

Promptness and Accuracy.

Whatever a child promises, he should be made to fulfil to the letter; for the habit of promptness cannot be contracted too early in life. As the boy thus trained grows to years of intelligence and usefulness, his acquired habit of promptness becomes a valuable business asset. If a man wishes to employ a lad in his store, office, or factory, he is almost certain to choose one with a school record for punctuality in attendance, and promptness in recitations. When the same man is about to select one of two clerks for promotion, he will, if he be a person of sound judgment, invariably choose him who has established a reputation for promptness and punctuality, over the other who, though more brilliant, has shown a carelessness in the matter of minutes.

A manufacturer was about to establish an agency in London. He had in his employ two young men whom he regarded highly, and both of whom he would like to advance to the coveted position. As it could go to only one, he watched the men closely for some time, while trying to decide which he should send to represent his interests in the English capital. One of the young men was an industrious plodder, always on time to the minute. The other was a much more brilliant fellow, who did his work well and easily, made friends readily, and was universally popular; but he had the serious defects of making promises carelessly, forgetting them almost as soon as they were made, and of rarely keeping appointments promptly. Finally the employer invited both of these young men to dine with him on a certain evening at exactly seven o'clock. The plodder presented himself to his host as the clock was striking, and they two immediately sat down to dinner. Five minutes later the other guest appeared with a laughing apology for being late, which, he said, was entirely the fault of his watch. On the following day the London appointment, with a large increase of salary, was given to him who had learned the business value of promptness.

Many a man has lost a fortune through

missing a train by the fraction of a minute, and I know of one who lost a bride from the same cause, the young lady declaring that she would rather remain single than be worried all her life by a man who was always late. Many another, through slight carelessness in keeping an engagement, has seen the opportunity of a lifetime pass into the hands of a business rival who realized the value of minutes. As cents are to dollars, so are minutes to hours, and the saving of both is an absolute necessity for the attainment of success.

In these days of cheap watches that are also good timekeepers, the excuse, 'I did not know just what time it was,' no longer holds good in a failure to keep an appointment promptly. No boy, old enough to assume responsibility, is so poor, or so devoid of chances for earning money, that he cannot own a watch; nor does any dwell so remote from some standard of time as to be without opportunities for regulating this important possession.—Kirk Munroe, in 'Success.'


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