

Punctuality, hospitality, love of books, love of man, fidelity to promise, conscientiousness, benevolence, large-minded and large-hearted service to humanity, have for centuries been family traits. Who shall dare to say that there is nothing in "blood"?

William Earl Dodge was a native of Hartford, Conn., and born in 1805, so that at the time of his death, in 1883, he was nearly seventy-eight years of age. It is always important to know what are the early influences which shape a man's future; for we are all of us molded largely by our environment, even tho it be principally by the heroic resistance which it compels to unfavorable and hindering influences. In Mr. Dodge's case the surroundings were helpful. He was brought up in an atmosphere which was at once full of the oxygen of business training and the perfume of Christian faith. He was marked by a mind that was alert and a body that was active; he craved knowledge, he yearned for occupation, and he loved animals, and so he was disposed to intelligence, industry, and affection.

At his queenly mother's knee he learned his first lessons of faith and prayer, and both alphabets, the literal and the spiritual. Her mental equipoise, her emotional tenderness, her Christian devotion, her sanctified common sense, left lasting impress on the plastic clay of his child-character. His father helped to form studious habits, to direct his courses of reading, and to inculcate ideas of unselfishness and service to humanity in the lad, whose future neither parent had forecast enough to predict; and his uncle by marriage, the remarkable man whose brain was thought by Professor Bush to be the only adequate explanation of the brilliant meteoric display of 1837—Dr. Samuel H. Cox—had somewhat to do in inspiring the boy's better nature, for he resided at Dr. Cox's home for a time while at school in Mendham, N. J.

Before William was fully thirteen he was summoned by his father to the great metropolis, henceforth to be so closely linked with his name and fame, and school life was exchanged abruptly for a clerkship in a dry-goods house. He so commended himself to his employers that at the end of his first year's work he received a watch as a token of their regard—a significant token, for William E. Dodge was always a man who was up to time. For a while financial straits, which drove the family to Connecticut, changed William's home and occupation; and at Bozrahville he was permitted for the first time to "start in business" for himself, stocking a showcase in his father's country store, and, tho not yet fifteen, buying and selling on his own account, and learning how to adapt himself to his customers. A year or two pass, and this same boy William has shown enough capacity and sagacity to be trusted to go to New York regularly as the purchasing agent of the business. Meanwhile the boy's Christian character and activity were finding in the humble New England village a congenial clime, for a revival turned the cotton-mill, of which his father also had charge, into a place of prayer, and the business of the