

SUCCESS AS A TEST OF CHARACTER.

INCRASSATUS est dilectus, et recalcitravit." Few men, it has been truly said, can stand adversity, fewer still can stand prosperity. Israel, to use an equine simile, "got above their oats," and, so to speak, laid their ears back, and kicked vigorously. The proceeding, as we gather from their later history, and from Saint Paul's experience—*durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare* (Acts IX, 5)—was not conducive to their comfort, but may be looked on as the typical result of prosperity in nine instances out of ten.

So, at least, the Wise Man seems to have thought. "Lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say: Who is the Lord?" (Prov. XXX, 8). Solomon, one might have supposed, was well fitted to stand prosperity. How he stood it, we all know, and, knowing, cease to wonder at the saying: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of Heaven!" Nor need "riches" be interpreted in any narrow sense. Success, of whatever nature, is just as full of spiritual danger to most of us.

"A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin." [S. Mark VI, 4]. Speaking reverently, it is, probably, just as well for the prophet—as for all of us—that there should be some to estimate him at a lower value than he is apt to set on himself. "No man," says the old proverb, "is a hero to his valet." If the valet, or the kindred, or "our d—d good-natured friends," as Byron calls them, do but succeed in reminding us, from time to time, *quia pulvis es*, we shall learn, sooner or later, to be grateful for the "damned iteration."

To come, however, to the point wherewith we are here more immediately concerned: Ottawa University, I understand, is to send a Rhodes scholar to Oxford in 1911. That date, it may be said, is a long way off, nor is it likely that any student now at the university will be among the competitors for the honour in question. But this matter of the Rhodes scholarship is closely connected with our subject, since it raises the pertinent question: How will the successful student stand his success? What effect will it have on his character?

The latter question is, perhaps, not expressed as accurately as it might be. "Occasions," says the author of the *Imitation*, "do not make a man frail, but they show of what sort he is." So of