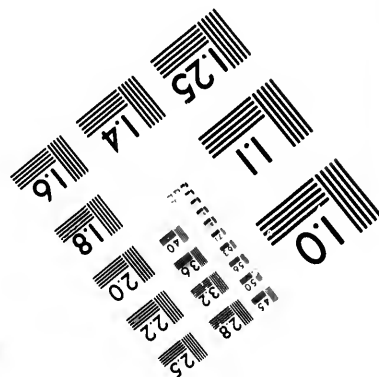
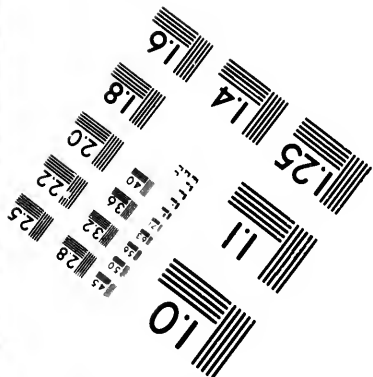
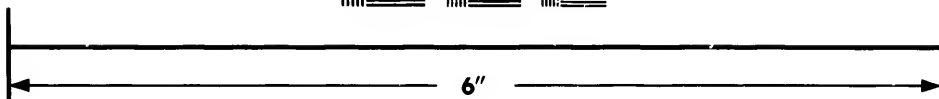
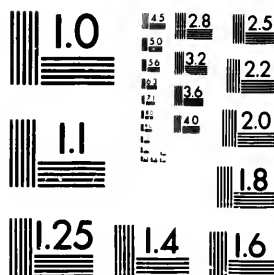


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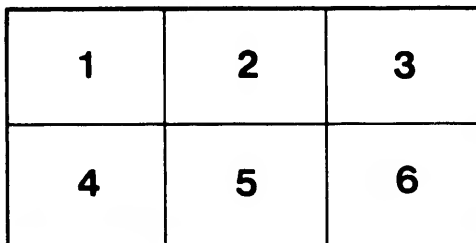
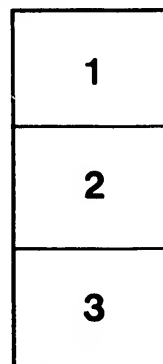
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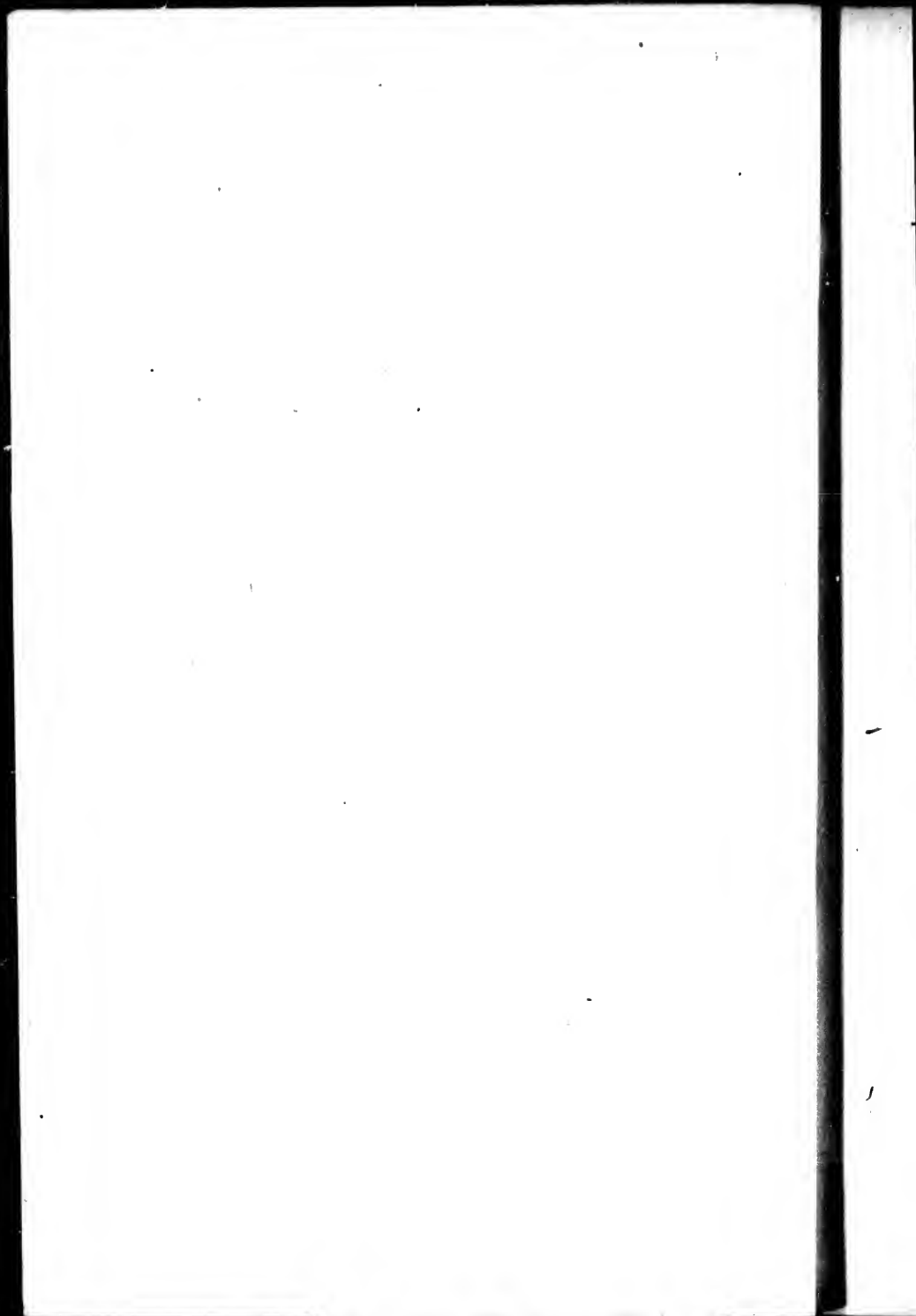
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FROM FIFTEEN TO TWENTY-FIVE.

A BOOK FOR YOUNG MEN.

BY

J. F. WILLING,

Author of "Diamond Dust," "The Only Way Out," &c., &c

QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE STRONG. — *Paul.*

INTERNATIONAL BOOK AND BIBLE HOUSE,
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FROM FIFTEEN TO TWENTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER I.

BOY AND MAN.

WHERE the St. Lawrence slips out of the arms of Lake Ontario, and starts off by itself to find the sea, it is difficult to tell just where the lake ends and the river begins; the narrowing is so gradual, and the stream rolls forth so grandly.

Very beautiful is the brave young river, playing about through its inland archipelago, rippling around the feet of lichen-tinted rocks, reflecting the pretty pictures of its clumps of greenery, and, in the still night time, its surface sparkling with the brilliants of the sky.

When one is watching a young life, it is not easy to tell just where the gayety and freshness of boyhood give place to the man's strength and purpose. The boy slips away from the home shelter and is out seeking his fortune, making his way, an independent, responsible being, long before they who guarded his childhood are ready or willing to acknowledge his right to direct himself. We are children to our home people, as long as they can keep their hold upon us, even if our heads are gray.

One is blind indeed who does not admire the courage and hopefulness, the breezy, though sometimes bothering jollity, the boundless ambition, the dauntless faith for the future that makes a boy's life exuberant and fresh, free and glorious.

What fine, smooth sailing, one finds upon the St. Lawrence! Have you ever taken the tour of the islands on a bright summer day? The *Island Wanderer* thrids her way in and out, hither and thither, at her own sweet

will, now making good headway over a plain sweep of river, as if she really had business on hand, then idling about through the narrowest, shady lanes, as if her one object was to make her gay tourists forget the busy, outside world, and live forever like some wild, aquatic birds, gliding here and there through lovely solitudes.

When she brings you back toward your hotel, she is saluted by the leisurely people sitting on their cottage verandahs, or out under their shade trees, and she whistles back her "How do you do?" in a free, neighborly way. Canoe loads of merry girls make the waters gay with their glee, while the waves of her wake toss their little boats about like a mimic tempest.

This, also, is like a boy's life. All seems "merry as a marriage bell," and yet — there are dangers lurking about, even in the smooth, gala-day sailing of the early years.

We saw a wreck, its bones bleaching on the head of an island. "That fellow under-

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took to run without a pilot," said our captain. "He thought he knew the river well enough himself; and he'd save expense; but he paid pretty dear for the whistle. A current caught his sloop, and whirled her through that channel, and on to the rocks, before he knew what he was about — and there he had to leave her. Guess he'll find it cheaper to pay a pilot, if he ever undertakes to run on this river again."

There are dangers that lie in wait for young men all along the way; but some that they have to encounter belong specially to the time when they are just gliding out of the home shelter into manhood. It may not be amiss for me to speak of them.

One about which much ado has been made, and at the door of which many false accusations have been laid, is the over-strictness of parents and guardians. Now and then one grows up knarled, and twisted in the grain, from the ropes that held him from natural growth in childhood; soured and sickly for

lack of sunshine; secretive and tricky from small exactions and tyrannies, or with abnormal development of some faculties because others were cramped into nonentity by somebody's superstitions. Yet the great risk is from the lack of restraint. Boys are much more unkindly dealt with in this regard than are their sisters. They are allowed to develop themselves in savagery by tormenting smaller boys, stoning birds, drowning cats, and any other pieces of brutality to which they can screw up their courage. They may gash and mutilate their moral sense by all manner of small villainies, many of them carrying the scars to the end of life. They may have contact with all coarse, low, braggadocio people, whose bravado makes them specially charming to the inchoate little man. They may rush to see and hear anything and everything that vile people throw in the way, and thus gratifying a prurient curiosity, they become contaminated with taints that the holiest and

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best influences fail to sweeten. People have queer notions about boys. They either believe that they are of so angelic a nature as to be quite proof against evil contact, or else they think their moral condition a matter of no consequence. Boys seem to be expected to be just about so hateful, contrary and wicked, and there is no use trying to hold them to purity or probity.

A young fellow is full of restless activities that prompt him to get out of the beaten lines, just as the friskiness of a colt makes its heels fly over the traces. When he grows rapidly he is quite apt to suffer desperately from what the French call *mauvaise honte*. His body seems to him to have got the start of his soul. He is painfully conscious of hands, feet, and general awkwardness. He is often treated most inconsiderately, and he burns with a sense of injustice and of indignation. Many mature people act as if boys have no rights that others are bound to respect. They crowd the poor fellows into the most un-

comfortable and inconvenient places. They must give up their seat to anybody and everybody, whether any reason can be shown for the courtesy. They must be pushed into the most conspicuous and awkward places; and then, when they reach the "don't care" point, and become a terror by their loud, disagreeable misdemeanors, they have to be put into the pillory of a general fault-finding, and wholesale reprimand. My soul has blazed with indignation against the perpetrators of small injustices that I have seen practiced upon the outraged sensibilities of bashful, young fellows, who, I knew, were quivering in every nerve, and who would avenge themselves upon their tormentors by becoming coarse, and tough, and hard, just when they ought to be gentle, and sweet, and pure as the Lord's white saints.

I have a friend, — yes, I have her yet, though she has passed into the city that lieth four-square. Her class of sixty young men shared with her own son the love of her

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large, motherly heart. Most of them were strangers in the great city, and she knew how to take hold upon each with the warm, magnetic hand of a true friend, and steady him by the dangers that beset his path. The last time she called upon me, she turned after she had said "Good-bye," and added, all her heart in the earnest words, "Do n't forget my boys. Pray for them, please. I must see every one of them converted, and at work for Christ." While she was ill her "boys" sent her rare flowers every day, to let her know how much they cared for her interest in them; and when she went away, they brought the loveliest floral tribute for her casket. They knew that in all the city full, there beat not a warmer, truer heart for them in their need of a friend.

Hers was a grand work, touching with moulding hand the lives of sixty young men; yet I can but hope while I seat myself to say a few things to those who are passing through the difficult years from fifteen to twenty-five,

out of their turbulent, mischievous boyhood into established, reliable manliness, that I may have a yet larger class. At least twenty thousand ought to read what is given me for them. They come around my desk while I write. I look into their eyes, — brown and grey, deep black and laughing blue, — and I say with Tiny Tim in the Christmas Carol, “God bless us all, every one.”

The Breton sailor says in his prayer, “O Lord, the sea is wide, and my boat is very small.” My twenty thousand have before them a difficult and dangerous voyage. The first thing, I would, if possible, induce each to take on board the one only safe Pilot. He knows every rood of the way. Himself a young man, He has passed through every phase of the strange, mysterious life you are living. Being in all points tempted as you are, He knows how to rescue the tempted. Give Him your heart’s love and confidence. Let Him be to you an Elder Brother, walking hourly by your side, helping you when you most need a friend.

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Some of you have never known Him. You have yet to see Him for the first time, and hear from His lips the blessed word of recognition and fellowship. Let me entreat you, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to come at once to our Lord. Ask Him to forgive you for staying away so long. Trust Him to take you when you stumble out through the dark, and throw yourself down before Him. He said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." He did not say "Him that cometh with sufficient earnestness and love and faith," "Him that humbleth himself to do this, or that, or the other duty." No: "Him that cometh unto Me." Jesus Christ is a living, loving, mighty Saviour. He wants you. Offer yourself to Him, just as you are. He will be glad to take you. It is His work to make you what He wants you to be. Believe that He does, and according to your faith it will be done unto you.

If an angel brought you a contract written

out in due form, in which you, on your part, promise to give the direction of your life to God, doing what He wants you to do the best you know how, and He, on His part, pledging to supply all the grace, the disposition, the strength, happiness here and heaven forever, would you not sign it? Just such a contract God passes down to you. It is already signed by One whose signature was traced in the blood of the everlasting covenant. It is sealed by Him who cannot lie, and the legend on one side of His seal is, "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and on the other, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Give up your sins and trust the Lord to "know" you are His, and you will find very soon that Jesus will be all the world to you.

Some of my class of twenty thousand have gone away from the Lord, and it seems ten times harder to go back to Him than it was to go at first. No matter how hard it is, you are going to do it, because it is right. That

determination is the key to success in every good endeavor. You must begin with this most important adjustment of your life, bringing it into line with the will of God. Do not wait to read another line till you lift your heart to Him who stands beside you, confess your sins, and trust Him to take you back into favor. If you had gone away from your mother, nearly breaking her heart with your waywardness, you would have only to let her know that you were sorry and wanted to come back, and instantly her heart would bound toward you, in joy that you were willing to love and trust her once more. Christ loves you infinitely better than your mother possibly can do. He has measureless joy to get you back to Himself.

Some trust the Lord privately, but they have never taken a public stand for Him. Let me entreat you to consider how you rob others of the help toward God that you ought to give them. They think it is your

natural goodness that makes you amiable. You would not hide it, selfishly, if you had found a medicine that could cure all diseases. You would want to press it upon the attention of suffering people everywhere. Christ has cured you; now help others come to Him by letting them know who helped you out of your sins. Others follow the Lord, but it is afar off, like poor Peter while his Lord was in the hands of His enemies. He was ashamed of the cross. That is a miserable way to live. Christ wants the love of your whole heart. God grant that during these hours, while we look together into His truth, He may lead you into the fullness of blessing, so that you may love Him with all your heart.

CHAPTER II.

THE PILOT IN COMMAND.

ONE pleasant afternoon all were gathered on our steamer's deck; and though the sky above us was fleckless in its summer azure, and the woods along the shore waved brightly in their June gladness, yet every eye was intent on the stream below, every lip was drawn, and when one had to speak it was with bated breath. We were nearing the Rapids. An Indian shot out from the shore in his canoe, and was taken on board. A few moments later we saw him at the wheel. His muscle was as fine and taut as that of a tiger. His keen eye took in every motion of the turbulent water. We were all glad to obey the order on the pilot house, that seemed now to come to full meaning: "Do NOT

SPEAK TO THE MAN AT THE WHEEL!" for in the fight with the rocks that were just before us, everything depended upon his skill and alertness. He was supreme in that ship. It was his for the hour. No one dared say him "Nay."

When a young man feels for the first time the stimulus of independent action; when he reaches the rapids of his tumultuous impulses, on finding himself free, dominant, regnant, he needs, as never before, a strong, sure hand on the helm. The rocks all along that part of his way are strewed with wrecks. Where so many go down it is wise to sail carefully. I suppose more young men fail in their faith, and swerve from the good and the right way, than any other class of people; and more between eighteen and twenty-five, than at any other age. This, not because there is special moral infirmity or feebleness in men, or in men at that point in life, but because there are special temptations.

If boys are imposed upon in an exasperat-

ing manner, young men are treated with a leniency that is quite as harmful. One extreme follows the other. They are the petted members of society; and like all favorites, they are spoiled by indulgence. Many things are allowed them which others would not be permitted to do. There are several reasons for this, the chief, perhaps, is the fact that with youthful courage and spirit, they earn plenty of money, which they are quite ready to spend. So the people who make their living by catering to the public taste, usually consult the preferences of these, their most profitable customers.

They are eager to know a little of everything that is going on, and that curiosity leads them where they not unfrequently receive more harm than good. All these things conspire to stimulate their appetite for excitement, which grows by that it feeds upon.

Young men have often to work hard, and they claim the relaxation of amusements when they are off duty, that their strength

may be kept up, and their brain rested for the next day's service. Their greatest danger lies along that line.

One of the most common recreations, and one that tends as certainly to excess as any other, is the reading of fiction. It is quite as fascinating as the opium habit, and, indeed, the two evils resemble each other decidedly. It would be foolish to insist that one's reading must be held down to plain, simple, actual facts. He would be as much bothered to find out what he might read, and what he must shun, if he were to attempt to live by such a rule, as the Jews were in their hair-splitting distinctions about Sabbath burdens, and similar inanities. Since some fiction may be read to advantage, you had better know the symptoms of excess, so that you can properly guard yourself. Story reading tends to an abnormal development of your fancy for the young ladies; it harps almost entirely on that one passion; and few young men need special stimulus in that line. They

do not need to go through book after book to cultivate their interest in "the girls."

Novel reading tends to give its votaries false views of life. The story-people are so much nearer perfection than those with whom we are obliged to live, that we cannot help feeling disgusted with the commonplace ways of the latter.

In inveterate cases, the victim moves about in a dream, as completely unhinged from actual people, as the opium eater can be. Good, solid, reading becomes distasteful; the Bible quite a bore. He is never satisfied unless he is straining every nerve, galloping through page after page to find out which fellow succeeded in marrying the heroine. When he gets to the end, and the couples are permanently paired off,—a state of things that speedily lapses into the commonplace in real life,—he finds himself in a complete collapse, utterly empty of interest in anybody or anything, till another story puts him under the lash and spur of excitement. His appetite

for the sensational grows uncontrollable; it goads him ever onward, and he has no rest night nor day.

You can see that this mental opium eating must ruin body, soul and spirit, and, unless it can be held under tight rein, you had better take a pledge of total abstinence.

What I have said of novel reading, holds true of dancing, card playing, the skating-rink, the base-ball ground, the theatre, the opera, the use of tobacco, and alcoholic intoxicants. They are all wasteful of money, time, strength, and of the actual character for uprightness and sterling ability. There is much to be said about the unhealthful and immodest dressing of the ball-room, and the promiscuous hugging of round dances, but I can hardly touch upon these lines, and the depths of impurity over which those torches glare. The tendency to excess in all of them is beyond question. A young lady insisted that there could be no harm in a few friends dancing in a parlor. Of course she would

never think of going to a public ball. "Yes; but, Laura, if you allow yourself to dance at all, you can hardly hold the lines where you mean to keep them." It was not many months before she came in with a clouded, discontented face.

"What is the matter, Laura? Has anything gone wrong with you?"

"Oh, there is going to be the loveliest great ball down town, and mother says I can't go; and I'm dreadfully provoked."

"Yes; that is just what I was sure it would come to. Your quiet, harmless, little parlor dances did very well for a while; but now you are determined to go to the public ball? Do you see the natural tendency to excess in all these things?"

When one makes up his mind to be a thorough Christian, he will have to let the Lord guide him in his amusements, as well as in everything else. A young lady went to a minister, not her pastor, and asked his advice in regard to going to a "hop."

"Our church people are terribly straight-laced," she said; "but I'm sure there can be no harm in it."

He saw that she had made up her mind, so he determined to answer her according to her folly.

"Why, certainly," he said, "I'd go; only I'd ask the Lord Jesus Christ to give me His blessing."

"Indeed, I'll do no such thing!" she replied, before she thought. "I'll not say anything to Him about it."

Evidently she was in the rapids, and she had not given the Pilot command.

There is something charming in the grace and rhythmical movement of the dance; and when for the sake of avoiding the excess, the wastefulness, and the bad associations, one is obliged to give it up, the struggle is sometimes severe. Tens of thousands decide for the world, and give up Christ, when this is the test of submission. They do not make it a direct issue, a choice between the salva-

tion of the soul and the dance. The enemy is too subtle to allow that. He puts the case skilfully: "You mean to be good and do right, but these saints overdo the matter. You can't let them dictate to you. As good people as ever lived have indulged moderately in all these delightful, refining amusements, and you'll do well enough if you are as good as they."

The only safety is in committing the matter entirely to the Good Pilot, choosing His will and trusting for His guidance. If you look for wisdom to any but the Lord, you will be sure and go wrong. These principles hold good of the other fashionable amusements to which I have referred.

I glanced in at a skating rink the other evening. It was late; the skaters looked jaded. They had the appearance that one sees always in those who are lashed by an appetite for excitement to seek something yet more exciting. When the band began to play they spun away again; though a young

girl who had stopped a moment before within earshot, had given an unconscious comment on the weariness of the affair. "I'm tired enough to drop," and her face showed that the speech was within the limit of probability. Forever and forever the reckless use of time and strength, and all under the plea of resting from serious work; and also the tendency to excess that marks every amusement that excites and gratifies excitement, and beside, the opportunity of free, general association that bad men and women are not slow to take advantage of, to the infinite damage of the morals of the unwary.

Base-ball played on the village green by a company of "boys" who have been brought up together, is one thing, and the same game in the city park, where young men rush together by the thousand, many of whom can ill afford the afternoon from work, and the admittance fee, and who cannot with safety take the jostling and crowding among sporting men, who are loud, and coarse, and unscrupulous.

pulous; drinking, smoking, swearing, betting, — that is quite another thing. Unless you are sure you can stop at the exact point demanded by economy, uprightness, purity, you had better let it alone altogether.

I can hardly find an excuse for the late hours, excitements, bad contact and general riskiness of the card table, the theatre, and the opera. Perhaps you can; but I have seen so many wrecks on all these lines, that I am like the nobleman who was trying to hire a coachman, and who questioned a couple of applicants in regard to their skill in driving. The first was sure he could drive within an inch of a precipice, and not go over. "And how near could you go?" the gentleman asked the other. "Sure, your honor," was the reply, "I'd drive as fur from the idge as iver I could."

There is something in young blood that gives a relish for daring, — a charming sense of superiority when one can do what others fail in, even if the thing done is not, of itself,

specially worth while. The crucifixion of a complete surrender to the Lord touches this foolish ambition. One has to acknowledge his incapacity for self-management, which is a bitter thing to do; and the course in which he knows he will be led, lies at right angles with the opinions and practices of the mass of people around him. They go where they please, and when they are commended it is a flattering unction. He goes where God pleases, and if he escapes loss, and gains good, it is God, and not he, who is thanked.

If you choose to give the Lord Jesus Christ the command of your craft, you may as well face the matter fairly, and, as He enjoined, count the cost.

When you present to Him your body, as a living sacrifice, you will find that He means it to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and you will have to care for it accordingly. The question will come up, "Shall I smoke tobacco and take a 'social glass' now and then, as the rest of the 'boys' do?" You will be

obliged to submit the matter to Him. When it appears, as I think it will, if you consider it fairly, that narcotics and intoxicants, even when used moderately, burn out the brain, and ruin the nerves, you will have to put them aside with a resolute "No;" though you may be hissed as a coward, and "poky," "old deacon," or what not.

Henry Wilson, when he was Vice President of the United States, said that the hardest thing he ever said was uttered at the table of a senator, the first distinguished man who ever paid him special attention. Wine was offered him, and it tested him to the utmost, to say to his host, "I never drink wine."

In glancing again over rocks that make these "rapids" so dangerous, let me recapitulate. They are an extravagance that you cannot afford. You need to invest your money in something beside the frothy falsehoods of the theatre and opera, the excitements of the rink and the base-ball park,

the card-table and the ball-room, beer fumes and cigar smoke. You need your time for other things. You cannot afford the risk of the associations that are inevitable, if you frequent such places. You do not want to become the man that the majority of those are whom you meet at such places; and you know that we become like those with whom we are associated. You cannot fail to see that they tend to excess.

But I have not yet touched the main reason why they should be shunned. Paul said, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat meat no more while the world stands." He knew so certainly that an idol was nothing in the world, that it would not have hurt his morals to eat meat that had been offered to an idol; but he knew, also, that there might be some weak brother, who would be, by that example, led into idolatry, thus losing his soul, and the blood of his perishing would be on Paul's skirts. Giving one's self for the salvation of others is the most Christly thing

that can be done. Our Lord gave Himself utterly for us; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. No man liveth to himself. The primal murderer asked God in the dastardly impudence of selfishness, "Am I my brother's keeper?" When the brand touched him he found out how God regards the bond by which his human children are bound to each other. You that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. There are people who have pleasant, cheerful manners, sitting at your table, and talking about indifferent things, yet from inherited appetites and tendencies, or bad habits, they are in a fight with demons, desperate and dark, and it will take only the weight of a finger to turn the battle against them. I have known brilliant, educated men, who could not taste fermented wine at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, nor inhale the odor of bay rum in a barber's shop, without becoming wild with the appetite for strong drink. The passion for gaming is but little

less inveterate, and for the other "pleasures," as they are called, people risk perdition. Now when one is in such a case as that, dare you add your example to the awfully dangerous preponderance of evil? No! ten thousand times, No! Better that a mill-stone were hanged about your neck, and you drowned in the depths of the sea, rather than you should make one of these little ones offend. If it be a self-denial, you must deny yourself, lest, as Paul said, the weak brother perish for whom Christ died. As a follower of the Lord Jesus you have no right to consult your own preference in any of these matters. You gave yourself to Him that He might save you from your sins. You are not your own, you are bought with a price. That, with your voluntary surrender, makes you His, for Him to use, and employ in His service, as He will. By so much as you neglect to give Him your whole heart, and the complete obedience that He requires, you rob Him. Think who you are,—a mere atom

creeping about on this speck of His stardust for a day ; — and who He is, — the high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity, sitting on the circle of the heavens ; and then answer the terrible question, “ Will a man rob God ? ” and the fearful accusation, “ But ye have robbed Me. ” Choosing to follow the Lord wholly, is the only wise course to take. He made you, He only knows how to bring you to your best. He can make infinitely more of you than you can make of yourself.

It is safe. The adversary tries to make us believe that it is a fearful thing to serve the Lord with the whole soul. Under his misrepresentations it appears as though if you place yourself in the Lord's hands, He will take away what you most prize, and leave your life empty, hard, and bare. Yet the word is, “ As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. ” “ He delighteth in the prosperity of His servants. ”

Is it not strange that with the thirty thousand promises that the Lord has given us,

and though He has exhausted the language in trying to make us see how infinitely He loves us, yet we are slow of heart to believe that He does actually delight in making us happy. Oh, the wicked perversity of unbelief!

We are surer to hold to any enterprise, if we give ourselves to it heartily, than we are if we take it up in an indifferent or gingerly manner. The more earnest and hearty our support of a cause, the less liable are we to be discouraged by the trials that it may bring us.

A friend of mine was on a Mississippi steamer many years ago, when they came to a place known among river men as the graveyard, on account of the sawyers that were in that part of the stream, and that had sent many a good boat to the bottom. To my friend's surprise, as the vessel came to the graveyard all steam was ordered on. When he asked why, he was told that the boat must be put under all the power that she would bear, so that she would obey the helm. Everything might depend upon her turning

at a second's warning when the pilot discovered a danger.

Let the Great Pilot take the wheel. Surrender yourself up to Him for service, and He will fit you up to do His will. A young man who had recently been converted, went to the Young Men's Christian Association and asked for something to do for the Saviour. They gave him some "dodgers" and told him to go out upon the street and invite people to the evening service. In a little while he discovered that when any one who knew him came along, his hand would suddenly go behind him, and he would seem to be waiting for a street-car. "Now, see here, sir," he said to himself, "this will never do: you'll not hold out a month, unless you get over being ashamed of being seen at this business," and he went at once to the Saviour, and had his heart cleansed from the fear of man, so that he was not afraid to stand up for Jesus always and everywhere.

This victory is not a matter of time. Many

old Christians are as much fettered as they were the day of their conversion. It is not a matter of growth. Many who have grown a great deal in knowledge, and more or less in grace, since their conversion, are still very far from giving Christ the entire control of their lives. There are only two things necessary to this result;—submission and trust. They can be done as soon after conversion as one is able, through the Spirit's help, to apprehend the need. They are very simple when one honestly seeks to do them. You give yourself over to the Lord, body, soul, and spirit, for time and eternity, that you may do His will, and that alone, as far as you are able to find out that will. You ask Him to cleanse you from all sin, so that the element of disobedience may be eliminated from your soul. John said, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." You say, "Since I have given myself to Him, I have given Him the

chance to save me as He wants me to be saved. He takes me on purpose to cleanse me, and I believe that He does now make me clean."

If you submit and trust in this manner, it will not be very long till you will know beyond question, that the blood of Christ cleanses you, and that He has supreme control of your life.

CHAPTER III.

IN SCHOOL.

I REMEMBER an autumn day in Milan, when a note came to the hotel, asking the Americans to come to the English chapel for a memorial service in honor of their dead President. It was a most interesting occasion. The King of Italy was represented by the Prince of Leghorn. The municipal authorities were also present. An American tourist was asked to speak of our nation's loss, which he did in a manner never to be forgotten. Among many beautiful things that he said, was a reference to a picture that was on exhibition in the National Exposition of modern Italian art, then in session in the city. It represented a room, empty and bare a woman sitting there with little children

clinging to her, and crying for bread, while in one corner lay the stone-dead father. "Out of such a home," said the gentleman, "came James A. Garfield; and that he could come out of such a home, and become the man he was, is possible only in America."

In Rome, a few days later, a similar message brought the Americans together for a similar service. Among other beautiful things, the rector¹ said of Garfield: "A canal-boy trudging along on the tow-path after his slow team. A few years later all the millions of Christendom were listening at his bedroom door for the count of his pulse; and when at last his brave life went down, all the millions of Christendom followed his bier weeping as mourners. That the canal-boy should reach such a place of honor and trust, is possible only in America."

One great day on Bunker Hill the people were crowding to the front, endangering the lives of those on the platform. Daniel Webster waived them back with his kingly hand.

"We can't stand back!" cried a man in the crowd. "It is impossible!" — "Impossible!" exclaimed Mr. Webster, "Nothing is impossible on Bunker Hill!"

Nothing is impossible in this free, generous America,

"Heart within, and God o'erhead."

The young man who wants to make the most of himself, for good work, is guaranteed full scope and opportunity. All things right and reasonable, are possible to him. If he wants "an education," as we call a given amount of school drill, he will find it, extraordinary excepted, within reach of his ability. It may require a great deal of self-subjugation and perseverance, but it is possible.

Perhaps you are just now settling the question of your attempts in that line — whether or not you will "go through college." You enjoy study. You love books. You appreciate the advantage of being liberally educated; but the four or five years necessary to

such an undertaking, are packed with self denials ; and they seem a long time to spend in preparation for active life.

Your parents are unable to help you, and you will have to "work your way." Many a noble fellow has done that; and yet many who have attempted it have given up in discouragement. When Bishop Simpson was President of Asbury University, an awkward, poorly-dressed, country boy, came to his office to register as a student. With his usual kindly interest, Dr. Simpson spoke to the young man about the amount of time and hard work it takes to master a college course.

"Have you the means to carry you through?" he asked. "What have you to depend upon?"

The young American straightened his muscular frame, and extended his sun-browned hands, with the brave reply: "My two hands, sir."

You will not be surprised to know that he got his education, and also, that he became a United States senator.

You may have only your two hands to depend upon, and you shrink from the sacrifices involved in "working your way." I would be glad to say a word that shall turn the scale in favor of the best possible culture. Other duties may interfere. Your health may prove unequal to the strain. These, however, are the exceptional cases. With youthful courage and vigor, and a spirit conscious of the dignity of its relation to God, you will find each sacrifice light, as it passes. In later years the trials will be remembered as certificates of "pluck," in which you will pride yourself, as soldiers take pleasure in showing their scars.

The time seems long; but you will find when you get at the work of responsible life that your education is so much capital, enabling you to work at just so much better advantage.

The times demand straight, strong thinking. Many a good enterprise comes to loss and wreck because they to whom it is en-

trusted have not the ability to think all the way around and through its interests. There is usually a screw left loose, or a cord flying, and through that carelessness ruin comes to the project. The college is a mental gymnasium. The most that school work does for one is to teach him to think steadily and thoroughly. Your muscle may have been developed at the plow handles, or in the boat club. It matters little how you get the toughness and strength; the question is, can you breast the wave when a life is in danger? College emulations and honors are remembered only to be laughed over when the years sift snow upon one's head. The only serious point then will be, did they develop in you strength to think out a helpful plan for a hundred poor fellows who never learned to think for themselves.

In these days no one is entrusted to do difficult work without long and careful training. Mind needs drill as certainly as muscle. A horse is driven over the track hour after

hour, and day after day, when men intend to risk tens of thousands of dollars upon his ability to put his foot down in a given place within a given second. A singer who was gifted with a good voice went to an Italian vocal trainer to know what he could do for him in the way of culture. The reply was: "If you will study a year I will make you sing well. If two years, you may excel. If you will practice the scales constantly for three years, I will make you the best *tenore* in Italy. If for four years, you may have the world at your feet."

Malibran said: "If I neglect my practice a day, I see the difference in my execution. If for two days, my friends see it; and if for a week, all the world knows my failure."

If drill is essential to the best use of muscle, how can we expect good work from untrained thought?

You may forget your mathematical formulæ, just as you forget the weight of the dumb-bells you use in the gymnasium, or the

height and length of the bars; but in both cases you will have the strength that the exercise gave for the actual work of life. Another may succeed where you fail in some crisis hour, because he was trained as you were not, to track tirelessly a principle through all manner of entanglements and sophistries.

Have you ever read Plato's dialectics? It is amusing to see how Socrates drives the sophist by a little turn of expression from one point to another, till he makes him give an answer to a question that is directly opposite the one he gave to the same question in the outset. There are plenty of sophists in the world yet, and if we would escape their false conclusions and the consequent mischief, we must be able to follow the trail of a thought as tirelessly as a sleuth-hound scents a track; and that we are able to do only after long, close drill.

The difference between studying a subject till you know all about it, and slurring it

over, taking in only a few surface facts, may be illustrated by a story that is told of Agassiz when he was teaching on Penikese Island. An entomologist who had some reputation in his own line, came to perfect himself under the great teacher. To his astonishment, Agassiz gave him a fish to study, telling him to use his eyes upon it, and be ready for an examination in an hour or so, that he might be properly graded. The gentleman looked the fish over carefully, determining its class, genus, species, and peculiar characteristics. He found out everything about the subject that he could think of, and yet Agassiz did not come. There lay the fish, staring at him with its dead eyes, and disgusting him with its odor; but a full hour passed before the teacher appeared. When the entomologist recited his lesson, to his chagrin, Agassiz shook his head. "You'll have to try again, sir, you have n't looked at the fish yet." The student was somewhat out of patience, but his faith in Agassiz held

him to the work; and he discovered many things that he had before overlooked. Yet he was obliged to wait some time for the professor after he had found out all that he thought it possible for him to see in that fish. This time, though the examination was a little more satisfactory, Agassiz said, "You'll have to try once more, sir, you have n't shown yet that you know how to use your eyes; and without that you can't do anything with entomology." By that time the student was thoroughly aroused, and he went to work in good earnest. When the professor came back he was so deeply interested in points that he had not noticed before, that he did not observe when Agassiz came in. "That will do," said the teacher, "I see you can be made to use your eyes, and I know, now, what to do with you."

The main object of your school drill is to help you form a habit of using your faculties. Their daily exercise unfolds them, and develops their strength, so that they will be able to do good work in later years.

But you ask if you could not get that exercise at home, and so save time and money. Yes, but you will not be apt to do so, because other things will claim your attention, and will constantly break in upon your plans. To get the necessary discipline you need to go away from your ordinary avocations, and set apart several years for that special object. Take, for instance, one point that is of prime importance in all the business of life; punctuality, — a habit of doing the proper thing at the proper time. The college bell is the instructor in that department, and there is not a more useful member of the faculty. If students acquire a habit of presenting themselves in a given place at a given moment, it will give a reliability of mental action that will be of incalculable value in the years to come. There are other educating influences in college life that are not represented by the number of text-books mastered. Listening to good music develops musical taste. By familiarity with fine pictures the eye is culti-

vated to discern the points that mark a genuine work of art. The atmosphere about a college is bookish, and unless one is quite obtuse, his taste for books will be thereby developed.

The personal influence of the college faculty is a matter of no small importance. Contact with a refined, cultured person, educates one. College professors are selected with care, and students have daily association with them. The best they give their classes is not what they find in the text they are teaching, but their own lives — themselves. One can hardly help noticing how even the mannerisms of a strong professor are unconsciously imitated by his students.

Society work, with the contests and class victories of school life, look like mimic war to those who are handling the world's serious, actual facts; but after all, they help develop mental courage, which is, perhaps, the chief factor in every great enterprise.

When a young man stands on the thresh-

old of active life, quivering with restless energy, it seems like a heavy investment for him to give four years, and the amount of money that represents the difference in value between a consumer and a producer, for the sake of securing a liberal education. Yet he will hardly find an easier way to lay up ten thousand dollars. Aside from the pleasure of knowing something of the classics and the sciences, and the fellowship with bookish people, his education may have that financial value. His salary may be increased by it eight hundred or a thousand dollars a year; and that is the interest on ten thousand. Add to this its cumulative value, and also that the higher and better-paid positions are hardly open to one who is not liberally educated, and you will see that the investment is a profitable one.

It may be well for me to remind you of the dangers of your school life, as forewarned may be forearmed.

Young men sometimes become coarse and

boorish in their exile from the refinements of home. Hasty meals in boarding-houses and "club" dining-rooms, are apt to mar table manners. The charming accomplishment of table talk that saves the dining-room from becoming a mere feeding place, making it the scene of delightful and helpful domestic reunion, is quite lost.

A college curriculum is so heavy as to leave the average student little time for legitimate recreation. When he gets away from his books, his bottled-up spirits are apt to find vent in mischievous tricks, that depend mainly for their fascination upon the discomfort they occasion some one who has given offense, either by his strictness or his verdancy,—a mild type of savagery that develops in the perpetrator anything but nobleness of soul. A student who is betrayed into that sort of mischief, is liable to become a cheat in addition to the braggadocio, swagger, and deception, that are cultivated by such exercises. If he is out half the night in such

adventures, he will have to cheat his way through the recitation room, or lose his class standing. He cheats his parents, who may be sacrificing heavily to get money to pay his bills. He cheats himself out of a chance to lay a foundation for a strong, useful character.

Now and then a wild college boy has come out of his freaks into a noble manhood, and people who are afflicted with "bad boys," have tried to wheedle themselves into a belief that that wildness is a sign of special mental activity. "Young men must sow their wild oats," they say, in a ghastly attempt at a cheerful view of the case. Now if by "wild oats" they mean infractions of the moral law, doing unto others as you would not have others do to you, we say "No! a thousand times, no!" Young men are not idiots, that they should be exempt from moral obligation. Men claim and hold the prerogative of making all civil and ecclesiastical laws for all the land. They elect our

rulers. They aspire to fill all our college professorships and presidencies, to be the presbyters and bishops; and shall we permit such faults in their early training as may leave an unsound place in the foundation of their character? Do not all teachers know that perfection in any line can be hoped for only from training begun in early childhood? The United States Commissioner of Education said to me one day, "I am learning to lay more stress on primary teaching. I am coming to believe that education, to do its best, must begin with the breath." Dare we say that moral training is exceptional? Holmes says that tampering with sin is like touching nitrate of silver. The stain is there, though it may not show. All that is needed to bring it out is a strong enough light. So I say, if you expect to become a sovereign and law-giver, touch nothing, even "in fun," that has in it a moral taint.

Ancient Egyptian kings permitted none but persons of noble blood to serve their

children as menials, or be near them, for fear the princes and princesses would become coarse and common by contact with uncultured people. If we leave the law-making to men, we must insist that they be kept pure from babyhood, so that their moral sense may be firm, true, and reliable.

So let us have no more stealing from pantries, petty larcenies upon melon patches and cowards, tricks at the expense of professors, and hazing of freshmen. What would you think if your sister were guilty of such offences? Yet her responsibility in church and state will be light beside yours when you reach maturity.

College training is supposed to be a way of forming, at large expense, right mental and moral habits. Every hour that the student gives to mischief, defeats, by so much, the purpose of the work. It takes time and strength from legitimate drill, and wastes them upon that which develops the opposite of the refined, modest manners, that characterize the scholarly gentleman.

“Oh, but a fellow can't keep himself laced down to books all the time,—all work and no play. He has got to have some fun.” To be sure he has. Recreation is just as needful in its place as study. The oil on the axle of a car-wheel is necessary to the wear of the metal, but you have to look out, or a “heated journal” will set things on fire. More than one young man takes his parchment with a face stained with the smoke of a “heated journal.”

“Oh, but your fiddufine, Miss-Nancy-ish, button-hole-boquet men, never amount to anything. It is grip and grit that win; and they are developed by getting into scrapes and then getting out by your wits.” I think you have hardly gone to the bottom of this subject, if that last sentence is your conclusion. I agree with you that a literary, or scholastic, or professional “dude,” even in the pulpit, is as certainly a failure as his ridiculous, fashionable *confrere*. We are never disappointed in lily-fingered carpet

knights, for we never expect them to do anything brave or strong. They are what they are, not on account of mental drill and loyalty to moral principle, but in spite of efforts to develop their virility. Webster said his oratorical success was altogether the result of hard study. Alexander Hamilton said, "People sometimes attribute my success to genius. All the genius I know anything about is hard work." Agassiz defined genius to be a capacity for an infinity of toil.

John Wesley moved and is still moving millions toward God. He was like Themistocles, who said, "I cannot play the fiddle, but I know how to make a small town become a large city." Through Wesley's labors many and many a desert place is made to bud and blossom as the rose. When he was in Oxford, instead of spending his nights in taking clappers out of college bells, or tying geese in professors' chairs, he was visiting the sick and poor, praying with prisoners, and stirring up to good works those whom the others in

derision called "the Holy Club,"—practicing the noble works upon which he was to spend his life, and to which he was to move tens of thousands.

If you mean to make the most of your college life, you must plan for plenty of vigorous out-door sports to give you the necessary nerve and muscle. You must also see to it that your mental work is done in such a way as to produce the best results. It is possible to recite a long lesson accurately by training the memory to carry a heavy load for a short time, and then to throw it down, not to be shouldered again unless for a similar sharp effort. Such work gives very little actual exercise of the other mental faculties. It does not teach thinking, but rather how to escape the drudgery of thought. Few teachers know how to detect and correct this fault. If you have fallen into it, making your work mainly mnemonic, and giving but little time and strength to following out and assimilating the thought of your authors, you

must set about an immediate reform, or you will be but little helped by your college work. Of course you understand that the helps to feeble students that are so easily procured,—“ponies,” you college boys call them,—writing Greek case and tense endings on cuffs and thumb-nails, and all that sort of thing, cheats nobody so seriously as it does the perpetrator. Unless he means to be true to himself, honest under the lidless eye, his diploma will mean but little, and it will be of small use in the future.

There is risk that good, honest study may interfere with your spirituality. Not that there is the least incompatibility between the best thinking and the highest spiritual attainments. Only shallow thinkers and narrow observers hold that they are opposed to each other. The fact is, they who have done the best intellectual work are the most completely loyal to the Lord. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He has promised to give wisdom liberally.

Yet there is risk that in using assiduously the means of mental growth you may neglect your spiritual development. A study may be specially difficult for you, or you may be unavoidably hindered in your work, and fall behind your class. In your effort to make up what is lacking, you neglect your Bible and private prayer. You crowd these duties into the last few minutes before going to bed, when you are too tired to do anything well, and you get very little help from them.

After a while you find yourself haunted all day Sunday with the lessons that you must recite Monday forenoon; and you allow yourself to slip into the habit of studying, — doing week-day work on the Lord's day. A fatal mistake, — as certainly harmful to the mind that needs its seventh-day rest, as to the soul, that is thus robbed of its day of worship.

You find yourself growing indifferent to the Lord and His work, and you think it is because you miss the home helps. Not so.

You are sinning against God and starving your soul. You are forfeiting your best chance for a useful and happy life. The old home means of grace that you used to enjoy so heartily, will seem tame and insipid enough when you go back to them; and you will find yourself miserably backslidden in heart, if not in life. This is a matter of the utmost importance. We have a day of prayer for schools and colleges. It ought to find every Christian in the land in earnest supplication for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our young people who are studying. The men and women who are to do the world's work a few years hence, are now in school, and upon their integrity depends the future. Now is the time to reach and save them. A little effort now will result more than a great deal put forth by and by. They are sensitive, shy; many of them heart-sore, on account of their wrenching loose from home scenes and friends. It would not take much to lead them to trust the Elder Brother. A

great many are converted to Christ during their school life; and yet many others lose their hold on God, and become quite formal and careless in their piety. The Christian student who gets away from the Lord, not only harms himself, but he loses his chance to help others whom he may never again find in so susceptible a mood, even if he ever meets them again at all.

Nothing succeeds without God's blessing. If one would reach the highest success, he must let the motive for studying be purified by the blood of Christ, so that he can say by faith, "I am seeking this education that I may the better do His will." Then he can trust, with tremorless confidence, that he will be taken safely through all hard places.

CHAPTER IV.

OUT OF SCHOOL.

I KNOW by bitter personal experience the disappointment that clouds the life when the verdict is finally given, and one has to give up going to school. Attempt after attempt has been made, but the barriers are insurmountable,—poor health, weak eyes, no money. Many a spirited young fellow has faced these obstacles with throbbing brain and sinking heart. He sees others going right on, though they care very little for what is to him of untold worth. They idle and cheat their way through a college course, prodigal of time, careless about money, indifferent to books. The disappointed student quivers in every nerve with a hard hunger to know, a great desire to live above the coarse,

common level of physical wants, and an ambition to be able, some day, to help the weak and poor to a better plane of life.

There is an infinite pathos in what Mr. Lincoln said when Stephen A. Douglas had beaten him in a senatorial campaign. "Douglas' life is all success; mine all failure. I would give all my years and chances to have the opportunity that has come to him, of doing something to lift up the oppressed."

The conscientious, thoughtful young man, who has been obliged to give up his school life, can hardly bite back the bitter question, "Why does n't God give me a little chance to be somebody? He knows I want to do good. I mean to use all my strength to help others, but I am baulked at every point. I can't understand it." Let me whisper a word in your ear. God never blunders. and He is never careless. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. He delights in the prosperity of His children. If He takes away what seems to you most

desirable and essential, it is that He may give you something that He regards far better for you.

Which reached the goal of the nation's love, the world's honor, and the Christly opportunity, Douglas or Lincoln?

A young man who had been obliged to leave school, was quite rebellious about it. He had to go to work on a farm with his Quaker uncle, to save his health from complete wreck. One day, while they were in the field, he gave expression to his despair over what he regarded the failure of his life. The old man had seen many a dashing fellow shoot up like a rocket, and come down as suddenly, and he knew something of God's strength and patience. He leaned on his hoe, and pushed back his old straw hat:—

“Now see here, John,” he said, “thee ’ll learn in time that God's ways are right, all right and always right. When He wants thee to have Greek and Latin, He has ways enough to give thee Greek and Latin. If He

does n't want thee to have them, thee 'd better let them alone, and have no more words about it. Thee 'll find in the end that God's way is always the right one."

"But," you say, "I am not at all sure that it is the Lord who has put me under these disabilities. If I had taken care of my health when I had it," or, "If I had not been led into that folly," or, "If my father had been a sober man," or, "If my brother had not been so selfishly ambitious, I might have had a chance." Regrets cannot change the facts.

"Let the dead past bury its dead." The Lord might remove those disabilities, but He does not choose to do so. The only wise thing for you is to accept the facts as you find them now, using all your strength in making the most of the chances that are left. The only safe thing is to trust the case implicitly with the Lord. Pindar says, "The gods themselves cannot undo the action that is done." When our God forgives our sins He puts us into the same relation with

Himself that a child would have who had never sinned. When you give yourself fully into His hands, He takes you to make the most possible of you for His service. He may let obstacles come in your way to develop your ability to overcome difficulties. We are the better soldiers for every battle, the better sailors for every storm. What you want to gain by a liberal education, is not the privilege of saying, "I have a piece of parchment given me by the faculty and trustees of such a college, certifying that I spent so much time under their care, and passed examination in such and such textbooks." No; the result sought is the development of your mental powers so that they can be relied on for right action in the affairs of life. Natural history teaches to observe, as illustrated by Agassiz' fish lesson; not alone to observe insects and reptiles, plants and minerals, but facts, phenomena, events, currents of thought, trade, literature, people. Mathematical drill helps to power for sustain-

ed, continuous thought. If you lose your hold of a problem in the process of solution, you will lose your work, and have it all to do over, as if you had dropped a bucket of water that you were drawing up out of a well. The ability to think without letting go till you have mastered a theme, is usually the secret of success in any business. It is said of Socrates, though I must confess the story has a mythical smack, that while he was in the army he stood stock-still twenty-four hours in the rain, his comrades marching on, and leaving him while he followed a thought through all its relations and involvements. Languages make one think nimbly. In the steady flow of thought he must catch up the foreign word and fit it to the idea with the quickness of a flash, or he will find himself stupidly at fault.

The knots and tangles that are thrown in a student's way, in all departments, are to teach him to concentrate his powers on a given point, that whatever his hands find to do, he may do it with his might.

Not one in ten of college graduates get this, or any large part of it, out of the course of study. The world would be much wiser than it is, if they did. Many go through in a jolly, easy way, getting over the ground with as little trouble as possible. Others struggle through after a doltish, stupid, wooden fashion, their objective point being to say they have been through college.

What you want is the strength for good work that four years of honest, hard study, will give. Since it is denied you to get it in the ordinary way, if you can get it by other means all will yet be well. Let us see. God has given you that thirst for knowledge, that eagerness for books. He has also given you to see the greatness of His work, to desire a part in it, and to fit yourself to do what will be strong and telling. Now, will He not be pleased in some way to supply your lack? If this result of a liberal education is a real need, is it not provided for in the promise, "My God shall supply *all your need* according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"?

What has been done may be done. I know a woman who had many a battle, sharp and bitter, because she was hedged by ill health and poverty from the studies in which she delighted. At twenty-eight she gave herself fully to the Lord, and trusted Him to cleanse her from all sin. Then, with purified motives, she asked God to help her get the education for which her heart had always clamored. She asked it for His glory, that she might do more for Him. Everything seemed to be in the way of the answer. Her physician told her that even a light degree of brain work would probably result in paralysis. An oculist, one of the best on the continent, told her, after a close examination of her eyes, that if she would give them perfect rest for six months, and then come back to him, he would tell her if there was any hope for her to escape the threatened paralysis of the retina. God did not work any signs or wonders in answer to her prayer, but He gave her strength for work, day after day. She

began a course of reading, and to write for the papers, in a darkened room, with a little light coming in over one shoulder. She also took up the study of German, though she could not tell a "B" from a "V" without turning the book sidewise. She could not afford a teacher, and she could spare only fifteen minutes a day for her German, because she did her own house-work, light, heavy and all; the sewing for her family, and everything possible for her in the church and Sunday-school, beside entertaining no end of company. She made one little rule when she began, and she adhered to it rigidly. She held herself under bonds for an actual fifteen minutes of study each day; and if she failed one day she had to make it up as soon as possible. She could read German readily before she was in circumstances to study a single hour without work in her hands. She did not go through all the text-books of a college course, but she had the result of the drill as certainly as she would if she had graduated in

her youth. At forty she was carrying a heavy benevolent work, editing a monthly paper, and filling a professorship in a university. She had learned to hold herself inexorably to a given duty at a given time, as if she obeyed the call of a college bell four years. She could fix her attention on the thing in hand as well, probably, as if she had been under the stimulus of class emulation and professorial influence a given period. She could make the shuttle of her thought fly as nimbly through the web of affairs, as if she had translated the college Greek and Latin, with the German and French thrown in. If many others have tried to do the same thing and failed, it is possibly because they did not trust God as she was driven to do when everything was against her.

I have a friend who was fettered and held back in his boyhood from the education he was most eager to acquire. At eighteen he succeeded in getting off to a literary institution for a few months, and he determined to

make the most of his chance. He carried ten studies. By a masterful effort he obliged himself to throw all his strength upon a given point, and when that was conquered, upon another. By that means he learned his lessons in the shortest possible time. You may be sure he had no leisure for revery or castle-building, nor for college mischief. In those few months he had more actually helpful drill than most students do in a full course of study. At twenty-six, before most young men are fairly in the saddle, he had built up a heavy business, and he was making money by the thousands. His success was the result of a habit formed in his lonely, cramped, home study, and in his short, school drill. When he sat at his desk with a heavy transaction on hand, he would throw all his strength upon it, quite unconscious of what was passing in the room. A dozen men might be talking around him, but he knew nothing that they said, till his head clerk gave him to understand that he must attend

to something else that could no longer be neglected. Then, as Dickens used to turn the key of his room to lock in the characters of the story upon which he was busy, telling them to wait till he could come to them again, so this young man would lay aside the business upon which he was at work, take up the other matter and arrange it, and then go back to the first, losing himself in it as before, holding every thread clearly and without entanglement.

Abraham Lincoln was in school only six months of his life, and a little backwoods affair it was at that. When he began to take hold of national questions he used to lie on the lounge in his office, watching the flies on the ceiling, as it seemed, but as he said afterward, "bounding the subject in hand, north, south, east and west." He was tracking out its relation to all other questions, and finding the exact principles of right involved. When the hour struck he was ready to take the helm, and hold steady in the storm the

ship in which we were all sailing, and that seemed to be driving straight upon the rocks.

It is certain that the mental strength gained by a college course may be secured in other ways, and in ways from which one with average ability can hardly be hedged.

The first thing, I would advise you to give your case into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. Tell him that you choose His will in this matter. He may mean you to stay here so short a time that there is none to spare in preparation. He may have some plain, simple work for you that he prefers you to take up at once, deferring your larger intellectual development till you get into the other world. Deliberately lay aside your own plans, and choose His, whatever they may prove to be, no matter how they may go against your inclination. I never shall forget the hour when I made that surrender. One afternoon when the Holy Spirit sent His light into the depths of my soul, I discovered, hidden away, like the wedge of gold in

Achan's tent, a determination to work, and study, and make something of myself. Not that I might win the wealth and honors of the world, but I would make for myself a dainty, little snuggerly into which I would bring a few fine books and pictures, some good music, and a *coterie* of choice friends. The loud, rough, coarse, old world might wag its way, and not a whit would I care for its tinsel and show; nor its troubles, either,—do you see? The Lord in kindness threw a picture upon the canvas that day, that gave me to see how wickedly selfish was my little scheme. I saw myself in a hospital with scores of people who were dying, and there was no one to give them their medicine, or even a cup of cold water. I had been sent there under orders to help all whom I could possibly reach; and there I was, planning to fit up my exquisite little room, in one corner, its walls padded to shut out the groans, and to shut in the delicacy and beauty that I hoped to gather about me. I saw that

selfishness like that could never get into Heaven. The word was, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." "He came to seek and to save that which was lost." "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." When I saw that, I was enabled to say, "I give it all up. Henceforth for me, only Thy will, and Thy work." The pain of the surrender was so severe that a knife seemed to pierce my heart, and the tears leaped from my eyes. Let me add that all these years, just in proportion as I have held myself loyal to that surrender, has God given me richly to enjoy the things that I put aside to accept His will.

Having given all into His hands, you ask Him to make all your motives pure; and then you set about making the most of yourself for His sake, and that you may do His work to the best advantage. You will find Him constantly helping you from that hour, and more abundantly as you trust Him more

implicitly. You surrender without conditions, as to a monarch whose claims you had neglected, but whose right to rule, you are forced to acknowledge. To your surprise, you find Him the tenderest, most loving, and helpful Father, the strongest, truest Friend.

He may not see fit to give you a collegiate course, but He will help to you the mental drill you need in order to do His work properly. In the light that He gives, you will discover your mental defects, and by what efforts you can master them.

He will probably lead you quite against your natural inclination. One to whom mathematics are easy usually needs linguistic drill, to teach him quickness of thought. If he prefers the languages, he will probably need mathematics to help him to continuity of thinking. If you are fond of public excitement and occasions, the Lord will be very apt to shut you up to quiet and retirement. If you have whims and fancies that make you reserved and exclusive, he will be apt to

keep you a great deal before the people. This for your own better development, and because you are more likely to lean on His strength, and so give Him a chance to help you in the line in which you do not feel yourself at home. Be all that as it may, if you put yourself in His hands, and trust Him implicitly, He will fit you up for the best work and give you the best scope for your ability.

George Muller, who has been used of God for such a marvelous faith work in England, began while he was a student asking God to help him with his studies. His faith has sent a thrill through the entire Christian church.

With God's blessing human perseverance and industry may be almost limitless in results. All things are possible with God, and all things are possible to Him that believeth.

CHAPTER V.

YOUR OWN WAY TO MAKE.

WHAT I have to say to my class of twenty thousand under this head, may not just now be applicable to all, but there is no knowing how soon it may be of interest to the richest, in this uncertain America, where we have no entailed estates, and property currents change most readily.

In talking to young men who are poor, I mean, of course, only in finance. A man may not have a penny in his pocket, and yet have superb muscle. Indeed, the chances in that line are increased by poverty, for we are too indolent to exercise properly unless we are driven to do so for our daily bread; and only the muscle that is used to the utmost of its capability has full strength.

Feel of a blacksmith's arm, and then take hold of that of a delicate young fellow who has had some easy, indoor avocation. It will not do to let them test their strength in a tussie, for fear the sturdy mechanic will annihilate the dainty little man. It is too palpable to need proof that no muscle is firm and strong, unless it is constantly and vigorously used. One may make some dilettant attempts at muscular culture in a boat-club, or gymnastic class, but he is not apt to give himself to the business with sufficient energy and perseverance to bring the result, unless he is obliged to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow.

You who are poor have usually the better physical outfit; and for the same reasons, you may not be behind in mental vigor; while the probabilities of moral excellence may also be in your favor. Mean, cringing, selfish people, flatter and cajole those who have money, and so are able to help them in the struggle for gain. That develops egotism

in the rich, and nothing more surely kills the spiritual life. The offences of the rich are overlooked on account of their moneyed importance, and they become careless about moral obligation. The self-indulgence which is so easy and natural when one has wealth, is a deadly enemy to noble, unselfish, Christian character. Please understand, I do not mean that all rich young men have suffered mental and moral loss on account of their difficult surroundings. That is the risk, however, and our Lord must have had it in view when He said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

The poor have also their special temptations. They may have physical injury from over-work. They become so weary with their drudgery that they take light, frothy amusements, and even those that are coarse and disgusting, to make them forget their hardships. They do not always use their leisure on good books. They get a false

estimate of character, and look upon getting money as the one thing to be desired. They make haste to be rich, and fall into hurtful and deceitful lusts that drown men in destruction and perdition.

They are quite apt to succeed in getting "filthy lucre," for the currents of wealth move by law as certainly as do the tides of the sea; and economy and industry usually strike that law, and find the current sought. But in getting money they miss the greater and better things. They find at last that riches fail utterly to feed the hunger of the mind, the cravings of the soul.

Have you ever noticed how seldom you see a "successful" old man with a sweet, beautiful face? He has either the keen, secretive phiz of a fox, the sharp, dangerous expression of the wolf, or the brow-beating, terrorizing look of a bull-dog. You treat him respectfully, because he holds the purse-strings with a stout grip; and, as you whisper in the ear of your friend, you must keep the

right side of the old codger; but you are always relieved when he nods you out of the office. Look in the glass and imagine yourself at sixty carrying about such a face as that!

He is a self-made man, he says, with a significant look toward his safe; and you wonder at his complacency over such a disagreeable piece of work. He may wax confidential, and tell you how he got his start, and how he got ahead of So-and-So in such-and-such a race, and you cannot help thinking that, after all, the result has hardly paid for the trouble. He is a church member, and is conspicuous on all important occasions; but he is the last one to whom you would go to be shown how to get near the Lord. You would as soon think of consulting the ledger or the daily paper to find the way of life, as to ask him about it. He is poor, but not in spirit; for he has been made to think that he does pretty well if he pays more to the church than others do; albeit, they give

relatively ten times more than he does ; so he is wretchedly poor, spiritually.

You have your own way to make, and perhaps I can give you a few suggestions that will be helpful. I would say in the outset, take an objective view of yourself, and decide what you had better be and do. Too many drift with the current, borne this way or that, by the strongest influence that strikes them, instead of finding the thing to which they are best adapted, and aiming at excellence in that line. By the time they are thirty they can do several things passably well, but they excel in nothing, and they settle down into the mass of the mediocre. They remind one of a certain old *Atlantic Monthly* article of which I remember only the title, "Concerning people of whom more might have been made." These "might have beens" are not a comfortable or happy set of people. They are the drift-wood of society, and we are continually thinking that they are failing to meet the purpose of their existence.

In making a plan of your life, suppose you lay it off in sections of twenty years each. The first section is probably behind you. The first quarter of it, the main business seemed to be to develop your legs and lungs. The second quarter you were running hither and thither on your uncertain feet, as fancy or whim impelled you, picking up an immense deal of information about the me and the not-me; the chief work being to secure a suitable physical outfit, and to train somewhat your five senses. Steps had already been taken toward giving the little animal a systematic, mental drill, and teaching him the bounds of morality. The latter half of your first twenty years have been devoted largely to these things with varying success. You can read, write, and speak your mother tongue with fluency; and you have dipped into another language or so. You have a general idea of the rudiments of the elementary sciences.

Being born of Christian parents, and

having studied the Bible more or less, you have an invaluable frame-work of character in the way of moral principles, infinitely better than it was possible for Zoroaster, Aristotle, Socrates, or even "the divine Plato" to attempt. The ten commandments have been mortised into your life; and you could not do a false or dishonest thing without laying violent hands on your convictions.

The second section, from twenty to forty, will be the active, up-hill part of the way. You must plan it carefully. The third section, from forty to sixty, will be your harvest years. If by reason of strength you reach fourscore, from sixty to eighty you ought to have the broadest usefulness, and the most complete and restful enjoyment.

In choosing your line of work, you need special Divine guidance. You cannot trust yourself to find the way alone. When Thales was asked, "What is the hardest thing in the world?" his reply was, "To know thyself." If the old philosopher found

self-knowledge so difficult, how dares an untrained boy claim to know his own ability and adaptability so as to take the helm of self-direction?

The judgment of your friends can no more be trusted than your own. Was it Holmes who said that every calf that bleats in the meadow is a genuine Osiris to its dam? None but God knows what you are meant for; and your only hope for a successful life is to find and work to His plan. If you fall below that, you will always have a sense of incompleteness and dissatisfaction. If you aspire above it, failure is inevitable. No matter what that plan may be, its authorship is your patent of nobility. God's will makes it grand.

Some one has said that if the Lord were to send an angel down into this world to sweep the street crossings, and another to rule an empire, they could not by any means be induced to exchange. The work of the former would seem to him as noble as that

of the latter, because it had as certainly the stamp of the Divine approval.

When you decide to take God's plan of your life, and seek with implicit trust to find it, He will see that you make no mistake. Put your hand in His, and He will guide you where He wants you to go. He has promised to lead the blind in paths that they have not known. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. This is as certainly true in temporal as in spiritual affairs. Bazaleel, upon whom Moses had to depend for some of the difficult work on the tabernacle when they were out there in the wilderness, was wise-hearted and filled with the Spirit of the Lord; and God taught him a half-dozen different trades. If our Heavenly Father did that once, He may do it again. One case demonstrates His ability. "But that was a long time ago." There are no years with God. If those fugitives from Egyptian slavery, away back there in the twilight of the old dispensation, could get

near enough to God to be so taught, what may we not hope for in the cumulative light of nineteen Christian centuries? "But Baza-leel had a special work to do." Yes; and so have you, if you are in God's hand for service. Quite likely it is not a work that will set a corps of reporters scribbling every time you turn round; but it is one that will be forever unwrought unless you set your hand to its accomplishment. Your failure to find and do it, will mar by just so much, God's perfect plan. Your success will add just so much to His glory.

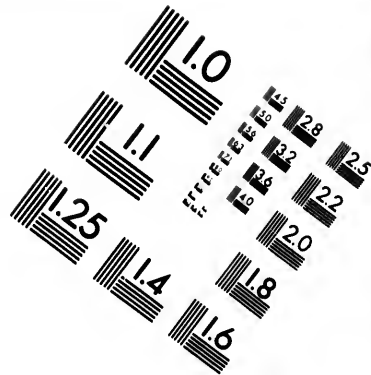
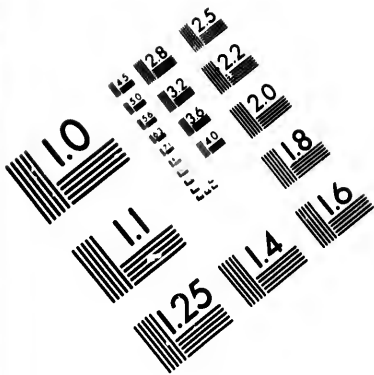
The majority of my class of twenty thousand have failed to secure a liberal education. You who are of that number, have given up "going through college," and you are obliged to turn your attention to the question of getting your own living. The time for the breaking up of the old home seems to be drawing near. The dear circle will not hold together much longer. Older brothers and sisters are marrying off and

making homes of their own, and you cannot help thinking of a similar future. You must go to work in earnest to establish yourself in the line that has been marked out for you.

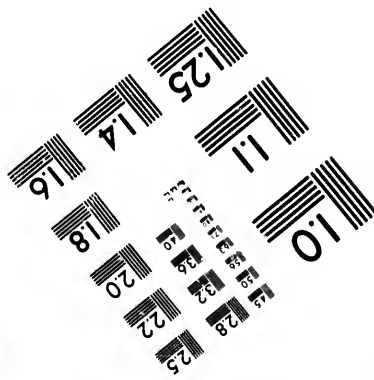
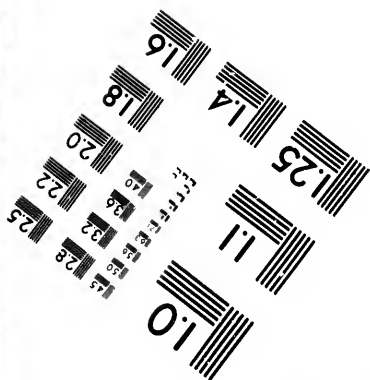
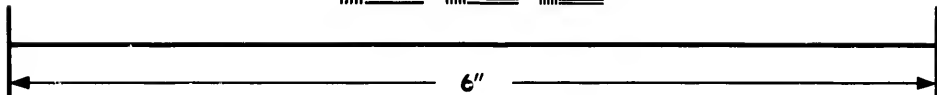
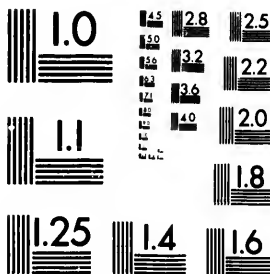
In the very outset you must form a habit of industry. Be diligent in business. Diligence is from the Latin, "*diligentia*"; that is from the verb "*diligo*," to love earnestly, and that is from *di* and *lego*, to choose. So the command, "Be diligent," means that you are to choose and love earnestly what you believe God wants you to do. What your hand finds to do, is to be done heartily, as unto the Lord. Do not go to your work with a hang-dog look or feeling, nor take hold of it in a gingerly way, as if you felt above it; but carry it bravely and gladly because you choose to do what is given you, with your might.

Make up your mind that you are not going to succeed without hard work. No matter if you do not love it naturally, be determined that you will not shirk it, but you will bear





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your full part manfully. The one who wins is he who prepares most carefully for his work, does it most thoroughly, holding himself steadily in hand, and who keeps on after the rest have given out and given up.

Perhaps you have that "fatal facility of speech" that makes you think you might distinguish yourself in some avocation where talk seems to be the stock in trade. Easy speaking and shallow thinking usually go together. It is only the deep, sure, strong thought, that takes the prize. Surface talents are usually like fool's gold, glittering and valueless. Remember to make haste slowly.

In Rome, where they build for the centuries, they dig down to the living rock to lay the base-stones of their palaces. The foundation is sometimes the most expensive part of the building.

You would not build a pyramid apex downward. If you lay carelessly or narrowly the foundation of your character or your fortune, it will topple over in the first hurricane.

You want to form a habit of working tirelessly, faithfully, undiscouragedly. Grant said of himself at Shiloh, "I thought I was going to fail, but I kept right on." To form a habit of keeping right on will be worth everything to you.

Ninety-five per cent. of business men fail. You are trying for the twentieth chance, the one that succeeds. If you secure it, it will not be from good luck, but by God's blessing upon honest, faithful, persistent, hard work.

You must see to it that you form exact business habits. Learn to be prompt in keeping your engagements. Your time and that of the few people with whom you are associated, may not be worth much now, but by and by, if you get on as you hope to do, you will have business with those who can earn five, ten, fifteen dollars an hour. Suppose you keep six of them waiting fifteen minutes; you were needed to make a quorum, or to complete some transaction. You have wasted an hour and a half of expensive time, besides

taking the risk of the strain on their temper, and their confidence in your reliability. Let it be understood that when you say you will be at a given place, at a given hour, you can be depended upon to appear at least a half minute before the time. Hold your business so in hand that you can make definite promises with a fair prospect of being able to keep them. Never attempt so much that you are unable to make good your word, and so get a reputation for unreliability. When monetary cyclones sweep over the land, it will be worth thousands to you, if good, solid business men, can say of you, "He will do as he says. His word can be taken for any amount that he promises."

After all, no matter how much money you make, nor how many friends you seem to have, unless you are so honest that you are not afraid to have God inspect your books, you are an unmitigated failure. In other words, there is no success worth the name except that which strikes root in moral probity.

The Bible says, "The just man walketh in his integrity." That sturdy word is from the Latin, meaning untouched. It is first cousin to the mathematical term, integer, a whole, or unbroken number. There must be a wholeness of your obedience to the right, your loyalty to conscience, even when the currents are heavy, and strong enough to sweep most men from their moorings.

There is a system of false weights and measures in use in the world. People are marked not at what they are, but at what they possess. Whatever others may say or do, let us see to it that our own standards are right. Otherwise we are not sure that we will give others their due. Let me give you a test by which you can determine whether or not you have the true standard of values. If you find yourself hanging your head for honest poverty, if you are ashamed of the plainness of your dress, the awkwardness of your manners, or the lack of polish in your speech, you may be sure that you need to

correct your table of values. Unless you see the nobility of a soul in alliance with God, and respect yourself so much as to be independent of slights and snubs, the probability is that you would be haughty and supercilious, if a change in affairs gave you the opportunity to lord it over others.

The higher English nobility, with their miles of elegant domain, their castles and palaces, are not half so lofty in bearing, nor so exclusive, as some of their servants. They are so assured in their position, that they can afford to be simple and affable.

Be sure from the first to plan your business so as to save time for the care of your body and the culture of your mind and soul. Of what use would it be for you to find yourself rich at fifty, but with broken health, your mind cramped to a knowledge of your ledger and prices current, and your soul so dwarfed that if it could get into heaven at all, it would be a pitiful little weazen thing fit only for the lowest place and the narrowest enjoyment.

Above all, remember that it is the blessing of God that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow.

You must not forget the claims of benevolence. The only safe plan is to give by rule. A tenth is the Scriptural percentage.

You will find a rigid system of giving to be economical. You will have to manage carefully each piece of property that comes into your hands, so that you may know its annual profit, in order to be sure that you give your tenth. This will keep you from the slipshod financiering that is the cause of most of the financial failures.

God must have control of your business, not only in its principles and management, but in the amount of pressure you will permit to come on you to crowd you to greater effort.

A young business man who had done unusual things in the way of Christian work and giving, was asked his rule in this matter. In reply he showed a note in his memoran-

dum book that read over a given date, "From this time I will make the service of God my business, and do business only to pay expenses."

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CHAPTER VI.

RICH.

THE rich young men have read what I have said to the poor about the uncertainties and dangers of having wealth; yet there are other risks of which I wish to speak.

Wealth gives opportunity for the best culture, and that represents power to do good. Money buys leisure, books, and travel, all of which add to personal influence. Power increases obligation. If one knows of another's need, and has the ability to help, he is culpable if he fails to meet the obligation.

The world is perishing. Thousands suffer for food and clothing. Multitudes are in mental want, myraids in spiritual destitution. Your money might give shelter to the homeless, medicine to the sick, all manner of com-

forts to the neglected poor, books and teachers to the ignorant, and missionaries to the abandoned. If you spend it on your own pleasures and leave them to perish, their blood may be required at your hand.

Woe betide the soul on which rests the curse of unwrought good! There is no "might have been" more unutterably and fatefully sad. The hungry eyes of the unhelped will glare throughout eternity on the one who might have been their benefactor. He never can escape their reproaches. The rich man in hell did not want his five brothers to come to that place of torment; for he knew that his wealth, morality, and consequent influence, might have led them to the Lord for salvation. With his characteristic selfishness he wanted to be spared the lash of their terrible upbraidings.

There is great danger that the rich will fail in self-denial. Christ's plan for saving people begins with the thrusting out of self, and leads to a crucifixion. It was founded in

sacrifice. Self-giving is its most characteristic expression. The rich have special temptations to go in the opposite direction. The world has its wares in the market. The rich are its best customers ; and it spares no pains or ingenuity to get their money for its products. One who carries a full purse is tempted on every hand to purchase things that appeal to the five senses ; and it is easy to form a habit of self-gratification, and consequent indifference to the wants of others. Self-denial, always a difficult grace, becomes harder when self is thus pampered.

Covetousness is a cardinal fault even with Christians. One of the twelve, though serving a Master who was dependent for His daily support upon the charity of women who risked all to become His followers,—one of the little body-guard fell, through this sin, and went to his own place by suicide. Few are exempt from this temptation ; but the rich are in more danger than the poor. The tendency of possession is to increase the love

of gain. This is an insidious vice, and it will steal over you like the poison of malaria. You may not be able to tell just when it first touches you; but unless you are divinely guarded, you will yield to its power when riches increase, as certainly as a stranger who sleeps on the Roman Campagna succumbs to malaria.

While the young are in less danger than those of mature years, yet, as in most physical diseases, probably the trouble begins in the careless habits of youth. At any rate, systematic giving is a safeguard.

You will find it harder to give a tenth of your income than you would if you were poor. It ought to be easier, for the remaining nine-tenths are a far more ample support than they would be if the income were small. If one has a salary of a thousand a year, and gives a hundred dollars, he has only nine hundred left for his living; but if his income is ten thousand a year, he has nine thousand left for himself. His thousand looks large,

but it represents really less sacrifice than the poor man's hundred. Some, indeed, I fear many, who begin by giving liberally, draw back, and give less proportionately with the increase of wealth, because the sums begin to look large, and are beyond the average benevolence of well-to-do people. I remember a man during the war, who owned a mill that produced an article which came suddenly into great demand in the army. He had promised to give the Lord a tenth of his profits; but when he found that he would clear thirty thousand dollars that year, it seemed quite too much to count out three thousand for benevolence. He broke his vow. Within a few days his mill was in ashes; and before it could be re-built, the special demand had created its own supply, and so cut down his profits to the usual rates. When you make up your mind that it is safe and right to give a tenth to the Lord's work, let the decision be made for life. Regard it as a debt, and attend to its payment as rigidly and conscientiously as you do to that of any other.

Another temptation to covetousness comes from the fact that the increase of wealth becomes more rapid, proportionately, as its amount increases. One can invest ten thousand more easily, to better advantage, and with hope of larger gain than he can one thousand. It is true, also, that with added increase of importance from ownership, there is a rising ratio of increase in the desire for gain.

There is something decidedly attractive in becoming a bank president, a railroad monarch, a money king. People recognize readily the ability to grant favors, and they are delighted to reciprocate. Do you remember some lines in one of our old school-readers that ran something like this:—

“So goes the world ; if you are wealthy,
You may call
This, friend, that, brother,
Friends and brothers, all.”

There is no use in denying that this is pleasant and engrossing. One is not in con

dition to see how empty and hollow it is, till the money takes wings, as it has an awkward habit of doing. These delicate flatteries and attentions are like exquisite music. They drown the cry of the needy. Like palace walls and broad, beautiful grounds, they shut out the ghastly eyes of the starving. They hide, as under a bank of bloom, the chain that binds together all sinning, suffering human souls. They cannot sever that chain, for it is as unbreakable as that which holds the planets in their orbits, as tireless as gravitation, as relentless as destiny.

As the years go by you may lose the freshness and tenderness of youth; you may become worn and *blase* with the round of pleasures purchased by your wealth, and the added cares from its increase. You will dislike to be bored with tiresome stories and petty complaints. Gradually others will come between you and the poor with whom you might come in contact, those whom you employ. You do not mean to be hard and

unfeeling, but abuses grow up into which it is not convenient nor agreeable for you to look. Subordinates will make everything appear smooth and plausible, but God will hear the sighing of the needy, and you will be the one whom He will hold responsible. Upon you will come the woe.

When the rich young ruler ran through the crowd and threw himself down before the carpenter's son, asking to be taught the way of life, our Lord saw that there were no hoof-marks of vice on his face. In that dissolute land and time, amid all the temptations that wealth brings, and the sins that its possession makes people condone, that young man could lift a clear, steady eye, to the Teacher, and respond to His question about the commandments. "All these have I kept from my youth up." Jesus loved him, for He saw in him the basis of a strong, noble, Christian character. He saw, also, that a secret, hidden selfishness, that most obscure and unyielding disease, had taken possession of

the soul of the young ruler. In his childhood he had been flattered and fawned upon, till he had come to believe himself better than the common herd. "I belong to another grade of human beings. Of course I will be kind and helpful, and give something of my surplus means to add to their comfort, but as to giving myself to them in any sense, why, that is not to be thought of." Christ saw that this case must have heroic treatment, or the fine, spiritual young fellow, would grow to be a grasping, avaricious, hard-hearted, iron-handed, old Jew, with a face as dry and wrinkled as his bonds, and as yellow as his gold, and a nose as sharp and hooked as the beak of a bird of prey.

Christ's command for him to sell all that he had and give to the poor, touched like a lance his hidden, deep-seated selfishness. He started to his feet. What! give up all his schemes for the spread and improvement of his great possessions! Turn his grounds and palaces, his wardrobes, jewels, articles of

virtu, all over to others, and distribute their value among the leprous, unwashed poor, while he tramped over the country with this pauper Rabbi, as poverty-stricken as the poorest of those whom he had always held in contempt! Surely there must be some mistake about that. There certainly ought to be some way for him to secure eternal life, better suited to his rank and station, than this hard, unconditional surrender of all. He turned his back on Christ, and walked slowly away, while the deep, sad eyes of the Master, followed him lovingly. He knew how that innate selfishness would ruin him, here and hereafter; and his only chance of salvation was in breaking every tie that held him to his old life, and giving himself without stint to the helping of others.

Christ required of him simply what he asks of every soul that He saves. Only so can He cure the cancer of self-love and trust. Only on those terms can one hope for usefulness here, and life beyond the grave.

Not that you are to deed your property away to some benevolent institution, while you give your entire time to the service and instruction of the poor ; but you are to hold it simply as God's steward. The great change is in your spirit. No longer owner, but steward, ready to disburse on call of the real owner. You are to say, "Henceforth I will hold every dollar subject to the Divine order, paying never less than ten per cent. of the profits — a light interest, surely — into His treasury. I will invest as carefully the part that He takes, as I do what He leaves for my use. I will look to Him for direction in the management of it all, not venturing to spend so much as five cents without a motive that I dare take to the Judgment.

"More than that, I will give the poor a sympathy and fellowship that is worth infinitely more than all the wealth I can bestow on them. As Christ came down out of Heaven, making Himself one of us that He

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might save us, I will take upon my heart
the troubles of the poor, giving my very self
for their salvation and help.”

art
elf

CHAPTER VII.

IN BUSINESS.

I HAVE already had occasion to tell you that only five per cent. of business men escape failure. Many, with a feeble sort of fatalism, blame their luck when things go wrong with them. They flatter themselves that it is no fault of theirs that they do not get on better. "A. is a lucky dog. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth; but I — somehow things always go against me."

Now the real luck that brings success comes from the skillful management of well-invested capital.

"Capital!" you exclaim; "I have no great capital to invest or manage."

The cash, stocks, and real estate that you have on hand, are the least important part of

your capital. The assessor has no scheme for noting the items that are most valuable, and that go furthest toward building up a good business. I have already touched upon some of them, — probity, promptness, benevolence, and a careful choice of the line to which you mean to give your life. Let me be a little more definite. If you expect to make a fortune, you must choose a business that can grow. There are some lines of which even Napoleon Bonaparte could not make much, for there is in them no expansiveness. If you find yourself in one of those little island cages, and believe it is the place you are meant for, go on and do your best, but do not expect to become a great land owner. The land is not there for anybody. You can keep your little island “trig and neat;” you may be as contented with it as was Cincinnatus with his plow, or Ximenes with his books, when he was running away from Isabella’s attempt to make him Primate of Spain; but you will have to let

the busy, outside world, manage the greater general interests.

If your business has in it the possibility of growth, you must study the laws of that growth. Do not look for any fortunate venture that shall give you a sudden tilt toward success. Understand that they only achieve permanent prosperity, who work by the immutable laws that underlie any development. Emerson says, "Hitch your wagon to a star," which means in plain English, find the forces that God has ordained, and set at work, and move in harmony with them.

Get also a knowledge of all the details of your business. You must be willing to sit on the shoemaker's bench, and pound pegs, if you want to come out a safe and respectable shoe merchant. Learn the business from bottom to top.

Two men begin trade in that line in equally favorable localities, with about the same capital; the stock of one as well selected as that of the other, and their clerks of about the

same grade of honesty and ability. One has worked his way up from the bench ; the other has little practical knowledge of that branch of trade. The former knows a piece of leather so thoroughly that no polish can hide its defects. He knows what goods will bear to be pushed, and which must be recommended with the rising inflection. The other has to depend upon the knowledge of others in keeping up his stock, and in urging it upon his customers. It takes no prophet to foretell the future of the two houses. One builds up a good trade. The other has one piece of bad luck after another, — which means that he blunders for lack of knowledge ; till he finds himself on the down grade, and bankruptcy is inevitable.

Another item of your capital may be thoroughness. One may know how to do a given thing, and yet be too careless, indolent, or divided in his attention, to use his knowledge. The successful dealer sees to it that every order that goes out of his house is filled so

as to please the customer, if possible. There must be no slackness, no carelessness, no leaving of loose ravelling ends. Every part of the work must be done conscientiously, and so as to stand wear. Your business must not only be managed with a complete knowledge of its details, but with thoroughness in its execution. It will add to the permanency of your profits when it comes to be known that you are always truthful and reliable, your goods are always what they are represented to be.

In the rush and hurry of a large town, there is a great tendency to be crowded into careless and indifferent habits. Workmen are apt to promise more work than it is possible for them to finish in a given time. In his anxiety to get on, and do as much as he can, each overrates his own ability. He meant to have the article done when he promised, but he was obliged to let one thing lap over the time of another, till some of his work was crowded into time quite beyond

the limit of the customers' patience. So it has come to pass that promises are of but little value. They are not worth their face. Monday has come to mean about Wednesday, if not later. The article that was promised for Saturday will be sent around Tuesday noon. If your house was to be ready for occupancy by the first of May, you may be thankful if you are able to move in the first of June. There is no lack of excuses, to be sure. The carpenters failed to get out of the way of the plasterers, who, in turn, lapped over upon the contract of the paper-hangers; and threw the painters out so far that they began another job that was urgent, and that could not be left after it had been begun. While you are living on promises in a boarding house during the live-long month of May, your goods in boxes, your plans for the summer all thrown out of line, you can't help wishing that you had found an architect who could plan his business so thoroughly that all his pledges did not require thirty-days grace.

You could have afforded to pay an extra hundred dollars for such a marvel of reliability.

Having learned one business thoroughly, do not throw all that knowledge into the waste basket, and begin upon another, unless you are sure the first effort was all a mistake, or the second offers extraordinary advantages. You remember the old adage about the rolling stone. The English member of the Rothschild banking house said to some young business men, "Make up your mind what you are going to do, and then stick to it, through thick and thin. If you are a banker, be that and nothing else. You cannot know thoroughly more than one thing."

There is an atmosphere about every business, which can be mastered only by years of attention. It is as much more essential to success than the common details, as it is more difficult to acquire.

Glass blowers will not attempt to teach any one their business, unless he has been in

it from childhood. We were in the steel-rail mills one day, looking at the cauldrons of melted metal. The man in charge had told us that there was an exact moment when they must be taken from the fire. A little mistake in time, taking them off too soon, or leaving them on too long, would make them faulty. "How do you know that exact point"? we asked. "Why, I know by the way it looks." "But how does it look when it is ready to come off? How does it differ from what it was the moment before, and from what it will be the moment after?" "I can't tell you. I only know that there is a difference that is plain enough to me; but I have been years and years learning it." No other man about the establishment had that knowledge, that had come to be almost a sixth sense. It made him so necessary to the business, that he could demand any wages that were at all reasonable. It would have been foolish for him to go into something else in which that special knowledge

would have been of no use, and would have had no value.

Another element that can easily be brought into your business, and that will influence the result far more than you may imagine, is courteousness.

Customers are not always the wisest and most thoughtful people in the world. Indeed, to tell the truth, they are often so inconsiderate and provoking as to make it difficult for one to keep from giving them "a piece of his mind." Yet you will find that it pays always to be patient and polite; not only for its effect upon yourself, but for the prosperity of your business. If you allow yourself to be a little rough and short with those who you think deserve to be plainly dealt with, you will surely make a mistake now and then, and be quite unjust in your harshness. There is a book-store where I was once treated rudely; and I would walk a mile rather than stop there again, and take the risk of a similar discourtesy.

The safe and wise way is to be attentive to all, no matter how annoying they may be. Besides, the command, "Be courteous," is upon all Christians, a rule of conduct to which no exceptions are given.

There is plenty of asperity and sourness in the world; let us not add an iota to its aggregate. There are enough with bruised nerves, and hurt spirits, whom we may help with a kind word or even a smile. Let us proffer that cup of cold water, in the name of our Master, no matter how provoking our customers may be. That man who tumbled your goods about in a nervous, inconsiderate way, finding fault with everything, especially the prices, did not confess to you that he was out nearly all night hunting for his reckless, drunken boy. If he had done so, you would have paid little attention to his rudeness. Give him the benefit of the doubt next time. Always be courteous.

There is one difficult book that you must

study, if you would succeed. You have ample opportunity. Its leaves rustle at every breath. It is even within you; yet so many are blinded by egotism, and occupied with their own petty affairs, that they never read aright one of its wonderful, vital pages. You must begin at once to study human nature. You must know people. The principles that govern human action are the same the world over. They are like the axioms of any science, of universal application. Mungo Park found motherly pity for the sorrows of the stranger precisely the same among African savages, that he had known in his own sweet English home. Find out the laws of mind, and work in harmony with them. None but God can suspend or annul natural law. He can remake what He made; but you had better not attempt it. You cannot master gravitation. It will out live or outpull you. And so also of the laws that govern mind. They are expressions of a Will that you cannot conquer. The

wreck of many a poor fellow's life echoes with a hollow moan the dying cry of the apostate, "Thou hast conquered at last, O Galilean!" As certainly as Christ must ultimately conquer, His laws are invincible. So you must make up your mind to work in harmony with them if you would succeed. If you dash yourself against them, determined to make a path through them at your own sweet will, you will certainly fail.

Watch yourself when you are trying to bring to terms a particularly captious and unmanageable person. How carefully you observe every turn of his thought, and how skillfully you direct it to the points most advantageous for your case. You listen to his tiresome twaddle, as if it were quite Shakspearean. You laugh at his stale jokes in a manner altogether satisfactory. He tells you something that you know a great deal better than he, but you listen as though it were a marvellous bit of news. You are not playing the hypocrite either. You are only

trying to please him that you may bring him to do something that you knew he ought to do. You need skill in managing difficult people in any department of effort. You can teach properly only by observing the laws of mind, and working in harmony with them. You may pour a wash of words over the minds of your pupils, so absorbed in your own enjoyment of what you are saying, that you do not seem to know or care whether or not they really take in one thought. Much pulpit teaching is done in the same bungling manner. You cannot lead a soul to the Lord unless you work by the laws that govern its action. Some good people who attempt to make bargains, impart truth, and help sinners to Christ, act as though they thought they could ride rough-shod over every preference or prejudice. What they have to say is so weighty, what they have to do ought so certainly to be done, they can but demand and receive attention. Not so; if we do not find the thoroughfares by which

thought is carried into the mind, we waste our time trying to convey truth to other people.

Others seeing the failure of those who are brusque, abrupt, and assuming, take the opposite extreme, and fawn, and smirk, and overdo the amiable. They try the Machiavelian policy ; and if they do not tell what is untrue, they go to the verge of fancy with their flatteries and sycophancy. It does not take long for people of sense to find them out, and mark them at their real value. Their rates of discount are fixed as certainly as is that of the paper of a house that is dropping into bankruptcy. They forfeit their chance of doing good as certainly as do those who have careless manners and indifferent skill.

In studying human nature, it may be well to begin with the one most directly under your eye,— yourself. What attitude do you assume toward an abrupt, good man, who attempts to teach you something? Do you

see how, by a natural impulse of perverseness, you rise up and shut to the door, leaving him to batter outside? What right has he to assume to dictate to you? It may be a good thing that he is trying to crowd upon your attention, but you are not going to have it crowded upon you in that rude way. Remember that, when you get in deadly earnest to make somebody do a given thing. You may defeat your bargain or your lesson as certainly by your over zeal in pushing your point, as by indolence or indifference.

On the other hand, what effect does it have on you when one of those slippery, slimy, snaky people, come crawling around? Do you not draw your lips together and button up your pockets?

How do you enjoy a patronizing air in one who has no right to assume toward you the endearing relation of guardian? You may be sure that a similar course of conduct in you will affect others similarly.

Humanity knows itself to be a king,

though dethroned and crownless; and it will be treated with respect. A lady who understood this, accidentally pushed a little street Arab off the sidewalk. She stopped and apologized, saying she hoped she had not hurt him. He stepped back, and gave his rimless hat a jerk. "My eyes, Jim!" he exclaimed, turning to a boy who had heard the whole, "Ef she don't speak to me jest like I wore standin' collars! A feller could 'ford to git pushed off forty times a day, to git spoke to like that!"

You discover something similar in yourself, and you may set it down simply as a human trait, and make due allowance for it in your transactions with people.

Study your nearest friends. We are apt to practice upon them in a manner to bring out human traits, as we dare not do with strangers. Discovering in them characteristics similar to our own, we may conclude that people outside our circle are made of the same stuff.

A railway car is a good place to study

character. When people think they are where nobody knows them, they are apt to drop their masks, and show their real selves. H. H. said, "Perhaps the saints do go abroad sometimes, but I never saw one behind a railway locomotive." I have seen beautiful, saintly acts on the cars, but then, I have travelled a great deal. The rule is that people under such circumstances resist every petty encroachment upon personal prerogative as doughtily as the little Greek states used to do, and some of them are in as perpetual a state of warfare.

I remember a little Frenchman on a train between Florence and Rome, whose phiz and fussiness seemed to be of the rat-terrier order. We were in a "*non fumare*" car; but in the next compartment, which was separated from our own by a partition that lacked a few inches of reaching the roof, somebody began to puff a cigar. Instantly our little Frenchman snuffed, and growled, and snapped his eyes in small fury, subsiding only after the guard

had come and listened to his bristling complaint, and had duly enjoined the offending smoker to stop his violation of train etiquette. But it was not long till the tiny, blue shreds of smoke were curling over the top of the partition again, and touching the olfactories of the little Frenchman. Fizz! Fuzz! Bow-wow! At it he went again, and that bit of history repeated itself till we reached the eternal city; though in all probability the irate *Francois* would not have objected to a good cigar himself. It was altogether a war for personal prerogative; a not unusual one everywhere.

A few months of teaching a country school will give you some good lessons in human nature, especially if you have to "board around." You will find the small men and women, under your care, manifesting all the traits that will bother and foil the bargain-makers and preachers, a score of years hence.

I believe, after all, you can study this strange human book better upon your knees

than in any other way. You can learn most rapidly when you go directly to Him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, for He has promised if you lack wisdom, and ask of Him, to give liberally.

The crowning element of business success, is faith in God. He that believeth need not make haste. One who has a clear, calm, steady faith in the Lord, is in condition to do his best. He knows that while he stays in God's hand, and uses his little strength to the utmost, he will be guided to the best outcome.

“He always wins who sides with God.
To him no chance is lost.”

His powers of body and mind will be kept in healthful equipoise, unworn by worry. After a hard days' work he can sleep as soundly as if nothing depended upon his efforts.

Napoleon believed in his destiny. That was a counterfeit faith, that, for awhile, answered the purpose of a genuine trust in

God. He could sleep in his saddle, in the midst of the din and danger of battle. No doubt those little naps did much toward keeping even his great tough brain in good working order

Faith brings into the solution of every problem the power of Infinity. While Nehemiah was asking the Persian king to send his Hebrew captives back to their own country,—an unheard-of boldness of petition,—he knew that the good hand of his God was on him, and his request was granted.

You may set down your capital as so much muscular vigor, so much mental training, so much spiritual power, a business that can grow, knowledge of its details, thoroughness in their management, reliability, courteousness, knowledge of human nature, and faith in God: and it would seem that success is assured. You can say, "Jehovah is my strength. He will make my feet as hinds' feet. He will make me to walk upon mine high places."

CHAPTER VIII.

OUT OF BUSINESS.

No currents are more uncertain than those of the monetary world. None more certainly illustrate those lines of Robbie Burns about the "best-laid schemes of mice and men." Enterprises in which the wisest old heads would hardly have hesitated to guarantee a fortune, are left high and dry on the rocks to go to pieces, while some insignificant scheme, in which nobody had faith, comes out grandly.

You may have made one of the losing ventures. Your ship may have struck the rocks. In plain Saxon, the business you were trying to build up, has failed, and now you must join the innumerable company of the unem-

ployed, and look about till you find something else to do.

Your position is not an enviable one, and I will be glad if I may make a suggestion or so that will help you find your way out.

First of all, *nil desperandum*. Your nerves have had a severe shock, your courage a desperate wrench; but while there is life there is hope. You are not the first one that has been tested by failure. Some who have been ultimately most successful have been through that ordeal again and again. So of all things, do not lose heart. Stagger to your feet, and thank God it is no worse. You need not look far from your own door to find multitudes who are in an infinitely sadder condition than yourself.

Beware of that drop of fatalism that blames the luck when things go wrong. Do not let it narcotize and paralyze further effort. There is no luck about it. Somebody blundered, and He who chasteneth whom He

loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, permitted the blunder to spoil your fine plans, that He might save you from a worse evil than the one that has befallen you.

Go right on, and ask no questions about the past. Of all the miserable gnats that sting and torment one who is under heavy weather, none are more annoying than those abominable "Whys." No matter why about anything just yet. Of all things, do not sit down, and try to think out the reason for this and that, going over every little painful detail of the affair, again and again, instead of gathering together the remnants of your affairs, and spreading your small tattered sails for another effort toward port.

One thing is certain, that scheme is dead; and all your turning it over and over, and talking of "the particulars" with your friends, will not bring it to life.

Another is quite as sure: there is good in the stroke, for "all things work together for

good to them that love the Lord." It is disloyalty to God to talk about bad luck while He holds the helm. When you are strong and humble enough to heed Him, He will probably let you know what He meant by permitting this trouble to come upon you; but at present you had better set yourself to learn the lesson of humility, love, and faith, so that it will be safe for your soul to get out again into prosperity.

You will be strongly tempted to depend upon your own vertebral column; stiffening up with a stout, "I'll show them that I'm not a dunce! They'll see I'll come out all right yet." That sort of behavior reminds me of a young man whom I saw when his physician was called to prescribe for him in a sudden prostration caused by overwork.

"Well, doctor, how long are you going to keep me here?"

"Oh, I guess I'll have you on your feet again in a couple of weeks."

"Two weeks! No, sir!" and he straight-

ened himself as if he were going to push the foot-board out of the bedstead. "I give you notice that I'll not stay here two weeks!"

"Very well, my friend," said the old doctor, "if that is your spirit, we'll have to make it four. You'll have to lie there till you get all that sort of thing out of you."

While your courage stands like a rock, see to it that you let the Lord take all the egotism out of you. Your symptoms indicate self-trust; and He will not tolerate that in one of His children. In its very incipency it is harmful; in its strength it is fatal.

You will probably find that your changed circumstances will scatter your summer friends; and you will be tempted to indulge in all manner of bitter misanthropies. The probability is that your friends have been about as faithful to you as you would have been to them. We forget that we ourselves are human, when we get to railing against the infirmities of humanity. No doubt there

are palliating facts in each case; at any rate, the love that beareth all things, must give each the benefit of the doubt, for it also hopeth all things. You set about getting all the good you can out of this chastisement; but, after all, there stands the ugly fact, — you are out of business, — now, what?

You will not think of sitting down idly to “wait for something to turn up.” One thing is always sure to “turn up,” — bills for your living. You must go to work at something right away; but you had better go quietly and carefully. You do not know which way to turn. Be sure God has not forgotten you for a moment. He will open a way for you. When the Israelites were at the Red Sea with their retreat cut off, they were told, “The Lord will fight for you;” their part was to “hold their peace.” Yet the next moment Moses was ordered to speak to them that they go forward. You must set yourself bravely, thoughtfully, resolutely, to find the thing you are to do next.

You will not think for a moment of falling back on your friends. As already intimated, you will find them scarcer than they were formerly. Ordinary friendships are not to be depended upon when most needed. You need not plan for full moonlight in "the dark" of that orb of steady habits; neither can you order up moonlight when it is not promised in the almanac, no matter how inconvenient the darkness may be. You cannot count upon friends to help you when you most need them. To be sure the Lord has now and then a Great Heart who will stand by, no matter how heavy the gale. They are the ones of whom Shakespeare says:—

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel."

You will find, as a rule, that each has all he can do to take care of his own affairs. Few have any time or strength to spare for pulling other people's loads uphill.

While you are looking for a place to begin

again, you want to take in sail to suit your altered circumstances. Do not try to "keep up appearances." You have probably debts enough to carry without adding another dollar. Better a thousand times come down at once to the simplest fare, reducing by so much the probabilities of your being misunderstood in the matter, and lightening by even a little, the burden of the uphill tug.

It may be well to consider carefully whether or not you are adapted to the business in which you failed. Your judgment is more mature than when you chose it first; perhaps a change would be better; though in considering such an alternative, you must remember that your knowledge of that business is a part of your capital, and it ought not to be lightly put aside.

It will gall your pride to go down and begin again at the foot of the hill, doing work that you have been giving only to common day laborers; but your humility must be equal to that test. Sure of your own integ-

rity, Christ in you the hope of glory, you cannot long be depressed by your troubles. You will find yourself saying, "I am as good in the eyes of the Lord, and His people, in my rough, working clothes, and at my coarse, hard labor, as I was when I rode about in my carriage, and could entertain my friends handsomely."

Do not shy anybody on account of your changed exterior. Give good people credit for common sense and Christianity enough to know that "a man's a man for a' that."

Above all, trust God to teach you the lesson that your altered fortunes are intended to give. Get the honey out of the carcass of the lion. Let the sweet lesson in this body of bitterness give your soul strength; and be sure that it will be one of the things for which you will thank God most fervently in later years.

CHAPTER IX.

MUSCLE.

MIND has power over matter mysterious and measureless, yet matter sometimes gets the better of mind. There are people even in this enlightened nineteenth century, who believe so fully in the dominance of matter, that they look for depravity in the stomach or liver; and they are ready to prescribe blue mass or podophyllin for feeble thinking, disturbed conscience, or disordered morals. They forget that some of the finest intellectual work of the world has been done by men and women with a slender physical life; and some of the sweetest and mightiest saints live in the frailest tenements. Imperfectly housed, or even disembodied, spirits, may play a part, now and then, in the affairs

of the world; yet the rule holds that souls need good, sound bodies, for the tug and strain of bringing things to pass. Not unfrequently the last ounce of physical endurance takes the prize. One whose white soul touches the stars, may lie gasping and dying by the wayside, while another with feebler and more selfish spirit, but better muscle, holds out to touch the goal.

The body is the soul's servant, and it must be cared for accordingly. You take the best care of a horse if you would make him do the best work. When men risk thousands of money upon an animal's muscle, they spare no pains to keep him at his best. I am told that a certain New Yorker who invests heavily in the turf, keeps his racers in a stable with a groom sleeping beside them. The man has insufficient bedding, so that he will be wakened by a chill in the atmosphere. Then he will get up and give the horses extra blankets. If a man will keep his race-horse so carefully, how ought you to keep your

body in condition to render your soul the very best service?

The old Greeks carried muscular culture to the extreme. The highest honors of the state were given to the man who won in the games. When he returned to his city the walls near his house were taken down for him to enter; as much as to say, "The city who has such sons for her defense, has no need of walls."

Plato saw the folly of this, and swung to the opposite extreme, teaching that the body is the enemy of the soul; and until the latter is set free from the burdensome, dominant clay, it cannot have so much as a thought.

Christian ascetics have wrought by the rule of the old pagan philosopher, and have starved and otherwise maltreated their bodies, hoping thus to get rid of their sins. Paul said, "I keep my body under"; — as the little boy rendered it, "my soul on top." Paul said, also, that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, therefore we must glorify God with them.

The body has rights and it can assert them. The nerve of a tooth is a small affair, but it can drive one out of his wits with pain. The sick headache is a simple indisposition. Nobody wastes pity upon it, for it cannot kill you. Yet while it lasts you are deaf to all harmony, and blind to all beauty, knowing nothing in the universe but that tormenting pain and horrid nausea.

Since the body has such power over the soul, it stands to reason that it is wise to keep it in good condition. This can ordinarily be done, if you study and obey hygienic law. Like all rules, this one has exceptions. One who is supposed to be authority was asked if all diseases could not be cured if taken in time. He replied, "Yes; but to take them in time may mean to begin two hundred years back."

You may have inherited diseases that no medicines can reach. You may have been hopelessly injured by an accident; yet the rule is that you may have health if you will take care of your body.

To begin, you must have the main-spring of motive right in all your efforts at managing this delicate and complex machinery. Seek to be in health, not that you may be saved the annoyance of suffering, and have the pleasure of feeling well and strong; not even that you may be of service to your friends, your country, your race. Noble as this last motive is, it is poor and cheap beside the higher one of pleasing God, and doing something to add to His glory. For His sake to whom your body belongs, and that it may be strong for His service, you must do what you can to keep it in health, purity, and vigor.

Its outward appearance is not a matter of indifference. It must be clothed with agreeable manners and proper deportment. You may see some great man who is so engrossed with matters of importance, as to quite forget the "small, sweet courtesies." Do not allow yourself to imitate any of his uncouth ways, thinking thus to catch something of

his greatness. Diamonds may have flaws, but flaws do not make diamonds. The world may overlook the eccentricities of one whose hands are full of good work, because he is not supposed to have leisure for all the minutæ of decorum; but it is quite another thing with you, whose time is known to be far less valuable. You cannot be excused from giving due attention to the code of proprieties. He may wear an ill-fitting coat, but it will be better for you to have your clothing so made that it will give the impression that you still have leisure to attend to such matters, and you have a desire to please by your personal appearance. Not that you are to be dandyish, your garments indicating what one of that insipid tribe was honest enough to admit.

“I say, Fwed, youah necktie is just perfectly splendid! It’s magnificent!”

“It ought to look pretty well, I give my mind to it.”

Your great man may let his hair grow to

an awkward length, brushing it only occasionally. He may neglect his nails, cutting and scraping them only when he is obliged to do so. It is to be hoped that you will not spend time trimming and polishing yours, on account of any silly fashion, yet you must not forget to keep your hands tidy, even to your fingers' ends.

Many neglect their teeth, which is a costly carelessness. You may think you are too busy to stop and brush them daily. You save five minutes a day by your neglect, but presently you lose twenty-four hours with tooth-ache,—two hundred and eighty-eight times five minutes, of torture, and that multiplied indefinitely, and ending with a wrench that threatens to unroof the brain, and a good dentist's bill in the bargain.

Proper care of the skin, not only adds to the tidiness of one's appearance, but it is decidedly conducive to health. The skin helps largely at the scavenger work of the body, carrying off out-worn particles, and other

waste matter. This is of more importance than you may at first think. In a large city, where sanitary conditions are violated by the clogging of sewers, and the lack of proper street cleaning, people need not expect to be well. It is quite as necessary to keep open and clear the channels by which waste matter is thrown out of the system. You certainly do not want to breathe it into the faces of your friends; and yet that is just what you do when you neglect other methods of disposing of it. It is loaded upon the breath, and thrown out through the lungs. Even when an offensive breath proclaims publicly your negligence, that is not sufficient penance. Enough of the poison remains behind to make you liable to serious diseases. Many a man lies for weeks, tossing with fever, losing any amount of time and money, and drifting down toward death, when a daily bath and vigorous use of the flesh-brush, would have kept his skin in condition for its work, and saved him the loss and suffering.

We are often strangely at fault in regard to the circulation of the blood. We know that the blood goes out through the arteries, vitalizing every part of the body, and comes back, through the veins, to the lungs, to be re-vitalized by contact with outside air. The measure of our breathing, and the quality of the air we breathe, is usually the measure of our vitality and vigor. Yet, strange as it seems, we put ourselves on short allowance of air, which means, defective vitality, and failure in all good work, for lack of endurance and strength; and that when we are walking on the bottom of a sea of it, at least fifty miles deep. We shut ourselves in tight boxes, and kindle fires in them, to burn out what may crowd in at the cracks, around the doors and windows. For our weekly worship, we build boxes large enough to hold four or five hundred of us, where we sit, breathing each others' breaths, and trying to be devotional. Our efforts are often a failure, for the lack of pure air, though it is pressing at

the rate of fifteen pounds to the square inch, upon the shell in which we shut ourselves. You may not be to blame for the wretched ventilation of house, or lecture-hall, or church, but you can certainly cure yourself of the habit of only half-inflating your lungs in your ordinary breathing, thus only half vitalizing your blood, and keeping yourself feeble, when you ought to be full of vigor.

It is a question whether you have yet learned to breathe at all as you ought. Most people lift the entire frame-work of the chest, shoulder-bones, arms and all, every time they fill the lungs. The result is that they do not fill the lungs completely, and much of the blood staggers back in a feeble way, to do the great work of supplying with vigor, muscle, nerve, and brain. Feeble circulation, feeble vitality, feeble thinking, feeble moral purpose; — all feeble together, and for the lack of air, though the Lord has supplied it for us by the oceanful. Thoughtful people are just beginning to learn how to take in large, deep,

breaths, using mainly, the muscles of the diaphragm, and the lower part of the chest. In a recent *sängerfest*, a lady who teaches in the public schools, gave an exercise in abdominal breathing, in which two or three thousand children participated. No one spoke or sung. The hour was given to exercises that develop the chest muscles, and fix a habit of deep, full breathing, making the muscles that are used in abdominal breathing, as firm and manageable as those of the hand, and training the will to use them as if they were the handles of a bellows.

This system not only provides for abundant vitality, but it gives erectness and grace to the form. Curb your chin as you would bit a colt, to make him move with a sure, taut step. Let your heels strike the pavement, so as to stiffen the muscles back of your knees, and you will find yourself standing in an erect position.

“Oh, but,” you say, “I despise lofty airs. Anything in the world but these people who

go stepping around as if the earth were not quite good enough for them to walk on!" I join you in that disgust; and yet you want your bearing to represent honestly what you are,—an "upright, downright, straight-forward," self-respecting, God-fearing man, anybody's peer in the line the Lord has given you to walk in.

A crawling, cringing, weak-kneed movement, like that of Dickens' Uriah Heep, will not make you "an 'umble person"; neither will it make anybody believe that you are "'umble." It will do one thing for you: it will set all the growlers, canine and human, snarling at your heels; while if you have the bearing of a prince of the blood, "a child of the King," you can go through many a difficult place unchallenged. An erect carriage, and steady, firm step, will help your mental operations. Your mind will be apt to be shambling, slouching, slovenly, in its movement, if your will has not the sease and grip to hold your muscles to direct, dignified ac-

tion. And your soul, also, — easy-going, self-indulgent, shirking; — what Mrs. Stowe characterizes as “shiftlessness,” will mark your spiritual life. On the other hand, grace will help strengthen your muscles.

In one of the Salvation Army meetings in London, I heard a man speak who had evidently been rescued from that class of the lowest of all low people, — the English tramps and paupers. Some one has said, “No one has heart or hope for them but John Bright and Charles Spurgeon.” He would have to add now, “and the Booths”; for the meeting to which I refer was made up mainly of decently dressed, respectable-looking men and women, evidently gathered from the ranks of the outcasts; and that particular man had been fished out of the deepest mud of a London slum.

“Do you know what religion does for a body?” he asked. “I’ll tell you. Before I was converted they called me ragged Jim; and that’s just what I was, and no mistake.

Now what do you think was the first thing I did when the Lord spoke peace to my soul? I borrowed a pin to fasten my old ragged coat together. I did n't know till that minute how shabby I was. Now, that's what the grace of Jesus will do for a poor fellow. It'll show him first, how ragged he is, and then it'll put a decent coat on his back."

There is nothing like the enlightening grace of God to make one feel his physical and mental, as well as spiritual, need. The prayer of the ritual—

"Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight,"

applies to the necessities of the whole complex being. So, if you have run rapidly over these pages, only half thinking of what I have been saying, passing the most of what you read over to some miserable consumptive or dyspeptic of your acquaintance, who is "evidently in need of this fresh-air lecture," and have taken none of it to yourself,

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let me ask you to stop, right here, and ask HIM, whose temple your body is, if you are doing all in your power, as He would have you, to keep it strong and beautiful for Him.

No unclean bird would be allowed to make its nest in the forest of statuary that adorns the roof of the Milan Cathedral. The word in regard to the human body is, "Him that defileth the temple will God destroy." The birds may fly over that wonderful roof, but they are not allowed to rest there. Impure thoughts may throw their loathsome shadow over your mind; unclean words may be whispered in your ear; but your will, loyal to the holy Christ, stands with its scourge of small cords, to drive them away. You have said to the Lord: —

"Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee."

After that consecration you can never lower yourself to utter a syllable that will express or suggest a vile thought, no matter how

free, or careless, or merry your mood. You can never forget that lips that are kept for the Master's use, must not be defiled by unclean speech.

I remember a little fairy story about two girls whose godmother gave each a gift according to her disposition. Whenever one spoke, gems fell from her lips, and the little children ran to gather them up. When the other opened her lips, reptiles slid from them, so that the children ran off in terror, to escape the horrid things. You do not want to drop poison from your lips, that will burn and blister long after the good you tried to say is forgotten.

Keep your ear-gate closed against what ought not to be said. It will take but a moment for a drop of the venom of hell to get into your thoughts, and it may take years to restore you perfectly from its pollution. You would not stay in the presence of a leper, for fear of contracting the terrible disease. Would you trust yourself to associate with

one who is leprous in soul? The latter is infinitely the greater danger. Shun such a young man, as you would one from a pest-house, dripping with contagion. In the care of the body, as in everything else, it is the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow. It is the Sun of Righteousness that has healing in His wings. When you learn to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks,—“for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you,”—you will find that you can “mount up on wings as eagles, you can run, and not be weary, walk, and not faint.” Christianity has added fifteen years to the average life of the race. When its privileges are fully understood and enjoyed, it will bring us, in spirit, at least, into possession of perennial youth.

You need never fret; for all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. You need have no care; for you may cast all your care on Him. God is able to take the

very best care of whatever is committed to Him. You may feel free to ask Him to do all that needs to be done to keep your body in good working condition, as long as you can say, "For Thy glory, because it belongs to Thee."

CHAPTER X.

IN THE COUNTRY.

IT is not difficult to see a difference between those who live in the city and those whose home is in the country, though that difference is mainly external and superficial. It is not in dress, for that is a matter of personal taste. Some have a certain style about them, as we say; and they will look well-dressed in the coarsest, plainest clothing, while others pay extravagant tailors' bills, and yet fail altogether of the elegant appearance they so much desire. One who has natural taste will make a pretty bouquet of dandelions and a mullein stalk; another who is deficient in that quality, may have all the flowers of a conservatory, and he will put them together with an awkward, constrained

air, minus the grace that is as natural to the other, as song is to the nightingale.

As a rule, however, city people are more stylishly dressed than those who live in the country. They see well-dressed people every day, because many of them are showy and extravagant; besides, country people generally wear their best when they go to the city. So city people get a "habit of good clothes," as it is sometimes called. This holds also of their manners, which are a secondary clothing. They of the city have no time for rudeness. Jostled and crowded as they are constantly by strangers, they find that they pass for more and get on better if they are polite. In the country, everybody knows everybody, and there is little temptation to attempt to pass one's self off for more than he is. One may be a little rough and careless in his exterior, but they all know his real worth, and they say, "It's his way, you know"; and it makes little difference with his standing.

In the city, nobody knows you, and they

take you, up to certain risks, according to your appearance. That, of itself, will give one a habit of "putting the best foot forward."

A prime difference between the people who live in the country and those who are in the city, lies in their use of time. In the country the chief values depend upon growth, and growth takes time, and time is the most plentiful commodity.

A farmer becomes rich, not so much from personal work, as from the increase of population around him, and the development of the resources of the land. His slow enrichment goes right on, whether he sleeps or wakes. It may fluctuate with atmospheric and general financial changes; but the rule is, steady increase. He may drive early and late, crowd in larger crops, and take advantage of the market, but the main factor in his problem of success is time.

When any product is abundant it is used carelessly. Near the oyster beds of Ches-

peake Bay, they use the very best "counts" as commonly as people elsewhere do eggs.

Time, the best country product, is used wastefully. That habit may give a young man a leisurely, hesitating, sometime slouching gait. City people live by trade. Everybody has something to sell; and the profits of the business are usually determined by the number of times one can turn his capital in a year. That makes him alert, exact, direct. It gives him a not-a-moment-to-waste air.

Ask one in the country to direct you to a given point, and he tells you to go on till you come to a red barn. Widow Beasley lives there. Turn down past her house, and on, till you come to the bridge over the run; you mustn't take the road that bears off to your left hand, up the branch. It will bring you out at old Squire Putnam's, a good four miles from where you want to go, etc., etc., etc. I remember asking a London policeman the way to the submarine telegraph office. "Top of the third turning"; and before I

could make up my mind whether or not he had answered me in my mother tongue, and what the "top of a turning" could be, he was in the middle of the street, helping a cripple out of a crush of hansoms and omnibuses.

There are many advantages in country life, that one ought to make the most of while he has the chance. Fresh air, sunshine, rough riding, make the best possible muscle. More than one battle in later life turns on the ability to endure muscular strain and wear. Farmer boys usually get a magnificent physical outfit without boating or base-ball, which are expensive of time and opportunity, and often of morals. This muscle stands them in good stead upon occasion, and it is always serviceable. Do you remember the story of the countryman from the south of France, who was raised from the ranks to the emperor's staff within five minutes, by his muscle and wit? During a review in Paris, Napoleon's horse had become unmanageable, and

the emperor was in imminent danger. Nobody dared attempt a rescue, till the vicious animal had plunged down the ranks to where this countryman was standing. The man had handled more than one dangerous horse before, and he knew the strength of his own muscle. He seized the bit with both hands, and brought the frantic beast to a stand-still. "Thanks, captain," said the autocrat. The man showed instantly that quickness of thought that comes from sudden encounters with the forces of nature, and the stealthy, dangerous creatures of the forest. In a flash he responded, "Of what regiment, Sire?" The emperor recognized the shrewdness and quickness, that with the marvelous strength, would make the man invaluable in his service, and replied at once, "On my staff." The countryman's fortune was made, as this world goes.

City people can do a few things well and gracefully; but the country gives more time for broad general thinking, a seeking of pri-

mal principles, and unflinching loyalty to truth. The long, still days, with the broad sweep of wood and field, the calm meadow slopes, the great, old hills, and the deep, pure azure sky arched over all, must bring wide, quiet thought, to the soul.

On the other hand, it is easy where there is so little stir, so few excitements, to let the weeks and months slip by unimproved, and to come to the last, carrying the burden of wasted opportunities, undeveloped, crippled faculties, and unwrought good. Think of the long winter evenings that are dozed or dawdled away, the stormy days when you are shut in from work, and you ride over to the store or shop, and sit around, whittling a pine stick, and telling, or listening to stories, —some of them not the most elevating. How many books might have been read, and pondered, —how many studies mastered, if you had set yourself resolutely to use every moment, and fill it with the work of satisfying your hunger to know.

Farmer boys are apt to put off the time of the commencement of their study till they get out of the grind of work, and have more congenial, bookish surroundings.

That will never do ; for you are not at all sure that such a time will come, "this side Heaven." The thing to do is to begin at once a course of reading. It is also well always to have a study on hand, a language or a science, to be learned, little by little, but all the more prized, when once acquired.

Thank the Lord for the fine muscle He has given you ; and train it to hold you erect and graceful in your bearing, as certainly as your bit does the colt you intend to sell in the city. Your neighbors may give you a sarcastic fling now and then ; but never mind. You can let them see by your gentle thoughtfulness and patience, that as kind and meek a heart beats in your big chest as ever throbbed for another man's trouble ; and it will come to pass after a while that when their eyes rest on you they will involuntarily

straighten up, and throw back their own shoulders; and the next thing you know some of the boys, who had been "getting a little wild," will come to you for advice about books. It always make me wonder to see a farmer riding to market on a board across the top of his wagon box, and his back bent like a rainbow, when it would be so easy to have a seat with a back to it, and sit up straight, instead of violating hygienic law in that careless fashion.

There has been no end of jokes about "book-farming," but it is coming to be seen that thought is as good on a farm as anywhere else. If farmers were mere animals, and wrought by instinct, like bees and beavers, making the first cell or house as perfect as the fiftieth, there would be no use in trying to teach them anything. The utter inefficiency of those who fail at other things, and go into the country, thinking that "anybody can manage a farm," illustrates the need of practical training in this, as in other

avocations. It is possible that they who know the most about the subject in hand, are not the ones who write the books, and edit the papers, yet the fact holds that thinking and study will pay on a farm, as certainly as anywhere; and it had better be done by educated young farmers, rather than left to cheap writers in back attics who have not so much as two square yards of sky in sight, to say nothing of a patch of ground where anything could grow.

So I say, if you expect to spend your days on a farm, make your place a model of thrift and neatness for all that country. Have your barns carefully and economically built, your house as tasteful and commodious as your purse will permit. Have books, music, pictures, and above all, sweet, pure charity and friendliness.

Make up your mind to have as much labor-saving machinery in doors as out. I have seen men riding about on their "cultivators," enjoying all the modern improvements, while

their wives were breaking their backs over the washboard, and wringing their clothes by hand, just as their great-grandmothers did. I have thought I would like to reverse the order a little while, set the "weaker vessel" riding about, and let the "sterner stuff" take a few rounds at the unhelped, hand-to-hand fight with dirt. I think the house would soon be stocked with washing-machines and wringers, patent churns and sweepers, and all other needed apparatus for the economy of muscle.

Be sure and plan to save your minutes, so as to make the most of them for your books. Have refined and elevating table talk. Discuss needed reforms, church benevolences, the interests of the Lord's kingdom, rather than the flavor of a pie, or the toothsome-ness of a dumpling. I know of nothing under the broad, blessed skies, lovelier or more restful than an intellectual, Christian home in the country. You can make such a one, if it please God to give you the true help-meet,—

and you must ask Him for her,— but you will have to be very wise in the use of your time and money. It is as easy to overwork the body, and starve the soul, for the sake of adding to one's possessions, in the country, as it is in the city. In such homes, the old go down gently under the weight of years, and the young come up sweet and true, sound in health and morals, ready for the bravest and best work. From such homes, not only "Auld Scotia's grandeur springs," but also that of every enlightened Christian land.

There seems to be a gregarious impulse on Americans to draw them into the cities. At the beginning of the century only one twenty-fifth of them were in large towns, now there is one-fifth of them there. It will not be strange, if you yield to the currents, and are carried thither also. That will be a far more exhausting life than the one you now live. So you must improve these days in laying by you in store a fund of strength for those trying years. You will find in the city

that they who put their brawny shoulders under the world's burdens, lifting towards the light, are country born and country bred.

Moses lived his first forty years in a palace ; but the next forty had to be spent in the back side of the desert, to bring him to the clear, strong insight that would enable him to see and do the Divine will. Luther, Washington, Lincoln, those broad, brave, vital men, all spent their early years in the country.

But of all, we love most to think of the Young Man of Nazareth, walking alone under that Syrian sky, going to the hill on the side of which the little village was set, and looking off toward the Mediterranean, kneeling all night with the wind tossing His dew-dampened hair, His head bowed under our burdens, or His forehead raised toward His own stars, and His heavenly throne, in pleadings for us. Keep ever before you that lone, deep-eyed, sorrowful young man, who lived his secluded country life, and then was

manifested and offered for our sins. He said, "I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Let Him walk by your side, and talk with you as you journey by the way. Unconsciously to yourself you will grow like Him in character, and some day you will be recognized as His brother and friend, and honored by good people, by the angels, and God.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE CITY.

CITY people have advantages of which it may be well for us to take an inventory; though this has already been suggested in what I have said to young men in the country.

You are so constantly among people, it has become second nature for you to be well-dressed, polite, erect and self-possessed.

You have also learned directness of address, and a corresponding directness of mental action. Your answer to a question is as straight and economical as a telegraph dispatch.

To a given extent, you are thoroughly *au fait* in the ways of the world. You have been jostled by thousands, and sometimes

not by any means agreeably, so that you have seen as many phases of this myriad-minded microcosm, this queer, cranky, mysterious human nature, as you would have done if you had lived in the country a hundred years.

You have already seen quite as much wickedness as it is profitable for a young man to know about. You have acquired a habit of demanding proof, and you are not in the least offended when strangers require you to prove your identity. You have seen so many frauds that you suspect everybody till he proves himself genuine. When a stranger asks a favor of you, you require him to show his credentials in as business-like a way as a conductor asks to see a passenger's ticket. This is a part of the education that the world gives, and you who live in the city graduate early in that department.

Within given lines your powers of observation are well developed. When you go to

the country for your summer vacation, you see a thousand things that pass unnoticed under the very eyes of your country friends; though candor compels me to acknowledge that you may be behind them in solidity of opinion, and breadth of outlook.

You are tired of the monotony of the piles of brick and mortar within which you trudge your treadmill round, day after day, and the freshness and freedom of the country charm you. Your eyes take in hungrily the filmy clouds of tender green that catch in the branches of the trees in early spring; the vista of forest avenues, the autumnal glory when the woods blaze forth in scarlet and gold. After your being shut up so long to glimpses of the azure between rows of buildings, a whole June sky is superb, an unveiled sunset is magnificent. Some of the finest bits of rural description have been written by the dwellers in cities who go into the country with fresh, prying eyes.

You have your five senses under good drill;

and just there lies one of your greatest disadvantages. You grow superficial in your judgment, you have a consequently feeble hold of affairs. That may account for the fact that very few people who manage the world's great interests, are born and brought up in the city. Country people permit days to slip by with little systematic effort at mental culture. City people live a condensed life; yet they squander time on an infinity of affairs that have to be handled in a hasty manner. This superficial work quite spoils one for the calm, slow, steady, deep thought that only can strike the core of things. City people have usually three-ply engagements for every evening. They try to choose between a half dozen things that they would like to do, and it usually ends in their dipping into each, and doing none thoroughly, till they lose the habit of doing anything as it ought to be done. You start up from the dinner-table, and rush to a committee meeting, to help make a quorum, and get business

under way. Then you slip out and drop in upon a lecture that you ought to have heard from beginning to end. You glance over at the reporters' table and say to yourself, "I'll get the substance of it in the morning paper, so I'll just run over and show myself at Smith's reception." While you are tossing on your pillow at midnight, trying to get the better of the strong coffee you were foolish enough to imbibe, you congratulate yourself that after all, you have done a good evening's work. Better go down in sackcloth and ashes, for attempting the ubiquitous, and fastening upon yourself the habit of doing everything in a hasty, shallow way, that will leave you altogether *hors du combat* when the time comes for strong, telling strokes. When the people are looking for a man to give the heavy, steady pull at the oar, that will bring the boat through the surf, they will see that you are of too light a weight.

You are mortgaging your future; and nature is a hard creditor; she always exacts

compound interest. You are exhausting your capital; and when the hour strikes for the grand opportunities of life, you will be found unequal to the strain; and the prize will be taken by some plain, hard-working man from the country, who has been thinking, thinking, thinking, as Grant and Lincoln used to do.

I hope you will begin at once to remedy this mischief. Plan to do less, and do it better. Give yourself a mental sub-soiling. You have turned over the surface stratum of thought till it is quite worn out. Fields have to be left fallow to gather strength. There has to be a change of crops, to give one element a chance to come up while another is being exhausted. The soil must be fed and enriched. How much good, solid, mental food have you taken in, digested, and assimilated, during the past year?

Of the old statesmen who are playing the game on the great European chess-board, they only are full of vigor, and able to keep

pace with the surge of events, who hold their minds fresh and strong, by rest, and change, and study.

But you say you are just beginning life; you have not come to the pressure of which I have been speaking. True; yet you are on the train, headed in that direction. Even the little children in the city, unless they are carefully guarded, have an old, out-worn look. Did you ever notice the faces of the street Arabs that steal street-car rides? Eight and ten years old, and yet they seem to have been beaten upon by the storms of half a century. While I am writing, a quartette of city young folks sit across the aisle from me, in a railway car. Two young men and two young ladies; they have turned a seat, and the couples sit facing each another. Fair, average, young people; from their talk it is evident that they all belong to the same Sunday-school class. They are *blase*, nervous, excitable, superficial. Now they begin to blow, back and forth, the chaff of small talk, and

so far, I discover not the first grain of wheat in the whole of it. Indeed, the most of it hardly rises to the dignity of language. It is mainly adjectives, interjections, slang, and light laughing. The girls are a little guarded on the slang part of the talk; yet they evidently enjoy it, and they encourage the boys by laughing at their queer speeches. There is something in the whole performance that reminds me of what Solomon says about the crackling of thorns under a pot.

Now is the time for you to fix your habits so that you can stand steady in the currents that bear the majority of city young men into that careless, foolish, superficial life.

Make up your mind now, that you will not live in that hap-hazard, drifting way. Where there is so much to claim your attention, you will choose the best, and learn to shut off the rest with a resolute "No." Avoid dipping into this and that, just to say that you were there; you saw this celebrity, you heard that lion roar. Unless you learn his secret of suc-

cess, what is the use of giving him one of your precious hours? Of one thing you may be certain: he did not become famous through the dissipating round of city sociality. It takes time to make a character, as well as an oak; and city people are bankrupt in that priceless commodity. They never have time for anything.

I would not advise you to attempt yet, to do as one who has been a crowned king of men for nearly half a century, would say, "Put into the fire all the irons that you can get hold of, shovel, tongs, poker and all." I would say, rather, try to do only what you can do to advantage. When you find you can manage safely and surely the interests in hand, and you have a little surplus energy, then thrust another iron into the fire, but not till then. At the beginning make rigid rules for your amusements, your social life, even your work. Economize your resources. While you allow yourself to be crowded to your full strength, keep enough reserve pow-

er to enable you to meet any emergency that may arise. Above all things, cultivate a habit of excellence. Build your character like that marvellous roof of Milan cathedral, — away up there out of sight of the crowds that surge along the pavements below, “for the eyes of the angels,” as they say: “For the gods see everywhere.”

I saw it illuminated one night, by chemicals that brought out, now in one brilliant color, then in another, every spire and statue. It was like a dream of Paradise, — lying there under that Italian sky, it is seen only by the tourists who are at the pains of climbing stairs to look at it, except upon occasions when its marvellous beauty is illuminated for the crowd. It made me think of the character of Lincoln, our great emancipator. We passed him on the street, and jostled him in the political thoroughfares, little dreaming of the calm, high soul that was there, under God’s pure heavens, till the lurid lights of the nation’s peril brought out, through the gloom,

its majestic proportions, its perfect harmony, its exquisite finish. Build your character so that it will bear a calcium light.

Everybody knows that a great city is full of dangers to young men who come in from the country. You can hardly be too cautious where you know there are many gins and pit-falls.

When we were in Mammoth Cave, Mat, our old guide, would call out, now and then, "Keerful! Pit on de right!" If we strayed ever so little from the path in those slippery places, we might fall, nobody could tell how many feet —

"Deep among disjointed stones."

The true path was hardly discernible by common eyes. Though thousands had trodden it, their footfall left no track. I found, however, that when I kept near old Mat, I saved many steps, and my way was safer and surer.

You know of some of the pits beside this path; and I need hardly remind you of them.

You have been warned against confidence men and kindred decoys who would lure you into houses of death. You have heard of those who live by the vices of others, and who gloat on the dying agonies of the innocent who fall into their traps. Yet you cannot be too watchful, for nothing can exceed the ingenuity with which they devise new methods to catch the thoughtless.

Where so many have lost their way and their life, your only safety is to keep near your Guide, setting your feet in His very footsteps.

In the quiet, steady habits of your country life, you have laid up a store of health and vigor; now you will be tempted to squander it in late hours, and the many excitements that lie in wait for you.

You will also be in danger of mental starvation. People who write and print cheap, wishy-washy literature, are specially active in crowding it upon the attention. It seems, sometimes, that the facility with which it is

“pushed” is in exact ratio with its lightness.

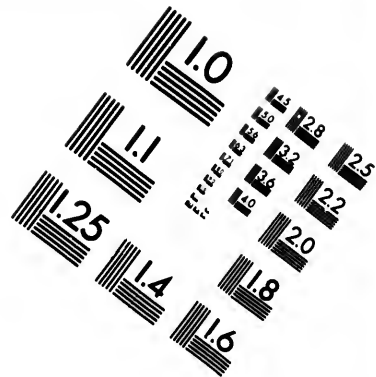
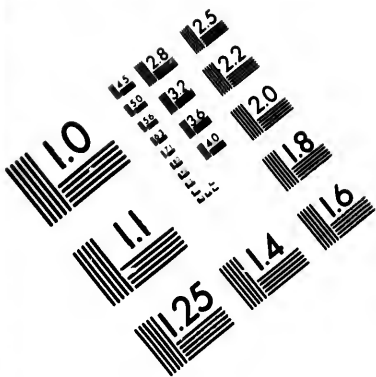
The daily papers carry to perfection the art of selling “sensations.” From the competition that is rife among them, they get the trick of saying things in a style as sharp as the crack of a minie-rifle, chiming exactly with the stir and dash of young blood. You can see how it will help you get rid of your country moderateness; but you must set a “thus far” to this spirited daily editor, or he will spoil your appetite for solid food. He will also teach you to forget, for he is a great gossip who tells to-day what he may have to contradict to-morrow; and he expects you to unload your memory each twenty-four hours, so as to be ready for a new budget.

The English talk about “walking up an appetite.” Your best chance to keep your mental appetite good, is to take a “constitutional” in the shape of at least a few minutes good hard study of a language or a science daily. That, with your Bible study, will keep you from learning to forget.

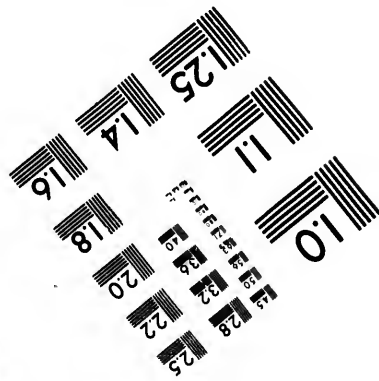
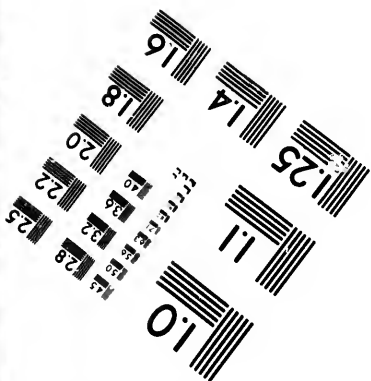
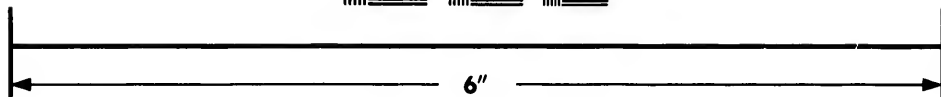
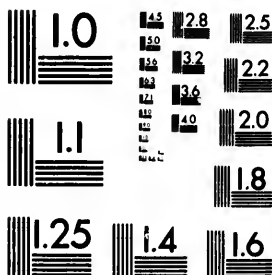
You can tell when you begin to decline in physical strength; but mind shows its pallor and attenuation only to close observers. Others will feel your mental emaciation long before you are conscious of it yourself. Your only safety is to establish your principles of mental hygiene, and live by them loyally.

Your greatest danger will come from the breaking up of your home religious habits. In your old home church, if you were tempted to neglect the regular services, you knew you would be missed, and your absence would be inquired into and commented upon. In the city, as soon as you turn the first corner, on a Sunday morning, you are as certainly lost to observation, as if you were in the wilderness. Nobody knows how you spend your Sabbath. The braces are gone. You are left to your own responsibility. When you are thus cut loose from your moorings, you are apt to drift with wind and tide till you lose your reckoning.





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“Oh, what’s the use of being so narrow and bigoted! One church is just as good as another. It broadens a man’s horizon to hear all sides of a question. You’ve always been tied up to one church; now look around awhile; they are all alike to you here.” If you take that advice, they will soon be all alike to you, sure enough; for you will care for none of them. Another set of influences more pungent and sensational will take you captive.

They say that in India a diseased liver is indicated by an increased appetite for sharp condiments in the curry. The poorer the digestion the more pepper and mustard. There is something like this in morals. When we are near God we relish plain, simple, substantial food; but when we get spiritual dyspepsia and torpidity, we must have a highly flavored, sensational style of preaching and teaching. Thousands have fallen into this snare, and you are no stronger than they.

I never knew a young man come to the

city, and drift about hither and thither, instead of selecting a steady place of worship, who did not fall into a habit of spending his Sabbath afternoons calling upon young ladies, and talking all manner of nonsense. The *bier garten* and Sunday theatre are a not unusual ending of such a course of careless living.

The position you take in regard to the church will do much toward determining your social standing.

While society in the city seems free and unfenced, it is, after all, a conglomerate of little communities, each of which is clearly defined in its limitations. Ordinarily, when one is admitted to a guild he is entitled to all its rights and privileges. When he takes a decided stand for religion by connecting himself with a church, the other members recognize their obligation to look after him socially. The exclusive few may be remiss in their duties, but the more earnest and efficient look after strangers in the congrega-

tion, especially young men, who are more easily entrapped by Satan, and are consequently rarer in church circles.

If you go to the church sociable, you will find some sweet-faced "old maid," or genial matron, coming to introduce herself with an air of cordial interest, and taking special pains to make you feel acquainted and at home. You must appreciate her kindness, and make the most of it; for she has left her pretty home, her books and magazines, that have lain on the table for weeks, waiting for the leisure hour that never comes, besides a choice *coterie* of delightful friends, for this noisy, clattering crowd, that she may make just such strangers as you are pass an agreeable evening, and learn to look toward the church as their social as well as religious home. If she asks you to call, do not hesitate to accept the invitation. She is sincere; for she knows your danger a thousand times better than you do yourself; and for her Master's sake she wants to help you to a safe

standing place in the whirl in which you find yourself.

Select your church. Present your letter. Go to your class and prayer meetings, even if they do not seem exactly like those of the dear old home church. You will get used to the new ways in a little while, and feel quite at home in them; for you will find the Lord's children are the same at heart the world over.

Do not shy any one; but make up your mind to accept and return courtesies, and to do your part toward making others, who come in later than you, feel happy in their new associations. You will find yourself helped more by the little effort you put forth for others, than in any other means of grace. And you will also find, if you take the right course, that these new surroundings help you far more than the old ones did. But, above all, you must be careful of your private religious habits. You must spend some time, daily, in the study of the Bible, and have at

least three seasons of private prayer each day.

Spurgeon said that when he went away to school, and the older boys tormented him, he found in **Christ** a friend who was never too busy to listen to him; one who never made fun of him, and never told.

As careful hygienic habits as are necessary to keep the body in health, will keep the mind and soul safe and sound. The greater the temptation, resisted in God's strength, the more rapid the growth.

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CHAPTER XII.

UNDER DISCIPLINE.

IF you were enrolled as a student in a literary institution, and no difficult lessons were given you, no exercises prescribed, that were meant to correct bad mental habits, you would say, "I do n't see what good all this is going to do me. I came here to learn. These people try hard enough to make me have a pleasant time, but they are not teaching me anything."

If lessons were given you, so difficult that your brain reeled under the tug, you would say, "I need them : and the harder they are, the sooner I will be through, and ready for the actual work of life."

In Christ's school we have everything to learn, and yet we wonder, sometimes, at the

severity of the lessons. We dread the discipline, though we know that our seasons of prosperity are our times of greatest danger. In the old story, the wind and storm strove in vain to steal the traveller's cloak. The more they raved, the more closely he drew it about him; but the sunshine made him loosen its fastenings, and let it slip from his shoulders.

When all is bright, we become so occupied with the Lord's gifts that we forget the Giver. We sin against Him in our ingratitude, and are betrayed into that most hidden and baneful sin, self-trust.

The Lord told Saul, when he was little in his own sight he was made ruler over the tribes of Israel. We feel our weakness, and lean on God for help. He does the work, and lets us stand by and see the result. We rejoice in the success. Friends flatter us, and we forget that God did it all, — we, nothing. We begin to trust our own strength, and just in proportion as we do that, we cripple our-

selves, and lose our chance to be workers together with God.

We attribute our unsuccess~~to~~ to this and that, blaming circumstances, opportunities, our friends and co-workers, anybody, anything, except our own perverse self-trust. Our fault is like an obscure disease that the physician tracks with difficulty. It hides itself under a drawl or whine of self-depreciation, and tries to pass itself off for humility. "Oh, "I'm so unworthy,—such a weak and feeble instrument for the Lord to use!" though we know very well that worthiness and strength, *per se*, are not in us; neither are they requirements of the Lord for His workers; for He has said He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

This counterfeit humility covers self-assertion as a wet cloth does the face of a dead man, and it is a most unsightly thing.

We need to see the infirmity, that we may ask God for its cure.

You have not succeeded in the Lord's work of late as you used to do. Competent judges have pronounced you strong for your years. Your powers have been acknowledged, your services sought after. Lately nobody seems to care for your help, because you fail to bring to pass the things that ought to be done. You prepare yourself more carefully than ever. You try to reinforce your courage by thinking over the commendatory things that have been said of your efforts. All this time you are doing the very opposite of the thing that is the secret of success. Paul says, "When I am weak, then I am strong." When one feels his weakness, then he leans on God, and the work is done. You do not care to be regarded weak. Indeed, if anyone hints at your inadequacy for the work in hand, you are offended. Of course you know you are very weak and unworthy, but you have been trusted to do some things, and they generally came out about right. You have the word of God in your mind and on

your tongue, but like one who has let slip the syllable by which the combination lock of his safe was fastened, you have lost the key by which to open the promises, and make available their resources.

If you would ask God, and believe for the answer, He would whisper again into your soul the word of power! He lets the tempter loose on you a little, to drive you to feel your need of grace. I think the Lord uses Satan as a shepherd does his dog, to start up the sheep that are straying out of the way.

You hear him growl and bark, and you are terrified. Like a silly sheep, you run this way and that, as if you had quite lost your head.

You redouble your zeal. You dash into this and that Christian work. You try to make up in energy what you seem to lack in skill; yet your efforts are unavailing.

You increase your knowledge of holy tactics; but results are nothing at all what they were when you knew much less than

you do now. Trials come. Friends fail. Your way seems hedged on every hand. You cry to God for deliverance, yet the burdens seem to grow heavier. You say with the Psalmist, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me. All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." You begin to question God's love and power,—to doubt His care for His own work. You have given yourself wholly to Him. You have sacrificed everything that you knew to give for His cause. You cannot understand His apparent indifference. You certainly pray enough. Whole nights are spent in restless, importunate prayer. Please permit me a few suggestions. The Lord make them helpful to you in these days of discipline.

Cast not away your confidence. God's interest in His own children is above challenge. You dare not think the opposite of that. Hold steadily your faith in Him, though the heavens fall. Use your common sense. Settle it that your trials are disciplin-

ary. They are meant to correct your faults. Now search for the unsoundness. It lies far beneath the surface, else you would have had it set right long ago. It takes deep, severe probing to find it; but God has taken you in hand in answer to that prayer of yours, "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults:" and He is not going to let you go with a half healing. When we desire it, He makes thorough work. Ask the Holy Spirit to search you, and see if there be any wicked way in you. Bring your motives to the straight-edge of the Word of God. Surrender unconditionally every controverted point. Choose the Divine Will unflinchingly, because you know it is right, always and only right. You seem to be losing what property you have, and your chance to make more. If God sees you can do more for Him without a dollar, choose to have Him take it all. Oh, but he lets others, who are better than you hope to be, keep their property. "What is that to thee?" Christ says,

“follow thou Me.” He had not where to lay His head; and He may mean to promote you by placing you on His staff, in this war; —giving you the fare He chose for Himself. The disciple is not above his Lord.

“But I had so many plans for His work.” He makes His own plans. The Captain of our Salvation orders the campaign. Who are you, to dare touch His part of the work? “But it hurts to give all this up.” Then you have found one unsound spot. Let the blood of healing so cure you that there will be no pain in choosing the Lord’s will in everything.

You have often sung:—

“Perish every fond ambition,
All I’ve sought, or hoped, or known.”

The Lord has taken you at your word, and is answering the prayer. You have asked Him to help you

“Learn to scorn the praise of men,
And learn to lose with God.
For Jesus won the world through shame,
And beckons us that road.”

That is fine devotional sentiment; it seems quite another thing when it comes into every day life. These losses and crosses, property taking wings, and friends turning the cold shoulder, are meant to teach you the mocking poverty of worldly gain and honors.

You think you have learned the lesson, and yet the rod is not removed. As long as the discipline continues you may be sure its purpose is not yet accomplished. God is infinitely more anxious to have you relieved from chastisement than you are to be free from the pain. Scrutinize yet more carefully your motives. Choose the will of God, even at your own cost, yet more resolutely. And, after all, you must overcome inner as well as outer enemies by faith. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you what you need to know, what the chastening is meant to drive you to learn. Trust Him to answer the prayer. Believe that He works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Thank Him for the discipline, and for the lesson. Trust

Him to deliver you from the trial when He sees it best, and go on like a happy child, rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks.

We are in a hostile land, on an enemy's shore. The world is in revolt against our King, and it is the one thing to be done by those who are loyal, to bring all the rest back to their allegiance. War is not a holiday business, nor a gala day amusement. We must learn to endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must stand, and, having done all, stand.

Clan Grant in Scotland furnished for the Napoleonic and Crimean wars, soldiers who seemed invincible. Wellington said of his Highlanders, "They can run beside a trooper all day, live on a handful of meal, sleep in the snow, and fight always for victory." The device on the banner of Clan Grant was a crag rising out of a moor; and over it was the legend, "Stand fast, Crag Allache!" And that was the battle-cry of the clan, "Stand

fast, Crag Allache!" Ruskin says of it, "Though mortised into the backbone of the earth, Crag Allache might give way, but Clan Grant, never!" The cry comes ringing down the lines of Christ's war-worn veterans, "Stand fast in the Lord!"

CHAPTER XIII.

AT YOUR BEST.

WE dare not question the fact that God would have us at our best, every hour of every day of every year. There never will come a time when we can relax our hygienic habits, and let our bodies grow weak and helpless for lack of care, our minds nerveless and inactive, and our souls feeble and sickly, without knowing that we are living, not according to the will of God, but against its declared dicta. The word must always be, "No step backward, but always onward, steadily, right on!"

Growth is one of the basal laws that represent to us the Divine will. When we cease to grow we begin to die.

Spiritual growth underlies the prosperity

of mind and body. We seldom feel the "ought" holding us to the care of our physical life till we understand that this is a religious duty. Our best intellectual quickenings and uplifts come to us through the direct illumination of the Holy Spirit, stirring us to know and do that we may the better glorify God.

Hence, if we would be at our best in body and mind, we must keep near the Lord, growing always in His grace and knowledge.

One indication of spiritual growth is the mastery of our prejudice, that seems an infirmity that hardly has moral quality, because quite out of our reach; — like the color of our eyes, determined by the constitution of things, and altogether changeless. Not so. If we have a prejudice against one, we prejudge him. From some unfortunate act of his that has come to our knowledge, some misinterpretation that has been given by a careless acquaintance, we pass judgment upon him; and, though we may be too well trained to

speaking ill of him, in our private thinking he is always a person not to be loved, or trusted, or honored. Now this is a violation of a direct command, "Judge not." It is, also, altogether out of harmony with the charity that thinketh no evil. Much of our discipline is meant to cure us of this, and similar infirmities. The only remedy is in a direct Divine healing touch, and that may be had in answer to believing prayer.

If we keep at our best it must be indicated by constant improvement in spiritual things; and in nothing is this more manifest than in the increase of our faith. We must learn directness in prayer. I have known Protestants who went over their daily "subjects of prayer," as formally as any Romanist could do. When they became earnest in some request they were moved to present, they seemed to rack their rhetoric to find forms in which to present the petition, and yet avoid using exactly the same words every time.

As you grow in faith you come to understand

that God is a Person, to be addressed accordingly. You will learn to state your requests in plain, simple, direct speech; believing that He prompted the prayer, that it is according to His will, that He hears, and that consequently you have the petitions. Tennyson says, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." More things might be wrought by prayer than we have ever dreamed of. What about the removing of mountains, the subduing of kingdoms, the putting to flight the armies of the aliens? If we are at our best, we will be growing toward the ability to do valiantly in God's strength. There is an active, as well as passive, attitude, for the believer. It takes severe discipline to teach him to lie quietly in the hands of the Lord; and when He is once completely subdued, it seems to take as sharp a goading to make him use his strength on the enemy. He must learn to be like the sling, and also like the slinger's arm. The waves had to wash over the pebble, back and

forth, back and forth, year in and year out, to bring it to sufficient smoothness, so that it would go straight to the mark. At last one whirl of the sling, and one jerk of the slinger's arm, sent it crashing through the skull of the giant.

You little know your own possibilities. Steam, when left to itself, floated out upon the air in clouds, pretty, and useless; but when caught, and held, and turned upon machinery, it was found to be equal to the work of the world. When Watt watched the lifting of the tea-kettle lid, little did he dream that he was on the track of a principle that would, one day, draw millions of tons over seas, across continents, through mountains, never tiring, never resting, leaving human brain and muscle with leisure for higher achievements.

We are sent to school to learn the use of speech,—in the Lord's school we learn the power of silence. They only are strong who can rule their own spirit, holding their

strength till the Lord gives the word to speak.

When the soul is full of indignation against wrong, burning words will slip their leash and dart forth, in spite of judgment and will, unless one has himself well in hand. I remember a scene on a convention floor where a strong advocate of a good cause was thrown off his guard by the tantalizing questions of one who was evidently determined to drive him from his position by fair means or foul. He fenced well for a little while, till his sensibilities were stung by a specially provoking question. Then he forgot himself, and gave the rein to his sarcasm. He gave his opponent a sharp, well-deserved rebuke, but he lost his cause. If he had held steady under that last galling fire, he would probably have won.

Do you know how William of Orange came to be called "the Silent?" A gay young nobleman, he was riding one day with a French prince, when the latter laid open to

him a scheme that the kings of southwestern Europe had on the *tapis* for the destruction of the Protestants in Holland. The iron entered William's soul; but he did not betray himself by so much as the twitch of a muscle. From that hour, however, his will was set as a flint to save his country. He stood like a Gibraltar against the storm of persecution that burst upon the Netherlands. He is recognized not only as a fearless, self-sacrificing patriot, but a statesman of the first rank. We associate his greatness with his power over himself, keeping silence when another would have spoken, and, by speaking, ruined the cause for which he stood.

The Lord Jesus Christ gave us an example of self-control. The impulsive and erratic Peter resented the indignities heaped upon the Master, and striking about with his sword, he cut off a man's ear. Christ, though staggering under the load of that awful, redemptive agony, stopped, and by miracle repaired the damage that His servant had

done, reminding him that He could bring twelve legions of His own strong angels upon the field by a wave of the hand.

In bringing us to our best, God gives us easier or heavier lessons according to the stuff of which we are made, and the work He has for us to do. The lapidary gives weeks to the polishing of a diamond, while a cheaper stone can be finished in far less time.

Before He puts into our hands the best work of which we are capable, He tests our strength to the utmost, and also our reliability. In the testing-room of a watch factory, I saw watches that were being proved before they were allowed to "time" railway trains, where the loss of a minute might destroy a hundred lives. They had to stand on their heads and lie on their faces, to be shut up in ice-chests, and then in hot ovens. Their value depended upon their unvarying reliability. When we ask God to use us for large work, the first question is, "Can you drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism?"

If we answer, "We are able," we may expect such testings as will give ample exercise for our faith, till we have shown that we are dead, and our lives hid with Christ in God.

Peter had an energetic, fiery soul, capable of taking in so much of God, that under his first sermon after the Pentecostal baptism, three thousand were converted. With his natural leadership, he must have come to think himself somewhat essential to the imperilled infant church. The Lord had to teach him that the excellency of the power is not of men, but of God, and no flesh can glory in His presence. So the first thing Bishop Peter knew, he was in prison, with a strong probability of losing his head. No doubt he had something of a struggle to get the care of the church back where it belonged, in the hands of the Lord. He reached the point of perfect submission and rest in God, for he lay asleep between two soldiers, when the angel touched him, and led him out of the prison, the great iron gate swinging open before him of its own accord.

Only through the infinite grace of God can one learn to be so submissive that for Christ's sake he will become the servant of all, never asserting himself, or "standing up for his rights"; and at the same time using every power to its utmost in aggressive war for the conquest of the world for his Master. The two *roles* seem utterly incompatible; and so they are except by the power of the Lord Jesus. The only way that one can master this paradox, is to be dead to self and sin, and alive unto God. He will find the more completely "dead" he is, the more fully "alive" he will be. He will seek nothing for himself, but every dollar, every hour, every ounce of strength, will be made to do its utmost for the Lord.

A successful preacher was asked how he prepared and preached his sermons. He said, "I prepare as carefully as if I had it all to do; then I trust God as completely as if I had made no preparation at all." That may illustrate your consecration to the Lord.

You use your powers as carefully and skillfully as if all depended upon your efforts; and at the same time, you trust Him as if you never expected to do another stroke of work, and had actually done nothing.

This seems like giving you who are just fairly beginning the earnest work and study of life, advanced lessons, such as are understood only by those in whose hair the pelting snowballs have caught. Yet I believe in holding before each a high ideal, from the first. Read only the best authors, if you would learn to express yourself properly. Listen often to classical music, if you would form a correct musical taste. Study the best pictures, if you would learn to discriminate in works of art.

So in spiritual things: instead of looking into the life of a frail, selfish, average professor of piety, and thinking that is as well as you need ever hope to do, associate in thought with the best and highest. Better still, keep before your mind the Model Young Man of

Galilee. As He was in the world, so are you. Your Elder Brother,—study Him, imitate Him, and let Him dwell in your heart by faith. You can do all things through His strength. You can be more than conqueror through Him that hath loved you and given Himself for you. His gift of love to you is, not only eternal life beyond the grave, but the privilege of representing Him even in this life where people are so crooked and perverse.

I remember a legend of a prince who had promised to send the princess whom he was to marry, a valuable betrothal present. When it came, and was taken from the box, behold it was only an iron egg. She was displeased and threw it down. When it struck the marble floor, it burst open, showing a silver case. She took it up and began to examine it, and presently she touched a spring that opened the case, and disclosed a golden yolk. After a little that was opened by another spring, and within it was a crown of rubies, and within that a diamond ring—the be-

trothal ring. Christ's token of love to us is in the form of severe discipline, testing our trust in Him, or plain, simple, hard work, which we may do from love to Him. If we receive the gift, and make the most of it for His sake, we shall find within it the crown of our royalty, — kings and priests unto God, — and the ring that makes us His own forever.

May the Lord give each one of my class of twenty thousand an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

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