

THE YOUNG MAN AND HIS PROBLEM

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RIGHT HERE

Don't go far to look for your work. The whole world centres at your front door. You can find "problems" without going to New York. You can find "foreigners" without going to Quebec. You can find "opportunities" without going to Winnipeg. You can find "a neglected spot" without going a mile from your home. There are men who should go to all the places indicated, but that man ought first to clean up the ground in his own immediate vicinity. So take a good look at your own premises. Fix up your own wood pile. Work the grass cutter on your own lawn. See to it that your back yard is half way decent.—A notable saying by Joseph Cook was this: "That soul is nearest to God who is striking the hardest at the nearest duty."

CREATIVE THOUGHT

Thought power is the only thing which you really possess. Everything else can be taken away from you. This only remains. You can think, therefore you are. You can think your way in, think your way through, think your way under, think your way over, think your way out and think your way on. The only creative force is thought. The more intense your thought is, the greater is your power. You have well nigh only one thing to do and that is—learn how to think. Thought is everything. "J. B." in the British Weekly remarks: "Thought is, after all, the only thing we really have; the only thing we really know. Mr. Pierpont Morgan was known the other day as the owner of the mansion in New York, the mansion at Prince's-gate; the owner of yachts; of vast properties, of museums, of priceless collections. What of him owned them? Plainly, just his thought. As soon as his thinking in this world ceased he had ceased to own anything here."

AS RIGHT IS RIGHT

Steer by the stars. Pick out a few things which are fundamental. Tie up to the things which are vital. Whatever you doubt be sure of God, Right and Conscience. Let this be the trinity enthroned in thy soul. Righteousness is enwrought into the fabric of the universe as the warp is married to the woof. Righteousness works well in every part of God's universe. Righteousness has the promise of the years and fits into eternity. Be right. "It is related," say the editors of a volume just issued entitled "Essays on Liberty," by Lord Acton, "it is related of Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, that during one of his periods of intellectual perplexity he found that the only rope to hold fast by was the conviction: 'It must be right to do right.'"

THE FAMILY FLASK

The family flask is a piece of furniture which is sometimes handed down from generation to generation. But, of a truth, it can be said that it seldom passes beyond the third or fourth generation, for the very good reason that the generation passes down and out and the flask is left as a lonely thing on the ash heap of human failure. The man who wishes a long life, or a family name, carried onward for successive generations had better fling the flask to the rear. A New England writer remarks: "When for three generations a family uses liquor in excess, nature registers the deterioration. His biographer tells us that the first Webster represented colossal strength and sobriety. This giant had a son, Daniel, who represented colossal strength and moderate drinking, while his son represented one who made the amusements of his ancestors to be his occupation."

DON'T FORCE YOUR BRAIN

Get the little things out of the way, so that you can have room for the things which are worth while. Decide little questions off hand. Get them out of the way. What if you do blunder occasionally, the universe will not go to pieces. Save room, time and leisure for the things which are important. Never decide a great question in a hurry. Take time to think, cogitate, contrast and compare. Your mind will crystallize if you only give it time. Charles Kingsley says of Turner, the great painter, that he spent hours and hours in the mere contemplation of nature without using brush or pencil. An authentic story is told of how Turner was once known to have spent a whole day sitting upon a rock throwing pebbles into a lake. When evening came his brother painters showed him their sketches and rallied him upon having done nothing. He said: "I have done this, at least: I have learned how a lake looks when pebbles are thrown into it."

HOW MUCH IS THERE IN IT?

Keep on good terms with yourself. Keep your conscience friendly to your memory. Remember that the highest type of respect is self respect. There is nothing which will bring you so much satisfaction as a pure life. The cleanest thing is a clean record. So, be straight. Do not compromise. Do not equivocate. Do not ask for a seat on the fence. Be flat-footed, outspoken, and easy of comprehension on all vital matters. Not so much for the sake of the world, as for yourself and your own peace and joy. Hold in mind the fact that you must live with yourself and die by yourself. When a man thinks, he is always alone. Be true to yourself. A popular writer remarks: "A London friend in the commercial world told me how a certain business matter had arisen between himself and an acquaintance, a man of the world. The latter slyly asked, 'How much is there to be for me out of this piece of business?'—meaning secret commission. 'That is not quite the way I do business,' was my friend's answer. 'But nobody need know—no one could find out.' 'Oh, yes, some one would know.' 'Who—how?' 'Oh, there's one who would know.' The man thought he scented a religious reference, and became sarcastic: 'Oh, is that where you are—is that the sort of man you are?' 'There's one man would know,' quietly persisted my friend, 'and there's no person whose good opinion I value as I value his, and that's myself; I'd always know.'"

MR. SMOKER

We are not hard on the man who smokes, because we are convinced that if smoking were the only evil in the world the human family would be very happy. But for the chain-smoker we have small respect, and for the man who smokes during business hours we have no great admiration. About the worst introduction for a young man who is seeking to achieve success in the business world—is the odor of bad tobacco or the stench of an old pipe. Cut it out; to all such we commend the story of the eccentric but hard-working painter Whistler. Coming into his painting class one morning he found an English student smoking his pipe. "You should be very careful," Whistler said to him, "You know you might get interested in your work and let your pipe go out."

THE REASON FOR FAILURE

It is an easy thing when a man fails to blame him; to charge his defeat to a lack of commonsense or, what is worse, to laziness or foolishness. But there are, nevertheless, scores of young men who are to blame for their own misfortunes. They invite defeat. They have all the circumstances arranged for a "slump." They carry about with them the signs and symbols of carelessness and indifference. In matter of dress, toilet, and sanitation they are decidedly objectionable. A shabbily dressed young man applied to the manager of a big department store for employment. "What can you do?" asked the manager. "Most anything," answered the applicant. "Can you dust?" "Yes, indeed." "Then why don't you begin on your hat?" The fellow hadn't thought of that. "Can you clean leather goods?" "Oh, yes." "Then it's carelessness on your part that your shoes are not clean." The fellow hadn't thought of that either. "Well, can you scrub?" "Yes, indeed," was the reply. "Then I can give you something to do. Go out and try your strength on that collar you have on. But don't come back."

A FIGHTING CHANCE

Always give yourself a fighting chance. Have on board your ship as many strong anchors as you have room for. Tie up to the church, the Sunday school, the Y.M.C.A., and the business science class. Cut out the things which have been too much for other people such as tobacco, drink, gay companions and low born amusements. Give yourself a fighting chance. We clip the following from an interesting periodical: "Charles R. Ross tells of a young Western farmer who had been converted. It had been his custom when going to the village to tie his team by the hotel and visit the bar-room. After his conversion he still continued to tie his team to the hotel main hitching post. The trained and watchful eye of a good old deacon noticed this, and after congratulating the youth upon his new start in life, said, 'George, I am a good deal older than you, and I will be pardoned, I know, if I make a suggestion out of my wide Christian experience. No matter how strong you think you are, take my advice and at once change your hitching post.' It was sensible advice. If he had still gone to the old place, and got in with the old friends at the bar, who can tell but he would have been tempted to turn back, and perhaps in an evil hour had fallen. 'Evil communications corrupt good manners.'"

A NEW TYPE OF ORATOR

It is always easy to "hold a meeting." And almost always as easy to get a speaker. Of course when a man speaks we make an allowance and leave a margin for his temperament, the size of the audience, the particular occasion and also for the fact that we have asked him to speak. In fact, we ask men to speak, very often, in hope that under the pressure of platform enthusiasm they will be tempted to say more, or at least to speak with a greater emphasis than they would in ordinary conversation. Which leads us to remark that there is a demand for a new type of orator, namely the private orator—the man, who, wherever he is, in the street or behind the counter, will speak his mind with conviction and courage. Some one said concerning Hugh Price Hughes: "he was always expressing what others thought, and what they had not the courage to say."

CROMWELL'S PICTURE

Don't ask for too much praise or accept it even if it is offered to you. If they compliment you on the size of your congregation, tell them that your church is "central." If they congratulate you on your large majority in the last election, modestly remark that you have lived three times longer in the neighbourhood than had your unfortunate political opponent. If you are congratulated on a stray speech which happened to be happily, "sane, comprehensive and practical" let it be known that it was a condensation of thirty years' experience in your special line of professional business. If men point to you with pride as an illustration of long life, business sagacity, commercial honor and public spirit, inform them that you are simply a favourite child of circumstance and "a chip of the old block." Not many men are so outspoken as Cromwell was when he sat to Cooper for his miniature: "Paint me as I am," said he, "warts and all."

BE SWIFT BUT DON'T HURRY

Bustle is not hustle. The man who is "flying to pieces" is not getting there. The merchant who is in a swirl because he does not know "which way to turn" is not doing things. Mental excitement is, not business execution. The man who is bringing things to pass is usually quiet, serene and self-composed. Nerve energy is too valuable to waste it in sighs, moans and useless exclamations. Study the successful man: how steady he is.—An eminent French surgeon used to say to his students when they were engaged in difficult and delicate operations, in which coolness and firmness were needed, "Gentlemen, don't be in a hurry, for there's no time to lose."

BE STRAIGHT

In the long run nothing will help you so much with people as their belief concerning you that you are straight. Even those who are angry with you because you will not fall in line with their rascality, will have the greater confidence in you when their wrath has sobered down into a sober second thought. In the hour of emergency men turn to the man who has proved himself straight in spite of every trying circumstance. A capitalist wrote from the continent of Europe to a young merchant in England proposing a very questionable transaction and received the following reply: "I do not attend to business in that way." Some two years elapsed when the Englishman received from his former correspondent the request that he take his son in his office as a clerk, adding significantly, "I desire my son to learn how to do business in your way."

TWO STANDARDS

There are two ways of looking at life—through red glasses or through blue. You can measure the distance between the base of the mountain and its brow and exclaim: "I have climbed it!" or you can measure the immeasurable distance between the highest peak and the nearest star and affirm that no airship will ever span such a stretch of atmospherical blue. King George of England, at the close of the Revolutionary War, in which he had lost thirteen colonies, proclaimed a day of thanksgiving because of the return of peace. His chaplain said to him: "For what would your majesty have us give thanks? for the fact that you have lost thirteen of the brightest jewels of your crown?" "No, not for that," said the king. "Because we have added millions to our national debt?" "No, not for that," said the king. "Because tens of thousands of people of the same race have been destroyed?" "No, not for that," said the king. "Why, then?" insisted the chaplain, "and for what shall we give thanks?" "Thank God," said the king, with great vehemence, "thank God because matters are no worse."