



QUEEN'S COLLEGE, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND.

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HINDRANCES.

A FEW WORDS TO YOUNG MEN.

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Hindrances—obstacles—things that get in the way! The very mention of the words calls up before each of us a long procession of failures which we know to be due to some hindrance.

To make a catalogue of them would be to take up much time, would involve no little labor, and in the end would be of little or no value: for truly their name is legion. How then shall we think of them? Can we say of anything that at all times and everywhere it is a hindrance? Is not the same thing sometimes a hindrance and sometimes a help? and is not one man's hindrance an assistance to another? All these questions come to us as we begin to think of the hindrances that we meet with every day, and which hamper us in our endeavors to lead the Christian life. And then another thing strikes us. They say that a thing that is not worth *trying* for is not worth having, and that it is worth having just in proportion to the amount of work it took to get it: and what they say is true; but *trying* for a thing means that there's something in the way, some obstacle, some hindrance between me and it, something that I must get over; and so, if a thing is valuable according to the amount of labor it costs to get it, these hindrances, these obstacles, are good things, and the bigger they are the better they are, for the harder must be the work required to get over them.

And all this is just another way of saying that all depends on the fellow who is trying.

There were three men entered for an obstacle race. Just before the race, they came out to have a look at the course. No. 1 looked at once for the goal, and when he found it he kept it firmly in his mind. Then he glanced at the obstacles, but did not worry about them much, just noticed where they were and so on; but the goal was, for him, the great thing to be kept in mind. These things in the way had to be got over so as to enable him to reach the

goal. He looked on them as just so many stages on the way.

No. 2 looked at the first obstacle;—it was a barrel that had to be crawled through. As he looked he began to wonder how on earth he'd ever get through it—it looked so small and he was no feather weight; and the more he looked the less he liked it, and the more he lost heart. Then he looked at the next one, and the next, and each time he looked his courage failed a little more, till by the time the race began he was utterly discouraged, and was, as they say, "beaten from the start."

The 3rd man looked at the obstacles first, and thought of the neatest way of getting through the barrel, and wondered if he'd get his swell new running-suit torn or spotted.

The race started, the pistol was fired and off they went. No. 1 slipped at the start, and the other two forged ahead. No. 2 found to his great surprise that, as a matter of fact, he was smaller than the barrel, and he got through. No. 3 paused an instant just to make up his mind which was the neatest way to get through. He thought No. 1 was "out of it"—he'd slipped, and was so horribly dirty, and muddy. But that instant was too long. No. 1 was hard at it, and through the barrel—with a barked shin, it's true, but that didn't matter—while No. 3 was thinking.

No. 2 ahead. The next obstacle was a bad one. He made a try at it and failed. Down went his courage again. "I'll never do it," he muttered, and as he was making a feeble second attempt up came No. 1, tried and failed, but, instead of losing heart, he was roused by the opposition, and with that goal still steadily before him tried twice as hard the second time, and over he went.

So all through the race. No. 1 got the prize, of course. I fancy No. 2 is still trying that second obstacle, or perhaps he's explaining to his sympathetic friends how absurd it was to expect any man to get over a hurdle like that. "That fellow just did it by a fluke, couldn't do it again if he tried." As for No. 3, he retired hurt, with a wound not half as bad as that of which No. 1 had taken no notice.

So, brothers, is it with our hindrances. The comparison of the Christian life to a race is as old as St. Paul; but it's the way of looking at obstacles that's the point. Now there is nothing flippant or light about this way of looking at the serious hindrances that meet us in our lives, especially those which meet us young men, pledged, as we are, to a very definite service and work for our Master—the work of bringing more of us under His banner.

But remember what the exact thing is that we are considering. It is the hindrances in our own lives, the obstacles that are between us and the prize of our high calling, or, in other words, the things that make the difference be-