

lieve in the possibility of doing something noble and chivalrous in life brings such an accession of strength as makes work a pleasure and danger an inspiration. The power of faith from the human standpoint is shown in the lives of false teachers and false prophets. Mohammed believed himself called of God to teach the doctrines of the Koran. Under the inspiration of this belief he wrote and spoke with such power that he impressed his views upon the hearts and lives of thousands of his countrymen; and, as a result, Mohammedanism lives to-day. The Mahdi, or false prophet, that arose in southern Egypt a few years ago, became mighty in war, because he fancied that he was destined by God to be the liberator of his people. Virgil said of his boatmen: *Possunt quia posse videntur*; men are able because they think they are able. I do not wish to encourage low self-conceit, which is usually the outcome of weakness and vanity; and yet there is a certain amount of self-confidence which is necessary to give backbone to a man's character. We never like to go to a man and ask him to do something for us and be invariably met with the response, I cannot. Such persons very seldom do anything in the world. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." As he narrows and belittles the capabilities of his own soul he will fall back from duty, and the very energies with which God endowed him will be taken from him, and he will be left a comparative weakling. It is sometimes stated that every missionary should have faith in the success of his mission, otherwise he will soon become discouraged, and his work will be a failure; but I would go farther, and state that every person, young and old, needs to have faith in the trade, profession or mercantile pursuit in which he is engaged; faith in the capabilities of his own nature, and, above all, faith in God, if he would bring to bear upon that calling the moral stamina and energy that are the essentials of success. The moment he begins to doubt the utility or the practicability of his object in life he enfeebles himself. On the other hand, when he considers his object in life a worthy one, when it is suited to his talent and taste, when he believes himself called of God to accomplish that work, then, from the human standpoint, even if mistaken, like the false Mohammed, his soul will feel the impetus of an importunate compulsion amounting almost to inspiration. This power I ask you all to put on in religious work, not simply from the lower and human standpoint that we have been describing, but from the higher and divine standpoint. Have supreme faith in God, and then have faith in the cause which you have espoused, because you believe or know it to be the cause of God and must prevail. Some Christians seem to have just enough faith to obtain a faint sense of acceptance, but not enough faith to lift them above their fears and forebodings and enable them to do their duty with cheerfulness. To such I would say, "Put on thy strength." Stretch forth the hand of faith till it consciously lays hold upon the resources of the Almighty and turns them to account in the practical purposes of life. This is the power which will enable one to chase a thousand; and two put ten thousand to flight. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and learn what men, and even delicate women, have done who have been transported beyond themselves by the power of mighty faith. Paul, after enumerating a long list of worthies, sums up the whole by saying: "And what shall I say more! for the time would fail me to tell of Gedson, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephtha, of David also, of Samuel and of the prophets who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

None of us can dissipate the clouds and the mists that hang above our horizon; but if we were in some countries we could climb to the mountain-top and look above and beyond them. Such a mountain-top is always within reach of the Christian, and faith is the power which will enable him to climb to the summit, and from this vantage ground look down upon the petty weaknesses and trials which discourage and overcome others.

Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries it shall be done.

II. In the second place, a man is strong in the direction of his will. Let a man resolutely determine to accomplish a certain work in life, and it is astonishing what an addition this makes to his strength. Energies and capabilities long latent and hidden even from the man himself come into active service and bear him onward to the attainment of the proposed end. So great is the potency of the human will that its praises have passed into the well-known proverbs, "Where there is a will there is a way"; "Where the will is ready the feet are light"; "Nothing is impossible to a willing mind." Perhaps, in most cases, a man's success in life is determined more by his decision of character than by his inherent ability. Many a man of strong intellect and capacious memory is far outdistanced in the literary race by one of feebler faculties, simply because the latter has more steadiness of purpose and more resoluteness of will than the former. When a young man comes to you for employment, the first thing you do is to look at his physical build, to see whether or not he has sufficient muscle for your line of business; but beyond this you scrutinize his expression of countenance, you mark his words in order to ascertain whether or not there is any strength or earnestness of purpose, any underlying resolution to give force and stability to his character. From experience and observation you have learned that a comparatively weak constitution may accomplish more hard work than a vigorous and healthy one when the former is nerved to activity by the energy of will and when the latter is careless and unimpassioned. The late Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, one of the greatest educators of his day, said "That the difference between one boy and another in his school consisted not so much in talent as in energy." Sir Thomas F. Buxton said, "The longer I live the more I am certain that the difference between the great and the insignificant is

energy, invincible determination, an honest purpose once fixed, and then death or victory." Sir Isaac Newton, one of the ablest philosophers that ever lived, said "That he did not consider that he had any advantage over other men, except that whatever he thought of sufficient importance to begin he had sufficient resolution to continue until he had accomplished his purpose." We know what strength of will did for such commanders as Julius Cæsar, Hannibal, Napoleon and Wellington. We know what the lack of this stimulating and ennobling quality is doing for thousands in all lines of business. Men fail to succeed because they are not resolute and persistent; others triumph over difficulties because they are plucky and indefatigable. Disraeli was coughed and hissed down the first time he attempted to speak in the British Parliament. Nothing daunted, he arose and said with firmness: "The time will come when you will hear me"; and the time did come. Such tenacity of purpose will always win the battle of life. Take the case of Warren Hastings. When a boy seven years of age he resolved that he would recover the estate that had belonged to his fathers; that he would be Hastings of Douglasford, and for seventy years the purpose of his childhood never wavered. Macaulay says of him, "When under a tropical sun he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance and legislation, still pointed to Douglasford; and when his long, public life, so singularly checkered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed forever, it was to Douglasford that he retired to die." The resolve of the child became the experience of the man. Take the case of Marius sitting upon the ruins of Carthage, an outcast from human society, and yet preserving amidst those ruins a calm and unconquerable spirit, and determining ere long to retrieve his misfortunes and punish his opponents. In a few months



Truly Yours
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Marius entered Rome a conqueror, and there followed the terrible butchery of those opposed to him and Cinna. I have not referred to these two men, Warren Hastings and Marius, to commend their course of action, but simply to illustrate the potency of the human will under the most discouraging circumstances. It must be admitted that men can rouse themselves to action, that they can put on strength beyond all that is ordinary, that they can compensate for the want of wealth, for the want of what is commonly called good fortune, for the want even of personal accomplishments by that calm and indomitable force of will that will not be daunted by difficulties; that will not be turned aside by reverses until bright and glorious success is reached.

This element of power every young person should put on in a temporal sense. Resolve that you will be an intelligent, progressive and successful mechanic, merchant or professional man. It is God's will that you should be successful in your life's work, if you can enter upon it in the right spirit and for the Master's sake; but above all I would urge you to put on this strength in a moral and religious sense. Having sat down first and counted the cost, having reckoned up on the one hand the so-called advantages of a prayerless, ungodly life, and an eternity beneath the frown of the Almighty; and having reckoned up on the other hand the manifest advantages of a holy, useful life, and heaven at the end of the journey; then come to a definite decision, commit yourself to the cause of truth and righteousness with all the energy of your will. Come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Say with Joshua of old, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." It is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. This is true in a certain sense, and yet it is equally true that no one will ever get to heaven without his willing or determining to go there. To the Israelites of old God promised the land of Canaan, the land flowing with milk

and honey, and yet He did not carry them to Canaan against their wills. He did not miraculously lift them up in a whirlwind, transport them over the sandy desert, and put them down in the land of promise. They had to make up their minds to leave Egypt, and endure the hardships and privations of the wilderness before they got even a sight of the godly land, or were permitted to eat a single cluster of its grapes. Of course, God helped them to make a wise decision. He encouraged them by His promises, He lured them by His mercies, he awed them by His judgments upon the Egyptians; still, He did not decide for them; He did not make the journey for them. It was their duty and responsibility to make up their minds to leave the land of bondage and follow the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. The same principles underlay our eternal salvation. Every sinner that wants to be saved must make up his mind to seek salvation; to ask and receive, to seek and find, to knock at the door of mercy that it may be opened. Every Christian that wants to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, must decide to follow Christ through evil as well as through good report, to keep the eye single that the whole body may be full of light; in short, to be out and out for God. Without a strong and settled purpose to do right and to be right a man is poorly armed against temptation. We sometimes hear persons say, with considerable emphasis, that when they enlisted under the banners of the cross they enlisted for life, or that they are determined to see the end of a praying life; and I confess that such expressions always strike a responsive cord in my heart. They indicate an honest and firm decision to adhere to the noble principles of Christianity in preference to everything else, and that to the end of life; and in nine cases out of ten, such, thorough decision, with God's blessing, is more than half the battle.

III. In the third place, a man is strong in the direction of his affections.

Let a man's heart be interested and his hands will not tire. Let him leave a home in the morning where love reigns, and under the inspiration of this noble principle let him go to his office or workshop, and it matters not how difficult or laborious his duties may be, he will be more than capable of attending to them. Working for those who have a hold upon his affections no effort will be irksome, no care or anxiety will be galling or oppressive. Even when beaten down by mishap he cannot succumb to discouragement, because loving thoughts of home impel him to action, and give him a mightiness beyond all that is possible under other circumstances.

Young boys away from home know what it is to feel the power of a mother's love behind them, impelling them onward to success and honor; and when the young man advances further in life, and he thinks of establishing a home for himself, and he gives his heart to one that he expects ere long will be the central figure in that home, how great is the inspiration of true affection! The late Dr. Beecher referred to a young man fighting valiantly upon the battlefield and falling amongst the slain, and said that the secret of all his strength and courage was that "hidden under his vest was a sweet face done up in gold; and so, through love's heroism, he fought with double strokes and danger, mounting higher, till he found honor in death."

Take the case of a delicate mother bending over the pale emaciated form of a sickly child. For weeks she has been waiting upon it, almost by night and by day, scarcely letting it out of her thoughts for a single hour, and yet, though actually worn out, she cannot think of leaving the child to the care of others, and taking the rest that she really needs. Why is this the case? Why is that mother willing to endure so much? I would rather ask, why is she able to endure so much? The only answer that can be given is, 'tis the mystery of love. The mother's heart is interested. Her child is one with herself. Every sigh it utters touches the most tender chords of her being, awakens her energies, and prepares her for almost anything that may save the life of the child. Can anything be more touching than the story of Rizpah watching the dead bodies of her sons that had been hanged by the Gibeonites? And when that poor, distressed mother was forbidden to take the bodies down and bury them, she stayed with them by night and by day, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field to devour them by night. The poetess has expressed her feelings in the following stanzas:

"But I hoped that my cottage roof would be
A safe retreat for my sons and me;
And while they ripened to manhood fast,
They would wean my thoughts from the woes of the past.
Tall, like their sire, with princely grace,
Of his stately form and the bloom of his face,
O, what an hour for a mother's heart!
When the pitiless ruffians tore us apart!
When I clasped their knees and wept, and prayed,
And struggled, and shrieked to heaven for aid,
And clung to my sons with desperate strength,
Till the murderers loosened my hold at length
And tore me breathless and faint aside
In their iron arms, while my children died.
They died, and the mother that gave them birth
Is forbid to cover their bones with earth."

Love for a leader makes valiant soldiers. David at one time when weary and parched with thirst, gave expression to the wish, "Oh, that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" Three of his brave men heard the wish, and though the hosts of the Philistines lay between them and the fondly remembered spring from which David had drunk in his boyhood, they passed through the ranks of the enemy, drew the water from the favorite spot, and bore it back in triumph to their leader. David was so moved by this act of devotion that he refused to drink the water, stating that it was too sacred to be used for such a purpose and as a hallowed and precious oblation he poured it out unto the Lord.

The most wonderful illustration on record of the supporting power of love is that of Jesus of Nazareth, who for our sakes undertook the work of redemption and carried it into completion by the