

The Young Man and His Problem

THE SIGN OF A HERO

He is a slave who dare not be in the right with two or three. The true hero does not count the cost, or if he does, he is indifferent to the result. He is familiar with history and knows what heroism means—a prison for Paul, a stone for Stephen, a scaffold for Savonarola, a burning fagot for Hugh Latimer, a cup of hemlock for Socrates, an assassin's bullet for Lincoln and a cross of crucifixion for Jesus. But the true heart looks down into the dark corridors of the martyr's dungeon and exclaims: "I am now ready to be offered." Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone.

PROPHET, POET AND PHILOSOPHER.

In the Wesley family there were three sons—John Wesley, Charles Wesley and Samuel Wesley. John Wesley was a preacher and prophet. He did more to regenerate and redeem the British Isles than any man of his generation. He accomplished much because of a steady quiet enthusiasm which came as near "perpetual motion" as anything which the world has ever seen. Charles Wesley was a poet and singer. He wrote seven thousand hymns. He set the heart of humanity on fire with melody. But Samuel Wesley—well, he was a cool minded, cold blooded philosopher. He laughed at his brothers John and Charles. He sneered at the Holy Club and Bible Bigots. He regarded himself as the thinker of his family, but he missed the golden opportunity of his age. He failed to act. Reflection is useless without action.

BE SURE OF YOURSELF.

Grant had a quiet way of deciding things. A decision with reference to one hundred head of cattle or an order concerning the movement of one hundred thousand men seemed to cost about the same measure of mental effort. Each order seemed to be given in a quiet, confident way, as though he was absolutely sure of himself. Wellington at Waterloo said to one of his officers at a time when the fighting seemed to be the hottest, "Hard pounding, this. But let us see who will pound the longest!" He was sure of himself. Anthony Froude, when he had finished writing the life of Lord Beaconsfield, said to a friend: "That is an honest book. It will please neither the friends nor the enemies of Lord Beaconsfield, but it is an honest book." He was sure of his ground, sure of his facts, sure of his inferences, sure of his conclusions, sure of his own sincerity.—He was sure of himself.

THE MAN OF GALILEE.

I am not preaching a sermon or attempting to exhort when I affirm that earth has produced but one perfect character—the peerless personality of history—Jesus of Nazareth. Listen to the words of Renan, "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed." When Mr. Landon (Eli Perkins) was preparing his volume on "Kings of the Platform and Pulpit," he wrote to Col. Robert G. Ingersoll for a copy of his most famous lecture. In the letter which accompanied the manuscript Mr. Ingersoll said, "Whatever you do, don't put anything into the book against Christ. I may have said silly things about Him when a boy in Peoria, Ill., but I now regard Him as the one perfect man." Jesus is the one universal man. Moses was a Hebrew, Socrates an Athenian, Buddha a Hindu, Mohammed an Arab, Gladstone an Englishman, Luther a German and Lincoln an American, but Jesus belongs to us all. He is the universal man—the one perfect character.

THE GREATEST PROBLEM IN THE WORLD.

Civilization's biggest problem is the saloon. What shall we do with it? Put it where you please and it is a nuisance. Place it on the street corner, adorned with snow white marble and decanters of cut glass and it is a snare—a pocket edition of perdition in gilt edged binding. Hide it away in the rear end of a blind alley and you are playing with a dynamite bomb of devilry which may explode at any moment. Crown it with high license or curse it with low license it remains the same unsolvable problem—a national nuisance and an individual curse. Even the New York saloon, blessed and consecrated by Bishop Potter of the

Episcopal Church of America, turned out a failure and a disappointment. Gladstone affirmed that the end of all legislation was two-fold: that men might find it easy to do right and hard to do wrong. With such a two-fold design in view, keep an eagle eye on the saloon. Chain it! Curb it! Restrict it! and where you can, Destroy it!

GREAT MEN—HOW TO STUDY THEM.

A straw will show which way the wind blows and the little things in the life of a great man will reveal his character. Parnell, in playing chess, was very slow in making a move, but when he made a move, he did it quickly—rapidly. His thinking was long and deliberate. His action quick and sharp. Grant thought over every battle in order to gain fresh points for the next conflict. Luther placed a flower on his writing desk in order to calm and sweeten his thoughts. Dickens inspected every room in his house, every day, in order to see that everything was neat and in order. Whitefield could never study in a chamber where the furniture was poorly arranged or out of order. In his personal dress he was the very incarnation of neatness and yet he swayed thousands. In the pulpit he had the abandonment of inspiration. Gen. Sherman walked among his sleeping soldiers at midnight in order to see that all important details had received proper attention. In life detail determines destiny.

"I GET UP."

The strong man is a good blend. He is a mixture of common sense and uncommon sense. He has a sincere regard for the twin realities—the seen and the unseen. He is the incarnation of caution and courage—about fifty per cent. of each. When he looks forward he has also an eye to the right and an eye to the left. He can be religious without being visionary and Godly without being "goody." Dr. Adam Clarke, the commentator, was well known as an early riser. A young preacher who regretted his inability to follow the example of the Doctor in the matter of early rising wrote to him to inquire the secret of his success. "Do you pray about it," inquired the youth. "No," replied the Doctor, "I get up!"

DISARMED.

There is a frank honesty which cannot be made ridiculous, although it be an acknowledgment of ignorance. It was an honesty that Lincoln used, and an anecdote told of him shows how with it he once disarmed a learned opponent who had overwhelmed him with quotations. Lincoln was not a learned man, but for true knowledge he had the highest respect. The practising lawyer with his pseudo-learning, however, was a fair target for Lincoln. One such lawyer, in order to impress his hearers and to embarrass his opponent, quoted massively a Latin maxim. "Is that not so," Mr. Lincoln? he asked. "If that is Latin," Lincoln responded dryly, "I think you had better call another witness." Probably the jury hailed the frank young lawyer as their own champion, since he professed himself as ignorant as they.

BE HONEST.

No man likes to be defrauded. If he buys a coat he wishes the cloth to be just what the merchant says it is; and if he purchases a barrel of apples he feels outraged when he discovers that the big apples have been put in the ends of the barrel, and that the space between is filled with small and unsound fruit. Great business successes have been built up by men who have acted on this known trait in human nature; and men who have ignored it—who have perhaps assented to the proposition that honesty is the best policy, but have not acted on the knowledge that it is so—have failed to win permanent success. A fine illustration of what happens when men throw away their opportunities is afforded by the decline of the American cheese export trade. In 1881 cheese to the amount of nearly one hundred and fifty million pounds was sold abroad. Last year the export of American cheese amounted to less than ten million pounds. The Americans had the market, and lost it by failing to keep the cheese up to the standard. Canada has secured the trade. In 1905 Canada exported more than two hundred million pounds of cheese. "Honesty is the best policy."

Truth is a beautiful thing, and philosophy is bent on seeking it. A professor of philosophy, who has taught as rigorously as did Kant that it is never right, under any circumstances, even if the shock kills the listener, to tell anything but the exact truth, so far as words will do it, has staked his entire prosperity on a wager. He agrees for one year to utter no falsehood, even a white lie, on penalty of forfeiting his estate. He thinks that the trouble with philosophies is that they have never been demonstrated in practice. He is willing to back his philosophy in a way that is at least sportsmanlike, if not philosophical. By the way, he differs from most philosophers in having an estate to forfeit.

FARMING A PROFESSION.

A distinguished scholar and farmer is quoted as having paid his eloquent and, on the whole, just tribute to the farmer, "Farming is a profession requiring more shrewdness than law, more technical training than medicine, more uprightness than theology, more brains and resourcefulness than pedagogy. It is its own reward. God made farmers. The other professions are parasites. This is rather hard on other professions, but still, none too much honor can be paid the conqueror of the soil. More intensive farming is needed in this country and the young man who learns to farm scientifically will reap a richer harvest."

PLEASURES OF THE HIRED MAN.

"The real, the substantial pleasures of the hired man's life, especially if he is hired by the day during the harvest time, is the rainy day. Does the pious Hindu, his hundred cycles of laborious life completed, awake to divine music than the melody of pattering rain? It seems peculiar that a man who works hard with his muscles from five in the morning until late in the evening, with a short nooning of an hour, perhaps, should turn to athletics the first thing after the chores are done in the evenings. Foot races, jumping, turning pole, all are popular, especially if some neighbor had comes over from the next farm to join in it. Among the pleasures not athletic are the summer ice cream socials, destined more for the glory and advancement of the church, however, than for the pleasure of man. You ride six or eight miles of a dark night, after a hard day's work, your fatigue aggravated by the good clothes you have to wear. Arriving at the school house, you are invited to pay ten cents for a dish of watery ice cream and a square of cake, served by some young woman whom you do not know and are afraid of being introduced to. After the refreshments, if you are refreshed, and the program, if there is a program, you drive home again to arrive, perhaps, a little before breakfast time. Such are some of the pleasures of the hired man."

POLITICAL MANNERS.

Manners, according to Edmund Burke, barbarize or refine us by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like the air we breathe. Burke referred not to the graces of the drawing-room alone, but to the bearing up of men and women towards others in all their activities. The man of gentle manners, whether he be rich or poor, always respects the feelings of others, and when he expresses disagreement with another he does it in a gentlemanly way. Those who follow the reports of the debates in the British House of Commons have frequently noted the high tone of the discussion. There are exceptions, but the rule is that men of all parties act as if they were co-operating for the general good. Debate in the Canadian House of Commons too frequently degenerates into arraignment of the honesty of purpose of this party or that officer. The Premier himself receives his share of abuse. The Canadian Parliament might profit by the example of the British House of Commons. Good manners, political or otherwise, are an indication of good breeding.

KNOW YOUR MAN.

In this age of "hustle" a proper exercise of discretion in the selection of your social, business and political alliances might not be amiss. A good story is told about a young college graduate who has been learning something about practical politics. He attempted to wrest the control of a New York assembly direct from Tammany. When the campaign was over he found that the men whom he had trusted to co-operate with him had taken his money and hired out to the other side. They took his ballots, but did not vote them. The "detective" whom he hired to watch his rival turned out to be a lieutenant of that rival, and some of his professed followers stole his watch, chain and diamond scarf pin. Make it your rule to "know your man" before trusting him too implicitly.