

stack. Whether you feel hopeful or desponding, sad or cheerful—whatever be your expectations—keep on, persevere! For one thing is certain—perseverance will conquer in the end, and perseverance in one thing leads to perseverance in every thing.

Self-control, diligence and perseverance mutually sustain each other; the man who can persevere in self-control, has gained a great victory. Self-control helps us to shun all that tends to depress and degrade us, and to seek that which refines and elevates. Do you lie too long in bed—spend money wastefully—loiter over your work—frequent taverns—take snuff—have you any low or dirty habit? Leave it off at once, and you will have taken the first step towards self-control. These are the weeds that must be rooted out, unless you wish your harvest to be choked by docks and thistles.

Well, suppose the habit of perseverance conquered; to be lying within you, ready as a steam-engine to work whenever called upon, it may at once be made to assist all your endeavours. The next step is to begin to read. Perhaps the remark may be made, I have been reading all my life. This is said by many persons who look into books just to pass the time away, and call it reading. But the true way is to read as you would take food—to digest it, to make it a part of yourself. Books are now cheap, and by the exercise of a little self-denial, any person, even in the humblest circumstances, may become the possessor of Histories, Biographies, Travels, Essays, Poetry, and increase his knowledge a hundred-fold, and store his mind with the best thoughts of wise men. To read of the good that men have done may stimulate us to follow their example, and to read of their errors may teach us to be watchful over our own ways; and thus we shall profit by the experience of others. But some will say we have no time for reading—we work early and late, and have no leisure. To this we would answer: get some books about you, and opportunities for reading them will not be lacking. Five minutes in a morning before going to work, and the same on coming home to your meals, or half-an-hour at night, even such small attempts as these will be profitable. Remember the Dutch proverb—an inch an hour. Inch by inch the tortoise creeps a mile; and five minutes to five minutes will take a man or woman, boy or girl, through a book. Besides, great economy of time may be effected by planning it out beforehand; those who have hitherto been content to 'get along,' will be astonished at the benefits to come from foresight. For instance, on waking in the morning, you may fix in your mind on certain duties to be done between the time of rising and breakfast, others from thence till dinner, and others again from mid-day till dusk and bed time. The minor details of life might thus be made to go on almost of themselves, and leave you more at liberty to follow the bent of your inclinations in matters of greater importance. With a plan arranged beforehand, every moment of time may be provided for; and wherever there appears to be a spare minute, not wanted for household duties, playing with the children, or attending to the garden, let it be filled up by reading, study, music, or conversation. Time is too precious to be wasted; odds and ends are work more than is commonly supposed. You can find time to sit and smoke your pipe, to go to the 'Cross Keys' or 'Lord Nelson'; suppose you change this habit for a reading habit. You may read aloud if you will, and you will have not only the pleasure of informing your own mind, but of seeing your wife and children become listeners. Who can tell how many words in season might thus be spoken in little shreds of time now looked on as worthless! Perseverance does a great deal with odds and ends of time: we know a working mechanic who, in odd quarter-hours made an excellent finger-organ; another, who by keeping on, furnished his house comfortably from top to bottom; and another, a carpenter, who in addi-

tion to his regular trade, had learned to make shoes. This one, whenever he had a spare minute, sat down on his stool and put a few stitches into a shoe preparing on the last; and thus, almost without feeling it a trouble, his family were kept provided with boots and shoes. To pass from small things to great: all history teaches us that those who have been most successful in the world, were generally those who best economised their time.

This planning out of your time may seem to be very troublesome, but it is not so in reality. After a little practice, your various arrangements grow into habits, which by-and-by become as natural to you as any ordinary movement of the body or limbs. But even if it be troublesome, we are not to shrink from it on that account. Nothing worth having can be obtained without trouble; and that which we have gained by exertion, we prize more, and turn to better account than that which costs little or no labour. There must be no flinching; those who are afraid of exertion may stand aside, and make way for those who are more persevering or less faint-hearted.

What we have said on the subject of reading, will apply equally to all kinds of study—to conversation, and observation. Whatever you undertake let it be a fixed principle with you to keep on till you have accomplished your wishes. And here a habit of observation will also be of great assistance. By observation is meant the paying attention to what is going on around us—making proper use of our eyes. There are thousands of persons who never see any thing—that is, they shut their eyes to every thing but the mere mechanism of life—the three meals a-day; dressing and undressing. But observation will show us a thousand facts that will add to our knowledge and experience. Note well the different characters of the people you work with, of those you meet in your daily business, and by-and-by you will find out they are not all alike, and learn to value the best. Pay attention to handicrafts how many hints you may pick up which otherwise you would never have known. Are you taking a country walk: you will find in the trees and hedgerows, in weeds and stones, many things to make you thoughtful and increase your pleasures. It is not all barren; there is a multitude of delights for those who will take the trouble to look for them. Observation leads a man to form correct judgments; if he has any notions in his head he can always test their value by observation—by comparison with others. And, what is not least, by observation at home you will learn to understand differences in the character of your children, and to train them so as to bring out the good that is in their nature, and thus avoid the error of governing them all by one limited, uncompromising rule.

Perhaps it will be some time before you can entirely make up your mind to what appears to be such a hard task. But is it really hard? By thus giving yourself continual employment, you are in fact promoting your peace of mind. Occupation prevents the mind from dwelling upon little cares, makes a man sensible of his true value, and makes him happier if not richer. Think over all the good examples of which you have heard or read, and little by little your mind will come to a determination. When once your mind is made up, set to work immediately. You have come to the conclusion that you want knowledge, and knowledge you must and will have. You will no longer be a mere digging, weaving, or smiting animal. You will become a thinking animal. Do not, however, be frightened at the first difficulty; keep on, go a-head, as the Americans say. We do not mean that you are to master all the sciences; but you are to aim at that knowledge which will make you a good husband, father, citizen—which shall save you from being led astray by false arguments or false pretences. We are all responsible for the pains we take to inform our minds; to gain such principles as shall enable us to judge correctly between right and wrong.