

whatever kind it may be, in due season, need scarcely fear that he will ever experience any disadvantage from the want of presence of mind. He is always unembarrassed, and whatever comes to his hand, he is ready to execute. Few emergencies harass him, because he is prepared for them beforehand. On the contrary he whose indolence or folly causes him to procrastinate, is always in a hurry, and never does anything well. He can never extricate himself from confusion; and a small thing is to him an emergency, inasmuch as, when the time for undertaking it arrives, he is never ready to begin. The business of to-day he puts off till to-morrow; and when to-morrow comes, finding he has the work of two days on his hands, and that to go through it would cost him unusual labour he says to himself once more, "It will be time enough to-morrow," and postpones all till the third day. Thus he proceeds accumulating in his progress a multitude of dilemmas, from which no earthly prudence or presence of mind is capable of extricating him. We have known men of this kind, who led far more laborious lives, everything considered, than those who did three times as much work. They would forfeit their sleep two nights in the week, slaving and toiling at a business, which, if taken in proper time, and by proper arrangements, could have been very easily accomplished. To act wisely, therefore, in the business of life, we must always combine forethought with promptitude—we must bring *mind* into play. A well-disciplined mind, which, at a glance at all sides of a subject, can

see where the difficulties lie, and how they are to be surmounted, is seldom at a loss in acting promptly and prudently. Promptitude without forethought, or the power of acting wisely on the spur of the moment, is of no use, or worse than useless, for it amounts to precipitancy; besides, it is often necessary, in human action, to proceed with deliberate caution—to go on patiently for a time in a dull routine of duty before the period arrives that is to produce the glorious result we anticipated. The famous Michael Angelo, who was very long about his works, said that "in arts haste was good for nothing; and that as nature takes much time in forming what is to last long, so art, which strives to imitate nature, ought to work leisurely: it being impossible for man to do anything that is excellent in haste." Thus, even in some of the higher departments of art, where genius comes into play, long labor and careful execution are indispensable to success. Those who work at ordinary professions may likewise be assured that prudence and persevering industry are no less necessary in their case, and that the only way to hit "the nick of time" is, to be constantly busy in their employments.

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Every man is ready to give in a long catalogue of those virtues and good qualities he expects to find in the person of a friend; but very few of us are careful to cultivate them in ourselves.

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Speak of the absent as if they were present; then if you do not say all that you think, think all that you say.