

PHYSICAL CULTURE

A correspondent is good enough to suggest that physical culture would be an appropriate subject to discuss in these columns, and we are quite in agreement with him. The remarks that follow, however, are only by way of preliminary, as the subject is obviously much too extensive to do justice to in a few paragraphs. The literature available on physical culture probably runs into thousands of volumes; numerous courses are before the public, and many magazines are entirely devoted to the art.

Physical culture is not a new thing. The present Olympic championships are evidence of a very early interest in things athletic. The Bible tells us that the body is the temple of the spirit, while the old Latin phrase runs: *Mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body. Then, too, the old folk will tell you that the best physic is fresh air, and the best pill is plain fare. This, I believe, is the first essential—fresh air and plain fare.

For the majority of the people, physical culture should not mean an intense desire to become exceedingly strong, or the taking of thought to add to one's stature. It ought, rather, to mean a quiet determination to maintain the body in that state of perfection that befits the average man who has average tasks to do. Many people have put time, money and strength into certain plans and devices for the purpose of, say, increasing their height. Such efforts hardly come under the heading of physical culture, and it is doubtful if they are productive of much real good. In any event, they belong probably to the domain of surgery.

It is said of a man who was rather troubled about his shortness of stature, and thought it might affect his ultimate success in life, that he asked President Lincoln how tall a man ought to be. Lincoln gave a typical answer to the effect that it really didn't matter providing his legs were long enough to reach to the ground.

The means which are used to help the people to keep in good physical condition are very varied and numerous. In the cities, we have the school and institutional gymnasia, the great public playgrounds, the swimming baths, the skating rinks in winter, and various other activities. In the country, the variety of artificial aids is not so evident, but here the need is not so pressing, for there is no gymnasium like to that of God's great outdoors. Sometimes, indeed, I think we make a mistake in investing from ten to a hundred thousand dollars in enclosed buildings of imperfect ventilation, when we might be making use of Nature's parks in a revival of the community games that seem unfortunately to have lost their attraction for this generation.

Two years ago, I was with some friends at a country picnic in the heart of a farming district. The visitors thought they would like a swing. In a moment two young fellows of about twenty had taken the ends of the rope and were high up a pair of poplars. About five minutes later the swing was ready. Later in the day I learned that the school trustees of that district were to make a special visit to the city for the purpose of finding the cost and studying the equipment necessary to fit up a local gymnasium!

Some people feel the need of considerable physical exercise; others can do with very little. Many successful and long-lived business men, bankers, editors, authors and scientists, have been known to take very little exercise. Others on the contrary cut their working hours as much as possible, and spend their surplus time in a variety of exercises. The problem, after all, seems to be largely one of relaxation.

On a future occasion, if it can be done, I will try to present a brief outline of exercises for those who desire regular practice. In the meantime, here is a list of ten health commandments for which Mr. B. C. Forbes is responsible:

1. Good habits.
2. Good food.
3. Plenty of sleep.
4. Fresh air—breathe it deeply.
5. Plenty of exercise.
6. Lots of water—outside and in.
7. Sensible clothing.
8. Right thoughts.
9. Work.
10. Freedom from worry.

OBSERVATION

It is said that Dr. Conan Doyle based his famous story of Sherlock Holmes on a real character—a professor under whom he studied. It is said further that this professor was a man of very keen observation, and that he tried constantly to develop this faculty in his students.

The Young Man and His Problem

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On one occasion during a chemical experiment, he had before him a pot of vile smelling substance into which he dipped a finger and then put one in his mouth. "Do as I do, gentlemen," said he, passing the pot around. The students dipped their fingers into the pot and then put them in their mouths, making very wry faces as they did so.

"I must remind you once more, gentlemen," said the professor, "of the importance of observation. If you had really been observing me, you would have seen that the finger I put into the pot was not the one I put in my mouth."

Some time ago, I was required to set an examination paper in which I put the question—"Write an article on Accounting as a Factor in Conservation." The examinees were studying for work that required more than ordinary keenness of perception, and yet ten per cent of them misread the title and wrote on "Accounting as a Factor in Conversation."

Herein they were hardly as observant as another professor whose students once asked his opinion of the identity of a "specimen" which they had skillfully compounded from the body of a blue-bottle, the legs of a spider, the wings of a dragon fly, and a few bristles from a blacking brush. The professor, after a thoughtful scrutiny, asked his students for their own conjecture—

"We think, sir, that it is some species of bug."

"You are right. It is a very distinct species of hum-bug."

THE GOVERNMENT AS PROTECTOR

It is not correct to say that the government has no part in industry. On the contrary, a just and strong government is the most important single fact for the attainment of industrial success. History does not provide a single case of a flourishing industry under a corrupt or weak government; but it furnishes many illustrations of fields unworked, and of industries falling into decay, because workers were deprived of the protection of strong and just governments. Government as a protector is an essential condition of an effective and progressive business community. It is in this sense that we include the protective function of government as a part of the legal framework of industry.

The protective functions of government of importance to industry are:

- Protection against aggression from without.
- Protection from violence within, and
- Enforcement of contracts.—Henry C. Adams.

SELF-RELIANCE

D. O. Mills was once asked this question: "To what formative influence do you attribute your material success?" To this he replied:

"I was taught very early that I would have to depend entirely upon myself; that my future lay in my own hands. I had that for a start and it was a good one. I didn't waste any time bothering about succession to wealth, which so often acts as a drag upon young men. Many persons waste the best years of their lives waiting for dead men's shoes; and, when they get them, find them entirely too big to wear gracefully, simply because they have not developed themselves to wear them."

"I have never accepted an inheritance or anything but good-will from my family or relatives. As a rule, the small inheritance which, to a boy, would seem large, has a tendency to lessen his efforts, and is a great damage to him in the way of acquiring habits necessary to success."

THE RIGHT PLACE

The whole problem of employment is to find the right man for the right place. Clearly, the right place for a man is where he can do the best work, earn the most money and be the most contented. Since a man can do best the work he likes best, the safest rule for choosing a vocation is: "Follow your liking." Your natural liking for a certain line of work is a pretty safe indication that you have some natural ability for that work.

Even as children we tend to follow our natural ability. I know one small boy who will play only with railroad toys; and another who wants only fairy stories. If these boys develop along their natural lines, one will become a mechanical engineer, and the other a writer. If they're forced into other

lines, they will always be round pegs in square holes.

Not so long ago, it was the custom for the boy to follow his father's trade or profession, on the theory that he had inherited special ability for it. But in America to-day, it's recognized that the son of a blacksmith may have unusual aptitude for law, while a lawyer's son may find his proper berth as a mechanical engineer. Provided you're willing to get the training and experience required for the position you want, it's your business to decide what shall be your right place.—C. R. Barrett.

STAND FAST

Dr. Ellis Powell tells an interesting story in connection with the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is said that at a critical moment in the history of the railway, Lord Mount Stephen sought counsel by cable from the late Lord Strathcona, who happened to be in England.

Within a few hours, Lord Mount Stephen received the laconic reply: "Craigellachie—Strathcona."

The slogan of the Highland Grants, to whose country both the Canadian pioneers belonged, was "Stand fast, Craigellachie." Lord Mount Stephen acted upon the cryptic exhortation, and the creeping rails of the C. P. R. moved westward again towards Vancouver.

OPPORTUNITY

"Are you a believer in opportunity?" was once asked of Theodore Roosevelt. He replied:

"To a certain extent. Many of the great changes in our lives can be traced to small things, a chance acquaintance, an accident or some little happening. A time comes to every man when he must do a thing or miss a great benefit. If a man does it, all is well. If not, it isn't likely that he will have the chance again. You can call that opportunity if you wish, but it is foresight that leads a man to take advantage of the condition of things. Foresight is a most valuable thing to have."

Master of human destinies am I!

Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate!
If sleeping, wake; if feasting rise before
I turn away.

This verse it might be said, has met with some rather severe criticism in our western continent. There are many who maintain that Opportunity knocks not once, but many times. The problem challenges the attention of the young man.

EARNING A LIVING

Upon those who can work well at something, a great responsibility rests. In every ten people, taking them as a mass, four are too young, too old, or too feeble, to take an active part in the world's labor. At least two more are engaged in home duties, thoroughly necessary, it is true, but not of a kind to bring in ready cash. One more is usually out of a position temporarily, either because he is personally shiftless or discontented, or because business in his line happens to be dull. That leaves three out of the entire ten who must not only support themselves but earn enough in addition to keep the other seven from starving to death.—R. O. Hughes.

GETTING ON

Mr. Harry C. Spillman, in his book "Personality" writes that the earth's most dependent paupers live in bank books and strong boxes; the exchequer is the largest slaveholder in the world. A great editorial writer has recently estimated that ninety per cent of people are trying to make money, thinking of little else and envying those who have money; seven per cent despairing of making money and bitterly envying those who have money; and three per cent thinking of earnest, useful effort apart from money, like the noble Agassiz who said he hadn't time to make money.

While there is no way of verifying these percentages, the greatest chance for error lies in the liberality of the three per cent. This unhealthy state is due to a false idea of wealth. In Lapland a man's wealth is measured by the number of his reindeer; in America, by the number of his automobiles. Therefore, the ninety per cent are striving to become millionaires, notwithstanding the assurances of the statistician that a man has sixteen chances of being killed by lightning to one of being worth a million dollars.