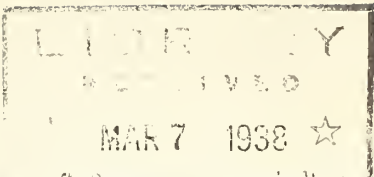


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WHAT COUNTS

A radio talk by Mr. A. E. Graham, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, February 5, 1938, and broadcast by a network of associate-NBC radio stations.

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Old King Midas thought gold was the one thing that counted, so he wished that everything he touched would turn into gold. But very soon he discovered that many things besides gold were necessary to his life and happiness. He couldn't eat or drink gold; if he touched his little daughter he didn't want her turned into gold. Money, though necessary, must be considered merely an aid to secure what counts. Let us name some of the things that count, but which money can not buy.

Happiness - How fortunate is a boy or girl in a family where there is an atmosphere of love and mutual helpfulness; where parents can understand children because they were once children. What a happy life will be found in the home where the little troubles and problems are discussed and solved within the family circle instead of making the faults of the neighbors and their children the topic of meal time conversation. It counts to remember the loving kindnesses of those in the home and to exemplify them in our own lives.

Friendship - We can not live without friends. To have them we must be friendly. We will make more friends in a week by getting ourselves interested in others than we can in a year by trying to get them interested in us.

Optimism - It counts to be an optimist, for then we see the silver lining instead of the dark cloud; we believe in success. Optimists see the best in others and find it reflected in themselves. This reminds me of an old rhyme - "Between optimist and pessimist the difference is droll
The former sees the doughnut, the latter sees the hole."

Punctuality - It counts to be on time. Did you ever wait for someone who promised to meet you at a certain time and have him arrive a half hour late as though any time would do? How did you like it? Good jobs have been lost because of the applicant's failure to be on time for the interview. The clock-like precision of the radio program is splendid discipline for those who do not appreciate punctuality.

Confidence - It counts to make your word worth as much as your note. Confidence in your word is worth more than money. When I was six years old my father took me to a fair and bought me a balloon. Soon it got away and I cried; a man who was with us promised me another one. He forgot to buy it, but I didn't forget his promise. Years later when I reminded him of it, he said, "Won't you forget anything?" My reply was, "Never promise a child what you don't expect to fulfill; it may be remembered." This applies equally to grown-ups.

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Integrity - It counts in matters of finance that young people establish credit with a business firm or a bank. If you want good standing in business, make payments promptly. Four-H club members who have borrowed and paid have begun to establish a credit, but don't abuse such a valuable and such a dangerous thing as credit.

Toleration - It counts to be tolerant. Every person has a right to his opinion and should arrive at his own conclusions, but don't be one-sided. Read books by reputable authors on subjects in which you are interested and discuss matters with older people in whose judgment you have confidence, even though you may not agree with them. The French author, Voltaire, once said, "I don't believe what you say, but I would give my life that you have the right to say it."

Honesty - It counts to build a reputation for fairness and honesty, not merely by talking about it, but by living it. There was a man in our community who sold horses, but if any farmer bought a horse from him that was not as represented, both the horse and the money were returned to the original owners.

Understanding - It counts to be interested in young people. This interest keeps one young, no matter how old he may be by the birth record. How well I recall a Sunday School teacher who, perhaps, was not well educated, but how well she understood boys. We could tell her our little troubles, even to our fist fights, and be sure that she would understand us. She was a diplomat among boys. She appreciated humor and saw the funny side of what we told her. She has gone; but what Keats said applies well to her -

"To live in hearts we leave behind,
Is not to die."

Is not our 4-H candle lighting ceremony a symbol of What Counts? The upright lighted candle represents you and your characteristics. As we pass through life, coming in contact with others, we give and receive the light of inspiration and example without dimming the light of our own personalities.

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