

BRAVE AND TRUE

TALKS TO YOUNG MEN

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REV. THAIN DAVIDSON, D.D.

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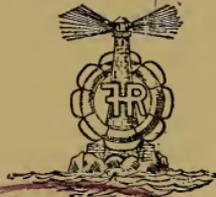
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BY

THAIN DAVIDSON, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "TALKS WITH YOUNG MEN," "A GOOD START,"
"SURE TO SUCCEED," ETC.



NEW YORK AND CHICAGO.

Fleming H. Revell Company,

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PREFACE.

IT is not the soldiers that do all the fighting. Many a young man who knows . . . nothing of military drill, and never . . . shouldered a musket in his life, has daily to join in a battle that puts his mettle and courage to the test. There are foes to be encountered and victories to be won in the office, the workshop, the exchange, or the street, and hundreds of other places at homé, that demand of our youth a pluck and heroism quite as great as though they were summoned with rifle and knapsack to the banks of the Nile, or to the wilds of Afghanistan. The commercial and social life of to-day presents abundant opportunities for the display of all those qualites that constitute true manliness. Temptations are more manifold and insidious than ever. A general tone of frivolity prevails, with an impatience of restraint that bodes ill for

the rising generation. There is a deficiency of moral backbone. A man is an optimist indeed who does not see and deplore a lack of seriousness and reflection. Young men of thoroughgoing conscientiousness, of high moral courage, and inflexible loyalty to the truth are sufficiently rare to be conspicuous amongst their fellows when they do appear. One is reminded of the Divine appeal to the prophet Jeremiah in the days of old: "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, *if ye can find a man*, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon the city." Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom: it seems that one just and true man would have saved Jerusalem!

It has often been observed since the days of Solomon that "one sinner destroyeth much good," but the converse is not less true, that one man of stern principle and force of character counteracts much evil in a community. I have remarked it again and again: such an individual is a tree of life, a well of living waters. It is indeed impossible to over-estimate the influence he

wields. It has been said with truth that most men overrate their talents and under-rate their influence.

One has scarcely a conception how his own character is telling upon those around him, either for good or evil. If the thought is fitted to startle the unprincipled, it is no less one that ought to stimulate the virtuous and true.

Be out-and-out a man of unbending rectitude, true as steel, and having at all times the courage of your convictions; and you cannot fail to be a power for good amongst your fellow-men.

It is remarkable with what frequent reiteration the Bible calls upon us to be of good courage, and to play the man. As Christians, we are to be both brave and true.

Even physical courage is a quality not to be despised. Though some affect to call it a mere brute attribute, it has close kinship with a noble character, and the want of it is a serious misfortune to any one. It is a virtue which qualifies a man for the protection of the weak, and which makes him capable of many manly and invigorating amusements.

In almost all athletic sports and out-door recreations there is some element of personal risk, which, whilst debarring the timid and nervous from indulging in them, only adds zest to the pleasure which robuster natures find.

Exercise on horseback or on the river; swimming, skating, and cycling; the pleasures of the foot-race, football, and baseball diamond—all involve some slight spice of danger; and if a youth is too finely strung for any of these he had better take at once to threading needles and winding Berlin wool. The man who at the risk of his life plunges in amid the foaming waves and grasps a sinking brother, how great his delight as he comes, almost breathless, beating in to shore, and entrusts the rescued one to the care of his loved ones again; or he who, forcing his way through smoke and flame, saves a woman or a child—what can exceed his joy when he safely descends the ladder, carrying the captive in his arms?

But there is a courage *to be* as well as *to do*, and unquestionably the former is the greater of the two. This is often forgotten. If a man will die for his flag, many will call

him a hero; but if he is prepared to die for a principle, then they call him a fanatic. The noblest courage is that which inspires one to be sternly loyal to conscience, to duty, and to truth; to be uncompromising where the honor of Christ is concerned; to bear reproach, the estrangement of friends, and the ridicule of foes, rather than sacrifice what he knows to be right; to "stand four-square to all the winds that blow," and set the face as a flint against all unrighteousness.

The words of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, to the ambassador of the Elector of Brandenburg, are worthy to be remembered. He had been much tried by the fickleness of some whom he had come to help, and with much solemnity he said: "I will hear and know nothing of neutrality. His Highness must be friend or foe. When I come to his borders he must declare himself hot or cold. The battle is between God and the devil."

The greatest want of our time is young men of decided moral and religious character, courageous and faithful, BRAVE AND TRUE.

In the words of Tennyson—

“ Ah God, for a man with a heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
Forever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one
Who can rule and dare not lie!”

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BRAVE AND TRUE.

I.

HOW TO GET ON IN THE WORLD.

FREDERICK THE GREAT once remarked of Joseph II., Emperor of . . . Germany, that he always wanted to . . . take the second step before he had taken the first. This is precisely the mistake which I find many young men making, and which is sufficient to account for their not getting on in the world. They want to escape everything like initial drudgery, and to leap at once into a position of ease, if not of luxury. It is no good sign of the times, that there is a growing disposition to shirk manual labor of all kinds: physical toil is

distasteful: the young man of the day much prefers to make his living by his wits.

There was a strong, stalwart youth in the days of Solomon, in whom that sagacious monarch perceived qualities that commended him to his favor. Jeroboam (for that was his name) was engaged in the fortifications and earthworks near the citadel of Zion, which went by the name of Millo; and the king, in the course of his frequent visits to the spot, was so struck with the manly form and untiring energy of this workman, that he determined to give him an important advance. For so we read in 1 Kings xi. 28: "And Solomon, seeing the young man that he was industrious, made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph."

This is very instructive, and perhaps the first lesson it suggests is *the advantage of early training in some form of handicraft.*

Jeroboam began with a pickaxe and ended with a throne. If he sometimes blistered his hands in digging the earthworks of Millo, they were all the better fitted for hold-

ing a sceptre. The king was too wise to think the less of him because he supported his mother and himself by manual labor. The men who have risen to the highest positions of eminence in our mercantile marine knew at one time all the roughing and the hard work of the common sailor. Our most distinguished civil engineers are not ashamed to say that, with grimy hands and greasy clothes, they once served their time in the noisy workshop or factory.

It is a vast pity that in certain circles of society it seems as if a positive stigma rests upon a person who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. This most foolish aping of aristocratic life appears to be taking a firm hold of a large class in this democratic country of ours. Everywhere throughout society the rage runs to bring up our children to what are called the genteel professions, which just means in many cases to genteel starvation. It is impossible that a whole nation can live by sitting at high desks and wielding steel pens. I believe

that one of the lessons God is going to teach this country during the next fifty years is, that it is no dishonor to make one's living by the labor of one's hands. In the battle of the world your scented dandy will be left far behind, even though he can talk like a philosopher. Some time ago, at a gathering in Australia, four persons met, of whom three were shepherds on a sheep-farm. One of these men had taken his degree at Oxford, another at Cambridge, and the third at a German university. The fourth, will you believe it? was their employer, a successful squatter, rich in land and cattle, but almost destitute of the elements of an ordinary education.

There is no surer token of a little mind than to imagine that anything in the way of physical labor is dishonoring. I confess to an unbounded contempt for the smart young gentleman who would not, on any consideration, be seen carrying a parcel down the street.

Our first father was a gardener, and it is

a law of this world which we cannot overturn that man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The great bulk of mankind must ultimately make their livelihood by handicraft of some kind or another.

“The king himself is served by the field.”

It has been wisely suggested that to all our public schools a workshop should be attached, where every boy should daily spend a portion of his time, and learn some handicraft. It is perfectly deplorable, the idea that many have taken up, that if their kid-gloved hands touch a hammer or screw-driver, or lift a box, or tie up a parcel, they are lowering their dignity.

People seem to think—such is the mania for speculation and jobbing—that they must contrive to make money without hard work, and that by a little juggling, by the meeting of a few men round a board once a week, to drink sherry and talk together, they can make far better profits than by real honest labor. No, no! All honor, say I, to the

horny hand and the sweating brow. It was because Jeroboam made good use of the spade that Solomon made him a ruler.

Then again, we are also to learn this lesson, that *whatever be our calling or business, the likeliest way to rise is to be thorough and persevering.*

Some time ago I was taken over one of the largest engine factories in all this country, where everything is managed with the most perfect regularity, and where, though some thousands of men are employed, all are happy and contented; and I was struck with a remark made to me by the head of the firm.

He said: "I keep a watchful eye upon my men, and wherever I see special merit, I give an advance; but the instant a man demands a rise he is paid off." The best and most thorough workers, accordingly, were always moving to the front. Any arbitrary rule which will put all—the skilful and the stupid, the industrious and the idle—upon one and the same level is an

outrage upon justice, and is to put a premium upon incompetency.

If Jeroboam, with his hands in his pockets, had hung loosely about the ramparts of Millo, he had never been made clerk of the works.

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings.”

When George Peabody, the millionaire and philanthropist, visited his native place in the year 1855, he said to the young men of the village: “Though Providence has granted me unusual and unvaried success in the pursuit of fortune, I am still in heart the humble boy who left yonder unpretending dwelling. There is not a youth within the sound of my voice, whose early opportunities and advantages are not very much greater than were my own, and I have since achieved nothing that is impossible to the most humble youth among you.”

I have no hesitation in saying that most eminently successful men have commenced life under unfavorable conditions. The

difficulties stimulated their energies, and brought out what was in them. It is rather the exception than the rule, that a youth brought up under all manner of advantages, as regards wealth, and rank, and education, has by dint of pluck and perseverance forced his way to the front and commanded brilliant success.

How easy to give you a list of notable men who, starting from the humblest ranks, and without a penny in their pockets, managed by sheer thoroughness and perseverance to reach a high round of the ladder of fame. The immortal Homer began life as a beggar; Æsop was a slave; Demosthenes, the son of a sword-maker; the poet Aken-side was a butcher's boy; Jeremy Taylor, the son of a barber; Ben Jonson, a brick-layer; Hugh Miller, a mason; Dr. Livingstone, a factory-worker; Faraday, a book-binder's apprentice; Dr. Kitto, a shoemaker. Why, I might multiply the instances to almost any extent.

Make good use of the talents God has

given you, be they great or small; apply your whole energy to the business you have in hand, and look up for the Divine blessing on your toil; do this, and—no fear of you!

II.

BODY-CULTURE.

WE are happily becoming delivered of the notion which long prevailed in . . . certain branches of society, that personal religion looks with disfavor on physical culture.

A powerfully built frame, strong muscle, and athletic vigor were long associated with mental incapacity and a low *morale*; so that a well-developed gymnast had almost to apologize for his robustness and agility. It seemed to be taken for granted in certain circles that a pious youth must necessarily be pale and sickly, and lend no encouragement to out-door sports or pastime. Even Pascal once observed that invalidism is the natural state of Christians.

Thank God, something like a revolution

in the public sentiment on this subject has of late years taken place

It is now generally acknowledged that attention should be given to the full and healthful development of every part of man's tripartite nature—body, soul, and spirit all sharing in the blessings of a genuine and intelligent Christianity.

An important requisite to success in life is to be a good animal: and a vigorous bodily constitution is not likely to be enjoyed without a due amount of physical exercise. It is said of Cicero of old, that, becoming somewhat enfeebled and dyspeptic through prolonged mental toil, he adopted as a remedy the discipline of the gymnasium, and in two years was so fully recuperated, that he returned to his studies as robust as the peasants that worked upon his farm.

Let it never be imagined that the religion of Jesus Christ is on the side of asceticism. I would never say to a man who has a mind to become a Christian, You must now give up the pleasures of the world. There is no one

on earth who has so much right to the pleasures of the world as the man whose heart is right with God.

Come along; enumerate what you call the pleasures of the world: make out the inventory; and when I have run my eye down the list, and scored off every one that is in any way morally objectionable, I shall present you with a splendid catalogue to which Christians have the first and truest claim: pleasures — indoor, outdoor; pleasures rural and urban; pleasures of nature and art.

I claim, first of all, for *Christian* young men, the exhilarating enjoyment of the tennis racket, and the croquet mallet, and the base-ball club, and the angler's rod, and the sportsman's gun, and the cyclist's steed. Where God-fearing youth are assembled, let wit and hilarity abound, and the shout of innocent laughter rend the air; let healthful sports expand the chest and strengthen the muscle; let the graceful oar dip the stream, and the evening tide be resonant of boat-

man's song as the bright prow splits the crystal billow.

Away with the notion that the pleasures of the world are denied to the Christian! There is no single pleasure which a manly nature can relish which is not permissible to him. I repudiate with scorn the idea that when a man begins to be religious, he is pinched, dwarfed, and shut up. Rather is he liberated and ennobled. "I will walk at liberty: because I keep Thy statutes." Never were you more completely victimized than when you were made to believe that life *minus* the fear of God is more free and happy.

The most saintly man I ever knew, or expect to know on this side of heaven, was the Rev. Murray McCheyne, of Dundee, whose admirable Memoir by Dr. Bonar is one of the most useful biographies that ever appeared.

May I tell you an incident of personal recollection?

One Monday morning, after the labors of

a busy and specially solemn Sabbath, McCheyne was walking in the country, along with one or two of the most devoted ministers of the Gospel Scotland has ever produced, all of them being then in the bloom of early manhood. They were crossing a field; and McCheyne, bounding forward, started the game of "leap-frog," in which the others heartily joined. But a grave and aged elder of the kirk, who had witnessed the sport, came up, and in the tones of one who was fearfully shocked, rebuked the divines, who good-humoredly confessed the heinousness of their crime, and promised never to do the like again!

Such innocent sport is good for every part of our being, and leaves no evil results.

I do not deny that athletic exercise is sometimes carried to excess, and in some of its forms is too often associated with the vice of betting. But there is no necessity for its being thus prostituted to base and ignoble ends. There is no reason why you should be ambitious to have the brawn of a profes-

sional pugilist, or to be able to lift a thousand pounds' weight, or walk a hundred miles in four-and-twenty hours. There is not the least occasion for your staking your pocket-money on a boat race, or betting on the issue of a game at base-ball. Some of the finest athletes of our own day have been pronounced Christians, who were not afraid to show their colors.

The physical vigor that comes of a due attention to body-culture adds much, in every calling or profession, to the usefulness and enjoyment of life.

An excellent writer has remarked that no man is in true health who cannot stand in the free air of heaven, with his feet on God's free turf, and thank his Creator for the simple luxury of physical existence.

But, with the cramped chest, and quaking nerves, and aching head, and disordered liver of many a man who neglects his body and takes no open-air exercise, life becomes more of a burden than a pleasure. Early rising, a cold bath every morning, and

strictly temperate habits, together with a due amount of physical exertion, will do more for some than all the tonics the medical profession can prescribe.

Nor are the advantages of the body-culture brief and transient; for, in addition to maintaining your physical energies in the best condition while you are young, you may reasonably expect, with the blessing of God, to prolong your days, and enjoy vigor and cheerfulness when you are old. Just as you neglect the body, you impair your happiness and shorten your days. As Horace Mann said, with a touch of Irish wit, "Had I lived for a month as I see some people do, I should have died in a fortnight."

III.

HONEST TO THE CORE.

WAS it not Charles Kingsley who divided men into three groups: honest . . . men, knaves, and fools?—honest men, . . . who wish to do right, and do it; knaves, who wish to do wrong, and do it; and fools, who wish to do right, but contrive to do wrong. It is to be feared that the two latter classes are not altogether extinct; but I shall hope that none of my readers belong to either of them.

In very plain terms does the voice of Scripture indorse that of conscience, when it says, "The Lord requireth of thee, O man, that thou do justly."

No young man enters on a business life with a hopeful future before him who does

not determine at the outset that under no conditions whatever will he participate in unlawful gains, or lend himself to any form of fraudulence.

Unhappily, many of you, on going into the mercantile world, are introduced to an arena in which deception, chicanery, and fraud must at once be met.

Again and again a dear young fellow, uninitiated in the tricks of trade, has come to me, and said, "I am at a loss what to do; in the business on which I have entered I find a great deal that is not straight; practical lies are told every day, and I must either wink at them or give up my situation." Remember, it wants tremendous strength of moral character for such a lad to go to the manager or to his employer, and say, "I will have nothing to do with these business dishonesties."

The consequence is, that the greater number just keep silent; they say nothing on the matter, but quiet their conscience by thinking it is their employer's lookout, not theirs.

And so they become inoculated with the poison, and their moral sense is permanently injured.

A well-known wit observed that the youth of his country reminded him of the three degrees of comparison: their first aim being to get *on*, their second to get *honor*, and their third to get *honest*.

On—honor—honest. Now you will do well to invert the order. Let strict honesty come first; and no fear that honor and success will follow. The scandal of Christianity to-day is that so many men who profess to be "leaning upon the Lord," are not square in their bargains.

Talleyrand once replied to a man, who, by way of excusing his doubtful method of conducting business, said, "Why, you know I must live!" "I don't see that at all." There is no absolute necessity that you should live, but there is an absolute necessity that you should

In conversation be sincere;

Keep conscience, like the noontide, clear.

If you cannot maintain your integrity and succeed, then less success with a good conscience will be a greater gain.

It is sometimes asserted that there is now more honesty in the world than ever, and that whatever adulteration of goods is practised is insignificant; this I know, there is still quite enough to make us blush for shame.

The readiness, a few years ago, to put a false name, description, or mark upon manufactured articles appeared in almost every trade. In fact, it appeared that almost every article that can be purchased for money yields its percentage of imposture. Be it Sheffield cutlery, or Brussels lace, or Irish linen, or French calicoes, it is all the same; swindle the public if you can, and make your goods fetch more than they are worth.

The devil is always busy tempting men to dishonesty; and the eighth and ninth commandments are voted out of the Decalogue.

The best apples are placed at the top of

the barrel; the milk-can holds more liquid than the cow is responsible for; tea at two prices comes out of the same chest; wool is mixed with cotton and sold at thirty-five inches to the yard; flaws are hidden with varnish; shams, impositions, and evasions abound on every side.

Right in the face of all this comes the stern command from Heaven: "The Lord requireth of thee to do justly." Be straight in all your transactions. Abhor every form of dishonesty. Refuse to touch any but clean money. Believe me, a full purse is a poor exchange for a clear conscience.

It never pays in the end to have God against you. It all depends on the mint it comes from whether you will find your money a curse or a blessing.

Remember, the Lord's copper is better than the devil's gold any day. A pure conscience and a stainless character are the best capital a young man can possess. Strict fidelity, thank God, is still an article of high commercial value. Rather would I be

Longfellow's "honest blacksmith," who "looks the whole world in the face, and fears not any man," than I would be the unprincipled speculator who enriches himself at the sacrifice of conscience and of the blessing of Heaven. Be true to your conscience, whatever it may cost you. Never for a moment entertain the thought of a transaction which will not bear the light through and through. It is very rarely the case that, even as regards the present world, dishonesty proves a good policy. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

Tempted you are certain to be; but do not wait till that moment of trial to determine what your conduct shall be; fix it now; put your foot firmly down, and vow before God that never and under no circumstances will you say what you do not mean, or do to another what you would not wish that he should do to you.

Mirabeau once said, "If there were no honesty in the world, it would be invented as a means of getting wealth"; but if a

man's motive is no higher than that, he may, whilst outwardly honorable, be a thorough rogue at heart. With you integrity should be a second nature.

The youth to whom, when he refused to pilfer his employer's till, a companion suggested, "Nobody will see you," gave the admirable reply, "*I shall see myself.*"

It is a grand thing when a young man has such an inherent hatred of all that is underhand, that, policy or no policy, he will be truthful and honest right to the core, acting on the noble principle of St. Paul, when, as it were baring his breast to Heaven, he declared: "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man."

The age needs men who will stand firm to principle, and refuse to budge; their spirit akin to that of the heroic Nelson when he exclaimed, "Victory, or—Westminster Abbey!"

Let us hope that, as the years pass on, the commerce, not of our land only, but of

all the nations, will be purified, and that the day may not be distant, when—

Crime shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail,
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale;
Peace o'er the land her olive wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.

IV.

THE TRUE GENTLEMAN.

GOOD manners are like standard gold—they are current all the world over. . . . Courtesy is not only in itself a virtue . . . and adornment, it is one of the essentials of civilized and social life. Politeness has been defined as benevolence in small things. The true gentleman is always recognized by his delicate regard for the feelings, opinions, and rights of others, even in matters that are of but trifling importance. Well does Tennyson say, "Manners are not idle, but the fruit of loyal nature and of noble mind."

There cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose, as it must be confessed some young men appear to do, that gentleness of

deportment is a token of unmanliness. On the other hand, it may be safely asserted that the strongest and bravest men are generally the most mild in manner and most regardful of the susceptibilities and even of the prejudices of others.

Were there any incompatibility between strength and gentleness, then possibly we might be pardoned for dispensing with the latter: but the two are not only possible, but most beautiful, in combination. The man is little better than a fool who imagines that uncouthness indicates genius, or that rudeness of manner means robustness of character: not unfrequently just the opposite inference may be drawn. And where unquestionable genius is allied with brusqueness of manner, and an apparent disregard to the feelings of other people (have we not an instance in Thomas Carlyle?), the manner suffers in consequence, and his influence for good is impaired.

It is not necessary to assert unwelcome truths in an offensive way; even the most

telling rebuke may be given in a manner that will win regard.

“*Gant de velours, main de fer,*” as the French say—the iron hand in the velvet glove—if you must draw blood, let it not be with a rusty poniard.

It is one of the first marks of true refinement of mind to guard against saying any thing that unnecessarily gives pain; as Chaucer writes in his “*Canterbury Tales*” :—

The firste vertue, sone, if thou wilt leve,
Is to restreine, and kepen well thy tongue.

Civility costs little, but is of great value. True, as an old proverb has it, “fine words butter no parsnips”; but they are of good service, and, like oil, make the wheels of life run smoothly. How often has it been remarked, that it was not so much what a certain person said, as how he said it, that left an impression behind.

Dr. Johnson on one occasion observed to a friend: “Sir, a man has no more right to say an uncivil thing than to act one; no

more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down."

Politeness is to a man what beauty is to a woman—it at once creates an impression in his favor, whilst the absence of it immediately excites a prejudice against him. We may condemn the nation of proverbial good manners for its frivolity, but we may at least take a lesson from its courtesy; ask a Parisian to show you the road, and without even smiling at your poor French he will, with the kindest address, give you full direction. Contrast this with the curt manner with which, as a rule, a stranger's inquiry is responded to on our streets.

There is no doubt that travelling and coming in contact with society in all its varied forms tends to give one polish and agreeableness of manners.

The rustic youth who has never been fifty miles from his native glen, and accordingly has hardly rubbed shoulders with men of a different way of thinking from himself, is naturally narrow and opinionative; but if his

heart has been brought under the power of Divine grace, this soon rubs off as he sees a little of the world; his prospect enlarges, his sympathies widen, and he perceives truth and goodness where he had not expected to find either. Nothing so mellows and beautifies the character as true religion; nor was it with any spirit of irreverence that, more than a couple of centuries ago, Thomas Dekker wrote of the Divine Carpenter of Nazareth:—

A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.

Let me remind you that courtesy, like charity, begins at home. The well-bred man is as polite within the circle of his own family as in the company of his social superiors. He is a mere prig who takes his good manners with him, like his carpet-bag, only when he is going from home, whose supreme aim is to shine amongst strangers.

The refinement of a true gentleman will be nowhere more conspicuous than in the

society of his own parents and sisters, and in the thousand little attentions which cannot be formulated in rules, but are prompted by a kindly and ingenuous nature. The easy surprises of affection, the readiness to oblige, the promptness to do a favor, the skill in smoothing a momentary jar, the delicate abstinence from topics likely to cause irritation,—these are amongst the secrets of that genuine politeness that goes so far to make the home happy.

One loves to see, in a young man especially, alertness to be courteous in the smallest things. The very closing of a door on leaving a railway car, the giving the inner side of the pavement to a lady, the rising up to shake hands with a friend who addresses you, the respectful raising of the hat, and fifty other things may be mentioned as trifling indeed, in one sense, but most important in another, and sufficient to draw the line between an ungainly boor and a Christian gentleman.

Let me remind you that your general bear-

ing and deportment will have much to do with your future success in life.

“Give a youth address and accomplishments,” says Emerson, “and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes wherever he goes.” And the Earl of Chesterfield was not far wrong when he remarked, “Manners is all in everything; it is by manners only that you can please and consequently rise. All your Greek,” he adds, “will never advance you from secretary to envoy, or from envoy to ambassador; but your address, your air, your manner, if good, may.”

The man who attains success in any calling is not always the ablest or most diligent; but as a rule he is the man who shows the greatest readiness to please and to be pleased; whose courtesy of manners almost disarms criticism and insures regard.

There are countless instances within our knowledge in which pleasing manners have had much to do with the success, not only of lawyers, doctors, and divines, but also of clerks, laborers, and men in every walk of

life. Of a certain politician it was said that the very tones in which he asked for a pinch of snuff were more potent than the clearest logic. Genuine refinement is the exclusive possession of no one class; it is within the reach of every one.

May each of my young men readers so bear himself through life, that he may merit the couplet Tennyson wrote on Hanlon:—

And thus he bore without abuse,
The grand old name of gentleman.

V.

RUBBISH.

“**T**HERE is much rubbish.” So said the Jewish builders in Nehemiah’s time, . . . who were set to restore the walls of . . . Jerusalem.

Whilst that single-hearted patriot, though in reality in exile, was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, and living amid all the splendor and luxury of Shushan, it was a constant burden on his spirit to think of the desolations of his own land, of the walls of the sacred city lying in ruins, of the temple broken down, the ordinances of religion neglected, and the people sinking into helpless despair.

He clearly saw that the one step which, under God, would resuscitate the nation, revive their spirits, restore their prestige,

and lay the foundation of their future prosperity was the rebuilding of their ancient and beloved city, and to do this he resolved to devote his life.

Having obtained permission of the Persian monarch, and earnestly sought the blessing of Heaven, he came to Jerusalem to enter upon his gigantic task. With all the energy of his nature he threw himself into the undertaking, and by his inspiring words and example so stirred up the whole population that they vigorously entered on the work. Each several tribe and family had its own share allotted to it.

The various trades were well represented.

Special mention is made of the activity of the goldsmiths, and the apothecaries, and the merchants and others, who set to work with a will to restore the city.

In an incredibly short space of time the walls began to emerge from the *débris* and dust, the gateways were rebuilt, the doors with locks and bars were hung, and the city gave promise of being once more a place

of strength and beauty; but, oh, the *rub-*
bish that had first to be cleared out of the
way.

Now, we are builders, or we ought to be. Every one has his own share of work to do in the building of the temple of God; and a man's life has been utterly thrown away if, when it is ended, it is found that he has not added so much as a stone to the edifice. Some persons are intent on building up a business, building up a fortune, building up a reputation, but if that is all you have before you, it will be a sad thing for you in the day of reckoning!

God wants you to build for Him, and for eternity; to do your quota in the erection of a spiritual temple to Him on earth; to discharge your own measure of responsibility in regard to the setting up of His blessed kingdom, "kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." A duty devolves upon every one, even the youngest and the humblest, in respect to the purification of society, the amelioration of sorrow,

the spread of knowledge and happiness, and the bettering of mankind.

You have to rear the sacred edifice of character, to raise the stately structure of a life-work that shall be to the glory of God: and now is the time to set about it in earnest. But every one will find, no matter what his sphere may be, that if there is much to be done, there is, first of all, not a little to be *undone*. In a world like this there is a great deal of negative work to be accomplished. A heap has to be cleared away before you can begin to build. The spade must come before the trowel. It is arduous and painful; there is no romance or *éclat* about it; but it is necessary in order that the foundations may be securely laid. The slate is scribbled over, and must be cleaned before the fair copy can be written.

When our first parent was placed in Eden, God said nothing to him about clearing away the weeds and nettles; there was no Dutch hoe put into his hand, for as yet the soil was clean, and the first gardener's instructions

were simply to dress the garden and keep it. It is very different work now. Everywhere weeds and noxious growths of all kinds prevail, and before a man can sow his seeds and plant his flowers, there is much stiff and unattractive labor in preparing the ground for them.

This negative work may not make any show, it may call forth little admiration and applause, but it is essential. A friend once called upon Michael Angelo in his studio, whilst he was at work upon a statue. Some weeks later he called again and found the great sculptor still engaged on the same marble figure. "Why, you have done nothing to this statue since I saw it some weeks ago!" "Oh, yes," replied the incomparable genius, "I have; I have removed the blemish from that limb, and taken away the hard expression from that eye, and corrected the defect in that muscle." Well, it was only negative work, but it was indispensable to a successful result.

"There is much rubbish" of conceits, and

prejudices, and misconceptions, and superstitions, and delusions of every sort, in the case of most of us, to be cleared away at the very commencement of our spiritual education. The mind has to be liberated from many a prepossession. Some of us have drunk in from the earliest days the most erroneous conceptions. It has been our trouble from boyhood that we have had to unlearn a good many notions which had taken such a hold upon us that they warp our judgment to this very hour. Even Martin Luther bitterly complained that from his childhood he had been trained to regard Jesus Christ as a severe and angry Judge, so that he positively trembled at the mention of that name that ought to "sound so sweet in a believer's ear."

Some impressions and opinions, though incorrect, may be harmless in their effect, but others may throw a lifelong blight upon the soul. Columbus was firmly persuaded that the world was not more than twelve thousand miles in circumference. He, there-

fore, confidently expected that after sailing about three thousand miles to the westward, he would touch the shores of the new continent.

It was a big mistake, but it was a harmless one, because he pushed forward all the more hopefully in the right direction.

But had his miscalculations been on the other side—had he imagined, for example, that the earth's circumference was fifty or sixty thousand miles, it is probable he would never have planned his expedition, and never have made his great discovery. Some of us were early taught to think of God as far away from us, as a Being, stern, implacable, and delighting in judgment; and that impression has done us a world of harm: it has discouraged us in moments when we were ready to arise and go to Him, and the first part of our spiritual education was the unlearning of this hideous lie and the discovery that, so far from delighting in judgment, He "delighteth in mercy," and that the Father's arms are opened wide

to welcome the penitent prodigal home again.

The rubbish in the way may take other forms. Yes, a man's very gold and silver may be the rubbish that is hindering him from building up a Christian character and a noble life. Money as well as ambition has often blocked up the way to heaven, and many a youth, when called to the kingdom, has, like Saul, been "hid among the stuff."

A successful merchant lay a-dying, who yet seemed as though he could not die, and with aimless and nervous restlessness his hands kept moving about, opening and shutting, and clutching the bed-clothes. "What is the matter?" asked the physician, who was at a loss to know what it meant. "I know," said his son; "every night before he went to sleep, he liked to feel and handle some of his bank-notes." The youth slipped a bank-note into his father's hand, and feeling, handling, crumpling it he died.

VI.

THE LOVE OF PLEASURE.

WHEN Solomon says, "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man" (Prov. . . . xxi. 17), he puts his finger upon the . . . secret of the failure of nine-tenths of our unsuccessful young men. They loved pleasure and gave themselves up to its pursuit, and so they have never got on, and—never will. Not by any means that to be a poor man is necessarily to be an unhappy man; but when poverty comes as the result of idleness, and sloth, and self-indulgence it is both a curse and a shame.

None of my readers desire to be poor men; if you are poor just now you hope to be rich some day, or at least to be fairly well off; and in this wish there is nothing

whatever to condemn. Whatever view we may take of human life, and of the value of money, one thing is certain, that if happiness is not always found in success, it is never found in failure.

Poverty is, of course, a relative term. What one man would deem indigence, another would probably consider to be abundance, but nothing is more surprising than the large proportion of men having a fair start in life who never, all their days, come within sight of the position of comfort they had confidently expected to reach.

A well-known citizen in a large commercial centre, who had long been acquainted with the leading business men of the place, gave it as his deliberate opinion that not more than three out of every hundred who entered upon mercantile life there became ultimately successful. Of the great mass of young men who every year rush to the cities in the hope of doing well for themselves, there is but a small percentage who win a position of comparative affluence, whilst

there are probably large numbers whom, to the end of the chapter, every day is but a struggle to keep their heads above water.

Now, *why is this?* It will not do to say that there is not room for all, or that mercantile life is but a great lottery, in which the prizes are so few and the blanks so many, that thousands must of necessity collapse; no, a very large proportion of the failures can easily be accounted for, and the ancient sage pointed to one of the most conspicuous causes when he asserted, that "he that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man." Other causes of non-success among our young men can easily be mentioned,—financial speculation for example. There are always a number of persons who lay themselves out to get money by any other means than by good honest work; and when a young fellow once gets on this line of rail, he is practically done for. "The darkest day in any man's earthly career," so said Horace Greeley, "is that wherein he first

fancies there is some easier way of gaining a shilling than by squarely earning it."

Some remain poor men all their days simply through want of business capacity; they are wooden headed, and would spoil almost any job they did, unless it were that of turning a grindstone.

Others fail through sheer downright laziness, never seeming to be more than half awake; others, through instability of application, and impatience for immediate results; others, through an entire lack of originality and enterprise; whilst, in still a fifth case, failure has been due to an extravagant sanguineness; for, to listen to them, you would suppose they had just tapped a new vein that is to bring them a fortune; but said fortune never comes.

After all, however, it is to the love of pleasure that a large number of young men owe their non-success.

Pleasure, indeed, is a word of many meanings, and it must not be supposed that the pursuit of it in every form tends to penury.

Some find an exquisite pleasure in the contemplation of Nature; others will tell us of the pleasure they realize in the study of literature, in science, in travel, in music; and many a one, to whom a well-stocked library is like a little heaven on earth, can join in the words of an old English song:—

Oh for a book and a shady nook,
Either indoors or out,
With the green leaves whispering overhead,
Or the street cries all about;
Where I may read all at my ease,
Both of the new and old;
For a jolly good book, wherein to look,
Is better to me than gold.

No one would say, in regard to such pleasures as these, that the man who pursues them in moderation will come to poverty, for indeed they are elevating and wholesome in their character. But I would have my readers know that the word Solomon employs in his proverb points to pleasure of a very different character; it is rendered "sport" in the margin, and indicates a class of amusements that are riotous and demoralizing. In

what are usually called out-door sports, there is nothing which an intelligent Christian is called upon to condemn where they do not absorb too much attention and time; but it must be acknowledged that through an excessive fondness even for these some young men have injured their prospects of business success. The craving for amusement requires sometimes to be curbed; it is possible that games and athletic exercises that are innocent enough in themselves, may become a snare. Many a man who began life well has, through nothing but the inordinate love of pleasure, ended in the poorhouse. I have seen youths become so enamoured of this, that, or the other form of amusement, that business was neglected, books were neglected, even religion was neglected, and off they went galloping to ruin.

Such pleasures, for one thing, generally demand money, and when the little stock is exhausted the stupid fellows are first tempted to borrow what they cannot earn, and then to steal what they cannot borrow.

An occasional holiday is not enough for them; and instead of throwing their whole heart into duty, they are ever planning new schemes of diversion. How many an anxious parent has occasion to write after this style: "I wish you would use your influence with my son, and get him to stick more closely to his work. James is a nice lad, but he is too fond of pleasure and unhappily has got among a set of companions who are always tempting him to neglect business."

Well, I recommend Master James to lay to heart what a great sage declared three thousand years ago: "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man."

The truth of the proverb has been confirmed times without number, and many is the elderly man who is eating a dry crust today, because in youth his motto practically was, "Pleasure before Duty."

Put pleasure in its proper place, and it will be doubly sweet. It is those who stick resolutely to their post, and carry through their

task, who not only are on the way to easier circumstances by and by, but even now have by far the largest enjoyment of legitimate pleasure. "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it."

VII.

“THE BUBBLE REPUTATION.”

VALUABLE as money is, we have it on very high authority that there is . . . something more valuable still, for Solomon declares that a good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and is more to be desired than silver and gold. What a happy thing it is that it is a treasure out of the reach of no one! Wealth you may never be able to acquire, but this is a possession within the grasp of all.

In the first place, be it remembered that a good name *must be the fruit of one's own exertion*. Of all the elements of success in life none is more vital than self-reliance, the determination to be, under God, the creator of your own reputation. If difficulties stand

in the way, all the better, so long as you have pluck to fight through them.

Let each young man learn to have faith in himself, and, scorning props and crutches, take earnest hold on life; believing that, as the biographer of Goethe says, "man ought to regard himself not (as he is often told) as the creature of circumstances, but as the architect of circumstances." Many a youth has good stuff in him that never comes to anything, because he slips too easily into some groove of life: it is commonly those who have a tough battle to begin with that make their mark upon their age. Beethoven said of Rossini, "that he had the material in him to have made a good musician if he had only been well flogged when a boy, but that he was spoiled by the ease with which he composed."

Thousands of young men have turned out failures because they relied for a good name on their excellent parentage, or on the patronage of friends, rather than on their own personal exertions,

It has not always proved an unmixed benefit to have a wealthy grandfather or an influential uncle, to give the young spark a start in life and a reputation on which he could trade: not seldom this has turned out a real misfortune. Such conditions generally issue in the production of a weak and molluscous character. Hence it happens so often that the sons of merchant-princes, of your big city men, turn out mere nobodies. It is quite observable that character and wealth rarely continue in the same family for more than two or three generations.

"What I am I have made myself; I say this without vanity and in pure simplicity of heart." So wrote that brilliantly successful man, Sir Humphrey Davy; and it is quite remarkable how many of our worthiest and most respected citizens have risen to honor and position, simply by dint of their stern principle and persevering exertion. The only good name worth having must be sought in this way.

If it is an honorable ambition for a young

man to wish to "get on," it is a still nobler ambition for him to wish to "get up," to stand high in the respect of all who know him; but if you are hoping to reach this in any other way than by your own steady self-exertion, ah! my dear boy, you are looking through the wrong end of the telescope, and your prospect can only be dim and disappointing.

The next thing I have to say is that the pursuit of a good name must be *begun in early life*. Remember, it is not a thing that can be created suddenly, it takes years to establish, and when youth and adolescence are gone, it is next to impossible. It will not shoot up in a night like Jonah's gourd at Nineveh; but, like that gourd, it may perish in a night. The high character which it has taken long years to establish may in one hour be hopelessly shattered. But, thank God, such a case is exceedingly rare, especially where the formation has commenced at an early age. The sooner a boy gives indication of sterling principle, of

unbending truthfulness, and of genuine self-respect, the greater is the confidence we may feel in his honorable future.

Most of the men of our country whose names stand for exalted principle, a high sense of honor, and splendid beneficence, revealed while they were yet beardless youths the germs of their future character. Even at fourteen or sixteen years of age there were not wanting indications of what the coming man was to be. I should say that in most cases the third septennate of life—from fifteen to twenty-one inclusive—is the formative period. Let a young man pass this season with pure morals and an unstained reputation, showing command of himself, control of his passions, and diligent application to duty, we need have little fear that "a good name" will crown his maturer years.

On the other hand, if at this stage of life he gives way to indolent habits, indulges in vicious courses, associates with drinking and betting men, and betrays an undoubted

want of conscientiousness, his character incurs a stain which no subsequent repentance is likely to remove. It is usually after he has reached his majority that a man begins to make money; but it is before he reaches it that he makes what is far more valuable—a good name—a fair, honorable character.

A good name, to be of value, *must be based on sterling and intrinsic worth.*

Dugald Stewart tells of a young man whose supreme ambition was to be able to balance a broomstick on his chin; another's highest aim is to be the champion sculler, to be the first foot-ball player in the country; to be A1 at a game of billiards, to beat the record on his bicycle, to go without food for forty days, and so forth. Well, every man to his taste; I am not at present saying anything for or against these achievements, but you will hardly pronounce any of them the noblest form of ambition. No man can be expected to rise higher than his own standard.

May I venture to mention one or two elements which go to the formation of that good name that all the gold of the Rothschilds could not buy?

I give the first place to *stern truthfulness*. No prevarications, no innuendos, no shams. Let the strict truth be spoken at all times and at all costs. Not this only; for a lie may be acted as well as spoken. There may be as big a falsehood in omission or in concealment, as over-statement. As an old Latin proverb has it, "*Suppressio veri suggestio falsi*"; *i. e.*, the suppression of truth is the suggestion of the lie. Let your word be as good as your oath any day; your promise as valuable as your bond. You are already of consequence in the world if it is known you can be implicitly relied upon. Strict fidelity is an article of high commercial value. You may have a pleasing address, good manners, and any amount of brain; all that is worth little if absolute confidence cannot be placed in you. Loathe an untruth as you loathe death. Be jealous of any

weakness on this point of character. Stamp it out if it exists.

Again, let your name be a synonym for *purity*. Let your character, like Cæsar's wife, be above suspicion. Have such an abhorrence of the lewd, the vile, the base that the veriest hint of a charge against you will rebound and fall harmless at your feet. Beware of a word, a look, a gesture, a laugh that may be misunderstood, and bring a stain upon you. Remember, even a whisper of reproach, if there is cause for it, may ruin you for life. A pointed cannon is nothing to a pointed finger, when the conscience is not clear.

I would have you also have a good name for *benevolence*. Sweeter than the perfume of roses is a reputation for a kind, charitable, unselfish nature; a ready disposition to do for others any good turn in your power.

Strict integrity and purity are not enough. A man is not likely to get on well in the world if he thinks of nobody but number one. There are many other qualities essen-

tial to a fair reputation, which space does not permit me to name; but very important it is to keep in mind also what may be called *the minor moralities of life*. A good name for punctuality, for example, of what immense service may this be to a young man,—always up to the minute, his watch never behind time and he never behind his watch. A good name for early rising, for clean and tidy habits, for an obliging disposition, for plodding perseverance, for regard to economy: there is not one of these points you can afford to despise, for they all go to make up the reputation on which your future must largely depend.

VIII.

“HARD LINES.”

HOW frequently do we hear the remark made regarding some youth who has . . . got into trouble, and cannot get out . . . again, “Poor fellow! he has hard lines.” Misconduct and misfortune not seldom follow one another in this life; and too often it happens that whilst the latter awakens sympathy, the former does not evoke rebuke.

In regard to a large number of evil courses retribution usually follows without long delay. Sin never pays. The indulgence of vice is not only a crime, but a blunder. It can never be good in the long run to have God against you.

When men sin, they do it in expectation

of happiness; the happiness does not come, but on the other hand misery. Not once within the past six thousand years has a man reaped a single real advantage from doing wrong. In every instance without exception in which one has violated conscience, he has eventually been the poorer and the sadder for it. Sin means sorrow and pain, whether the pain follow immediately or after a while.

Fix this deeply on your mind, you cannot contravene the laws of God without suffering damage. Probably all men have some suspicion of this truth, and though they try to forget it, have a rooted conviction that God will bring them into judgment for their sins.

But this is not the point I wish to press just now. Will the reader remember that, in regard to a large class of sins, retribution follows in this present world? "The way of transgressors is hard" before they have long gone on in it.

At first it promised to be a pleasant road.

It looked flowery, smooth, enticing; but it turned out to be stony, rough, and rugged.

Very tempting do many of the avenues of vice appear. There lies the danger. You look down this path and that, and oh, how attractive is the view! Everything to bewitch and charm. A greenwood path, as it were, festooned with trees, and carpeted with flowers! Such it seems at its opening, but as you advance the vision vanishes; the flowery turf changes into sharp, rugged stones, and with sore and bleeding feet you are forced to own, "The way is hard!"

I sometimes think that, from exceptional circumstances, it has been specially my lot for a good many years to come in contact with a large number of young men who are witnesses to this truth.

I could fill a volume with the record of instances that have come under my own personal observation, of promising youths, once the joy of their parents and an ornament to society, who in the hour of temptation fell, and have gone from bad to worse, till now

they are mere wrecks—situation gone, money gone, health gone, character gone, power of will gone, and all hope gone, and they themselves very pictures of misery, fit for nothing but to be warnings to others, as they wail forth the bitter confession: “The way of transgressors is hard!”

Some time ago a godly minister from the country, who had taken a special interest in the spiritual welfare of young men, happened to be in London. Passing along Cheapside one day, he took refuge from a shower of rain in the Mansion House, where the Lord Mayor was sitting in court. On the following morning, whilst calling at the office of a friend, a letter was handed to him, which had been thrust in under the door. The letter was as follows:

Tuesday Evening.

DEAR SIR: As I was walking up Ludgate Hill this morning, you passed me. It is ten years since I left—, but I knew you instantly, and forward this line to tell you that I am glad to see you looking so well, and that the sight of your familiar face induced a number of pleasing reflections in connection with

bygone scenes, but of agonizing remorse at the maddening recollection that from the neglect of those principles which you endeavored to inculcate, I find myself a young man stripped of fortune, friends, character, and hope of the world to come—a mere wreck, a waif on the restless waves of life that sway to and fro in this great city! What would I not do to recall the past! The text, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,' thunders in my conscience constantly.

I find it true in temporal affairs as well as spiritual. The next you hear of me will be in the list of those who seek to bury their sorrows in the waters of the Thames.

That a coffee-house is my study is my only excuse for this rude scrawl. I thought these feelings *I* had smothered forever, but conscience *will be heard*, despite all. I wilfully silence her, and now I can trace the retributive hand of Providence in the results of every false step. I saw you at the Mansion House again in the afternoon. I hope you will refrain from making inquiries as to my name, as it would be labor thrown away. All I ask is an interest in your prayers.

It can well be believed that the perusal of this letter deeply touched the heart of the minister, who, though intensely desirous to find out the writer, yet, having no clue, seemed to have a hopeless task before him. However, he determined he would try.

Next morning the following advertisement appeared in the "agony column" of the *Times* newspaper:

"A young man who on the 23d inst. addressed a note to R. E. M., which was left at an office in Gresham Street, is earnestly requested to send his name and address to the said R. E. M., 356 Post Office, B——, who will be rejoiced to relieve him."

Little was expected from this, but it was a bow drawn at a venture.

It was not long before a letter, addressed as above, reached the minister by post. I will give it you word for word:

CITY, *Monday.*

DEAR SIR: I see that time, that destroys all things, has not altered your character, ever kind, generous, and anxious to succor the distressed. Accept my best and heartfelt thanks for your kind communication in the *Times*; but I regret that you should have been at the trouble and expense of insertion, as it is impossible for me to avail myself of it at the present. The past, the present, and the future equally forbid a disclosure of my private history; and yet you are the only person to whom I could, I think, unbosom myself, or from whom I

could seek advice; but not now. Do not waste another thought upon one who is totally unworthy of everything but contempt and derision from all good men. Could I persuade myself that there is no hereafter, how gladly would I seek annihilation! But it is a hopeless task; the instincts of my better part are unfortunately too truthful to be deluded with a lie. What an awful reality is life, and what a dream has been mine! Commencing with novel-reading, and ending in vice, misery, and disease! Such are a few of the least evils I am now reaping.

I remain, dear sir, yours gratefully,

Ah! this is but one of hundreds of such cases which occur every year in our large cities, many of which indeed never come to the light, but terminate fatally in some dark lodging in the slums, or in the poorhouse, or the asylum, or banishment beyond these shores. Were I not bound to strict confidence, I could supply many a letter as distressing as the above; which, after perusal, I have laid down with a heavy sigh, unconsciously saying: "Verily, the way of transgressors is *hard!*"

This page may be read by some who are

just beginning to venture on the perilous incline. Stop! By the grace of God plant your foot firmly on the line of principle and purity. Have the mind preoccupied with noble and inspiring thoughts, and beware of what Tennyson calls "sins of emptiness."

IX.

THE CONFIDENTIAL CLERK.

SOME time ago, being in the company of a friend who had acquired a considerable fortune, I took the liberty of . . . asking him, "Suppose you could command whatever income or capital you might choose to name, what is the sum you would specify as sufficient to make you perfectly happy?" His answer was significant. Naming a certain figure, he added with impressive emphasis, "*And a confidential clerk or steward* to whom I could safely entrust the management of all!"

Large possessions mean heavy cares, and many a man with apparently an unlimited income and a corresponding amount of varied anxiety, has confessed himself to be

really less happy than when he was earning the meagre salary of an ordinary clerk.

A late Scotch nobleman, being accompanied one day by a friend to the top of a hill that overlooked his wide estates, honestly acknowledged, in reply to the remark, "Surely your lordship must be the happiest of men," that he did not believe there was in all the country round an individual more ill at ease than himself. His property, said he, involved a burden of care, and he had no trustworthy subordinate on whose shoulders he could lay it. To such a man what an enormous relief it must be to secure the services of one who makes his master's interest his own, and who can at all times be implicitly relied on!

In this respect, few men have probably been more fortunate than Abraham. A landed proprietor on an extensive scale, and at the head of an immense establishment, he was one of the great magnates of the East.

But in Eliezer of Damascus, who in all

likelihood was originally a slave, but whom the patriarch had early attached to his household, he found one on whose prudence, faithfulness, and loyalty he could depend.

So greatly did this stranger endear himself to his master by his admirable character and trustworthiness, that he rose, not only to be his chief servant and confidential steward, but—failing any issue to the patriarch—to be sole heir to all he possessed.

Thank God, slavery in its literal sense is no longer the reproach and dishonor of our fair land. But are there not, even in a free country, positions of drudgery and toil that are little better? Yet, from time to time, we meet with the case of one who, by sheer dint of energy and exemplary fidelity, has won his way upward from the very lowest to almost the highest step of the ladder, and who becomes, not even a subordinate, but “a brother beloved.”

For true highmindedness and unselfish fidelity, few names on the page of Scripture are entitled to more respect than that of

Eliezer of Damascus; and his loyalty to the interests of Abraham was not more conspicuous than his piety.

As the patriarch's steward or confidential clerk, he took everything straight to his Master in heaven; and his prayer at the well of Nahor was one which every young man might profitably offer every morning: "O Lord God, I pray thee, send me good speed this day." My earnest advice to every youthful reader of these pages is to make this short petition his own, and look up for the Divine blessing on everything he undertakes.

Even the strictest fidelity to your earthly master will not take the place of faithfulness to God. When M. Colbert, a successful merchant in France, was laid down with his last illness, a letter was brought to him from the king, but he refused so much as to have it read to him. "Let him leave me in peace," exclaimed he. "Had I done for my God what I have done for that man, I would be happier now." It was a remarkable ex-

pression from dying lips, showing that it is quite possible, with all worldly integrity and success, to forget that there is One above to whom we are first of all responsible. The mere making of money, whether for ourselves or for our superior, comes a long way short of indicating a successful life; to be worth having or earning, it must have the blessing of God resting upon it. When Jacob Astor, the well-known millionaire who by his own abilities had raised himself from a very humble position to be one of the foremost men in the United States, was dying, he asked to be supplied with a sheet of paper and a pencil; and what do you suppose he wrote? The man who had been the envy of all his fellows, and who had amassed more money than he knew what to do with, scratched with his trembling hand the melancholy confession, "My life has been a *failure!* Ah! my reader, your life too must in the end prove a failure, unless the smile of God rests upon you.

I am struck with the earnestness of

Eliezer's prayers for his master. "Show kindness," he entreats, "unto my master, Abraham." Young men! Do you pray for your employers? Do you invoke the Divine blessing on the firm under which you serve?

It is an unspeakable advantage to any mercantile house to have godly assistants employed in it; to have decidedly Christian men at the head of the various departments; to have as confidential clerk a man who has the fear of God before his eyes. The prayers of such men will do more to bring true prosperity to the establishment than all the sharp tricks of persons who have no higher thought than to make gain.

It is a fine thing to see young men who have no selfish ends to promote, and who perhaps get no commission or percentage of profit on the business they turn over, working as diligently as if all the proceeds went straight into their own pockets. They will be no losers in the end.

Let every morning, then, find you taking this double prayer to your Father in heaven:

“O Lord God, I pray Thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness to my master.”

What a different atmosphere would there be in the commercial world, if this practice were universal!

In sailing out of some of our great harbors one may sometimes see a green and tattered flag floating over a broken but invisible hulk, with the word “Wreck” inscribed upon it, and seeming to say, “Here a ship went down.” So I am ever and anon coming across some wasted, ruined life, and therefore I am urgent in entreating every reader of these pages to go to the proper quarter for blessing and success.

X.

OUT OF A SITUATION.

OF the host of young men who every week find their way to the cities, it . . . is only a limited number who come to . . . enter vacant situations already secured for them; the majority have just to look out for themselves.

In truth, a good many had been wiser not to come at all. In not a few distant country places it is quite a common notion, that if a youth can only scrape together as much money as will pay his way to the city, he is pretty sure, within forty-eight hours of his arrival, to find a berth exactly to his mind. Possibly he believes that so valuable an acquisition as he will be eagerly sought after.

Too often the illusion vanishes when his feet patter on the hard pavements.

The stranger is mortified to find that no one wants him, and that the big city can manage to get on without him. At times I have not known whether most to be amused or distressed at the expression of vexed surprise on the face of some new-comer, who had evidently expected many an open door of welcome. The first bitter experience in life has not seldom been the cold rebuffs met with by such a too sanguine adventurer.

What a curious picture of Eastern life is that which our Lord incidentally gives us in one of His parables, where we read of a land-owner who has plenty of work to be done on his property, but finds a scarcity of men ready to undertake it!

But on going to the market-place, he sees no lack of idlers there. It matters not at what hour—be it nine in the morning, or noon, or three, or five P. M., as often as he goes he finds lazy, indolent fellows loafing about waiting for somebody to come and put bread in their mouths.

“Why are you standing here all the day

idle?" he inquires. "Because no man has hired us." It seems never to have occurred to any of them just to step round among the vineyards, and see whether they could not find a job. I suppose they would sooner starve than bestir themselves to seek for honest employment.

Such fellows are not unknown characters in any of our large towns; and they claim not a particle of sympathy. The idle man—I mean the man who is content to be idle—is an annoyance, a nuisance. He is of no benefit to anybody, an intruder in the busy thoroughfare of life—like a "crawling cab," hindering the traffic, blocking the way.

There is nothing more demoralizing than idleness. Industry, as Isaac Barrow says, is a fence to virtue. "You are right," said Frederick the Great to a friend, "in supposing that I work hard. I do so in order to live, for nothing has more resemblance to death than idleness."

Better turn a cutler's grindstone all day

long, than loiter about with the hands plunged in the pockets of your trousers.

In the Louvre, at Paris, the anvil is still exhibited at which Louis XVI. was in the habit, with the smith's apron on, of endeavoring to keep his energies employed. Idlers are the very stock out of which gamblers, drunkards, and suicides are formed. When a man has nothing to do, his spirit sours, his manhood withers. Old Dumbiedykes bid his son to be "aye stickin' in a tree, when he had nothing else to do"; and the advice was sound. We are often told of persons who kill themselves by over-work; but of this I am certain, that many a life is shortened through sheer *ennui* and aimlessness.

I shall presume, however, that amongst my readers are some who detest idleness, but for the life of them can find nothing to do. They have strained every effort to get a situation, but to this hour are as far from it as ever.

Oh! it is chilling to go to this house of business and that, to call on one and another,

and yet another employer of labor, or head of a firm, and find that there are no hands wanted, to tramp the weary streets day after day, knocking at every door that offers a ray of hope, presenting testimonials that seem all that could be desired, and yet at the day's close to be no nearer an appointment than before. It is very trying. I confess my heart has often bled for such a youth.

And yet I am bound to say that in many cases I have known, the individual himself has been largely to blame; perhaps too lightly throwing up one situation before another has been secured, or coveting a line of calling for which his talents did not fit him. There is a good deal of truth in what Sydney Smith said: "Be what nature intended you for, and you will succeed; be anything else, and you will be a thousand times worse than nothing." Every lad who is to get on in the world must study his own aptitudes. How many young fellows prove total failures, simply because they have mistaken the line for which God designed them;

whilst others, with less talents, have met with brilliant success, because they got into their appropriate groove.

Young Ferguson's wooden clock gave promise of the future astronomer; Humphrey Davy's boyish experiments were a hint of the coming chemical philosopher; Faraday's electric machine, made with a big bottle; Watt's study of the steam of the tea-kettle; Michael Angelo's pencil sketchings at school—all these showed the bent of each young mind, and are in keeping with the answer of a certain splendid equestrian, when asked how he sat so gracefully on the saddle, "Oh," said he, "I was born on horseback!"

But—I come back to my point. It is seldom there are not some, who, through no fault of their own, either fail to find an opening, or are thrown out of situations which they have filled—Christian young men, too, it may be; and they get sadly despondent. Perhaps this page meets the eye of the very youth I am describing, who

has tramped the city for days without success, and is utterly at a loss what to do. It may encourage you to know that not a few men who became famous for their commercial success were at first almost in despair like yourself. George Moore, the distinguished London merchant, who died about twelve years ago, came from a quiet home in Cumberland when he was nineteen years of age, and determined to find a sphere of usefulness in the metropolis. Many was the rub and snub he had to put up with. "It seemed," he said, "as if nobody would have me. The keenest cut of all was from ——, of Holborn: he asked me if I wanted a porter's situation. This almost broke my heart."

But on he plodded and persevered; and as soon as one door was shut against him, he tried another. At last he met with his reward. And at the close of his marvellously successful life he acknowledged that he could see God's faithful and guiding hand all through his career, and that those early dis-

appointments proved to be for his good. Do not lose heart, young friend: there is still room for you. See that the grass does not grow under your feet; leave no stone unturned till you secure an opening; lay your case before God, looking in faith for His guidance; and comfort yourself with the cheering assurance (Deut. ii. 7): "He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness."

XI.

“A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK.”

“WHOSE son art thou, young man?” was the first question addressed . . . by King Saul to the rosy-cheeked . . . stripling of Bethlehem, when, introduced by Abner into the royal presence, David stood before him, holding Goliath’s head in his hand.

A question it is, which one is always ready to address to a youth of distinction and promise.

Character is often moulded by parentage, and qualities moral, intellectual, and physical are transmitted from father and son. In numerous instances we see certain tendencies and idiosyncrasies handed down through successive generations.

Sometimes it is positively amusing.

Without a mistake I can recognize in that boy's handwriting the pen of his father, and of his grandfather, too. In other cases we see the hereditary transmission in peculiarities of figure, or stature, or gesture; in the tone of the voice, in hesitancy or volubility of utterance, in dimness or nearness of sight, or perhaps in the early whitening of the hair, or, what is worse, the loss of it. Some families are noted for longevity, others for good looks, others for love of adventure. The aquiline nose runs in the line of the Bonapartes, the large lip in the House of Hapsburg, the bald head in the House of Hanover.

In some instances there is a certain expression of countenance traceable to the third or fourth generation. I call upon a young man at his lodgings, and take up the portrait-album on his table; and instantly I say, pointing to a photograph there, though I never saw the original, "Ah, you don't need to tell me who that is; one can see at a glance that you are a 'chip of the old block,'"

Mental qualities are transmitted too. Without much knowledge of phrenology, I have only to look at that lad's head, to see from the configuration of it that, like his father, he is a mechanical genius; in another case it is musical talent that descends; in another the taste for painting; in a fourth the love of poetry; and in a fifth the gift of acquiring languages.

And, what is yet more noticeable, moral tendencies, good, bad, and indifferent, pass on from parent to child.

Not long since I heard of a case in which a confirmed slave of alcohol actually said, "My father was a tippler, my grandfather was a drinker before him, I shall be a drunkard too; we belong to a race of inebriates. I may as well accept my fate, it cannot be helped."

So a fiery temper seems in certain instances to be perpetuated in successive generations; the father fiercely passionate, the son and grandson irate too. There are conspicuous cases of close-fisted greed being

ancestral; the old gentleman would save up every penny he could scrape together, his son is a miser, his grandson a screw. You never hear of any member of that family giving money for a good object; they are all born to handle the rake rather than the pitchfork, to gather together rather than to scatter abroad.

On the other hand, noble and generous features of character appear sometimes to run in the blood. You are kind and warm-hearted, your parents were so before you. You are sternly upright and truthful—a more scrupulously straightforward man than your father never lived.

Those well-thumbed volumes of Puritan theology in your bookshelves; that big old-fashioned Bible, bearing date of more than a century ago; they tell what kind of a stock you have come from, and what a legacy of prayer you have fallen heir to. Ah! if there is anything like a pious momentum coming from a long line of Christian progenitors, some of us ought to be godly indeed.

St. Paul was not afraid of being misunderstood by Timothy when he wrote to him, "I thank God when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice."

And this suggests the thought that on the mother's side, perhaps even more than on the father's, this law of heredity seems to prevail. The finger of history points to many a gifted man whose talents undoubtedly came to him in the maternal line: his mother was a noble woman, and her finest qualities were reproduced and intensified in her son.

It is of such ancestry that one may honorably be proud. Some very weak persons talk of blue blood, and of their high connections, and their family crest, and so forth: forgetting that it would be something incomparably greater to boast of if they could tell of a saintly lineage, or of progenitors who by their good works had proved a blessing to the world.

Blue blood, as it is called, is by no means the purest blood. There are some of the highest families in the land whom it would hardly be polite to remind of their ancestry; the less said upon that subject the better. Probably there are not a few among my humbler readers who have more reason to be proud of their pedigree than could they trace it to a royal family. The purest blood on earth is that which for successive generations has flowed down through a high-toned and godly ancestry. This throws all other nobility and aristocracy into the shade. Not that one will be a good man merely because his forefathers were so before him. It is but too plain that grace does not run in the blood.

If a man owes his reputation to nothing more than the fragrance that hangs about his ancestor's name, one may almost say, in the words of Sir Thomas Overbury, that he is something like a potato, for the best part of him is underground.

Still, it is an unspeakable advantage to

have been born and brought up in a Christian home. When the earliest recollections are linked with beautiful and benignant piety, and with all the gracious influences that gather round the family Bible and the domestic altar, it is a valuable help to a man going out to rough it in the world.

A long line of godly inheritance is something that one may be pardoned for rejoicing in. If you can point to a genealogical tree of your family, and show that root, stem, branch, and twig were all holy, you have good cause to thank God, and to esteem yourself as belonging to the peerage of the skies. Well did Cowper say:—

My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, the rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
The son of parents passed into the skies.

It is a terrible aggravation of a young man's guilt when his daily life is a contradiction to his father's counsels and his mother's prayers; when the child of a Christian home tramples on all the sacred

memories and traditions of the past, and determinately breaks through the moral fences that had been set around him. Such persons generally make a sad rebound. The worst of men are apostates from the purest faith. Tell me what good influences a youth has resisted and defied, and I will almost calculate the depth of his depravity. I never knew an instance of a son of godly parentage becoming an outcast who did not fall even lower than the average of profli-gates. And, on the other hand, in every case I have met with—and happily they are not a few—of the offspring of reprobates turning out virtuous and God-fearing men, there has been a corresponding upward rebound, to the praise of Him whose grace has oft-times found the brightest diamonds in the darkest mines, and the richest pearls in the deepest sea!

XII.

FOOLISH PARTRIDGES.

THOSE of us who have been brought up in the country and are not unfamiliar . . . with poultry, have sometimes noticed . . . beside a duck-pond a very amusing sight.

For my own part, I know, I have laughed outright at the astonishment and dismay of a respectable barn-door hen standing by the edge of a pond, when a whole group of tiny ducklings, which she has hatched and tended with motherly care, plunge into their natural element, the water, and seem to say to their foster-parent, "Follow us, if you can!"

The partridge, it is said, is in the habit of stealing eggs from the nests of other birds of a different species from herself, and of

sitting upon them; and when, soon after those eggs are hatched, the young birds forsake their false parent, and associate with birds of their own order, the old partridge looks uncommonly foolish, as she sees all her promising brood desert her. The ancient prophet apparently refers to this habit when he says:—

“As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not (for herself), so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.”

So that there are other bipeds besides hens and partridges, that by possessing themselves of that which does not rightfully belong to them, and losing it when it is most desired, prove in the end to be but fools.

Be it clearly observed, that the Bible has nothing to say against a man's getting rich by just and honorable means. The pietistic slang sometimes heard in certain quarters against the acquisition of wealth has no en-

couragement in the Word of God. Nowhere does Scripture assert, as it is sometimes misquoted, that "money is the root of all evil." On the contrary, it declares that "money is a defence," and that "it answereth all things." In spite of all that is said against it, it is a powerful instrument in doing good; if it comes to you honorably, and goes from you usefully, it is one of the greatest blessings you can possess.

The need of it, and a moderate desire for it, prove a valuable incentive to industry.

We would not be assured that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, if wealth were necessarily an evil.

A fine healthy sight it is to see every morning in our large commercial cities the thousands of young men pressing into the city in 'bus or car, or better still on their own two feet, eager for business, and determined to get on.

The lad who knows nothing of such ardor is not half a man, and does not deserve to succeed. By all means throw yourselves

heartily into business; go at it with all the vigor and brains you have, and God grant that many a youthful reader of these pages may be a merchant prince some day!

Why not? I have myself known not a few young men within the past five-and-twenty years beginning on most moderate salaries, who worked hard, stuck to their business, kept clear of debt, and *wrote a good clear hand!* and now their signature is worth many thousands.

Christian wealth is clean money.

No reason why, with the grace of God, a devotedly pious man should not be conspicuously prosperous. Thank God, many a camel has gone through the eye of a needle, spiritually; for with God all things are possible.

But riches, unrighteously gotten, never bring a blessing. It is our Maker's design, you may be sure, that wealth should be begotten of honest industry, of real hard work; and those who acquire it otherwise will have little joy with it.

The man who sets himself to make money

by sharp practice, or by one of the many forms of gambling, may possibly meet with a certain success; the process of financial incubation may for a time seem to be going on well; but by and by, in all likelihood, when the egg-shells burst, the fortunes he had looked for will take wings and fly away, leaving the nest empty, and the poor disappointed man nothing better than a fool.

It seems to the rogue, said Thomas Carlyle, that he has found out "a northwest passage" to wealth, but he soon discovers that fraudulence is not only a crime, but a blunder.

Strict fidelity still fetches a high price in the market. To a young man who wrote to him for advice, John Bright replied: "In my judgment the value of a high character for honor and honesty in business cannot be estimated too highly, and it will often stand for more in the conscience and even in the ledger, than all that can be gained by shabby and dishonest transactions."

Said a pawky Scotch farmer to his son:—

“John, honesty is the best policy; I have tried both ways myself.”

There is reason to believe that there is a good deal more unrighteousness in the mercantile world than most men are willing to allow. Too often there is one code of virtue for the home-circle, and another code for the office, or shop, or factory—one system of morals for the Sunday, and another for the week-day.

Strange as it may seem, thousands of men are far more ready to be benevolent than to be just. Mr. Gladstone once observed, “I would almost dare to say there are five generous men for one just man. The passions will often ally themselves with generosity, but they always tend to divert from justice.” You cannot be too particular, therefore, in seeing to it that every penny you put in your pocket is money “göt by right.” You cannot be too scrupulous in regard to the straightforwardness of all your business transactions. Why, the late George Moore, the rich and self-made London merchant,

would throw all the clerks in his great establishment into a ferment because a trifling amount had been charged, for which no voucher could be found. This was not because he was mean or shabby, but because a principle was involved; and it was the same to him whether the amount was small or large.

The Nemesis that follows ill-gotten gains generally follows even in this life.

“In the midst of his days,” says the prophet, the fraudulent man and his riches shall part company. Some unexpected turn comes, some monetary crisis, some commercial disaster, and, lo! all his hoarded gains take wing and fly away, and the poor unprincipled man is left like the silly partridge to sit disconsolate in an empty nest!

But, even though it remains with him, ill-gotten wealth never makes its owner truly happy. Ah! there are plutocrats whose tables are covered with silver plate, who drink their sparkling champagne, and roll along the streets in their sumptuous car-

riages, whose hearts are yet unutterably miserable. A worm is gnawing at the root. Their fortune has been built upon a basis of deception bringing with it bitter remorse, and though friends may flatter, an upbraiding voice from the unseen is ever whispering in their ear one little word of four letters, and two of them the same—"Fool!"

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

XIII.

“PLANTS GROWN UP IN THEIR YOUTH.”

SCENE: a handsome Oriental residence; enter, and look around. The form is . . . quadrangular: in the centre is an . . . open court or square, with windows looking into it from every side.

The ancients, in their building arrangements, did just the opposite of what we do. We construct our houses with the gardens in front or behind. They built theirs with the gardens inside. And so, when you entered the porch, you found yourself in a court, with the rooms all around. In the houses of the wealthy this court was laid out with wonderful taste, adorned with shrubs and trees, with fountains and fish-ponds, and elegant statuary. In some instances it

was paved with colored marbles, shadowed by olive and acacia trees, and surrounded by a piazza, whose entablature rested on columns or pilasters, which were frequently carved after the figure of a graceful woman dressed in long robes.

Now, I think the reader will catch the thought I wish to emphasize.

In that central court there are two prominent objects that arrest the eye: the one being the young but sturdy trees that grow up so vigorous and tall within the sheltered inclosure, and the other the polished pillars or pilasters that stand so elegantly around; and to the poetic mind of the ancient Psalmist they were respectively the suggestive emblems of the sons and daughters of a pious and prosperous household.

Happy thought! Would that it were illustrated in all the homes of our land!

Perhaps it may seem at first glance as if the two emblems should be reversed: the daughters being the graceful trees which grow up within the *atrium* or court, and the

sons the solid pillars that support the building. But the writer guides his pen wisely: and whilst my special aim at present is to justify the metaphor he applies to right-minded and well-doing young men, it will not be denied that the girls are an equally important part of a Christian household—that virtuous daughters unite families and bind them as corner-stones join walls together; and that, like polished pilasters, they contribute at once to the security and the comeliness of the structure.

When sons are nobles in spirit, and daughters are maids of honor, the home becomes a palace. Would that all our homes were after this pattern! "Happy the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

Our sons are as "plants grown up in their youth." This does not mean overgrown lads—boys that are prematurely men—old heads on young shoulders; for if there is an objectionable class of beings, it is this,

Sometimes we hear the excuse offered for the follies of youth, "Boys will be boys"; but what else would you have them to be? In my opinion a more frequent mistake is that "Boys will be men." Before their beards are as long as their teeth, they put on the airs and assume the importance of full-grown adults. The smooth-cheeked laddie who is just from school struts along the pavement with his high hat, and his cane, and his cigar, and everything but the conception what a little fool he is: and youths from sixteen to twenty, who ought to know better, think it manly to drink stimulants for which they have no liking, and to frequent places of amusement where they will learn nothing that is good.

No, no; the beautiful simile before us countenances no folly of that sort. But, if it is foolish for a lad to ape the man, there is something that is decidedly worse: and that is for one who has reached the years of manhood to be still, in taste and intelligence, only a boy.

In truth we sometimes see it—the jacket and the satchel have been thrown aside, but little else. There is still the same frivolity and want of ballast, the same idle larking and practical joking, and disinclination for sober work, which were pardonable in a boy, but which are inexcusable in a man. The pleasing picture before the Psalmist's mind, as he gazes on the blooming palms, olives, and acacias that skirt the *atrium*, is therefore not of any abnormal precocity, but of vigorous, healthful, upright, manly, and ingenuous youth; and he feels that this, if realized, would be the highest glory of the land. God grant that, in this sense, our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth. It is suggestive—

1. *Of a healthful, vigorous frame.*

The type of man you generally associate with a boxer, a wrestler, or prize-fighter is not exactly the highest ideal of humanity.

That mountain of flesh and sinew and bone may compete with an ox; he may form a good exhibit at a cattle show; but as re-

gards all the qualities that ennoble men, he may be a very poor specimen indeed.

Quite true: but we must not run into the opposite error of imagining that thoughtful, cultured, religious men must be pale-faced and delicate, pitifully dyspeptic, with a stooping gait and a suspicious cough, and at the utmost possible remove from a sound physical development.

I am glad to observe that now, in nearly all our Young Men's Christian Associations, much attention is being given to the cultivation of a robust and well-proportioned physique. In order to be fully equipped for the task of life, you should use every means to secure and maintain a full, normal bodily vigor.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, *and men decay.*

May the young men of this nation prove a stalwart, manly race, and may her sons everywhere be like "plants grown up in their youth!"

2. *A solid character.*

Character, as Foster says, should retain the upright vigor of manliness: it should be like an erect yet elastic tree, which, though it may accommodate itself to the wind, never loses its spring and independent form.

"Let it not be said," writes George Eliot, "that the young men of this age are squashy things: that they look well, but wont wear."

Youth unquestionably is prone to excess; and on the sunny side of twenty there is a disposition to carry more sail than ballast. Nothing is more injurious to a man than incessant frivolity. To be always running after pleasure betokens a low type of humanity. Youth should be happy, but serious too. Continued levity emasculates the soul. To be ever cackling may befit a goose, but not a man.

It is a fine thing to see a young man with some solidity about him, some moral backbone—to see stamped upon his very face, and gait and manner the self-respect that

accompanies good sense, integrity, and virtue. Young men should strive to carry with them a moral momentum that shall drive before it the trivialities that encumber so many, and prove their ruin. Grow like young palms, stretching upwards towards heaven; or, if you prefer the simile, like sturdy English oaks, not dwarfed, nor stunted, nor pollarded, but reaching out and up towards Him that made you.

3. *A hidden life.*

Doubtless that which chiefly struck the eye of the sacred poet as he looked on those young trees was their exuberant vitality. Whence the height of their stems, the fullness of their branches, the greenness of their foliage, the beauty of their bloom? There was a life within, which, springing from the root, made itself felt to the remotest leaf and fibre. Under the warm and favoring influence of a tropical climate, sheltered within the inclosure, yet open to the light, and rain, and dew, those trees were pictures of full luxuriant life.

That life came from God. Man's power is marvellous, but it stops short of this. Alike in the vegetable and animal world he has pushed his explorations almost to the fountal spring of being; but he reaches a point where his keenest research is arrested. He can neither discover nor impart life.

Equally true is this in the spiritual domain. Personal religion is no development from within, no product of moral evolution; its germ must be implanted in the soul by the Spirit of God.

St. Paul speaks of "the power of an endless life"; the Greek word is *δύναμις* (the original of dynamite), and means a vital force that cannot be confined.

Who will not long for the day when the "sons of freedom" shall be "as plants grown up in their youth"? when the young men of our land, spurning all courses that enervate or demean, shall rise to the height of a manly dignity, and aim to be the guardians and benefactors of their country?

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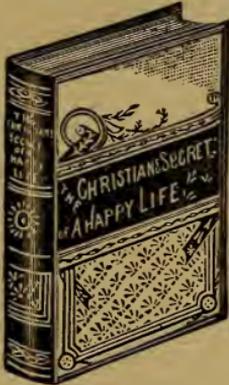
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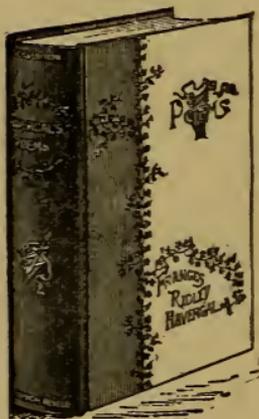
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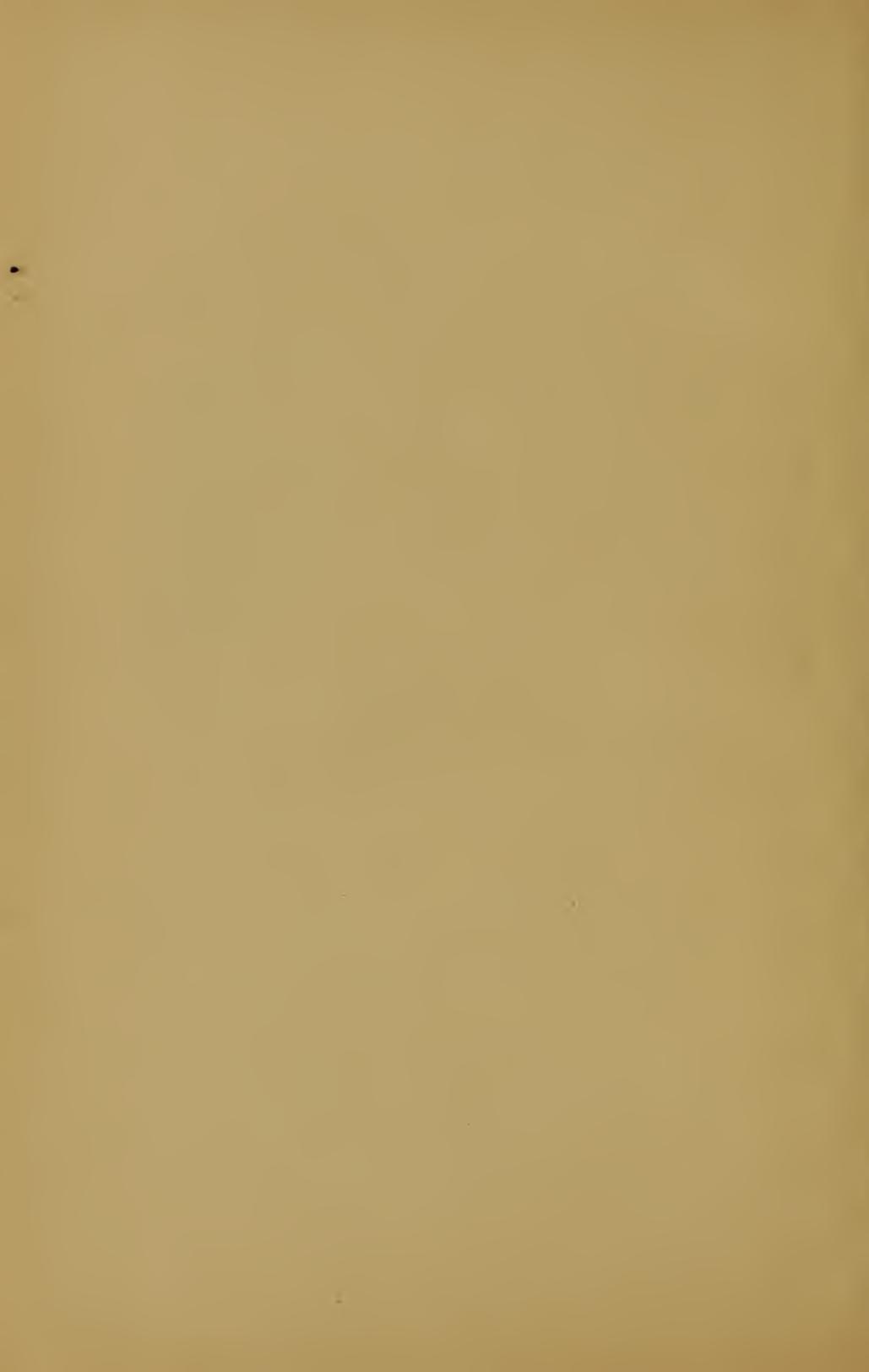
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