

# FINANCIAL

By INVESTICUS

## THE CHILD'S FUND.

**A** SUPRISINGLY large number of family folk declare a sort of financial armistice, or holiday, in the intervals between paying the doctor's bill for introducing the baby to this grouchy planet, and paying for the first window the said baby heaves a brick through in the course of character development. The average child is quite as important as a grocery shop, even more so since he may live to be ruler over many grocery shops (or farms, or railways, or banks), and yet the financing of the child is seldom as carefully considered as the financing of even the smallest of shops. Its earliest boots are bought in the interval between the larger items of household expense. Its early dresses are somehow schemed out of the kitchen money or the mother's dress allowance. Its first "own" spending money is wheedled or begged or whined—or blackmailed out of the average parental trousers' pocket. Its expenses for schooling are met "somehow or other." They are seldom, except in rich men's houses, the subject of easy contemplation.

Of course parents often assume the attitude that the children came themselves and may, like Rousseau's offspring, look after themselves. Many people sincerely believe that it is a good thing to allow children to fend entirely for themselves, like young birds, tipped out of the nest by their all-wise parents. Some people, making a virtue of necessity, declare against the sinfulness of giving the children too much help in their start in life. They point out all the notable examples of poor men's sons amounting to great things, and rich men's sons getting in wrong with the police. They say in effect: Finance the children. Rubbish.

And yet there are plenty of good children who have been turned into good citizens by parents who DID see that their offspring had enough money for a decent education, or a decent start in business. And countless families have worried themselves sick over the financing of college courses for their prodigies—and had the satisfaction of seeing their prodigies do well in the world later. And more and more in this new country, where people are inclined to take life more easily than it is taken in the close-packed communities of the old world, families are taking "child finance" seriously. It is worth it. It is, for the average household, a serious matter.

Children should be the subject of shrewd financial arrangements (that does not mean that large sums need be involved) from their earliest years. Far be it from Investicus, married though he be, to include with his duties as a financial editor the duties of parental adviser. But parents become financiers—or ought to—as the problem of financing the children comes before them. And in that connection this department hastens to say: Make an investment for your child. As soon as you have paid the doctor's bill and shooed the nurse out of the house, open some sort of special account for the new individual. Make it a bank account if you like, but when the first hundred dollars has accumulated to the child's credit in the bank account, then place the money in something that pays a higher rate of interest. It is not at all difficult for any sane man or woman to find a perfectly safe security that will pay at least five per cent. Five per

cent on one hundred dollars will double your original capital by the time the child is twenty-one if you invest it within the first year of the child's life. A little weekly saving for the child from the time it cries in its mother's arms until it is fourteen will save the family tremendous scraping and scratching at the last moment. The years when the child's clothing and feeding cost least are the years in which extra money should be laid aside for that child.

Somebody says: "Yes—and ruin the child by making his start in life too easy!" Not a bit of it. These stories about children who start without a penny and rise to great heights are all very well. They sometimes make you proud to be a human being. But the thing we have to remember is that it was NOT the lack of money that made these people what they turned out to be. It was CHARACTER, and no amount of poverty can supply character to a child if it hasn't been trained into the child by the parents in the first place. Character—you have heard this before I know, but it bears repetition—is the paramount thing. To impart it to your child you must have it yourself—and one of the best indications that you have it, that you have self-control, discipline, purpose and tenacity of purpose in your life, is to be able to set aside a little money for the youngster even in the days when you seem to have least.

Two men, living side by side in a country district in New Brunswick, had sons the same age. From the day the child was born ONE of those farmers began to lay aside funds for the boy's education. The other pooh-poohed the idea and declared his son would have to make his own way in life. Twenty-one years elapsed and what happened—the son whose father had laid aside money for him—went through Dalhousie easily and smoothly, played football and made friends. His course was not brilliant but it was sound. The son whose father had forced him to fend for himself—went through the same college in the same time—but with brilliant records. He had come down to college term after term with only five or ten dollars in his pockets—and no immediate prospects of any more. Often he was uncertain how he was to pay his fees or buy his books. In a purely academic way he was a colossal success. But in order to win that success he had paid a big price. Time that might have been devoted to recreation, or to making friends (one of the chief things in university life) was spent worrying the dollars out of a tight-fisted old world. He left college with every official honour but with weakened health and with admirers instead of friends. Book-learning isn't as good as health and admirers aren't worth a button until they are friends. The lad whose course through school had been made a little easier by his father established himself successfully in law. So did the other. But where the first man's successes came fairly hard and the second man's came rapidly because of his brilliant reputation—the first man's health endured where the second's failed; the first man built up a good all-round clientele and grew to be a chief citizen—the second became an invalid before he was forty.

That isn't always the way of course. But money has its uses and they shouldn't be overlooked in the raising of children. Many of the trust companies in this country offer spe-

cial facilities for "financing the child." Or, if you prefer, use the bank, or the post-office savings account, until you can buy the boy or the girl a bond or a debenture.

Extended comment on the North American Life Assurance Co.'s Report, printed elsewhere in this issue, will appear next week.

## Wit of 1683.

**A** SOMEWHAT near bit of musical repartee was indulged in at a recent affair of one of the Canadian Rotary Clubs. A well-known violinist was called upon to play, accompanied by another well-known artist at the piano.

"The instrument I am about to play on," he said, "is a Stradivarius made in 1683."

"What date is the piano?" asked a back-the-haller. "Same date," replied the accompanist. "Hope you will like it."

"I guess he knows more about 83 than 16," said an expert, who had fond memories of the casket scene in the Merchant of a town where water used to be less plentiful than in Venice.

"Not since Sept. 16," was the reply.

This Mark Twain story might have happened. It dates back to the period when Mark was living in Hartford, on the next block from Harriet Beecher Stowe and her husband. Professor Stowe. One cold and blustery winter morning, after an unusually heavy snowstorm, a neighbour, meeting Mark on the street, slowly plowing his way through the drifts, with a corn-cob pipe in his mouth and a snow-shovel over his shoulder, asked him where he was bound. "Oh, just around the block—an errand of mercy," drawled Mark, removing the pipe from between his teeth and pointing over his shoulder with the stem of it. "Mrs. Stowe has just telephoned me that Professor Stowe is under the weather this morning, and I'm on my way round there to shovel him out."

Two young ladies of literary tastes were once discussing their reading, when one of them remarked: "I have been engaged with a delightful work for a week past" "Indeed; what is it?" "Anthony Trollope's autobiography." "Who is the author?" "Really, I don't know. I have looked over the title-page and through the preface, but I can't find any reference to the author at all. Whoever it is is a charming writer, and seems to have known the novelist very intimately." "I'll get it and read it, but it is too provoking, isn't it, that so many delightful authors of late are writing anonymously?"—Argonaut.



ALL'S FARE IN LOVE.

McTavish: "That's a fine lassie opposite."

Dun Brown: "Would you like an introduction?"

McTavish: "Weel, yes; but wait, mon, till the conductor's been round."

—Sydney Bulletin.

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