

A kindly influence shed abroad
 And from the soul lift many a load—
 These angel deeds, grand and sublime,
 Like ripples on the restless sea,
 Sweep o'er the fretful stream of life
 And reach into eternity.—Paul Clayton.

As with any other man so—perhaps more so with a Pythian, he has not only an influence, but his influence may be as the poet puts it, one that is fraught with evil. Or one loaded with blessing. Put the two influences together, compare them, look at them, think of them, imagine them, then realise how hateful, how despicable, how mean and contemptible is the one which casts a mirk-some gloom across life's rough and troubled sea, and how beautiful, how pleasing, how God-like is that influence which lifts the loads of humanity. But Pythians will not end the matter here. It is not enough to compare things which differ; it is not even enough to arrive at a decision as to which is the most worthy—he must do more. If he has learned the lessons of Pythianism aright, and if he has drank deeply of the noble spirit which is ever a fount of inspiration to us, then he will strive through good and bad report, though things pleasing and displeasing that his influence shall be a kindly influence shed abroad. But how, some reader may ask, is this influence obtained? Not by hap hazard, not by chance, and not by what is called good luck. To attain this, which should ever be the chief ambition in life, one must nurture noble thoughts, cultivate generous feelings, and then whatever the cost, do grand deeds. Such things again have a cost attached to them. You cannot get them by wishing or by dreaming. The possession of them implies labor, and their exemplification and revelation demands struggle and effort of the most heroic kind. No man can be a good man without the valour and the courage of a God. But the thing aimed at is worth the cost, and the man who professes should aspire to reach the heights of his profession. Easy by no means. The true Knight of the past found his path not easy, but difficult and to attain, cost blood and tears. He knew that, but like Tennyson's hero—his not to reason why—his but to do or die, to gain the reputation and character of a true Knight. To-day duty calls us in different ways, and to different scenes, and to different things, but to do at all times what is noble, true, and heroic demands a heart as brave as a lion, and as gentle and kind as that of a woman. Let another poet give you another view of this impressive theme and fact in human existence.

I climbed the winding stairway
 That led to the belfry tower,
 As the sinking sun in the westward
 Heralded twilight's hour.

For I thought that surely the music
 Would be clearer and sweeter far
 Than when through the din of the city
 It seemed to float from afar.

But lo! as I neared the belfry,
 No sound of music was there:
 Only a brazen clangour
 Disturbed the quiet air.

The singer stood at the keyboard,
 Far down beneath the chimes,
 And patiently struck the noisy keys
 As he had uncounted times.

He only knew his duty,
 And he did it with patient care:
 But he could not hear the music
 That floated through the air.

Only the jar and the clamour
 Fell harshly on his ear,
 And he missed the mellow the chiming
 That every one could hear.

So we from our quiet watch-towers
 May he sending a sweet refrain,
 And gladdening the lives of the lowly
 Though we hear not a single strain.

Our work may seem but a discord,
 Tho' we do the best we can,
 But others will hear the music,
 If we carry out God's plan.

The thought is exquisite. Here is a man making music for others, and yet hears it not himself. Here is a man, a lover of duty, faithful to duty, making others glad, while all around his own life is jar and clamour, and though he hears not, yet keeps on gladdening the hearts of others. So it may be with many still. Doing good always means music; always means making others glad and happy, but it may happen oft that the maker of the music may not hear what he himself is making. However isn't it grand to know that while we are doing our duty others are made glad thereby! So far then we have been looking at this influence from the personal standpoint, but let us now look at it from a wider point of

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