

honorable. Pope said long ago—"An honest man is the noblest work of God." A great many applaud that beautiful thought, and yet, as things often go, it is the dishonest man that is applauded most. In law, we are to regard a man as innocent until he is proved to be guilty, but very often we pronounce men to be guilty before they are tried. The Worldly Wiseman tells you, "Believe every man a rogue until proved to be honest." You are almost called a fool if you act otherwise, and yet the maxim is unjust, dishonorable, and demonish. If men were really to carry out that horrible principle, the world would only be fit for savages to live in. Our Order has no sympathy with such maxims. Our teaching is in touch with the proverbial lore of the past, which tells us, "that an honest man's word is as good as his bond"; that he "swearth to his own hurt, and changeth not"; that "short reckonings make long friends"; that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches"; that "he that will cheat at play will not be honest in earnest," and, under the inspiration of such, we say "fair play is a jewel." The world is calling loudly to-day for men who are honest to the backbone, and where you have a man of honor, there you will ever have a man who will fill the bill.

No man is a man of honor who is devoid of truth. It is sad to see how careless men are about what is called character. Everything in life that is good, useful and beautiful tells us that such perfected things are the product of hard, thoughtful labor, and yet the grandest, the most beautiful thing on earth—a true character—which can only be obtained through struggle—men somehow are perfectly callous and indifferent about. Men do not gather grapes from thorns, nor thistles from fig-trees; and the laws of nature ought to teach us that honor cannot come from dishonorable associations, transactions, practices, thoughts, and actions; that if we are to become the men which our Order is trying to make, we must have right things in us before they can come out in action, and that our conduct must be the natural result of unseen, but of all potent forces. There can be no honor about the untruthful man, for when falsehood would come in through the door of a man's heart, honor would fly out of the window. The two cannot possibly live together. On the tomb of the great Baron Steir—a man of noble services—there are inserted these lines:—

"His nay was nay, without recall;

His yea was yea, and powerful all;
He gave his yea with careful heed;
His thoughts and words were well agreed;
His word, his bond and seal."

With such a man you could trust your life. Eulwer Lytton, in describing the origin of the roots of honor, tells us that the savages discovered that they could not live in safety among themselves unless they agreed among themselves to speak the truth to each other. This truth becomes valued and grows into a principle of honor. Very true, and we can no more live a life that is worth living, without agreeing to speak and act the truth to one another. Truth and honor are therefore inseparably intertwined. The truth demands heroes, but it is the love of truth in a man that ultimately makes the hero, and a man of honor. A Spanish historian tells us about a Spanish cavalier who, in a hasty quarrel, slew a Moorish gentleman. He fled, and in despair jumped over a garden wall. The owner, a Moor, happening to be in his garden, was addressed by the Spaniard on his knees. He implored protection. "Eat," said the Moor, giving him a peach, "you now know that you may depend upon me to protect you." The Moor went away, and soon discovered that the man whom he had promised to protect was the man who had murdered his own son. Did he break his word? No! Going out to him, he said, "Christian, the person whom you have killed is my son; you ought to suffer, but I have given you my word, and that cannot be broken." He was only an infidel, as the Spaniards called the Moors in those days, but he was a man of honor, because he was a man of truth. We need more infidels of this class everywhere, for if we had them the wheels of life would go more smoothly round, and what a heap of rubbish in the shape of prevarication, pretence, shamming, and hypocrisy would be swept away. The world needs what the Scotch call a "reddin' up," and if our lying habits and practices could be cleared away, life would be sweeter, truer, and grander. Archibald Lampman, a sweet Canadian singer, who has lately gone to rest, says:—

"Even one little deed of weak untruth
Is like a drop of quenchless venom cast,
A liquid thread, into life's feeding stream,
Woven forever with its crystal gleam,
Bearing the seed of death and woe at last."
On the other hand, we are reminded by the same forceful writer:—

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