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UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE.

IF men who are looked up to and recognized as leaders, whether because they are regarded as successful business men or because they hold positions of honor and trust, could only realize how much influence they are exerting on younger men, they would ordinarily be much more careful as to the character of their influence. Young men, full of energy, without much experience, looking forward to their life work, are very easily moulded by men of high rank and mature age. The words that are spoken carelessly by older men, falling as seed into the soil of younger minds, have a potency for good or evil that can hardly be over-estimated.

Not long since, travelling with one of our most prominent business men, who is now about fifty years old, we were speaking of the men we knew when we were soldiers together in the army, before either of us had reached his twentieth year. This man, who is a model of business integrity and moral purity, said, calling the name of a well-known officer in the army, "Captain ——— once said in my presence something that had a great influence on my life. A company of officers were spending the evening together, and one of the younger officers told a lewd story, when this Captain said to him, in a kindly but very stern way, 'I never want any man to tell in my presence a story that has in it the least element of impurity or indecency. No man who ever tells such a story or hears one is as pure and good a man after telling or hearing it as he was before.'"

These words, spoken thirty years before, had made a wonderful impression on this young mind, and they were very helpful in moulding the character of the younger man. The man who uttered them will ever be held in high esteem by the man who heard them. On the other hand, speaking of other officers in the same regiment, the name of a young officer was called, who was notorious among his boon companions as a teller of indecent stories. He was remembered with loathing and disgust.

This will illustrate imperfectly what we mean by unconscious influences. The man who is upright and pure and honorable, always and everywhere, is exerting an influence for good that can be hardly overestimated; while the man who is impure, dishonest and dishonorable in act or conversation, is either alienating from

himself all good and true men, or he is helping mightily to make them as corrupt, impure and dishonorable as possible.

Impure, profane, and false, words are often found on the lips of men who are noted for their polished manners; but in such cases they always advertise their author as a whitened sepulchre. Impure and profane thoughts must be found in the fountain which sends forth such a stream.

It may be said, on the other hand, that many men simply use impure and profane forms of expression without having any meaning. If so, it is a great misfortune. Unconsciously they are doing a great injury to others, as perhaps unconsciously they have received injury from others. "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil; for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh."

In order to do good we need to be good. Every thoroughly pure and good man is a centre from which radiate good influences. He creates unconsciously a pure man-ennobling atmosphere. Every bad man contaminates the moral atmosphere in which he lives. — *Pres. Messenger.*

READ THE BEST.

What do you read and leave unread? What time do we give to the Bible? No other book, let us be sure of it, can equally avail to prepare us for that which lies before us; for the unknown anxieties and sorrows which are sooner or later the portion of most men and women; for the gradual approach of death; for the period, be it long or short, of waiting and preparation for the throne and face of the eternal Judge. Looking back from the world, how shall we desire to have made the most of our best guide to it! How shall we grudge the hours we have wasted on any be they thoughts or books or teachers— which only belong to the things of time! — *Canon Liddon.*

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