

## POWER OF DEFINITE AIM.

Great Lesson to be Learned From Napoleon's Career.

A boy said of the donkey engine: "It puffed like a locomotive, whistled like the steam-car, but it didn't go anywhere." The world is full of donkey-engines, of people who can whistle and puff and pull, but they don't go anywhere, they have no definite aim, no controlling purpose.

The great secret of Napoleon's power lay in his marvellous ability to concentrate his forces upon a single point. After finding the weak place in the enemy's ranks he would mass his men and hurl them upon the enemy like an avalanche until he made a breach. What a lesson of the power of concentration there is in that man's life! He was such a master of himself that he could concentrate his powers upon the smallest detail as well as upon an empire.

When Napoleon had anything to say, he always went straight to the mark. He had a purpose in everything he did; there was no dilly-dallying nor shilly-shallying; he knew what he wanted to say, and said it. It was the same with all his plans; what he wanted to do, he did it. He always hit the bull's-eye. His great success in war was due largely to his definiteness of aim. He knew what he knew what he wanted to do, and did it. He was like a great burning glass, concentrating the rays of the sun upon a single spot; he burned a hole wherever he went.

The sun's rays scattered do no execution, but concentrated, in a burning glass, they melt solid granite; yes a diamond even. There are plenty of men who have ability enough, the rays of their faculties taken separately are all right; but they are powerless to collect them, concentrate them upon a single object. They lack the burning glass of a purpose, to focalize upon one spot the separate rays of their ability. Versatile men, universal geniuses, are usually weak, because they have no power to concentrate the rays of their ability, to focalize them upon one point, until they burn a hole in whatever they undertake.

This power to bring all of one's scattered forces into one focal point makes all the difference between success and failure. The sun might blaze out upon the earth forever without burning a hole in it or setting anything on fire; whereas a very few of these rays concentrated in a burning glass would transform a diamond into vapor.

Sir James Mackintosh was a man of marvellous ability. He excited in everybody who knew him great expectations, but there was no purpose in his life to act as a burning glass to collect the brilliant rays of his intellect, by which he might have dazzled the world. Most men have ability enough, if they could only focalize it into one grand, central all-absorbing purpose, to accomplish great things.

If I were asked to state in a word the great secret of so many failures in life, so much mediocre work, I should say it was a lack of purpose. Many of our young men start out in life with a good education, good mental equipment, and many of them show great ability in school and college, raising great expectations in all who know them, but somehow they never focalize, they never come to a point; they scatter their forces. The trouble with most of us is, we cut ourselves up into too many parts; we try to cover too much ground, if we concentrate at all it is not along the line of our greatest ability, hence our weakness and inefficiency.

We all know plenty of men who seem to have great resources; they are alert and active, they excite great promise, and we look for great things from them. They form great plans, project great schemes, and are always "just going to do something," but somehow they disappoint expectations, there is some screw loose, they are always running to waste. They are hard workers, great planners, but somehow they do not pan out.

The fact is they lack balance, they have no definite aim, no all-absorbing purpose to bring to a focus the rays of their scattered abilities. "Mental shillinessness" could be written over the graves of these failures.

One talent concentrated will do indefinitely more than ten talents scattered; a thin layer of powder behind a ball in a rifle will do indefinitely more execution than a carload of powder unconcentrated. The rifle barrel is the purpose which direction and aim to the powder which otherwise, no matter how good it might be, would be powerless.

The poorest scholar in school or college often outstrips the class leader or the senior wrangler in practical lines, simply because what little ability he has brings to a focus in a definite aim. While the other who looked upon him with contempt, depending upon his general ability and brilliant prospects, never concentrates his forces into a definite purpose. Concentration is the secret of all great execution in explosives, and, in fact, in all science, and it is equally the secret in the law of success.

"Be not simply good—he good for something."

A Parrot Story.

A grey African parrot is the hero of one of the best parrot stories ever told. It was usually kept in the nursery with its owners children, and its greatest delight in life was to see the baby bathed. One day, however, it was somewhat suddenly taken from the nursery to the kitchen, where its cage had not been placed above an hour or so when the whole household were horrified by the parrot shrieking, in the most piercing tones:

"Oh! the baby, the dear, dear baby!"

Of course everyone rushed in haste to the kitchen. Here they found the parrot wild with excitement, watching the roasting of a sucking-pig.

If too rapid eating causes dyspepsia, and it in its turns produces nervous exhaustion, dizziness, weakness, anemia, etc., the first step in effecting a cure is to eat slowly. The second and most important is to take a course of Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic, which aids the process of digestion, invigorates the stomach, restores the vitality of the blood, relieves brain fatigue, and makes weak nerves strong.

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## A GOOD LOVE STORY

Which Shows that True Love's Path is a Smooth.

There is more romance in uneventful lives than many would suppose. The love stories of some are replete with interest, and would ensure the fiction-writer a huge success were he able to grasp the outlines of such histories.

The love story of a young lady of wealth is extremely interesting, and reveals what true affection will sacrifice. Her suitor was poor but respectable; and no sooner were their attachment discovered than her parents endeavored by all possible means to turn her attention elsewhere.

She declined to reciprocate the attention of more wealthy suitors, so the father threatened young Romeo, though without avail. The two were kept apart, but proved true in spite of these drawbacks, the youth being offered a lucrative post in Australia by the girl's parents, which he seized with alacrity, because of the opportunity it offered of advancement.

Once the youth was settled in his far-away home, the parents withdrew from the contract, and the young man was thrown on his own resources. Letters were written to quickly provide a home for her, but by pre-arrangement, the girl was enabled to despatch and receive suitcases through an old nurse who resided in the district. By this means she learned that her lover had obtained a good position in another quarter, and being assured of his sincerity she secretly set about preparing to go out to him, without the consent of her parents if they remained refractory.

In course of time she joined him, and so mortified were the old folk that the girl's plan for forgiveness was utterly ignored. This hero and heroine, unlike their story-book relations, did not amass considerable riches, and so secure the approval of harsh parents, but led a happy uneventful career, and were respectively poor, without prospect of enriching themselves. The girl's father died, leaving his widow great wealth, but owing to inability to manage the business, the wife was soon in a deplorable state, writing agonized letters to her daughter, who eventually persuaded her to join them. And this was a girl who could have married money, a title, a position in society—but preferred love.

## PEACEFUL PIRATES.

The Creation of a Member and the Fictitious Following.

In New York there exists an association of Germans, which enjoys the greatest name of the Pirates' Club. The name is, however, worse than the thing; for the pirates are very peaceful citizens, and their pirating is restricted to the edible denizens of the deep, which are caught in the not uncommon way of angling on the Ronger shoals of the Bay of New York.

Not very long back a very active and worthy member of the club passed to another world; but in his will he asked his fellow pirates to cremate his body, and throw his ashes into the sea at the scene of their exploits.

The will was faithfully executed. One fine morning the members turned out with a band, the president carrying the ashes in an urn. The club-boats, with a flag half-mast high, carried the party out upon the briny sea. With them went six cases of beer and plenty of provisions, for which the defunct pirate had left an ample amount in his will. At the Ronger shoals they cast anchor, and the band played a funeral march, and the virtues of the deceased. Then four members took the ashes on small shovels, the captain fired a gun, and the ashes flew into the sea, while the band of the pirates sang mingled with the ocean.

Thereupon the mourners set to drinking and singing, whilst the sun smiled upon them from a deep-blue sky. To finish the day, they moored the boat by an old wreck, sticking out of the water, and threw out the lines. Whether or not the ashes had attracted the fish cannot be known, but they certainly made a good catch that day.

## Our Opinions of Others.

As the years go by let us grow more lenient. When we hear things adverse to anyone, let us remember there is another side. How often we are compelled to change our opinions of men and things. There frequently comes a great outburst of feeling against public men, and after a vast expenditure of reprehension, we hear a satisfactory explanation. We hear the dogs out of the kennel for a chase that ought never to be made. After a while our own turn comes to be pursued, and then we learn by bitter experience how one may be misrepresented and belied.

We usually need in the matter of a crust of sweet oil, as well as crusts of vinegar and cayenne. We need to put ourselves into more frequent associations with dispositions mild and genial, and that think no evil. Charity! Beautiful grace and rare! We all need more of it in our speech and lives. Above all, by constant communion with Christ, we will absorb something of that gentleness and love which were the characteristic of his life. No one can be much with Christ without catching something of his spirit.

## Feminine Politics.

"Have you been able to catch the Speaker's eye?" asked the first lady legislator.

"Have I?" rejoined the second legislator. "Well, rather. I wore my navy blue bengaline with the heliotrope sleeves, and the Speaker couldn't keep his eyes off me."

Upon the call of the House they separated.

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## SECOND-HAND DRESSES.

What Becomes of Some Ladies' Finery After Once Wearing.

"The idea is, I know, a very popular one that the maids of so-called, ladies of fashion, earn quite a considerable addition to their regular incomes by the sale of articles of clothing, which, having been discarded by their mistresses, are inherited by them almost as a matter of right; but I can assure you that, nowadays at any rate, there are not a few establishments among the 'upper ten' wherein the lady's maids never gets a single chance of securing such perquisites from one year's end to another."

"I can speak with authority and not a little feeling on this subject," went on the lady manufacturer of fashionable gowns who, as she spoke, to furnish evidence of the accuracy of her assertions, took down from a little cupboard in her workroom "a dream of a dress" that was there hanging.

"Here, for instance, is a gown supplied to a well-known society beauty, which was made for her on the special understanding that when it had been worn, say, half-a-dozen times, I should buy it back of her—of course, at a reduced price. She is a very good customer of mine, and her husband being somewhat pressed for money at the time, I did it to oblige her; but there is not much fun making up stuff to special design only, as it were, to let it out on hire."

"How do I get rid of these second-hand dresses that are in this way returned to me? Ah! A very interesting chapter might be written on that subject, and it is a list of the names of the ladies who buy and wear such gowns, the public would be inclined to some of the names that would be included."

"Of course, they are nearly always altered in some way, trimmed differently, for instance, before being again disposed of; but we never alter a dress before submitting it to a fresh customer, showing it always just as it has come back to us, so that the lady may satisfy herself that the proposed alterations will ensure the garments not being recognized by its original owner."

Too Hot For Fall Dress.

A punctilious care for the niceties of official dress is sometimes a laughable folly. General Grant knew this, and on one occasion told Abraham Lincoln an illustrative story.

When the army under General Taylor was in Mexico, there was a visit from the Comodore of the fleet. Taylor judged it necessary in spite of climatic conditions, to receive in full state rig. He spent time in preparing to look imposing. The Comodore did the same; and at bottom both men had a contempt for fine dressing. They were profoundly ill at ease. By-and-by, however, the Comodore, who was a sailor, had white gloves, blue cloth, and gold lace. The soldier was in a great uproar. Over them was the broiling southern sun. They soon began to look like boiled lobsters, perspiration pouring down their faces. But they went indoors and sat at table opposite each other and tried to transact business. Young Grant was watching them grinning. At last a smile broke out simultaneously on their countenances.

"This is nonsense!" cried Taylor. And off went his coat.

"Nonsense it is," echoed the Comodore, and he jerked away everything but his shirt and trousers.

"Then," said Grant, "they lighted their pipes, and had a good talk over the military situation."

## A Change in Government.

Is deemed to be, by some, the great need of the country, while others, equally positive, assert that the present government, and the present policy, is the only one ever this may be as to politics, there can be no doubt that the change from the old rubber waterproof, which held the figure in a clumsy embrace, to the new scientific idea as expressed in the Rigby Rovers Waterproofs was greatly needed, as many can testify whose health has been benefited therefrom. Rigby is now acknowledged to be the only waterproof garment which cannot be distinguished from an ordinary garment. The process leaves no marks; makes no impairment of the porosity of the material. Everybody asks for Rigby now. Others may experiment. Rigby is the last word of science. Wear only Rigby Waterproofs.

"Differ With" is All Right.

A week or two back, writes Mr. Labouchere in London Truth, I made a confession in these columns. It was that I differ with Lord Rosebery on certain points. I have been severely taken to task by one of my readers, not for differing, but for differing "with" his lordship, when I should have differed "from" him. My critic asks what there to "differ with" is not "a somewhat vulgar solecism." As such questions have, I confess, but little interest for me. I am a Philistine. As such I am content to take the English language as I find it in daily use among my fellow-countrymen of average education, without much regard to the usage of previous generations, recorded in the literary remains of Englishmen dead and gone.

A Cautious Girl.

A Kansas girl, with four married sisters, received a proposal of marriage recently, and asked a week to think it over. She went to see all of her married sisters. One, who used to be a belle, had three children, did all her own work, and had not been to the theatre or out riding since she was married. Another, whose husband was a promising young man at the time she married, was supporting him. A third did not dare say her life was her own when her husband was around, and the fourth was divorced. After visiting them, and hearing their woes, the heroine of this narrative went home, got pen, ink, and paper, and wrote an answer to the young man. She accepted him, and said she could be ready for the ceremony within a month.

A Curious Fad.

The Count of Montequien, a wealthy and eccentric French nobleman, inhabits a splendid villa in the neighborhood of Paris, chiefly remarkable for its magnificent conservatory, which is used as a banqueting hall. Creeping among the plants in this winter garden are to be seen a number of little tortoises, which their eccentric owner has had enamelled and studded with precious stones.

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