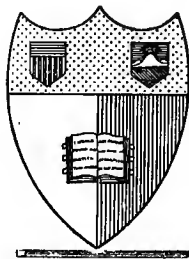




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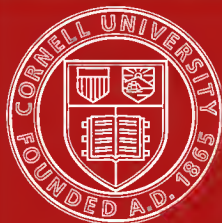
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*Orison Swett Marden*



## PREFACE

“Experience,” says the proverb, “is a dear school, and none but fools learn therein.” The inference is that to be wise one must suffer himself to be taught by the experience of others. This volume contains the life stories, told by themselves, of many successful men and women, with emphasis on those experiences which to them appear to have been the turning points in their lives.

It is not likely that there is anywhere in existence a similar collection of heart-to-heart talks with distinguished people of equal value to this. The idea of requesting the leaders in invention, manufacture, transportation, commerce, finance, in political and public life, and in the professions of the ministry, the law, literature and art, to bequeath in their own words the stories of their lives, their ideals, and the lessons of their experience, to the American public, originated with Orison Swett Marden, and contributed in no small degree to the immediate and remarkable popularity of *SUCCESS*, in which many of these interviews first appeared. The early files of the magazine are long since exhausted, but the interest in, and demand for, these articles is sufficient assurance that they are of enduring merit, and deserve to be collected in permanent form.

## Preface

We regard them as a trust. We do not feel that we have a right to withhold them from the public. We have accordingly fulfilled our obligation by presenting them in attractive form, and we are well assured that young and old alike who are striving to attain their ideals in life will recognize the fact that the highest form of self-interest will lead them to read and absorb the practical helpfulness contained in these pages. Many and varied careers have been selected, so that each one may find his ideal of success fulfilled in real life, and be aroused to a lofty aspiration and resolute determination to achieve like eminence. With Emerson we say, "Hitch your wagon to a star," and, with Lowell, "Not failure, but low aim, is crime."

While for the most part the experiences portrayed in this book occurred upon American soil, in several instances persons born or now living abroad, but prominently identified with American life, have been included.

We acknowledge our indebtedness to the publishers of the "Literary Digest," of "Collier's Weekly," of the "American Review of Reviews," and others who kindly loaned valuable photographs for reproduction, and also to members of the SUCCESS editorial staff for valuable assistance in the preparation of this volume.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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## INTRODUCTION

Apelles, the great artist, traveled all over Greece for years, studying the fairest points of beautiful women, getting here an eye, there a forehead, and there a nose, here a grace and there a turn of beauty, for his famous portrait of a perfect woman which enchanted the world. It was not a portrait, not an imaginary ideal head, but a composite, a combination from the most perfect features he could find. By combining the perfect points, the graceful curves, the lines of beauty of many individuals, he made his wonderful painting.

The great artist knew that all elements of beauty and perfection of physical form could not be found in one person. He knew, too, that some of the most perfect features and beautiful curves would be found in women who were on the whole anything but beautiful—perhaps repulsive.

The editors of this volume have been for many years in quest of the elements of a grand, healthy, symmetrical, successful man—the ideal man. They knew at the beginning that it would be impossible to find any one man who would illustrate all these points of perfection, who would combine in perfect degree all the success qualities, but they have found in scores of men who have achieved something worth while qualities which, put together, would make a composite ideal man, a man



## Introduction

who, in the evolution of civilization, will, perhaps, sometime be possible. Usually, in men who have risen to eminence, some one quality or virtue shines conspicuous, often accompanied with defects, perhaps great weakness, which, to gain the lesson, we must ignore.

The editors have found here a man illustrative of perseverance, here one marked by undaunted ambition, there a life where grit overcame all obstacles, and another where the quick grasping of opportunities led to noble achievement.

They have interviewed successful men and women in the various vocations, trying to get at the secret of their success, the reasons for their advancement. These varied life stories will give the reader the material for constructing the composite character—the ideal man or woman—one that shall combine all the best virtues and qualities, whose imitation will help to insure a useful, profitable and honored life. This composite man will not be a one-sided specialist. He will not be a man cursed with any great weakness. He will be a man raised to the highest power, symmetrical, self-centered, equipoised, ever master of himself.

It does not follow that every man whose name appears in this book is a model in every respect. Napoleon was not a model character, and yet he exemplifies some success qualities in his career in an almost ideal degree.

What question, arising from individual experience, from family life, or from daily observation within the

## Introduction

community, is of more poignant human interest than the query: "Why do some men succeed, while others fail?" and the allied question: "What constitutes success in life, and how may it be attained?"

An analysis of the ideals and achievements of these leaders in invention, commerce and finance, in public affairs, and in literature, the arts, and the professions, as set forth by themselves, seems to reveal certain salient life lessons well worthy of most careful consideration. First, it would appear that without exception every successful man or woman at some period of his or her life, whether early or late, has formed a life purpose, and has registered a solemn vow to achieve something more than ordinary in the world. An exception to this rule appears to obtain in the cases of men or women possessed of a strong natural bent or talent, the exercise of which is an instinctive craving that will not be denied. This determination to be or to achieve, or this instinctive bent of thought and action, appears to be the first indication of greatness, and the turning point in great careers.

The next most obvious lesson to be drawn from a careful study of these interviews seems to be, that once a determination to succeed is made, and the first steps, however humble, have been entered upon in the new career, the subject commences to take an *interest* amounting to positive pleasure in the tasks and duties incident to his chosen life work.

The far-away goal of success, with its reward of

## Introduction

fame, wealth, and all that money can procure, appears to fade from the worker's sight as he advances toward it, and the incitement to labor for material reward is lost in the joy of congenial labor for its own sake. The player loses sight of the hope of victory in the mere zest of the game. This note appears again and again in the life stories of great workers as revealed by themselves, and accounts for the spectacle, so puzzling to many, of the master of millions apparently grasping for more millions in his declining years. There can be no content with present achievement, however great, because all who have achieved great things have discovered that the ends sought are lost in the value of the faculties developed by the search, and they hence seek, not additional reward of toil, but rather the pleasurable exercise of the chase. The joy of labor will not permit men to lay down the harness and relinquish effort this side the grave.

A determination to succeed once formed, and a congenial career once chosen and entered upon, there commences a process of character-building by the formation of life habits. These solidify into personal characteristics, the varying assortment of which in the individual constitutes what we call his personality, wherein one man differs from another. Character, it has been wisely said, is the resultant of choices. It appears again and again in the reminiscences of those who have succeeded, that from time to time they have deliberately chosen a course of action which by force

## Introduction

of habit has become a personal characteristic, and has earned them national, if not world-wide, reputation. The name of "Honest" John Wanamaker stands for a reputation having a commercial value of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The acorn from which grew this mighty oak was a young man's choice of honesty as the foundation of his career.

Books and essays by the score and hundred have been written by theorists upon the principles of success in life. Worthy as are many of the writers, their lives often illustrate the adage of the poet, "It were easier to tell twenty what were good to be done than to be one of the twenty to follow mine own teachings." Boldly contrasted with such writings are the flesh and blood maxims herein contained, stamped with the mint marks of great personalities, towering mountainous among their fellows, each coined from the life habits which have hardened into enduring character, and have left their impress upon the history of our times.

In a drawing-room or public assemblage he would indeed be unambitious and mean-spirited, who would not choose the company and conversation of the greatest and the best. Carlyle says, "Great men taken up in any way are profitable company." What privilege could promise equal pleasure and profit with a series of visits at the homes of the most notable personages our land contains, to consult with each on the great questions of success or failure, of what constitutes ideal success, and of how it may be attained?

## Introduction

Such is the privilege contemplated by this volume and freely offered to all who choose to avail themselves of it. Compared with the inspiration, the examples and the wise counsel contained within its covers, the cost of such a volume sinks into insignificance. Benjamin Franklin said that the reading of one good book made him what he was. Henry Clay testified, "to the fact that in the midst of her early poverty my mother provided her home with a few choice books, do I owe my success in life." Senator Dolliver, in the present volume, regards a chance-found book as the turning point of his career, and like testimony is all but universal. Let the young and the guardians of youth weigh well the thought that there are sins of omission, as well as of commission, and that it may be hardly a less criminal negligence to refuse fit books for the growing mind than food for the growing body.

Quite aside from considerations of profit and duty are the considerations of pleasure offered by a volume of this character. It is a truism that truth is stranger than fiction. The romance of reality is the most thrilling of all romances, and there is a peculiar fascination associated with those glimpses of the inner man which are revealed by a speaker who sets forth his own life story, and places his own interpretation upon it. From this view point, "Little Visits" possesses a wealth of suggestion and of information, alike valuable and interesting to readers of all ages and of every walk in life.

## Introduction

The dominant note of this book, is inspiration; its keynote, helpfulness.

We have tried to drive home every precept and lesson with stirring and inspiring stories of great lives which show that men and women are the architects of their own fortunes, and which will explode the excuses of those who think they have no chance in life. It shows that necessity has ever been the priceless spur that has urged man to struggle with his destiny and develop his greatest strength.

We think the reader will find in these pages the composite character, the all-round success. We have tried to show that there is something better than making a living, and that is making a life—that a man may make millions and be a failure still.

We have shown that a man to succeed must be greater than his calling, that he must overtop his vocation. We have tried to teach that the really successful man must be greater than the book he writes, than the patient he treats, than the goods he sells, than the cause he pleads in the courts—that manhood is above all titles, greater than any career.

THE EDITOR.

**BOOK ONE**

**INSPIRATIONAL TALKS**

**WITH FAMOUS AMERICANS.**

## Success Maxims

The tissue of the life to be  
We weave with colors all our own,  
And in the field of destiny  
We reap as we have sown.

—WHITTIER.

No man is born into this world whose work is not born with him.—LOWELL.

If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door.—EMERSON.

Character is power—is influence; it makes friends, creates funds, draws patronage and support, and opens a sure and easy way to wealth, honor and happiness.—J. HAWES.

To be thrown upon one's own resources is to be cast into the very lap of fortune.—FRANKLIN.

There is no road to success but through a clear, strong purpose. A purpose underlies character, culture, position, attainment of whatever sort.—T. T. MUNGER.

Heaven never helps the man who will not act.—SOPHOCLES.

The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do, without a thought of fame.—LONGFELLOW.

The longer I live, the more deeply am I convinced that that which makes the difference between one man and another—between the weak and powerful, the great and insignificant, is energy—invincible determination—a purpose once formed, and then death or victory.—FOWELL BUXTON.

In the measure in which thou seekest to do thy duty shalt thou know what is in thee. But what is thy duty? The demand of the hour.—GOETHE.

A strong, defiant purpose is many-handed, and lays hold of whatever is near that can serve it; it has a magnetic power that draws to itself whatever is kindred.—T. T. MUNGER.



# I

## Hard Work : the Secret of a Great Inventor's Genius.

**T**O discover the opinion of Thomas A. Edison concerning what makes and constitutes success in life is an easy matter, if one can only discover Mr. Edison. I camped three weeks in the vicinity of Orange, N. J., awaiting the opportunity to come upon the great inventor and voice my questions. It seemed a rather hopeless and discouraging affair until he was really before me ; but, truth to say, he is one of the most accessible of men, and only reluctantly allows himself to be hedged in by the pressure of endless affairs. "Mr. Edison is always glad to see any visitor," said a gentleman who is constantly with him, "except when he is hot on the trail of something he has been working for, and then it is as much as a man's head is worth to come in on him." He certainly was not hot on the trail of anything on the morning when, for seemingly the tenth time, I rang at the gate in the fence which surrounds the laboratory on Valley Road, Orange. A young man appeared, who conducted me up the walk to the elegant office and library of the great laboratory. It is a place, this library, not to be passed through without thought, for with a further

## Thomas Alva Edison

store of volumes in his home, it contains one of the most costly and well-equipped scientific libraries in the world; the collection of writings on patent laws and patents, for instance, is absolutely exhaustive. It gives, at a glance, an idea of the breadth of the thought and sympathy of this man who grew up with scarcely a common school education.

On the second floor, in one of the offices of the machine-shop, I was asked to wait, while a grimy youth disappeared with my card, which he said he would "slip under the door of Mr. Edison's office." "Curious," I thought; "what a lord this man must be if they dare not even knock at his door!"

Thinking of this and gazing out of the window, I waited until a working man, who had entered softly, came up beside me. He looked with a sort of "Well, what is it?" in his eyes, and quickly it began to come to me that the man in the sooty, oil-stained clothes was Edison himself. The working garb seemed rather incongruous, but there was no mistaking the broad forehead, with its shock of blackish hair streaked with gray. The gray eyes, too, were revelations in the way of alert comprehensiveness.

"Oh!" was all I could get out at the time.

"Want to see me?" he said, smiling in the most youthful and genial way.

"Why,—yes, certainly, to be sure," I stammered.

He looked at me blankly.

"You'll have to talk louder," said an assistant who

## The "Wizard of Electricity"

worked in another portion of the room; "he don't hear well."

### HIS GRANDFATHER WAS A BANKER.

This fact was new to me, but I raised my voice with celerity and piped thereafter in an exceedingly shrill key. After the usual humdrum opening remarks, in which he acknowledged with extreme good nature his age as fifty-five years, and that he was born in Erie county, O., of Dutch parentage, the family having emigrated to America in 1730, the particulars began to grow more interesting. His great-grandfather, I learned, was a banker of high standing in New York; and, when Thomas was but a child of seven years, the family fortune suffered reverses so serious as to make it necessary that he should become a wage-earner at an unusually early age, and that the family should move from his birth-place to Michigan.

"Did you enjoy mathematics as a boy?" I asked.

"Not much," he replied. "I tried to read Newton's 'Principia' at the age of eleven. That disgusted me with pure mathematics, and I don't wonder now. I should not have been allowed to take up such serious work."

"You were anxious to learn?"

"Yes, indeed. I attempted to read through the entire Free Library at Detroit, but other things interfered before I had done."

## Thomas Alva Edison

"Were you a book-worm and dreamer?" I questioned.

"Not at all," he answered, using a short, jerky method, as though he were unconsciously checking himself up. "I became a newsboy, and liked the work. Made my first *coup* as a newsboy.

"What was it?" I ventured.

"I bought up on 'futures' a thousand copies of the 'Detroit Free Press' containing important war news,—gained a little time on my rivals, and sold the entire batch like hot cakes. The price reached twenty-five cents a copy before the end of the route," and he laughed. "I ran the 'Grand Trunk Herald,' too, at that time—a little paper I issued from the train."

### HIS FIRST EXPERIMENTS.

"When did you begin to be interested in inventions?" I questioned.

"Well," he said, "I began to dabble in chemistry at that time. I fitted up a small laboratory on the train."

In reference to this, Mr. Edison subsequently admitted that, during the progress of some occult experiments in this workshop, certain complications ensued in which a jolted and broken bottle of sulphuric acid attracted the attention of the conductor. He, who had been long suffering in the matter of unearthly odors, promptly ejected the young devotee and all his works. This incident would have been only amusing but for its relation to and explanation of his deafness. A box

## The "Wizard of Electricity"

on the ear, administered by the irate conductor, caused the lasting deafness.

"What was your first work in a practical line?" I went on.

"A telegraph line between my home and another boy's, I made with the help of an old river cable, some stove-pipe wire, and glass-bottle insulators. I had my laboratory in the cellar and studied telegraphy outside."

"What was the first really important thing you did?"

"I saved a boy's life."

"How?"

"The boy was playing on the track near the depot. I saw he was in danger and caught him, getting out of the way just in time. His father was station-master, and taught me telegraphy in return."

Dramatic situations appear at every turn of this man's life, though, temperamentally, it is evident that he would be the last to seek them. He seems to have been continually arriving on the scene at critical moments, and always with the good sense to take things in his own hands. The chance of learning telegraphy only gave him a chance to show how apt a pupil he was, and the railroad company soon gave him regular employment. He himself admits that, at seventeen, he had become one of the most expert operators on the road.

"Did you make much use of your inventive talent at this time?" I questioned.

"Yes," he answered. "I invented an automatic attachment for my telegraph instrument which would

## Thomas Alva Edison

send in the signal to show I was awake at my post, when I was comfortably snoring in a corner. I didn't do much of that, though," he went on; "for some such boyish trick sent me in disgrace over the line into Canada."

### A NOVEL METHOD OF TELEGRAPHING.

"Were you there long?"

"Only a winter. If it's incident you want, I can tell you one of that time. The place where I was and Sarnia, the American town, were cut off from telegraph and other means of communication by the storms until I got at a locomotive whistle and tooted a telegraphic message. I had to do it again and again, but eventually they understood it over the water and answered in the same way."

According to his own and various recorded accounts, Edison was successively in charge of important wires in Memphis, Cincinnati, New Orleans and Louisville. He lived in the free-and-easy atmosphere of the tramp operators—a boon companion with them, yet absolutely refusing to join in the dissipations to which they were addicted. So highly esteemed was he for his honesty that it was the custom of his colleagues, when a spree was on hand, to make him the custodian of those funds which they felt obliged to save. On a more than usually hilarious occasion, one of them returned rather the worse for wear, and knocked the treasurer down on his refusal to deliver the trust money; the other depositors,

## The "Wizard of Electricity"

we are glad to note, gave the ungentlemanly tippler a sound thrashing.

"Were you good at saving your own money?" I asked.

"No," he said, smiling. "I never was much for saving money, as money. I devoted every cent, regardless of future needs, to scientific books and materials for experiments."

"You believe that an excellent way to succeed?"

"Well, it helped me greatly to future success."

"What was your next invention?" I inquired.

"An automatic telegraph recorder—a machine which enabled me to record dispatches at leisure, and send them off as fast as needed."

"How did you come to hit upon that?"

"Well, at the time, I was in such straits that I had to walk from Memphis to Louisville. At the Louisville station they offered me a place. I had perfected a style of handwriting which would allow me to take legibly from the wire, long hand, forty-seven and even fifty-four words a minute, but I was only a moderately rapid sender. I had to do something to help me on that side, and so I thought out that little device."

Later, he pointed out an article by one of his biographers, in which a paragraph, referring to this Louisville period, says:—

"True to his dominant instincts, he was not long in gathering around him a laboratory, printing office and machine shop. He took press reports during his whole

## Thomas Alva Edison

stay, including, on one occasion, the Presidential message, by Andrew Johnson, and this at one sitting, from 3:30 P. M. to 4:30 A. M.

"He then paraphrased the matter he had received over the wires, so that printers had exactly three lines each, thus enabling them to set up a column in two or three minutes' time. For this, he was allowed all the exchanges he desired, and the Louisville press gave him a state dinner."

"How did you manage to attract public attention to your ability?" I questioned.

"I didn't manage," said the Wizard. "Some things I did create comment. A device that I invented which utilized one submarine cable for two circuits, caused considerable talk, and the Franklin telegraph office of Boston gave me a position."

It is related of this, Mr. Edison's first trip east, that he came with no ready money and in a rather dilapidated condition. His colleagues were tempted by his "hayseed" appearance to "salt" him, as professional slang terms the process of giving a receiver matter faster than he can record it. For this purpose, the new man was assigned to a wire manipulated by a New York operator famous for his speed. But there was no fun at all. Notwithstanding the fact that the New Yorker was in the game and was doing his most speedy clip, Edison wrote out the long message accurately, and, when he realized the situation, was soon firing taunts over the wire at the sender's slowness.



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### HIS FIRST PATENT.

"Had you patented many things up to the time of your coming east?" I queried.

"Nothing," said the inventor, ruminatively. "I received my first patent in 1869."

"For what?"

"A machine for recording votes and designed to be used in the State Legislature."

"I didn't know such machines were in use," I ventured.

"They ar'n't," he answered, with a merry twinkle. "The better it worked, the more impossible it was; the sacred right of the minority, you know,—couldn't filibuster if they used it,—didn't use it."

"Oh!"

"Yes, it was an ingenious thing. Votes were clearly pointed and shown on a roll of paper, by a small machine attached to the desk of each member. I was made to learn that such an innovation was out of the question, but it taught me something."

"And that was?"

"To be sure of the practical need of, and demand for, a machine, before expending time and energy on it."

"Is that one of your maxims of success?"

"It is."

In this same year, Edison came from Boston to New York, friendless and in debt on account of the expenses of his experiment. For several weeks he wandered about the town with actual hunger staring him in the

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face. It was a time of great financial excitement, and with that strange quality of Fortunism, which seems to be his chief characteristic, he entered the establishment of the Law Gold Reporting Company just as their entire plant had shut down on account of an accident in the machinery that could not be located. The heads of the firm were anxious and excited to the last degree, and a crowd of the Wall street fraternity waited about for the news which came not. The shabby stranger put his finger on the difficulty at once, and was given lucrative employment. In the rush of the metropolis, a man finds his true level without delay, especially when his talents are of so practical and brilliant a nature as were this young telegrapher's. It would be an absurdity to imagine an Edison hidden in New York. Within a short time, he was presented with a check for \$40,000, as his share of a single invention—an improved stock printer. From this time, a national reputation was assured him. He was, too, now engaged upon the duplex and quadruplex systems—systems for sending two and four messages at the same time over a single wire,—which were to inaugurate almost a new era in telegraphy.

### POVERTY AS AN INCENTIVE TO EFFORT.

Recalling the incident of the Law Gold Reporting Company, I inquired: "Do you believe want urges a man to greater efforts and so to greater success?"

"It certainly makes him keep a sharp lookout. I think it does push a man along."

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"Do you believe that invention is a gift, or an acquired ability?"

"I think it's born in a man."

"And don't you believe that familiarity with certain mechanical conditions and defects naturally suggest improvements to any one?"

"No. Some people may be perfectly familiar with a machine all their days, knowing it inefficient, and never see a way to improve it."

"What do you think is the first requisite for success in your field, or any other?"

"The ability to apply your physical and mental energies to one problem incessantly without growing weary."

"Do you have regular hours, Mr. Edison?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, "I do not work hard now. I come to the laboratory about eight o'clock every day and go home to tea at six, and then I study or work on some problem until eleven, which is my hour for bed."

"Fourteen or fifteen hours a day can scarcely be called loafing," I suggested.

"Well," he replied, "for fifteen years I have worked on an average of twenty hours a day."

That astonishing brain has been known to puzzle itself for sixty consecutive hours over a refractory problem, its owner dropping quietly off into a long sleep when the job was done, to awake perfectly refreshed and ready for another siege. Mr. Dickson, a neighbor and familiar, gives an anecdote told by Edison which

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well illustrates his untiring energy and phenomenal endurance. In describing his Boston experience, Edison said he bought Faraday's works on electricity, commenced to read them at three o'clock in the morning and continued until his room-mate arose, when they started on their long walk to get breakfast. That object was entirely subordinated in Edison's mind to Faraday, and he suddenly remarked to his friend: "Adams, I have got so much to do, and life is so short, that I have got to hustle," and with that he started off on a dead run for his breakfast.

NEVER DID ANYTHING WORTH WHILE BY CHANCE.

"Are your discoveries often brilliant intuitions? Do they come to you while you are lying awake nights?" I asked him.

"I never did anything worth doing by accident," he replied, "nor did any of my inventions come indirectly through accident, except the phonograph. No, when I have fully decided that a result is worth getting, I go about it, and make trial after trial, until it comes.

"I have always kept," continued Mr. Edison, "strictly within the lines of commercially useful inventions. I have never had any time to put on electrical wonders, valuable only as novelties to catch the popular fancy."

"What makes you work?" I asked with real curiosity. "What impels you to this constant, tireless struggle? You have shown that you care comparatively nothing for the money it makes you, and you have no

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particular enthusiasm for the attending fame. What is it?"

"I like it," he answered, after a moment of puzzled expression. "I don't know any other reason. Anything I have begun is always on my mind, and I am not easy while away from it, until it is finished; and then I hate it."

"Hate it?" I said.

"Yes," he affirmed, "when it is all done and is a success, I can't bear the sight of it. I haven't used a telephone in ten years, and I would go out of my way any day to miss an incandescent light."

"You lay down rather severe rules for one who wishes to succeed in life," I ventured, "working eighteen hours a day."

"Not at all," he said. "You do something all day long, don't you? Every one does. If you get up at seven o'clock and go to bed at eleven, you have put in sixteen good hours, and it is certain with most men that they have been doing something all the time. They have been either walking, or reading, or writing, or thinking. The only trouble is that they do it about a great many things and I do it about one. If they took the time in question and applied it in one direction, to one object, they would succeed. Success is sure to follow such application. The trouble lies in the fact that people do not have an object—one thing to which they stick, letting all else go."

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### OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE INVENTORS.

"You believe, of course," I suggested, "that much remains to be discovered in the realm of electricity?"

"It is the field of fields," he answered. "We can't talk of that, but it holds the secret which will reorganize the life of the world."

"You have discovered much about it," I said, smiling.

"Yes," he said, "and yet very little in comparison with the possibilities that appear."

"How many inventions have you patented?"

"Only six hundred," he answered, "but I have made application for some three hundred more."

"And do you expect to retire soon, after all this?"

"I hope not," he said, almost pathetically. "I hope I will be able to work right on to the close. I shouldn't care to loaf."

Shouldn't care to loaf! What a thought after fifty-two years of such magnificent achievement.

### THE WIZARD AT HOME.

While the inventions of Thomas A. Edison keep him constantly in the public eye, as a man in private life he is comparatively unknown. If you should see him in his laboratory, buried deep in work, surrounded by battalions of machines and hosts of experimental appliances, dressed in his "shop clothes" spotted with chemicals, you would never suspect that, just seven hundred feet away, a palatial home awaits him.

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Ten years ago he was an undomesticated man. His workshop and his chemical laboratory held such powerful sway over his mind that he was only supremely happy when "up to his eyes" in work. Gradually, almost insidiously, the "wizard" has been weaned away from the weaving of his spells, and now a new and more potent power than ever before controlled him has gained its mastery over him. This is the power of love. Though the great inventor even now works as few men of his age and accomplishments are in the habit of doing, the last few years have seen a steady relaxation of his toil. The time has passed when he was wont to lock himself in a room and work sixty hours at a stretch without taking more than an hour's sleep at various intervals in that time.

MRS. EDISON IS ALSO AN INVENTOR OF GOOD ABILITY.

When Mr. Edison toils now, there is one who shares his labors with him. It is Mrs. Edison, his second wife. She is the daughter of John Miller, who invented the famous Miller mowing machine, and inherits a great deal of inventive ability. It is through this additional bond of genius that they are united. She is a helpmeet in the true sense of the word. It is said that they are now working on an invention which they will patent jointly.

Whether Mrs. Edison intends to participate in one of her husband's inventions or not, she takes more than passing interest in all of his affairs, and has acquired,

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through her association with him, a vast amount of electrical and mechanical knowledge. When Mr. Edison met Miss Miller, twelve years ago, he was at the beginning of his fame. It was one of the most intensely busy periods of his career, his work engaging nearly every moment of his time.

The days of complete absorption in work have passed for him. His home-life has become necessary to him. Though he has had one or two relapses of "working fever,"—when he steadfastly refused to be moved from the laboratory by Mrs. Edison's persuasions,—he has reached the period when he is glad to go to his home. Much honor is due to the woman who has wrought so marvelous a change in her husband. Those who knew Mr. Edison best predicted that his present wife would soon become a secondary consideration in his life. They are, from all accounts, mistaken.

The Edison home is one of the finest residences in New Jersey, and is furnished with all the conveniences and luxuries of a modern palace. It bears evidence of Mrs. Edison's true taste and skillful management. The lower floor of the house is laid out in parlors, conservatories, and a magnificent dining room. Ponderous chandeliers bristling with electric-light bulbs hang from ceilings finished in open-work beams, exhibiting the best art of the builder. Mr. Edison has a fine library in his residence, though it does not contain so many scientific works as the library at his laboratory.

The upper floors are given up to sleeping rooms, and



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a special "den" for Mr. Edison. There he works out his plans, and has at hand the reference books he desires in chemistry, physics, heat, light, and electricity.

### RISES EARLY AND WORKS LONG.

He is an early riser, and is ready for work at half-past six o'clock. His first daily occupation is to read the newspapers. He is anxious to know if the reporters who interviewed him wrote just what he said, for he dislikes, above all else, newspaper interviews that are not correct. He does not like to be misquoted, and is willing to go to any amount of trouble in order that his statements shall be reported without error. No matter how busily he may be engaged at the laboratory he will stop to look over an interview, and no one is more willing than he is to set a reporter right.

At half-past seven in the morning Mr. Edison starts for the laboratory. He usually walks, as the distance is short, and his physicians have ordered that he must take a certain amount of physical exercise every day. When he reaches the laboratory, he begins with a great rush, and starts men on certain phases of work which he planned the previous day. He usually has from fifty to seventy-five subjects on which he puts men to work. These subjects he prepares at home, between the time when he leaves the laboratory, half-past six, and midnight.

Every afternoon Mrs. Edison calls for her husband

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at the laboratory, and takes him away in her carriage, and they drive about the beautiful district of the Oranges.

Mrs. Edison has undertaken the task of keeping the inventor healthy. She will not permit him to neglect his meals, or to work more than she thinks is good for him. She insists that he shall leave the laboratory at a certain hour each night, and she undertakes to personally see that he does so. At times, Mr. Edison objects, but in a very mild way, to this *régime*. Not long ago, he was deeply engaged in a certain experiment, when Mrs. Edison called for him and insisted upon taking him home. After some resistance, he at last consented, saying, however, by way of a final protest, as he stepped into the carriage:—

“Billy (his pet name for Mrs. Edison), “you’re a nuisance.”

Were it not, however, for the saving influence which Mrs. Edison exercises over her husband, it is doubtful if he would accomplish so much.

## II

### A “Down-east” Yankee who Dictates Peace to the Nations.

**H**IRAM STEVENS MAXIM is a gunmaker and peacemaker, and to-day the terms are synonymous.

Two armed men, although hostile, will hesitate to attack one another; each will be careful to make no false move, lest the other's hand fly to his pistol pocket. Neither knows the other's equipment for aggression or defense. So both will smile and smile, and continue to hate.

It is often thus with nations.

When I asked Mr. Maxim how one feels to be in the business of making machines of war,—machines for killing men by the brigade, so to speak, he replied:—

“Men of my profession do more to keep peace on earth than all the churches of Christendom. They beg for peace,—we compel it.”

Almost all famous men have two sides; the one is seen by the world, which never really sees the man at all, and is cold and glazed and more or less characterless,—being wholly intellectual. The other is the warm human side, full of points of strength and lovable weaknesses.

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### THE MAN WHOSE GUNS WILL CLEAR A JUNGLE.

Hiram S. Maxim is of this type. Mention his name to your neighbor, and he will say: "Oh, yes! Maxim,—he's the inventor of the rapid-fire gun, the flying machine, and smokeless powder, and a lot of other things." That's all he knows about him, and, very likely, it's all he cares. But the name Maxim is of tremendous import to every nation in the world; it is liable to have a potential influence in changing some of their boundaries, too. China had a good supply of rapid-fire guns when the war broke out between her and Japan, but the brass parts had all been stolen by traitorous Celestials, and the instruments left unfit for use. Otherwise, the results might have been different,—who can tell?

Ask the British Government how many British lives and how much British money was saved by the rapid-fire guns in South Africa. Also ask the "blacks" what they think of one of them. They call it "Johnny pop,—pop,—pop." But these guns were small affairs. Remember what their big brothers did for us at Santiago and Manila. I am told that they lashed the surface of the ocean into foam.

But let us look at the man as the public sees him.

Weigh the significance of his list of titles: Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, honorary member of the Bridgeport Scientific Society, member of the Royal

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Society of Arts, of the English Society of Mechanical Engineers, of the English Society of Electrical Engineers, of the English Society of Junior Engineers, of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, of the British Empire League, of the Decimal Society, of the British Æronautical Society, of the London Chamber of Commerce, and also recipient of decorations from the Emperor of China and several European sovereigns.

### HIS BRAIN IS BUILT UP OF INVENTIVE CELLS.

Mr. Maxim was the first man in the world to make an automatic gun; that is, a gun that loads and fires itself by its own reactionary force. He was also the first to combine gun-cotton and nitro-glycerine in a smokeless powder. The practicability of his flying machine is yet to be proved.

Such is Maxim, the ghost of whose presence appears to bellicose rulers and bids them halt,—and they do halt. It is said that the British Government and Hiram S. Maxim are two of the world's most powerful influences for peace.

Next consider the human being,—the big, brown-eyed, white-bearded man, over sixty years young,—for he was born in Maine, in 1840.

He seems to me to be a man with two ambitions: primarily, to keep on inventing, and, secondarily, to be the most famous inventor of all ages. His intellect and energy demand progress, his vanity demands fame.

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He doesn't appear to care for money, save as a means to a desired end. His personality might be considered unbalanced. His sense of self-suppression does not correspond with his fairly colossal intellect. The character of his intellectuality is uniform. The philosophical rather than the scholarly instinct dominates it. Another evidence of his quality of humanity is his sensitiveness to unfair censure. "I don't fear truthful criticism," he once said; "misrepresentation is what hurts."

It is difficult for one who knows him to imagine anything which he could not master. I once asked him the question, and he said he believed he would have succeeded at anything, except as a clergyman or a physician; that his religious views would preclude the former, and that he had a distaste for the latter.

### BITING OFF THE DOG'S TAIL.

At the age of fourteen young Maxim left school, and became apprenticed to a carriage-builder, although he had previously learned the use of tools in his father's mill. He was a stockily built lad, and was noted for his physical strength and daring. His father was not an ardent advocate of "turn the other cheek" policy. On the contrary, he used to say: "If any one assails you, sail into him." Once Hiram's father promised to bring him a present if he would be good. The little fellow, then six years old, looked forward to the fulfillment with impatience. At length, the elder Maxim, returning from the village, brought a puppy as a play-

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mate for his little son. Hiram regarded the animal with amazement for a few moments; then, bursting into tears, he rushed to hide his face in his mother's lap, exclaiming: "I am afraid of it, it looks so much like a dog." The two finally became great friends. One day the dog bit Hiram, and the lad asked his father what he ought to do under the circumstances. "Bite him back," was the verdict. In pursuit of this suggestion, the lad examined the dog and concluded that the end of his tail was about the most vulnerable point. Accordingly, he took that member between his teeth and began to put on pressure, raising the dog from the ground, in order to swing him once or twice. All the while the lad had tears in his eyes, for he loved his little play-fellow; but, with true Puritanical instinct, he deemed the chastisement just and necessary. The dog, however, did not join him in this view of the matter, and, in an attempt to escape, carried away one of his young master's upper front teeth. It is also said that one of Hiram's young brothers, in pursuit of this policy of retaliation, almost decapitated the family goose, which they were saving up for Christmas, which had savagely attacked the calf of the youngster's leg.

It is easier to give Mr. Maxim's manner of speech than his manner of speaking. He has wonderful brown eyes,—very honest eyes,—that stare at you inquiringly as he talks, and an extremely gentle voice of an almost hypnotic quality,—very attractive and soothing. Marvelously quick-witted himself, he has little patience with

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dullness in others. His power of explanation, too, is very great. He always uses language and methods according to the understanding of the listener. With a scientific man, he employs forms of speech that convey much in little, while to the ordinary layman he expresses himself in popular English.

"To what do you attribute your early success?" Mr. Maxim was asked.

"In the first place, I was a very large and strong boy, and, no matter where I worked, I always succeeded in doing more than any other man or boy in the shop. I was never absent from work or school."

PAT'S ANXIETY TO TRY "THE BOSS," AND ITS RESULT.

The development of his physical strength kept pace with that of his intellect. When he was thirty-five, he was manager of a large manufactory in Brooklyn. One day a herculean Irishman, who had long been ambitious to have a trial of strength with "the boss," asked the latter how it was that the Irish were so much stronger than the Americans.

"How much can you lift?" asked Mr. Maxim, quietly.

"Six hundred pounds," replied Pat.

"And how much do you weigh?"

"Two hundred pounds."

"Well," said Maxim, "I will lift you and your load together," and he did it.



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HOW THE MAINE "BACKWOODSMAN" CAPTURED A ROBBER.

On another occasion, while taking lunch at a railroad station in France, Mr. Maxim recognized a notorious confidence man who had, years before, robbed him in Paris. The fellow, seeing that he was detected, tried to escape by leaping upon a moving train. Maxim followed and a fierce struggle ensued on the footboard of the coach, while the train was running at a high speed. Maxim had to fight both the fellow and his comrades, but he subjugated his man. The train was brought to a standstill, and the victor marched his prisoner back over the ties to the station, delivering him to the authorities, and subsequently had the satisfaction of seeing him sentenced to several years at hard labor. This was one result of the backwoods training in Maine.

"Whatever job I was at," Mr. Maxim told me, "I used to work at and think of day and night. I talked shop in season and out. If I was given work that was not good enough for me, I would do it so well and so quickly that they thought I was worthy of something better. No matter where I was, I managed, somehow, to get to the top. I noticed, the first thing, that the majority of the men around me were poor and the few rich; and I knew, of course, that the methods of the former were wrong, and that, consequently, the way to succeed was to follow the latter."

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“When did you first begin to invent?”

“Almost before I learned to walk. When I went to work, I began to study out ways of improving tools and appliances.”

### FROM GAS MACHINES TO INCANDESCENT LAMPS.

“What were your first practical inventions?”

“In 1862-63 I was at work at Fitchburg, Massachusetts, making gas machines. I made various improvements at that time, which afterward came into general use. From Fitchburg I went to Boston, where I entered the service of Oliver P. Drake, who was not only a gas-machine maker, but also a philosophical-instrument maker. I first worked as a draughtsman, and then became his foreman. I learned from Mr. Drake many things that were useful to me in after life. From Boston I came to New York, where I obtained a situation as draughtsman at the Novelty Iron Works, East Twelfth street. At that time they were building the Pacific Mail steamers. Shortly after this, I thought of a new system of making gas from gasoline. All the machines that had existed would maintain only one hundred lights or less, and the density and illuminating power of the gas varied so much as to make the lights very unsatisfactory. I decided to make a machine that would make the gas, from first to last, of an equal density. I made this machine and patented it. It was intended for large consumers, and several were purchased by A. T. Stewart & Company. One of them was in the

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Park Avenue Hotel, and, for a time, another was used in the Post Office in New York City. I also made a very large machine, the biggest ever made, for the Grand Union and several other hotels at Saratoga which belonged to A. T. Stewart. From gas machines I turned my attention to small steam motors, and had a place in Centre street, which is still in existence, my successors being Messrs. Welch and Lawson, 205 Centre street. I soon began to experiment with electricity, and was the first man to file at the Patent Office an invention for building up and preserving the carbons of incandescent lamps, by the action of hydro-carbon vapors. I lost this patent, however, by a system of fraud, which I will not describe to-day. I was the first man to make an electrical regulator, and exhibited it at the Paris Exposition in 1881, and was made a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor. I secured many patents on electrical inventions from 1880 to 1885. I next experimented with automatic firearms."

### THE GENESIS OF THE AUTOMATIC GUN.

"How did you come to invent the automatic gun?"

"Many years ago, while firing at a target with a military musket, I was much surprised at the force of the recoil. It appeared to me that this waste of energy might be profitably employed in loading and firing the weapon, but it was not until I went to Europe and found myself in Paris with insufficient work to keep me fully employed, that I tried to make an automatic

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gun. I first made a drawing, which I afterward took to London; and, having obtained and equipped a small factory there, I commenced experiments with the view of evolving a gun which would load and fire itself. There were no data to refer to. No one had ever before spent a single cent in experimenting with automatic guns. I first thought of employing the recoil to working existing forms of mechanism, but found that impracticable. I then designed and constructed a totally new machine and a totally new system of feeding.

“In the spring of 1884, I constructed the first apparatus ever made in which the recoil of one cartridge would load another cartridge into the barrel and fire it. This is now in the South Kensington Museum, in London, labeled: ‘This apparatus loads and fires itself, by force of its own recoil, and is the first machine ever made in which energy from the burning powder is employed for loading and firing the arm.’

“When I made my first gun and found that it would really load and fire itself, I knew it would have a great future. A few friends came in to see it. They told others, and very soon a great number of people came to see the new wonder. In fact, everybody, from the Prince of Wales down, came to see the gun and fire it. No less than two hundred thousand rounds of ammunition were used in explaining the gun and showing it to visitors. At first, no one would believe that an automatic gun had really been made. No one was prepared to believe, without seeing it. In fact, I may say that

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they were unable to understand that the gun actually loaded and fired itself. It was considered a nine days' wonder. The English Government was the first to give an order. It asked for a gun which would not weigh over one hundred pounds, and would fire four hundred rounds per minute. I made one that weighed forty pounds and fired two thousand rounds in three minutes. with one pull of the trigger. This is a result that no one else has ever attained. I showed my gun to Lord Wolseley at Hythe, where I fired at a target. That leader and Colonel Tongue were standing by the gun while I was firing it. I heard the latter say that it was the best firing that had ever been seen; that the accuracy was much better than had ever been known before; and that the rapidity of fire was without parallel. Everyone seemed astonished, and it was then that Lord Wolseley approached me and said: 'Mr. Maxim, I have seen your gun. It is simply wonderful. It is the most remarkable invention I ever saw in my life, and I congratulate you heartily upon your success; but,' he continued, 'it is of no good, as you will observe that the cloud of smoke is very large indeed. Unless you can get smokeless powder, I am afraid your gun will be of little use.' It was then that I began to think in earnest about smokeless powder, one of the directors having said that I was just the man to invent it. When I told him that I was not a chemist at all, as compared with Professors Fred. Adel and Dewar, his reply was: 'You know all the chemistry that is necessary in the matter, and, more-

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over, you have an imagination, and the others have not. If you take the matter up, I am sure you will go ahead of them.’”

### AUTOMATIC GUNS MADE SMOKELESS POWDER INDISPENSABLE.

“Such was really the case, because I find that my application for a patent for a smokeless powder, consisting of nitro-glycerine and gun cotton, was filed at the patent office about fourteen days ahead of any other, and Sir Richard Webster, in speaking for the government in the celebrated case of Nobel against the Government on smokeless powder, said: ‘H. S. Maxim is the first man to make a smokeless powder with nitro-glycerine and gun cotton. This powder was taken out to the States as much as eight or nine years ago, shown at Springfield, and put into competition with all other forms; and, according to the printed reports of the time, it was said to be superior to all others at all points, and I may say that the powder has not been improved on to any extent, as all the leading powders of to-day are practically the same as that invented by him at that time.’

“I was the first man to show a thoroughly good smokeless powder in the United States. Having succeeded in England, I took my guns abroad. Switzerland was the first country where I had a competitive trial with other makers. I was asked to fire at a dummy battery of artillery, at thirteen hundred yards, for one minute; but, as a matter of fact, I was only engaged

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half a minute in actual firing, when it was telephoned that I had technically killed three-fourths of the men and horses. I thought, perhaps, that I ought to have killed the whole of them, but the general said with great enthusiasm: 'No gun ever made has ever done anything like that. It is the most marvelous thing that has ever been done. It is simply amazing. A little gun weighing only fifty pounds puts a battery of artillery out of action in half a minute, at thirteen hundred yards.'

"I next took the gun to Italy, where I won another victory, and then returned to England. I received very large orders from all these countries, and the gun is now in use, I may say, nearly all over the world. These guns are being made not only by our own company, which has many factories in England, but by the British Government, by Ludwig Loewe, of Berlin; by Krupp, by Armstrong and by the United States Government at Washington. The company with which I am connected is a very large one, and we make about sixty varieties of rapid-firing and automatic guns. We are also makers of very large guns, builders of battle-ships, etc. I have also made guns for flying aerial torpedoes, by the use of compressed air and gas. About ten years ago I conducted a series of experiments at Baldwin Park, Bexley, England, with a view of ascertaining how much power is required to perform artificial flight. These experiments were on a much larger scale than had ever been attempted before, and excited

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a great deal of interest in the scientific world. Lord Kelvin, at the Oxford meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Lord Salisbury in the chair, spoke in the highest terms of these experiments. He was very enthusiastic at what he had seen at Baldwin's Park. He said that the work was all exceedingly well done, that the experiments were conducted with great care, and that they were very creditable to me."

### HOW LI HUNG CHANG BECAME INTERESTED IN MAXIM.

"I have been decorated by the President of France, by the Sultan of Turkey, by the Queen of Spain, and by the King of Portugal, etc."

"How did you come to be decorated by the Emperor of China, Mr. Maxim?"

"On one occasion, when there was great excitement in London about a terrible massacre of missionaries in China, I attended a meeting which, at the beginning, was very much in favor of the missionaries and against the Chinese, but I made a speech from the Chinese standpoint and succeeded in getting a resolution passed about as follows: 'This meeting regrets exceedingly that the American and English Missionary Societies will persist in sending missionaries to China to attack the ancient faith of the Chinese, and we are very sorry that the missionaries will not remain in their own countries, and allow the Chinese to enjoy their own religion in their own way in their own country.' My speech



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was taken down in shorthand and sent to the Chinese Ambassador. He had it nicely written out in Chinese, beautifully bound, and sent it to Li Hung Chang. The latter sent it to the Emperor, and the Emperor gave me a decoration."

### HOW A FIRST-CLASS FRAUD WAS EXPOSED.

"Tell about the exposure of the Dowe scheme."

"Some years ago a Hoboken barkeeper and a German tailor went to England to exploit the soundness of the alleged bullet-proof cloth. A whole town was placarded, to advertise Dowe's wonderful bullet-proof cloth, etc. The invention was shown at the El Cambria Theatre, and a great many of the old military men of England went to see this wonderful invention, for the secret of which the supposed inventors demanded two hundred thousand pounds. The thing actually shown, however, was not bullet-proof cloth, neither was it a bullet-proof coat, but a little shield about the size and thickness of a railway cushion, which was apparently of fibrous material, and would stop a bullet. A target was marked on a piece of paper, and a piece of paper folded over the gun. One of these pieces of paper fell into my hands. I saw where the bullet had entered, and where the flash came out. This was a complete 'give away,' as it showed exactly what was in the plan, viz., that it was a piece of sharp deception. I then put a notice in the paper that I had discovered a shield, steel, better than that of Herr Dowe; that his weighed

## Hiram Stevens Maxim

twelve and one-half pounds to the square foot, and mine only ten; that he asked two hundred thousand pounds for his secret, whereas I would sell mine for seven shillings, sixpence. A great crowd of people came to see my supposed invention, and I showed the exact thing that Herr Dowe had, except that mine was thinner and lighter. I had used nickel steel where he had used chrome steel. Many people were very much disappointed, and many of them blackguarded me in the papers, but there was truth in all I said. I did exactly what I said I would, and beat Herr Dowe in the point of weight. This exposed the whole thing, and, at the end of three days, everybody in London knew that Herr Dowe and the Hoboken barkeeper had been deceiving the public. In fact, one of their own men revealed the secret, confessing that it was nothing more nor less than a piece of steel with a cushion around it. Then the newspaper men who had been abusing me roundly, because they did not understand, in the first place, invited me to London to a dinner, and Herr Dowe and the Hoboken barkeeper disappeared."

"To what do you attribute your success?"

"I never tried to exploit an invention till I had one to exploit. That is, I never asked anyone to invest in a theory; and I never allowed my name to be used to promote worthless properties or projects."

### III

## A Poor Boy Once Borrowed Books Now Gives Away Libraries.

**S**ELFISH wealth stands surprised, amazed, almost indignant, at the announcement that Andrew Carnegie, instead of resting in Olympian luxury on the millions he has earned, and going to the grave with his gold tightly clutched in his stiffening fingers, proposes to expend the bulk of his riches, during his lifetime, for the benefit of his fellowmen. Great financiers, who, if they lived to be as old as Methuselah, could not use a tithe of their vast fortunes on their own ordinary maintenance, protest against Mr. Carnegie's plan of action, and declare that he ought to go on accumulating to the last. Others mildly suggest that his charity will be wasted on unworthy objects, and others frankly avow that they doubt the sincerity of his intentions. Altogether it may be said that Mr. Carnegie has stirred the very heart of Mammon as it has not been stirred since the Savior told the rich man to sell what he had and give to the poor.

IT IS HARDER NOW TO GET A START.

"There is no doubt," said Mr. Carnegie, in reply to a question from me, "that it is becoming harder and

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harder, as business gravitates more and more to immense concerns, for a young man without capital to get a start for himself, and in large cities it is especially so, where large capital is essential. Still it can be honestly said that there is no other country in the world, where able and energetic young men and women can so readily rise as in this. A president of a business college informed me, recently, that he has never been able to supply the demand for capable, first-class [Mark the adjective] bookkeepers, and his college has over nine hundred students. In America, young men of ability rise with most astonishing rapidity."

"As quickly as when you were a boy?"

"Much more so. When I was a boy, there were but very few important positions that a boy could aspire to. Everything had to be made. Now a boy doesn't need to make the place,—all he has to do is to fit himself to take it."

"Did you make your high places as you went along?"

"I shouldn't call them high, and I did not make the earliest ones. In starting new enterprises, of course, I made my place at the head of them. The earliest ones were the poorest kinds of positions, however."

"Where did you begin life?"

"In Dunfermline, Scotland. That was only my home during my earliest years. The service of my life has all been in this country."

"In Pittsburg?"

"Largely so. My father settled in Allegheny City,

## Ironmaster and Philanthropist

when I was only ten years old, and I began to earn my way in Pittsburg."

"Do you mind telling me what your first service was?"

"Not at all. I was a bobbin boy in a cotton factory, then an engine-man or boy in the same place, and later still I was a messenger boy for a telegraph company."

### MR. CARNEGIE'S FIRST WAGES.

"At small wages, I suppose."

"One dollar and twenty cents a week was what I received as a bobbin boy, and I can tell you that I considered it pretty good, at that. When I was thirteen, I had learned to run a steam engine, and for that I received a dollar and eighty cents a week."

"You had no early schooling, then?"

"None, except such as I gave myself. They were no fine libraries then, but in Allegheny City, where I lived, there was a certain Colonel Anderson, who was well to do and of a philanthropic turn. He announced about the time I first began to work, that he would be in his library at his home, every Saturday, ready to lend books to working boys and men. He only had about four hundred volumes, but I doubt if ever so few books were put to better use. Only he who has longed, as I did, for Saturday to come, that the spring of knowledge might be opened anew to him, can understand what Colonel Anderson did for me and others of the boys of Allegheny. Quite a number of them

## Andrew Carnegie

have risen to eminence, and I think their rise can be easily traced to this splendid opportunity."

"How long did you remain an engine boy?"

"Not very long," Mr. Carnegie replied, "perhaps a year."

"And then?"

"I entered a telegraph office as a messenger boy."

Although Mr. Carnegie would not dwell much on this period, he once described it at a dinner given in honor of the American Consul at Dunfermline, Scotland, when he said—

"I awake from a dream that has carried me away back in the days of my boyhood, the day when the little white-haired Scottish laddie, dressed in a blue jacket, walked with his father into the telegraph office in Pittsburg to undergo examination as an applicant for a position as messenger boy.

### HIS FIRST GLIMPSE OF PARADISE.

"Well I remember when my uncle spoke to my parents about it, and my father objected, because I was then getting one dollar and eighty cents per week for running a small engine in a cellar in Allegheny City, but my uncle said a messenger's wages would be two dollars and fifty cents. . . . If you want an idea as to heaven on earth, imagine what it is to be taken from a dark cellar, where I fired the boiler from morning until night, and dropped into an office, where light shone from all sides, and around me books, papers, and

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pencils in profusion, and oh! the tick of those mysterious brass instruments on the desk, annihilating space and standing with throbbing spirits ready to convey any intelligence to the world! This was my first glimpse of paradise, and I walked on air."

"How did you manage to rise from this position?"

"Well, I learned how to operate a telegraph instrument, and then waited my opportunity to show that I was fit to be an operator. Eventually my chance came, as everyone's does."

The truth is that the boy had the appearance of one anxious to learn and quick to understand. James D. Reid, the superintendent of the office, and himself a Scotchman, favored the ambitious lad, and helped him. In his "History of the Telegraph," he says of him:—

"I liked the boy's looks, and it was easy to see that, though he was little, he was full of spirit. He had not been with me a month when he began to ask whether I would teach him to telegraph. I began to instruct him and found him an apt pupil. He spent all his spare time in practice, sending and receiving by sound and not by tape, as was largely the custom in those days. Pretty soon he could do as well as I could at the key, and then his ambition carried him away beyond doing the drudgery of messenger work."

"As you look back upon it," I said to Mr. Carnegie, "do you consider that so lowly a beginning is better than one a little less trying?"

## Andrew Carnegie

IT IS BEST TO BEGIN AT THE BOTTOM.

“For young men starting upon their lifework, it is much the best to begin as I did, at the beginning, and occupy the most subordinate positions. Many of the present-day leading men of Pittsburg, who rose with me, had a serious responsibility thrust upon them at the very threshold of their careers. They were introduced to the broom, and spent the first hours of their business life sweeping out the office. I notice we have janitors and janitresses now in offices, and our young men, unfortunately, miss that salutary branch of early education. Still I would say to the boy who has the genius of the future partner in him, that if by chance the professional sweeper is absent any morning, do not hesitate to try your hand at the broom. It does not hurt the newest comer to sweep out the office if necessary.”

“Did you?”

“Many’s the time. And who do you suppose were my fellow sweepers? David McBargo, afterward superintendent of the Allegheny Valley Railroad; Robert Pitcairn, afterward superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Mr. Moreland, subsequently City Attorney of Pittsburg. We all took turns, two each morning doing the sweeping; and now I remember Davie was so proud of his clean shirt bosom that he used to spread over it an old silk bandana handkerchief which he kept for the purpose, and we other



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boys thought he was putting on airs. So he was. None of us had a silk handkerchief."

"After you had learned to telegraph, did you consider that you had reached high enough?"

"Not in the least. My father died just at that time, and the burden of the support of the family fell upon me. I became an operator at twenty-five dollars a month, a sum which seemed to me almost a fortune. I earned a little additional money by copying telegraphic messages for the newspapers, and managed to keep the family independent."

### HE WAS AN EXPERT TELEGRAPH OPERATOR.

More light on this period of Mr. Carnegie's career is given by the "Electric Age," which says: "He was a telegraph operator abreast of older and experienced men; and, although receiving messages by sound was, at that time, forbidden by authority as being unsafe, young Carnegie quickly acquired the art, and he can still stand behind the ticker and understand its language. As an operator, he delighted in full employment and the prompt discharge of business, and a big day's work was his chief pleasure."

"How long did you remain with the telegraph company?"

"Until I was given a place by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company."

"As an operator?"

"At first, until I showed how the telegraph could

## Andrew Carnegie

minister to railroad safety and success. Then I was made secretary to Thomas A. Scott, then superintendent, and not long afterward, when Colonel Scott became vice-president, I was made superintendent of the western division of the Pennsylvania Railroad."

Thinking of this period of his life, I asked Mr. Carnegie if his promotion was not a matter of chance, and whether he did not, at the time, feel it to be so. His answer was emphatic.

"Never. Young men give all kinds of reasons why, in their cases, failure is attributable to exceptional circumstances, which rendered success impossible. Some never had a chance, according to their own story. This is simply nonsense. No young man ever lived who had not a chance, and a splendid chance, too, if he was ever employed at all. He is assayed in the mind of his immediate superior, from the day he begins work, and, after a time, if he has merit, he is assayed in the council chambers of the firm. His ability, honesty, habits associations, temper, disposition—all these are weighed and analyzed. The young man who never had a chance is the same young man who has been canvassed over and over again by his superiors, and found destitute of necessary qualifications, or is deemed unworthy of closer relations with the firm, owing to some objectionable act, habit or association, of which he thought his employers ignorant."

"It sounds true."

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### THE RIGHT MEN IN DEMAND.

“It is. Another class of young men attribute failure to rise to employers having near relatives or favorites whom they advance unfairly. They also insist that their employers dislike brighter intelligence than their own, and are disposed to discourage aspiring genius, and delighted in keeping young men down. There is nothing in this. On the contrary, there is no one suffering more for lack of the right man in the right place than the average employer, nor anyone more anxious to find him.”

“Was this your theory on the subject when you began working for the railroad company?”

“I had no theory then, although I have formulated one since. It lies mainly in this: Instead of the question, ‘What must I do for my employer?’ substitute, ‘What can I do?’ Faithful and conscientious discharge of duties assigned you is all very well, but the verdict in such cases generally is that you perform your present duties so well, that you would better continue performing them. Now, this will not do. It will not do for the coming partners. There must be something beyond this. We make clerks, bookkeepers, treasurers, bank tellers of this class, and there they remain to the end of the chapter. The rising man must do something exceptional, and beyond the range of his special department. He must attract attention.”

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### HOW TO ATTRACT ATTENTION.

“How can he do that?”

“Well, if he is a shipping clerk, he may do so by discovering in an invoice an error with which he has nothing to do and which has escaped the attention of the proper party. If a weighing clerk, he may save the firm by doubting the adjustment of the scales, and having them corrected, even if this be the province of the master mechanic. If a messenger boy, he can lay the seed of promotion by going beyond the letter of his instructions in order to secure the desired reply. There is no service so low and simple, neither any so high, in which the young man of ability and willing disposition cannot readily and almost daily prove himself capable of greater trust and usefulness, and, what is equally important, show his invincible determination to rise.”

“In what manner did you reach out to establish your present great fortune?” I asked.

“By saving my money. I put a little money aside, and it served me later as a matter of credit. Also, I invested in a sleeping-car industry, which paid me well.”

### CARNEGIE AND THE SLEEPING-CAR.

Although I tried earnestly to get the great iron-king to talk of this, he said little, because the matter has been fully dealt with by him in his “Triumphant Democracy.” From his own story there, it appears that, one

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day at this time, when Mr. Carnegie still had his fortune to make, he was on a train examining the line from a rear window of a car, when a tall, spare man, accosted him and asked him to look at an invention he had made. He drew from a green bag a small model of a sleeping-berth for railway cars, and proceeded to point out its advantages. It was Mr. T. T. Woodruff, the inventor of the sleeping-car. Mr. Carnegie tells the story himself in "Triumphant Democracy:"—

"He had not spoken a moment, before, like a flash, the whole range of the discovery burst upon me. 'Yes,' I said, 'that is something which this continent must have.'

"Upon my return, I laid it before Mr. Scott, declaring that it was one of the inventions of the age. He remarked: 'You are enthusiastic, young man, but you may ask the inventor to come and let me see it.' I did so, and arrangements were made to build two trial cars, and run them on the Pennsylvania Railroad. I was offered an interest in the venture, which, of course, I gladly accepted.

"The notice came that my share of the first payment was \$217.50. How well I remember the exact sum! But two hundred and seventeen dollars and a half were as far beyond my means as if it had been millions. I was earning fifty dollars per month, however, and had prospects, or at least I always felt that I had. I decided to call on the local banker and boldly ask him to advance the sum upon my interest in the affair. He put

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his hand on my shoulder and said: 'Why, of course, Andie; you are all right. Go ahead! Here is the money.'

"It is a proud day for a man when he pays his last note, but not to be named in comparison with the day in which he makes his first one, and gets a banker to take it. I have tried both, and I know. The cars paid the subsequent payments from their earnings. I paid my first note from my savings, so much per month, and thus did I get my foot upon fortune's ladder. It was easy to climb after that."

"I would like some expression from you," I said to Mr. Carnegie, "in reference to the importance of laying aside money from one's earnings, as a young man."

### THE MARK OF A MILLIONAIRE.

"You can have it. There is one sure mark of the coming partner, the future millionaire; his revenues always exceed his expenditures. He begins to save early, almost as soon as he begins to earn. I should say to young men, no matter how little it may be possible to save, save that little. Invest it securely, not necessarily in bonds, but in anything which you have good reason to believe will be profitable; but no gambling with it, remember. A rare chance will soon present itself for investment. The little you have saved will prove the basis for an amount of credit utterly surprising to you. Capitalists trust the saving young man: For, every hundred dollars you can produce as the re-

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sult of hard-won savings, Midas, in search of a partner, will lend or credit a thousand ; for every thousand, fifty thousand. It is not capital that your seniors require, it is the man who has proved that he has the business habits which create capital. So it is the first hundred dollars saved that tells."

"What," I asked Mr. Carnegie, "was the next enterprise with which you identified yourself?"

### A FORTUNATE LAND PURCHASE.

"In company with several others, I purchased the now famous Storey farm, on Oil Creek, Pennsylvania, where a well had been bored and natural oil struck the year before. This proved a very profitable investment."

"Were you satisfied to rest with these enterprises in your hands?" I asked.

"No ; railway bridges were then built almost exclusively of wood, but the Pennsylvania Railroad had begun to experiment with cast iron for bridge building. It struck me that the railway bridge of the future must be of iron, and I organized, in Pittsburg, a company for the construction of iron bridges. That was the Keystone Bridge Works. We built the first iron bridge across the Ohio."

His entrance to the realm of steel was much too long for Mr. Carnegie to discuss, although he was not unwilling to give information relating to the great subject. It appears that he realized the immensity of the steel manufacturing business at once. The Union Iron

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Mills soon followed as one of his enterprises, and, later the famous Edgar Thompson Steel Rail Mill. The last was the outcome of a visit to England, in 1868, when Carnegie noticed that English railways were discarding iron for steel rails. The Bessemer process had been then perfected, and was making its way in all the iron-producing countries. Carnegie, recognizing that it was destined to revolutionize the iron business, introduced it into his mills and made steel rails with which he was enabled to compete with English manufacturers.

### THE HOMESTEAD STEEL WORKS.

His next enterprise was the purchase of the Homestead Steel Works,—his great rival of Pittsburg. By 1888, he had built or acquired seven distinct iron and steel works. All the plants of this great firm are within a radius of five miles of Pittsburg. In no other part of the world can be found such an aggregation of splendidly equipped steel works as those controlled by Carnegie and his associates. It now comprises the Homestead Steel Works, the Edgar Thompson Steel Works and Furnaces, the Duquesne Steel Works and Furnaces, all within two miles of one another; the Lucy Furnaces, the Keystone Bridge Works, the Upper Union Rolling Mills, and the Lower Union Rolling Mills.

In all branches, including the great coke works, mines, etc., there are employed twenty-five thousand men. The monthly pay roll exceeds one million, one





INFANCY



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hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, or nearly fifty thousand dollars for each working day.

"You believe in taking active measures," I said, "to make men successful."

"Yes, I believe in anything which will help men to help themselves. To induce them to save, every workman, in our company, is allowed to deposit part of his earnings, not exceeding two thousand dollars, with the firm, on which the high interest rate of six per cent. is allowed. The firm also lends to any of its workmen to buy a lot, or to build a house, taking its pay by installments."

"Has this contributed any to the success of your company?"

### A STRENGTHENING POLICY.

"I think so. The policy of giving a personal interest to the men who render exceptional service is strengthening. With us there are many such, and every year several more are added as partners. It is the policy of the concern to interest every superintendent in the works, every head of a department, every exceptional young man. Promotion follows exceptional service, and there is no favoritism."

"All you have said so far merely gives the idea of getting money, without any suggestion as to the proper use of great wealth. Will you say something on that score?"

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“My views are rather well known, I think. What a man owns is already subordinate, in America, to what he knows; but, in the final aristocracy, the question will not be either of these, but what has he done for his fellows? Where has he shown generosity and self-abnegation? Where has he been a father to the fatherless? And the cause of the poor; where has he searched that out? How he has worshipped God will not be asked in that day, but how he has served man.”

### MR. CARNEGIE'S PHILANTHROPY.

That Mr. Carnegie has lived up, in the past, and is still living up to this radical declaration of independence from the practice of men who have amassed fortunes around him, will be best shown by a brief enumeration of some of his almost unexampled philanthropies. His largest gift has been to the city of Pittsburg, the scene of his early trials and later triumphs. There he has built, at a cost of more than a million dollars, a magnificent library, museum, concert hall and picture gallery, all under one roof, and endowed it with a fund of another million, the interest of which (fifty thousand dollars per annum), is being devoted to the purchase of the best works of American art. Other libraries, to be connected with this largest as a center, are now being constructed, which will make the city of Pittsburg and its environs a beneficiary of his generosity to the extent of five million dollars.

In his native land, Scotland, thrift is a virtue that is

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taught with the alphabet; and, when the twelve-year-old "Andy" Carnegie came to America with his father and mother, he was full of the notion of thrift and its twin brother, hard work.

### CARNEGIE'S VIEWS ON THRIFT.

Once he wrote on the subject of thrift for a Scottish journal. He said:—

"The accumulation of millions is usually the result of enterprise and judgment, and some exceptional ability or organization. It does not come from savings, in the ordinary sense of the word. Men who, in old age, strive only to increase their already too great hoards, are usually slaves of the habit of hoarding, formed in their youth. At first they own the money they have made and saved. Later in life the money owns them, and they cannot help themselves, so overpowering is the force of habit, either for good or evil. It is the abuse of the civilized saving instinct, and not its use, that produces this class of men. No one needs to be afraid of falling a victim to this abuse of the habit, if he always bears in mind that whatever surplus wealth may come to him is to be regarded as a sacred trust, which he is bound to administer for the good of his fellows. The man should always be master. He should keep money in the position of a useful servant; he must never let it be his master and make a miser of him. A man's first duty is to acquire a competence and

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be independent, then to do something for his needy neighbors who are less favored than himself."

Mr. Carnegie has always lived up to this doctrine. He has made philanthropy a factor of existence. Already he has endowed over ninety libraries in different cities of the United States, having spent about \$4,500,000 in this manner alone. He believes that a man can learn the science of true life and success in good books. In Scotland, where many of the residents of a poor hamlet have been benefited by his generosity, he is called "the good angel." Whenever he visits any of these places, he is a greater man than the King of Great Britain.

While thus endowing the city where his fortune was made, he has not forgotten other places endeared to him by association or by interest. To the Allegheny Free Library he has given \$375,000; to the Braddock Free Library, \$250,000; to the Johnstown Free Library, \$50,000, and to the Fairfield (Iowa) Library, \$40,000. To his native land he has been scarcely less generous. To the Edinburgh Free Library he has given \$250,000, and to his native town of Dunfermline, \$90,000. Other Scottish towns to the number of ten have received helpful donations of amounts not quite so large.

"I should like you to say some other important things for the young man to learn and benefit by."

"Our young partners in the Carnegie company have all won their spurs by showing that we did not know half as well what was wanted as they did. Some of

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them have acted upon occasions with me as if they owned the firm and I was but some airy New Yorker, presuming to advise upon what I knew very little about. Well, they are not now interfered with. They were the true bosses,—the very men we were looking for.”

“THE MISFORTUNE OF BEING RICH MEN’S SONS.”

“Is this all for the poor boy?”

“Every word. I trust that few, if any, of your readers have the misfortune to be rich men’s sons. They are heavily weighted in the race. A basketful of bonds is the heaviest basket a young man ever had to carry. He generally gets to staggering under it. The vast majority of rich men’s sons are unable to resist the temptations to which wealth subjects them, and they sink to unworthy lives. It is not from this class that the poor beginner has rivalry to fear. The partner’s sons will never trouble you much, but look out that some boys poorer, much poorer, than yourselves, whose parents cannot afford to give them any schooling, do not challenge you at the post and pass you at the grand stand. Look out for the boy who has to plunge into work direct from the common school, and begins by sweeping out the office. He is the probable dark horse that will take all the money and win all the applause.

“The first thing that a man should learn to do is to save his money. By saving his money he promotes thrift,—the most valued of all habits. Thrift is the

## Andrew Carnegie

great fortune-maker. It draws the line between the savage and the civilized man. Thrift not only develops the fortune, but it develops, also, the man's character."



## IV

### A Good Shoemaker Becomes Detroit's Best Mayor and Michigan's Greatest Governor.

**A**N interview with Hon. Hazen S. Pingree, Governor of Michigan, was not an easy thing to obtain. "Approachable?" Very. He was a great favorite with newspaper men, but the most-sought-after man in Michigan. When he arrived at the simply furnished room that served as his official headquarters in Detroit, it was to find it bordered with a human wainscoting, each anxious member of which was waiting patiently, or otherwise, to ask some favor of the chief executive. As he entered the room suddenly became quiet; for there was something about the Governor's powerful personality that compelled attention. But soon each want, no matter how small, was attended to in his kindly but straightforward way.

An interesting medley of petitioners was present on the day of my interview. The first was a widowed mother requesting a favor for her son—a wreck of the Spanish-American war.

## Hazen S. Pingree

"I'll do the best I can for you," said the governor heartily as she left the room—and everyone knew what that meant.

Next came a gayly-dressed young woman, with a bill from the mint of her own imagination, which she asked the Governor to please push through the legislature. She was patiently referred to the representative from her district. Then a soldier stood before him with a transportation snarl to untangle; a book agent; a broadcloth-coated dandy, and a street laborer, each seeking help; and then a gaunt, ill-clad old woman, who in broken English, with harrowing tears and gestures of despair, laid her humble burdens in supplication before him. It was a touching picture.

Hers was not a case to lay before the Governor of the State, but she will never know it, poor woman, for the generous hand of the great-hearted man slid quickly down to the nest of the golden eagle that sent her gratefully away.

"You are not a native of the State you govern," said I, as the Governor leisurely seated himself for the interview.

"No; I was born in Denmark, Maine. My father owned a forty-acre farm, and I was brought up there until I was about seventeen years old."

"And you did——"

"Just what any one would do on a small farm; worked in summer and went to school in the winter.

## Shoemaker, Mayor, Governor

Then I started out to make my own way in the world, and the first work I found was in a cotton mill at Saco, Maine. In 1860, I went to Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and learned the trade of a cutter in a shoe factory. Soon after that the war broke out."

"And you enlisted?"

"Yes, I have two honorable discharges as a private. I value them more than my position as governor."

"How long were you in the war?"

"From 1862 until its close. I first enlisted in Company F, First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, and, with that regiment, took part in the battles of Bull Run, Fredericksburg Road, Harris Farm, Cold Harbor, Spottsylvania Court House, North Anna and South Anna."

"Then you know something of the horrors of war from your own experience?"

"Yes; that is the reason I am an advocate of the universal peace project."

"You believe in that?"

"Decidedly; and, moreover, I believe that ten years from now every man who calls himself a Christian will be ready to stand by the side of the Emperor of Russia in his plea for peace."

"Let us return to your experience in the war. Were you ever a prisoner?"

"Several others and myself were captured on May 25, 1864, by a squad of Mosby's men. We were confined five months at Andersonville; and from there

## Hazen S. Pingree

were taken to Salisbury prison in North Carolina, then to Millen, Georgia, where we were exchanged in November, 1864. I rejoined my regiment in front of Petersburg, and was in the expedition to Weldon Railroad, the battles of Boynton Road, Petersburg, Sailors' Creek, Farmsville, and Appomattox."

"And after the war?"

"I came to Detroit and obtained employment in a shoe factory. Soon after that my partner and myself started one of our own. He had a little less than a thousand dollars, and I had \$460—left from my army pay."

"That seemed a large sum, I suppose?"

"Yes, and I thought if I could ever get to making fifty pairs of shoes a day I would be perfectly happy."

The number is amusingly small, when it is remembered that this factory, the embryo of which he spoke, grew up under the Governor's personal supervision, until it is now one of the largest in the United States.

"But tell me, Governor, when you were starting out in life, did you ever look forward to the career you have carved out for yourself?"

"No," said he, with the promptness that characterizes all of his speech; "I never had anything mapped out in my life. I did whatever there happened to be for me to do, and let the result take care of itself."

"Is it the same with your political success, or is that the outgrowth of youthful ambition?"

## Shoemaker, Mayor, Governor

### HOW HE BECAME MAYOR OF DETROIT.

"No, I was pushed into that by accident. I had never been in the common council chamber before I was elected Mayor of Detroit. The thing that caught me was that my friends began to say I was afraid of the position, so, of course, I had to accept the nomination to prove that I wasn't."

This was clever of his friends. The fact is that, at that time, the city needed the Governor's brains to manage its affairs. He was elected Mayor of Detroit four consecutive terms and was in his eighth year as mayor when he resigned. Even his most earnest political opponents admit that he was the best mayor the city ever had.

"But, during the formative years of your career, did you ever worry over the possibility of failure?"

"No," said the Governor serenely, "I never did, and don't now. I was never given to worrying."

In this as in other ways, Mr. Pingree was remarkable. During the stormiest of his political times he was never in the least disturbed when he reached home, and he would sleep as peacefully as a child.

"What would you suggest, Governor, as the best route by which the young man of to-day may obtain success?"

"He can do one of two things: go to work for somebody else; or, if he cannot stand that, he can buy a small farm."

## Hazen S. Pingree

"Then you think there is not the chance in the United States now that there was thirty years ago?"

"There isn't a doubt about it. The young men of to-day are to be pitied—there isn't anything for them to do. The subject is a serious one," said the Governor, speaking rapidly. "Why, if I had nothing, I wouldn't know how to advise my own son to start. I don't claim to know much, but I do understand a little about the shoe business, and I can tell you honestly that, with the knowledge I have gained in many years of experience, and with the influence of my friends, I could not start in the shoe business to-day with the chance of success that I had then."

"And the causes of this?"

"Are trusts and monopolies."

"And the result?"

### A GREAT CHANGE PROPHESED.

"There will be a great change in this country before many years. Free schools have so educated the people that they will not submit to this injustice forever, even though it is organized against them."

"But how will this change be effected?"

"Through the splitting up of political parties—but it is sure to come."

"Recognizing the conditions that the young man of to-day has to contend with, what guide-posts would you point out to him?"

"In the first place, I would advise every young man

## Shoemaker, Mayor, Governor

to be honest and outspoken at all times. What people want is open, frank talk. There is too much catering and palavering and round-about talking nowadays. It is a great mistake. Then, of course, in order to accomplish anything, the young man must have plenty of energy and perseverance."

By inheritance, Governor Pingree was a patriot and fighter. In his possession were three historic muskets, one of which was used by his great-grandfather in the Revolutionary War; another by his grandfather in the War of 1812, and one by himself in the Civil War. His first American forefather was Moses Pingree, who emigrated to this country in 1640. Many of his descendants have figured with distinction in American history, among them being Samuel Everett Pingree, Governor of Vermont from 1884 to 1886.

Governor Pingree was a strikingly interesting example of self-earned success. His indomitable will, tireless energy and unyielding perseverance were the machinery with which he manufactured the fabric of his career. But the pattern was stamped by his own individuality, and was like no other ever seen—it was *sui generis*.

On the battlefield of public life, Governor Pingree was a general who said, "Come on!" not "Go on!" He acted with the bold, unfettered authority that springs from an honest belief in the justice of his opinions, and never put his plans out of focus by shift-

## Hazen S. Pingree

ing his ground. When once resolved, he was as immovable as a fixed star. He was absolutely fearless because he was absolutely honest, and was not afraid to fight, single-handed, the greatest financial power the world has ever known.

The political spider was never able to bind his arms with the thread of party combination—scheme or intrigue. He was at all times a free lance, fearless and ceaseless in his efforts to chip the veneer from gilded fraud, to pierce the heart of injustice and to befriend those not able to shield themselves. He was a champion of the people and a believer in them.

### HE WAS NOT A DEMAGOGUE.

“But they call you a demagogue. How does that accusation affect you?”

The Governor smiled, as if he considered it a good joke.

“Well, that amuses me,” said he. “They don’t do that around here any more. They’ve worn it out, I guess. No, it doesn’t disturb me a particle. I always go on the principle that lies never hurt anybody.”

Governor Pingree was a man of powerful physique and dignity of bearing. But he was delightfully oblivious to his own importance, and was entirely devoid of ostentation in everything that he did or said. His disposition was buoyant, his manner that of frank simplicity, and he was prodigal in his generosity and sympathy for those in need. In his private business,



## Shoemaker, Mayor, Governor

the welfare of his employees was always balanced in the scale with his own.

In the camps of war he was known as "Father Pingree," and when the boys returned to Detroit he was the first to greet them. But no one ever saw him in an open carriage behind the band; he was always away off in a corner of the station, where the ambulances were waiting, giving a word of encouragement to this poor fellow and patting that one on the back. He worked for forty hours at a time, without a thought of sleep, to keep up a cheerful welcome, though many a time he was seen to turn away just long enough to brush the tears from his eyes.

### GOVERNOR PINGREE'S LUXURIOUS HOME.

The home life of Governor Pingree was as beautiful as his life in public was successful. His residence, a three-story gray stone house, was a model of quiet elegance and refinement, and there his greatest happiness was found.

The accusation was often made that the people of Michigan did not appreciate the Governor. However, during his last election, he was not a prophet without honor in his own country, for the long-continued climbing up of his majority caused one of the local newspapers to suggest that the State set aside special holidays to satisfy the appetite for voting for Pingree.

## V

### Determined not to Remain Poor, a Farmer Boy Becomes a Mer- chant Prince

**M**ARSHALL FIELD, one of the greatest merchants of the United States, and that means of the world, is not readily accessible to interviewers. He probably feels, like most men of real prominence, that his place in the history of his time is established, and he is not seeking for the fame that is certain to attend his name and his business achievements. No more significant story, none more full of stimulus, of encouragement, of brain-inspiring and pulse-thrilling potency has been told in any romance. It is grand in its very simplicity, in its very lack of assumption of special gifts or extraordinary foresight. The Phenix-like revival from the ashes of ruined Chicago is spoken of by Mr. Field as an incident in the natural and to be expected in the order of events. In Marshall Field it was no doubt natural and to be expected, and it touches the very keynote of the character of the celebrated western merchant, sprung from rugged eastern soil, whose career is an example to be studied with profit by every farmer boy, by every office

## A Prince of Merchants

boy, by every clerk and artisan,—yes, and by every middle-aged business man, whether going along smoothly or confronted by apparently ruinous circumstances, throughout our broad land.

I was introduced to Mr. Field in the private office of Mr. Harry G. Selfridge, his most trusted lieutenant, and this first of interviews with the head of Chicago's greatest mercantile house followed.

"My object," I said to Mr. Field, "is to obtain your opinion as to what makes for and constitutes success in life."

"That can be quickly given," said Mr. Field; "what would you like to know?"

"I wish to know something of your early life, and under what conditions you began it."

"I was born in Conway, Massachusetts, in 1835. My father's farm was among the rocks and hills of that section, and not very fertile."

"And the conditions were?"

"Hard."

"You mean that you were poor?"

"Yes, as all people were in those days, more or less. My father was a farmer. I was brought up under farming conditions, such as they were at that time."

### HIS PARENTS HELPED HIM.

"Did the character and condition of your parents tend in any way to form your ambition for commercial distinction?"

## Marshall Field

"Yes, somewhat. My father was a man who, I consider, had good judgment. He made a success out of the farming business. My mother was more intellectually bent, if anything, and, naturally, both my parents were anxious that their boys should amount to something in life. Their interest and care helped me."

"Had you early access to books?"

"No; I had but few books, scarcely any to speak of. There was not much time for literature. Such books as we had, though, I made use of."

"Were you so placed that your commercial instincts could be nourished by contact with that side of life?" I asked.

"Yes, in a measure. Not any more so than any other boy raised in that neighborhood. I had a leaning toward business, and took up with it as early as possible."

"Were you naturally of a saving disposition?"

"Oh, yes. I had to be. Those were saving times. A dollar looked very big to us boys in those days, and as we had difficult labor earning it, it was not quickly spent. I may say I was naturally saving, however, and was determined not to remain poor."

"Did you attend both school and college?"

"Only the common and high schools at home, but not for long. I had no college training. Indeed, I cannot say that I had much of any public school education. I left home when I was seventeen years of age, and, of course, had not time to study closely."

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"What was the nature of your first venture in trade, Mr. Field?"

"My first venture was made as a clerk in a country store at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where all things were sold, including dry goods, and there I remained for four years. There I picked up my first knowledge of that business."

"Do you consider those years well spent?"

"I think my employer did, anyway." He laughed.

"I saved my earnings and attended strictly to business, and so made them valuable years to me."

"Was there no inducement to remain there as you were?"

"Yes; before I went west, my employer offered me a quarter interest in his business if I would remain with him. Even after I had been here several years, he wrote and offered me a third interest if I would go back. But I was already too well placed."

"Did you fancy that you were destined for some other field than that in which you have since distinguished yourself?"

### ALWAYS INTERESTED IN COMMERCE.

"No, I think not. I was always interested in the commercial side of life, and always thought I would be a merchant. To this end, I bent my energies, and soon realized that, successful or not, my labor would always be of a commercial nature."

"When did you come to Chicago?" I inquired.

"I caught what was then the prevalent fever to come

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west, and grow up with the country, and west I came. I entered as a clerk in the dry goods house of Cooley, Woodsworth & Co., in South Water street."

"Did you foresee Chicago's growth in any way?"

"No, there was no guarantee at that time that the place would ever become the western metropolis. The town had plenty of ambition and pluck; but the possibilities of greatness were hardly visible."

It is interesting to note in this connection that the story of Mr. Field's progress is a wonderfully close index of Chicago's marvelous growth. An almost exact parallel may be drawn between the career of the individual and the growth of the town. Chicago was organized in 1837, two years after Mr. Field was born on the far-off farm in New England, and the place then had a population of a little more than four thousand. In 1856, when Mr. Field, fully equipped for a successful mercantile career, became a resident of the future metropolis of the west, the population had grown to little more than eighty-four thousand. Mr. Field's prosperity advanced in strides parallel to those of the city; with Chicago he was stricken but not crushed by the great fire of 1871, and with Chicago he advanced again to higher achievement and far greater prosperity than before the calamity.

"What were your equipments for success when you started as a clerk here in Chicago, in 1856?"

"Health, sound principles, I hope, and ambition," answered Mr. Field.

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"And brains," I suggested ; but he only smiled.

"What were the conditions here?"

"Well, merit did not have to wait for dead men's shoes in a growing town, of course. Good qualities were usually promptly discovered, and men were pushed forward rapidly."

"How long did you remain a clerk?"

"Only four years. In 1860, I was made a partner, and in 1865, there was a partial reorganization, and the firm consisted after that of Mr. Leiter, Mr. Palmer and myself (Field, Palmer & Leiter). Two years later Mr. Palmer withdrew, and until 1881 the style of the firm was Field, Leiter & Co. Mr. Leiter retired in that year, and since then it has been as at present: (Marshall Field & Co.)

"What contributed most to the great growth of your business?" I asked.

"To answer that question," said Mr. Field, "would be to review the condition of the west from the time Chicago began until the fire in 1871. Everything was coming this way: immigration, railways and water traffic, and Chicago was enjoying what was called 'flush' times.' There were things to learn about the country, and the man who learned the quickest fared the best. For instance, the comparative newness of rural communities and settlements made a knowledge of local solvency impossible. The old state banking system prevailed, and speculation of every kind was rampant. The panic of 1857 swept almost everything away except

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the house I worked for, and I learned that the reason they survived was because they understood the nature of the new country, and did a cash business. That is, they bought for cash, and sold on thirty and sixty days, instead of giving the customers, whose financial condition you could hardly tell anything about, all the time they wanted. When the panic came, they had no debts, and little owing to them, and so they weathered it all right. I learned what I consider my best lesson, and that was to do a cash business."

### HIS PRINCIPLES OF BUSINESS.

"What were some of the principles you applied to your business?" I questioned.

"Well, I made it a point that all goods should be exactly what they were represented to be. It was a rule of the house that an exact scrutiny of the quality of all goods purchased should be maintained, and that nothing was to induce the house to place upon the market any line of goods at a shade of variation from their real value. Every article sold must be regarded as warranted, and every purchaser must be enabled to feel secure."

"Did you suffer any losses or reverses during your career?"

"No loss except by the fire of 1871. It swept away everything,—about three and a half millions. We were, of course, protected by insurance, which would have been sufficient against any ordinary calamity of



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the kind. But the disaster was so sweeping that some of the companies which had insured our property were blotted out, and a long time passed before our claims against others were settled. We managed, however, to start again. There were no buildings of brick or stone left standing, but there were some great shells of horse-car barns at State and Twentieth streets which were not burned, and I hired those. We put up signs announcing that we would continue business uninterruptedly, and then rushed the work of fitting things up and getting in the stock."

"Did the panic of 1873 effect your business?"

"Not at all. We didn't have any debts."

"May I ask what you consider to have been the turning-point in your career,—the point after which there was no more danger of poverty?"

"Saving the first five thousand dollars I ever had, when I might just as well have spent the moderate salary I made. Possession of that sum, once I had it, gave me the ability to meet opportunities. That I consider the turning-point."

### PERSEVERANCE, MR. FIELD'S ESSENTIAL TRAIT.

"What one trait of your character do you look upon as having been the most essential to your successful career?"

"Perseverance," said Mr. Field; but another at hand insisted upon the addition of "good judgment" to this, which Mr. Field indifferently acknowledged. "If I am

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compelled to lay claim to these traits," he went on, "it is simply because I have tried to practice them, and because the trying has availed me much, I suppose. I have always tried to make all my acts and commercial moves the result of definite consideration and sound judgment. There were never any great ventures or risks,—nothing exciting whatever. I simply practiced honest, slow-growing business methods, and tried to back them with energy and good system."

"Have you always been a hard-worker?"

"No," Mr. Field said, with the shadow of a smile. "I have never believed in overworking, either as applied to myself or others. It is always paid for with a short life, and I do not believe in it."

"Has there ever been a time in your life when you gave as much as eighteen hours a day to your work?"

"Never. That is, never as a steady practice. During the time of the fire in 1871, there was a short period in which I worked very hard. For several weeks then I worked the greater part of night and day, as almost anyone would have done in my place. My fortune, however, has not been made in that manner, and, as I have said, I believe in reasonable hours for everyone, but close attention during those hours."

"Do you work as much as you once did?"

"I never worked very many hours a day. Besides, people do not work as many hours a day now as they once did. The day's labor has shortened in the last twenty years for everyone. Still, granting that, I

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cannot say that I work as much as I once did, and I frankly admit that I do not feel the need of it."

"Do you believe," I went on, "that a man should cease laboring before his period of usefulness is over, so that he may enjoy some of the results of his labor before death, or do you believe in retaining constant interest in affairs while strength lasts?"

"As to that, I hold the French idea, that a man ought to retire when he has gained a competence wherewith to do so. I think that is a very good idea. But I do not believe that when a man retires, or no longer attends to his private business in person every day, he has given up interest in the affairs of the world. He may be, in fact should be, doing wider and greater work when he has abandoned his private business, so far as personal attention is concerned."

### QUALITIES THAT MAKE FOR SUCCESS.

"What, Mr. Field," I said, "do you consider to be the first requisite for success in life, so far as the young beginner is concerned?"

"The qualities of honesty, energy, frugality, integrity, are more necessary than ever to-day, and there is no success without them. They are so often urged that they have become commonplace, but they are really more prized than ever."

"I should like to know what you believe should be the aim of the young man of to-day?"

"He should aim," said Mr. Field, "to possess the qualities I have mentioned."

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"By some, however," I suggested, "these are looked upon as a means to an aim only. Would you say to the young man, 'get wealth?'"

"Not," Mr. Field answered, "without practicing unflinchingly these virtues."

"Would you say to him, 'acquire distinction?'"

"Not at any expense to his moral character. I can only say, 'practice these virtues and do the best you can.' Any good fortune that comes by such methods is deserved and admirable."

"Do you believe a college education for the young man to be a necessity in the future?"

"Not for business purposes. Better training will become more and more a necessity. The truth is, with most young men, a college education means that just at the time when they should be having business principles instilled into them, and be getting themselves energetically pulled together for their life's work, they are sent to college. Then intervenes what many a young man looks back on as the jolliest time of his life, —four years of college. Often when he comes out of college the young man is unfitted by this good time to buckle down to hard work, and the result is a failure to grasp opportunities that would have opened the way for a successful career."

"Would you say that happiness consists in labor, or in contemplation of labor well done, or in increased possibility of doing more labor?"

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"I should say," said Mr. Field, "that a man finds happiness in all three. There certainly is no pleasure in idleness. I believe, as I have said, that a man, upon giving up business, does not necessarily cease laboring, but really does, or should do, more in a larger sense. He should interest himself in public affairs. There is no happiness in mere dollars. After they are had one cannot use but a moderate amount of them. It is given a man to eat so much, to wear so much, and to have so much shelter, and more he cannot use. When money has supplied these, its mission, so far as the individual is concerned, is fulfilled, and man must look further and higher. It is only in the wider public affairs, where money is a moving force toward the general welfare, that the possessor of it can possibly find pleasure, and that only in doing constantly more."

"What," I said, "in your estimation, is the greatest good a man can do?"

"The greatest good he can do is to cultivate himself in order that he may be of greater use to humanity."

"What one suggestion," I said, in conclusion, "can you give to the young men of to-day, that will be most useful to them, if observed?"

"Regardless," said Mr. Field, "of any opinion of mine, or any wish on the part of the young men for wealth, distinction or praise, we know that to be honest is best. There is nothing better, and we also know that nothing can be more helpful than this when combined with other essential qualities."

## VI

### Honesty, the Foundation of a Great Merchant's Career

**T**HE men who manipulate the levers that move the world, with few exceptions, were once poor boys. One of the largest retail stores in the world, in Philadelphia, and one of the handsomest stores in America, in New York, are monuments of the genius, industry and integrity of a "boy with no chance" who has become the peer of any of the merchant kings of our century. He is also one of the very foremost in many other enterprises.

To accomplish all these various things, it would be supposed that Mr. Wanamaker must have been a pet of fortune from the first. But that is not so. He began with nothing, as money goes, and has pushed his way to the top by sheer force of character, and by unwearying work.

I know of no career in this country that offers more encouragement to young people. It shows what persistency can do ; it shows what intelligent, well-directed, tireless effort can do ; and it proves that a man may devote himself to helping others, to the Sunday school,

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to the church, to broad philanthropy, and still be wonderfully successful in a business way.

### A STANCH INHERITANCE.

John Wanamaker, the boy, had no single thing in all his surroundings to give him an advantage over any one of hundreds of other boys in the city of Philadelphia. Indeed, there were hundreds of other boys of his own age for whom anyone would have felt safe in prophesying a more notable career. But young Wanamaker had an inheritance beyond that of almost any of the others. It was not money; very few boys in all that great city had less money than John Wanamaker, and comparatively few families of average position but were better off in the way of worldly goods. John Wanamaker's inheritance, that stood him in such good stead in after life, was good health, good habits, a clean mind, thrift in money matters, and tireless devotion to whatever he thought to be duty.

He went to school some, not very much; he assisted his mother in the house a great deal, and around his father's brickyard he was very helpful so far as a boy could be helpful in such hard work. But he had ambition beyond such things, and in 1852, when in his fifteenth year, he found work with a publishing house at \$1.50 a week.

I know a number of people who were well acquainted with John Wanamaker when he was a book publisher's boy. Most of them say that he was an exceptionally

## John Wanamaker

promising boy; that he was studious as well as attentive to business. Some of them declare that he used to buy a book or some such gift for his mother regularly with part of his savings. This may be partly romance,—the exaggerated remembrance that most people have of a boy who, as a man, cuts a notable figure in the world. Very likely he did buy some books, but the best that I can get is that, after all, he was very much like other boys, except that he did not take kindly to rough play, or do much playing of any kind, and that he was saving of his money. He was earnest in his work, unusually earnest for a boy, and so when, a little later, he went to a Market street clothing house and asked for a place, he had no difficulty in getting it, nor had he any trouble in holding it.

### HE WAS ALWAYS PROMPT.

His effort was to be first at the store in the morning, and he was very likely to be one of the last, if not the last at the store in the evening. But he did not expect credit for this. Men who worked with him in the Tower Hall clothing store say that he was always bright, willing, accommodating, and very seldom out of temper. If there was an errand, "John" was always prompt and glad to do it. And so the store people liked him, and the proprietor liked him, and, when he began to sell clothing, the customers liked him. He was considerate of their interests. He did not try to force undesirable goods upon them. He treated them so that



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when they came again they would be apt to ask, "Where is John?" There was nothing in all this that any boy could not have done ; it is simply the spirit that any boy or young man should show now,—must show if he expects to succeed wonderfully. Of course this could only lead to something higher. An ambitious young man, such as John Wanamaker, was not to be contented to sell goods all his days for other people. It was not long before he became secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association at \$1,000 a year. In the course of a few years he had saved \$2,000, when, joining with a friend who had \$2,000, they decided to open a clothing store of their own.

Now here was successful growth without one single outside influence to help the young man along. He got his first situation without influence. He got into Tower Hall without influence. His earnestness, activity and ability got him the secretaryship. He saved \$2,000 while other young men, who perhaps had earned many times more than he, had saved nothing. He had made friends among the customers of the old store, and he had not only made friends of many of the employees there, but he had impressed them all with the feeling that here was a young man whom it was safe to tie to. He had also made friends among church people and helpful folk generally. All of this was great capital.

### STEP BY STEP UPWARD.

At the very outset of his storekeeping, John Wana-

## John Wanamaker

maker did what almost any other business man would have stood aghast at. He chose the best man he knew as a salesman in the clothing business in Philadelphia, and agreed to pay him \$1,350 a year,—one-third of the entire capital of the new concern. It seemed reckless extravagance. And there were other employees, too. What could Mr. Wanamaker be thinking of to make the promise of this great sum just for one assistant! This move that seemed so audacious was really a very wise one; for, when the new employee went with Mr. Wanamaker to New York to buy goods, the fact of his association added credit to the young house and so a little money was eked out with a good deal more of credit, and a very fair stock of goods was laid in. This was just as the war began. Oak Hall was a success from the start. Possibly, under the circumstances, any sort of a clothing venture that had fair backing would have been a success. But no ordinary concern could have grown so rapidly and so healthfully as Oak Hall grew.

And right here another characteristic of Mr. Wanamaker's makeup strikingly manifested itself; *he was not bound by precedent*. No matter how time-honored a business method might be if it did not strike him as the wisest, he put it aside at once. And from the first he fully appreciated the importance of attracting public attention. As a boy he had published "Everybody's Journal,"—a hodge-podge of odd bits with dabs of original matter; notable then and now mainly because it indicated the bent of the young mind. At Oak Hall

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the same spirit of innovation was continually shown. It has often been told how Mr. Wanamaker delivered his first order in a wheelbarrow, and put the money (\$38) into an advertisement in "The Inquirer." But this was only one instance significant of the man.

### "WAKING UP" A TOWN.

Philadelphia awoke one morning to find "W. & B." in the form of six-inch square posters stuck up all over the town. There was not another letter, no hint, just "W. & B." Such things are common enough now, but then the whole city was soon talking and wondering what this sign meant. After a few days, a second poster modestly stated that Wanamaker & Brown had begun to sell clothing at Oak Hall.

Of course the young firm got business rapidly. When any man gets out of a rut and in the direction of more enterprise, it helps him. Before long there were great signs, each 100 feet in length, painted on special fences built in a dozen places about the city, particularly near the railroad stations. These told of the new firm and were the first of a class that are now seen all over the country. New ideas in advertising were cropping out. In time balloons more than twenty feet high were sent up, and a suit of clothes was given to each person who brought one of them back. Whole counties were stirred up by the balloons. It was grand advertising, imitated since by all sorts of people. When the balloon idea struck the Oak Hall management it was quickly found

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that the only way to get these air-ships was to make them, and so, on the roof of the store, the cotton cloth was cut and oiled and put together. Being well built, and tied very tightly at the neck, they made long flights and some of them were used over and over again. In one instance, a balloon remained for more than six months in a cranberry swamp, and when the great bag was discovered, slowly swaying in the breeze, among the bushes, the frightened Jersey men thought they had come upon an elephant, or, maybe, a survivor of the mastodons. This made more advertising of the very best kind for the clothing store,—the kind that excites interested, complimentary talk.

### SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES.

Genius consists in taking advantage of opportunities quite as much as in making them. Here was a young man doing things in an advertising way regardless of the custom of the business world, and with a wonderful knowledge of human nature. He took common-sense advantage of opportunities that were open to everybody.

Soon after the balloon experience, tally-ho coaching began to be a Philadelphia fad of the very exclusives. Immediately afterward a crack coach was secured, and six large and spirited horses were used instead of four, and Oak Hall employees, dressed in the style of the most ultra coaching set, traversed the country in every

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direction, scattering advertising matter to the music of the horn. Sometimes they would be a week on a trip. No wonder Oak Hall flourished. It was kept in the very front of the procession all the time.

A little later, in the yachting season, the whole town was attracted and amused by processions and scatterings of men, each wearing a wire body frame that supported a thin staff from which waved a wooden burgee, or pointed flag, reminding them of Oak Hall. Nearly two hundred of these prototypes of the "Sandwich man" were often out at one time.

But it was not only in the quick catching of a novel advertising thought that the new house was making history; in newspaper advertising, it was even further in advance. The statements of store news were crisp and unhackneyed, and the first artistic illustrations ever put into advertisements were used there. So high was the grade of this picture-work that art schools regularly clipped the illustrations as models; and the world-famous Shakespearean scholar, Dr. Horace Howard Furness, treasured the original sketches of "The Seven Ages" as among the most interesting in his unique collection.

As a storekeeper he was just as original. It was the universal rule in those days, in the clothing trade, not to mark the prices plainly on the goods that were for sale. Within rather liberal bounds, the salesman got what he could from the customer. Mr. Wanamaker, after a time, instituted at Oak Hall the plan of "but one

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price and that plainly marked,"—the beginning of still another revolution in business methods. He saw to it that customers had prompt and careful attention.— If a sale was missed, he required a written reason for it from the salesman. There was no haphazard business in that store,—nothing of the happy-go-lucky style. Each man must be alert, wide-awake, attentive, or there was no place for him at Oak Hall.

### ECONOMICAL WAYS.

And Mr. Wanamaker's habits of economy were never relaxed. It is told of him that, in the earlier days of Oak Hall, he used to gather up the short pieces of string that came in on parcels, make them into a bunch, and see that they were used when bundles were to be tied. He also had a habit of smoothing out old newspapers, and seeing that they were used as wrappers for such things as did not require a better grade of paper.

A considerable portion of the trade of the new store came from people in the country districts. Mr. Wanamaker had a way of getting close to them and gaining their good will. An old employee of the firm says: "John used to put a lot of chestnuts in his pocket along in the fall and winter, and, when he had one of these countrymen in tow, he'd slip a few of the nuts into the visitor's hand and both would go munching about the store." Another salesman of the old house says: "If we saw a man come in chewing gum, we knew it was of no use trying to sell him anything. You see, he was

## A Great Modern Merchant

sure to be as green as grass and fully convinced that we were all watching for a chance to cheat him. John said it was all nonsense ; that such people came on purpose to buy, and were the easiest people in the world to sell to. And he would prove it. He would chew gum with them, and talk farm or crops or cattle with them. They'd buy of him every time. But none of us could ever get his knack of dealing with countrymen."

There it is. This young merchant understood human nature. He put his customer at ease. He showed interest in the things that interested the farmer. He was frank and open with him, and just familiar enough not to lose a bit of the respect and deference that superiority commands.

### CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPIST.

Meantime Mr. Wanamaker was interesting himself in Sunday school work, as well as in Christian Association matters. He established a Sunday school in one of the most unpromising of the down-town sections, and there built up the largest school of the kind in the world,—with a membership of something like three thousand. This school proved a powerful factor for good.

He was also active in general philanthropic work. He was making his mark on almost every phase of the city's life. Such activity and forceful good sense are always sure to make their mark.

When the great store was started in 1877 at Thir-

## John Wanamaker

teenth and Market streets, Mr. Wanamaker announced certain fundamental principles that should mark the course of the enterprise. The one-price thought was continued, of course. But he went far beyond that. He announced that *those who bought goods of him were to be satisfied with what they bought, or have their money back.*

To the old mercantile houses of the city this seemed like committing business suicide. It was also unheard of that special effort should be made to add to the comfort of visitors, to make them welcome whether they cared to buy or not, to induce them to look upon the store as a meeting-place, a rendezvous, a resting-place,—a sort of city home, almost. Yet these things that were thought to forebode so much of disaster to the old generation of merchants, have completely overturned the methods of retailing throughout the United States. That “Wanamaker way” is now almost the universal way.

When asked what he attributed his great success to, Mr. Wanamaker said: “To thinking, toiling, trying and trusting in God.” Surely, his life has been crowded with work. Even now, when wealth and honor have been heaped upon him, he is likely to be the earliest man at the store, and the last to leave at night,—just as when a boy at Tower Hall.

### HIS ADVICE TO YOUNG MERCHANTS.

He cares little for money, and even less for fame.



## A Great Modern Merchant

When I asked him to name the essentials of success, he replied, curtly: "I might write a volume trying to tell you how to succeed. One way is to not be above taking a hint from a master. I don't care to tell why I succeeded, because I object to talking about myself. It isn't modest."

Mr. Wanamaker is epigrammatical at times. I asked him if a man with means but no experience would be safe in embarking in a mercantile business, and he replied, quickly:—

"A man can't drive a horse who has never seen one. No; a man must have training, must know how to buy and sell; only experience teaches that."

When I asked him whether the small tradesmen has any "show" to-day against the great department stores, he said:—

"All of the great stores were small at one time. Small stores will keep on developing into big ones. You wouldn't expect a man to put an iron band around his business in order to prevent expansion, would you? There are, according to statistics, a greater number of prosperous small stores in the city than ever before. What better proof do you want?"

"The department store is a natural product, evolved from conditions that exist as a result of fixed trade laws. Executive capacity, combined with command of capital, finds opportunity in these conditions, which are harmonious with the irresistible determination of the producer to meet the consumer directly, and of mer-

## John Wanamaker

chandise to find distribution along the lines of least resistance. Reduced prices stimulate consumption and increased employment, and it is sound opinion that the increased employment created by the department stores goes to women without curtailing that of men. In general it may be stated that large retail stores have shortened the hours of labor, and by systematic discipline have made it lighter. The small store is harder upon the sales-person and clerk. The effects upon the character and capacity of the employees are good. A well-ordered, modern retail store is a means of education in spelling, writing, English language, system and method. Thus it becomes to the ambitious and serious employees, in a small way, a university, in which character is broadened by intelligent instruction practically applied."

A feature of his make-up that has contributed largely to the many-sidedness of his success is his ability to concentrate his thoughts. No matter how trivial the subject that is brought before him, he takes it up with the seeming of one who has nothing else on his mind. While under the cares of his stores,—retail and wholesale,—of the Sunday school, of the postmaster-generalship, of vast railroad interests, of extensive real estate transactions, and while he was weighing the demands of leading citizens that he accept a nomination for mayor of Philadelphia, I have seen him take up the case of a struggling church society, or the troubles of an individual, with the interest and patience that would be expected of a pastor or a professional adviser. He

## A Great Modern Merchant

is phenomenal in this respect. Probably not one young man in a thousand *could* develop this trait so remarkably, but any young man can try for it, and he will be all the better and stronger for so trying.

In one physical particular Mr. Wanamaker is now very remarkable; he can work continually for a long time without sleep and without evidence of strain, and make up for it by good rest afterward. This, perhaps, is because of his lack of nervousness. He is always calm. Under the greatest stress he never loses his head. I fancy that this comes from training, as well as from inheritance. It adds amazingly to the power that any man can assert. It is certainly a tendency that can be cultivated.

### CONDITIONS THEN AND NOW.

I have heard it said a hundred times that Mr. Wanamaker started when success was easy. Here is what he says himself about it:—

“I think I could succeed as well now as in the past. It seems to me that the conditions of to-day are even more favorable to success than when I was a boy. There are better facilities for doing business, and more business to be done. Information in the shape of books and newspapers is now in the reach of all, and the young man has two opportunities where he formerly had one.

“We are much more afraid of combinations of capital than we have any reason for being. Competition regu-

## John Wanamaker

lates everything of that kind. No organization can make immense profits for any length of time without its field soon swarming with competitors. It requires brain and muscle to manage any kind of business, and the same elements which have produced business success in the past will produce it now, and will always produce it."

I have heard others marvel at the unbroken upward course of Mr. Wanamaker's career, and lament that they so often make mistakes. But hear him:—

"Who does not make mistakes? Why, if I were to think only of the mistakes I have made, I should be miserable indeed."

### THE VALUE OF "PUSH."

He has exceptional skill in getting the best that is possible out of his helpers. On one occasion he said:—

"We are very foolish people if we shut our ears and eyes to what other people are doing. I often pick up things from strangers. As you go along, pick up suggestions here and there, jot them down and send them along. Even writing them down helps to concentrate your mind on that part of the work. You need not be afraid of overstepping the mark and stepping on somebody's heels. The more we push each other, the better."

This is another Wanamaker characteristic: he wants everyone associated with him to "push." Stagnation and death are very nearly synonymous words in his vocabulary.

## A Great Modern Merchant

Out of it all stands a man who has been monumentally successful as a merchant and in general business; a man who has helped his fellow-man while helping himself.

The lesson of such a life should be precious to every young man. It teaches the value of untiring effort, of economy, of common sense applied to common business. It gives one more proof that no height of success is, in this country, beyond the reasonable ambition of any youth who desires to succeed.

I have no doubt that thousands on thousands of young men in the United States are to-day better equipped in almost every way than was John Wanamaker when he began business for himself in 1861. Very likely, not one in a hundred of them will make a mark of any significance. The fault will be their own,—they will not have the compelling force that comes from “thinking, toiling, trying,” and the serene confidence that *then* comes from “trusting” a guiding power through every change of circumstances,

## VII

### A British Boy Wins Fortune and Title by American Business Methods.

THE lower bay was charged with subdued excitement everywhere as the "Water Witch" hove to alongside Sir Thomas J. Lipton's "Erin," and I stepped aboard. The hum of preparation for the great race was heard above the lapping waves. Fresh and keen came the breezes from the snowy ridges of the ocean's breast. A thousand spreads of sail studded the bay, the great ships standing up in fixed majesty, the smaller vessels darting here and there in the wind, while right in the path of the sun's glare lay the green hull of the "Shamrock." Along the whitened shores beyond were hundreds of fishing craft dancing at their work, and in the offing were the smoke-stacks of the Atlantic liners.

"Good morning!" came a cheery sailor's voice from the promenade deck. "Step right up here and you will get a better view of our little beauty."

The voice belonged to Sir Thomas Lipton, and the "little beauty" was the dainty craft to which he had pinned his faith. The Scotch-Irish knight was as en-

## Merchant and Cup Challenger

thusiastic as a boy. With a cordial handshake, he led the way to the rail and pointed to the emerald swan below.

"There she is," he tenderly exclaimed; "the pride of a nation; isn't she a picture!" His tone fairly caressed the graceful thing. I fully expected to see him clamber down the rope-way and go out to pet her, as the Arab is said to pet his steed, but he satisfied himself by gazing at her and talking about her.

Confessedly, I was more interested in her owner than in the "Shamrock," but I was too diplomatic to show it, so I quite won my way into his heart by praising her.

SIR THOMAS WAS WON.

"Sir Thomas," I said, "I can't say I hope she will win, but I hope she will come so close to it that she will turn us all green with envy!"

"Ah, my boy, that's the spirit," he said; "that's why it's a pleasure to race against you Americans. You meet a fellow more than half way."

The "Erin" is no less beautiful than the racer. With the "Shamrock's" pennant at the foremast and the Stars and Stripes flying from the after-pole, she is a model. Commodore Morgan says she is one of the three finest ocean-going yachts in the world. The Prince and Princess of Wales visited her often, and gave signed photographs of themselves to hang in the elegant cabin. Admiral Dewey's likeness hangs near the "Columbia's." The appointments of the yacht are worthy of the Wal-

## Sir Thomas Lipton

dorf-Astoria. Sir Thomas never leaves her, he told me, except to go aboard the "Shamrock." I could not blame him. Finding a pair of upholstered steamer chairs forward, we dropped into them.

The conversation drifted into the early struggles of the baronet, to the days when he did not own a floating palace or an international cup challenger.

### WHEN HE BORROWED FIVE CENTS.

"I remember, as if it were yesterday," said Sir Thomas, "how utterly hopeless my financial condition seemed to be when I was a boy of fifteen in New York. I had run away from home to see the world. My experiences were anything but pleasant, without work as I was, a stranger in a great city. I got used to living on a few cents a day, but when it came to such a pinch that I couldn't buy a five-cent stamp to carry a letter to the old folks in Glasgow, I very nearly gave up. I really think that decided me to go back. It accentuated my homesickness. I thought of the prodigal son. I borrowed five cents for that letter, and resolved to get back as soon as a chance offered. I can tell you I was glad when I once more set foot on the other side. I had refrained from telling my people how hard up I had been. This was largely a matter of pride with me, but another consideration was their feelings. I would do anything rather than distress them. So I stepped up, on my arrival, as jauntily as you ever saw a lad, and when a proposition was made to me by my father, soon



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after my home-coming, to set me up in a small grocery, I jumped at the chance."

"Was that the beginning of your fortune?"

"Yes. I made money from the start. I put in practice what I had seen abroad,—such as displaying goods attractively in windows, keeping the place as neat as a pin, and waiting personally on my customers. Every dollar that I earned I saved,—not that I really loved money myself. That was not my inspiration,—it was my father and mother."

AMERICAN BUSINESS METHODS GAVE HIM HIS START.

"I am willing to admit that it was my admiration for American methods that gave me my start," said Sir Thomas, as he leaned against the taffrail. "It was the application of proper methods to conditions that needed them. These applications and conditions are always with us. The world is full of them. A man only needs to know both when he sees them.

"We have all marveled at the prosperity of America, but, years ago, I felt that it would come. But your country is still young, and has many more victories to win. I may say the same thing of all the world. Every country has a future still. Honest competition will still give all the nations a chance for supremacy. It only remains for the people to catch those chances, and not let them pass by. If I were a poor man to-day, I would be just as happy; I know that I could start anew and win.

## Sir Thomas Lipton

"Honest application is the stimulus of all effort. That, to me, is the science of achievement. Whenever you find an opportunity to do something that will benefit you, do not fail to take advantage of it. Often, the most trying periods will produce the best results. For instance, fifteen years ago, while sailing down the African coast in a steamer which carried, as the bulk of its cargo, my teas, we encountered a terrific storm. The steamer had to be lightened. At one time it even looked as if we were going to be wrecked; but, really, I thought more of the loss of that tea than of anything else. I had it brought on deck, with the idea of using it for advertising purposes, if for nothing else. On each case I had painted, in large black letters, 'Lipton's Tea,' and then cast it overboard, dreaming that it would float to the African coast, and be picked up by someone who had not heard of the product before. Sure enough, it was."

### HE OWNS NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED STORES.

"Your business must be an enormous one now, Sir Thomas, from the stories in the English papers about the organization of your enterprises into a limited company."

"Yes, I have a good deal to attend to," he said, smiling. "I have sixty stores in London alone, and four hundred and twenty the world over, most of them being in the British Isles. I sell all food products except beef, which I have never handled. I own thousands of acres

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on the island of Ceylon, where I am the largest individual land-owner. On this land I grow tea, coffee and cocoa, and employ several thousand natives to cultivate and ship it. I have warehouses all over Asia, and branch stores in Hamburg and Berlin. In Chicago I have a packing-house where I sometimes kill three thousand hogs in a day. So, you see, my enterprises are pretty well scattered over the earth.

“How many employees have I? Well, all in all, I have somewhat over ten thousand, and a nicer lot of employees you never saw. I have never had a strike, and never expect to have one, for I make it my personal duty to see that my men are all comfortably fixed. We live together in perfect harmony.”

“And what advice would you give young men who are about to start out for themselves, Sir Thomas?”

“That’s a broad question,” laughed the great man. “It would take me some time to answer it properly. But, to begin with, I say that hard work is the cardinal requisite for success. I always feel that I cannot impress that fact too strongly upon young men. And then a person’s heart and soul must be in his work. He must be earnest, above all, and willing to give his whole time to his work, if necessary. Honesty, it goes without saying, is necessary, and if you want to be wholly successful, you must do unto others as you would have them do unto you. If you don’t, they will be sure to retaliate, when you least expect it. If young men would follow these rules, they would get along

## Sir Thomas Lipton

very well; but few of them will. If your article can inspire any of them to harder work, its mission will be blessed."

### CHANCES FOR YOUNG MEN TO-DAY.

I inquired whether the chances for young men in Great Britain are equal to those in America.

"That is a difficult question to answer," said Sir Thomas. "Being a merchant, I can speak of trade opportunities, but in the professions I really do not know which side of the Atlantic is the better. Literature, of course, knows no country; neither does art. In the legal profession, the chances are two to one in favor of the United States. You make more of your lawyers there; you utilize them in legislation, in places of trust, while abroad their duties are limited. A good physician in England will probably make as much money as your leading ones here. Taking it altogether, there seems to be as good a chance for professional men on one side as on the other. The British isles are small compared with the states, but young men are going out every day into new British fields, just as your young men are pushing out into every part of your magnificent stretch of country.

"THRIFT IS THE TRUE SECRET OF SUCCESS."

"When men tell you," continued the baronet, "that there are no more chances in this world, tell them that they are mistaken. Your country abounds in so many

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that I marvel why any American cares to leave its shores. There are thousands of manufactures that are still in an imperfect state; there are millions of acres that are still to be made productive; there are, seemingly, countless achievements yet to be undertaken. What I say is best proven by the international yacht races. Every year we race we believe that we have produced the best possible boat, but we find, after the race is over, that we can improve it in some respect. If all men would use their minds in the same way that the builders of these big yachts use theirs, what a world of improvement would be made! After every race, we produce something better, something finer,—the result of brains and workmanship,—and we are not satisfied yet.

“I have often been asked to define the true secret of success. It is thrift in all its phases, and, principally, thrift as applied to saving. A young man may have many friends, but he will find none so steadfast, so constant, so ready to respond to his wants, so capable of pushing him ahead, as a little leather-covered book, with the name of a bank on its cover. Saving is the first great principle of all success. It creates independence, it gives a young man standing, it fills him with vigor, it stimulates him with the proper energy; in fact, it brings to him the best part of any success,—happiness and contentment. If it were possible to inject the quality of saving into every boy, we would have a great many more real men.

## Sir Thomas Lipton

“Success depends also on character to carry it through life.

“Knowledge should be a compound of what we derive from books, and what we extract, by our observation, from the living world around us. Both of these are necessary to the well-informed man; and, of the two, the last is, by far, the most useful for the practical purposes of life. The man who can combine the teachings of books with strong and close observation of life, deserves the name of a well-informed man, and presents a model worthy of imitation.”

The great passion of Sir Thomas's life, yachting, has been a costly indulgence for him, yet he has inadvertently secured more popularity through his efforts to win the “America's” Cup than would have been possible in any other way. The three “Shamrocks” have cost him, all told, reckoning the expenses of sailing the races as part of the grand total, more than one million dollars.

## VIII

### A Self-made Man who Strives to Give others a Chance

“IF a bootblack does all the good he possibly can for his fellowmen, his life has been just as successful as that of the millionaire who helps thousands.”

That was what Darius Ogden Mills said when I asked him to give me his idea of a successful life. His next reply was quite as epigrammatic.

“What, Mr. Mills, do you consider the keynote of success?”

“Work,” he replied, quickly and emphatically. “Work develops all the good there is in a man; idleness all the evil. Work sharpens all his faculties and makes him thrifty; idleness makes him lazy and a spendthrift. Work surrounds a man with those whose habits are industrious and honest; in such society a weak man develops strength, and a strong man is made stronger. Idleness, on the other hand, is apt to throw a man into the company of men whose only object in life usually is the pursuit of unwholesome and demoralizing diversions.”

Mr. Mills is quite averse to being interviewed, but

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when I told him that his words would be carried to many thousands of young men, and probably do considerable good in the way of encouragement and inspiration, he consented to a brief talk.

### AN AGE OF OPPORTUNITIES.

I asked Mr. Mills when he would be ready for me, and he replied:—

“I am just as ready now as I ever will be. There is no time like the present.”

Like an oasis in the desert is the experience of a man, the accumulation of whose wealth has been on lines parallel with the conducive rather than counter to the welfare of mankind. This is what Mr. Mills says on the subject:—

“A man can, in the accumulation of a fortune, be just as great a benefactor of mankind as in the distribution of it. In organizing a great industry, one opens up fields of employment for a multitude of people who might otherwise be practically helpless, giving them not only a chance to earn a living for themselves and their families, but also to lay by a competency for old age. All honest, sober men, if they have half a chance, can do that; but only a small percentage can ever become rich. Now the rich man, having acquired his wealth, knows better how to manage it than those under him would, and having actual possession, he has the power to hold the community of his employees and their interests together, and prevent disintegration,



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which means disaster so much oftener to the employee than to the employer."

Volumes of fascinating matter could be written of the career of Mr. Mills, but the purpose of this article is a talk with, rather than a talk about him.

"To what formative influence do you attribute your material success, Mr. Mills?" I asked.

"I was taught very early that I would have to depend entirely upon myself; that my future lay in my own hands. I had that for a start, and it was a good one. I didn't waste any time bothering about succession to wealth, which so often acts as a drag upon young men. Many persons waste the best years of their lives waiting for dead men's shoes; and, when they get them, find them entirely too big to wear gracefully, simply because they have not developed themselves to wear them. I have never accepted an inheritance or anything but goodwill from my family or relatives."

### THE FIRST HUNDRED DOLLARS.

"As a rule, the small inheritance, which, to a boy, would seem large, has a tendency to lessen his efforts, and is a great damage to him in the way of acquiring habits necessary to success. Above all, no one can acquire a fortune unless he makes a start; and the habit of thrift, which he learns in saving his first hundred dollars, is of inestimable value later on. It is not the money, but the habit which counts. There is no one so helpless as a man who is 'broke,' no matter how

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capable he may be, and there is no habit so detrimental to his reputation among business men as that of borrowing small sums of money. This cannot be too emphatically impressed upon young men. Another thing is that none but the wealthy, and very few of them, can afford the indulgence of expensive habits; how much less then can a man with only a few dollars in his pockets? More young men are ruined by the expense of smoking than in any other way. The money thus laid out would make them independent, in many cases, or at least would give them a good start. A young man should be warned by the melancholy example of those who have been ruined by smoking, and avoid it."

### TRAITS OF INFLUENTIAL MEN.

"What marked traits have the influential men, with whom you have been associated, possessed, which most impressed you?"

"A habit of thinking and acting for themselves. No end of people are ruined by taking the advice of others. This may answer temporarily, but in the long run it is sure to be disastrous. Any man who hasn't ability to judge for himself would better get a comfortable clerkship somewhere, letting some one of more ambition and ability do the thinking necessary to run the business."

"Are the opportunities for making money as numerous to-day as they were when you started in business?"

"Yes, the progress of science and invention has in-

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creased the opportunities a thousandfold, and a man can find them wherever he seeks them, in the United States in particular. It has caused the field of employment of labor of all kinds to expand enormously, thus creating opportunities which never existed before. It is no longer necessary for a man to go to foreign countries or distant parts of his own country to make money. Opportunities come to him in every quarter. There is hardly a point in the country so obscure that it has not felt the revolutionizing influence of commercial enterprise. Probably railroads and electricity are the chief instruments in this respect. Other industries follow closely in their wake."

### SOME SECRETS OF SUCCESS.

"In what part of the country do you think the best chances for young men may be found?"

"The best place for a young man to make money is the town in which he was born and educated. There he learns all about everybody, and everybody learns about him. This is to his advantage if he bears a good character, and to the advantage of his townspeople if he bears a bad one. While a young man is growing up, he unconsciously absorbs a vast deal of knowledge of people and affairs, which would be equal to money if he only has the judgment to avail himself of it. A knowledge of men is the prime secret of business success. Upon reflection, how absurd it is for a man to leave a town where he knows everything and every-

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body, and go to some distant point where he doesn't know anything about anybody, or anything, and expect to begin on an equal footing with the people there who are thoroughly acquainted."

"What lesson do you consider best for young men to learn?"

"The lesson of humility;—not in the sense of being servile or undignified, but in that of paying due respect to men who are their superiors in the way of experience, knowledge and position. Such a lesson is akin to that of discipline. Members of the royal families of Europe are put in subordinate positions in the navies or armies of their respective countries, in order that they may receive the training necessary to qualify them to take command. They must first know how to obey, if they would control others."

### THE BOTTOM OF THE LADDER.

"In this country, it is customary for the sons of the presidents of great railroads, or other companies, to begin at the bottom of the ladder and work their way up step by step, just the same as any other boy in the employ of the corporation. This course has become imperatively necessary in the United States, where each great business has become a profession in itself. Most of the big machine shops number among their employees, scions of old families who carry dinner pails, and work with files or lathes, the same as anyone else. Such shoulder-to-shoulder experience is invaluable to

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a man who is destined to command, because he not only masters the trade technically, but learns all about the men he works with and qualifies himself to grapple with labor questions which may arise.

“There is no end of conspicuous examples of the wisdom of this system in America. There are also many instances of disaster to great industrial concerns due to the inexperience or the lack of tact of men placed suddenly in control.”

“What is the responsibility of wealth, Mr. Mills?”

“A man must learn not to think too much of money. It should be considered as a means and not an end, and the love for it should never be permitted to so warp a man’s mind as to destroy his interest in progressive ideas. Making money is an education, and the wide experience thus acquired teaches a man discrimination in both men and projects, where money is under consideration. Very few men who make their own money use it carelessly. Most good projects that fail owe their failure to bad business management, rather than to lack of intrinsic merit. An inventor may have a very good thing, and plenty of capital may be enlisted, but if a man not acquainted with the peculiar line, or one who is not a good salesman or financier be employed as manager, the result is disastrous. A man should spend his money in a way that tends to advance the best interests of society in the country he lives in, or in his own neighborhood at least. There

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is only one thing that is a greater harm to the community than a rich spendthrift, and that is a miser."

### A WORD ABOUT CHEAP HOTELS.

"How did you happen to establish the system of hotels which bear your name, Mr. Mills?"

"I had been looking around for several years to find something to do that would be for the good of the community. My mind was largely on other matters, but it occurred to me that the hotel project was the best, and I immediately went to work at it. My purpose was to do the work on so large a scale that it would be appreciated and spread all over the country, for as the sources of education extend, we find more and more need of assisting men who have a disposition for decency and good citizenship. The mechanic is well paid, and the man who has learned to labor is much more independent than he who is prepared for a profession, science or other objects in life that call for higher education. Clerks commencing at small salaries need good surroundings and economy to give themselves a start. Such are the men for whom the hotels were established."

## IX

### Thrift, the Secret of a Fortune Built in a Single Lifetime.

**V**ERY few great fortunes have been acquired by one man, or within the limits of a single lifetime. The vast wealth of the Vanderbilts, the Astors, and many others, has accumulated through several generations. It is seldom, indeed, that a fortune like that of Russell Sage is amassed by one man. For years, the newspapers of the country have been filled with stories of his eccentricities.

When I called at the great banker's office, I found it very hard to obtain an audience with Mr. Sage, even though I had an introduction to him. He has so often been the victim of cranks, and has so many callers at his office, that he has been obliged to deny himself to all alike. He finally decided to see me. I found him seated at an old flat-topped desk, looking over the stock reports of the day, and I was surprised at the extreme simplicity of all his surroundings. The furnishings of the room looked as if they might have seen service before the Civil War, and, upon later inquiry, I learned that most of the chairs and the desk itself have been in use by Mr. Sage for more than twenty-

## Russell Sage

five years. He has become so attached to them that he cannot think of discarding them for more modern inventions. Mr. Sage is smooth-faced, and his hair is thin and gray. His clothes are fashioned in the style of thirty years ago, but of good material, and well kept. His shoulders are bent with care and age, but his face has a good color, and a happy smile that betokens health and a peaceful mind.

"I have come to ask you to tell me the story of your life," I said, "for I am sure it must be of great interest."

HE BEGAN AS A GROCERY CLERK.

Mr. Sage smiled. "I don't know about its being of interest. It is very simple and commonplace to me. You know I began as a grocery clerk, in a country town. That is a very humble beginning, I'm sure."

"Yes, but it's the beginning that counts," I said; "not the end."

"You are right," replied the financier. "Well, when I was even younger than you are, I received a dollar a week for working from early morning until late at night, but I was well satisfied with my lot, because I knew that it was bound to lead to better things. So I worked my very best, and saved my wages, which were slowly increased as I went along, and finally I had enough money to start a little store for myself. When I was twenty-one years old, I had a store of my own, and I made a success of it, too." He smiled, as he remembered those early days.



## Specialist in Finance

"But how did you happen to come to New York?" I asked.

"Oh, I was ambitious," laughed Mr. Sage. "Like most boys, I thought there was no other place like a city for success, and I finally sold my country store when I was still very young, and came to New York. I started in as an office-boy, at very low wages, and, from that day on, I worked myself up and up, until I finally became a financier on my own account. It took a long time, though. It wasn't all accomplished in a day; though, when I came to New York, I expected to be rich in two or three years. I was very much like other boys, you see. They all expect to get rich in a day."

"But some of them never get rich," I said.

"Well, it's their own fault if they don't succeed," said the financier. "Surely, everyone has as good a chance as I had. I don't think there could be a poorer opportunity for a boy to rise. The trouble is that most of them are not very anxious to rise. If they find themselves wealthy some morning they are glad, of course; but they are not willing to work and make themselves rich."

### NO LUCK IN HIS ACHIEVEMENT.

"Some say that it is all luck," I ventured to suggest.

"Oh, pshaw!" said Mr. Sage, with great disgust. "There's no such thing as luck. I'm sure there was none of it about my career. I know just how I earned

## Russell Sage

every penny, and the reason for it, and I never got anything I didn't work for. I never knew anyone to obtain lasting wealth without lots of hard work."

"Do you think there are as good opportunities for getting rich to-day as there were thirty years ago, or when you made your start, Mr. Sage?"

"Undoubtedly. I think there are even greater opportunities, for new industries are being established all the time, and there are broader fields to work in. But then, the old fields of business are not overworked, by any means. I always say that there is room for good men anywhere and at any time. I don't think there can be ever too many of them. It is true that there are many applicants for every place in New York, but if I were unable to get a place in an eastern city, I should go west, for there are great opportunities there for everyone."

"People say, though, that the west is not what it is supposed to be," I remarked.

"Yes, there are always pessimists," said Mr. Sage. "The people who say the west has no opportunities are the same persons who used to call it foolish for any young man to come to New York. When I decided to come here, I was told on every side that I would regret my action; but I never have. Some people never see opportunities in anything, and they never get along. I didn't see any very great opportunity ahead of me when I came to New York, but I knew that, if I had a chance, I could make one. I knew that there are always



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## Specialist in Finance

openings for energetic, hard-working fellows, and I was right."

### STRICT HONESTY IS NECESSARY.

"Of course, you believe that strict honesty is essential to success, Mr Sage? I've heard many people say that honesty doesn't pay, especially in Wall street."

"That is a foolish question," said the financier. "It is absurd to imagine that it pays to be dishonest, whatever your business or profession. Do you suppose, if I had been dishonest in any dealings when I started out, that I would be worth anything to-day?"

"What do you think of the chances for country boys in a great city like New York to-day, Mr. Sage?"

"I think they are as great as ever. Employers are on the lookout for bright young men, and I believe that they would prefer that they come from the country, provided there is no danger of their becoming dissipated. I think that is the only thing men have against country fellows, and there are many things in their favor. I think an earnest, ambitious, hard-working boy from the country has a splendid chance of becoming somebody. There are much greater opportunities for him to exercise his good qualities, and the reward of his enterprise is much larger. The same energetic labor that would make a man worth twenty-five thousand dollars in a small town would be very likely to make him worth a hundred thousand or so in a great city, and all on account of the wider field."

## Russell Sage

"To what do you owe your wonderful vitality?" I asked. Mr. Sage smiled before answering me.

"I never smoke, I never drink any liquors, I retire early, and get up early, and take care of myself in every possible way," he said. "Don't you think I ought to be healthy? I have always taken care of myself, and I think I've proved that hard work is not bad for one's health. In fact, I think that work is the best thing I know of for improving a man's constitution, for it makes a good appetite, and encourages digestion. It isn't work that ruins so many men. It's the wine they drink, and the late hours they keep, and their general dissipation. I expect to be at my desk for many years to come, and just because I've taken good care of myself."

## X

### Cut Out for a Banker, He Rose from Errand Boy to Secretary of the U. S. Treasury.

“**I**N my own career, I have learned that varied experience in early youth is often of great value in after life. My schooldays ended when I was fourteen years old, and I began work as a mail agent on the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad. I do not mean to say that, when I stopped school, my education ceased, for it was after 1850 that my character received its greatest development. I was but poorly satisfied with my work as mail agent, although it taught me much that I didn't know before, and I kept my eyes open for something better. In a short time, the death of the president of the United States resulted in the loss of my first position. The village postmaster was removed from office, and, of course, my dismissal followed. This was discouraging, but I re-entered the village academy to pursue, for a time, my studies. There was in our town a small bank, and this institution had always possessed a fascination for my youthful mind. I used to watch the merchants going in with bags of gold and bundles of

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greenbacks, and coming out again with only account books in their hands. I knew that the bank had some connection with the government, and, being greatly impressed with its dignified appearance and the actions of its officers, I was seized with a desire to work within its walls. When I applied for a position, I learned that there was no likelihood of a vacancy occurring in the near future; so, when I was offered a place in a local stationery shop at a salary of a hundred dollars a year, I accepted with alacrity. The wages were small, indeed, but in this shop I was privileged to become acquainted with general literature, and spent many hours with the great authors. So the months with the stationer were not without profit.

“After a time there was a rival bank established in the town, and I was offered the position of ‘messenger and general assistant,’ at the same old salary of a hundred dollars a year. I didn’t hesitate, but left the store to enter the bank, and so began my career in the financial world. My duties as ‘general assistant’ were many and varied. I was janitor, first of all, and attended to the heating of the building. I made many trips every day to the cellar for coal, and I used to think the officials most extravagant when they insisted on a fire when the days were comparatively warm. I was obliged to keep the front sidewalk clear of dirt in the summer and of snow in the winter, and had to sweep the floor of the banking room daily, and dust the desks and furniture frequently.



## A Statesmanlike Financier

WHEN YOU START IN LIFE IN A STRANGE CITY, DO NOT  
EXPECT "SOFT SNAPS."

"As the 'messenger' of the bank, I was sent around town with notices of notes which had fallen due, and with drafts which had been sent to the bank for collection from other cities. All these duties kept me fairly busy, but I still had time to learn something of banking as a business, and of the transactions which took place behind the counters. As the business of the bank increased, the teller and the bookkeeper welcomed my assistance in their departments; and, when summer came, and there were no fires to make and no snow to shovel, I had opportunity to learn most of the details of the business. After a while I was intrusted with the work of the teller or of the bookkeeper when either was kept at home by illness, and at the end of my first year I felt that I was indeed 'cut out for a banker.'

"I had so good an opinion of my accomplishments that I demanded of my employers an increase of salary for my second year. They replied that I was receiving all they could afford to pay, and I immediately resigned. At this time, nearly every boy in Central New York had the 'Western Fever,' and, after I left the bank, I developed a very bad case. I determined to start for Chicago to make my fortune, and arrived there one day in 1855, with few dollars and no friends. I had my mind made up to be a banker, and supposed that it would be easier to find an opening in the western city than it had

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been in my native village. But when I made the rounds, I found that no embryo banker was needed. I could not afford to be idle, so I determined to accept the first position which should offer, whether or not it was to my liking. It does not pay for a young man starting in life in a strange city to be too particular about what he does for a living. I soon found a place as bookkeeper for a lumber company. The panic of 1857 effected even bookkeepers, however; and, when the firm found it necessary to reduce expenses, I gladly accepted appointment as night watchman.

“I had been in Chicago three years before good fortune seemed to come my way. I had visited every banking house several times in search of a position, for I was convinced that banking ought to be my career, and I was a familiar applicant to all the officials. On the third of August, 1858, a date I shall always remember, I was summoned to the office of the Merchants’ Loan and Trust Company, where my name was on file as a candidate for any position, however humble. ‘Can you keep a set of books?’ asked Mr. Holt, the cashier. ‘I can try,’ was my answer. ‘That isn’t what we want,’ said Mr. Holt; ‘can you do it?’ ‘I can, if it can be done in twenty-three hours out of twenty-four,’ I replied, and I was thereupon engaged at an annual salary of five hundred dollars. After working for so long at uncongenial employment with low wages, this opening made me very happy. I felt that my future

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was assured, for I had obtained, at length, the long-desired standing-room in a Chicago bank.

THE PUBLIC WOULD RATHER INVEST ITS MONEY IN MEN  
THAN IN FINE BUILDINGS.

“The story of my further progress can be of little interest to those who are beginning life in the financial world. My early preparation in the New York village was most useful, and, since I had also benefited from my experience with the world, my position was secure. If a young man has some preparation for his work, if he secures a proper opening, and if he behaves himself, there can be no question of his future. In two years after I entered the service of the Merchants’ Loan and Trust Company, I was given the position of cashier, at an annual salary of two thousand dollars, and naturally I was encouraged to find that my efforts were appreciated. I enjoyed my work, and was more convinced than ever before that banking was the career for which I was best fitted by nature.

“Every successful man started in a different way from that adopted by any other, and there is no rule which can be laid down as certain to win in the end. Some have received the benefit of a college training, and others have been self-educated. Some began life in other business and drifted into banking, and some were employed in financial houses from the very beginning. It often happens that those who make the most

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earnest efforts to succeed accomplish less than others who have had less preparation for the work. The prizes of life do not always come to the most deserving. Many things must co-operate to bring great results. Innate ability, which schools cannot furnish, must find conjunction with conditions, circumstances, and opportunities which lie outside of individual control. If you find a man great, distinguished, a business Saul among his brethren, do not worship him overmuch. Perhaps among the humble and unrecognized are a score or a hundred as worthy as he, to whom circumstances were unfavorable or opportunity did not come.

“The public appreciates more and more the importance of investing money in men, not in buildings. When I hear of large gifts to erect magnificent halls at our colleges, I think what greater good would be accomplished if that money were used to help a number of deserving young men and women through their college courses. When these young people have finished their work in the world, they may each and all be able to erect fifty-thousand-dollar buildings for their *alma maters*. A certain generous-minded man once said to me, ‘I have given money quite freely to help the distressed, to soften the bitterness of helpless age, and to alleviate the condition of the unfortunate; but there was little or no inspiration in it. When, on the other hand, I have helped a bright boy to secure for himself a good education, my imagination has become effected. I have seen my dollars—won by hard

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application, in sordid ways,—transmitted into intellectual agencies powerful to effect the thoughts and feelings of generations which will live when I am dead.’ This sentiment is becoming prevalent among the thoughtful men of America.”

## XI

### A Young Millionaire not Afraid to Work in Overalls.

**A**TALL, slender young man walked into the office of the master of motive power and construction, in the Grand Central Station, New York. He was dressed in clothes that showed marks of travel, and his face had a tired look. This was young Cornelius Vanderbilt, son of the head of the house of Vanderbilt, and great-grandson of his namesake, the founder of the Vanderbilt fortune. Cornelius had come to the office to report to the man under whom he is working, for the heir to the Vanderbilt millions was then serving his apprenticeship in the railroad business, and had to report the work he had accomplished, just like any other young mechanic on the road. Every clerk in the office stared at him, but the stare was affectionate, for every employee of the road has learned to like him. They have seen him with jacket and overalls, working in the yards and in the round-houses and machine-shops all along the system.

“It was not a sudden determination which led me to go out on the road and study the practical side of the

## A Millionaire Apprentice

railroad business," said young Cornelius Vanderbilt, in answer to my question as to his motive; "I had long intended to do it, because I know that the best way to learn a business is to begin at the bottom and work up. So when Mr. Depew arranged for me to begin in this department, I gladly accepted the place. I have been out on the road, off and on, for several months, and feel that I have learned a great deal that I could never have learned in any other way."

FROM THE FOUNDATION UP.

"I have enjoyed the experience, too. I think I have had a natural inclination for mechanics all my life, and I enjoyed having to do with engines and the construction of the road-bed. I am learning, gradually, of course, to build an engine, and to run one successfully. It won't be long before I can do that."

"And what will you undertake when you have finished with the construction and motive-power departments?" I asked.

"Well, I haven't planned that far ahead yet, but I hope, eventually, to know as much about the finances of the road as I do about the mechanics, and I also want to know something of the way in which the road is managed. All this will take time, but I am determined to give it all the time it needs. I think the advantages to be derived from such a training are worth a great deal of time and work."

"Does it seem like very hard work to you?"

## Cornelius Vanderbilt

"No; you know, I'm very much interested in such things, and so I don't mind the work. I would much prefer working in the yards and round-houses to working in the offices. It is much more to my taste."

I asked Mr. Vanderbilt whether he ever expected to run an engine attached to a train, and he said he had no idea of doing so, but he could, if necessary. "I'm glad to know how," he said.

And then Mr. Vanderbilt went to attend to some work awaiting him outside, and I entered Mr. Depew's office. When I asked Mr. Depew to tell me something more of the young man whom he has so nobly befriended in all his trials, he spoke with great animation.

### WISE DEVELOPMENT OF INHERITED TENDENCIES.

"Cornelius," said he, "is a remarkable youth. From his early boyhood, I have seen in him signs of a peculiar ability. He has always been passionately fond of mechanics, and once, when a boy, was found trying to construct a steam engine out of an old saucepan. I have always hoped that he would enter actively into the work of the road, and I believe he has now begun a career that will prove both remarkable and glorious. I believe that, by pursuing this course, he will be the greatest railroad man of the age."

"Where did he get this natural taste for the work, Mr. Depew?" I asked.

"From his father, who did much the same work, when he was young, that Cornelius, Jr., is doing now.



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But I believe Cornelius, Jr., takes an even greater interest in the work. It is not a new duty with him, but a natural ambition, and I believe that he would have become a railroad man even if he were the son of the poorest parents in the land. He is fitted by nature for such a career.

“His progress has so far been very satisfactory in every way. He has a genius for mastering details, and has already learned the construction of a locomotive. He has an inventive faculty, too, and has prepared plans for a locomotive that will achieve greater speed with smaller expenditure of coal. He expects to devote the next few years to mastering every department of railroad business, and he will eventually be competent to fill almost any position on the road. He will shovel coal and dig in the trenches, and polish engines. He will lay rails and take them up, and learn how to mend a cracked one. He will learn to detect uncertain ground, too, and how to make it solid again. He agrees with me that the way to make a workman respect you is to work with him.”

### HE WILL MASTER EVERY DETAIL.

“When he has finished his work on the road, he will take his place in the offices here, and learn how the system is administered. He will study the financial department especially, which deals with expenditures and receipts. This is, perhaps, the most important department of all for him, but he will also study the

## Cornelius Vanderbilt

freight and passenger departments, and learn why the business increases and decreases, and the remedy for a falling off. There are a hundred and one things to learn, and he couldn't learn them in any other way. It will, of course, take a long time, perhaps fourteen or fifteen years, but he has a great deal of grit and perseverance, and I believe he will stick to it until he has thoroughly mastered the business.

"He will, in all likelihood, be the next member of the family to enter into the active management of the road. His brothers and cousins may eventually go through the same training, but Cornelius, Jr., is destined to be the most active in the management. I may not live to see it, but if his health holds out, and he is allowed to pursue his own course, he will perpetuate the name and fame of the Vanderbilts for another century."

"He is a chip of the old block, indeed," said another friend of the Vanderbilt family, "and his industry brings to mind the push and energy of the first Cornelius Vanderbilt in the early part of his career. The Commodore was never ashamed of any kind of honest work, and Cornelius is not. He will always be a worker, and his success in life is therefore assured, whether his father disinherits him or not. It is not believed, however, that Cornelius Vanderbilt will deprive his son of his fair share in the estate. On the contrary, however strong the feeling of displeasure the father may have entertained toward Cornelius, it is

## A Millionaire Apprentice

thought by friends of the family that he will treat his son and namesake fairly and even liberally.”

### WORKING AS A MACHINIST.

Young Cornelius, in his work as a machinist and office clerk, presents an example which other sons of millionaires could follow with profit. He is not alone, however, among young men of his class in training for a useful life. One of New York's richest young men is said to be not only a worker, but an authority on mechanics, and is able both to roll up his shirt-sleeves and go to the bench, and to describe in the minutest detail the work on which he is engaged. His ability in the mechanical line would probably have won wealth and success for him, even had he not been born to a vast fortune. At the same time, the course of the next in succession to the control of the Vanderbilt millions, in entering upon an education in skilled labor as a common workingman, is an excellent assurance that the family stock is not degenerating, and that its interests are in trustworthy hands.

The ambition of Commodore Vanderbilt to establish and perpetuate a great railway empire seems likely to be fulfilled, so far as the present and the rising generation of the Vanderbilts are concerned. It is the most remarkable experiment of the kind since the beginning of the American republic.

## XII

### A Messenger Boy's Zeal Lifts Him to the Head of the World's Greatest Telegraph System.

**W**HEN romance can be added to hard facts in telling the life-story of a man, such a narrative becomes more pointed and interesting than the rarest dreams of a fictionist; therefore, the true story of a man who has made himself cannot fail to be instructive as well as interesting. No other man in the United States, to-day, can look back on a more remarkable career than that of Colonel Robert C. Clowry, president of the Western Union Telegraph Company. Mr. Clowry was delivering messages for that company in 1852, with but one object in view,—to hold his position. He is the busiest man, perhaps, in America to-day, and has little time to spend with an interviewer. He dislikes the notoriety that the world gives to men who fight and win, but the story of such a man is of more than passing interest. It is an important, valuable, uplifting factor in the great compound that makes America. It belongs to the people. It is for their use to profit by, and, with this one condi-

## President of the "Western Union"

tion impressed on Mr. Clowry, he agreed to tell what he knows about himself.

"I began my telegraph career on April 4, 1852," he said. "I shall never forget the day. I walked into the office of Judge Caton's old Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company, at Joliet, Illinois, and told the operator that I had come to learn the business. I can see the rickety building now, and the surprised expression on the operator's face when he looked at me.

HE WAS SO POOR HE HAD TO DO HIS OWN COOKING.

"I had been living with my mother on a farm in Will county, not far from Joliet, and, having reached the age of fifteen, I thought it time to start out in the world for myself. Ever since I first heard of the telegraph, I was fascinated with its workings, and at that time my chief ambition was to be able to send a message over the wires.

"What kind of work do you want to do?" the operator asked me. I replied that I didn't suppose I was capable of doing anything but carry messages. 'Well,' he said, 'we don't pay boys anything the first six months; but, if you want to work, you will have a chance to learn the business. When you're in the office you can easily pick up the knack of operating the keys, and, eventually, you'll get an office of your own.'

"I hadn't expected to earn any money at first, so I told him I was ready to begin at once. That was the beginning of my experience in the telegraph business."

## Robert C. Clowry

"But, if you received no money for six months, how did you live in Joliet during that time?" I asked Colonel Clowry.

"I was able to earn money by doing various odd jobs around town, and of course my expenses were very low. For a while I used to get my own meals. I had learned to do plain cooking at home, and it was no hardship for me to fry an egg or broil a piece of steak. Joliet was a very small town in 1852, and I had never been accustomed to luxuries living at home. I had to work long hours at the office. I was the only messenger, and had all the work to do, so I hardly had time to be homesick. After my life on the farm, Joliet was a regular metropolis in my eyes and I found much to interest me. Of course, I was discouraged at times. I was very young to be away from home and dependent on my own resources, and it was only natural that I should occasionally get the blues. But for the most part I was wrapped up in my work and occupied with ambitious plans for the future."

"Were you able to learn telegraphy in a short time?"

"Yes, it seemed to come natural to me. I always liked mechanics and didn't rest until I knew the function of every key and lever connected with the instruments in the office. Within two months, I was able to send and receive a message, and in four months I was quite as expert as the regular operator. He was surprised at the readiness with which I learned, and remarked one day that I wouldn't remain a messenger

## President of the "Western Union"

long. This encouraged me, of course, but I had no idea how soon I should be given an office of my own.

"I had various unpleasant experiences as a messenger. I learned that, no matter how zealous I was in my work, it was impossible to please everybody, and I was frequently accused of loitering when in reality I had hurried as much as possible. The telegraph was a new institution in those days, and people were always doubtful of its success. They seemed actually surprised when a message was delivered without delay."

IT IS WELL TO KNOW WHAT MEN HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

"In the beginning I was discouraged every time a man scolded me and found fault, but after a time I realized that it was foolish to be worried over trifles. I was doing my very best and knew that my services were appreciated by the officials over me. When I had been working six months as a messenger, I was delighted, one day, by the information that the office at Lockport, Illinois, was vacant, and that I was to be placed in charge. I was not yet sixteen years old, but most people took me to be nineteen or twenty, and the superintendent said that age shouldn't count against ability. Lockport is in the same county as Joliet, so I was stationed near home, and my mother was delighted at the progress I had made."

"At such an age you must have felt the responsibility of having the entire office in your charge."

"Yes," said Colonel Clowry, "I think I did. It was

## Robert C. Clowry

my constant endeavor to appear older than sixteen, because I felt that business men might not have confidence in my ability if they knew I was so very young. I was fortunate in my work. Everything progressed favorably under my management, and, as the business rapidly increased, the superintendent was pleased with my work."

"Do you think the company would nowadays employ a boy of sixteen as manager?"

"That's a difficult question to answer," said Colonel Clowry. "I think, if the boy were capable and earnest, he would be given such a position. Merit is as quickly rewarded to-day as ever."

"I suppose you did not stay long at Lockport?"

"I wouldn't have been satisfied to stay there long. It was my ambition to be manager of a more important office, and I tried to prove myself worthy of a better position. I took advantage of every opportunity to improve my education. I read every book which could give me any knowledge of telegraphy and electricity, and was especially interested in biography, travel, history, and geography. I was obliged to remain at the office until late in the evening, but often I sat up until after midnight, reading and studying. I think it is helpful for every boy to know what great and successful men have really accomplished. Among my favorite books were the journals of Lewis and Clark on their expedition across the continent in 1804, and, when I



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was discouraged or disheartened, it cheered me to remember the vicissitudes encountered by them."

HE TRIED TO DO MORE THAN HE WAS PAID TO DO.

"I always endeavored, while at Lockport, and in every other position I have filled, to perform more service than that which was allotted to me and to watch my employer's interests at all times, regardless of stipulated hours. It is a great mistake for a young man to think that his efforts to be efficient and to perform more work than is set apart for him will not be noticed by his employers or superior officers. The appreciation of such services may seem tardy, but it is almost sure to come, and, in my case, it came very soon. After I had served at Lockport for a few months, I was transferred to Springfield, Illinois, which is a more important station. I was not seventeen when I began my work there, but I felt myself to be quite an experienced person in the business, and capable of caring for almost any office. On account of my night study I had a thorough knowledge of the principles of telegraphy, and my practice as an operator had given me the necessary technical qualifications.

"Operators didn't receive as much then as they do now, but living expenses were low. When I went to Lockport, I believe that I was paid about a dollar a day, and at Springfield my wages were somewhat higher. In 1854, two years after I first began to carry messages, I was sent to St. Louis, as the company's

## Robert C. Clowry

chief operator, and of course that was a considerable promotion. I remained in that position until 1858, when I became superintendent of the St. Louis and Missouri River Telegraph Company, which was constructing many new lines in the border region. The company was not very rich, but it was very necessary that its system should be extended. It occurred to me that the citizens of the border towns ought to be willing to pay something to have the convenience of the telegraph; so, when the line was constructed to Kansas City, I raised three thousand dollars in Leavenworth to extend it to that place, and two thousand dollars in Atchinson to have it built to that city from Leavenworth. In this way we accomplished what the company was financially unable to do.

THERE ARE AS GOOD CHANCES IN THE WORLD TO-DAY.

“When the Civil War began, I offered my services to the government, and was placed in charge of the military telegraph in the Department of Arkansas. Missouri and Kansas were subsequently added to my territory. I served through the war, and, at its close, when I was twenty-seven years old, I became a district superintendent for the Western Union Telegraph Company in the southwest. I have been with this company ever since, having served in various capacities in St. Louis and Chicago. This is my fiftieth year in the telegraph business, and I became president of the

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Western Union just fifty years to a month after I first entered the Joliet office and asked for work."

"Do you think that a young man starting in commercial life to-day has as good a chance to rise as one had fifty years ago?" Colonel Clowry was asked.

"Yes, indeed; in my opinion the chances of success in commercial business, for the right sort of young men, have never before been so good as they are at the present time, provided that the young men are well educated, honest, industrious, and faithful, and not handicapped by mental or physical defects."

"But you had only a common-school education, Colonel Clowry."

"Yes, and that is quite sufficient in business if it is supplemented by some technical training. I have always thought that a full university course has a tendency to unfit young men for the rough struggles incident to the small beginnings of a commercial business career. It is advisable for boys to enter business early in life, so that they may be moulded to their work, and be in line for promotion when opportunities present themselves. Boys have an idea nowadays that they can leave college and immediately fill important positions in business life. There was never a greater mistake. Although I was in charge of an office six months after beginning work, it has taken fifty years to reach my present position."

## XIII

### Enthusiasm for Railroading Makes a Section Hand Head of the Metropolitan System.

SOME time ago New York learned with interest and some astonishment that the head of its greatest transportation system, Herbert H. Vreeland, had received from several of his associates, as individuals, a "valentine" present of \$100,000, in recognition of his superb management of their properties. Many New Yorkers then learned, for the first time, what railroad experts throughout the country had long known, that the transportation of a million people a day in New York's busy streets, without serious friction or public annoyance, is not a matter of chance, but is the result of perhaps the most perfect traffic organization ever created, at the head of which is a man, quiet, forceful, able, with the ability of a great general,—a master, and, at the same time a friend of men,—himself one for whom, in the judgment of his associates, almost any career is possible.

Thirty years ago Mr. Vreeland, then a lad thirteen years old, was, to use his own humorous, reminiscent phrase, "h'isting ice" on the Hudson River, one of a

## Street Railway President

gang of eighteen or twenty men and boys filling the ice carts for retail city delivery. A picture just brought to light shows him among the force lined up to be photographed, as a tall, loosely built, hatchet-faced lad in working garb, with a fragment of a smile on his face, as if he could appreciate the contrast of the boy of that day with the man of the future.

How do these things happen? What was the divine spark in this boy's brain and heart that should lift him out of the crowd of the commonplace to the position of responsibility and influence in the world which he now occupies? If my readers could have been present at the interview kindly granted by Mr. Vreeland and could have heard him recalling his early life and its many struggles and disappointments with a smile that was often near a tear, they would have gone away feeling that nothing is impossible to him who dares, and, above all else, who *works*, and they would have derived inspiration far greater than can possibly be given in these written words.

### HE INHERITED A TASTE FOR HARD WORK.

The desire to work was hereditary with Mr. Vreeland. His father incurred the displeasure of his own father and family, who were people of large means, by refusing to lead a life of gentlemanly idleness, and deciding, instead, to enter the ministry. The boy Herbert was the youngest son in a family of several children, each of whom in turn helped to support the

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mother and younger members after the death of the father. At ten years of age, in his passionate desire to *do something*, he drove a grocery wagon in Jersey City, to which his family had moved from his birthplace in Glen, New York, and, as before said, at thirteen years of age, he was hard at work in an ice business, of which an elder brother was superintendent.

"I first entered the railroad business in 1875," said Mr. Vreeland, "shoveling gravel on one of the Long Island Railroad Company's night construction trains. Though this position was certainly humble enough, it was a great thing to me then to feel myself a railroad man, with all that that term implied; and, when, after a few months' trial, I was given the job of inspecting ties and roadbed at a dollar a day, I felt that I was well on the road to the presidency.

"One day the superintendent asked the boss if he could give him a reliable man to replace a switchman who had just made a blunder leading to a collision, and had been discharged. The reply was: 'Well, I've got a man here named Vreeland, who will do exactly what you tell him to.' They called me up, and, after a few short, sharp questions from the train-master, I went down to the dreary and desolate marsh near Bushwick, Long Island, and took charge of a switch. For a few days I had to camp out near that switch, in any way that might happen, but finally the officers made up their minds that they could afford me the

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luxury of a two-by-four flag house with a stove in it, and I settled down for more railroading.”

### HE LOVED HIS WORK.

“The Bushwick station was not far away, and one of the company’s division headquarters was there. I soon made the acquaintance of all the officials around that station, and got into their good graces by offering to help them out in their clerical work at any and all times when I was off duty. It was a godsend to them, and exactly what I wanted, for I had determined to get into the inside of the railroad business from bottom to top. Many’s the time I have worked till eleven or twelve o’clock at night in that little station, figuring out train receipts and expenses, engine cost and duty, and freight and passenger statistics of all kinds; and, as a result of this work, I quickly acquired a grasp of railroad details in all stages, which few managers possess, for, in one way and another, I got into and through every branch of the business.

“My Bushwick switch was a temporary one, put in for construction purposes only, and, after some months’ use, was discontinued, and I was discharged. This did not suit me at all, and I went to one of the officials of the road and told him that I wanted to remain with the Long Island Railroad Company in any capacity whatsoever, and would be obliged to him if he would give me a job. He said, at first, that he hadn’t a thing for me to do, but finally added, as if he was ashamed

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to suggest it, that, if I had a mind to go down on another division and sweep out and dust cars, I might do it. I instantly accepted, and thereby learned the details of another important railroad department.

“Pretty soon they made me brakeman on an early morning train to Hempstead, and then I found that I was worth to the world, after two years of railroad training, just forty dollars a month, plus a perquisite or two obtained from running a card-table department in the smoking-cars. I remember that I paid eighteen dollars of my munificent salary for board and lodging, sent twenty dollars home for the support of my mother and sister, and had two dollars a month and the afore-said perquisites left for ‘luxuries.’”

### A NICKNAME THAT BECAME A REAL TITLE.

“It was at about this time, thus early in my career, that I first came to be known as ‘President Vreeland.’ An old codger upon the railroad, in talking to me one day, said, in a bantering way: ‘Well, I suppose you think your fortune is made, now you have become a brakeman, but let me tell you what will happen. You will be a brakeman about four or five years, and then they will make you a conductor, at about one hundred dollars a month, and there you will stick all your life, if you don’t get discharged.’ I responded, rather angrily, ‘Do you suppose I am going to be satisfied with remaining a conductor? I mean to be president of a railroad.’ ‘Ho, ho, ho!’ laughed the man. He



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told the story around, and many a time thereafter the boys slyly placed the word 'President' before my name on official instructions and packages sent to me.

"A conductor on one of the regular trains quarreled one morning with the superintendent, and was discharged. I was sent for and told to take out that train. This was jumping me over the heads of many of the older brakemen, and, as a consequence, all the brakemen on that train quit. Others were secured, however, and I ran the train regularly for a good many months.

"Then came an accident one day, for which the engineer and I were jointly responsible. We admitted our responsibility, and were discharged. I went again to the superintendent, however, and, upon a strong plea to be retained in the service, he sent me back to the ranks among the brakemen. I had no complaint to make, but accepted the consequence of my mistake.

"Soon after this, the control of the road passed into other hands. Many were discharged, and I was daily expecting my own 'blue envelope.' One day I was detailed to act as brakeman on a special which was to convey the president and directors of the road, with invited guests, on a trip over the lines. By that time I had learned the Long Island Railroad in all its branches pretty well, and, in the course of the trip, was called upon to answer a great many questions. The next day I received word that the superintendent wanted to see me. My heart sank within me, for summons of this

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kind were ominous in those days, but I duly presented myself at the office and was asked, 'Are you the good-looking brakeman who was on the special yesterday who shows his teeth when he smiles?' I modestly replied that I was certainly on the special yesterday, and I may possibly have partly confirmed the rest of the identification by a smile, for the superintendent, without further questioning, said: 'The president wants to see you upstairs.'

"I went up, and in due time was shown into the presence of the great man, who eyed me closely for a minute or two, and then asked me abruptly what I was doing. I told him I was braking Number Seventeen. He said: 'Take this letter to your superintendent. It contains a request that he relieve you from duty, and put somebody else in your place. After he has done so, come back here.'"

### AN IMPORTANT MISSION WELL PERFORMED.

"All this I did, and, on my return to the president, he said, 'Take this letter at once to Admiral Peyron, of the French fleet (then lying in the harbor on a visit of courtesy to this country), and this to General Hancock, on Governor's Island. They contain invitations to each to dine with me to-morrow night at home in Garden City with their staffs. Get their answers, and, if they are "yes," return at once to New York, charter a steamer, call for them to-morrow afternoon, land them at Long Island City, arrange for a special train

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from Long Island City to Garden City, take them there, and return them after the banquet. I leave everything in your hands. Good day.'

"I suppose this might be considered a rather large job for a common brakeman, but I managed to get through with it without disgracing myself, and apparently to the satisfaction of all concerned. For some time thereafter, I was the president's special emissary on similar matters connected with the general conduct of the business, and while I did not, perhaps, learn so very much about railroading proper, was put in positions where I learned to take responsibility and came to have confidence in myself.

"The control of the Long Island Railroad again changed hands, and I was again 'let out,' this time for good, so far as that particular road was concerned,—except that, within the last two or three years, I have renewed my acquaintance with it through being commissioned by a banking syndicate in New York City to make an expert examination of its plant and equipment as a preliminary to reorganization.

"This was in 1881, or about that time, and I soon secured a position as conductor on the New York and Northern Railroad, a little line running from One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Street, New York City, to Yonkers. Not to go into tedious detail regarding my experience there, I may say in brief that in course of time, I practically 'ran the road.' After some years, it changed hands (a thing which railways, particularly

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small ones, often do, and always to the great discomposure of the employees), and the new owners, including William C. Whitney, Daniel S. Lamont, Captain R. Somers Hayes and others, went over the road one day on a special train to visit the property. As I have said, I was then practically running the road, owing to the fact that the man who held the position as general manager was not a railroad man and relied upon me to handle all details, but my actual position was only that of train-master. I accompanied the party, and knowing the road thoroughly, not only physically but also statistically, was able to answer all the questions which they raised. This was the first time I had met Mr. Whitney, and I judge that I made a somewhat favorable impression upon him, for not long after that I was created general manager of the road."

### HOW HE WAS ELECTED TO THE PRESIDENCY OF HIS COMPANY.

"A few months later, I received this telegram:—

"H. H. VREELAND.

"Meet me at Broadway and Seventh Avenue office at two o'clock to-day.

"WILLIAM C. WHITNEY.'

"I had to take a special engine to do this, but arrived at two o'clock at the office of the Houston Street, West Street and Pavonia Ferry Railroad Company, which I

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then knew, in an indistinct sort of way, owned a small horse railway in the heart of New York. After finding that Mr. Whitney was out at lunch, I kicked my heels for a few minutes outside the gate, and then inquired of a man who was seated inside in an exceedingly comfortable chair, when Mr. Whitney and his party were expected, saying, also, that my name was Vreeland, and I had an appointment at two. He replied: 'Oh, are you Mr. Vreeland? Well, here is a letter for you. Mr. Whitney expected to be here at two o'clock, but is a little late.' I took my letter and sat down again outside, thinking that it might possibly contain an appointment for another hour. It was, however, an appointment of quite a different character. It read as follows:

“ ‘MR. H. H. VREELAND.

“ ‘DEAR SIR:—At a meeting of the stockholders of the Houston Street, West Street and Pavonia Ferry Railroad Company, held this day, you were unanimously elected a director of the company.

“ ‘At a subsequent meeting of the directors, you were unanimously elected president and general manager, your duties to commence immediately.

“ ‘Yours truly,            C. E. WARREN, Secretary.’

“By the time I had recovered from my surprise at learning that I was no longer a steam-railroad, but a street-railroad man, Mr. Whitney and other directors

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came in, and, after spending about five minutes in introductions, they took up their hats and left, saying, simply, 'Well, Vreeland, you are president; now run the road.' I then set out to learn what kind of a toy railway it was that had come into my charge."

### HIGH-PRICED MEN ARE IN DEMAND.

Mr. Vreeland was asked the secret of successfully managing a street-railway system of this sort.

"High-priced men," he unhesitatingly replied. "High-priced men, and one-man power in all departments. Ten-thousand-dollar-a-year men are what I want,—one of these rather than five two-thousand-dollar-a-year men."

"I began at the bottom and worked up. I think that is always the way for a young man to do, as soon as he has decided upon his career. I was fitted for the railroad business, and it didn't take me long to decide just what I wanted to be. I think much of my progress was due to my early beginning. I think an early beginning means a great deal in after life.

"I have always been glad that I chose the business I did. I have never had any reason to regret having done so. Of course, when I was very young, I had discontented moments, like almost every other youth, but I overcame them, and stayed with the railroad. I believe that everyone should overcome those passing fancies, instead of yielding to them. Too many young fellows, just starting out, go from one thing to another,

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never satisfied, and consequently never making any progress. I think the faculty for 'sticking' is one of the most valuable a young man can have. When an employer hires a man, he likes to feel that he won't be wasting his time in teaching him the business. He likes to feel that the man will remain with him, and be a real help, instead of leaving at the first opportunity."

The rest of the history is well known to the people of New York, and to experts in street railroading throughout the country. The "Whitney syndicate," so-called, was then in possession of a few only out of some twenty or more street railway properties in New York City, the Broadway line, however, being one of these, and by far the most valuable. With the immense financial resources of Messrs. Whitney, Widener, Elkins, and their associates, nearly all the other properties were added to the original lines owned by the syndicate, and with the magnificent organizing and executive ability of Mr. Vreeland, there has been built up in New York a street railway system which, while including less than two hundred and fifty miles of track, is actually carrying more than one-half as many passengers each year as are being carried by all the steam railroads of the United States together.

## XIV

### A Factory Boy's Purpose to Improve Labor Makes Him a Great Leader.

“**T**O reduce the burdens of the overworked and find employment for the workless workers,” as expressed in his own words, is the life-work of Samuel Gompers.

This single aim has been the wellspring of the manifold activities, excitements, vicissitudes, and achievements of a remarkable career. Nearly forty years ago, when Samuel Gompers, a boy of ten, worked fourteen hours a day in a shop in London, the hardships of the workman made an impression on his childish mind, and this impression, and vague ideas that followed it, were the beginnings of his life purpose,—a purpose that kept growing and strengthening during twenty-six years at the cigarmaker's bench, and finally raised him to the position of foremost representative in America of the interests of labor.

Being president of the American Federation of Labor, whose headquarters are in Washington, Mr. Gompers now lives in that city, but not long ago he was in New York as one of the distinguished speakers



## Founder American Federation of Labor

before a great mass meeting. The following night, in an obscure hall on the "eastside" where a number of his old friends and fellow-workers in the cigarmaker's trade had gathered to discuss their common interests, I had my interview with him.

### LOOKS LIKE EDWIN FORREST.

"He's not here yet," I was informed on my arrival; "but come in and wait. When he comes, anybody will point out Sam to you." The room filled rapidly, and at length there appeared in the doorway a small man with a great head, covered with a luxuriant growth of very black hair. His short, robust figure, his high forehead, deep-set eyes, heavy mustache and short imperial made him look strikingly like some of the portraits of Edwin Forrest. He came in alone and attracted no special attention, but I knew intuitively that it was Samuel Gompers. With such easy and cordial salutations as "Hello, Jack!" "How are you, Herman?" and "Glad to see you, Mac!" he began to greet his old friends, and they responded in the same spirit, almost invariably addressing him as "Sam." This did not imply a lack of dignity on his part, for these were his old shopmates,—men who had for years worked with him at the same benches. They recognized each other as fellow-workmen, with no difference between them, and, indeed, the only difference was that Sam Gompers had thought much and seen much in his mental vision as he

## Samuel Gompers

sat at the mechanical work of cutting and rolling tobacco leaves, while the others had seen only their own environment and machine-like toil. But this difference has made one a leading citizen of the Republic, while his mates have remained humble cigarmakers, looking to Mr. Gompers as their champion and friend.

"It was just at such meetings as you see here to-night," Mr. Gompers said to me later in the evening, "that I began to try to do something in behalf of the workingmen. Even when a small boy in London, and working pretty hard for the child I was, I used to attend some of the gatherings of workingmen, and I remember how I was stirred by the excitement and enthusiasm when the question of recognizing the Confederate States was before the government and there were great meetings of the working classes to show the feeling of British workmen against slavery of any sort. I had already vaguely begun to feel that there was more than one kind of slavery, and that the workingmen who had protested so vigorously against slaves in America could hardly call themselves free men. I knew little of the matter; I only knew that my own life was hard, while that of many other children was easy."

### HE WORKED IN A FACTORY AT TEN.

"When I was ten, I had been put in a factory to learn shoemaking, but a few months afterward was apprenticed to a man in my father's trade,—that of a cigarmaker. I went to school at night, but it was a

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very meagre foundation for an education that I got this way, and I have been trying ever since to make up for it by reading and study. My lack of early opportunity to learn and develop normally, with schooling and much recreation, as a boy should, has always been a great drawback to me, but it has made me zealous in the cause of keeping the children of the workers out of the workshops and giving them a fair education. College training is not necessary for success in any but scholastic pursuits, but boys must certainly know the rudiments."

### THE LATER ARISTOCRACY.

"Times were bad in London when I was a child there. Gangs of workmen used to parade the streets, singing mournfully, 'We have no work to do!' This condition led my father to immigrate to this country, in 1863, when I was thirteen. I continued my trade of cigar-maker in New York, and joined the 'Cigarmakers' International Union' when it was organized, in 1864. It now has thirty thousand members, but mine is the longest continued membership; my due card is No. 1. This was the first labor organization I belonged to. I attended its meetings and got into the habit of studying and thinking about labor matters and the many changes in the workingman's condition that would be beneficial to himself and to the commonwealth.

"I began to realize that, in the struggles of the ages, lords and nobles have lost their gold lace and velvet,

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but that they survive as the economic lords of the means of life, and that their aggressions must be opposed by combinations of labor—by trade unions. I began to appreciate the true dignity of labor and the importance to the state of fair conditions for workingmen. The older I grew, the more essential seemed the strong organization of labor. I felt that Wendell Phillips expressed in these words: 'I rejoice at every effort workingmen make to organize. I hail the labor movement. It is my only hope for democracy. Organize and stand together. Let the nation hear a united demand from the laboring voice.'

### THE NEED OF ORGANIZED LABOR.

"Of course the idea of organized labor is a very old one. Trade unions have been in existence since the Middle Ages, but what they needed in this country was more cohesive strength. There were a great number of separate unions and some general organizations, but they were not strong enough. A new plan was needed, and we published a call which resulted in a convention at Pittsburg, in 1881, at which the American Federation of Labor was formed. Most of the delegates to that convention were strongly opposed to our project for an organization on broader lines than had been before attempted, but we carried the point, and at present the Federation has six hundred and fifty thousand members."

It is a matter of history that Samuel Gompers was

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the founder of the American Federation of Labor. The first impulse came from him. While sitting at his bench in New York rolling cigars, he conceived the plan that has made the Federation the largest and most important and useful labor organization that has ever existed.

### HE WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION.

Mr. Gompers declined the presidency at the first convention, but he was obliged to accept it at the second great gathering, held in Cleveland, in 1882. For some time after his election he remained at work at his trade, but the growing number and importance of his duties at length made it necessary for him to devote all his time to the Federation, which he does for a salary that many clerks would scoff at. Mr. Gompers has received offers for nominations to congress from both the Republican and Democratic parties in his New York district, and has been asked by several presidents of the United States to accept important and highly salaried offices, but he has declined them all, feeling that his present position gives him greater opportunities of usefulness to the workingman.

The laws whose place on the statute books are due to the efforts of Mr. Gompers make a long list. They include sanitary inspection for factories, mills, mines, etc., the age limit law, employers' liabilities for damages to life and limb, wage-lien laws, uniform car-coupling laws, anti-sweatshop legislation, the anti-con-

## Samuel Gompers

spiracy law, the state-board-of-arbitration law, laws restricting the hours of labor, and the enactment making the first Monday in September a holiday.

### FOR THE EIGHT-HOUR WORKDAY.

“At present,” said Mr. Gompers, “one of our chief slogans is,—‘An Eight-Hour Workday!’ There is more in this than one might think at a first glance. With a little leisure, the workingman has an opportunity to read and cultivate his mind and devote himself to his home and family. It makes him expand intellectually and think more, and with this new life come new desires. He wants to have his home more comfortable than it has been. He wants a few books, a few pictures, a little recreation for himself and family, and for these things he makes outlays of money which are very modest in individual cases, but which, in the aggregate, amount to vast sums and have a stimulating effect on all trades. This makes an increased demand for labor. It has a tendency to raise wages and diminish the number of the unemployed. These important benefits to be derived from shorter hours of labor constitute the reason why I am making an issue of the eight-hour workday. We have already done much and expect to do more. Yet you have no idea how hard it sometimes is to procure the passage of a measure. When the uniform car-coupling bill was before the senate, the senators would run into the coat-room to avoid voting, and I stood at the door in a half

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frantic condition, sending my card to this senator and that senator, and telling each that he simply must support the measure. It was hard work, but we carried it through."

### STRIKES AS A LAST RESORT.

Strikes are not favored by Mr. Gompers except under certain circumstances and as a last resort. During the great Chicago strike, the most intense pressure was brought to bear upon him to issue an order calling out all the workingmen in the country. It took high moral courage to resist the many strenuous appeals, but Samuel Gompers possessed this courage and the country was saved from an experience which might have proved most calamitous.

"I firmly believe in arbitration," said Mr. Gompers, "but to arbitrate, the power must be equal, or nearly so, on both sides; therefore labor must be strongly organized."

I asked him to what he attributed his success in his life-work.

"Well," he answered slowly, "I learned both to think and to act, and to feel strongly enough on these great questions of labor to be willing to sacrifice my personal convenience for my aims. I have felt great devotion to the common cause of the manual workers, and I can say nothing better to young men than,—'Be devoted to your work.'"

When I asked a very intelligent workingman why

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Samuel Gompers is so highly respected by the workers, he replied:—

“Why, because,—because he’s Sam Gompers,—but that doesn’t explain much, does it? Well, I will say because he has done more for labor than any other man in this country, because we can trust him down to the ground, and because he’s in his work heart and soul.”



## XV

### A Puny Boy, by Physical Culture, Becomes the Most Vigorous of American Presidents.

**T**HE way to study a man, I find, is at close range, when he is not on the platform or under the limelight. Better than any other is his vacation time, when the armor has been laid aside and the man himself stands forth. My card of introduction proved a ready passport to the country seat of Theodore Roosevelt, near Oyster Bay, Long Island. As I drove up, one bright July morning, the shore of this sequestered inlet was framed in a background of heavy green. No painter could do justice to the mirrored loveliness of the water, or the graceful line of sailboats lazily floating over it. The beach was a silver mat in an emerald frame, and every tree on the opposite shore was inverted in the clear depths. The Roosevelt house stands on a hill overlooking a magnificent view of Long Island Sound. It is three miles away from the railway station, just the sort of place one would choose for complete rest. The dreamy beauty of the scene was conducive to indolence, and so, sure enough, I found Mr. Roosevelt in outing attire, sur-

## Theodore Roosevelt

rounded by his children and entering with zest into their out-door sports.

Little Theodore was prancing up and down the road on his favorite black pony, a genuine rough rider in horsemanship, brown as a berry, and an unmistakable cadet of the Roosevelt house. The president's war-horse, "Texas," whose right ear was clipped by a Spanish "Mauser," was out for an airing. Over the veranda flared a pair of great antlers, a trophy of the chase, while in the big reception hall were other antlers. The sword worn by Colonel Roosevelt in Cuba has found a resting-place across the mantel mirror, its leathern strap all ready to be buckled on again should a military emergency arise. The overcoat is there, too, with the hat and boots.

I found him averse to politics as a topic for discussion, but I hinted that I would be pleased to quote his views on young men in politics,—their chances and their duties.

### YOUNG MEN IN POLITICS.

"That opens up," said he, as he smiled graciously, "such a vista of human thought that I know you will excuse me from its contemplation this hot weather."

The shade of the veranda where we sat was deliciously somnolent, and I was beginning to regret my question when the president relented for a moment.

"You know I have always advocated an earnest, in-

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telligent study of political subjects by young men. Our American politics offer a clean, wholesome field, after all is said and done, for the young man of character and ability; but never should one enter politics for a living."

"Now, we know that you approve of college education for boys, but want your own words about it."

"It depends somewhat on the boy. I don't believe in every boy going to college."

"But do you not think it makes them less practical than they would be if they grew up in business pursuits?"

"Not at all. The best kind of college graduates are the most practical, and they are becoming more numerous every year. Don't you think I'm practical?"

"Do you think the boys in towns like this have as good a chance for success in life as those who live in large cities?"

"Certainly, and often better chances. I have always been glad to have been raised in the country. Of course it is often a good thing for a boy to go to the city when he is grown. He sometimes does better there than in a small place; not always, though. It depends upon the boy."

### OPPORTUNITIES AND TALENTS.

"Are you a believer in opportunity, Mr. Roosevelt?"

"To a certain extent. Many of the great changes in our lives can be traced to small things, a chance

## Theodore Roosevelt

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

"Some men," I remarked, after a time, "have a talent for working themselves, while others have a talent for setting others to work. Which is the more valuable?"

"I think a man ought to have both. If he can't, I think he ought to be able to work himself. The ability to work hard is, perhaps, the most valuable aid to success. One can't have much success without it."

"They say it isn't a good thing for a young man to have too many talents, Mr. Roosevelt. Is it true?"

"That's very hard to answer. I have managed to do many different things in a lifetime. I might have done better by doing only one. Still, that is another thing that depends very much upon the young man, and his capabilities."

"I know you must believe in recreation for people who are working, since you are yourself indulging in it now."

"Oh, yes, one must have some change. A man who has no outdoor exercise is likely to wear himself out in short order. I love to be out of doors. I always have, and that is one thing that has helped me to do some

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things that I have. I go out for a time every day when I am here at home. I enjoy being in the open air."

"I know you think that the young man of to-day has a better chance to make a success in life than those who lived twenty-five years ago."

"Certainly. The young man of to-day has greater opportunities for advancing himself and achieving a real success than any men have ever had before. Everything offers better chances, and all a boy needs is education enough to appreciate them when they are here. That is one of the chief values of a good education. It aids a young man in many things that would be invisible to the uneducated fellow. It helps him to weigh things in his mind before deciding what to do. It is mind-training that we need. The power to think is almost absolutely necessary to success. Without it, a man is sure to be unequal to the great struggle for supremacy that is going on constantly in certain professions and lines of business."

In a contributed article President Roosevelt gave his views of what constitutes good citizenship. An extract from this article is given herewith:

### THE CITIZENSHIP THAT COUNTS.

"After honesty as the foundation of the citizenship that counts, in business or in politics, must come courage. You must have courage not only in battle, but also in civic life. We need physical and we need moral

## Theodore Roosevelt

courage. Neither is enough by itself. You need moral courage. Many a man has been brave physically who has flinched morally. You must feel in you a fiery wrath against evil. When you see a wrong, instead of feeling shocked and hurt, and a desire to go home, and a wish that right prevailed, you should go out and fight until that wrong is overcome. You must feel ashamed if you do not stand up for the right as you see it; ashamed if you lead a soft and easy life and fail to do your duty. You must have courage. If you do not, the honesty is of no avail.

“But honesty and courage, while indispensable, are not enough for good citizenship. I do not care how brave and honest a man is; if he is a fool, he is not worth knocking on the head. In addition to courage and honesty, you must have the saving quality of common sense. One hundred and ten years ago, France started to form a republic, and one of her noted men—an exceedingly brilliant man, a scholar of exceptional thought, the Abbe Sieyès,—undertook to draw up a constitution. He drew up several constitutions, beautiful documents; but they would not work. The French national convention resolved in favor of liberty; and, in the name of liberty, they beheaded every man who did not think as they did. They resolved in favor of fraternity, and beheaded those who objected to such a brotherhood. They resolved in favor of equality, and cut off the heads of those who rose above the general level. They indulged in such hideous butcheries, in the

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name of liberty, equality, and fraternity, as to make tyranny seem mild in comparison;—and all because they lacked common sense, as well as morality.

“Two or three years before that, we, in America, had a body of men gathered in a constitutional convention to make a constitution. They assembled under the lead of Washington, with Alexander Hamilton, Madison, and many other eminent men. They did not draw up a constitution in a week, as the brilliant Sieyés did, but just one constitution, and that one worked. That was the great point!

“It worked, primarily, because it was drawn up by practical politicians,—by practical politicians who believed in decency, as well as in common sense. If they had been a set of excellent theorists, they would have drawn up a constitution which would have commended itself to other excellent theorists, but which would not have worked. If they had been base, corrupt men, mere opportunists, men who lacked elevating ideals, dishonest, cowardly, they would have drawn up a document that would not have worked at all. On the great scale, the only practical politics is honest politics. The makers of our constitution were practical politicians, who were also sincere reformers, and as brave and upright as they were sensible.”

### THE BOYHOOD OF ROOSEVELT.

Nobody thought of calling Theodore Roosevelt “Teddy,” when he was a boy. He was always known

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as "Tedio,"—pronounced as if written "Teedie." But several years before he went to Harvard, when he was about fifteen years old, his mother thought that it was high time that the baby name was replaced by something more dignified, and so it was decided, in family council, that he should be addressed as Theodore.

Unfortunately, family decisions of this kind are not always respected at school or college, and, when young Roosevelt became a freshman at Harvard, he was promptly dubbed "Teddy" by his classmates. The nickname stuck; he has been "Teddy" ever since to his intimates, and to-day he is more generally known under that title by seventy-six millions of people than by any other. There is every reason to believe that he enjoys the little informality, justly regarding it as a tribute to his popularity.

When he was nine years of age, young Roosevelt was taken abroad by his parents, and he made another trip with them to Europe not long afterward, greatly enjoying a voyage up the Nile. At seventeen he entered Harvard, and promptly grew a pair of side-whiskers, of which it may reasonably be supposed that he was very proud. The side-whiskers resembled those of Pendennis, as pictured by Thackeray. It goes without saying that he soon became extremely popular at college, where he acquitted himself fairly well in his studies. Old classmates recall the fact that he had a



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passion for animals and that he collected many queer natural history specimens, which he kept in his room.

### WHERE HE GAINED STRENUOSITY.

On the whole, it is rather surprising that Theodore Roosevelt ever lived to grow up and become the President of the United States. He was an exceedingly delicate child, suffering such tortures with asthma that on many occasions his father was obliged to harness his four-in-hand in the middle of the night, take the boy from his bed, and drive many miles, in order that he might get his breath.

To my thinking, his inherent manliness, his independence of thought and action, his firm determination to do his duty as he sees it, found early expression in the character of Theodore Roosevelt when, as a youth, in search of health and strength, he went to the great west. It is probable that, while yet a young man, he was ambitiously inspired to do something out of the ordinary, and was shrewd enough to know that, to win success in life's undertakings, vigorous health is a prime requisite. He elected the arid plains and mountains of our western country, as a likely locality wherein he might build up a constitution sturdy and strong.

### HE DASHED INTO THE VORTEX OF THE CHASE.

It was in the summer of 1883 that he entered the then "wild and woolly" town of Little Missouri, situated on the Northern Pacific Railroad, in the very heart of the "bad lands" of Dakota. Little Missouri

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contained at that time some of the worst "bad men" and outlaws to be found outside the borders of civilization. But it was not in the town that he expected to find the health and strength to carry him through the strenuous life he, perhaps, had already mapped out, but in the saddle, camp, and chase, by living close to nature and taking "pot luck" with the rough and rugged men who became his companions, and who understood him and whom he understood from the outset. During that summer, with one man and a pack-outfit, he hunted over the country, from Yellowstone Park to the Black Hills, from the Black Hills to the Big Horn Mountains, through the Big Horn Basin to Jackson Hole and in the majestic Rocky Mountains, back to Yellowstone Park, down Clark's Fork to the Yellowstone, the Big and Little Horn Rivers, through the Crow Indian Reservation where General George A. Custer, the gallant and lamented soldier, went to a heroic death. Back again to the "bad lands" of the Little Missouri, went Theodore Roosevelt, having hunted buffaloes, elk, deer, antelope, mountain sheep, bear, lion and the smaller game of that country. He fished in the numerous mountain streams, and lived the rough, hardy life of a frontiersman. For five months, the heavens were his only canopy. He caught and killed game for his own use, saddled his mounts, did his own cooking, was his own scout, and performed his half of the night-work. The capacity to do for himself and meet men upon an equal basis—self-reliance and per-

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sonal courage,—came to him as the fruition of this and similar experiences in the Far West. I know that this democracy still influences him.

### HE SHOWED PIONEERS HOW TO WINTER CATTLE.

Having studied the conditions of the wild animal life of mountain and plain, he found that the fattest and best wild game inhabited the "bad lands" of Little Missouri. Although without food or shelter, save what they could gather from the grasses that grew there, the wild game was in splendid condition. As a result of these conditions, the young hunter made up his mind to engage in the business of raising cattle. Old frontiersmen told him that cattle could not be wintered in the "bad lands." This he disputed, and he argued, as proof of his contention, the fact that the finest wild game was to be found there, and he could not understand why cattle would not thrive under the same conditions. The following spring, Theodore Roosevelt shipped to Little Missouri, by the Northern Pacific Railroad, several hundred head of cattle, hired *vaqueros*, purchased mess-wagons and provisions, and drove the cattle from the cars to his range in the very heart of the "bad lands." There he took up the life of a western ranchman, and asked of his men nothing that he would not undertake himself. He faced the most violent blizzards while rounding up the cattle for safety. I remember this intrepid son of fortune, participating in the stampedes, doing his share of the

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night-herding, breaking his own horses, sleeping at night with his saddle for a pillow, and, perhaps, the snow for a blanket, eating the same rough, substantial fare as his employees, and evidencing the indomitable will, courage and endurance which brought to him the affection and respect of his men.

HE CIVILIZED MANY "BAD MEN" BY HIS INFLUENCE.

The country at that time was the habitat of horse thieves, stage robbers, desperadoes, and criminals in general. Surely this "tenderfoot" from the east would prove an excellent subject for imposition! Other men had been made to feel that lawlessness and depredation were united as a common lot visited upon each newcomer, the only apparent, quick redress being in the power and ability of the offended party to protect himself and chastise the marauders. Mr. Roosevelt's salutary to such persons came early, and was effective. His influence and example did much toward civilizing the "bad men" in his locality, who found him to be an absolutely just man, possessing nerve, and handy with gun and fists. No person ever stole a hoof of his cattle or horses but was captured and punished according to the laws then existing in that country.

Theodore Roosevelt early acquired the reputation of being abundantly able to protect himself and his interests, his aptitude along such lines being brought out in bold relief by what is remembered in the west as the Marquis De Mores incident. Marquis De Mores was

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a Frenchman by birth and a western ranchman through preference. He went west heralded as a duelist of great reputation, and located upon a ranch some miles distant from that of the subject of this article. Although thoroughly an honorable man, he believed in governing the country by force, and it was the popular impression that the cowboys in his employ were "killers" and ready to fight at the drop of the hat. Soon after De Mores had established his headquarters in a town called Medora, Roosevelt's cowboys and those in De Mores' employ became involved in a dispute over some cattle, which resulted in a pitched battle between the disputants. Victory, and a decisive one, perched upon the Roosevelt standard. De Mores' anger and chagrin were boundless when he learned of the outcome of the affair, and he informed his men that, if they could not whip Roosevelt's cowboys, he, personally, could whip their boss, and that some day he would go to Roosevelt's ranch and accomplish such a task. Roosevelt heard of this threat and sent immediate word to De Mores that he need not trouble to undertake the journey to his (Roosevelt's) ranch, but that he would meet him half way, at any designated point, when any differences could be speedily, if not peacefully, adjusted. Marquis De Mores did not choose to seriously consider our friend's message, and the impression became prevalent and widespread in that section of the country that the Frenchman's hand

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had been "called" and that he had been found bluffing.

"GAMENESS" WAS NEEDED; ROOSEVELT HAD PLENTY.

In those days, if there was one attribute of character and make-up more thoroughly acceptable than another, to the average westerner, it was the "gameness" a man possessed and displayed at an opportune time, such qualities always proving the open sesame to the regard and affections of the men of the camp. The De Mores episode gained for Roosevelt no little distinction. Contrary to predictions, his cattle industry proved to be a financial success. The cattle wintered well in the "bad lands," and, from there, he shipped some of the finest beeves ever placed in the Chicago market. He remained in the business for about three years, when he found himself the owner of several thousand head of cattle, splendid ranch houses, and corrals, and no doubt he could have remained in the business and become one of the cattle kings of the west. But by that time he had obtained what he went west for,—vigorous health and an iron constitution, the result of his labor and life on the plains, had come to him and he was ready for greater things. He gave to the people of the west an example of splendid integrity and forceful character, early winning their esteem and loyalty, the possession of which he has never forfeited but rather increased by the continued exercise of the sturdy independence which found such early expression among a people whose pluck and perseverance in the

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upbuilding of a great and new country has been immortalized in song and legend.

HIS FRONTIER LIFE WAS AMPLY WORTH THE WHILE.

As a legislator, police commissioner, governor and soldier, he has proved his capacity and worth, performing his work well and conscientiously. His fellow citizens, regardless of geographical distribution, believe that he will not be found wanting in the discharge of the exacting duties of his present exalted station, and his career may well be an inspiration to American youths. To all who have ever lived the untrammelled life of plain and mountain, the sweet memory of it abideth forever. To our president the freedom of it still strongly appeals, and we find him making occasional excursions into a country where the pleasures of the camp and the chase are still to be found, and where democracy prevails. To live as he did, and accomplish what he has, meeting the conditions of a new country, gaining health, strength, and a knowledge of men, was indeed worth while.

## XVI

### A Brave Volunteer Fights His Way to the Head of the American Army.

**G**ENERAL MILES has had a remarkable military career.

He was not quite twenty-two when Fort Sumter was fired upon, and was, at the time, employed in a store near Boston. He spent his money in organizing a company, of which he was elected captain, but was commissioned only as a lieutenant, on account of his age. But he rapidly rose to be captain, colonel, brigadier-general and major-general. General Hancock quickly discovered his abilities. He was in charge of that commander's line at Chancellorsville, and held his own successfully against every attack by Lee's veterans. The second day, he was seriously wounded, and General Hancock, in a letter to Washington urging his promotion, said: "If Colonel Miles lives, he will be one of the most distinguished of our officers."

In February, 1865, this young man of twenty-six commanded the Second Army Corps. Never before had an American officer, at that age, had charge of so



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large a body of soldiers. When Lee surrendered at Appomattox, he had command of the First Division of the Second Army Corps.

### SIX YEARS OF INDIAN FIGHTING.

General Miles is best known as an Indian fighter. His six years of work among the Indians covered a belt of country from the Rio Grande to Canada, and four hundred miles wide. In 1874, powerful Indian tribes roamed over this land. But Miles and his companions-in-arms, officers and soldiers, guarded the newly constructed railroads, and the towns which arose on the plains, until civilization prevailed. In 1876, he fought at Staked Plains, defeating the Cheyennes, Kiowas and Comanches. He subjugated the Sioux, and drove Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse and other braves across the Canada line. In September, he conquered the Nez Percés, with Chief Joseph; in 1878, the Bannocks. For five years,—(1880-1885),—he commanded the Columbia Department; in 1885, he was transferred to the Arizona Department, and subdued the Apaches under Geronimo and Natchez. He was made a major-general, United States Army, April 5, 1890; in 1891, he closed the war with the Sioux.

General Miles carries the honorable scars of four serious bullet-wounds. His wife was a Sherman, daughter of Judge Sherman, and niece of ex-Secretary Sherman and of General William Tecumseh Sherman. She is a "comrade" as well as a home-companion, and

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went with him to inspect fortifications and visit our southern camps during the late war.

### HIS RECORD IN THE CIVIL WAR.

In the Civil War he was noted for his audacity and dash. He was a fighting commander. He never hesitated to obey an order to advance, and he never wanted to retreat. His courage was an inspiration to his troops, and undoubtedly prevented disaster on more than one occasion. Hancock had the utmost confidence in Miles, and put him to the front to bear the brunt of the enemy: the latter never failed his chief. When the break took place at Reams' Station,—that unfortunate battle, the name of which is said to have been printed on the heart of Hancock like Calais in the heart of Queen Mary,—Miles and his staff pushed to the very front to stay the backward rush of the troops, and the gallant defense which he offered to the victorious enemy saved the day from becoming one of the great catastrophes of the war.

While Miles is famous for his gallantry as a commander, he is equally noted for his coolness and good judgment. He always insisted upon the proper treatment of his men by the commissary department, and his division, the Second Corps, never had any reason to complain of want of attention on the part of their general to their comforts. "Good treatment and good fighting" was his rule.

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A LOYAL, DAUNTLESS LEADER.

As commander of the army, General Miles is not different from the Miles of thirty years ago. Those who knew him then say that he has changed very little in appearance, and not at all in his devotion to duty and to the army. He was always above petty jealousy, and never withheld from a subordinate the credit due to him,—and this is a prominent trait in Miles to-day. The public wondered that Miles showed no impatience when he was not sent in command of the troops to Cuba, but those who knew the General felt that he was too firm a believer in discipline to object to any lawful act of his commander-in-chief. Miles is known to have been anxious to lead the fighting in the only war likely to offer him an opportunity to prove his ability as a general in command, but he obeyed without a murmur the orders which placed in other hands the leadership of the troops in the field. He maintained a vigilant supervision of all that was going on, and was especially watchful of the supplies which had been intended for the support of the army at the front. His criticism of those supplies has caused a widespread sensation and there were earnest demands that all the facts should be known, and the responsibility fixed.

A YOUNG MAN'S CHANCES IN THE ARMY.

General Miles is not willing to see callers when he is busy with his official duties. At other times, he is

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readily approached. He said to me that he did not care to talk about matters pending in connection with the army. I assured him at once that I had no intention of questioning him in regard to the matters to which he alluded, but would be glad to have his opinion about the chances of a young man in the army, and the proper qualifications for one seeking to enter the service.

General Miles replied that he would not object to answering questions on that point.

I asked the general if he thought an education necessary for a good soldier.

"Certainly," was the reply; "education is a good thing for a soldier, and he ought to be educated in more than reading, writing and arithmetic. He ought to have character, stability, energy and a willingness to obey. These qualities are largely brought out by the right kind of education. It can be set down as a rule, that a worthless civilian would be a worthless soldier. There are exceptions to the rule, of course, but the man who has the right kind of training to make him a good citizen is the best man for the army."

### CHARACTER THE FOUNDATION OF TRUE COURAGE.

"And such a man will get along best in the army?" I suggested.

"Most assuredly," answered General Miles. "You can see that by looking over the list of heroes in the past. They have always been men of character. An



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officer should be a man of character, in order to command the respect of his men. Without their respect and esteem, he cannot succeed. With them, he can accomplish great things, if the opportunity offers. Look at the regard which the English soldiers had for the Duke of Wellington. It was chiefly based on his character, for he was not what might be called a lovable man. His men were ready to go anywhere that he sent them, for they knew their commander, and had confidence in him. Character is as important in a great general as in a great statesman or a great merchant. Character is just as necessary, also, in the private as in the officer. It will command recognition in time."

"Would you say, General, that the army really holds out very great chances for advancement?"

"I think it holds out as many chances as any profession or business does; for in the army, as in business, merit wins every time, and if a soldier has real merit, it is bound to be recognized, sooner or later."

"There is a chance, then, for every man who goes into the army as a private to become a general?"

"I don't know that I would make the statement as strong as that, but I believe that every soldier who deserves it will be promoted."

"Would you advise young men to select the army in preference to other professions?"

"That depends," the general replied, "on the young man. If he is fairly educated and properly trained, if

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his tastes are military, and he understands the importance and duty of discipline, if he is willing to learn and to obey, he will make no mistake in entering the army. There are, of course, other circumstances, such as family claims and associations which must have their bearing upon the choice of a career, but, speaking from the standpoint of the army, I would say that it is a good place for any young American with the right qualifications."

### COURAGE NATURAL TO AMERICANS.

When asked about the conduct of our troops in the late war, General Miles answered: "Our soldiers fought bravely, but nothing else could be expected from American soldiers. They have no superiors in the field, and American history has shown that they can cope successfully with any foe. Courage is a natural virtue with all Americans, and the late war has shown that it has not been weakened any by years of peace. There is no better material in the world for an army than the young men who grow up in the cities, and towns and on the farms of the United States. I have already said that a young man who enters the army should have education, and the intelligence of the average American soldier is one of his most valuable traits. He is not merely a machine; he is an intelligent machine. He is conscious of his duty and his responsibilities.



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“What do you think of the future of the army, General?”

General Miles replied deliberately: “The American people will never have any occasion to be otherwise than proud of their army. It will be found equal to every call that can possibly be made upon it, and prepared to face any danger in defense of the nation.”

## XVII

### Making the Most of His Opportuni- ties Wins a Coveted Embassy.

“**Y**OU may say what you will,” said a young lawyer in a conversation wherein Joseph H. Choate and his ability were the topics of conversation; “a man cannot hope to distinguish himself without special opportunities.”

“Not even in law?” questioned one.

“There least of all,” was the answer.

“Well,” said another, “the period in which Mr. Choate began his career in New York is commonly referred to as the golden age of the metropolitan bar. James T. Brady was a conspicuous figure in the popular eye. Charles O’Connor had already made a lasting impression. Mr. Evarts was in the front rank in politics as well as in law. Mr. Hoffman was equally prominent on the Democratic side, and Mr. Stanford’s brilliancy in cross-examination had given him an enviable reputation. The legal heavens were studded with stars of such lustre as to make any newcomer feel doubtful about his ability to compete. But Choate displayed no anxiety. He hung out his shingle and began to look for clients, and they came.”

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### A YOUNG LAWYER'S CHANCES THEN AND NOW.

"That was before the war," resumed the original speaker. "Do you imagine he could have attained his position as the foremost American lawyer under conditions as they exist to-day without special advantages?"

"Possibly," I said, and added that it was probable that Mr. Choate, if approached, would kindly throw light on the subject.

In pursuance of this idea, I called one evening at the residence of Mr. Choate. Previous inquiry at the law office of Evarts, Choate and Beaman, on Wall Street, elicited the information that Mr. Choate's days were filled to overflowing with legal affairs of great importance. Consequently it was surprising to find him so ready to see a stranger at his home.

It was into a long room on the ground floor that I was introduced, three of its walls lined with tall, dark walnut book-laden cases, lighted by a bright grate fire and by a student's lamp on the table by night, and by two heavily-shaded windows by day. As I entered, the great lawyer was busy prodding the fire, and voiced a resonant "good-evening" without turning. In a moment or two he had evoked a blaze, and assumed a standing attitude before the fire, his hands behind him.

### ARE SPECIAL ADVANTAGES NECESSARY?

"Well, sir," he began, "what do you wish?"

"A few minutes of your time," I answered.

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"Why?" he questioned succinctly.

"I wish to discover whether you believe special advantages at the beginning of a youth's career are necessary to success?"

"Why my opinion?"

I was rather floored for an instant, but endeavored to make plain the natural interest of the public in the subject and his opinion, but he interrupted me with the query:—

"Why don't you ask a man who never had any advantages," at the same time fixing upon me one of his famous "what's in thy heart?" glances.

"Then you have had them?" I said, grasping wildly at the straw that might keep the interviewer afloat.

"A few, not many," he replied.

"Are advantages necessary to success to-day?"

"Define advantages and success," he said abruptly, evidently questioning whether it was worth while to talk. A distinguished looking figure he made, looking on, as I collected my defining ability. The room seemed full of his atmosphere. He is a tall man, oaken in strength, with broad, intelligent face, high forehead, alert, wide-set eyes, and firm, even lips expressive of great self-control. His fluency, his wit and humor, his sound knowledge, his strength and perfect self-possession, were all suggested by his face and expression, and by the firmness of his squarely set head and massive shoulders.

"Let us," I said, "say money, opportunity, friends,

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good advice, and personal popularity for early advantages.

"The first isn't necessary," said the jurist, leisurely adjusting his hands in his pockets. "Opportunity comes to everyone, but all have not a mind to see; friends you can do without for a time; good advice we take too late, and popularity usually comes too early or too tardy to be appreciated. Define success."

### WHAT SUCCESS MEANS.

"I might mention fame, position, income, as examples of what the world deems success."

"Foolish world!" said Mr. Choate. "The most successful men sometimes have not one of all these. All I can say is that early advantages won't bring a man a knowledge of the law, nor enable him to convince a jury. What he needs is years of close application, the ability to stick until he has mastered the necessary knowledge."

"Where did you obtain your wide knowledge of the law?" I asked.

"Reading at home and fighting in the courts,—principally fighting in the courts."

"And was there any good luck about obtaining your first case? Was it secured by special effort?"

### THE GOOD LUCK OF BEING PREPARED.

"None, unless it was the good luck of having a sign out, large enough for people to see. The rest of it was

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hard work, getting the evidence and the law fixed in my mind.

“You believe, of course,” I ventured, “that advantageous opportunities do come to all?”

“Yes,” said he, drawing up a chair and resignedly seating himself. “I believe that opportunities come to all,—not the same opportunities, nor the same kind of opportunities, nor opportunities half so valuable in some cases as in others, but they do come, and if seen and grasped will work a vast improvement in the life and character of an individual. Every boy cannot be president, but my word for it, if he is industrious, he can improve his position in the world.”

### TURNING OBSTACLES INTO AIDS.

“It has been said, Mr. Choate,” I went on, “that you often ascribe both your success in particular cases, and your general success at the bar, to good luck and happy accidents.”

“Just so, just so,” he answered, smiling in a manner that is at once a question and a mark of approbation. “I hope I have always made the most of good luck and happy accidents. We all should. My friend, John E. Parsons, once denounced a defendant insurance company as a ‘vampire,—one of those bloodless creatures that feed on the blood of the people.’ It was a savage address of the old-fashioned style, and convincing, until I asked the judge and jury if they knew what a vampire really is. ‘Look at the Quaker gentleman

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who is president of this company,' I said, pointing him out. 'Also look at that innocent young man, his attorney, who sits next to him with a smile on his face. You thought vampires were something out of the way when Brother Parsons described them, but these are regular, genuine vampires.' That brought a laugh and good feeling, and I suppose you might call the whole thing an opportunity to turn a bad assault into a helpful incident."

The great lawyer was a study as he spoke, his easy, unaffected attitude and bearing itself carrying weight. His manner of accepting the intrusion with mild acquiescence and attention, but with no intention of allowing himself to be bored, was interesting. It has become customary to say that he is a poor politician, and as the term is ordinarily employed and understood, he is, because he is ever ready to say what he really thinks. It is precisely this quality, this freedom from cowardice, this detestation of truckling to ignorance and brutality, this independence, that cause him to stand out so boldly in the legal profession.

### DOES LACK OF OPPORTUNITY JUSTIFY.

"If equally valuable opportunities do not come to all," I went on, "hasn't an individual a right to complain and justify his failure?"

"We have passed the period when we believe that all men are equal," said Mr. Choate. "We know they're free, but some men are born less powerful than others.

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But if an individual does not admit to himself that he is deficient in strength or reasoning powers, if he claims all the rights and privileges given others because he is 'as good as they' then his success or failure is upon his own head. He should prove that he is what he thinks he is, and be what he aspires to be."

"You believe, of course, that an individual may overestimate his abilities."

"Believe it," he answered, with a deprecatory wave of the hand, "trust the law to teach that. But if a man does overestimate himself, he still owes it to himself to endeavor to prove that his estimate of himself is correct. We all need to. If he fails, he will be learning his limitations, which is better than never finding them out. No man can justify inaction."

"What do you consider to be the genuine battle of a youth to-day?—the struggle to bear poverty while working to conquer?"

"Not at all," came the quick answer. "Poor clothes and poor food and a poor place to dwell in are disagreeable things and must be made to give place to better, of course, but one can be partially indifferent to them. The real struggle is to hang on to every advantage, and strengthen the mind at every step. There are persons who have learned to endure poverty so well that they don't mind it any longer. The struggle comes in maintaining a purpose through poverty to the end. It is just as difficult to maintain a purpose through riches."



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"Money is not an end, then, in your estimation."

"Never, and need is only an incentive. Erskine made his greatest speech with his hungry children tugging at his coat-tail. That intense feeling that something has got to be done is the thing that works the doing. I never met a great man who was born rich."

### MR. CHOATE'S ANTECEDENTS.

This remark seemed rather striking in a way, because of the fact that Mr. Choate's parents were not poor in the accepted sense. The family is rather distinguished in New England annals. His father was a cousin of the famous Rufus Choate, and the latter, at the date of Joseph's birth, January 24, 1832, was just entering his second term in congress to distinguish himself by a great speech on the tariff. Mr. Choate was the youngest of four brothers, and, after receiving a fair school education in Salem, was sent to Harvard, where he was graduated in 1852, and later from its law school in 1854. Influence procured him a position in a Boston law office. After a year of practical study, he was admitted to the bar of Massachusetts. In October of that year he made a tour of observation in the western states, in company with his brother William, and on his return determined to settle in New York.

"Isn't it possible, Mr. Choate," I ventured, "that your having had little or no worry over poverty in your youth might cause you to underestimate the effect of it on another, and overestimate the importance of stick-

## Joseph H. Choate

ing with determination to an idea through wealth or deprivation?"

"No," he replied, after a few moments' delay, in which he picked up one of the volumes near by as if to consult it; "no, the end to be attained makes important the need of hanging on. I am sure it is quite often more difficult to rise with money than without."

### DOES SUCCESS BRING CONTENT AND HAPPINESS.

"You have had long years of distinction and comfort; do you find that success brings content and happiness?"

"Well," he answered, contracting his brows with legal severity, "constant labor is happiness, and success simply means ability to do more labor,—more deeds far-reaching in their power and effect. Such success brings about as much happiness as the world provides."

"I mean," I explained, "the fruits of that which is conventionally accepted as success; few hours of toil, a luxuriously furnished home, hosts of friends, the applause of the people, sumptuous repasts, and content in idleness, knowing that enough has been done."

"We never know that enough has been done," said the lawyer. "All this sounds pleasant, but the truth is that the men whose great efforts have made such things possible for themselves are the very last to desire them. You have described what appeals to the idler, the energyless dreamer, the fashionable dawdler,

## Ambassador to Great Britain

and the listless voluptuary. Enjoyment of such things would sap the strength and deaden the ambition of a Lincoln. The man who has attained to the position where these things are possible is the one whose life has been a constant refutation of the need of these things. He is the one who has abstained, who has conserved his mental and physical strength by living a simple and frugal life. He has not taken more than he needed, and never, if possible, less. His enjoyment has been in working, and I guarantee that you will find successful men ever to be plain-mannered persons of simple tastes, to whom sumptuous repasts are a bore, and luxury a thing apart. They may live surrounded by these things, but personally take little interest in them, knowing them to be mere trappings, which neither add to nor detract from character."

### THE DELUSION OF LUXURY AND EASE.

"Is there no pleasure then in luxury and ease without toil?" I questioned.

"None," said the speaker emphatically. "There is pleasure in rest after labor. It is gratifying to relax when you really need relaxation, to be weary and be able to rest. But to enjoy anything you must first feel the need of it. But no more," he said, putting up his hand conclusively. "Surely you have enough to make clear what you wish to know."

Mr. Choate had talked for ten minutes. His ease of manner, quickness of reply, smoothness of expres-

## Joseph H. Choate

sion, and incisive diction, were fascinating beyond description. As I was about to leave, I inquired if he would object to my making our conversation the subject of an article, to which he smiled his willingness, waiving objection with a slight movement of the hand.

### MR. CHOATE'S SHARE OF NEW YORK'S LAW BUSINESS.

In court circles it is common report that Mr. Choate's contemporaries divide half of the business among them, and Mr. Choate has the other half to himself.

This is due to his wonderful simplicity and directness, which never falters for a moment for thought or word. He drives straight for the heart and head of client or officer, witness or counsel, judge or jurymen. A distinguished barrister has said of him:

"Where other lawyers are solemn and portentous, or wild or unpleasant, he is humorous and human. He assumes no superior air; often he speaks with his hands in his pockets. He strives to stir up no dark passions. While he is always a little bit keener, a little finer and more witty than the man in the box or on the bench, yet he is always a brother man to him."

## XVIII

### A Village Boy's Gift of Oratory Earns Him Wealth and Fame.

**O**F the busy men of the world, there are none more so than Chauncey M. Depew, until recently president of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, and now president of the board which looks after all the Vanderbilt interests. One must have something worthy his attention to gain admittance to the busy man, and I need say no more for the present interview than that the distinguished orator and statesman saw fit to discuss the possibilities of young men and their future, and gave readily of his time and opinions. I stated to him the object of my interview,—that it was intended to obtain his views as to what qualities in young men best make for success, and to ask him, if possible, to point out the way, by the aid of example, to better work and greater success for them. He smiled approvingly, and, to my question, whether, in his opinion, the opportunities awaiting ambitious young men are less or more than they have been in the past, replied:—

“More, decidedly more. Our needs in every field were never greater. The country is larger, and, while

## Chauncey M. Depew

the population is greater, the means to supply its increased wants require more and more talent, so that any young man may gain a foothold who makes his effort with industry and intelligence."

"Do you mean to say that there is an excellent position awaiting everyone?"

"I mean to say that, while positions are not so numerous that any kind of a young man will do, yet they are so plentiful that you can scarcely find a young man of real energy and intelligence who does not hold a responsible position of some kind. The chief affairs are in the hands of young men."

"Was it different in your day, when you were beginning?"

"Energy and industry told heavily in the balance then, as now, but the high places were not available for young men because the positions were not in existence. We had to make the places, in those days; and not only that, but we were obliged to call ourselves to the tasks. To-day, a man fits himself and is called. There are more things to do."

"How was it with boys, in your day, who wanted to get an education?"

### HE HAD TO EARN HIS OWN WAY.

"With most of them, it was a thing to earn. Why, the thing that I knew more about than anything else, as I grew from year to year, was the fact that I had nothing to expect, and must look out for myself. I

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can't tell you how clear my parents made this point to me. It absolutely glittered, so plain was it."

"Your parents were Americans?"

"Yes. I was born at Peekskill, in 1834."

Although Mr. Depew modestly refrains from discussing his ancestry, he comes from the best New England stock. He descends, through remote paternal ancestors, from French Huguenots, who were among those who came to America in the early days of the country, and who founded the village of New Rochelle, in Westchester county. His mother, Martha Mitchell, was of illustrious and patriotic New England descent, being a member of the family to which belonged Roger Sherman, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; and he is a lineal descendant of the Rev. Josiah Sherman, chaplain of the Seventh Connecticut Continental infantry, and of Gabriel Ogden, of the New Jersey militia, both of whom served in the American Revolution.

"Had you any superior advantages in the way of money, books, or training?" I continued.

"If you want to call excellent training a superior advantage I had it. Training was a great point with us. We trained with the plow, the ax, and almost any other implement we could lay our hands on. I might even call the switch used at our house an early advantage, and, I might say, superior to any other in our vicinity. I had some books, but our family was not

## Chauncey M. Depew

rich, even for those times. We were comfortably situated, nothing more."

"Do you owe more to your general reading than you do to your early school training?"

"Yes, I think so. I attended the school in our village regularly, until I went to college; but I was not distinguished for scholarship, except on the ballground."

"Do you attribute much of your success in life to physical strength?"

"It is almost indispensable."

### HE ENTERED YALE AT EIGHTEEN.

"I was always strong. The conditions tended to make strong men, in those days. I went to college in my eighteenth year. I think I acquired a broader view there, and sound ideals which have been great helps. It was not a period of toil, however, as some would have made it."

His time at Yale was in no respect wasted. The vigorous, athletic, fun-loving boy was developing into a man with a strength and independence of character, very imperfectly understood at first by the already long list of men who liked him.

"What profession did you fix upon as the field for your life work?" I asked.

"That of the law. I always looked forward to that; and, after my graduation, in 1856, I went into a law office (that of Hon. William Nelson,) at Peekskill, and prepared for practice. That was a time of intense



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political excitement. There were factions in the Democratic party, and the Whig party seemed to be passing away. The Republican party, or People's party, as it had first been called, was organized in 1856, and men were changing from side to side. Naturally, I was mixed in the argument, and joined the Republican party.

"When I was graduated at Yale College, in 1856," he continued, "I came home to the village of Peekskill to meet my father, my grandfather, my uncles and my brothers, all old Hunker, state-rights, pro-slavery Democrats. But I had been through the fiery furnace of the Kansas-Nebraska excitement at New Haven, and had come out of it a free-soil Republican. Two days after my return, I stood, a trembling boy, upon a platform to give voice in the campaign which was then in progress, to that conversion which nearly broke my father's heart, and almost severed me from all family ties. It seemed then as if the end of the world had come for me in the necessity for this declaration of convictions and principles, but I expressed my full belief. In this sense, I believe a young man should be strong, and that such difficult action is good for him."

### HIS BEGINNING AS AN ORATOR.

"Is that where you began your career as an orator?" I asked.

"You mean as a stump-speaker? Yes. I talked for Fremont and Dayton, our candidates, but they were

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defeated. We did not really expect success, though, and yet we carried eleven states. After that, I went back to my law books, and was admitted to the bar in 1858. That was another campaign year, and I spoke for the party then, as I did two years later, when I was a candidate for the state assembly, and won."

The real glory hidden by this modest statement is that Mr. Depew's oratory in the campaign of 1858 gained him such distinction that he was too prominent to be passed over in 1860. During that campaign, he stumped the entire state, winning rare oratorical triumphs, and aiding the party almost more than anyone else. How deep an impression the young member from Peekskill really made in the state legislature by his admirable mastery of the complex public business brought before him, may be gathered from the fact that when, two years later, he was re-elected, he was speedily made chairman of the committee on ways and means. He was also elected speaker, *pro tem.*, and at the next election, when his party was practically defeated all along the line, he was returned.

After briefly referring to the active part he took in the Lincoln campaign, I asked:—

"When did you decide upon your career as a railroad official?"

"In 1866. I was retained by Commodore Vanderbilt as attorney for the New York and Harlem Road."

"To what do you attribute your rise as an official in that field?"

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“Hard work. That was a period of railroad growth. There were many small roads and plenty of warring elements. Out of these many small roads, when once united, came the great systems which now make it possible to reach California in a few days. Anyone who entered upon the work at that time had to encounter those conditions, and if he continued at it, to change them. I was merely a counselor at first.”

In 1869, Mr. Depew was made attorney for the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, and afterward a director. This was the period of the development of the Vanderbilt system. Mr. Depew was a constant adviser of the Vanderbilts, and, by his good judgment and sagacious counsel, maintained their constant respect and friendship. In 1875, he was made general counsel for the entire system and a director in each one of the roads.

A SALARY OF \$25,000 A YEAR.

It has often been urged by the sinister-minded, that it was something against him to have gained so much at the hands of the Vanderbilts. The truth is that this is his chief badge of honor. Many times he has won influence and votes for the Vanderbilt interests, but always by the use of wit, oratorical persuasion and legitimate, honorable argument,—never by the methods of the lobbyist. Commodore Vanderbilt engaged him as counsel for the New York Central Railroad, at a salary of \$25,000 a year,—then equal to the salary of

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the president of the United States,—and he always acknowledged that Mr. Depew earned the money.

He is now the head of the entire Vanderbilt system, or the controlling spirit of thirty distinct railroads, besides being a director in the Wagner Palace Car Company, the Union Trust Company, the Western Union Telegraph Company, the Equitable Life Insurance Society, the Western Transit Company, the West Shore and International Bridge Company, the Morris Run Coal Mining Company, the Clearfield Bituminous Coal Corporation, the Hudson River Bridge Company, the Canada Southern Bridge Company, the Niagara River Bridge Company, the Niagara Grand Island Bridge Company, the Tonawanda Island Bridge Company, the American Safe Deposit Company, the Mutual Gas Light Company, and the Brooklyn Storage and Warehouse Company.

“How much of your time each day,” I asked, “have you given, upon an average, to your professional duties?”

“Only a moderate number of hours. I do not believe in overwork. The affairs of life are not important enough to require it, and the body cannot endure it. Just an ordinary day’s labor of eight or ten hours has been my standard.”

“Your official duties never drew you wholly from the political field, I believe?”

“Entirely, except special needs of the party, when I have been urged to accept one task after another. I

## U. S. Senator and Railroad President

believe that every man's energies should be at the disposal of his country."

"On the political side, what do you think is the essential thing for success?"

"The very things that are essential anywhere else—honesty, consistency and hard work."

"It requires no strain of character, no vacillation?"

"For twenty-five years," answered Mr. Depew, "I was on all occasions to the front in political battles, and I never found that political opinions or activity made it necessary to break friendships or make them."

Mr. Depew's political career is already so well known that it need not be reviewed here.

After three years of service as vice-president of the New York Central Railroad, he was elevated, in 1885, to the presidency. While thus given a position of great influence in the business world, his growing reputation made him eligible for greater political honors than any for which he had yet been named. In 1888 he was the presidential candidate of the Republicans of New York state, at the national convention of the party, and received the solid vote of his state delegation, but withdrew his name. President Harrison offered him the position of secretary of state, to succeed Mr. Blaine, but he declined.

### OPPORTUNITIES OF TO-DAY.

"What do you think of the opportunities to-day? Has the recent war aided us?"

## Chauncey M. Depew

“It is the best thing for the young men of to-day that could have happened! The new possessions mean everything to young men, who are going to be old men by and by. We, as a nation, are going to find, by the wise utilization of the conditions forced upon us, how to add incalculably to American enterprise and opportunity by becoming masters of the sea, and entering with the surplus of our manufactures the markets of the world. The solid merchants are to undertake the extension of American trade, but the young men will be called in to do the work under their guidance. The young man who is ready is naturally the one chosen.”

“You think a tide of prosperity waits for every young American?”

“It may not exactly wait, but he can catch it easily.”

“It is said,” I went on, “that any field or profession carefully followed, will bring material success. Is that the thing to be aimed at?”

“Material success does not constitute an honorable aim. If that were true, a grasping miser would be the most honorable creature on earth, while a man like Gladstone, great without money, would have been an impossibility. The truth is that material success is usually the result of a great aim, which looks to some great public improvement. Some man plans to be an intelligent servant of some great public need, and the result of great energy in serving the public intelligently is wealth. It never has been possible to become notable in this respect in any other way.

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"It is often said that the excellent opportunities for young men are gone."

"If you listen to ordinary comment," said Mr. Depew, "you can come to believe that almost anything is dead—patriotism, honor, possibilities, trade—in fact, anything, and it's all according with whom you talk. There was a belief, not long ago, that the great orators were dead, and had left no successors. Papers and magazines were said to supply this excellent tonic. Yet orators have appeared, great ones, and in the face of the beauty and grace and fire which animates some of them, you read the speeches of the older celebrities, and wonder what was in them that stirred men."

"And this field is also open to young men?"

"Not as a profession, of course, but as a means to real distinction, certainly. The field was never before so open. I have listened to Stephen A. Douglas, with his vigorous argument, slow enunciation, and lack of magnetism; to Abraham Lincoln, with his resistless logic and quaint humor; to Tom Corwin, Salmon P. Chase, William H. Seward, Charles Sumner, and Wendell Phillips; and, as I look back and recall what they said, and the effect which they produced, and then estimate what they might do with the highly cultivated and critical audiences of to-day, I see the opportunity that awaits the young man here. Only Wendell Phillips strikes me as having possessed qualities which are not yet duplicated or surpassed."

## Chauncey M. Depew

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE KIND OF SUCCESS.

"You recognize more than one kind of success in this world, then?"

"Yes; we can't all be presidents of the United States. Any man is successful who does well what comes to his hand, and who works to improve himself so that he may do better. The man with the ideal, struggling to carry it out, is the successful man. Of course, there are all grades of ideals, and the man with the highest, given the proportionate energy, is the most successful. The world makes way for that kind of young man."

"Do you consider that happiness in the successful man consists in reflecting over what he has done or what he may do?"

"I should say that it consists in both. No man who has accomplished a great deal could sit down and fold his hands. The enjoyment of life would be instantly gone if you removed the possibility of doing something. When through with his individual affairs, a man wants a wider field, and of course that can only be in public affairs. Whether the beginner believes it or not, he will find that he cannot drop interest in life at the end, whatever he may think about it in the beginning."

"The aim of the young man of to-day should be, then—?"

"To do something worth doing, honestly. Get wealth, if it is gotten in the course of an honorable public service. I think, however, the best thing to get is the means of doing good, and then doing it."



## XIX

### A Chance-Found Book the Turning Point in a United States Senator's Career.

**H**E wasn't much of a boy to look at, this Dolliver boy of ten, trudging off to school every morning in the West Virginia hamlet of Kingwood, where the mountains are so brown in winter and so green in summer. To the master of the little subscription school he was Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver; to the comrades of sport and study he was just plain "Prent," a sturdy little chap, whose hair refused to stay combed, whose clothes showed the rough-and-tumble of play, whose love for the mountains far exceeded his love of arithmetic.

Somebody lost a copy of the "Congressional Record" about that time,—a bound volume, containing many speeches of senators and representatives. "Prent" found it. His boyish imagination was fired. Hour after hour he pored over its pages, committing to memory several of the passages in the speeches.

One day the school committee called,—an auspicious event in the little schoolhouse. Young Dolliver was asked to give a declamation. To the astonishment

## Jonathan P. Dolliver

of all, the boy performed his task with force, vigor, clearness and almost eloquence. Where did he get it?

“O, I can talk,” he declared; “dad’s a preacher, you know.”

Thus climbed into his first forum the witty, eloquent, magnetic Dolliver, a United States senator from the state of Iowa at forty years of age.

The match of ambition having been thus applied, the young lad studied to greater advantage. A superb mother made sacrifices to aid him. How these American mothers have ever helped! He took a course at the State University at Morgantown, West Virginia. This was in 1875, and Prentiss was only seventeen when he stepped forth with his diploma in his hand.

### A SCHOOL TEACHER AT EIGHTEEN.

At eighteen, he was a country school teacher himself. The scene is laid in Victor Center, Illinois, in a yellow schoolhouse; and, while it is only a stepping-stone in a career full of more exciting episodes, it is worth while to note that the youth of eighteen was able to do what his predecessors had failed to accomplish,—make an orderly, successful school out of a very turbulent lot of youngsters. On one occasion he quelled a fight by simply looking at the combatants.

The law, and the wide, free west captured the young man a few years later, the former for a profession, the latter for a home. Fort Dodge, Iowa, welcomed the little family in 1880, and there the future senator

## United States Senator at Forty

wrestled with life's serious problems in earnest. Inevitably he was drawn into politics, that field which always has use for men of active brain and silvery tongue. Dolliver had both. James G. Blaine, for whom he delivered scores of speeches, predicted, in 1884, that this dark-haired young orator of the west would enjoy a conspicuous future. The prophecy was not long in reaching fulfilment. From 1890, when he was first elected to congress, until 1900, when he took his seat in the senate, he rose steadily in importance as a great leader and debater, until he had no superior in the great forum of the nation.

His wit is one of the most attractive of his gifts. He can tell a story with wonderful effect. His keen sense of humor would have made him a comedian, if nature had not cast his other faculties in a more serious mould. Therefore, his fun only crops out at times.

When I asked him when and where he first began to consider himself famous, he said:—

“My first term in congress gave me my first sense of exaltation. The people up in the Iowa hills had a little lake, and they named it after me. Then a new postoffice was named in my honor, and a colored woman named her baby after me. I began to think of engaging a niche in some temple of fame.

“But, in my second term, I was disillusioned. A climatic disturbance dried up the lake, free delivery wiped out the postoffice, and the child died,—and I found myself back at the very place whence I had started!”

## Jonathan P. Dolliver

### THE STRANGE RESULT OF A LECTURE.

A few years ago Mr. Dolliver was invited to deliver a lecture in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, before the Young Men's Christian Association Lyceum. In each city, the hall was crowded wherein he spoke, some fifteen hundred young men attending. His topic was, "Chances for Young Men."

"That," said he to me, "was a favorite topic with me. I believed in young men, and liked to talk with them, knowing full well that if one can stir them up to energy and ambition, he is doing a grand work in the world.

"Well, I have not changed my opinion since the delivery of that lecture; but, when I got back to Washington to resume my congressional duties, a week later, I began to hear from those particular young men. Letters began to pour in on me. They came in bunches of twos and threes; then in dozens, and finally in basket-fuls. Every St. Paul and Minneapolis young man who had heard me declare that this is the young men's age, wrote that he fully agreed with me,—and asked me to get him a government job!"

Mr. Dolliver's services to his party were particularly great in the controversy over the Porto Rican change of front by the administration. The president had, in his message to congress, in December 1899, favored the extending of unrestricted trade opportunities to the Porto Ricans; but, later, seeing that such a course was opposed by many influential persons, and by several

## United States Senator at Forty

strong arguments, he advised the imposition of light duties and the application of the proceeds to the island's own use. In the conflict which at once arose in congress, Dolliver's strong and eloquent plea alone saved the measure from defeat.

### HIS IDEA OF GENUINE SUCCESS.

When I asked him what the true idea of success is, he replied, without a moment's hesitation :

"Money-making is the cheapest kind of success. It doesn't indicate the highest development, by any means. I will give you a simple illustration, embodied in an incident which occurred this very day. A friend of mine, a professional gentleman of high mental attainments, had been offered a salary of ten thousand dollars a year by a corporation engaged in transportation. He was strongly tempted to take it, for he is working for the government at a salary of only five thousand dollars. He admitted to me, however, that he is capable of far greater usefulness, in his present work, than he would be in the employment of the railroad. Thereupon I strongly advised him to reject the larger offer, and he has done so. My reason was simply that money does not measure one's place in the world, one's mental triumphs, or one's usefulness to humanity."

"But money is a helpful factor in life," I urged, "and is considered indispensable, nowadays, in climbing up the ladder."

## Jonathan P. Dolliver

“Well,” he replied, “if I had a son and a hundred thousand dollars, I would keep them apart.”

In the senate a new member is not supposed to take part in debates, or even discussions. The atmosphere is not only dignified, but frozen. I strongly anticipate, however, that there will be a thawing out before long. The presence of Mr. Dolliver ought to act like an old-fashioned depot stove in a cold-storage room.

## XX

### Varied Business Training the Foundation of a Long Political Career.

**T**HOMAS COLLIER PLATT has succeeded in business and in politics in a phenomenal manner. The reason is, he has had the native sagacity, energy and working ability of two ordinary men, and has fairly earned his place as a senator of the United States, as one of the political leaders of the nation, and as president of the United States Express Company.

Last summer, as I sat on the porch of the Oriental Hotel at Manhattan Beach, for Mr. Platt's return from his office, he came up the steps two at a time, with the elasticity of a man of forty. As I waited for him in the Fifth Avenue Hotel the other day, he came into the lobby looking very much jaded. He said: "I am very tired, after a week's session of the senate at Washington. I have had a very busy day in New York. Come up to my room."

Members of the legislature, local politicians, statesmen of national renown, sent their cards to the senator's room before we were fairly seated. Wearied amid this

## Thomas C. Platt

great press, Mr. Platt took time to say some things about himself, and to indicate some of the elements of his success as an encouragement and inspiration to young men in the struggle of life.

“Where were you born?”

“In Owego, Tioga County, New York.

“My ancestors were Americans. They were Yankees that came from Connecticut and Massachusetts to New York state.”

“Do you believe in hereditary tendencies?”

“I do, most certainly. Blood tells. There is nothing so absolutely true as that blood tells in cattle, horses and men.’ My father was a devoted, consistent Presbyterian. The preachers almost counted my father’s house a home when I was a boy. My father was my ideal of a man every way. He was one of the few men I ever saw whose everyday life completely harmonized with the Christian profession.”

“In your Puritan home, you had to toe the mark, did you not?”

“Yes, my parents were strict ; but very tender. They never used the rod, because we were such exceptionally good children. We did not need it. I never saw father or mother raise their hand against a child. My father was a lawyer. He afterward became interested in real estate, taking charge of extensive timber and farm lands in the northwest, owned by a gentleman in Philadelphia.”



## “Empire State” Republican Leader

### HIS START AS A BOY.

“To what do you attribute the start you got as a boy on the road to success?”

“To the principles of truth, honor, love, and labor, which were instilled into my mind in our quiet village home.”

“Where were you educated?”

“I attended the Owego Academy. There was nothing out of the ordinary line in teacher or scholar. In the academy I prepared for Yale College, which I entered in 1849. Ill health compelled me to give up my college course at the close of my sophomore year. Our class contained some of the most distinguished men ever graduated from the college. Wayne McVeigh, Edmund Clarence Steadman, Isaac Brumley, Judge Shiras, of the Supreme Court of the United States; Andrew D. White, ambassador to the court of Berlin, were among the number. Yale has grown marvelously since my day, and the student now has increased opportunity for knowledge, but I do not think that the grade of talent to-day is any better than in our time. In 1876, Yale conferred on me the degree of master of arts.”

“Would you advise a young man, having a business life in view, to attend college?”

“I would! The intellectual discipline, the social advantages, the mental stimulus will be of profit to a

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young man entering business in times of great enterprises and heated competitions.”

### ALWAYS FOND OF READING.

“Were you a reader of books?”

“I have always been fond of reading, and have read books to advantage, but for forty years I have been so engaged with business and politics that I have not had the time to gratify my taste for literature, which is strong. Reading is of great advantage to a young man,—that is, the reading of good books.

“I was fortunate in my early friendships. A man’s character and success are greatly effected by his friends. A man is known by the company he keeps. It used to be that a man was known by the newspaper he read. That is not so now.”

“Why?”

“Because there are so many and so cheap that a man can and does take and read more than one. I read them all,—those which agree and those which disagree with me politically.”

“You are reputed to have been a fine singer when a young man.”

“I had a voice which gave me much delight and seemed to please others. I was for many years the leader of the Owego Glee Club, which was very popular. We used to be called for as far as Elmira, Ithaca, Auburn, and Binghamton. With Washington Gladden to write the verses, our glee club to sing them,

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and Benjamin Tracy, a young lawyer of the town, to make the speeches, we gave considerable inspiration to the social and political gatherings of our community.”

### A TASTE OF MINING LIFE

“What was your first venture in business?”

“On my return from Yale, I started a retail drug store in my native town, and continued it for fifteen years. I then branched out in the lumber business in Michigan. I became connected with several local enterprises, among them the bank, and a wagon factory.”

“You invested in a western mine, did you not?”

“Yes! I owned a third interest in a mine at Deadwood, and in the winter of 1877 I decided to go out and see it. It was my first trip west, and I was not prepared for the hardships. I had to ride sixty hours from the end of the railroad to the camp. The Indians were on the war path and had killed a passenger on the stage that preceded ours. As I started to enter the coach, the driver said: ‘Are you armed?’ ‘No,’ said I. Taking a gun from the top of the stage, he gave it to me, and said, ‘You will need it.’ I told him I was a tenderfoot and did not know how to shoot. He showed me, and I took the gun with me. Luckily I did not need it. About the first thing I saw when I reached the camp was an example of frontier justice. Men, with a rope, were hunting for those who had been guilty of holding up the stage. I found the claim in which I

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was interested to be one of the richest in the vicinity, according to indications. We spent \$60,000 in working the claim. I was offered half a million dollars for my interest in the property, which I declined. Just as we got to paying expenses, the mine played out."

"Did you make any of your money in speculation?"

"I never made much money any way, and I never made any in speculation, or in politics. My political experience has cost me—not brought me money."

"How happened you to come to New York?"

"I came to New York as the general manager of the United States Express Company, and soon after, in 1879, I was elected president, which position I have held ever since."

The United States Express Company began business in 1854, and had in New York City eight wagons and twenty men, including officers. Its mileage was less than 600 miles. It now operates 30,000 miles of railroads, which is a larger mileage than that of any other single express company in the country. It has ten thousand employees and five thousand offices. In New York City alone it has six hundred horses and two hundred and fifty wagons; and other great cities of the country are correspondingly well equipped. For a dozen years the company has had the entire responsibility of carrying all government money and securities, except in a few states and territories, and it has transported hundreds of millions of gold and silver and paper money without the loss of a penny to the govern-

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ment. The executive ability, tireless industry, ceaseless vigilance and courteous and honest dealing of President T. C. Platt has had much to do with the success of the company.

### THE ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS.

“What do you consider essential elements for success in business?”

“Adaptability to the calling, hard work, strict attention to business and honest dealing.

“Young men should remember that it is not the amount made, but that which is saved that indicates financial success. The habit of economy is important in getting along in the world.”

“When did you turn you attention to politics?”

“Very early in my history, and I have been in its seething, boiling steam about ever since. I was first elected clerk of my county, and soon after was sent to congress, where I served two terms. I was elected to the United States senate in 1881, and again two years ago this last January.”

“It is said that the speech you made on the Treaty of Paris was your maiden speech in the senate.”

“It was.”

“Why should a man who can make such a speech as that have been silent so long?”

“I am dragged almost to death with my hard work, and I have had no time to prepare fine speeches. I

## Thomas C. Platt

have tried to do my duty in my appropriate sphere as a representative of my state in the senate."

"To what do you attribute your political success?"

"To fidelity to the political principles professed, and especially to my loyalty to my friends."

### ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN.

"Would you advise a young man to enter the political field?"

"By no means! I should advise him to keep out of it. It is vexatious, unsatisfactory and unremunerative. I have requested my sons to keep out of politics, and they have wisely heeded the request."

"Do you not think that it is the duty of a young man to hold office or in some way bear his share of the burdens of state?"

"Certainly I do. That is a different thing. I referred to the undesirable calling of a professional politician."

"What would you call the essential elements of success in life?"

"Not one thing, or two things, but a number of them harmoniously blended, and crowned by a true sterling character. True success is not in making money, nor in securing power, nor in winning praise. It is in the building up of true manhood that merits and enjoys these things and employs them for the benefits and happiness of mankind."

"I forgot to ask you about your health?"

## “Empire State” Republican Leader

“It has never been robust, but it has been good. I have been very careful in my habits, and have preserved what bodily energy I needed for my life plans. Bodily vigor is necessary to the highest success in any business or profession.”

### MR. PLATT'S CHARACTERISTICS.

The senator spoke like the courteous gentleman that he is. His bearing is simplicity and sincerity personified. He made answer to my questions in a voice as delicate as a woman's, giving no hint of the dynamite behind it. I understand that it is his habit to economize his strength and use no more on each occasion than is really required. Mr. Platt is a serious man and yet he has a deep vein of humor. He likes a good joke and tells one well. He has a hearty laugh. He has great patience, but makes a hard fight when provoked. He is not tyrannical in victory or vengeful in defeat. He has a knowledge of human nature, a keen insight into men's motives, and has skill in playing upon them. He is a master in adjusting himself to events. He has a masterful will, but a remarkable faculty also for disarming instead of exciting antagonism. Altogether he seems well qualified to be a leader of men.

## XXI

### A Magnate, the Courage of His Convictions Make Him a Reformer.

**A**T the time of the Civil war Tom L. Johnson was just old enough to begin to realize the significance of events; he could remember his family's former affluence, and this memory served as a spur to urge him to the rehabilitation of broken fortunes. At the outbreak of the conflict his father, A. W. Johnson, had joined the Confederate army as a colonel, removing his wife and children, from the Kentucky homestead near Georgetown, to the south, and finally to Staunton, Virginia, for greater safety. There the boy Tom, who was born in 1854, spent four of the most impressionable years of his life, and there he earned his first dollar.

#### HIS FIRST SPECULATION.

"I am glad I was old enough to remember my home before the war," he said, in speaking of his early life. "Rightly or wrongly, I attach great importance to this fact as a constant incentive in my career. The thought of regaining the position which we had previously held was always with me."



## Railway Magnate and Single Taxer

The five weeks immediately following Lee's surrender were a golden time to Tom financially; in that period, he earned eighty-eight dollars, enough to carry the family (which consisted of his parents and two younger brothers), back to Kentucky. This was the way he did it: There was, of course, great thirst for news in Staunton, as all over the country, but only once a day was Staunton in railway communication with the outside world.

The boy saw his chance for a monopoly in newspapers and periodicals, and he straightway cornered the market. This he was enabled to do through the friendship of the conductor of Staunton's unique train, who refused to furnish papers to anyone else. For five weeks he held his monopoly, selling dailies at fifteen cents and illustrated periodicals at twenty-five cents each.

When Johnson ceased to enjoy these exclusive privileges, he was already a small capitalist, besides having learned a lesson that was not without profit in after life. He had eighty-eight dollars in silver.

"I tell you, that seemed like a lot of sure 'nough money," he said, with a smile, "to us who had been paying one hundred dollars in Confederate notes for a hat."

### AT WORK IN A ROLLING MILL.

Three years after he went to work in Louisville as clerk in an iron rolling mill, on a very small salary. In the same office with him was another lad, Arthur Mox-

## Tom L. Johnson

ham, who later became his business partner. For economical reasons, the managers of the mill decided that the services of one of the boys could be dispensed with, and it then came to a choice between them. Moxham was the one retained, and Johnson was turned out to commence over again. At the time, this looked like a misfortune, but it was really the best thing that could have happened. Before long, an opening with Louisville's ramshackle, broken-down-old-mule street railway presented itself, and the discharged mill clerk started on the career which was to lead to fortune.

### A FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE.

"The decision which retained Moxham in the mill and turned me adrift," he said, "was both a wise and a fortunate one. Moxham was better suited to the position than I was, and, moreover, I was thus thrown into the work for which I was adapted."

Quickly, the boy, who was then nearing manhood, passed from one place to another in the company's service until, after a few years, he became superintendent. Then he set about building up the railway and putting it on a paying basis. By a wise system of improving the accommodations and reducing the expenses, he was successful in this effort, and he forthwith began to look around for fresh fields for his ambition. But, in the meantime, like most men who are conscious of their strength and ability to cope with the world, and like many who are not, he had entered upon

## Railway Magnate and Single Taxer

matrimony. His bride was his cousin, Miss Margaret J. Johnson, of Louisville, Kentucky.

At the time of his marriage, Tom L. Johnson was but twenty, and was just beginning to get a secure footing in business. But he was not content with his limited scope of action. Moreover, his employers wanted to help him forward, recognizing his ability. Of his own initiative, Biderman Du Pont, one of the owners of the railway, offered to his *protégé* a loan of \$30,000, with which to try his fortune. The possibility of security was, of course, out of the question.

"Take it, Tom," he said, "and if you live, I know you'll pay it back; if you die, why, I'll be out just so much. But I'm gambling on your living."

"And later," remarked Mr. Johnson, "I had the pleasure of associating two of Mr. Du Pont's sons with me in business matters, and thus enjoyed the satisfaction of partially repaying his kindness. With the generous loan, the young financier organized a triumvirate for the purchase of the street railways of Indianapolis, thus taking the first step in the course which led him in turn to absorb the lines of Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis, Brooklyn and other cities. In Indianapolis, he pursued, with benefit to himself, the system which had been successful in Louisville,—cheap fares and good accommodations, with increased transfer privileges.

From that time on his career is an illustration of the benefits of expansion. The days of the cable and elec-

## Tom L. Johnson

tric cars came, and the new inventions were immediately extended to the lines under his control. By that time he had become strong enough to conduct his operations independently in his own behalf, or in conjunction with Moxham,—whose retention in the mill, by the way, had been but of temporary benefit to him, owing to the failure of the concern.

Like other practical men who have risen from the bottom of the ladder, Mr. Johnson familiarized himself with every detail of his business, even to the mechanical difficulties involved. This he proved by inventing a brake for cable-cars, which came into extensive use.

“PROGRESS AND POVERTY” CHANGED HIS WHOLE LIFE.

One day, while traveling, Mr. Johnson came across a book which was destined to influence his career vitally. This book was Henry George’s “Progress and Poverty.” There, he thought, was the solution of the great social questions of the age, and from that moment he was an ardent “single-taxer.” Indeed, the desire to benefit his fellowmen by opening their eyes to what he considered the truth, had become his first consideration in life, more important even than his business. Forthwith he set about to convert his father and partner, and when, soon thereafter, the chance for action on a larger stage presented itself, he was himself irresistibly impelled to seize it, despite distrust in his own ability. Owing to his uniform plan of considering the comfort of the public in the operation of his railway lines, he

## Railway Magnate and Single Taxer

had earned for himself unsought popularity in the city of Cleveland, where rival companies had practiced a reactionary system of niggardliness and indifference. The reward came not only in financial prosperity, but also in the form of an unexpected nomination to congress.

### HIS VOLUNTEER GERMAN FRIEND.

News of this honor reached Mr. Johnson while fishing, and his first impulse was to decline to run. But further thought led to a change of decision. Having decided, he acted. From that time until the election, he delivered a succession of public speeches, and the man who had distrusted his ability to address an audience suddenly found that he was an orator.

At every one of his tent meetings was to be seen a stout old German, who always occupied a front seat, and who evidently felt a proprietary interest in the speaker, which he manifested by liberal and loud interjections of "Bully Boy!" On one occasion, after a meeting, the German happened to be sitting next to Miss Johnson in the trolley car on the return trip. "Do you see that stout man down there?" he said, addressing her; "well, that's my friend, Tom Johnson. He's a great man; I know him well. And that lady next to him, that's his wife."

"Indeed," replied Miss Johnson, "and I happen to be his daughter."

The old German was not one whit abashed. Spring-

## Tom L. Johnson

ing to his feet, he held out his hand. "And I'm delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Johnson!" he cried, at the top of his voice; "I'm delighted to meet any one belonging to Tom Johnson. Bully boy!"

Like his German admirer, the people stood by Mr. Johnson, and he was elected a member of the Fifty-second and Fifty-third Congresses, in which he distinguished himself by his frank criticism of the administration.

### HIS FIRST SPEECH IN CONGRESS.

Mrs. Johnson's account of her husband's first speech in Congress is as dramatic and vivid as Baudet's description of the trial in the "Nabob." Like the Nabob's mother, she was in attendance unknown to the principal actor; but, in her case, this was due to intention, not accident.

"I was alone in the stall of the gallery," she said, "save for one other woman, who was there evidently merely from curiosity. I was choking, trembling from excitement. There was a great, inarticulate noise in the chamber, the banging of desk-lids, the calling of members to pages, the murmur of voices in conversation. Groups were scattered about the room; members were reading; no one was paying the slightest attention to the proceedings. Then Mr. Johnson arose, and I felt my heart stand still. Surely they would stop the noise, if only from common courtesy. But there was not an instant's cessation in the hubbub; everything continued exactly as before. He began to speak, but I

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could hardly catch the sound of his voice. I leaned forward and gripped the rail; the confusion would distract him; he would break down. Oh, how I hated those men who had no consideration for anyone but themselves. I felt the eyes of the other woman on me, sympathetically, pitying. Suddenly, someone cried 'S-sh!' and there was an instant's cessation in the noise. But only for an instant. I was bending forward over the rail, my eyes fixed on the speaker, hoping, praying for his success. Suddenly, W. C. Breckenridge, who was sitting directly in front of him, lifted his eyes and caught sight of me, and started to rise to come up into the gallery. I raised my hand and motioned him back, for I feared Mr. Johnson might look up and see me. Mr. Breckenridge sank back in his seat again, and I breathed a sigh of relief."

TOM REED LISTENED.

"Then a wonderful thing happened. A great, massive figure arose on the Republican side of the house and came over and took a seat directly in front of the speaker. He had come over to hear what Mr. Johnson was saying, and when Tom Reed came across to listen to a Democrat, everyone else listened, you may be sure. A hush fell on the house that remained unbroken until the speaker sat down in a burst of applause. That was the happiest day of my life."

A PEN PICTURE OF TOM JOHNSON.

Mr. Johnson is short and stout, with clear-cut, strong

## Tom L. Johnson

features. His face is that of an orator, the eye clear and direct, the forehead high and commanding. The broad nose-bridge indicates physical strength, and the firm mouth and chin, strength of character. In face, he resembles William Jennings Bryan, but a strong sense of humor belies deeper resemblance. Unlike most rich men, he knows when he has enough, and to this conclusion, it seems, he has now arrived.

“At the age of forty-five,” he said to me, in his apartments at the Waldorf-Astoria, “I am fortunate enough to be able to retire from business and to devote myself to other pursuits. Except for two small matters, I may be said to be already out of business, and I have no intention of going into anything new. From now on I shall give all my energies to spreading the single-tax theory, either here or in England, where it seems to be making rapid progress. Exactly how this will be done, I don’t know. I have always been a Democrat, and am one still, and I believe in organization; but whether or not I shall work within party lines, I am not yet prepared to say. Still, I have my own ideas, although it is rather my custom to act than to talk in advance.”

Those who know Mr. Johnson will agree with him, I think.



## XXII

### A Backwoods Boy Works His Way through College and Becomes University President.

**A**T ten years of age he was a country lad on a backwoods farm on Prince Edward's Island. At thirteen, he had become a clerk in a country store, at a salary of thirty dollars a year.

At eighteen, he was a college student, supporting himself by working in the evenings as a bookkeeper.

At twenty, he had won a scholarship in the University of London, in competition with all other Canadian students.

At twenty-five, he was professor of philosophy, Acadia College, Nova Scotia.

At thirty-eight he was appointed President of Cornell University.

At forty-four, he was chairman of President McKinley's special commission to the Philippines.

In this summary is epitomized the career of Jacob Gould Schurman. It is a romance of real life such as is not unfamiliar in America. Mr. Schurman's career differs from that of some other self-made men, how-

## Jacob Gould Schurman

ever. Instead of heaping up millions upon millions, he has applied his talents to winning the intellectual prizes of life, and has made his way, unaided, to the front rank of the leaders in thought and learning in this country. His career is a source of inspiration to all poor boys who have their own way to make in the world, for he has won his present honors by his own unaided efforts.

President Schurman says of his early life:—

“It is impossible for the boy of to-day, no matter in what part of the country he is brought up, to appreciate the life of Prince Edward’s Island as it was forty years ago. At that time, it had neither railroads nor daily newspapers, nor any of the dozen other things that are the merest commonplaces nowadays, even to the boys of the country districts. I did not see a railway until late in my ’teens. I was never inside a theater until after I was twenty. The only newspaper that came to my father’s house was a little provincial weekly. The only books the house contained were a few standard works,—such as the Bible, Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim’s Progress,’ Fox’s ‘Book of Martyrs,’ and a few others of that class. Remember, too, that this was not back at the beginning of the century, but little more than a generation ago, for I was born in the year 1854.

“My father had cleared away the land on which our house stood. He was a poor man, but no poorer than his neighbors. No amount of land, and no amount of work could yield much more than the necessities of life

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in that time and place. There were eight children in our family, and there was work for all of us.

“Our parents were anxious to have their children acquire at least an elementary education ; and so, summer and winter, we tramped the mile and a half that lay between our house and the district school, and the snow often fell to the depth of five or six feet on the island, and sometimes, when it was at its worst, our father would drive us all to school in a big sleigh. But no weather was bad enough to keep us away.

“That would be looked upon as a poor kind of school, nowadays, I suppose. The scholars were of all ages, and everything from A,-B,-C, to the Rule of Three, was taught by the one teacher. But whatever may have been its deficiencies, the work of the school was thorough. The teacher was an old-fashioned drillmaster, and whatever he drove into our heads he put there to stay. I went to this school summer and winter until I was thirteen, and by that time I had learned to read and write and spell and figure with considerable accuracy.

“At the age of thirteen, I left home. I hadn't formed any definite plans as to my future. I merely wanted to get into a village and to earn some money.

“My father got me a place in the nearest town,—Summerside,—a village of about one thousand inhabitants. For my first year's work I was to receive thirty dollars and my board. Think of that, young men of to-day! Thirty dollars a year for working from seven in the morning until ten at night! But I was glad to

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get the place. It was a start in the world, and the little village was like a city to my country eyes.”

### HE ALWAYS SUPPORTED HIMSELF.

“From the time I began working in the store until to-day, I have always supported myself, and during all the years of my boyhood I never received a penny that I did not earn myself. At the end of my first year, I went to a larger store in the same town, where I was to receive sixty dollars a year and my board. My salary was doubled ; I was getting on swimmingly.

“I kept this place for two years, and then I gave it up, against the wishes of my employer, because I had made up my mind that I wanted to get a better education. I determined to go to college.

“I did not know how I was going to do this, except that it must be of my own efforts. I had saved about eighty dollars from my storekeeping, and that was all the money I had in the world.

“When I told my employer of my plan, he tried to dissuade me from it. He pointed out the difficulties in the way of my going to college, and offered to double my pay if I would stay in the store.”

### THE TURNING POINT OF HIS LIFE.

“That was the turning-point in my life. On one side was the certainty of one hundred and twenty dollars a year, and the prospect of promotion as fast as I deserved it. Remember what one hundred and twenty

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dollars meant in Prince Edward's Island, and to me, a poor boy who had never possessed such a sum in his life. On the other side was my hope of obtaining an education. I knew that it involved hard work and self-denial, and there was the possibility of failure in the end. But my mind was made up. I would not turn back. I need not say that I do not regret that early decision, although I think that I would have made a successful storekeeper.

"With my eighty dollars capital, I began to attend the village high school, to get my preparation for college. I had only one year to do it in. My money would not last longer than that. I recited in Latin, Greek and algebra, all on the same day, and for the next forty weeks studied harder than I ever had before or have since. At the end of the year I entered the competitive examination for a scholarship in Prince of Wales College, at Charlotte Town, on the Island. I had small hope of winning it, my preparation had been so hasty and incomplete. But when the result was announced, I found that I had not only won the scholarship from my county, but stood first of all the competitors on the Island.

"The scholarship I had won amounted to only sixty dollars a year. It seems little enough, but I can say now, after nearly thirty years, that the winning of it was the greatest success I have ever had. I have had other rewards, which, to most persons, would seem immeasurably greater, but with this difference: that

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first success was essential ; without it I could not have gone on. The others I could have done without, if it had been necessary."

For two years young Schurman attended Prince of Wales College. He lived on his scholarship and what he could earn by keeping books for one of the town storekeepers, spending less than one hundred dollars during the entire college year. Afterward, he taught a country school for a year, and then went to Acadia College in Nova Scotia to complete his college course.

### A SPLENDID COLLEGE RECORD.

One of Mr. Schurman's fellow-students in Acadia says that he was remarkable chiefly for taking every prize to which he was eligible. In his senior year, he learned of a scholarship in the University of London offered for competition by the students of Canadian colleges. The scholarship paid five hundred dollars a year for three years. The young student in Acadia was ambitious to continue his studies in England, and saw in this offer his opportunity. He tried the examination and won the prize in competition with the brightest students in the larger Canadian colleges.

During the three years in the University of London, Mr. Schurman became deeply interested in the study of philosophy, and decided that he had found in it his life work. He was eager to go to Germany and study under the great leaders of philosophic thought. A way

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was opened for him, through the offer of the Hibbard Society in London, of a traveling fellowship with two thousand dollars a year. The honor men of the great English universities like Oxford and Cambridge were among the competitors, but the poor country boy from Prince Edward's Island was again successful, greatly to the surprise of the others.

At the end of his course in Germany, Mr. Schurman, then a doctor of philosophy, returned to Acadia College to become a teacher there. Soon afterward, he was called to Dalhousie University, at Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1886, when a chair of philosophy was established at Cornell, President White, who had once met the brilliant young Canadian, called him to that position. Two years later, Dr. Schurman became Dean of the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell; and, in 1892, when the president's chair became vacant, he was placed at the head of the great university. At that time, he was only thirty-eight years of age.

President Schurman is a man of great intellectual power, and an inspiring presence. Though one of the youngest college presidents in the country, he is one of the most successful, and under his leadership Cornell has been very prosperous. He is deeply interested in all the affairs of young men, and especially those who, as he did, must make their own way in the world. He said, the other day:—

“Though I am no longer engaged directly in teaching, I should think my work a failure if I did not feel

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that my influence on the young men with whom I come in contact is as direct and helpful as that of a teacher could be."

### COLLEGE-BRED MEN ARE IN DEMAND

"It is true that there is an increasing, and just now, an unusual demand for college-bred men in all walks of life. The prescribed preliminaries to legal and medical education are, step by step, approaching graduation from college, and have reached it, in some instances, while these professional courses themselves have been extended and deepened, till they are now nearly or quite on a par with the old liberal training with which they are co-ordinated in the modern university. As to engineers,—fifteen years ago, the manufacturers of machinery had to be coaxed to take those pioneers, the Cornell men, into their shops and give them a chance. But where one went, many followed. Last spring, when the class of 1900 came to graduation, every student in this branch was eagerly bid for two or three times over. One great electrical firm alone asked to be given the entire class. There is observable, too, a gradual increase in the call for college-bred teachers in the public schools, and this demand will grow by what it feeds upon.

"All this is but the sign and symbol of an increasing complexity and organization in our civilization. Rough-and-ready methods are going out, and the untrained handy-man with them. In all directions, as



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expanding American manufactures and commerce come into competition with those of Europe, it is daily more obvious that the higher skill and intelligence, making the closest use of its resources, will win. Nowadays, to do the work of the world as the world will have it done, and will pay for having it done, requires that a man be trained to the exactitude of scientific methods, and that he be given the wide mental outlook and the special training which he can acquire in the university, and nowhere else."

## XXIII

### A "Jack of All Trades" Masters One and Becomes the Poet of the People.

**J**AMES WHITCOMB RILEY and I were at breakfast together, and the appearance of his cup of steaming coffee, into which he hastened to drop four full-sized blocks of sugar, threw the "Hoosier" poet into a train of reflections, for which he presently found expression. "They don't make coffee any more," he observed, in an almost aggrieved tone. "It is a lost art. You don't see any more the clear, transparent beverage that mother used to make. It's thick and murky, and, worse than all, it does no good to protest."

It was a fortunate circumstance, however, this recalling a youthful remembrance, for it led him at once into a lively discussion of that part of his career,—his early struggles,—which possess for the average person, and often for the subject himself, far more interest and fascination than any later triumphs, no matter how complete. It is doubtful if there is in the literary world, to-day, a personage whose boyhood and young manhood can approach in romance and unusual circum-

## The "Hoosier" Poet

stances that of the author of "The Old Swimmin' Hole." It was almost as if it were all a chapter from a fairy tale, to see the poet sitting there, calm and dignified, and to listen to his slow speech, in well-modulated voice, and still attempt to realize of what circumstances he had been a factor, what experience he had passed through. All tradition was against his accomplishing anything in the world. How, indeed, said the good folks of the little town of Greenfield, Indiana, could anything be expected of a boy who cared nothing for school, and deserted it at the first opportunity, to take up a wandering life.

It is a wonder of wonders that from such a beginning should spring a poet whose ideals are among the noblest in American literature. "Ike Walton's Prayer," it would seem, must have been spoken from the poet's heart.

### IKE WALTON'S PRAYER.

I crave, dear Lord,  
No boundless hoard  
Of gold and gear,  
Nor jewels fine,  
Nor lands, nor kine,  
Nor treasure-heaps of anything.  
Let but a little hut be mine  
Where at the hearthstone I may hear  
The cricket sing,  
And have the shine  
Of one glad woman's eyes to make,  
For my poor sake,

## James Whitcomb Riley

Our simple home a place divine:—  
Just the wee cot—the cricket's chirr—  
Love, and the smiling face of her.

I pray not for  
Great riches, nor  
For vast estates, and castle halls,—  
Give me to hear the bare footfalls  
Of children o'er  
An oaken floor,  
New rinsed with sunshine, or bespread  
With but the tiny coverlet  
And pillow for the baby's head;  
And pray thou, may  
The door stand open and the day  
Send ever in a gentle breeze,  
With fragrance from the locust trees,  
And drowsy moan of doves, and blur  
Of robins' chirps, and drone of bees,  
With after hushes of the stir  
Of intermingling sounds, and then  
The good-wife and the smile of her  
Filling the silences again—  
The cricket's call,  
And the wee cot,  
Dear Lord of all,  
Deny me not!

I pray not that  
Men tremble at  
My power of place  
And lordly sway,—  
I only pray for simple grace  
To look my neighbor in the face

## The "Hoosier" Poet

Full honestly from day to day—  
Yield me his horny palm to hold,  
And I'll not pray  
For gold:—  
The tanned face, garlanded with mirth,  
It hath the kingliest smile on earth—  
The swart brow, diamonded with sweat,  
Hath never need of coronet.  
And so I reach  
Dear Lord to Thee,  
And do beseech  
Thou givest me  
The wee cot, and the cricket's chirr,  
Love, and the glad sweet face of her!

### THROWN ON HIS OWN RESOURCES.

The boy's father, like almost all fathers, had aspirations. He wanted the boy to follow in his footsteps, in the legal profession, and he held out alluring hopes of the possibility of scaling even greater heights than any to which he had yet attained. Better still,—from the standpoint of the restless James,—he took the youngster with him as he made his circuit from court to court. These excursions, for they were indeed such to the boy, sowed deep in his heart the seed of a determination to become a nomad, and it was not long until he started out as a strolling sign-painter, determined upon the realization of his ideals. Oftentimes business was worse than dull, and, on one occasion, hunger drove him for recourse to his wits, and lo, he blossomed forth

## James Whitcomb Riley

as a "blind sign-painter," led from place to place by a little boy, and showered with sympathy and trade in such abundance that he could hardly bear the thought of the relinquishment of a pretense so ingenious and successful, entered on at first as a joke.

Then came another epoch. The young man fell in with a patent-medicine man, with whom he joined fortunes, and here the young Indianian, who had been scribbling more or less poetry ever since he first essayed to compose a four-line valentine upon a writing table whose writing surface was almost as high as his head, found a new use for his talent, for his duties in the partnership were to beguile the people with joke and song, while his co-worker plied the sales of his cure-all; and, forsooth, there were many times when, but for his poetic fancy, Riley might have seen his audience dwindle rapidly away. It was while thus engaged that he had the opportunities which enabled him to master thoroughly the "Hoosier" dialect. When the glamour of the patent-medicine career had faded somewhat, Riley joined a band of strolling Thespians, and, in this brief portion of his life, after the wont of players of his class, played many parts. At length he began to give a little more attention to his literary work, and, later, obtained a place on an Indianapolis paper, where he published his first poems, and be it said that they won their author almost instant success.



COURTSHIP





## The "Hoosier" Poet

WHY HE LONGED TO BE A BAKER.

When I drew Riley out to talk still further of those interesting days, and the strange experiences which came to him therein, the conversation finally turned on the subject of his youthful ambitions. "I think my earliest remembered one," he said, "was an insatiate longing to become a baker. I don't know what prompted it, unless it was the vision of the mountains of alluring 'goodies,' which, as they are ranged in the windows of the pastry shops, appear doubly tempting to the youth whose mother not only counsels moderation, but enforces it.

"Next, I imagined that I would like to become a showman of some sort, and then my shifting fancy conjured up visions of how grand it would be to work as a painter, and decorate houses and fences in glowing colors, but finally, as I grew a little older, there returned my old longing to become an actor. When, however, my dreams were realized, and I became a member of a traveling theatrical company, I found that the life was full of hardships, with very little chances of rising in the world. I never had any literary ambition whatever, so far as I can remember. I wrote, primarily, simply because I desired to have something to read, and could not find selections that exactly suited me. Gradually I found a demand for my little efforts springing up, and so my brother, who could write legibly, transcribed them."

## James Whitcomb Riley

THE SUPERSTRUCTURE DEPENDS ON THE FOUNDATION.

"Mr. Riley," I said, "I came here to see you to-day in behalf of the thousands of people who are seeking to make progress, or gain a start in business or professional life, and I suppose that the tastes of some of them incline to the literary field. Can't you give me your idea of the prime requisites for success in the field of letters?"

"The most essential factor is persistence,—the determination never to allow your energy or enthusiasm to be dampened by the discouragements that must inevitably come. I believe that he is richer for the battle with the world, in any vocation, who has great determination and little talent, rather than his seemingly more fortunate brother with great talent, perhaps, but little determination. As for the field of literature, I cannot but express my conviction that meteoric flights, such as have been taken, of recent years, by some young writers with whose names almost everybody is familiar, cannot fail to be detrimental, unless the man to whom success comes thus early and suddenly is an exceptionally evenly-balanced and sensible person. Many persons have spoken to me about Kipling's work, and remarked how wonderful a thing is the fact that such achievements could have been possible for a man comparatively so young. I say, not at all. What do we find when we investigate? Simply that Kipling began working on a newspaper when he was only thirteen years of age, and he has been toiling ever since. So

## The "Hoosier" Poet

you see, even that case, when we get at the inner facts, confirms my theory that every man must be 'tried in the fire,' as it were. He may begin early or late, and in some cases the fight is longer than in others, but of one thing I feel sure, that there is no short-cut to permanent, self-satisfying success in literature, or anything else."

### A LITERARY LIFE MEANS WORK.

When he was asked for his opinion on the subject of the expansion of Indiana literature, Mr. Riley said:—

"I do not know what I should say about Indiana literature and the causes of its growth. I think, possibly, the reason it has attracted such wide attention, and expanded in so many directions, is that it drew inspiration and received impetus from having been lampooned and made fun of by every cultured 'Tom, Dick, and Harry' of the outside world.

"Personally, the world has always been kind to me, but I do not know that I expected kindness.

"It is glorious to be barred,—to suffer the whips and scorn of self-accredited superiors! It roused us, this superciliousness, to our real worth, and it inspired us to put forth our best efforts. That excellence in literature is found in Indiana I am thankful for, and I am glad that I have outlived the ridicule, and that others have recognized, of late, this special excellence of the work of our authors, and given credit most generously.

"I am sure that the same excellence will be found in our neighboring western states, and that we, in turn,

## James Whitcomb Riley

will not withhold from them encouragement and recognition. Illinois has already developed some rare poets. Ohio, too, ranks high in western literature.

"The beginner, with his youthful imagination just 'ramping it,' is too sensitive to the pricks of criticism. He stands in awe of the self-constituted critic, until he cannot see anything else, and, necessarily, loses sight of the value of ideas, which count more than all else. He can never make up the loss in years. Indeed, he can never regain it. It is expecting to be a writer in six months or a year that makes him think himself a failure.

"A literary life means work. He who would write must learn that, and learn to work hard. Look at Bernhard's art; look at the amount of hard work she goes through every day to make it perfect. How many writers do as she does? No good thing was ever done quickly,—nothing of any value. The capacity for hard work has had much to do with the development of Indiana literature."

### A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS AN ADVANTAGE.

Answering other questions, the poet said: "A college education for the aspirant for literary success is, of course, an advantage, provided he does not let education foster a false culture that will lead him away from his true ideals and the ideals he ought to cling to. There is another thing that the young man in any artistic pursuit must have a care for, and that is, to be prac-

## The "Hoosier" Poet

tical. This is a practical world, and it is always ready to take advantage of this sort of people, so that if he wishes what we might call domestic happiness, he might as well make up his mind to a dual existence, as it were, and must try to cultivate a practical business sense, as well as an artistic sense. We have only a few men like Rudyard Kipling and F. Hopkinson Smith, who seem to combine these diverse elements of character in just the right proportions, but I believe that it is unfortunate for the happiness and peace of mind of our authors and artists and musicians that we have not more of them."

Riley's poetry is popular because it goes right to the feelings of the people. He could not have written as he does, but for the schooling of that wandering life, which gave him an insight into the struggle for existence among the great unnumbered multitude of his fellow men. He learned in his travels and journeys, in his hard experience as a strolling sign-painter and patent-medicine peddler, the freemasonry of poverty. His poems are natural; they are those of a man who feels as he writes. As Thoreau painted nature in the woods, and streams, and lakes, so Riley depicts the incidents of everyday life, and brightens each familiar lineament with that touch that makes all the world kin. One of his noblest poems is "Old Glory." It speaks the homely, sterling patriotism of the common people.

"The Little Coat" illustrates his wonderful power to touch the heart.

## James Whitcomb Riley

### THE LITTLE COAT.

Here's his ragged "roundabout,"

Turn the pockets inside out;  
See: his pen-knife, lost to use,  
Rusted shut with apple-juice;  
Here, with marbles, top and string,  
Is his deadly "devil-sling,"  
With its rubber, limp at last,  
As the sparrows of the past!  
Beeswax—buckles—leather straps—  
Bullets, and a box of caps,—  
Not a thing of all, I guess,  
But betrays some waywardness—  
E'en these tickets, blue and red,  
For the Bible verses said—  
Such as this his memory kept—

"Jesus wept."

\* \* \* \* \*

Here's the little coat—but O!  
Where is he we've censured so!  
Don't you hear us calling, dear?  
Back! come back, and never fear.  
You may wander where you will,  
Over orchard, field and hill;  
You may kill the birds, or do  
Anything that pleases you!  
Ah, this empty coat of his!  
Every tatter worth a kiss;  
Every stain as pure instead  
As the white stars overhead;  
And the pockets—homes were they  
Of the little hands that play  
Now no more—but, absent, thus

Beckon us.

## XXIV

### A Farm Boy Who Devoured Books Writes One of the Greatest Poems of the Century.

**T**HE international discussion of "The Man with the Hoe" had hardly subsided, when popular interest was revived by the remarkable declaration of the author, Mr. Edwin Markham, that he had spent ten years in its production.

Who is this magician of the pen, this man of mystery, who carries his readers, in a single sentence, through "a storm of stars," and, in another, kneels with them in dreamy sympathy beside "the brother to the ox,"—who mixes up the critics in a hopeless tangle of doubt, and puzzles the public by the erratic chronology of his mental processes?

The widespread interest in the personality of the poet may justify the attempt of the writer to get at the "true inwardness" of his life-story. This has not yet been told.

This handsome dreamer, whose eyes are softer than a fawn's, and whose gray-tinged locks give an unwonted majesty to his mien, is only about fifty years old. Yet, in his span of life, he has been engaged in

## Edwin Markham

half a score of vocations, ranging from the exciting and strenuous to the peaceful and poetic. The discovery that he was once a village blacksmith promises to lend interest to a new phase of his distinguished career.

### THE MAN WITH THE HOE.

(Written after seeing Millet's World-Famous Painting.)

*"God made man in His own image,  
in the image of God made He him."—Genesis.*

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans  
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,  
The emptiness of ages in his face,  
And on his back the burden of the world.  
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,  
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,  
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?  
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?  
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?  
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave  
To have dominion over sea and land;  
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;  
To feel the passion of Eternity?  
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns  
And pillared the blue firmament with light?  
Down all the stretch of Hell to its last gulf  
There is no shape more terrible than this—  
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed—  
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—  
More fraught with menace to the universe.



## Farm Boy, Blacksmith, Teacher, Poet

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!  
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him  
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?  
What are the long reaches of the peaks of song,  
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?

Through this dread shape the suffering ages look;  
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;  
Through this dread shape humanity betrayed,  
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,  
Cries protest to the Judges of the World,  
A protest that is also prophesy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,  
Is this the handiwork you give to God,  
This monstrous thing, distorted and soul-quenched?  
How will you ever straighten up this shape;  
Touch it again with immortality;  
Give back the upward looking and the light;  
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;  
Make right the immemorial infamies,  
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,  
How will the Future reckon with this Man?  
How answer his brute question in that hour  
When whirlwinds and rebellion shake the world?  
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—  
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—  
When this dumb Terror shall reply to God  
After the silence of the centuries?

ONE OF THE GREAT POEMS OF THE CENTURY.

No other poem published in America in many years  
has so stirred the emotions of the people, commanded

## Edwin Markham

so much attention and created so much comment as "The Man with the Hoe." It and Kipling's "Recessional" are regarded as the great poems of the closing years of the century. The critics have hailed "The Man with the Hoe" as a prominent piece of political literature, because of the breadth and depth and vital importance of the theme, and the fervor and noble dignity of its treatment. Yet the poem has been misinterpreted and assailed. It has been said to be an affront to manual labor. The only answer Mr. Markham has thus far made to his critics he dictated to the writer. He also spoke, for the first time for publication, of his mother, and her all-pervading influence on his early life, of his youthful days, and of his own experience with the hoe.

Mr. Markham's poetry proves that his paramount quality is his deep sympathy with suffering. The most marked thing in his personality is his humanity, which effuses, so to speak, in a spontaneous geniality and unaffected interest in others. He laughs easily and tells a story extremely well.

### HIS MOTHER WAS BOTH PRACTICAL AND POETIC.

"I am a very serious man at heart," he remarked to me, "but, fortunately, I have a sense of humor. I will confess that the attention attracted by 'The Man with the Hoe' has surprised me, and the comments of some of the gentlemen who have condescended to criticise the poem are amusing. They seem to miss entirely its

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true spirit and meaning, and yet speak with most complacent confidence. I,— O, you want me to start at the beginning of my life and proceed in an orderly manner, do you? Well, I have said little for print about my early days, but get out your pencil and I will dictate you something.

“That most important event, my birth, occurred in Oregon City, Oregon, on April 23, 1852. My schooling began when I was about four years old, in a primitive little school in my native town.

“While he instilled in my youthful mind the principles of the alphabet and other important knowledge, it was the influence of my mother,—my father having died,—that dominated me. She was, in some respects, the most extraordinary woman I have ever known,—a woman of strong likes and dislikes, and capable of holding on to a purpose to the end. She kept a large store of general merchandise in Oregon City, and conducted the business with remarkable energy. But, despite her hard common sense and practical ability, she was known as the ‘Woman Poet of Oregon.’ It was from her, of course, that I got my own poetical bent. Her poetry was full of feeling and earnestness, and was impressed with a strong religious spirit. It was published chiefly in newspapers at the time, and I presume I am the only person in the world who now has any of it.”

### HE GAINED VALUABLE DISCIPLINE ON A FARM.

“When I was still a small boy, mother moved to

## Edwin Markham

California. She settled in a little wild valley amid the hills in the central part of the state, on a sheep range that she had bought. I was chief herder. All day long I followed the herd over ridge and hollow, and along the hillsides into the blue distance. I absorbed woodcraft and weather-wit, and a love of nature which has been one of the predominating influences of my life.

“After a few years, we turned our place into a cattle range and farm, with myself as chief farmer. I was just entering my ‘teens’ then. I fenced and plowed the land straggling up the little valley, and learned every detail of a farmer’s work and life. The hoe, the shovel, the scythe, the cradle, the reaper, the threshing machine, the grafting knife,—these are all old friends of mine. When I began to near young manhood, I became a thresher, going from farm to farm, helping to thresh out the grain after the harvest home, and often sleeping at night in hay-mows.

### BYRON’S POEMS INSPIRED HIM.

“Meanwhile, I devoured all the poetry I could find. I read Byron’s poems more than any other’s, because a complete set of his works was at hand, and as a result of his influence I wrote, when about sixteen, a very ambitious poem called, ‘A Dream of Chaos.’ This was only one of my youthful indiscretions in the poetical line. No, I don’t believe the general public will ever

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be asked to read them. It has been kind to me, and deserves fair treatment.”

“But, Mr. Markham, did you not find that your hard farm labor tended to crush out the poetry, and finer feelings generally?”

### ANSWERING HIS CRITICS.

“Oh, you are now getting on ticklish ground, for it is here that the critics of ‘The Man with the Hoe’ congregate and jubilate. Let me say briefly, though, in answer to you and to them, that I believe in labor, that I believe in its humanizing and redeeming power. Indeed, from a religious point of view, I believe that a man’s craft furnishes the chief basis of his redemption. While one is making a house, he is making himself. While he chisels the block of marble he is invisibly shaping his own soul. And it does not matter much what a man does,—whether he builds a poem or hoes in a garden. The chief thing is the way we do our work. It must be done thoroughly, and in the spirit of loving service. Work of this order is a perpetual prayer. The doer is elevated by such work.

“But, while all this is true, it is also true that excesses are evils,—that overwork and underpaid work tend to break down instead of build up. Work is good for the child, but I can put such heavy burdens upon him as to deform his body and stunt his mind.

“‘The Man with the Hoe’ is, of course, the type of industrial oppression in all lands and in all parts of

## Edwin Markham

labor. He is the man who has been chained to the wheel by the fierce necessity for bread,—the man with no time for rest, no time for study, no time for thought, no time for the mighty hopes that make us men. The poem is not a protest against labor; it is a protest against the degradation of labor.”

### SEED SOWN LONG AGO.

Speaking of the writing of this poem, Mr. Markham said that he sketched the outline of it fourteen years ago, upon seeing a photograph of Millet's famous painting, "The Man with the Hoe." When he saw the picture itself four years afterward, he further elaborated the idea, but did not write it out in complete form until Christmas week, 1900. He then spent three or four days on it, and sent it to the San Francisco Examiner, where it was published for the first time on the eighth of January 1901.

Within a few months, the volume, "The Man with the Hoe and other Poems," was issued by Doubleday and McClure, of New York, and met with so large a sale that it was soon in its fifth edition. It has been very favorably received.

Mr. Markham paid his way through the state normal school at San Jose, and afterward through Christian college at Santa Rosa, California. He has done important educational work in that state as a superintendent and principal of schools in various places, and is now head master of the Tompkins observation

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school in Oakland. Inducements have been offered him to deliver a series of lectures throughout the country, and he has received many requests for literary work, with some of which he will comply.

The world is well lost when the world is wrong,  
No matter how men deride you;  
For if you are patient and firm and strong,  
You will find in time, though the time be long,  
That the world wheels round beside you.

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

## XXV

### A Famous Authoress Tells Literary Aspirants the Story of Her Struggle for Recognition.

**B**ORN and reared in Wisconsin, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, although a resident of New York, is still faithful to the ideals and aspirations of the young and vigorous western state in which she first saw the light. She began writing at an early age, and still has in her possession childish verses, composed when she was only eight years old.

She was, however, far from any literary center; she had no one upon whom she might rely for advice as to her methods, and she had no influential friends, for her family was not a wealthy one. The usual difficulties, so familiar to all beginners, met her at every step; discouragements were endured day after day, and year after year. After a while, she began writing for various periodicals. Her first poems appeared in the *New York Mercury*, the *Waverly Magazine*, and *Leslie's* publications. It was from the publishing house of Frank Leslie she received her first check. Her income from literary work was very small and recog-



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nition came quite slowly. But courage, and patience, and fortitude, finally won the day.

### HOW HER BEST POEMS WERE WRITTEN.

One of her most famous poems, beginning, "Laugh and the World Laughs with You," was written about February, 1883, at Madison, Wisconsin. She had talked with a friend who had been bereaved by death in her household; later, while dressing for an inaugural ball, given in honor of the governor of Wisconsin, she was startled to think how soon the mind turns from stories of sorrow to scenes of gayety. Thus she formed the idea of this famous poem. It originally appeared in the *New York Sun*, and the author received five dollars for it. Subsequently, an attempt was made to pirate the verses as the composition of another; but the effort was, happily, a complete failure. The poem embodying the idea,—

"A question is never settled  
Until it is settled right,"

with which W. J. Bryan concludes his book, was written by her after hearing a gentleman make a remark in those words at the conclusion of a heated argument, on the single-tax question. The gentleman was afterward told that Lincoln had made use of this exact expression, years ago. But neither the gentleman in question, nor Mrs. Wilcox herself, had ever heard the expression before.

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"The Two Glasses," one of her brightest poems, was written at the age of eighteen. Although this was a "temperance poem," she had never, up to that time, seen a glass of beer or wine. This poem, too, was pirated by one who pretended to be the author.

"The Birth of the Opal" was suggested by Herman Marcus, the Broadway jeweler, who advanced the idea of the opal being the child of the sunlight and moonlight.

"Wherever You Are," originally appeared in Leslie's Popular Monthly. A young man who had served a term in Auburn Prison read this poem, and it became the means of his reformation. Mrs. Wilcox lent him a helping hand, and he is to-day a hard-working, honest, worthy man.

She regards the poems, "High Noon," "To An Astrologer," and "The Creed," as probably her best efforts. It will thus be noted that she does not prefer the more fervid poems of passion, written in her early youth.

### THE CREED.

Whoever was begotten by pure love,  
And came desired and welcomed into life,  
Is of immaculate conception. He  
Whose heart is full of tenderness and truth,  
Who loves mankind more than he loves himself,  
And cannot find room in his heart for hate,  
May be another Christ. We all may be  
The Saviors of the world, if we believe

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In the Divinity which dwells in us,  
And worship it, and nail our grosser selves,  
Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims  
Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,  
Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,  
And lends new courage to each fainting heart,  
And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,  
He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

Mrs. Wilcox lives in New York City from November to May, and in her cottage at Short Beach, Connecticut, during the rest of the year. Her husband, R. M. Wilcox, is a clear-headed business man, of polished manners, kind and considerate to all whom he meets,—one who, in short, is deservedly popular with all the friends of the happy couple. The summer house at Short Beach is especially charming. It is in full view of the Long Island Sound, with a fine beach in front, and a splendid sweep of country at the rear.

### SHE IS A PRONOUNCED OPTIMIST.

As to "literary methods," Mrs. Wilcox has few suggestions to make, except to recommend hard work, conscientiously performed. She is untiring in her own efforts at rewriting, revising and polishing her productions, and cannot rest until every appearance of crudeness and carelessness is effaced. Her manuscripts are always neat, always carefully considered, and never prepared in undue haste. She believes that no writer can succeed who is a pessimist. She is, therefore, an optimist of the most pronounced type, and believes that

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all poems should be helpful not hurtful ; full of hope, and not of despair ; bright with faith, and not clouded by doubt.

“What is your view of the first duties of a young author?” she was asked, and replied :

“The first thing necessary for you to do is to find out your own motive in choosing a literary career. If you write as the young bird sings, you need no advice from me, for your thoughts will find their way out, as natural springs force their way through rocks, and nothing can hinder you. But if you have merely a well-defined literary ability and taste, you should consider carefully before undertaking the difficult task of authorship.

“An author should be able to instruct, entertain, guide or amuse his readers. Otherwise, he has no right to expect their attention, time or money. If it is merely a question of money, you would be wise to wait until you have a comfortable income, sufficient to maintain life during the first ten years of literary pursuits. Save in rare cases of remarkable genius, literature requires ten years of apprenticeship, at least, before yielding support to its followers. But be sure that you help,—not harm, humanity. To the author, of all men, belongs the motto, ‘*Noblesse oblige.*’”

### DO NOT FEAR CRITICISM.

“Unless you are so absorbed in your work that you utterly forget the existence of critics or reviewers, you

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have no right to call yourself a genius. Talent thinks with fear and fawning of critics; genius does not remember that they exist. One bows at the shrine of existing public opinion, which is narrow with prejudice. The other bows at the shrine of art, which is as broad as the universe."

"How do you think a young author should proceed to obtain recognition?"

"In regard to the practical method of getting one's work before the public, I would beg that you would not send it to any well-known author, asking him or her to 'read, criticize, correct, and find a publisher for you.' If such a thought has entered your head, remember that it has entered the heads of five hundred other amateurs, and the poor author is crushed under an avalanche of badly-written manuscripts, not one of which he has time to read. No editor will accept what he does not want, through the advice of any author, however famous.

"Do not attempt to adopt the style of anyone else. Unless you feel that you can be yourself, do not try to be anybody. A poor original is better than a good imitation, in literature, if not in other things.

"Expect no aid from influential friends in any way. The more wholly you depend upon yourself, the sooner will you succeed.

"It is absolute nonsense to talk about 'influence' with editors or publishers. No one ever achieved even passing fame or success in literature through influence or

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'friends at court.' An editor might be influenced to accept one article, but he would never give permanent patronage through any influence, however strong.

"As I receive so many hundreds of letters asking how I found my way into print, and through what influences, it may be pardonable for me to say a few words regarding my own experiences. In the first place, I never sent a manuscript to any human being in my life, to ask for an opinion or influence. I always send directly to the editors, and I am not aware that any influence was ever used in my behalf. I have often had an article refused by six editors and accepted by the seventh. An especially unfortunate manuscript of mine was once rejected by eight periodicals, and I was about to consign it to oblivion, when, at a last venture, I sent it to the ninth. A check of seventy-five dollars came to me by return mail, with an extremely complimentary letter from the editor, requesting more articles of a similar kind."

### MERIT IS NOT ALWAYS DISCOVERED QUICKLY.

"Very few authors have lived to attain any degree of fame without receiving back their cherished yet unwelcome manuscripts from the hands of one or more unappreciative editors before they met the public eye.

"It is reported of 'David Harum' that six publishers rejected it previous to its final publication.

"Archibald Gunter's book, 'Mr. Barnes of New York,' went the rounds of the various publishing

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houses, only to be rejected by all. Then Mr. Gunter rose to the occasion, published it himself, and reaped a small fortune from its sales.

"Many a successful short story and poem passes through the 'reading' department of a half-dozen magazines and weeklies without having its merit discovered until a seventh editor accepts it.

"Poems of my own, which have later met much favor from the public, I have seen return with a dejected and dog-eared air, from eight or nine offices, whither they had gone forth, like Noah's dove, seeking for a resting place. A charming bit of verse, written by a friend of mine, took twenty-one journeys from the maternal hand to the editor's table before it found an appreciative purchaser.

"If the young writer will stop and consider that each editor has his own individual ideas of what he wants, both in verse and prose, and that, just as no two faces are alike, no two minds run in the same groove,—he may be hopeful for the ultimate acceptance of the darling of his brain, if he will persevere. Of course, this refers to a writer who possesses actual talent."

### EDITORS ARE ANXIOUS FOR GOOD ARTICLES.

"No more absurd idea ever existed than that of the efficacy of 'influence' in literature. An editor will buy what he thinks his readers will appreciate. He will not buy anything which he feels will fall dead on his audience. He may purchase one—possibly two, manu-

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scripts,—to oblige a friend, but it will end there; and one or two manuscripts, so purchased, can never make name or fame for their author.

“It would be just as reasonable to talk about ‘influence with a dry-goods merchant, and to expect to make him purchase undesired goods from a manufacturer for friendship’s sake, as to think an editor can be influenced by a friend at court.

“Editors are employed by the owners of periodicals to select and publish material which will render the periodical a paying concern. The editor who does not do this may lose his position and his salary.

“He is on the watch for attractive matter—and desires to find new material. He is delighted when he discovers a new poet or author. Being mortal, and having but one mind, he can judge of the poems and stories sent to him only from an individual standpoint.

“He not infrequently lets genius slip through his hands, and accepts paste imitations. But he does it ignorantly, or carelessly, not wilfully; or he may have in his collection of accepted manuscripts something similar, which would prevent his use of a poem or sketch at that particular juncture.

“The reasons why an editor declines a good manuscript are innumerable. It is impossible for him to explain them to each applicant for his favor. Nothing indicates the crudity of an author more than a request to criticize a manuscript and point out its defects; for frequently the very first verse or the very first page



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of a poem or romance decides its fate, and the editor returns it without reading further. Sometimes its length prevents any possibility of its being used in that particular periodical, while it might be just what another magazine would desire."

### PERSEVERANCE COUNTS IN AUTHORSHIP.

"The young writer who decides absolutely upon a literary career, and is confident of his mental equipment for his profession, should read all the current periodicals, magazines, and weeklies, American and English, and observe what style of literature they publish. Then he should make a list of them, and send his poem or his narrative first to the magazine which he feels it is best suited for; if it returns, let him proceed to speed it forth again, after giving it another reading; and so on, until it has finished the circuit of, perhaps, fifty periodicals. This habit of perseverance will be worth something, even if he never sells that manuscript.

"If he is still confident of his powers, let him write in another vein, and proceed in the same manner. This persistency, backed by talent, must win in the long run.

"If he feels he wants criticism, let him apply to some of the literary bureaus which make a business of criticism and revision.

"Very few authors have time to give to this work, nor are they, as a rule, the best judges of the merit of another writer's productions. After all, the secret of

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a writer's success lies within him. If he is well equipped, he will win, but not otherwise."

### WILL-POWER

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,  
Can circumvent, or hinder, or control  
The firm resolve of a determined soul.  
Gift counts for little; will alone is great;  
All things give way before it, soon or late.  
What obstacle can stay the mighty force  
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,  
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait?  
Each well-born soul must win what it deserves,  
Let the fool prate of Luck! The fortunate  
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,  
Whose slightest action or inaction serves  
The one great aim.  
Why, even death stands still  
And waits, an hour, sometimes, for such a will!

## XXVI

### A Printer's Boy, Self Taught, Becomes the Dean of American Letters.

“I SHOULD like, Mr. Howells,” said I, by way of opening my interview with the famous novelist, to learn your opinion concerning what constitutes success in life. You should have the American view?”

“Not necessarily,” said the novelist, seating himself.

“Do you share the belief that everything is open to the beginner who has sufficient energy and perseverance?”

“Add brains, and I will agree,” said Mr. Howells with a smile. “A young man stands at the ‘parting of two ways,’ and can take his path this way or that. It is comparatively easy then, with good judgment. Youth is certainly the greatest advantage which life supplies.”

“You began to carve out your place in life under conditions very different from those of to-day?”

“Yes. I was born in a little southeastern Ohio village,—Martin’s Ferry,—and, of course, I had but little of what people deem advantages in the way of schools,

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railroads, population, and so on. I am not sure, however, that compensation was not had in other things."

"Do you consider that you were specially talented in the direction of literary composition?"

"I should not say that. I think that I came of a reading race, which had always loved literature in a way. My inclination was to read."

"Would you say that, with a special leaning toward a special study, and good health, a fair start, and perseverance, anyone can attain to distinction?"

### EARLY IDEALS.

"That is a probability, only. You may be sure that distinction will not come without those qualities. The only way to succeed, therefore, is to have them; though having them will not necessarily guarantee distinction. I can only say that I began with a lofty ideal, without saying how closely I have held to it. My own youth was not specially marked by advantages. There were none, unless you can call a small bookcase full of books, which my home contained, an advantage. The printing office was my school from a very early date. My father thoroughly believed in it, and he had his belief as to work, which he illustrated as soon as we were old enough to learn the trade he followed. We could go to school and study, or we could go into the printing office and work, with perhaps an equal chance of learning; but we could not be idle."

"And you chose the printing office?"

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“Not wholly. As I recall it, I went to and fro between the schoolhouse and the printing office. When I tired of one, I was promptly given my choice of the other.”

“Then you began life in poverty?”

“I suppose that, as the world goes now, we were poor. My father’s income was never above twelve hundred a year, and his family was large; but nobody was rich then. We lived in the simple fashion of that time and place.”

“You found time to read?”

“My reading, somehow, went on pretty constantly. No doubt my love for it won me a chance to devote time to it.”

“Might I ask how much time you devoted each day to your literary object?”

“The length varied with varying times. Sometimes I read but little. There were years of the work, of the over-work, indeed,—which falls to the lot of many, that I should be ashamed to speak of except in accounting for the fact. My father had sold his paper in Hamilton, and had bought an interest in another at Dayton, and at that time we were all straining our utmost to help pay for it.”

“And that left you little time?”

“In that period very few hours were given to literature. My daily tasks began so early, and ended so late, that I had little time, even if I had the spirit for reading. Sometimes I had to sit up until midnight, waiting for

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telegraphic news, and be up again at dawn to deliver the papers, working afterward at the case; but that was only for a few years."

"When did you find time to seriously apply yourself to literature?"

### ACQUIRING A LITERARY STYLE.

"I think I did so before I really had the time. Literary aspirations were stirred in me by the great authors whom I successively discovered, and I was perpetually imitating the writings of these,—modeling some composition of my own after theirs, but never willing to own it."

"Do you attribute your style to the composite influence of these various models?"

"No doubt they had their effect, as a whole, but individually I was freed from the last by each succeeding author, until at length I came to understand that I must be like myself, and no other."

"Had you any conveniences for literary research, beyond the bookcase in your home?"

"If you mean a place to work, I had a narrow, little space, under the stairs at home. There was a desk pushed back against the wall, which the irregular ceiling sloped down to meet, behind it, and at my left was a window, which gave a good light on the writing leaf of my desk. This was my workshop for six or seven years,—and it was not at all a bad one. It seemed, for a while, so very simple and easy to come home in the middle of the afternoon, when my task at the printing

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office was done, and sit down to my books in my little study, which I did not finally leave until the family were all in bed. My father had a decided bent in the direction of literature; and, when I began to show a liking for literature, he was eager to direct my choice. This finally changed to merely recommending books, and eventually I was left to my own judgment,—a perplexed and sorrowful mistaken judgment, at times.”

“In what manner did you manage to read the works of all your favorite authors?”

“Well, my hours in the printing office began at seven and ended at six, with an hour at noon for dinner, which I used for putting down such verses as had come to me in the morning. As soon as supper was over, I got out my manuscripts, and sawed, and filed, and hammered away at my blessed poems, which were little less than imitations, until nine, when I went regularly to bed, to rise again at five. Sometimes the foreman gave me an afternoon off on Saturday, which I devoted to literature.”

“Might I ask concerning your next advance in your chosen work?”

“Certainly. As I recall it, my father had got one of those legislative clerkships, in 1858, which used to fall sometimes to deserving country editors, and together we managed and carried out a scheme for corresponding with some city papers. Going to Columbus, the state capital, we furnished a daily letter giving an account of the legislative proceedings, which I mainly

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wrote from the material he helped me to gather. The letters found favor, and my father withdrew from the work wholly."

"How long were you a correspondent?"

HIS POEMS ALWAYS WERE REJECTED.

"Two years. At the end of the first winter, a Cincinnati paper offered me the city editorship, but one night's round with the reporters at the police station satisfied me that I was not meant for that kind of work. I then returned home for the summer, and spent my time in reading, and in sending off poems, which regularly came back. I worked in my father's printing office, of course; but, as soon as my task was done, went home to my books, and worked away at them until supper. Then a German bookbinder, with whom I was endeavoring to read Heine in the original, met me in my father's editorial room, and with a couple of candles on the table between us, and our Heine and the dictionary before us, we read until we were both tired out."

"Did you find it labor?"

"I fancy that reading is not merely a pastime, when it is apparently the merest pastime. It fatigues one after the manner of other work, and uses up a certain amount of mind-stuff; and I have found that, if you are using up all the mind-stuff you have, much or little, in some other way, you do not read, because you have not the mind-stuff for it. You cannot say more of any other form of work."



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"Then it might be said that you worked at separate and equally difficult tasks, constantly?"

"Perhaps not equally difficult, but, certainly, constantly."

"Rather a severe schooling to give one's self, don't you think it?"

Mr. Howells smiled. "It was not without its immediate use. I learned how to choose between words, after a study of their fitness; and, though I often employed them decoratively, and with no vital sense of their qualities, still, in mere decoration, they had to be chosen intelligently, and after some thought about their structure and meaning. I would not imitate great writers without imitating their method, which was to the last degree intelligent. They knew what they were doing, and, although I did not always know what I was doing, they made me wish to know, and ashamed of not knowing. The result was beneficial."

"It is very evident that you recovered your health, in spite of your toil?"

### HIS FIRST EDITORIAL POSITION.

"Oh, yes. I got back health enough to be of use in the printing office at home, and was quietly at work there, when, to my astonishment, I was asked to come and take a place upon a Republican newspaper at the capital. I was given charge of the news department. This included the literary notices and the book reviews,

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and I am afraid that I at once gave my prime attention to these.”

“When did you begin to contribute to the literature of the day?”

“If you mean, when did I begin to attempt to contribute, I should need to fix an early date, for I early had experience with rejected manuscripts. One of my pieces, which fell so far short of my visions of the immense subjects I should handle as to treat of the lowly and familiar theme of spring, was the first thing I ever had in print. My father offered it to the editor of the paper I worked on in Columbus, where we were then living, and I first knew what he had done when, with mingled shame and pride, I saw it in the journal. In the tumult of my emotions, I promised myself that if ever I got through that experience safely, I would never suffer anything else of mine to be published; but it was not long before I offered the editor a poem, myself.”

“When did you publish your first story?”

“My next venture was a story in the *Ik Marvel* manner, which it was my misfortune to carry into print. I did not really write it, but composed it, rather, in type, at the case. It was not altogether imitated from *Ik Marvel*, for I drew upon the easier art of Dickens, at times, and helped myself out in places with bald parodies of “Bleak House.” It was all very well at the beginning, but I had not reckoned with the future sufficiently to start with any clear ending in my mind; and,

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as I went on, I began to find myself more and more in doubt about it. My material gave out; my incidents failed me; the characters wavered, and threatened to perish in my hands. To crown my misery, there grew up an impatience with the story among its readers; and this found its way to me one day, when I overheard an old farmer, who came in for his paper, say that he 'did not think that story amounted to much.' I did not think so, either, but it was deadly to have it put into words; and how I escaped the mortal effect of the stroke I do not know. Somehow, I managed to bring the wretched thing to a close, and to live it slowly down."

### AN EXPERIENCE IN COLLABORATION.

"My next contribution to literature was jointly with John J. Piatt, the poet, who had worked with me as a boy in the printing office at Columbus. We met in Columbus, where I was then an editor, and we made our first literary venture together in a volume entitled, 'Poems of Two Friends.' The volume became instantly and lastingly unknown to fame; the west waited, as it always does, to hear what the east should say. The east said nothing, and two-thirds of the small edition of five hundred copies came back upon the publisher's hands. This did not deter me, however, from contributing to the periodicals, which, from time to time, accepted my efforts."

"Did you remain long, as an editor, in Columbus?"

"No; only until 1861, when I was appointed consul

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at Venice. I really wanted to go to Germany, that I might carry forward my studies in German literature; and I first applied for the consulate at Munich. The powers at Washington thought it quite the same thing to offer me Rome, but I found that the income of the Roman consulate would not give me a living, and I was forced to decline it. Then the president's private secretaries, Mr. John Nicolay and Mr. John Hay, who did not know me, except as a young westerner who had written poems in the 'Atlantic Monthly,' asked me how I would like Venice, promising that the salary would be put up to \$1,000 a year. It was really put up to \$1,500, and I accepted. I had four years of nearly uninterrupted leisure at Venice."

"Was it easier when you returned from Venice?"

"Not at all. On my return to America my literary life took such form that most of my reading was done for review. I wrote at first a good many of the lighter criticisms in 'The Nation,' and then I went to Boston, to become assistant editor of 'The Atlantic Monthly,' where I wrote the literary notices for that periodical for four or five years."

"You were eventually editor of the 'Atlantic,' were you not?"

"Yes, until 1881; and I have had some sort of close relation with magazines ever since."

"Would you say that all literary success is very difficult to achieve?" I ventured.

"All that is enduring."

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"It seems to me ours is an age when fame comes quickly."

"Speaking of quickly made reputations," said Mr. Howells, meditatively, did you ever hear of Alexander Smith? He was a poet who, in the fifties, was proclaimed immortal by the critics, and ranked with Shakespeare. I myself read him with an ecstasy which, when I look over his work to-day, seems ridiculous. His poem, 'Life-Drama,' was heralded as an epic, and set alongside of 'Paradise Lost.' I cannot tell how we all came out of this craze, but the reading world is very susceptible of such lunacies. He is not the only third-rate poet who has been thus apotheosized, before and since. You might have envied his great success, as I certainly did; but it was not success, after all; and I am sure that real success is always difficult to achieve."

"Do you believe that success comes to those who have a special bent or taste, which they cultivate by hard work?"

"I can only answer that out of my literary experience. For my own part, I believe I have never got any good from a book that I did not read merely because I wanted to read it. I think this may be applied to anything a person does. The book, I know, which you read from a sense of duty, or because for any reason you must, is apt to yield you little. This, I think, is also true of everything, and the endeavor that does one good,—and lasting good,—is the endeavor one makes with pleasure. Labor done in another spirit will serve

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in a way, but pleasurable labor brings, on the whole, I think, the greatest reward."

### THE REWARDS OF LITERATURE.

"You were probably strongly fascinated by the supposed rewards of a literary career?"

"Yes. A definite literary ambition grew up in me, and in the long reveries of the afternoon, when I was distributing my case in the printing office, I fashioned a future of overpowering magnificence and undying celebrity. I should be ashamed to say what literary triumphs I achieved in those preposterous deliriums. But I realize now that such dreams are nerving, and sustain one in an otherwise barren struggle."

"Were you ever tempted and willing to abandon your object of a literary life for something else?"

"I was once. My first and only essay, aside from literature, was in the realm of law. It was arranged with a United States senator that I should study law in his office. I tried it a month, but almost from the first day, I yearned to return to my books. I had not only to go back to literature, but to the printing office, and I gladly chose to do it,—a step I never regretted."

"You started out to attain personal distinction and happiness, did you not?"

"I did."

### WHAT TRUE HAPPINESS IS.

"You have attained the first,—but I should like to

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know if your view of what constitutes happiness is the same as when you began?"

"It is quite different. I have come to see life, not as the chase of a forever-impossible personal happiness, but as a field for endeavor toward the happiness of the whole human family. There is no other success.

"I know, indeed, of nothing more subtly satisfying and cheering than a knowledge of the real good will and appreciation of others. Such happiness does not come with money, nor does it flow from a fine physical state. It cannot be bought. But it is the keenest joy, after all, and the toiler's truest and best reward."

## XXVII

### A Famous Novelist Atones for Wasted School Days by Self-Culture.

**I**N his study, a curiously-shaped building without the accompaniment of a window, and combining in equal proportions the Byzantine, Romanesque and Doric styles of architecture, the gray-haired author of "Ben Hur," surrounded by his pictures, books and military trophies, is spending, in serene and comfortable retirement, the evening of his life. As I sat beside him and listened to the recital of his earliest struggles and later achievements, I could not help contrasting his dignified bearing, careful expression, and gentle demeanor, with another occasion in his life, when, a vigorous, black-haired young military officer, in the spring of 1861, he appeared, with flashing eye and uplifted sword, at the head of his regiment, the gallant and historic Eleventh Indiana Volunteers.

General Wallace never repels a visitor, and his greeting is cordial and ingenuous.

"If I could say anything to stimulate or encourage the young men of today," he said, when I had explained the object of my visit, "I would gladly do so, but I fear that the story of my early days would be of very little interest or value to others. So far as school



## Author of "Ben-Hur"

education is concerned, it may be truthfully said that I had but little, if any; and if, in spite of that deficiency, I ever arrived at proficiency, I reached it, I presume, as Topsy attained her stature,—'just growed into it.'

### HE WAS A CARELESS STUDENT.

"Were you denied early school advantages?" I asked.

"Not in the least. On the contrary, I had most abundant opportunity in that respect. My father was a lawyer, enjoying a lucrative practice in Brookville, Indiana,—a small town which bears the distinction of having given to the world more prominent men than any other place in the Hoosier state. Not long after my birth, he was elected lieutenant-governor, and, finally, governor of the state. He, himself, was an educated man, having been graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, and having served as instructor in mathematics there. He was not only an educated man, but a man of advanced ideas generally, as shown by the fact that he failed of a reelection to congress in 1840, because, as a member of the committee on commerce, he gave the casting vote in favor of an appropriation to develop Morse's magnetic telegraph. Of course, he believed in the value, and tried to impress upon me the necessity of a thorough school training; but, in the face of all the solicitude and encouragement which an indulgent father could waste on an unappreciative son, I re-

## General Lew Wallace

mained vexatiously indifferent. I presume I was like some man in history,—it was Lincoln, I believe,—who said that his father taught him to work, but he never quite succeeded in teaching him to love it.

“My father sent me to school, and regularly paid tuition,—for in those days there were no free schools; but, much to my discredit, he failed to secure anything like regular attendance at recitations, or even a decent attempt to master my lessons at any time. In fact, much of the time that should have been given to school was spent in fishing, hunting and roaming through the woods.”

### HE LOVED TO READ.

“But were you thus indifferent to all forms of education?”

“No, my case was not quite so hopeless as that. I did not desert the schools entirely, but my attendance was so provokingly irregular and my indifference so supreme, I wonder now that I was tolerated at all. But I had one mainstay; I loved to read. I was a most inordinate reader. In some lines of literature, especially history and some kinds of fiction, my appetite was insatiate, and many a day, while my companions were clustered together in the old red brick school-house, struggling with their problems in fractions or percentage, I was carefully hidden in the woods near by, lying upon my elbows, munching an apple, and reveling in the beauties of Plutarch, Byron or Goldsmith.

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"Did you not attend college, or the higher grade of schools?"

"Yes, for a brief period. My brother was a student in Wabash College,—here in Crawfordsville,—and hither I also was sent; but within six weeks I had tired of the routine, was satiated with discipline, and made my exit from the institution. I shall never forget what my father did when I returned home. He called me into his office, and, reaching into one of the pigeon-holes above his desk, withdrew therefrom a package of papers neatly folded and tied with the conventional red tape. He was a very systematic man, due, perhaps, to his West Point training, and these papers proved to be the receipts for my tuition, which he had carefully preserved. He called off the items, and asked me to add them together. The total, I confess, staggered me."

### A FATHER'S FRUITFUL WARNING.

"'That sum, my son,' he said, with a tone of regret in his voice, 'represents what I have expended in these many years past to provide you with a good education. How successful I have been, you know better than anyone else. After mature reflection, I have come to the conclusion that I have done for you in that direction all that can reasonably be expected of any parent, and I have, therefore, called you in to tell you that you have now reached an age when you must take up the lines yourself. If you have failed to profit by the advan-

## General Lew Wallace

tages with which I have tried so hard to surround you, the responsibility must be yours. I shall not upbraid you for your neglect, but rather pity you for the indifference which you have shown to the golden opportunities you have, through my indulgence, been enabled to enjoy.' ”

“What effect did this admonition have on you? Did it awaken or arouse you?”

“It aroused me, most assuredly. It set me to thinking as nothing before had done. The next day, I set out with a determination to accomplish something for myself. My father's injunction rang in my ears. New responsibilities rested on my shoulders, as I was, for the first time in my life, my own master. I felt that I must get work on my own account. After much effort, I finally obtained employment from the man with whom I had passed so many afternoons strolling up and down the little streams in the neighborhood, trying to fish. He was the county clerk, and he hired me to copy what was known as the complete record of one of the courts. I worked for months in a dingy, half-lighted room, receiving for my pay something like ten cents per hundred words. The tediousness and regularity of the work was a splendid drill for me, and taught me the virtue of persistence as one of the avenues of success. It was at this time I began to realize the deficiency in my education, especially as I had an ambition to become a lawyer. Being deficient in both mathematics and grammar, I was forced to study those

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branches evenings. Of course, the latter was a very exacting study, after a full day's hard work, but I was made to realize that the time I had spent with such lavish prodigality could not be recovered, and that I must extract every possible good out of the golden moments then flying by all too fast."

### HIS FIRST LITERARY EFFORT.

"Had you a distinct literary ambition at that time?"

"Well, I had always had a sort of literary bent or inclination. I read all the literature of the day, besides the standard authors, and finally began to devote my odd moments to a book of my own,—a tale based on the days of the crusades. When completed it covered about three hundred and fifty pages, and bore the rather high-sounding title, 'The Man-at-Arms.' I read a good portion of it before a literary society to which I belonged; the members applauded it, and I was frequently urged to have it published. The Mexican War soon followed, however, and I took the manuscript with me when I enlisted; but before the close of my service it was lost, and my production, therefore, never reached the public eye."

"But did not the approval which the book received from the few persons who read it encourage you to continue writing?"

"Fully fifty years have elapsed since then, and it is, therefore, rather difficult, at this late day, to recall just how such things affected me. I suppose I was en-

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couraged thereby, for, in due course of time, another book which turned out to be 'The Fair God,'—my first book to reach the public,—began to shape itself in my mind. The composition of this work was not, as the theatrical people would say, a continuous performance, for there were many and singular interruptions, and it would be safe to say that months, and, in one case, years, intervened between certain chapters. A few years after the war, I finished the composition, strung the chapters into a continuous narrative, leveled up the uneven places, and started East with the manuscript. A letter from Whitelaw Reid, then editor of the New York 'Tribune,' introduced me to the head of one of the leading publishing houses in Boston. There I was kindly received, and, delivered my manuscript, which was referred to a professional reader, to determine its literary, and also, I presume, its commercial value.

"It would be neither a new nor an interesting story to acquaint the public with the degree of anxious suspense that pervaded my mind when I withdrew to await the reader's judgment. Every other writer has, I assume, at one time or another, undergone much the same experience. It was not long until I learned from the publisher that the reader reported in favor of my production. Publication soon followed, and for the first time, in a literary sense, I found myself before the public, and my book before the critics."

"How long after this did 'Ben Hur' appear, and what led you to write it?"

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### THE ORIGIN OF "BEN HUR."

"I began 'Ben Hur' about 1876, and it was published in 1880. The purpose, at first, was a short serial for one of the magazines, descriptive of the visit of the wise men to Jerusalem as mentioned in the first two verses of the second chapter of Matthew. It will be recognized in 'Book First' of the work as now published. For certain reasons, however, the serial idea was abandoned, and the narrative, instead of ending with the birth of the Savior, expanded into a more pretentious novel and only ended with the death scene on Calvary. The last ten chapters were written in the old adobe palace at Sante Fe, New Mexico, where I was serving as governor. It is difficult to answer the question, 'what led me to write the book?' or why I chose a piece of fiction which used Christ as its leading character. In explanation, it is proper to state that I had reached an age in life when men usually begin to study themselves with reference to their fellowmen, and reflect on the good they may have done in the world. Up to that time, never having read the Bible, I knew nothing about sacred history; and in matters of a religious nature, although I was not in every respect an infidel, I was persistently and notoriously indifferent. I did not know, and, therefore, did not care. I resolved to begin the study of the good book in earnest.

### CONVERTED WHILE WRITING HIS OWN BOOK.

"I was in quest of knowledge, but I had no faith to

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sustain, no creed to bolster up. The result was that the whole field of religious and biblical history opened up before me, and, my vision not being clouded by previously formed opinions, I was enabled to survey it without the aid of lenses. I believe I was thorough and persistent. I know I was conscientious in my search for the truth. I weighed, I analyzed, I counted and compared. The evolution from conjecture into knowledge, through opinion and belief, was gradual but irresistible; and at length I stood firmly and defiantly on the solid rock. Upward of seven hundred thousand copies of 'Ben Hur' have been published, and it has been translated into all languages from French to Arabic; but, whether it has ever influenced the mind of a single reader or not, I am sure its conception and preparation, if it has done nothing more, has convinced its author of the divinity of the lowly Nazarene who walked and talked with God."



## XXVIII

### A Social Leader, Having "Eyes That See," Earns Literary Laurels.

**M**RS. BURTON HARRISON, the gifted American authoress, is a charming woman socially. She is unaffected in manner, and easy and graceful in conversation. When I called, I was ushered into her library and study, and was entertained in the same delightful way in which her books are written. Indeed, she told me that she writes without effort, and endeavors to do so naturally.

It was a pretty story she told me of her childhood days in Old Virginia, where she spent the greater part of her time in reading standard works, and in dreaming of an almost unformed ambition. "Even in my youngest years," she said, "I used to make up fairy tales. Later, I put my thoughts on paper."

"And what was your first experience in a literary way?" I asked.

"When I was about seventeen years old, I sent a love story to the 'Atlantic Monthly.' It was lurid and melancholy," she said, with a smile. "It was returned in due course of time, and across its face was written, in very bright ink, 'This is far better than the average, and ought to be read through,' from which I inferred

## Mrs. Burton Harrison

that only the first page had been read. But I was encouraged even by that."

### HER FIRST NOVEL.

"My next attempt was a novel, which I called 'Skirmishing.' It was destroyed in a fire, for which I have ever since felt grateful."

Miss Constance Cary (her maiden name), next went abroad with her widowed mother, and spent some years in traveling and in completing her education.

"It was not until after I returned to America," she said, "and was married to Mr. Harrison, that I was again bold enough to take up my pen. I wrote a little article, which I called 'A Little Centennial Lady.' It was published in 'Scribner's Magazine,' and had so favorable a reception that I was encouraged to write 'Golden Rod,' a story of Mount Desert, which appeared later in 'Harper's Magazine.'"

### BOOKS SHE ENJOYED.

"My books that I have enjoyed most, if a writer may enjoy her own work, have not been those dealing with New York social life, but my tales of the south. Charles A. Dana, of the New York 'Sun,' was unconsciously responsible for my 'Old Dominion.' He gave me the agreeable task of editing the 'Monticello Letters,' and from them I gleaned a story which outlined my 'Old Dominion.' But the editors cry for stories of New York social life, to gratify the popular demand."

## Novelist of High Life

Mrs. Harrison's books are so well known that it is unnecessary to dwell on their acknowledged merit, vividness, and truthfulness to life. To the general public, there is something fascinating about a New York social story, dealing with the millionaire's club life, woman's teas, and love's broken lances. Besides the general desire for a good social novel, there is a morbid, unsatiated desire to pry into the doings, customs and manners of the rich. It is with agreeable expectations that one picks up one of Mrs. Harrison's books; it is almost with the knowledge that you will be entertained.

### HER CHARACTERS ARE FROM LIFE.

On a former call, she told me that her New York stories are built on her observations, and that the characters are so changed as not to antagonize her friends, for she enters the best society through her family ties and her well-earned prestige.

"It is very peculiar," she continued, "how, in writing a story, the characters govern me, not I the characters. I may have the outline and ending of a book in my mind, but the characters take everything into their hands, and walk independently through the pages. I have always found it best to obey. The ending of 'Anglomaniacs,' which caused so much adverse criticism, was not as I had planned. I was helpless under the caprices of the characters. At first, I was dis-

## Mrs. Burton Harrison

pleased at the ending ; but now, looking back upon it, I am well satisfied."

"Then the characters to you become real, and you are entirely under their spell, merely chronicling what to you appears real?"

### IN LOVE WITH HER WORK.

"Yes, if I did not believe in them, I would be unable to write ; for the time being, I am living and observing a dozen lives. There is much satisfaction in doing so correctly. I am in love with my work, and am a hard worker."

For the past few months, Mrs. Harrison has been idle, by the advice of her physicians, and has spent the season abroad, traveling over the continent.

"But all the time, I am turning little romances over in my mind, and when I can no longer keep my pen from paper, I suppose I shall sit down and write," she said. "Last winter, I was under a pretty heavy strain, and my overworked condition compelled me to rest for awhile."

Many amusing little instances touching upon her work have come to her attention.

"One morning," said Mrs. Harrison, "after my husband had successfully defended a client, the man grasped his hand very warmly, and, to my husband's amazement, said, 'Well, Mr. Harrison, I want to tell you what we think of your wife. She's the finest

## Novelist of High Life

writer in the English language, that's what my daughter says. She says there are no books like hers.'

"Which one does she like most?" asked my husband, immensely pleased.

"Well,' he replied, 'I can't just answer that, but I think it's 'Your Eyre.'

"Once I received a rather startling letter from a western ranchman. It said, 'Your book has been going the rounds, but it always comes back, and I have threatened to put a bullet in the hide of the man who does not return it.' I was greatly pleased with that letter.

"The most gratifying letter I ever received was from a man in a prison. He begged to be supplied with all I had written.

"Perhaps he was a man who had been in society, and there is a little story connected with his imprisonment."

### SHE IS A GENTLE, FORCEFUL WOMAN.

Mrs. Harrison has made many close friends through her books. Once she was with a party of friends in a Madrid gallery. Her name was mentioned, and a Spanish lady came forward, and introduced herself, at the same time expressing her admiration for her.

"She is now one of my dearest friends," concluded Mrs. Harrison."

Just then, a colored man appeared in her library, bearing a tray,—for afternoon tea,—so I arose, although she asked me to have a cup of tea, fearing that

## Mrs. Burton Harrison

I might be intruding, and expressed my wish that she would soon be at her desk again.

"I suppose I shall," she said, "for it is irksome being idle."

Such is Mrs. Harrison's disposition. Indeed, it is hard to imagine her idle. Orders are pouring in upon her, which through her present weak health, she is forced to decline.

But what is my impression about her? She is a gentle, forceful woman, whose energy and painstaking have placed her in the front rank of American writers. Without the latter attributes, her talent would have fallen to the ground.

## XXIX

### Painstaking, the Secret of a Celebrated Painter's Success.

**U** NDOUBTEDLY the best-known American artist is Edwin Austin Abbey. He has done more than any other man to spread the fame of American art in Europe. He has proceeded, step by step, from his early youth, when he earned fifteen dollars a week as a "hack-artist," until he ranks as the greatest living decorative painter. The history of his life is an inspiration to students, as it furnishes striking evidence of what hard work and self-confidence can accomplish in the field of art. Mr. Abbey advanced gradually from water-colors and pen-sketching to oil-painting, pastel and fine decorative work. Although he is a very prolific artist, he has maintained a surprising degree of excellence. His work breathes forth his personality, and shows the character of the man; there is confidence in every line. His taste is as fine, as his art and execution are perfect, and he has an extraordinary degree of comprehension and receptivity, due to his American blood.

Mr. Abbey has scholarly ability and intense application, but they would have availed him little if they had

## Edwin Austin Abbey

not seconded a talent of the most unusual order, and an individuality which is so personal that it may be said of him that he resembles no other living painter. It is only natural that he should have gained success in his chosen line of work, for his heart has been in it from his boyhood days. His earnest efforts have always been appreciated both in Europe and America. Only two seasons after he went to live in England, he was elected a member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colors. In 1889, he received a first-class medal at the Paris Exposition, and, in 1896, he was honored by an associate membership in the Royal Academy. Two years later he was received into full membership, though John R. Sargent, his fellow-countryman, had to wait three years. Mr. Abbey was honored by King Edward VII with a commission to paint the coronation scene in Westminster Abbey, and by the Pennsylvania legislature with a commission to decorate the new state capitol at Harrisburg.

### A MOST INTERESTING STUDIO.

During a recent trip to England, I determined to visit Mr. Abbey, and obtain from him some message for his young countrymen who are beginning where he began thirty years ago. He has a beautiful country house known as Morgan Hall, in Gloucestershire, an attractive English county. In this house is the largest private studio in the whole country, built especially for the preparation of the Boston Library decorations,



## Illustrator and Decorator

which Mr. Abbey recently completed. It measures twenty-five by fourteen yards, and has a high ceiling. In this room I observed a number of great easels, for Mr. Abbey usually has several pictures in progress at one time, but they occupied only a fraction of the space. It would be hard to imagine a studio more perfectly equipped for work. Great tapestries hung from heavy frames, not for ornamentation, but for study; carved oak doors and panels were resting against the walls, and scattered everywhere were casts of curious architecture. Priceless armor was displayed on every side, and along the walls were a number of canvases which had been used for studies, or paintings which had not been completed. There were chests filled with velvets, brocades and silks of various ancient periods. All these things are accessories of Mr. Abbey's craft and nothing more. He uses them in working out the details of his historical paintings. There were trestles full of elaborate studies and half-finished drawings standing about, and, tacked upon the walls were photographs of pictures of many interesting periods.

Mr. Abbey has also a vast collection of costumes. They are of all periods, and one might suppose himself in the stock room of some great theater. All these costumes help in depicting the dress worn at some great event which the artist desires to put upon canvas. Mr. Abbey is very accurate and careful in his work, and has never been challenged in any details of fact, of costume, of architecture, or of accessory. It must not be sup-

## Edwin Austin Abbey

posed that any of these costumes and decorations are copied in the paintings ; they are merely suggestions for invention.

Mr. Abbey's industry and energy are prodigious, so that I was quite prepared to find him at work when I visited his studio. Although the artist has lived abroad for many years, he is thoroughly American in his personality, and I might have been talking with him at a Philadelphia studio, instead of in the heart of England.

### HE WAS NOT A PRECOCIOUS BOY.

"There was nothing at all extraordinary about my boyhood," he said, in answer to a question. "I was very much like other boys, perhaps less promising than most. I remember that my parents complained because I was unable to fix my ambition upon any single profession, and they urged that I must have some definite aim in life. When I appeared unable to decide for myself, they undertook to decide for me and to formulate plans for my future. They suggested that I enter the ministry, but I had an instinct which told me that I was fitted for no such career. I told them then that art offered a greater attraction, and they were willing that I should begin studying. I entered the Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, and was delighted with my undertaking from the very beginning.

"Of course I was interested in all that pertained to art, and especially in drawing in black and white. I read all publications which printed work of this sort,

## Illustrator and Decorator

and especially 'Punch' and 'The Graphic,' so that they had no inconsiderable share in my instruction in the use of a pencil. I used to observe the styles of the different artists and study the best in each.

"In 1871, my father suggested that it was time to decide whether or not I was to earn my livelihood as an artist, and I decided that it should be my life-work. I was fortunate in obtaining employment in the art department of Harper and Brothers, in New York City. I was only nineteen years old at the time, and was filled with enthusiasm over my work. I was anxious to learn as much as possible, and Harper's was an excellent place for me. I was given a great variety of work, and received every encouragement for earnest effort. Every improvement in my drawings was appreciated. Several boys who worked with me at that time have since become famous in the art world, notably Reinhart and Alexander. Even the boys who swept out the office were gaining an excellent start, for one of them has since become one of the most famous Franco-American painters, practicing in Paris."

### HIS WORK WAS ENCOURAGED.

"My first published drawing represented the demolition of the Vendome Column in Paris by the French Commune, and I shall never forget my pleasure at seeing it in 'Harper's Weekly.' It doesn't matter how old we get, we're sure to remember our first appearance.

## Edwin Austin Abbey

I received many congratulations for my effort and continued my work with enthusiasm.

“The young artists in Harper’s offices were given all sorts of subjects to do, pictorial, illustrative and reportorial, and this variety has been of the utmost value to me. There was one sort of work, however, that I preferred above all others. When only a lad I fell in love with the classic literature of England; Goldsmith was always one of my favorite authors, and whenever I had spare time I devoted it to illustrating some of the stories that I had read. I was especially fond of English history, so you can imagine my delight when it was decided that I was to illustrate the works of Herrick for ‘Harper’s Monthly,’ with a view to ultimate publication in book form.

“It was then that I first came to England. I thought it advisable to live for a time in the English country, and I settled for two years in one of the most picturesque districts of Worcestershire. I need not tell you that I enjoyed that visit, and, when I returned to America, in 1880, it was only to remain eight months and to arrange my affairs so that I could return here. Although I had lost none of my regard for the land of my birth, I felt that, if I was to draw pictures from English history, England was the place for me to live in, so here I have been ever since, save for occasional journeys to America and the Continent.”

Mr. Abbey breathed a sigh of relief as he finished the narrative of his early days. “But this doesn’t bring you

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up to date," I said, "and the most interesting story is about what you've done since." But the artist shook his head. "It's simply a record of steady work," he said; "you already know about the chief paintings I have done in late years."

"Of course," I said, "you are doing nothing now but painting in oils?"

"That's all," replied Mr. Abbey, "and my contracts will prevent me from doing any other kind of work in the near future. I didn't begin painting in oils until I had been working many years; the 'Mayday Morn,' my first exhibit, was not shown until 1890. It seems quite the usual thing for artists to take up oils after they are known chiefly by black and white or water colors."

### HE ALWAYS TAKES PAINS.

"It is well known that you spend much time in preparing the subjects of your paintings," I said, "but there aren't many artists who worry about the technical details as you do."

"I won't say that I worry about them," replied Mr. Abbey. "An artist should study for his profession just as a man should prepare for the law or medicine, and should never consider that natural ability is all that he requires for success. He should have a knowledge of architecture and sculpture as well as of the principles of drawing; in short, he should carefully learn what may be called 'the grammar of his profession.'

## Edwin Austin Abbey

“When I am to paint a subject which is mythological, I am at pains to absorb the atmosphere of the period, and to learn something of the geography in which the legendary figures moved. I visit the scene of the story, obtain every picture which will give me a knowledge of the dress of the period, and I am not satisfied until I have exhausted every possible source of information. It is well known that Sir Frederick Leighton constantly refreshed his mind and memory by visiting the classic scenes of his paintings.

“Some artists have been known to go so far as to paint a scene as an artist living in the period of the story would have painted it. I regard this as rather extreme. It is well to have the details perfect, but modern art has some advantage of technique and color which are not to be despised. I would not have you believe that technical efficiency is the greatest essential in an artist’s qualifications, only it is a valuable asset when added to natural ability and earnestness of purpose.”

### PERSISTENCE AND HARD WORK COUNT.

Mr. Abbey has invariably practiced what he advises other artists to do. Before beginning the decorative paintings for the delivery room of the Boston Library, he spent many months traveling in Italy, collecting information which might aid him in the paintings of the Holy Grail. But in the end he decided that the scene should not be in Italy at all, and his effort went

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for nothing, as far as that particular series was concerned. He spent four years of unsurpassable toil, study and application in completing the first five of the pictures, and when they were done the public was not slow to appreciate the effort he had evidently put forth. Mr. Abbey could not have chosen a subject more worthy of his talent. He has confidence in his ideas of what is best in art, is full of mediæval feeling, and is endowed,—in spite of his sunny, hopeful temperament,—with an appreciation of the tragedy underlying so much of human life. In historical pictures, he considers no toil too great to make sure of accuracy, and his university training has been of the greatest assistance to him in his work.

“No artist can be too well educated,” he said, during my conversation with him; “every bit of information is sure to be of use to him sooner or later, in one painting or another.

“I am glad,” he said, “if I can encourage anyone to hard work, for surely that is the chief aid to success in any career. The young person who believes that an artist’s life is a bed of roses, and that he needs only to ply the brush a few hours each day, is mistaken. He must be scholarly by nature, must have a wide and minute acquaintance with art, and must never consider that he has learned it all if he hopes for lasting fame. I might add that he must also have earnest convictions regarding his work, and the courage to carry them out. Given these qualifications, combined with talent, of

## Edwin Austin Abbey

course, any person should succeed as well in the field of art as in any other profession, providing he is willing to give a reasonable time to study and preparation. Although the world may call him master, the true artist will never regard himself as other than a student.”



## XXX

### A School Girl, Not Afraid of Drudgery, Becomes America's Foremost Woman Illustrator.

**I**N the heart of Philadelphia's great business quarter, on lower Chestnut street, there stands a five-story, red brick building which is about as reserved looking as Philadelphia business structures can be, and before which, in the street below, the tide of traffic rumbles and clatters and clangs from early morning until night. It doesn't look much like a place where a person could be free enough from noise and other distractions to exercise a fine artistic taste.

Yet it was here, I was informed, that Alice Barber Stephens had her studio, and to this I was bound. Mrs. Stephens takes rank with A. B. Frost, Howard Pyle, A. B. Wenzell, C. D. Gibson and others, and there are those who put her before several of these. I remember looking over a book of her drawings, published by some New York house, entitled "The American Woman in the Home," and admiring exceedingly the gentle, refined appearance of the mothers, the excellent sedateness and sympathetic beauty of the

## Alice Barber Stephens

young married daughters, and the quiet modesty of the girls in these pictures.

You would say, looking at these drawings, "Here is a plain, commonplace, genuine person, who illustrates." She has swept, sewed, performed the duty that lay nearest. You can see it in the sketches. She paints because she likes to, and as well as she can. She has no thought of immortality, nor imagines that she will be hailed as a marvel, but simply believes it is well and interesting to do good work.

Considering these things, I made my way one afternoon up several flights of stairs,—artists must have the sky-light, you know,—to a door labeled A. B. Stephens, which was opened by a tall, slender, reserved-looking woman, who smiled as she admitted that she was Alice Barber Stephens. After a sentence or two of explanation, an invitation was extended to enter.

### ART IGNORES NOISE.

It was as if one had dropped a stage curtain upon the rattling, excited scene without. Comfortable chairs were scattered about. Screens and tall bric-a-brac cases of oriental workmanship divided spaces and filled corners. A great square of sunshine fell from a sky-light, and in one corner a Dutch clock slowly ticked. The color of the walls was a dull brick red, and against them stood light brown shelves, holding white and blue china vases, jugs and old plates. Sketches in ink, wash and color were here and there on the wall, and in one

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place a large canvas showing Market street, Philadelphia, near City Hall, on a rainy day, gave a sombre yet rather pleasing touch.

Mrs. Stephens had returned to her easel, on which was a large sketch in black and white, showing a young rake, with his body bent forward, his elbows resting on his knees, his face buried in his hands,—the picture of despair. Some picture for a novel it was, the title of which might easily have been "The Fool and His Money."

"You won't mind my working," said Mrs. Stephens, and I hastened to explain that I wouldn't, and didn't.

She put touches here and there on the picture, as we talked of women in art, and the conversation did not seem to distract her attention from the work in hand, which advanced rapidly.

### GIRLS' CHANCES AS ILLUSTRATORS.

"Don't you believe it is easier, to-day, for a young girl to succeed in illustrating than it is for a young man?"

"Well, possibly," she answered. "Neither girl nor boy can succeed without aptitude and the hardest kind of work, but girls are rather novel in the field, and their work may receive slightly more gentle consideration to begin with. It would not be accepted, however, without merit."

"Hasn't the smaller remuneration which women ac-

## Alice Barber Stephens

cept something to do with the popularity of the woman illustrator?"

"Very little, if any," she answered. "I find that women are about as quick, perhaps more so, than men, to demand good prices for clever work, although they have less of the egotism of men artists."

"You judge from your own case," I suggested.

"Not at all. I never possessed cleverness. It was need and determination with me, and I can honestly say that all I have gained has been by the most earnest application. I never could do anything with a dash. It was always slow, painstaking effort; and it is yet."

"Do you ever exhibit?" I asked.

"No," said Mrs. Stephens, "not any more. There was a time when I had an ambition to shine as a painter, and as long as I had that ambition I neither shone as a painter nor made more than a living as an illustrator. I made up my mind, however, that I was not to be a great woman painter, and I decided to apply myself closely to the stronger, illustrative tendency which fascinated me. From that time on my success dates, and I am rather proud now that I was able to recognize my limitations."

"Did you find that in marrying you made your work more difficult to pursue?" I ventured, for her interesting home life is a notable feature of her career.

"I cannot say that I did. There is more to do, but there is also a greater desire to do it. I love my boy, and I take time to make his home life interesting and

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satisfying. When he was ill, I removed my easel from the studio to a room adjoining the sick-chamber at the house, and worked there."

### HOW SHE BEGAN.

Her instinct for art seems to have been a gift direct. As a very little girl her facility with the pencil delighted her teachers, and after the regular exercises of the day she was allowed to occupy her time drawing whatever fancy or surroundings might suggest. At seven years of age her parents removed to Philadelphia, and there the young artist encountered school regulations which rather debarred her from following her beloved pastime. But her talent was so pronounced that one day in every week was allowed her in which to attend the School of Design—an arrangement that continued until she entered the grammar school.

A few years later she became a regular student at this School of Design, where she took a course of wood engraving, but did not relax her study of drawing. As an engraver she became so successful that her work soon became remunerative, and gave her means to enter the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. At the same time her progress as an engraver was so marked that her efforts were brought to the attention of the art editor of "Scribner's Magazine," for whom, to illustrate an article on the academy, she engraved the "Woman's Life Class," from her own drawing. Soon her drawings gave her a reputation, and she abandoned

## Alice Barber Stephens

engraving. Her first published drawings were for school-book illustrations, from which her field widened and her work came into great demand.

In 1887 she was married and spent ten months abroad, studying for a part of the time in Paris in the school of Julien and of Carlo Rossi, devoting the remainder of her stay in travel. Upon her return she was prevailed upon to become an instructor in the Philadelphia School of Design, where she introduced life-class study, which has met with marked success.

## XXXI

### A Schoolboy's Sketches Reveal the Bent of a Talented Illustrator.

**F**REDERIC REMINGTON'S drawings and paintings of ranch life are so full of action and so vigorously drawn that they have attracted attention all over the United States and abroad, wherever true art is honored. No living artist can equal Remington in bringing into life, as it were, on the very canvas, a bucking broncho, or the sweeping charge of a force of Uncle Sam's cavalry. One fairly sees the dust on the scorching alkali plains, and hears the quick clatter of the horse's hoofs as he strikes the ground, and gathers his legs again.

And yet, with all his success, Mr. Remington is most unassuming. I went to New Rochelle, where he has a cosy place on the crest of a hill. He was in his studio, which is an addition to the house; and, as I descended a few steps, he rose from before his easel to greet me. His working coat was covered with paint, and he held a brush in his left hand. He had not been warned of my mission, and seemed almost startled.

"I cannot shake hands," he said, looking at me, "mine are soiled; I am a painter, you know."

## Frederic Remington

He sat down, hanging one arm over the back of his chair.

"Don't write about me, but speak of my art!" said Mr. Remington.

"But you and your art are one," I replied, looking around the studio, and to its walls hung with Indian relics. "Most of your pictures are from experiences of your own in the great far west, are they not?"

"Yes, but not all," was the reminiscent reply.

"And those trophies?" I added, glancing at them.

"O, I bought most of them. That jacket I bought from a mounted policeman. Pretty, isn't it? I am able to depict the western country and life, because I have been there."

### REMINGTON'S SCHOOLBOY EFFECTS.

"When did you first take up art?"

"I studied some art at the Yale Art School, and a little at the Art League. When I was a schoolboy, I was forever making sketches on the margin of my school-books, but I never really studied it much, although my dream was to be an artist. At nineteen, I caught the fever to go west, and incidentally to become rich. That was my idea; art came second. I ranched it, and got into Indian campaigns. I have always been fond of horses and out-of-door life, and I got plenty of it there, with every opportunity to study the rough life, the lay of the country, and the peculiar atmosphere."

"Mr. Remington," I asked, "how do you get that



## The Artist of the Plains

'devil-may-care' look in the faces of your cowboys and soldiers?'

His face lighted up, and a deep twinkle came into his eyes. He glanced across the room at just such a picture as I had described. He took his pipe out of his mouth and laid it on the window sill.

### REMINGTON'S ATTENTION TO DETAIL.

"Kipling says that, 'a single man in a barrack is not a plaster saint,' and that is about it. That cavalryman posed for me on his horse. But not all of my work is from life. I go west for three months every year, and gather a lot of sketches and then work them up. Those color sketches there,—a chief and his daughter,—are from life. You see I was able to get all the color. Yet I like to depict white men best; they are more interesting."

My eyes rested on an unfinished picture, toward which, every now and then, Mr. Remington turned a thoughtful gaze as if trying to think of something. It was a birch-bark canoe, with a figure at either end; the water was smooth, and the shore was wooded. One person in the motionless canoe was fishing.

"Is that from memory?" I asked of the artist.

"Partly," he said, with a smile. "I used to see a good many photographs of trout fishing in the Adirondacks; lines taut, and then hurling a trout through the air, to land it in the canoe. So once I thought I would try it myself. I went up there and fished for two weeks

## Frederic Remington

in the rain. I am trying to think how to make the rain appear to strike and bounce from the water. You know how water looks when it is raining,"—and there came into his face a thoughtful and studious look, showing how carefully he weighed every detail of his work.

Mr. Remington rises early, has breakfast at seven, and works until three, when he takes his customary horseback ride across the country.

"Do you work from inspiration?" I asked.

"I do not know what you mean, exactly. I must have a study in my mind, and then I work it out. Some mornings I can do but little; but I am kept exceedingly busy with constant orders to fill, besides illustrating my own articles."

### HOW HIS WAR PICTURES ARE MADE.

"That painting of the charge of the Rough Riders up San Juan hill, and your other Cuban pictures, must have been interesting work."

"I saw Roosevelt just before but not during the charge. But when you see one, you see all. The fighting to-day is done in long, thin lines; the solid formations are no longer used. It makes too great a target. You are never out of range, for the bullets carry a mile and a half. Most of the fighting is done lying down, the front line advancing, and the others harassing the enemy. To me there was nothing enjoyable about it. A correspondent is worse off than the soldier. He has no means of transportation. For-

## The Artist of the Plains

tunately, in Cuba, I secured a horse the day before the battle. I made a great number of sketches, but lost one of my sketch books while crawling on my hands and knees through the long grass. It contained many bits of action, which I wanted. I suppose it was spoiled, or maybe someone found it. But in my younger days, I actually enjoyed being in the midst of an Indian fight. The climate is so different, and entirely to my liking, out west."

We rose and viewed the studio.

"How do you get that peculiar alkali, yellowish air of the plains?" I asked, as we stood before an example of Mr. Remington's art.

"Only by having lived there, and after a dint of study. That is a dust study."

"And those blue shadows are correct?"

### COLOR OF THE PLAINS.

"Yes; you cannot have a black shade out in the open, and the atmosphere there causes that particular shade. That one above, though, which is also a study, shows an almost steel gray shadow, while that other one is still darker. These are 'color notes,' of Indian ponies, and bronchos. There is no crest or arch to their necks. They are really degenerated horses, but they can go."

On a pedestal was a casting of the "Broncho Buster."

"You must have modeled in clay before you did that."

## Frederic Remington

"No, that was my first attempt. I had never put my hands to clay before. Painting and modeling are about the same. You must know anatomy in both. I never intended to have it cast, but some of my friends, on seeing it, said I should, so I had it done. 'Bunkie,' which means, in the army, 'comrade,' is my second work."

It was only in 1885 that Mr. Remington turned his whole attention to art. On leaving Yale, where he was more devoted to football than to study, he served for a brief period as confidential clerk to Governor Cornell, at Albany. But that life was too prosaic; and, in 1880, he caught the fever, "to go west." He went to Montana, and became a "cow-puncher." Later, he made money on a Kansas mule ranch, and was cowboy, guide and scout in the southwest. When he had run through what he had earned, he returned to Kansas City, where the shops displayed his first work. They possessed the now well-known Remington style, but the colors were daubed on so that they looked like chromos, although the drawings had that muscular dash and action for which his work is noted.

### HIS FIRST SKETCH.

"My first drawing," said Mr. Remington, "appeared in Harper's. It was redrawn by them, but it had in it that which they liked."

In the meantime he had married, and he started east with his wife. They arrived in New York with just

## The Artist of the Plains

three dollars. After engaging a small room, he made a bee-line for Harper's with a number of sketches. They were accepted on the spot, and since then there has been no more successful illustrator than Frederic Remington among the celebrated artists of America.

## XXXII

### Rebuffs and Disappointments Fail to Repress a Great Cartoonist's Genius.

**T**O-DAY Homer C. Davenport is the "first cartoonist" of America, and yet he is but thirty-five years old. Mr. Davenport has a small place in Roseville, on the outskirts of Newark, New Jersey. He is a tall, handsome man, with large, humorous eyes, beneath heavy eyelids, that give him an expression of perpetual thought.

"I suppose you want to see my studio?" Mr. Davenport said. We went upstairs.

"This is it," he said, with a chuckle.

It was merely a small, square room, with a few framed pictures on the papered walls, and a desk in the corner. There was no easel in the room, but I saw a drawing-board under the desk.

#### DAVENPORT'S UNIQUE STUDIO.

"You work on that board, when on the desk?"

"Yes."

"You are disappointed," said his sister, with a smile.  
"It is not what you expected."

## Caricaturist of Public Men

It wasn't. I had expected to see a typical studio, with unfinished cartoons, and the usual artistic surroundings.

Mr. Davenport laid an unfinished cartoon on the desk, representing a chariot race, and laughed when he explained what it would be and mean; and this told me that he enters heartily in whatever he draws, which is requisite to success in art as well as in other things. Then we adjourned to another room and sat about a wood fire.

"Tell me of your beginning," I said.

"Well, I was born in Oregon, thirty-five years ago, on my father's farm. As a child, I was perpetually drawing, and to my father I owe much, for it was he who encouraged me, my mother dying when I was very young. I would lie flat on my stomach, and draw on the floor, if I had no paper. As I spent hours this way, the habit became injurious to my digestive organs, so a flat cushion was made for me. I was a hopelessly poor student, doing more drawing on my slate and on the margins of my books than studying. To sit in school for any length of time made me sick and nervous, so my father called on the schoolmaster and gave instructions that, whenever I got tired, I should be allowed to draw, or to go home."

### HE DREW CARTOONS IN SCHOOL.

"This was rather demoralizing to the school, for even then I drew cartoons. Finally, I was taken away,

## Homer Davenport

and my father painted a blackboard, four feet high by fifteen feet long, on the side of a room in the farmhouse, where, with plenty of chalk, I drew to my heart's content. I would draw all day."

"And you received no instructions in drawing?"

"I never had a lesson in my life. It was my father's ambition for me to become a cartoonist. When, in later years, I did anything that he considered particularly good, he would carry me off to Portland, and I would submit it to the Portland 'Oregonian,' where my attempts were always laughed at. Then, much crestfallen, I would return to the farm.

" 'Now, my boy,' my father would say, 'that is good enough to be printed,' and off I would go again.

"At length, the news spread that I had a job on the Portland 'Oregonian.' The whole town became interested, and when the day arrived for my departure, the band of which I was a member, and many of the townspeople, escorted me with due honor to the railroad station."

### HIS FIRST DISAPPOINTMENT.

" 'Well,' I heard some say, 'I guess we will never see him again. He's too big for this place.'

"I was on the Portland 'Oregonian' just one day.

" 'What's the sense of this?' I was asked. 'You can't draw,' and back I went.

"I had before me the mortification of meeting the righteous disgust of my friends. On my way back to



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Silverton, I heard that they were short of a brakeman at the Portland end, so I beat my way back to Portland, and, walking into the office, offered myself.

“What!” said the man. “What do you know about braking? I would like to know who sent you on such a fool’s errand?” and he raved and stamped, and swore he would discharge everyone on the train. But on the next train, I went out as head brakeman. All the elements got together,—it rained and snowed and froze, and when I got to Silverton, almost frozen, I slipped from the train and tramped home, a much disheartened young man.

“But just to show my father I had something in me, and wanted to make my way in life, I asked to be sent to an institution of learning, where I stayed just one week. Then I got a place attending to the ink roller in the local printing office, where the town paper was published, which, to this day, I do not think can be beaten,”—and Mr. Davenport laughed in his hearty way.

### AT TEN DOLLARS A WEEK.

“Finally, my star rose on the horizon. I went to San Francisco, and was taken on trial on the ‘Examiner.’ I remember the day well,—February 2, 1892. For one mortal week, I simply hung around the office. Then I was put to work at ten dollars a week. But I proved unsatisfactory. I drew the man over me aside.

“‘Look here,’ I said, ‘I can’t draw. I want you to

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write to my father and tell him what a failure I am, and that his belief that I am an artist is the delusive mistake of a fond parent. He sat down to write, and, as he was doing so, my fingers, always itching to draw, were at work with a pencil in sketching horses, on a piece of paper on the table.

“ ‘When did you do that?’ he asked, picking up the paper.

“ ‘I did it just now,’ I replied, sheepishly.

“ ‘What? Do it again.’

“ ‘I did so. He looked at me curiously.

“ ‘Wait a bit,’ he said. He took the paper into the office. ‘Come in here,’ he said, ‘the boys won’t believe it. Do some more.’

“ ‘Davenport,’ said the manager, ‘you are too old to strike a path for yourself. You must put yourself in my hands. Do nothing original, not one line.’ If the manager caught me doing so, he tore it up.

“ ‘I remember one time, Ned Hamilton, a star writer on the ‘Examiner,’ some others, and myself, were sent to a Sacramento convention. I drew what I considered very good likenesses, and that night, when I retired, with a fire burning brightly in the room where we all bunked, I fairly kicked my heels in delight, in anticipation of the compliments of the ‘Examiner.’ I was awakened by the tearing of a paper, that sent the cold shivers up and down my back. Ned Hamilton was grumbling, and throwing my labor into the fire.

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“‘If you can’t do better than that,’ he said, ‘you ought to give up.’”

“I almost wept, but it took any conceit I might have had out of me, and the next day I did some work that was up to the mark.”

### HE WAS DISCHARGED IN CHICAGO.

“But my walking papers came in due time, and I went to the ‘Chronicle.’ It almost took my breath away when they offered me twenty dollars a week. Before I was discharged from there, I had risen to a higher salary. I went to Chicago, and got on the Chicago ‘Herald,’ at thirty-five dollars a week. I was there during the World’s Fair. It seemed to me the principal thing I did was to draw horses. But the greatest blow of all was when the Chicago ‘Herald’ discharged me. It seemed as if everything were slipping from beneath my feet. I went back to San Francisco and got on the ‘Chronicle’ again. It was then, and not till then,—1894,—that I was allowed any freedom. All that I had been asking an outlet for found vent, and my cartoons began to attract attention.

“William R. Hearst, of the ‘Examiner,’ asked, in one of his editorial rooms: ‘Who is that Davenport, on the ‘Chronicle,’ who is doing us up all the time?’”

“‘Oh, we bounced him; he’s no good,’ was the reply.

“‘Send for him!’ said Mr. Hearst.

“No attention was paid to the order. Mr. Hearst

## Homer Davenport

finally sent for me himself. I was engaged at forty-five dollars a week. Then a thing happened that I will never forget, for no raise before or since ever affected me to such a degree.

“I drew a cartoon of Senator ‘Steve’ White and his whiskers. The whiskers so pleased Mr. Hearst, that he called me in and said that my pay would be raised five dollars a week. I went home that night, and woke up my wife to tell her the glad news. She fairly wept for joy, and tears trickled down my own cheeks, for that increase meant appreciation that I had been starving for, and I felt almost secure,—and all on account of Senator ‘Steve’ White’s whiskers.”

Here Mrs. Davenport, who had brought us two large books, in which she had fondly pasted all of her husband’s work, said:—

“Yes, no subsequent increase, no matter how large, has ever equaled that five-dollar advance.”

### IN CLOVER AT LAST.

Mr. Hearst, as soon as he bought the New York “Journal,” telegraphed to the “Examiner:” “Send Davenport.” He is now receiving a very large salary, and his work is known throughout the world.

Two years ago, Mr. Davenport went abroad and drew sketches of the members of the houses of parliament, and Mr. Phil. May, the English artist, became his fast friend.

In Washington, Senator Hanna insisted upon meet-

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ing Mr. Davenport, and shaking him by the hand. He was the first to immortalize Mr. Hanna, with that checkered suit of dollar marks.

Such is the man and artist, Homer C. Davenport, who, in 1894, had not drawn a public cartoon, and who, to-day, has a world-wide reputation, and the esteem of even those whom he has caricatured, and who cannot help enjoying their own exaggerated portraits. Davenport's success has come rapidly, but not until he had sustained reverses that would have discouraged any man of a less resolute character.

## XXXIII

### Being Himself in Style and Subjects, the Secret of an Artist's Wonderful Popularity.

**N**OTHING in the studio of Charles Dana Gibson suggests that it is a studio, excepting the alien circumstance that it is artistic. Such proof tends to puzzle the casual-minded, whose mind is trained to look upon any sky-lighted room furnished like a pound party, and occupied by artists, or brokers, or bachelor wholesale dealers,—as a studio.

Mr. Gibson's studio is a real room, devoted to stern facts, and is, therefore, beautiful. It has no furniture that is not essential. Even the large rugs, woven of moss and mist and fire, hang on the walls like coverings, and not by way of decoration. The wood is heavy and dark. There are no pictures.

Mr. Gibson talks while he works. His easel stands squarely beneath the skylight, and, as he sat before it the other day, a picture grew under his hand while he talked about the making of an illustrator. Everything he said was emphasized by the slow growth of the glorious creature, who was there to show, from her

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pretty tilted pompadour to the hem of the undoubted creation she was wearing, that what the famous illustrator insisted may be done by skill and hard work can assuredly be accomplished.

"When anyone asks me," said Mr. Gibson, "what to do to become a successful illustrator, I always assure him that he has thought about the matter and doubtless knows far more about it than I do, for I know of no rule to follow to become what one was born to be, and I certainly know of none to prevent one from failing at something for which he has no talent.

"If a man knows how to draw, he will draw; and all the discouragements and all the bad teachers in the world cannot turn him aside. If he has no ability, he will drift naturally into school-teaching and buying stocks, without anybody's rules to direct him either way.

"The main thing is to have been born an artist."

Mr. Gibson said this quite simply, as if he were advising a course in something, or five grains of medicine.

"If you were that," he went on, "you yourself know it far better than anyone can tell you, and you know also, in your heart, that neither wrong teaching nor anything but idleness can prevent your success. If you are not a born artist, you may not know it. I think I can soon say something about the way to find your limitations, but no one can say much to help a born genius. His genius is largely, indeed, that he knows how to help himself."

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Lightly leaving the student of illustrating adequately provided with having been born a genius, Mr. Gibson went on to tell what should be his education before he begins to study art, and upon this he put on record an opinion which is a departure from current belief.

### A NATURAL ARTIST WILL NEVER REQUIRE AN INSTRUCTOR.

"I do not think," he said, "that the previous training of a student who begins studying illustrating has much to do with his career. It seems to me that his actual previous education matters very little. If he wants to learn, he will learn. If he does not, he will not. If he does not want to learn, his attempt at an education will profit him very little. His gift for illustrating, if he has it, is a thing not more dependent upon his education than upon his surroundings. While there are instances in which an education forced upon a pupil has been acknowledged by him afterward to mean much to him, there are also cases in all arts of which we say that contact with the schoolmen would not have been an advantage."

Mr. Gibson said this quite tranquilly, as if it were not an idea at odds with all other accepted statements that the thorough education of an artist is the best foundation for anything he may undertake.

"That leaves a good deal of work for the pupil's master," I suggested.

"Master!" exclaimed Mr. Gibson, with almost a



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frown; "what is a master? Have we any masters now? It seems to me that the word has lost its old meaning, and that there is no longer such a thing as a 'master.' Suppose we say 'teacher' instead! And then let me add this: I do not believe the teacher matters in the least."

"Don't you think," I demanded, "that a pupil would make better progress with you for a teacher than he would with somebody whose work had no value?"

IF YOU DO NOT SEE YOUR MISTAKES, NO ONE ELSE CAN.

"Not a bit," he said, promptly. "To tell the truth, I think the teaching of drawing is an over-estimated profession. It doesn't seem to me as if I could teach,—as if I would feel it would be exactly honest to teach. Why, see for yourself,—what can a teacher do?"

Mr. Gibson laid down his pencil, but he continued thus:—

"I was for a year at the Art League, and two years in Paris. In Paris we used to sit in rows at canvases, like this. We saw our teacher for half an hour, twice a day. He would come and spend less than two minutes beside the chair of each of us, and what would he do? Point out a mistake, or a defect, or, rarely, an excellence, which, if we had any talent at all, we could see perfectly well for ourselves. This last is the important point.

"If you are a born illustrator, you will know your own mistakes better than anyone can tell you about

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them. If you do not see your mistakes, nobody can ever help you to be anything. All the teachers in all the art schools cannot help you if you cannot see your mistakes. I said I could help a pupil to know his own limitations. Well, that is the way. If your own work looks quite finished and perfect to you, or if it looks wrong but you cannot tell exactly what is the inaccuracy or lack, you may depend upon it that you were not born to be an illustrator.

“That is true in anything. The writer, the sculptor and the musician have to stand this test. What sort of musician would a man be who could not detect a discord? You can see it easily enough with that illustration. Well, your illustrator must see a bad bit of drawing, or bad composition, just as quickly as a born piano player can tell if he has played without expression. It is just as true in art as it is in ordinary matters. The snow-shoveler must know when his sidewalk is clean, the typewriter when the words are correctly spelled, the cook when her pastry tastes right,—or they are all discharged forthwith. Well, one expects no less of an illustrator than of a cook.”

### THE VALUE OF ARTISTIC INDIVIDUALITY.

Mr. Gibson returned to his board, and what he said next was wonderfully extra-illustrated by the girl—“Gibson” to her finger-tips,—who looked up at him.

“The whole value of your work is its individuality,” he said, “and for that you are obliged to depend abso-

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lutely upon yourself. Obviously nobody can show you how to be original.

"Now take the simple example of a copy book. Do you remember how the letters used to look, and the elaborate directions which accompanied every writing lesson? The 'a's,' and so on, must be just of a height. The 't's' must be twice as high. The 'l's' and the 'h's' must be a quarter-length or so above those. Well, as a matter of fact, who writes like that? Nobody. If anyone did he would simply be laughed at, and justly so. His handwriting would mean nothing. It would have no individuality. Everybody simply keeps the letters in mind and forms them to suit himself, and after a time he has a writing which he can never change by any chance. That has become the way he writes.

"Well, it is just the same in illustrating. I might tell you all that I know about drawing; any teacher might tell you all he knows; but, gradually, by observation and the assertion of your own personality, you will modify all these forms, and will find yourself drawing one special way. That is the way you draw, and you can never change it in essence, though you may go on improving it forever.

"Now, to my mind, just so much instruction in drawing is necessary as is needed to tell the child who is learning to write which letter is which, and how to pronounce and recognize it. That once learned, the child will go its own sweet way and develop a handwriting such as no one in the world can exactly dupli-

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cate. So it is with drawing. When the first fundamental instructions are over,—which anyone who can draw can give you,—you are your own master, and will draw or not, as you were born to do.

“Remember that I am not saying that I regret the time I spent studying, either here or in Paris. I am only telling you what I regard as necessary for one who wants to learn.

“Now, just as the way to learn to write is to write, so the way to learn to draw is to draw. I think it is best to begin with objects in the room, and with figures,—any objects, any figures,—it does not matter. But draw one over and over again; draw it from all sides; draw it big, and draw it little, and draw it again. Then go to something else, and then come back to it later the same day. Put them all away till the next day, and then find the mistakes in them. Here is something to remember, and something which ought to hearten many a discouraged student quite blue because of what really should have encouraged him: Do not be discouraged at the mistakes you can find in your own work, unless you find only a small number. The more mistakes you can detect, the better able you are to draw. Do not leave a thing until you are satisfied, after going back to it every day for weeks, that you can draw it no better. Then, if you come upon it the next year, and still see no room for improvement,—well, then there is still room for discouragement about yourself.”

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WHILE STUDYING ART, ONE SHOULD WORK INCES-  
SANTLY.

"In all this work, observe one rule: Never mind about drawing a thing as you may possibly have been told to do in the course of instruction. Draw it the way it looks to you. You will see it differently as you go back to it again and again. If you do not see it differently, you cannot see your own mistakes, and that is positive proof that for you fame is waiting at some other door,—or, at any rate, that it will not come to you from art.

"How much ought one to work? All the time. Draw all the time. Look all the time for something to draw. In the beginning, never pass anything without wresting from it its blessing, so to speak. Before you pass, be sure you can draw it; and the only way to be sure of that is to draw it several times. The objects in a room are a little simpler than figures, at first, but figures are the most interesting, and you must draw whatever interests you. If you would rather draw crawfish and bootjacks than men and women, draw crawfish and bootjacks. It really doesn't so much matter what you draw; the point is that you draw. But it is important to you that you develop a taste for drawing something special,—and of that you need have no fear if you are a born artist. If you are not, as I said, it doesn't matter.

"I always feel that any general talk about the way

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to succeed, in any art one selects, is rather unnecessary. I cannot repeat too often that I believe, if the student has it in him to draw, he will not need to be told to persevere, or to work hard, or to be careful of bad influences in his work, or to avoid imitation,—he will do all these as naturally as he will hold a pencil. Holding a pencil, by the way, is another example of what I just spoke of. Do you remember that they used to tell us just how our fingers must hold the pen, and how the whole arm ought to move? ‘What will they think of you,’ they said, ‘when you get out in the world, if you hold your pencil like that?’ As a matter of fact, nobody gives the matter a thought, and hardly one of us holds a pencil that way. It is so with many of the *formulae* of an art. But isn’t it curious that I never did get out of holding my pencil that prescribed way? I do happen to hold my pencil correctly.”

“Maybe you held some of the other *formulae* the same way,” I suggested, “and they are influencing you.”

“Oh, well,” said Mr. Gibson, “so far as the pencil goes, I fancy, perhaps, that I draw in spite of the way I hold it rather than because of it.”

Then he made a small retraction of his remark.

“There is one class of teachers,” he said, “that I count,—pictures. Pictures are always at hand,—and good work is the best teacher in the world. A pupil in New York ought to go to the art gallery often and often, and sit there and steep himself in what he sees.

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Let him go to study definite pictures, too,—but just to sit and absorb,—as one sits in a garden, or before an old tower, or by the sea,—without sketching, only just looking,—that is the best instruction you can pay for on either continent."

The picture of the girl on the board was practically complete, with its high little chin and haughty mouth and fearless eyes, and it seemed so alive that getting to be a great illustrator appeared hopeless by the side of it.

"How long," I asked, "does it take, normally, to find out if you're a born artist or not?"

Mr. Gibson laughed and took it the other way.

"A very long time," he said, regretfully, "and some of us even go down blind to our graves."

"May it not be inferred from your idea that the born illustrator has little need of a teacher, that he also has little need of a sojourn in the art atmosphere of Paris?" I asked.

"It certainly may be," replied Mr. Gibson quickly. "A young man or woman can now learn just as much art in some of our great cities, like New York or Philadelphia, as abroad. Our art schools are as good as those of Paris. In fact, they are superior in some respects, and I am very sure that the average American art student is, in general, better off in the United States.

"There are, of course, the magnificent galleries of Europe, with which every artist should be familiar,

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but there need be no special hurry to study these. It is much more advisable, I think, for the young artist to become imbued with the spirit of our own art, and to acquire a distinctively American style, before subjecting himself to the influence of the painters of the Old World.

“I have little patience with the American who, in his art, becomes a foreigner. If he does, he is not accepted as representative either abroad or in this country. The time has come when a man or woman may take much pride in being a true American artist. We are no longer mere imitators. We are forging ahead into leadership, and I venture to predict that this century will see New York the art center of the world.”













