

PEOPLE WHO FAIL.

There are many people who fail. Yet there are two standards by which success and failure may be measured. There is the world's standard and there is God's. Many whom men set down as having failed are successful in the higher sense, while many of earth's vaunted successes are really utter and terrible failures.

If we are wise we will seek to know life's realities, and will not be fooled by its appearances. True success must be something which will not perish in earth's wreck or decay, something which will not be torn out of our hands in the hour of death, something which will not last over into the eternal years.

The real failures in life are not those which are registered in commercial agencies and reported as bankruptcies, nor those whose marks are the decay of earthly fortune, descent in the social scale, the breaking down of worldly prosperity, or any of those signs by which men rate each other. A man may fail in these ways and as heaven sees him his path may be like the shining light, growing in brightness all the while. His heart may remain pure and his hands clean through all his earthly misfortunes. It matters little what becomes of one's circumstance if meanwhile the man himself is prospering.

The real failures are those whose marks are in the life itself and in the character. A man prospers in the world. He grows rich. He gathers luxuries and the appointments of wealth about him instead of the plain circumstances amid which he spent his early days. The cottage is exchanged for a mansion. He is a millionaire. He has wide influence. Men wait at his door to ask favors of him. He is sought and courted by the great. His name is everywhere known. But the heart which nestled in purity under the home-made jacket has not retained its purity under rich broadcloth. It has become the home of pride, ambition, unrest, unholy schemes and of much that is corrupt and evil. His character has lost its former innocence and loveliness. Shall we call that true success which rears up a pile of earthly grandeur, to dazzle men's eyes, while it strangles a man's spiritual life and forfeets him the divine favor and a home in heaven?

But in original endowments and in opportunities every life is furnished for suc-

cess. Those who fail, fail because they will not make their life after the pattern shown them in the mount, because they do not use the endowments which God has bestowed upon them, because they reject the opportunities offered to them, or because they leave God out of their life and enter the battle only in their own strength.

The saddest thing in the world is the wreck of a life made for God and for immortality, but failing of all the ends of its existence and lying in ruin at the last, when it is too late to begin again. The paths that lead to failure start far back and slope down usually in very gradual and almost imperceptible decline toward the fatal end.

It may be that these words shall come to one whose feet are already set in paths of peril. There are many such paths, and so disguised are they by the enemy of men's souls that of times they appear harmless to the unwary. They are flower-strewn. They begin at first in very slight and in only momentary deviations from the narrow path of duty and of safety. If the compass register falsely by but a hair's breadth when the ship puts out to sea it will carry her a thousand miles from her course a few days hence and may wreck her. The slightest wrong tendency of life in early youth unless corrected will lead at length far away.

Every young person who would save his life from failure must begin with the bright golden days now passing and make each one of them beautiful with the beauty of fidelity and earnestness. A wasted youth is a bad beginning for a successful life. We have not a moment to lose, for the time allotted to us is not an instant too long for the tasks and duties which God has set for us.

LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

A gentle, gracious old lady of seventy lately told the following incident to her grandchildren. We give, as nearly as possible, her own words:

"I drove out one day, when I was a young girl, to the Park. Some trifle had occurred to irritate me; a disappointment, probably, about a dress or hat. I left the carriage, and, bidding the coachman drive on, sat down on a bench near the river.

"Some children were playing under the trees, their nurses looking on. I remember that their noise annoyed me, and that.