

but that men are raised up by the Almighty to be instruments in his hands : and if so, knowledge is of some use—knowledge can be made the instrument of the highest good to man. But the true knowledge is that which does not puff up—the true knowledge is that which, when it looks upon the world around it, sees the very littleness of all its own efforts, and the impossibility of covering the wide field before it. Does that leave any room for pride and self-conceit? To the man who has acquired a little knowledge, and become vain and conceited, I would administer the homœopathic treatment of a little knowledge more. And why? Because, in fact, no man can really look upon the field of knowledge without perceiving how infinitely vast it is ; and when we see it is no longer possible for even the greatest among us to become a kind of walking encyclopædia, or to be even as great in mind as a Bacon or a Leibnitz—when we see that science is so explored and ramified that we must be content with only a little, and that possibly only one science is too much for one man's life to master, then I think we are very near this further lesson. If knowledge cannot all be conquered what is there we can thoroughly conquer and subdue? Can we not turn within ourselves, and say that, although I find, after all I am but as the child which picks up shells on the shores of the great and unfathomable sea, still I may take a lesson from that, and say that the object of learning is not that I should conquer everything, because that cannot be, but it is that I may do my duty here as a unit in the great population which God has poured over the world ; that if my knowledge cannot be perfect, the sense of duty with which I am penetrated, and the sense of love towards my kind which fills me, may at least be perfect and complete, for these are mine to cultivate.

2. RECENT EDUCATIONAL SPEECHES IN CANADA.

(Fourth Series, continued from page 37).

VII.—REV. JOHN ALEXANDER, OF MONTREAL.

From a lecture delivered by Mr. Alexander before the Young Men's Christian Association of Montreal, we make the following extracts :

THE ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE.

The subject of the lecture was practical in its character and bearing, to the young. Life was before them ; the race was to be run,—the battle to be fought ; and its course would be according as it was regulated by attention, prudence, and wisdom. None should expect to get through life easily. All must struggle with competitors, or remain at the foot of the ladder ; for it was only through many trials that the crown of successful life was won. Their motto should be "diligent in business," as well as "fervent in spirit" ; for nothing but persevering labor could bring success in life. And, first, how might they be most successful in life? Each case had its own peculiarity, but the primary necessity in all was that the individual should have a natural adaptation, and a liking for the profession in which it was sought to place him. The neglect of attention to this had been the ruin of thousands of youths, who, without a steady purpose, had floundered through life abortively, who, had their wishes and tastes been consulted, would have pursued a successful career of usefulness and honor. The natural bent of the youth should be observed and obeyed, for there was as much a call to the secular pursuits of life, as there was to the ministry. The glory of God and the welfare of man should be consulted in the choice of a profession, for none lived to themselves, but if a man said he had a call to the ministry, yet was not gifted with the power of utterance, he must be mistaken ; he was not meant for the ministry, but would most likely make an excellent tradesman. So it would be a mistake to suppose he was fit for a physician whilst he fainted at the sight of blood, or for a blacksmith, if his arm was void of sinew, or for the head of a mercantile establishment, if he lacked energy, judgment and firmness. It was useless, nay culpable in parents to force a profession upon a boy. Many a youth who had been a dullard in the profession into which he had been pushed, had shone bright with talent when, leaving it, he had attained his proper sphere. The celebrated Dr. William Carey would have made a poor cobbler, the trade to which he was put, for he never had his heart in mending shoes and boots, yet he subsequently became one of the most renowned Oriental scholars.

FIRST AND SECOND ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE.

For a man to be successful in his profession required the whole of his attention. The merchant who felt within him strong scientific leanings or literary aspirations would not succeed, and the physician who had a predilection for stock-jobbing would have his mind disturbed, and his attention distracted from his patients by the fluctuations in the money market. The rule was that a young man's interest, should be thoroughly absorbed in his business or profession, though always in subordination to the yet higher claims of

religion. The next element necessary to a successful career, was, Character. Talents were dangerous endowments, when unassociated with character. Above all men, the business man should have an unsullied reputation, and character was based upon principle, which was itself founded on truth revealed in the word of God. Hence, the man of principle, believing a certain course of conduct to be right, pursued it, because it was right, not because honesty was the best policy, for honesty did not always seem to be the best policy. The question with him, was, what was his duty? and having ascertained, he followed it in all faith. Character alone would command the confidence of those whose confidence it would be necessary to secure. With it, if a merchant or tradesman had fallen into straits, his creditors, if reasonable men, would be disposed to assist, and set him on his feet ; it would serve him, when the charlatany and humbug of professing to be making fearful sacrifices, and selling at fifty per cent below prime cost would fail him in his need. But the true measure of success was not in the value of wealth secured, but in the amount of good done ; neither was character mental in its nature, but moral. As an illustration of this, let them contrast the reputation of Samuel. Budget, the merchant of Bristol, with Barnum's. Both were men of amazing energy, both had, at times in their career, risen, phoenix-like, from the ashes of a calamity which would have paralyzed and overwhelmed most men with despair. But Budget was a man of sterling principle, of sternest truth, and highest honour, to conduct the largest and noblest mercantile transactions, whilst Barnum never could have succeeded except as a showman. His character was destitute of moral principle, which he had himself shown in his Autobiography. The one man's life was a failure, though he should yet die as rich as Croesus, the other was a success, and its owner, worthy of all honorable remembrance. Let young men also look to the influences to which they were exposed. Recreations they must have, then let them be seriously and prayerfully selected. Let their reading be of a solid and improving character, and their recreations be of a nature to improve the physical constitution, and give salutary excitement to the mind ; let them avoid the ball-room, the theatre, the tavern ; let them be careful how they acquired habits, for habits formed character.

THIRD AND FOURTH ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE.

The third element of success in life was capital. Capital would always have the advantage over credit. The tradesman or merchant should regulate the amount and nature of his transactions, by the capital at his command. It was a perilous thing for a young man to venture on credit. He should annually lay by a little from his profits to increase his stock of available capital, not be tempted into speculation, but consolidate, rather than extend, his business. No greater folly could be in young tradesmen than the spending of their capital on the outward show of their establishments ; this should be left to old established and rich firms. Labor, skill, enterprise, time, and talent were of yet more value than capital, they were the true and abiding store ; but the object of the young tradesman should, nevertheless, always be to increase the amount of his technical capital.—Young men whilst in the service of others, should save, and lay by in savings banks, and those who are in business should practise economy, and never spend a farthing unnecessarily. But their success would not depend entirely upon themselves, but with another also, for every young man should marry—as soon as his circumstances warranted such a step. Not to do so was bad policy, and worse philosophy. He would recommend young men, in due time, to practise the rule which says, twice one is one, but let frugality and economy, and a disposition to accommodate themselves to circumstances, be amongst their requirements for a wife ; indeed a good, genial, and economical wife would greatly aid in getting capital, in fact she would be capital herself.

The fourth element in success was enterprise, since in whatever profession a young man entered, he would find the road crowded with eager competitors. Every profession was an arena in which some must fall and come to grief. It was no doubt true, that every man who rises in a profession must tread in a path wet with the tears and blood of his fellows. This was the case with the soldier, the physician and the lawyer, but much more was it so in the sphere of mercantile affairs. "The more you have, the less he gets," was, no doubt, the true philosophy of trade. Competition was a sound principle, but often carried out in a wrong manner, to the contravention of the moral law. But when difficult and doubtful cases presented themselves, conscience should be allowed to answer, where reason could not speak. Let them beware, too, not to seek to advance their business by insinuations against their fellow-business men, for the driving of a rival from the field in this manner would not fail to call down punishment. The enterprising man had definiteness of aim, and avoided diffuseness ; enterprise meant perseverance, and the use of all legitimate means, such as advertising to keep a business before the public eye. Above all, having chosen a profession, stick to it. Thoroughness, promptitude, and punctuality,