

THE MORAL MARK OF MAN.

II.

Importance of Character in Life.



THOSE who habitually complain about Fortune and Luck would do well to lodge their grumblings at home, for there resides the cause of their misfortunes.

Each one of us is, in fact, the architect of his own life. Whatever sway may those extrinsic influences exercise upon our actions, it is none the less true that the master-wheel of life lies within us—in our sentiments, in our passions, in our will-power; it is the work of our character.

Popular wisdom, moreover, based upon centuries of long and persistent observations, speaks the same language and declares that it is the differences of character that explain the differences so manifest in the moral constitution of man. Hence it is that with two men equally gifted with talent, one will succeed, whilst the other utterly fails, owing to differences of character.

The trifling defects of man, the daily offshoots of his character, spoil and jeopardize a life more surely than great, but transitory, outbreaks.

Whence come, I pray, the many mishaps, counter-checks and painful blows that, falling to the lot of such man, full of glowing promises, have blighted all his hopes of a bright career? Perhaps from a single defect of his character. Thus, an insignificant flaw in one of the beams of the Quebec Bridge may have been the cause of its collapse, entailing such tremendous loss of life and property.

Now, consider this other man, whose nature is not so richly endowed, walking steadily on towards the goal of success. What is the secret of it? That his character opened for him the avenues of success and lead him onward unmolested.

If life can be compared to a stream full of energy and activity, character dredges out the channel wherein may flow that power with the most telling effect. If life is "the accomplishing of a task," character is the force that gathers in its many resources and applies them to the required labor. Character, then, plays on this "stage of life" a most telling part. Its importance is such that it behooves