

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

The Business Doctor.

There is a disease called creeping paralysis, which begins with one muscle, or set of muscles, and creeps along until it envelops the entire muscular system and complete paralysis of the muscles result.

It is a terrible experience for a man to feel himself gradually coming within the grasp of this enemy, to feel it slowly but surely closing in upon him, crushing out his life.

When a man becomes conscious that creeping paralysis is slowly but surely strangling the life out of his business or his profession, he experiences a painful shock. But business paralysis is not necessarily as fatal as paralysis in the human subject.

In many instances, the business man is unconscious of the paralysis that is creeping over his business. He has become so accustomed to his surroundings, and to the dropping of his ideals, and of system and order, and the fading out of his former alertness and the ebbing out of his ambition have been so gradual that he does not notice the changes until the conditions are serious.

It is the most astonishing fact that men will work desperately to get a start in life, to establish a business, and then let it run itself until they become alarmed by the gradual shrinking and dwindling away of trade.

A man with an experienced business eye can very quickly detect when going through a store, factory, or place of business, the symptoms of creeping paralysis.

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You must first find out whether or not you are working to the best advantage everywhere in your business, whether you are conducting it along the most economic lines, whether you have the most efficient time-saving devices.

Don't hypnotize yourself, as many business men do, into the idea that the great trusts are absorbing all the trade and gradually strangling the smaller concerns.

Do not deceive yourself by trying to find all sorts of excuses in hard times, or in the change of business. If your business is not holding its own, if it is dropping off, there is a real reason for it, somebody is to blame.

Every up-to-date business man is always on the alert for any indication of dry rot or creeping paralysis in his business—a malady which has ruined tens of thousands of good-meaning business men.

If new blood is not coming into your business, if your percentage of customers is dropping off or not increasing, there is some trouble somewhere.

Your success is largely a question of grit, of persistency, of progressive ideas, of up-to-dateness. The quality of a man's brain and the doggedness of his endeavor are everything. There are plenty of men in this country to-day whom nothing can down, for superiority is their pattern.—O. S. M. in Success.

The way we look at things. It is the way we look at things and take them that makes troubles of any kind bearable or absolutely unbearable. If we have burdens, we must take them up and carry them, whatever they are, with all our hearts and all our strength, or they will always be underfoot and tripping us up, and making us fall and stumble.

Real Successes. Thousands of young men in this country are tied down by iron circumstances, are not able to go to college or have a career, but are examples of self-sacrifice in sweetening the home, in brightening the life of an invalid mother or cripple sister.

It is in giving up a home of their own for the sake of a more deplorable one, in helping a brother or sister to go to college, in order that they may have a career which has been denied them. These are the real successes in life.

Troubles that never come.

How foolish to worry ourselves about dreadful things which the future may bring! A man once called his sons to him when he lay upon his deathbed and said: "My sons, I have had a great deal of trouble in this world, but the most of it never came." And as we look back upon the past the most of us will find that the things we most dreaded were never called upon to bear, so all our worry over them was for naught, and we get along with the unexpected just as well, perhaps better, than if we had all the chance in the world to worry about it.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE BOY AND HIS CHANCE.

No doubt the fact that he was a motherless boy had much to do with his father's treatment of him. In a fond and foolish way Hepburn Gray was trying to make up to the lad what he fancied he had lost by his mother's death.

And then one night Dr. Birdsall called upon Hepburn Gray. "Home for a half hour, Gray?" "Yes."

"All right. I'm coming over." In twenty minutes he was at the Gray door. Three minutes later he was smoking an excellent cigar before the cheerful blaze in the big fire-place in the Gray library.

"Stole an hour from my patients," he said. "Glad I found you home. This is a very good cigar."

"He was a stout man with a thick gray beard and thick eyebrows. "I seem to scent business in your studied ease of manner," said Gray. "What is it, Tip on the market?"

"Wrong," said the big doctor as he watched the smoke curl above his head. "What sort of a man am I, Hepburn Gray?"

"Pretty straight sort, I fancy," said Gray. "The fact that I have selected you as the guardian of the Gray health would seem to carry an impression of confidence."

"True," said the doctor. "Pretty frank, am I? Never hesitate to speak my mind, eh?"

"I have never noticed any reticence of that sort about you," Gray responded. "What is it, Birdsall? My heart again?"

"The big doctor shook his head. "No, you seem to be all right. Is—is anything wrong with Franklin?"

"The big doctor looked across at Gray. "Nothing unusual," he answered. "Nothing new, at least."

"Then it is about Franklin?" "Yes," Gray grimly smiled.

"It's no use, Birdsall. I can't deny the boy anything. He's motherless, you know, and I'm trying to be both mother and father to him."

"You're killing him with kindness, all right," he said. "That's easy to see. He paused and flung the half smoked cigar into the grate. "Listen to me, Gray. I like you. I like the boy's mother. I like the boy, too, as far as he will let me. And I want to say to you right here that you are all wrong in your treatment of the lad. You have spoiled him—and you keep right on spoiling him; more and still more. What's the consequence?"

Hepburn Gray frowned at the big doctor. "It's no use, John Birdsall," he said. "Your little lecture will be wasted. Now listen to me. I was a poor boy, as you know. I had no childhood. I did a man's work when I was fifteen. I slept in an attic where the snow sifted across my bed. I never knew what it was to play as other children played. I couldn't reason this out, but the fact was there and it made me bitter. I made up my mind to be rich when I grew up and if I had a son he should want for nothing. I know what it was to be poor. My boy should never know, I don't say that I have done right by the lad—but I've kept my promise."

He paused and stared at the cheery blaze. "That's all very well," said the big doctor in his deep tones. "It has a flavor of sentiment that I like. But sentiment is an expensive luxury, even to man of millions. You are all wrong about the boy, Hepburn."

"Go on."

"He is growing up to a tame, spiritless creature. Physically he is spindly and senemic. A puff of wind would blow him out. This soiled shoes on a damp day would mean a hurry up call for me. His grip on life, my friend, is anything but strong. Rich food distresses him—he cares for no other kind. He would be an ideal patient for me if he didn't keep me constantly worried. That's your only son and heir, Hepburn Gray."

"Professional exaggeration makes mountains out of mole hills, I fancy," he slowly said.

"Oblige me by pushing the button and calling the mole hill in," said the big doctor.

The other man hesitated. Then he touched an electric button and when the maid appeared bade her summon Master Franklin.

Neither man spoke until the boy appeared in the doorway. He was a slender lad of seventeen, with dark hair that accentuated the pallor of his cheeks.

"Did you want me, papa?" he asked. "It's the doctor who wants you."

The boy crossed to the doctor. "Nothing very nasty this time, I hope doctor?"

"Not this time, my boy. It's papa who gets the nasty dose to-night."

"Are you sick, papa?" "No, boy. But the doctor here thinks I need a little treatment. I guess he's mistaken."

The big doctor let the slender hand slip from his broad grasp.

"You can't keep those finger tips warm, can you? But there, run along. You'll get no dosing to-night."

"Good-night, papa." "Good-night, boy."

"Thank you, Dr. Birdsall." And he was gone.

"He's a fine mannered little chap," said the big doctor. "It's a pity he hasn't got a better casing for his good qualities." He looked at his watch. "I must talk faster," he said. His voice grew softer. "Hepburn," he said, "you and I are friends. We've stood side by side during anxious hours. We've clasped hands in sorrow. I was here when your boy came. I was here when his mother went away. I'm going to show you my friendship in a few light. I'm going to make a suggestion that will try the bonds that unite us. But you will not doubt my honesty. Wait. Is that the boy you hoped would grow up and take an interest in your affairs, and aid you, and perhaps in good time take the tiller from your hands and steer the ship alone? Is that the boy?"

"Yes." "But you have little hope of it now?" "Very little. The boy cares nothing for business."

"How do you know? What chance have you given him? How have you fitted him for his life you hoped would interest him? I tell you, man, there is still a chance. This boy must be given a better physique, he must be given health and strength. He isn't developed. Now listen to me, Hepburn. I want to take that boy away from you. I want to put him where he'll get the chance he needs. I know the place. I know what it should do for him. Give him to me for eighteen months. You trust me. Let me try this experiment. You are to trust me implicitly. You are not to know where the boy has gone. I will keep in communication with him and will tell you from time to time how he fares. What do you say? It means a chance for the boy. It may mean great happiness for you. Cut out the sentiment, Hepburn. Think only of the boy's future. Speak up, man."

He arose as he spoke and went to the other man and laid a broad hand gently on his shoulder.

The father of the boy straightened up. He put out his hand and gripped the doctor's.

"I'll think it over," he slowly said.

Hepburn Gray regretted countless times that he had let the doctor persuade him to give up his boy. It was only a wild experiment at the best. If the boy had his weak constitution from his mother there was little hope that it could be strengthened.

For a month Hepburn Gray would not call up the doctor. He was angry at him and still more angry at himself.

And then one night the doctor called him up.

"Just heard from the boy," he said. "He arrived all right and thinks he is going to like the place. You may be glad to know that he was awfully hungry for his breakfast the next morning. He sends you his love. I'll let you know when I hear anything further. Good-night."

After a while Hepburn grew more accustomed to his boy's absence, and his feeling toward the doctor underwent a change—although he couldn't quite forgive him. Nor would he ask any questions about the lad. All the doctor told him was volunteered information. That is until Hepburn fell ill.

It was a serious cold and pneumonia was threatened. The doctor looked anxious.

"Is Franklin close enough to be sent for if he should be wanted?" the sick man feebly murmured.

"He will not be wanted," the doctor sharply answered and his teeth clicked as he said it.

"The boy wasn't wanted, but the doctor got a serious scare."

"See here," he said, "if you want that lad of yours with you while you are convalescing, I'll send for him."

Hepburn shook his head. "No," he said. "I'm not selfish enough for that. A sick room is no place for the boy. Is—he doing well, where he is?"

"I have good reports from him," said the doctor a little evasively.

"Then let him stay the time out. It's only six months longer to wait."

The doctor nodded and went away well pleased.

So the time wore along and presently the doctor came to Hepburn and asked him whether he preferred to have the boy come to him, or would he like to go after the lad and fetch him home.

Hepburn looked thoughtful.

"Then here is the address," said the doctor and handed him a card and walked away. "Let me know the exact time you start," he called back.

Hepburn felt that there was little or nothing encouraging in the doctor's manner. He looked at the card. The place it named was a minor station on the Union Pacific east of Laramie.

And so with much anxiety and little hope Hepburn Gray began the long journey.

The second day after he boarded the Overland Limited, a boy, mounted on a stocky pony, came galloping across the prairie and drew up with a wild yell at the platform of the little station of Broadrib. The station master looked through the grimy window.

"It's that cub from the Gopher ranch," he chuckled. "What's he up to now?"

The boy drew the saddle and bridle from the pony and laid them on the porch. Then he turned the animal loose with a playful slap.

"You know what you'll get if you don't come when I whistle, Pete," he called after the pony. Then he pushed opened the door of the station and went in.

"Hullo, Pikey," he said to the station agent, "how's things?" "All right as far as I know," the agent responded. "What are you doing here?"

"Got a friend coming on the express. How much is she late?"

"Twenty minutes at Cloud Burst. But she don't stop here."

"Which I won't do."

"Don't get grumpy," chuckled the boy. "I guess my friend can induce 'em so stop if he wants to get off."

"Oh, can he? Mebby he's the president of the road—and mebby he ain't." "Mebby," laughed the boy. "And then again mebby he's the new station agent that's coming to take your place some day."

The man was about to retort when the telegraph instrument on the table before him began to tick. He stared at the instrument, and his ruddy face paled.

"The express is ditched at Atkin's Forks," he hurriedly muttered. "They're calling up Laramie for a relief train."

"Do you mean the Overland?" cried the boy.

"Yes." "Where is Atkin's Forks?" "Seven miles east. Just this side of Bingham's."

"I'm going there, Pikey." "You can't get there unless you wait for the relief."

"I'll take your handcar," And he was out of the door like a shot.

"Don't you touch that car," the agent roared after him. "That's company property."

"You go to blazes!" came back from the lad.

The agent ran to the door. The boy was dragging the car onto the track.

"That's the dumbest boy I ever saw," he muttered. Then he raised his voice. "Here, you limb," he shouted, "if you will steal the company's property take this along, too. It may come handy." And he shook a pocket flask at the boy. The latter ran forward. "I'd like to go along with you," the agent added, "and fetch my kit of tools, but there ain't anybody to take my place here. Look out for the grade, so long, kid."

A warning click drew the attention of the agent and a moment later the boy was speeding up the road.

He saw the effects of the disaster while he was still a half mile away—the overturned cars, the group of excited people—and then he hurried the handcar still faster. Presently he drew it from the track and ran forward.

There were a score or more of people hurt, and most of them were lying on blankets on the grass at the roadside waiting for the coming relief train. There was no doctor on the train and no medical help at hand. Those who were unhurt had done what they could for the injured. Wounds had been bandaged and water brought.

The boy ran forward and looked for the man he sought. He had glanced about at the uninjured. The man was not there. Then he passed among the injured, and presently he found him.

He was lying with his head propped up on a roll of blankets. His arm had been cut and bruised. They had clipped away his coat sleeve and tried to stop the flow of blood, but had only partially succeeded. The man had been struck on the head too, when the shock came. He was still dazed by the blow. He started up in a half wild way as the boy dropped on his knees beside him and put the flask to his lips.

"He ought to have a surgeon as soon as possible," said a passenger. "He's losing too much blood."

The boy arose and darted to the handcar and pulled it into the track. Then he lifted the wounded man.

"Can you walk a little way?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," said the man. "That stuff has put some life into me."

Half leading, half carrying the wounded man the boy got him to the handcar and lifted him aboard.

"Hold fast," he ordered; "it isn't far."

It was down grade all the way and the boy let the cargo go as fast as he dared. Twice he looked at the man. The cold air had revived him. He was standing the journey well. It was but a few minutes before the station came in sight, and almost instantly the agent ran forward.

"Got a man here who needs help right away, Pikey," said the boy.

Together they lifted the sufferer and carried him into the station, and laid him on the couch. And the agent who was a jack of many trades, got out his handy surgical kit and bandaged and plastered the hurt and presently looked up with a nod of satisfaction. "That'll do nicely," he said. "It was just a simple cut, but it's lucky the boy got you here as quick as he did. Where is he?"

"Yes, he's pulled the handcar from the track. There he is catching his pony. No doubt he's going over to Sam Pringle's to borrow his backboard. He'll want to carry you up to the ranch. I reckon. That's the place for you. They'll give you the best of care. It's only four miles across the prairie."

The man looked up.

"What station is this?" he asked.

"This is Broadrib."

The man looked around.

"I thought there might be a—a boy here waiting for me," he murmured with a little catch in his voice.

"Eh! That's the only boy around here."

The man shook his head. "I mean here. That boy was at the wreck."

He put his hand to his head. He was still a little confused.

"That boy belongs here. He was in the station when I heard the news of the wreck going through. What does the kid do but yank out the handcar and go a kibiting up the road. And back he bikes with you. Come to think he said he was expecting somebody on that train. But of course you can't be the one."

A strange look came over the man's face.

"Tell me something about this boy," he whispered.

The man chuckled.

"He's a great kid all right. Fine as silk and hard as nails. And say, you

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should have seen him when he came here! Skinny and white, and looking as if a breath would blow him away.

But Jim Temple's ranch was the place for him all right. In six months you wouldn't have known him. That kid ain't afraid of anything. There's nothing that goes for four legs that he can't ride. And he's full of business too.

He's got quite a bunch of sheep of his own, and last summer he and Jim went off prospectin' for a couple o' months and Jim says they struck something rich and each of 'em staked off a claim and Jim says it's a sure thing. If the folks down east let the boy alone he'll be a rich man some day—and made every dollar of it himself. They say he's got a dad somewhere that's a millionaire and no doubt he'll be coming out here after a while to get the boy—but he'll have to fight to get him away from Jim Temple. Here's the lad now. Come in, kid, I guess the stranger would like to speak to you."

The boy pulled off his soft hat and his eyes were shining, and the man's eyes were shining too, as he looked up into the eager boyish face.

Then the lad suddenly dropped on his knees by the couch and the man put his uninjured arm around his neck and drew the curly head against his breast.

"My boy!" he half sobbed. And the station agent turned abruptly and went into the other room.

In place of the customary sermon, the funeral services of the Rev. John S. Cullen, late pastor of St. Patrick's church, Watertown, Mass., were rendered more impressive by Archbishop O'Connell reading a letter, written by the priest before his death. "I want nothing said at my funeral by way of a sermon," decreed Father Cullen. "All I ask is that the people may pray for me. Their prayers will do me infinitely more good than the exaggerated praise of friends."

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