

by the overtasked, and one more dangerous there could hardly be. We believe it is correct to say that the gambling tables on the Continent were closed mainly because of the amount of suicides that accompanied them. A gambler, to begin with, is generally in an excited condition. When he loses, he is driven into a blind rage and fury against fate and circumstance. He then stakes his last stake—his life—and his suicide is simply the culmination of his gambling.

Another incentive to suicide is to be found in the great and growing publicity of modern time. We have turned on the light with a vengeance and for the guilty the whole world glares with menace. Once it was possible to be put to shame and dishonor, to lose character and reputation, and yet to start again and make a new life better than the old. Now it is not possible. Ex-convicts will tell you that wherever they go they are met with the story of their transgressions and punishment. There are in this merciful nature that carry through all an apparently invincible self-complacency. But there are many others quivering and sensitive. Their shame stares them in the face; all eyes seem to accuse them. The beasts of the field are in league against them. Anything, they say, for an escape. The future can hold no terrors comparable to the terrors of the hour.

Another reason for the increase of suicide is the weakening of religious sanctions. We cannot tell how far this goes. There was a time within the memory of middle-aged men when people, almost of a sudden, began to believe that God was all geniality and indulgence—that there was nothing to fear from Him—that those who took their lives found themselves immediately on the breast of His mercy. It was impossible that such a creed could live in such a world as this is. Even among those who reject definite forms of religious belief, there is a sense of the terrors of the universe, of the something after death, of the Justice and the Magnificence of God. Still, we believe that in so far as positive faith is weakened, to that extent one great deterrent from suicide is weakened correspondingly.

We should lay greater stress on the development of the imagination. People live much more in the future than they did. If we are not mistaken, it is only a hundred years ago since savings banks were instituted. Think of all the provision for the future which have been made since then. Think of the tremendous urgency with which all politicians, however reluctant, are compelled to take measures against unemployment and the poverty of sickness and old age. Men did seem to live once from hand to mouth, taking no thought for the morrow in any sense at all, and getting through somehow. Now they are expert in forecasting. Now their imaginations conjure up for them shapes of horror. All this, we believe, is stimulated by the passion for fiction which is so largely gratified alike by young and old. It is an evil in many respects. The imagination goes wrong as often as any of our faculties. Robust minds would spurn vain allurements that distract the weak. Still, the fact remains that they do distract and drive to madness. They refuse to be quelled by reason, and the result is in many cases suicide.

II.

Why should Christians condemn suicide? We have heard men argue for its lawfulness in certain circumstances, and they plead that it is nowhere explicitly forbidden in the Bible. But the Christian heart, and not the Christian heart alone, makes its silencing protest against all such sophistry.

We do not believe that it is possible to state fully the argument against suicide, and for this reason. The human horror of suicide has reasons that run too far into the unconscious nature to admit of complete expression. The great vice of rationalism in all its forms is its contempt of the deeper feelings and instincts which in the end of the day decide all great problems. A man knows that he has no right to take his life in his hands and fling it away. He can give a thousand

good reasons for this, but the real reason lies deeper than all. His knowledge is earlier than his reasoning, and an instinct not to be over-ridden is the source of his knowledge. But life we were pressed, we should say that life is given to us as a trust, and as our greatest trust, and we have to keep it and to use it, and to answer for it. Socrates gave his witness to the deep universal assurance. "The great Captain has set you in his ranks. You may not break your rank on the strength of your own private notions. It is an outrage on the common life in which your own is bound up. We are here by the will of the Great Captain. He will not forget to call us when our time comes." Till we hear Him calling, we must abide fighting as best we may. When He calls, it will be the hour to say adieu and pile arms—not a moment sooner. "And indeed I am not tired yet. I have strength to wait what is yet to see; What I know the hours will not forget. The end of the watch that is set for me."

Of the bitter cruelty of suicide, so far as survivors are concerned, and of many other things, we say nothing.

III.

In the face of what has happened and what is happening round us, we may well ask ourselves, humbly and earnestly, how we may be saved from the dreadful end of suicide. One preservative is open to many who will read these lines. The young can hardly ensure themselves against suicide more safely than by resolving to have no secrets in their lives. In Lockhart's Life of Scott there is an excellent remark on Scott's initial blunder in entering into a secret partnership with Ballantyne. Lockhart says: "It is an old saying that wherever there is a secret there must be something wrong and dearly did he pay the penalty of the mystery in which he had chosen to involve the transaction." Wherever there is a secret there must be something wrong. We do not, of course, mean by a secret affair a private affair. All of us have our private affairs with which outsiders have no business. A secret is something different. A secret is something which, if it were told, would more or less involve us in shame. Blessed are they who from the first keep clear of secrets—those whom none can threaten or blackmail, those who are not afraid at the end of any record that may leap to light. There are, it is to be feared, multitudes who live with the sword hanging over their heads, who are afraid to open their letters or their newspapers, who are tortured by those possessed of the fatal knowledge, who never know a day's escape from harassment. It is to this fear, often only too well founded, that many suicides are due. It is by that fear that the nerve by which we react to the world and turn to full account our powers and uses is oftentimes destroyed.

Again, there is a need of wisely using and conserving life. We have not meant in what has been written to over-value life for life's poor sake. The noblest use that can be made of life is gloriously to give it away. But this is a very different thing from throwing it away. The great men of the world are the men who, like St. Paul, are ready to be bound and to die, who count not their life dear unto themselves. We all honor above other men the man who takes his life in his hands with a great duty before him, because he knows that duty is more sacred than life. The martyr who dies for his faith, the soldier who risks his life for his country, the doctor who throws himself into the combat with plague—these are men who realize that life is given for duty, and make loyal venture thereof that the duty may be done. This being fully recognized, it must still be remembered that the care of life is a duty. We have no right so to overwork ourselves as to endanger the balance of the mind. There are kinds of work involving publicity and recognition, which are tempting and not repugnant. A man may be as self-indulgent in doing such work to ex-

cess as the laziest man on earth. It is our business to watch for the first danger signal and to accept advice. The sound mind in the sound body is the ideal at which we ought to aim. Everyone has to discover his own best methods of protection, and we doubt whether overwork is very often the cause of death. But the danger increases in these days of living in a manner and at a pace which is constantly endangering the controlling faculties of the mind. And there are the gravest reasons for resistance.

But in the end the great security is for those who have evidence of the love and trust of God. That evidence, to be sufficient, must be perpetually renewed by the experience of communion. It is in this that we shall find the relief which will enable us to turn

"The bitter pool
Into a bright and breezy lake,
The throbbing brow to cool;
Till left alone with Thee alone,
The wilful heart be fain to own
That He, by Whom our bright hours
Shone,
Our darkness best may rule."

THE KAWARTHA LAKES.

When Samuel de Champlain was leading the Hurons through the beautiful Kawartha Lakes he fancied the butternuts and other low trees were orchards set out by the hand of man, so picturesque and charming were the shore-trees laced and laden with running grapevines. And to this day, though the farmer has made his home in the "Highlands" and the picturesque war canoe of the Indian is gone from these waters, the shadowy shores of Kawartha Lakes are still beautiful to behold.

Owing to the high altitude of these lakes, nearly 1,000 feet above the sea level, the air is pure, and laden with health-giving and soothing balsamic odors from the pine and spruce-clad hills—it renews physical vigor, restores the nervous system, invigorates the mental faculties, and gives a new lease of life. To those who suffer from hay fever, the Kawartha Lakes are a haven of heaven-given relief and security.

Easy of access (three hours from Toronto by the Grand Trunk Railway), profuse in its gifts, and diverse in its attractions, having its fashionable resorts, and its delightful facilities for "roughing it." Why not throw business to the "antler" for a month, cast care to the dogs' and when you return from the "Bright Waters and Happy Lands" (the English rendering of the Indian word "Kawartha") you will be a new creature, fortified for another year's trials.

GREATER PRINCE RUPERT.

Mail advices to the Traffic Department of the Grand Trunk Pacific this week, show that there is great activity, both in new building operations and in the advance in real estate in Prince Rupert, which in another two months will complete its first year of existence. It is nothing unusual for a million feet of lumber to be delivered at Prince Rupert in a single week and it melts away as fast as men and teams can handle it. A number of leaseholders are starting to build wharves, and the new concrete wharf of the British Columbia government will also be under way at once. The Grand Trunk Pacific is planning further large additions to its already extensive wharves. The British Columbia Legislature late in the session, which has just closed, gave Prince Rupert a charter as a town, with special privileges and rights as to the control of municipal water and lighting privileges not enjoyed by other cities in British Columbia. The population of Prince Rupert believe that the inauguration of their own municipal government instead of being administered by commissioners, will mean a further stimulus to the already phenomenal, if not magical growth of the town.