

Poetry.

ORIGINAL.

(For the "Budget.")

FOR A MOMENT WE FEEL.

BY TIMOR.

For a moment we feel
Our past pleasures again ;
But each moment of grief
Is a chapter of pain.
Every shadow we smile on
Is dimmed by a tear,
And the loveliest visions
Repose on the bier.

Such is life, such is life
In this valley below,
We are buoyed up by false hopes,
Or buried in woe.

The brightest hopes perish
And die e'er they bloom,
And the pleasures of memory,
Are filched from the tomb,
For a moment they gladden
The dreams of our sleep,
But we wake from the vision
In sadness to weep.

Unceasing, the stem
Blossoms over the grave ;
But the flowers all perish
Beneath the dark wave ;—
And the chaplet we weave
For the brow of the bride
Falls withered and scentless
On life's passing tide.

The Fireside.

SUCCESS IN LIFE.

The great aim of life is to succeed. The spirit of emulation in man makes him shrink from the idea of failure, while the satisfaction anticipated in success spurs him on to greater efforts. From the fact that nothing is so successful as success, that is, that nothing is so taking to the popular mind as to see one succeed, the bent of human inclination is to succeed, even though it be at the expense of merit. The presumption is that, if a man succeeds, he is meritorious, and, ignoring all attending circumstances, this judgment is correct. But take a case. A physician of the body is engaged to a young lady who afterwards becomes intimate with a physician of souls. In the exchange of courtesies the minister has occasion to write to the young lady, and the doctor takes offence at the letter and writes an insulting reply, which induces the minister to contend for the hand of the lady, and, either owing to the weakness of the fair sex, and their respect for the cloth, or because he is the better man, he wins. Of course the doctor's heart did not break, for such is not a characteristic of the profession. Now, granting that the dominie did succeed, was he not devoid of all honor and merit in the case? Or, to put the case differently, is not he who decoys another man's intended, even though he wins, just as heartless a creature as he who entices another man's wife?

This much is, however, clear, that merit and

success are different things. There may be success and no merit, as there may be a great deal of merit with success; while, on the other hand, there may be great merit and no success at all. The distinction between success and merit is a thing that is too often lost sight of in the battle of life, and especially so in reference to the young and inexperienced. The grounds of success may be nothing but the basest of means, accompanied with a good amount of tact, or, perhaps, the merest accident, while the grounds of merit must be in themselves valuable, as, for example, when one man by roguery succeeds in business, and an honest dealer fails.

For all practical purposes, men may be classed under three heads: First, the aimless, which constitutes that great crowd of beings which is content to live on what they can get from day to day, or what fortune or good luck may send them. It is made up of both rich and poor, high and low. They are creatures good, and creatures bad, which, like the gnats and the bugs, live out their days by doing a certain quantity of gnawing and humming, and then die, and the world never knows that they have lived. These people succeed in only one thing, that is, in reaching the end of their days, and as it is the only thing undertaken by them they deserve the gratitude of the community at least for this.

Another class of men are those who have aims, but who are impatient and want tact. These men plan well, but fail in execution. If they had patience to wait sometimes, or if they possessed tact to adapt when a portion of their scheme goes wrong, they might yet attain some measure of success. Being impatient, they are afflicted with an attendant evil, that of being over sanguine. Their plans are made up largely of bright hopes, and, when they find how much more difficult it is to realize than to anticipate great things, they lose faith in their own schemes, and abandon one that is half-tried for another that is no better in itself, but charms merely because it is new and untried. This class of men accomplish most in connection with others. They have talents for organizing, and are useful as employees, or as silent partners, or stockholders in companies, where they can work under a supervising head that has executive ability. These good, generous people never can see that Montesquieu's maxim, "Success in most things depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed," applies to them individually. As sure as they meet with some measure of success, they become so elated that they at once destroy it. Just as sure as one of these exuberant fellows makes one hundred dollars, he will feel so rich that he will spend twice the sum.

The third class are the men of purpose and tact, those who plan well and execute well. They are the successful men of the world, and constitute the pith and stamina of society. They are the bottom-stock of the social compact. They are a cautious, slow, but sure race. They are the men who know that they seldom lose anything valuable by taking time for consideration, and that often much is lost through haste. They know how to wait for success, and while waiting they battle to succeed. When once they reach success, people wonder, and well they may, for but few know the trials these deserving men pass through. Let such as think it only fun to be meritorious and successful at the same time read the history of inventing the sewing-machine, the history of India-rubber manufacture, or the "Life of Horace Greeley," and they will seek for no better proofs to dispel the illusion.

Success, now, in the true and highest sense, is a success that combines merit just in proportion to the measure of success. It can be attained only through careful and prolonged efforts, at the same time the purpose being good and the means employed legitimate. The world is so dazzled with a show of success in every department of life, that young people have little or no patience to wait before they win. Sham and show receive so much applause that there seems to be danger lest humbug turn out to be the most deserving of favor. The central idea of American education is success at any cost, and by almost any means that will escape the clutch of civil law. The general impression is that there can be no such thing as success in business if it be done fairly and honestly. Success serves as a cloak to cover all sorts of evil schemes. He who succeeds is sure to receive the congratulations of his friends, even though it be with a twinkle of the eye that speaks what the tongue dare not utter. Steady, honest, old-fashioned integrity is so rare and at such a discount that young men entering business are swept away at once by the current of recognized trickery and deception. A man's word is looked upon as a thing to be kept just so far as it is convenient to do so.

Punctuality, the only real point in an agreement, is the last thing thought of. To be ready with an excuse is the highest aim of popular virtue. The honest man, if one is ever found, does nothing but what every one may expect of him, while he who deceives in nine cases and acts justly in one is counted very meritorious; the nine cases of deception serving to set off by way of contrast the one trustworthy act, and so secure the prodgal's appreciation. Integrity becomes a commodity, and, like everything else, succumbs to the idea of success. There is no justification of these evil practices sought or desired, further than that it is custom. Everybody does it, therefore everybody must do it, is the prevailing sentiment. To get the better of a bargain, when known to be by deception, is reckoned as skill, and not to be ready to seize an advantage is counted stupidity. But let the popular notion be what it may, let rogues grow fat and rich, and dazzle with their show of success, it must ever remain an immutable truth that there is no real success without merit. To barter reputation for gain, thinking that riches elevates a man, is a most absurd delusion.

It is time that the rising generation awake and improve upon the example of their fathers. Let there be an age of merit—an age of meritorious success. Let there be an age when to succeed by honest tact and skillful integrity shall be the highest honor a man can reach. Let there, for once, be a generation of honest men in the history of the Republic, and it will for ever be remembered as the golden age, and thereafter whoever through merit shall be crowned with success will be styled a hero.

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