer." Yet one or two hints may be offered to the inexperienced, and these are derived from the experience of those who have gone before us. So much on the choice of work.

One other topic still remains to be considered, namely the *doing of our work*. We have seen the importance and the necessity of labour. We have further remarked that every one has his own special part of the work of the world to perform, and we have tried to point out some of the guiding principles by which we may properly be determined in the selection of our work. Let us now consider how we should set to work in doing it.

1. Now there is one rule which may be laid down, which is very simple, almost we might say self-evident, and yet which is frequently forgotten or overlooked. It is this, that *what is worth doing at all is worth doing well*. Rightly understood this statement will be accepted by all; yet there are thousands who do not act upon it. We may hear people, any day and every day, justifying their neglect and carelessness by the argument that the thing they have in hand is of no importance.

But it is either worth doing or it is not worth doing; and it should either be let alone or done properly.

And the meanest duty may be done well or ill. We do not mean for a moment that all work is equally valuable, or that every duty should have the same amount of time and toil bestowed upon it. This would often be to withdraw from other and more important employments the attention and pains which they demand. But everything should be done according to its own nature and needs, with such care as shall ensure its being done effectually. The man who begins by doing anything badly, and being satisfied with so doing, is in great danger of ending by doing nothing well. But this thought has a very direct bearing upon the life-work of many. There are very many of our fellow-creatures who must toil at what are called the lower employments of life, and some of them must often feel that they are capable of better things. It is easy to understand the temptation which bids them despise their actual work. But assuredly it is the greatest folly to yield to such a temptation. When once we have satisfied ourselves that it is our duty to occupy a certain post, that here and nowhere else is our work, then let us believe that this is what our hand findeth to do, and let us do it with our might.

2. A powerful incentive to earnest and careful labour may surely be found in the *intrinsic excellence and beauty of all good work*, of whatever kind that work may be, whether the hand-work or brain-work, whether the work of the chisel, the graving-tool, the pencil, the brush, or the pen. May we not say that this is one of the very highest motives by which the worker can be animated? It is involved alike in the thought of doing all for the glory of God, in the desire to do the best we can for the world in which we live, and in the purpose of realizing our own proper perfection and doing our own appointed work.

(To be continued.)