

muscles and He expects us to use them, and we may be sure of this, that as atrophy or helplessness is the punishment which follows this neglect of muscular powers, so incompetence, atrophy of the brain is sure to follow mental indolence. God commands us to think, "Whatsoever things are true . . . think on these things." And not only does He command us to think, but also to think on right things.

The importance of our thinking.—It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of having our thoughts engaged on worthy objects. Men are generally too careless about their thoughts. They say "what does it matter what a man's thoughts are so long as his actions are all right?" But the question is how long will a man's actions continue good if his thoughts are bad? Our thoughts are the seeds of our actions. We reap in conduct the harvest we have sown in thought and imagination.

Every act was once a thought.—It lived invisible in the mind before it became visible in the life. True, we sometimes speak of men acting thoughtlessly, but what we mean is that their thought was immature and ill-digested, we do not mean that he did not think at all. Moreover though every act may not now be traceable to its origin in a definite thought, yet we may be sure it had such an origin. A man walks down the street, he is not conscious of his action, he does not deliberately think of moving his feet in a certain definite order or poisoning his body upright on his feet, but he thought of it all once. It gave him great labor, and possibly some pain, and many falls to acquire in his infancy this habit of walking and to-day his easy, careless graceful motion is the result of that early thinking and laborious effort. So it is true of every other habit which we form—habit of mind as well as habit of body—for we form mental habits and come at last to think without thinking, that is without conscious effort. We speak without thought, we act without thought, but thought and speech and act are the result of former thinking. Spiteful actions result from spiteful thoughts, hasty words from hasty thoughts, kind and loving deeds from loving thoughts.

The steam engine was once a thought. The germ of it lay in young Watts' wonderment over his grandmother's steaming kettle, and through the successive thinking of various minds it has grown into its present perfection.

This building was once a thought. It existed in the determination of the people to do what they could for God and His cause. It grew in the mind of the architect who planned it, and in its present unfinished condition it represents the yet unrealized thought and expectation of this people.

Our salvation was once a thought. It existed in the heart of God before it found expression in the life and death of Jesus Christ. He was the Logos, the Word of God. He came on earth to realize God's thought in the hearts and lives of men. And so of each and all of life's actions, small and great, they all are born of thought, little as we may be aware of it.

Moreover since every act was once a thought if follows that *Every true thinker is a worker.*—The architect who designs the building and draws up the specifications works as truly as the laborer who carries the hod. The one works his brain and the other his muscles. He who gives to men nobler and just ideas, he who widens the range of man's vision, he who ministers to the deepest yearnings of man's spiritual nature, surely he deserves the name of workman as truly as he does who caters to the need of men's bodies. There is an idea among some that ministers and teachers do not work. Work according to these people is always manual labor. If a man makes a suit of clothes or builds a house he is a worker, but if another man labors to build up and adorn the spiritual man he is a loafer. They will willingly pay for a pair of shoes for their children, or even buy a ticket for the skating rink, but they morally hate to pay the school tax and pew rents are an abomination. The parson especially is a useless sort of animal and simply lives on the silly credulity of people who know no better. Now I need not tell you that I think differently. If I did not believe that I could as truly work for men in the pulpit as I could in any other occupation I would change my business. But I believe that he who labors to save and enrich the souls of men works as truly as he who toils to feed or clothe men's bodies. Aye and more so, and to more and higher purpose! For when the body shall be decayed, when it shall fall as the useless scaffold of a building that being finished needs it no more, then the soul shall arise resplendent in heavenly glory. He who helps to mould that soul into forms of divine beauty, he is the great worker, for he works on the imperishable, the God-like element in man.

Christ was a carpenter until He was thirty-six. He was about His Father's business then, nor did he leave it to become a useless non-producer when he became a preacher. Nay, but it is this, His spiritual work that lasts and shall yet regenerate the world. The works of His hand they perished in the using.

But we must pass on and notice next that *thought develops character.*

Some one has said that men sow an act and reap a habit, they sow a habit and reap a character." A man's character is the sum of all his various habits, and as every habit springs from an act, or repetition of acts, and every act was once a thought, so a man's character is the product of his thinking. Hence the Bible says "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." This is a solemn truth and we do well to remember it. Forgetting it men often indulge in thoughts which they would never dare utter in words. They imagine that they are doing themselves no harm, while all the time they are moulding themselves in the line of their thought. Thoughts often cherished have a marvellous tendency to repeat themselves, intruding often when least expected and even when least wanted. Did you ever notice that you cannot think of A, B, and C without the mind passing on to D? Did you ever notice that you cannot stop in the midst of a line of a familiar hymn without the mind running on to finish the line? "Before Jehovah's awful—" who did not think of "throne?" And why thus? Simply because

you have always been accustomed to associate these words together in your mind. You have formed a definite habit of thinking in regard to them, and now you cannot help it. You are not free to stop when you like. You cannot control thoughts as easily as you can bodily actions. If a man has been accustomed to steal he may easily keep his hands out of his neighbor's pockets, but he cannot so easily keep from thinking about it, and how nicely he could do it if he only wanted. If he has been in the habit of swearing he may with great difficulty keep the oath from escaping his lips, but he will find it vastly harder to keep it from coming to his mind. The lascivious man may quit his lewd acts, but nothing short of omnipotent grace can save him from lewd thoughts and unclean imaginations.

Mental habits are more tyrannical than physical. Sins of thought are hardest to overcome. There is no bondage so complete as when the soul is enslaved to evil thoughts. There is no man so much to be pitied and prayed for as the man into whose mind crowd vile imaginations and impure thoughts, that like unclean devils come unmasked and undesired, to claim again the indulgence which they once enjoyed. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." There never was a truer word spoken. Think good thoughts and you will become good, think bad thoughts and you will assuredly become bad.

But more than that. Not only does thought develop character—*Thought is character.* By which I mean that our thoughts themselves have a moral quality apart from their efforts on us or others. "The thought of foolishness is sin," we are told. Not the foolish act alone, but the very thought of it. Again, we read that "the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." "He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." "Thou shalt not covet," the old commandment said. It is not necessary that men should steal, or commit adultery, or murder, or do anything else that's bad. God judges man not by what he actually does, but by what he would like to do. A thou-



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and influences may operate to check the expression of a man's desire. Sins, black as hell, may be cherished in men's soul that never see the light of day. Men who are guilty of robbing and adultery and murder in their hearts may be fair enough in outward conduct and pass for good respectable citizens, while some poor drunkard disgraces himself because his fault is seen. Though in God's sight bad as it is, it is innocence itself compared with their offences.

God "looketh upon the heart." He knows our "thoughts afar off." And He judges us not by external standards of conduct but by our real selves. The real man is not outside but inside. His true self revels in thoughts, feelings and imaginations, and those are the things which are "naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Realizing, then, these solemn truths, we must surely feel how necessary it is to *suppress all unhallowed thoughts.* We can appreciate the exhortation of Solomon when he says "Keep thine heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." We shall need all diligence, for evil thoughts come to us unbidden and undesired. Suggested by what we see or hear around us and awakened by associations over which we have no control. Satan entered the garden of Eden and polluted the innocent mind of Eve. Yea, he even tempted Christ, suggesting the possibility of wrong doing even to Him. We are in a world of temptation. If sin be not within us it is all around us seeking every opportunity of entering our hearts. Unhallowed thoughts may be suggested even to the purest mind. What we have to do is to bid them depart, to resist the temptations of the wicked one. To suppress the evil at its first appearance and crush the viper's egg before it is hatched in evil desire and cherished plan.

It is not only when we "give place to the devil," when we welcome evil thoughts that we become partners with hell.

But if we would successfully guard against evil thoughts, we must do something more than this, we must "overcome the evil with the

good," we must cultivate every good and holy thought. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," and he finds it all the faster when the head is as idle as the hands.

The evil spirit cast out of the man returned and found the house "empty, swept and garnished," and forthwith went and "brought seven other spirits more wicked than himself." If the house had not been empty he would not have been encouraged to come back. It is the vacant mind that like an empty house is haunted with evil ghosts. Idleness is the mother of iniquity. Most of the men lodged in our jails were out of employment when they committed crime. Give the mind wholesome employment. Fill the house with spirits of kindness and purity and heaven and then there will be no room for the evil spirit.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise think on these things."

The Religion of Christ is not narrow. It forbids no wholesome pleasure, all things beautiful and lovely, in the earth and air and sky are yours, for you to think upon and enjoy.

Why should men feed on carrion when there is so much that is wholesome to enjoy? Why should they make their minds the dumping-ground for the devil's scavengers when all heaven knocks for admittance? Oh, let us enjoy the sweet fragrance of the flowers, the beauty of the landscape, and the glory of the heavens. Let us contemplate the true and heroic, the kind and lowly in human life. Let us read wholesome books. Let us cultivate helpful companionships. Let us gaze upon that face which is "fairer than the sons of men" and sit at the feet of Him who is not only "wisest among the mighty and mightiest among the wise" but "meek and lowly of heart" as well, and who to make us like God, himself took our nature and gave his life for us. Let us open our minds to all the sweet influences of the spirit of God, so shall we grow like God true and honorable, just and pure and lovely, too. Finally if we would have our thinking do the most good to ourselves and others we must see to it that our

Holy thinking finds expression in holy living.—That is what the apostle means when he says "think of these things" for he uses a word which means to calculate, to reckon, that is to think in order that we may do. If there be anything true or honorable, do not be content with simply meditating on them in selfish spiritual enjoyment but plan to be or do them. If some day your heart is tender and full of kindly thoughts to the poor and desolate, do not be content with simply thinking kindly, and flatter your soul because you are not quite devoid of pity, but go at once and find some way of giving practical and Christlike effect to your thoughts.

If you meditate on some noble character in history, do not be content simply to admire this nobility in another and at a distance, but seek to make it your own, to realize it for yourself in your own daily life and in the place where God has put you. "Do noble deeds, not dream them all day long." Welcome sweet thoughts, holy thoughts, great thoughts! Welcome them as angels from heaven, and let them take you by the hand and lead you away from all impurity and all selfishness, and into all holy and Christlike living. So shall the peace of God be with you now and ever more.

Rev. William Henry Warriner M.A., B.D.

The subject of the following sketch was born in 1853 in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, England. His parents were members of the old Congregational Church there, and their son united with that Church at the age of fifteen. In the year 1871 he came to Toronto and immediately joined the Northern Congregational Church on Church Street. As a Sunday School Teacher in a Mission School and as a member of the Bible Class, in the Northern the qualities of head and of heart which so signally mark him now marked him then—intensity, activity, industry, determination to know, to attain, to succeed in goodness and in usefulness.

Accordingly in 1873 he entered College with a view to devoting his life to the work of the ministry. He graduated in four years from McGill College taking first rank standing, and carrying off the gold medal in English Literature. The following year he completed his Theological course in the Congregational College, where also he distinguished himself taking the Historical Theology medal. It is needless to say that he was a general favorite with both students and Professors.

His first Pastoral charge was in Yorkville, in 1878 as Pastor of the Congregational Church there. He removed thence to Bowmanville in 1882, and then in 1890 to Zion Church, Montreal. Since his oversight of that Church began it has witnessed a great growth in numbers, efficiency, and power.

During these years of earnest, faithful, and fruitful pastoral labors, Mr. Warriner remitted none of his diligence as a student but pursued systematic courses of study in different departments of knowledge. To him, then, the College Board turned to fill the position of Professor of Biblical Literature—the duties of which he continues to discharge with credit to himself and with entire satisfaction to the students and the College Board.

Specially at home in English Literature, thoroughly versed in Hebrew studies, a botanist of no slight note, a genial sunny spirit, an unwearied courageous worker, a Christian man, a loving and beloved minister—God spare him long to his adopted land and to the Churches of which he is so honored a servant.

—A. S. MCGREGOR, his College Class-mate.

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