

INVENTIONS

At the current meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the president urged that possible inventors ought to be provided with financial and other assistance to enable them to proceed with their work in a scientific manner. Many of the inventions, the fruits of which we are familiar with to-day, have been produced under great financial stress, and within unfavorable physical surroundings, and it is just possible that the lack of facilities was the spur which forced the progress of the invention. It is interesting to note, however, that a well-known psychologist has suggested a plan whereby the matter of an invention may be approached scientifically.

Briefly, he proposes that a man should make a list of all the parts, accessories, appliances or equipment used in his own particular sphere of work, and then pair them off with a view to ascertaining whether it would be possible to produce a combination machine which would embody the functions of two separate devices.

Familiar cases are the fountain pen, really a combination of an ink-well and a penholder; the Morris chair, a combination of a couch and a chair; the telautograph, a combination of a writing machine and a telegraph instrument; but it is a question whether these were produced by a studied plan or through "inspiration".

Our young men of the West, of an inventive turn of mind, might very well devote a little thought to these suggestions and endeavor to ascertain theoretically what might be done by the combination of agricultural and mechanical devices with which many of them are familiar.

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

I find that I have used the term "psychologist" in the preceding paragraph and when a writer undertakes to use such a many-syllabled word, he must expect some of his readers to ask "What is a psychologist?" Well, I have had the privilege of meeting a number of bona fide psychologists, and I have also worked and lived with the farmers of the West, and I find that psychologists and farmers have many points in common, for a man does not work for many years with Nature without developing the ability to think deeply and see clearly, for, after all, that is what psychology means.

Scientifically, it is defined as "That knowledge of the mind which we derive from a careful examination of the facts of consciousness". Like economics, it has its opponents and its exponents, but it has achieved a great victory in the recent war, for the services of psychologists were used to a great extent by all the allied governments, and perhaps for the first time in war.

The case of the New York telephone directory furnishes an interesting illustration of the practical side of psychology. This volume had become exceedingly bulky and had finally blocked the efforts of the printers and paper makers to reduce it in size, either by the use of different type or of thinner paper. The services of a noted psychologist were secured and, by a scientific rearrangement of the matter, based upon his knowledge of mental requirements, a very substantial reduction in size was effected.

A LIST OF GOOD BOOKS

The time is approaching, though perhaps one should delay reference to it, when the strenuous evenings of summer games will be exchanged for the quiet hours of the winter months, and then perhaps a few good books will not come amiss.

Of these, one of our own Canadian writers, Mr. Robert J. C. Stead, says:

"It is from books that we obtain our ideas of right and wrong, of honor and dishonor, of success and failure, of love and hate, of generosity and greed, of all high purpose and all noble character and all unselfish impulse. The brightest minds of the ages have stored the wisdom of the world in books, where it may be had for the taking."

In one of the early English plays we read:

That place that does contain
My books, the best companions, is to me
A glorious court, where hourly I converse
With the old sages and philosophers;
And sometimes, for variety, I confer
With kings and emperors, and weigh their counsels;
Calling their victories, if unjustly got,
Unto a strict account, and, in my fancy,
Deface their ill-placed statues."

Many years ago, Sir John Lubbock compiled a list which he styled "One Hundred Best Books." This was the forerunner of a spirited discussion which has lasted until this day as to which are

The Young Man
and His Problem

By H. J. RUSSELL

Commercial Master, St. John's Technical High School

the best books of the world. From Sir John's list, I select twenty. Probably you have read some, and possibly all, of them, but, be that as it may, they are good books:

Pilgrim's Progress	Natural History of Sel-
Morte D'Arthur	bourne
Human Knowledge	Vanity Fair
Shakespeare	Self Help
Robinson Crusoe	Burns
The Arabian Nights	Vicar of Wakefield
Bacon's Essays	Gulliver's Travels
Adam Bede	Pride and Prejudice
Last Days of Pompeii	Holy Living and Holy
Westward Ho!	Dying
Pickwick Papers	Don Quixote

Just a word of suggestion: some people buy books to read but others buy them as furniture.

ECONOMICS

A generous publisher has sent me a book entitled "An Introduction to Economics". I like the look of it and soon I propose to read it but, while the matter is fresh in my mind, I quote from the concluding paragraphs:

"Names, whether they be the names of socialism, bolshevism, or individualism mean, in themselves, simply nothing. No one is prepared with a satisfactory definition which really covers the whole content of the terms. What we must seek is the reality behind the label, using careful, scientific judgement and not blind passion.

Tub thumping at street corners will lead us no further than ignorant rhetoric in newspapers. In order to amend our society we must first understand it. Our study of economics should serve as a basis upon which to build a real knowledge of the economic structure of the present civilization. It rests with the student to fill in the many and deep gaps which have been left and to apply his knowledge to the task of so reconstructing society that the evils of which we are conscious shall be things of the past."

THRIFT

Constantly we are urged to be thrifty; so constantly that we may well ask if there is any method whereby we may be sure of attaining the standard which our government seems disposed to set for us. So perhaps we can gather a little from the book of good old Benjamin Franklin:

Save and have.
Every little makes a mickle.
Little strokes fell great oaks.
A rolling stone gathers no moss.
God helps those that help themselves.
Spend one penny less than thy clear gains.
Look before or you'll find yourself behind.
He that waits upon fortune is never sure of a dinner.
Money can beget money, and its offspring can beget more.
It is foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance.
Learning is to the studious and riches to the careful.
Waste neither time nor money, but make the best use of both.
Remember that money is of the prolific, generating nature.
All things are cheap to the saving, dear to the wasteful.

POTATOES AND-BOLSHEVISM

Bolshevism—I don't like again to record a word so overworked, and I would not do so now were it not for the fact that I believe I have discovered a cure for it. This is not boasting and no credit whatever is taken for the discovery. It was forced upon me, and the cure is—potatoes.

Last spring, in the little clay patch behind the house, I thought it time to plant a few potatoes, and for the seed I took from the basement a bucket or so of potatoes remaining from the winter supply, but the cellar had been overwarm and the potatoes were so soft as to be almost bad. Really, it seemed an insult to Mother Earth to plant them with the expectation of getting any return.

A few weeks ago, I began to dig them, and as from each root I turned to the surface six, eight and ten hard, white, large potatoes, my enthusiasm for Manitoba was revived once more, and so I put the question—How can a man think in terms of bolshevism so long as Manitoba yields so generously of mortgage lifters?

SUCCESS

What is success and what is the price that must be paid for it? Many years ago a great newspaper in an effort to find a popular answer to this question offered a substantial prize for the best definition of success, and this was the winning answer, submitted by Mrs. A. J. Stanley:

"He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who has left the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who has never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and given the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory is a benediction."

LAW

There is much more to law than contracts and negotiable instruments. Occasionally, "the law's delays" give rise to sentiments that voice a doubt as to the real value of man-made legal restrictions. But in spite of its imperfections, the law of our country is beneficent in its conception and usually in its execution. If you will take time to examine it, you will find that the law is designed to protect a man even in anticipation of his birth, and that it extends to the equitable distribution of his property after death.

We cannot dispense with laws. Even should we burn every sheepskin bound volume in the great libraries of law, and endeavor to destroy every trace of evidence of statutory requirements, there would remain the moral law—the law governing our consciences, and the natural law—the law relating to the animal, the vegetable, the mineral and the solar kingdoms.

Laws, as they are administered wisely and kindly, deserve the active support of every citizen, and just here we may well record a section from the work of the great Roman law-giver, the Emperor Justinian, which is known as Justinian's Doctrine of Law:

- (1) To live honestly.
- (2) To hurt nobody.
- (3) To render to everyone his just due.

BORROWED WORDS

If you should see a book by Waldo Pondray Warren, you may buy it without hesitation, confident in the expectation that it will be full of good things, and for those who are not acquainted with the writings of this author, I give, by way of introduction, a few quotations from one of his latest books:

The greatest asset a business or an individual can have is the Spirit of Progress.

The man who gets the most out of life is the man who lives to learn.

A knowledge of the whole plan enables one to handle a part more intelligently.

The average person is not thorough and therefore even a little thoroughness will surpass him.

A man loses force when he lets himself become confused by the bigness or complexity of things around him.

Activity is the normal state of mind. It is as natural for thought to be active as it is for the earth to move on its axis.

The time must come when no man will be called great until he is a gentleman.

Duty never requires a man to be in two places at once.

CHOOSING A VOCATION

Surely it is true that a young man should choose his life work not with the idea of the immediate remuneration, but with the possibilities that it may hold for his future development, and yet quite often the contrary is the case. Some years ago I had occasion to work with a class of boys who were preparing to enter upon certain business careers, and among them was one who had a very profitable newspaper route, with the proceeds of which he was putting himself through school.

In due time, the boys were graduated and began work, one by one, with various institutions, beginning generally at the bottom of the ladder, and to-day most of them are climbing satisfactorily. The boy I have reference to, however, had some difficulty in securing a post, and so he resumed the selling of papers rather than be idle. But he had a very profitable corner in the city, which brought in enough to keep him going and he discontinued his efforts to get a position with a business firm. Several friends have urged him to change his work but hitherto he has been indifferent to suggestions.

I passed his corner the other day and he was still selling papers.