

## RIGHT AND WRONG AMBITION.

"There!" said a little shoe-black boy to me one day, as he gave a last touch to my boots, and stuck his brushes into each other with a look of triumph, "there, they can't shine more." This boy had succeeded in life, and was at the top of his profession. Without striving to force himself into some position for which he was unfitted, he had aimed at succeeding in his own line. This is the right sort of ambition, and it is one that we can all gratify.

We may be sure that he who cannot play well a subordinate part in the drama of life will do no better if given a higher role. The great natural philosopher, Faraday, who was the son of a blacksmith, wrote, when a young man, to Sir H. Davy, asking for employment at the Royal Institution. Sir H. Davy consulted a friend on the matter. "Here is a letter from a young man named Faraday; he has been attending my lectures, and wants me to give him employment at the Royal Institution. What can I do?" "Do? put him to wash bottles. If he is good for anything, he will do it directly; if he refuses, he is good for nothing." Faraday washing bottles would be quite as successful a man as Professor Faraday lecturing at the Royal Institution, if both kinds of work were equally well done. The carpenter who makes good chairs and tables, better deserves a crown than a king who cannot govern. We must all admire and consider successful the crossing sweeper whose honest pride it was that he could do "an ornamental piece of sweeping round a lamp-post!"

If I wore a cobbler, I'd make it my pride  
The best of all cobblers to be;  
If I wore a tinkler, no tinkler beside  
Should mend an old kettle like me.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," is the motto of noble ambition. The other day I asked a young officer if he played polo. "No," he said, "I do not, for I have not time to practice it enough, and I hate doing anything badly." This is the feeling of a man who is ambitious in the best sense of the word. He hates doing anything badly.

The late celebrated head master of Uppingham School used to say that every boy is good for something. Probably we who are grown up are all good for something, and would excel if only we would try to do so in our own line. This, however, is what we do not do. Each man wants to boast in another man's line. He thinks that in order to "get on" and be successful he must leave the state of life into which he was called by God.

We speak of man's "calling" in life, implying by our words a belief that God calls each of us to his own place; that is, to the place which he is capable of filling with the greatest credit. By giving to us certain tastes and capacities, God calls us as certainly as if we heard a voice from heaven. False ambition says: "Leave this calling as soon as possible, and force yourself into a position which is more 'genteel,' into one which is prosided over by the 'bestial goddess of comfort and respectability.'" From this false ambition comes jealousy, grief from loss of fortune, all the torments of wounded self-love, and a thousand other mental sufferings—the commonly enumerated moral causes of insanity. They are griefs of a kind to which a man who is ambitious in the best sense of the word should not fall a prey. There need be no disappointed ambition if we set before ourselves the true aim in life, which is to amend ourselves, and do our "level best" in whatever sphere we are called upon to work.

All service is the same with God—  
With God whose puppets, best and worst  
Are we; there is no last or first,  
There is no great, there is no small  
To the soul that maketh all.

No position in life is so low that a really noble man cannot raise it, nor any so high that a base man cannot degrade it. I am not urging any one to live an indolent, unambitious, vegetative life. I am only saying: "Covet earnestly the best gifts." Be sure it requires much more perseverance and energy to perfect character than to become a "great success" in the estimation of the world. Instead of telling people, especially young and enthusiastic persons, not to be ambitious, the true policy is to urge them to be far more ambitious in the right sense of the word than they generally are, and to encourage in them a "divine discontent" with imperfection of all kinds, especially with badly done work.

"But what a rare thing is success in life!" said Endymion; "I often wonder whether I shall ever be able to step out of the crowd." "You may have success in life without stepping out of the crowd," said the Baron. This answer of the Baron seems to us to sum up the true philosophy of life: "You may have success in life without stepping out of the crowd." It is well to be assured of this, for to succeed in life is the natural ambition, if not of every young Endymion, at least of his parents for him. If to succeed in life it were necessary to become very famous, very powerful, or very rich, success would be the monopoly of but a very few people.

It has been calculated that not more than one in four thousand may be expected to attain distinction, and not one in a million possesses that wonderful thing called genius.

But there is a real sort of success that cannot be monopolized. Our being's end and aim is to be good and to do good. Here every one may succeed, for character is a kind of wealth that knows no failure. "They truly are faithful who devote their entire lives to amendment." Every man may make his life successful in this sense. And as one is never so successful as when he least thinks of becoming so, such a one will probably gain in the long run more happiness, and exercise a greater influence in the world than his more grasping neighbor.

"Oh! keep me innocent; make others great," was the prayer written by Queen Caroline Matilda, of Denmark, with a diamond on the window of her castle at Friendsborg. The more we know of the lives of the great, whether from history or personal acquaintance, the more we become aware how many of them would say:

'Tis better to be lowly born  
And range with humble dwellers in content,  
Than be perked up in a glistening grief,  
And wear a golden sorrow.

Earthly success is uncertain of acquisition, brief in continuance, disappointing in fruition. Not so with the success that is aimed at by true ambition. It is certain to all who seek it. It is endless in duration. It never disappoints:

'Tis not in mortals to command success,  
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it.

Epictetus once received a visit from a certain magnificent orator going to Rome on a lawsuit who wished to learn from the stoic something of his philosophy. Epictetus received his visitor coolly, not believing in his sincerity. "You will only criticize my style," said he, "not really wishing to learn principles." "Well, but," said the orator, "if I attend to that sort of thing I shall be a more pauper like you, with no plate, nor equipage, nor land." "I don't want such things," replied Epictetus, "and besides, you are poorer than I am, after all. Patron or no patron, what care I? You do

care. I am richer than you. I don't care what Caesar thinks of me. I flatter no one. This is what I have instead of your gold and silver plate. You have silver vessels, but earthenware reasons, principles, appetites. My mind to me a kingdom is, and it furnishes me with abundant and happy occupation in lieu of your restless idleness. All your possessions seem small to you; mine seem great to me. Your desire is insatiate, mine is satisfied."

We conclude with an historical anecdote which illustrates the difference between right and wrong ambition. Henry IV of France made the good and happiness of his people so much his peculiar care that he diminished, as much as possible, both the expenses of his table and his wardrobe, contenting himself with wearing a plain gray habit, with a doublet of either satin or taffeta, without the least ornament. He used often to banter his courtiers on the magnificence of their apparel, "carrying," as he said, "their castles and their woods upon their shoulders." In his elegant comparison between Henry and Caesar, Montaigne says, most truly, "If Caesar conquered more cities and won more battles, Henry acquired more real glory in making his people happy, after having delivered them from those tyrants who oppressed them. He joined to the talents of a warrior both moral and civil virtues, which Caesar never possessed. They were both ambitious, but the ambition of Caesar was crime in Henry it was virtue."—*The Quiver*.

## DISESTABLISHMENT IN WALES.

The *New York Times* of May 18th, resumes its discussion of the subject of disestablishment in Wales. We confess to being amazed at the utterances of this newspaper, which betray either shameful ignorance of fact, or more shameful *animus*. The most superficial study of a somewhat complicated question might have saved the writer from some of the gross blunders made by him. He confesses that he "cannot help liking" such men as Archbishops Whatley and Trench, and Bishop Jeremy Taylor. He, however, shows that he knows very little about the character or temper of these eminent men. He impugns the motives of the leading defenders of the establishment, when he says that "the ark of the covenant," which they think they are protecting, consists of "their own emoluments." This form of insinuation cannot conceal the ignorance of one who adds that the Church in Wales is "sustained at the public expense." This ignorance is so crass that we are tempted to call it wilful misrepresentation, for any one who has followed the discussion of the present question, as it is thrashed out daily and weekly in the English press, is well aware that even the bitterest opponents of the English Church are not barefaced enough to claim that the dioceses in Wales, of the province of Canterbury, are supported out of the pockets of an unwilling public. Such opponents have learned the A. B. C. of the matter too well for that. An intelligent man would disgrace himself by such incredible confusion of mind. We would also ask what authority has the *Times* for declaring that the Church of England "has signally failed to do the work it was endowed to do"? This is contrary to all the evidence which we have been able to obtain on the subject. The failure of the Church in Wales to cover completely the whole field of labor in the principality had been largely due to the poverty of the Church in Wales. The abstraction of tithes, the spoliation of Henry VIII., and even of Cromwell, reduced the Church to penury and compelled the dwellers in the highlands to build themselves chapels, and seek lay preachers, but not out of hostility to the Church. It seems a strange remedy for scantiness of endowments to