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PRACTICAL PARAGRAPHS.

The Apprentice Foreshadows the Workman.

Experience proves that the apprentice foreshadows the workman, just as surely as the bend of the twig foretells the inclination of the tree. The upright, obedient, industrious lad will graduate a steady, skilful and capable man, as unmistakably as the perverse, idling, careless boy will ripen into a lazy, dissolute and worthless fellow. The fact is, a boy is measurably the maker of his own destiny; and if he fails to acquire a master-knowledge of the trade to which he is put, it will mainly be because he did not at his outset determine to be a master-workman. Good morals and steady industry are indispensable.

When a lad who possesses these qualities proposes to learn the art and mystery of printing, it should be inquired of him: Has he had a fair common-school education? Is he a perfect speller? Has he a turn for reading? Is his eyesight good? Is he under fifteen years of age? A true affirmative answer to all these queries will entitle him to the position of reading and errand boy. He is told the hours at which he is to come and go, and a strict punctuality is enjoined upon him. He sweeps the room, he sorts out the pi, he learns the position of the various letters in the case. A year spent in this way is an excellent preparative for "going to case," or learning the art of composing type.

When he is put to composition, he is told to set up one line and show it to the foreman or to the journeyman under whose care he may be placed. The errors in the line are pointed out to him, and he is required to correct them himself. When the words are perfectly correct, he justifies the line tight enough to prevent it from falling down when the composing-stick is slightly inclined, and yet sufficiently loose to enable him to lift it out with ease. In thus spacing out the line, the blanks between the words must be so graduated that, when the matter is printed, all the words will appear at equal distances apart. No matter how impatient he may be to get on, he must be drilled at this ex-