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BY
KEITH J. THOMAS



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YSAHEL OROBATZ

To H. SIMONIS

MY DEAR SIMONIS,

You will find in these pages much of your own genial and kindly wisdom allied to a certain philosophy of my own. How much of this latter springs from the inspiration with which you have furnished me you may guess for yourself. Those who have such a friend as I have will appreciate his help and encouragement the more for reading this book, which, because you have thus helped me to write it, I inscribe with your name.

Your very sincere

KEITH J. THOMAS.

BROCKLEY,

October, 1912.

CONTENTS

PART I

Power in the Making

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. THE GIFT OF POWER	3
2. QUALITIES THAT MAKE FOR SUCCESS	20
3. EVERY MAN HIS OWN MIND-MAKER	27
4. SIMPLE IDEAS FOR MENTAL TRAINING	40
5. THE POWER OF SYMPATHY	47
6. THE TYRANNY OF DOUBT	59
7. STUDY	72
8. CULTURE AND CHARM	79
9. THE FEAR OF FAILURE	90
10. KEYS TO HAPPINESS	97

PART II

Power in Use

11. THE KNOWLEDGE OF POWER	111
12. MENTAL STOCKTAKING	121
13. PLANNING FOR SUCCESS	128
14. USING YOUR FOUR EYES	136
15. THE USES OF ORATORY AND CONVERSATION	143
16. GENEROSITY AS A MENTAL FORCE	153

CHAPTER	PAGE
17. THE GREATNESS OF LITTLE THINGS	160
18. THE ACTIVE MIND	166
19. HOW TO GET GOOD LUCK	178
20. THE POWER OF THE WRITTEN WORD	190
21. THE HABIT OF POWER	202

PART III

Pleasures of Power

22. THE JOY OF LABOUR	215
23. ACHIEVEMENT.	226
24. THE USE OF BOOKS	233
25. THE RIDDLE OF LIFE	245
26. THE LESSONS OF ART	252
27. THE SECRET CHAMBER	261
28. MUSIC AND THE MIND	268
29. SERENITY	284
30. SUCCESS	289
31. THE REWARD OF POWER	297

PART I
Power in the Making

CHAPTER I

THE GIFT OF POWER

*"Man is his own star, and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate."*

JOHN FLETCHER.

BE not afraid of greatness," says Shakespeare. "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." Which are you? I will tell you. You were born great; you can achieve greatness if you will; and if you go about it the right way, you will have greatness thrust upon you.

The mistake so many people make is to confuse greatness with riches. The great man can have all he wants, but he need not necessarily become rich. Carlyle was no more intended to be a millionaire than Andrew Carnegie was made to be a Milton. We cannot all be Nelsons, or Pitts, or Shakespeares, or Darwins, or Rockefellers, but we can all be great. If we want money we can get it, if we want power we can get it: the only condition being that we should want it badly enough. Whatever our desire

is, we must be prepared to give up all pleasure and all ease to attain it. Fortune is a hard mistress and will brook no rivals, but to the man who is prepared to serve her whole-heartedly she offers the sure promise of his heart's desire.

When we look back over the pages of history and scan the records of the world's most successful men, we find that there is not so much wonder when a man rises from penury to supreme heights as when a man with wealth and influence does so. All the experience of the world goes to show that the lower down a man is on the ladder of fortune, the more likely is he to rise. The reason is that the rich man has so many distractions, and, more than this, does not have the same hard experiences which develop character and brain.

As soon as a man makes up his mind that he will do something with his life, he changes over from a state of drift to one of action. It is easy to drift, but it is better to struggle, for the current of life drags men on to the rocks and into shallows unless they map their course along the right channels where the deep waters are that will bear them to their harbour.

Imagine a million-pound battleship, with steam in her boilers, being allowed to drift upon the ocean. What would happen? She would collide with something sooner or later, and be seriously damaged,

if not totally wrecked. Someone, however, takes control of her. The huge engines are started, and put forth their strength; the course is set by the guiding intelligence, and the vessel journeys through calm or tempest wherever the ruling brain directs.

Every man and woman born into the world is like that. We are all capable of setting our course, we are all built to overcome the difficulties we may encounter in following it, and we are free to drift or progress as we choose. If we want to move onward we must first see that our propelling power is in order, then we must set our course, and finally we must stick to that course unswervingly and with unceasing vigilance, for the moment we relax we drift.

In that analogy is the whole secret of success in life; and the power that is in us, awaiting the command of our brain, will prove either useless or an obedient worker of mighty energy, just according to the manner in which we neglect or develop it.

The force that drives a man to any goal he has before him is personal power. It is the Divine part of the man that gives him dominion over the earth, and over himself. It is something more than intelligence, because it makes a man use his intelligence in the right way. It is something more than character, for it creates character. It is something more than personality, because a man's personality is but an

expression of his mind. It is more than all these things, because it gives a man the eye to see beauty, the mind to appreciate life in its fullness, and the strength to grasp what he needs from the hands of Fortune.

If you are discontented, if you are despondent, even if you are despairing, there is still the dormant power within you waiting and able to turn discontent to serenity, despondency to happiness, and despair to hope.

The limbs of the body, if unused from year's end to year's end, would wither—simply for want of use. It is the same with a man's personal power, except that it never withers so much that he cannot quicken it into vitality again. It will shrivel and shrink, but as soon as he calls upon it, it will start growing again, and he can develop it into a mighty force which will make his life whatever he wishes it to be.

Your personal power is yours alone. You only can develop it; you alone can use it. More than this, it is fashioned by the Creator to serve your particular needs. Unless you have the inventive genius it will not make an Edison or a Marconi of you, and as soon as you recognise that truth you will realise the fallacy of those writers on success who tell the world that a man can do whatever he will. Unless your brain is Napoleonic you cannot

The Gift of Power

7

be a Napoleon, and even if by sheer determination you could emulate his achievements, life would not be worth while, for you would get no pleasure out of it. There is, however, this compensating advantage: whatever you are fitted for, you can attain by using your power in the right way, and you can be sure that the results you will get will satisfy you completely—that is, as much as the human mind is capable of complete satisfaction. If you honestly desire a fortune more than anything else in the world, you can make one. If you want a competence only, but a supremacy in an art or a science, you can succeed in these. Let your actions follow the aspirations of your heart, so long as these are pure and noble, and there is no power outside of you that can withstand the power you hold locked within your breast. Nothing worth having is easy to win, and there is no royal road to success in any department of life. But there is a sure road that all may travel, hard and stony and wearisome, but with flowers springing by the wayside to brighten the path, birds singing in the blue to cheer the journey, and the sure promise of reward waiting at the journey's end.

Whatever theories we may evolve for the successful conduct of our lives, this shining truth stands forth most obvious—there can be no success without strength of character. Let us go a little farther and probe, so far as we can, some of those deep

mysteries concerned with the subconscious forces within us. A man's character and a man's intellectual power are subtle, intangible things. The question we have to ponder over is: How shall we so develop our character and our intellect that these shall influence others?

A man comes to see me in business. He puts a proposition before me and makes no impression whatever. Another man comes with a similar proposal and compels my interest. Some men we meet leave a strong impression behind them. We remember them long afterwards. Faces in a crowd interest us. People seen in a drawing-room attract us, and we instinctively like them. Are these things pure accident? I put it to you that they are not, and I go farther, and say that we can all develop our personalities and similarly draw people to ourselves.

In discussing this question, we stand on sacred and solemn ground. There is something more of the divine in the intellect than in the body. "The mind's the measure of the man." The mind is the field the Creator gives us to cultivate and to bring forth its fruit. If the parable of the Ten Talents means anything, it means that we are to cultivate all the gifts which lie dormant within us. If Shakespeare had been content to lead an idle life, the matchless magnificence of his thoughts would never have been set down for the benefit of posterity. If Christ had

done His bare work in the carpenter's shop, the most shining example of manly perfection and the splendid prospect of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, culminating in the hope of the life beyond, would not have been handed down to us. Wherever we note the results of a great life we see that they were attained by ceaseless effort, strenuous living, and endless self-culture. Each of us has his gift. If you have a poem in your mind, write it down, however feebly. Perfection is the result only of drudgery, and that is the reason of the saying: "Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains."

Consider the evolution of Nature—how slow it is, measured by our standards of time. In the field we see the tillage, then the sowing, then the sprouting of the seed, followed by the shooting of the stem, the bud, and, finally, the full bloom of the flower.

All through Nature there is this same gradual progression. Can we hope to develop our powers more rapidly, and should we not learn from this and be well content to make our gradual progress? We cannot see the flowers grow, nor can we see our own intellectual progression. Day by day, as we study and work, we are moving forward. God made the earth of countless atoms; He covered it with numberless green things and many-hued details of shrub, bloom, and tree. The sea is colourless if you

take a little in your hand. But as you look at all these millions and millions of infinitesimal particles you see the earth in all its beauty, and the sea in all its grandeur. So it is with our daily life. We toil and drudge, we bear the burden and heat of the day, we are weary and depressed, and when a new day dawns we see the fruits of our labour in some completed and satisfying work. As the Psalmist says: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The only condition for coming again with joy is that you take your seed and go forth.

Though before the eyes of omnipotent Providence we must seem small and insignificant, we each have our part in the great scheme of the universe, and it is expected of us that we bear our part worthily. The ideal of life is a gradual evolution towards perfection. All our trials and struggles are part of that evolution, and, remembering this, we cannot lose heart. To ourselves, however, our own life is the paramount thing. A French poet said: "My life is but a little thing; but it is—My life." Whether our life is big or little depends upon ourselves. If we desire to make it big, fruitful, and complete, our desire must result in effort. However small our life may be, it is essential to the scheme

The Gift of Power II

of the universe, or we should not be living at all. If we only regard our daily work as necessary (as it surely is) to the whole living race and the races to come, no task can be ignoble and no endeavour unfruitful.

Before we can command success we must be competent, and we must be confident in that competence. That is self-reliance. If you have not yet read Emerson's essay on "Self-Reliance," I advise you to do so. In time of doubt and difficulty it is like the voice of a strong friend cheering you. "Let a man, then, know his worth and keep things under his feet," he says. "Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity boy, a bastard, or an interloper, in the world which exists for him. . . . Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous, half-possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. . . . Where is the master who could have taught Shakespeare? . . . Do that which is assigned thee, and thou canst not hope too much or dare too much."

And again: "To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men—that is genius. Speak

your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense ; for always the inmost becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what other men, but what they thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognise our own rejected thoughts : they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humoured inflexibility, the most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another." I will take one more stirring passage from this essay, because it hints so plainly at the Divine providence that in times of inspiration we feel working within us :

"Trust thyself : every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the Divine providence

has found for you ; the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves child-like to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the Eternal was stirring at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny ; and not pinched in a corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but redeemers and benefactors, pious aspirants to be noble clay plastic under the Almighty effort, let us advance and advance on Chaos and the Dark."

Does this passage not inspire us in our lowliest and humblest work ? Is it not a grand destiny to form a part in a great scheme planned by an all-wise Providence, working out His will, subordinate to it, but necessary to its perfection ? And should we not in our smallest work strive to make our labours worthy of the noble fabric which we are permitted to build ? If we are to make a real success of our lives, we must develop and use the talents with which the Creator has endowed us.

We come, then, to the question of the methods by which we are to do our best work, and how we are to fit ourselves to fill our allotted place in life. The athlete trains himself for the strain of the race. In an athletic contest the body is sharply tried.

The heart and lungs are called upon to do a vast amount of extra work, but by careful training the runner gradually brings his organs to such a state of perfection that he is able to withstand easily the extra strain that is put upon him.

In the remorseless competition of our modern business life a similar strain is put upon the mental capacity. Have you ever thought of training your mind to meet it? Few men think of it, but those who do are the stronger for it. The mind is a mysterious element which we are unable to fathom. It governs the body, and, as we know, it is so potent that it even shapes the body. People judge other people by their faces. That is to say, they discern in a man's face the impress of his mind. An imbecile has a vacant expression. A keen mind produces a keen-looking face.

I remember discussing a financial magnate with another man. The magnate in question, I pointed out, has a very indolent air, and at a casual glance looks very stupid. "Yes," said my friend, "but when you catch him looking at you, you are struck by the fact that he has a very intelligent eye."

A sage once remarked, "No clever man ever had a lack-lustre eye." I doubt if any very bad man has a serene face. Certainly he would not have a clear gaze. Such things are the external manifestations of the mind. The hypnotist exercises his

influence through his eyes. The human voice, as shown by the orator, has its effect in producing emotions in the listener. The very expression plays its part, as a sympathetic look can take the place of volumes of words. All these things are directly influenced by the mind, and the stronger your mind is the more forcibly will you impress your will and your personality upon the people with whom you come into contact.

Start at once upon the preliminary training of the intellect, because its force in daily life depends upon the power with which you can exercise it, and that power can only be developed by careful study. First of all, you should strengthen your intellect by reading good literature, and whenever you come across a fine passage you should memorise it.

It was said of Macaulay that if every copy of Milton's "Paradise Lost" were accidentally destroyed, he could replace it from his memory down to each comma. He trained his wonderful memory in the following way: When he was reading a book, he would stop at the end of each page and endeavour to recollect what that page was about. He did this so carefully that gradually he trained himself to such a pitch that by merely reading a passage, a page, or a poem, or even an article, he could repeat it word for word.

If you will follow this practice you will find

that your memory will be wonderfully strengthened. More than this, you will lay up in your mind a vast store of literary treasure that will reflect itself in your speech and writing, and influence your thought in the most desirable manner. Take the best literary models and commit the passages to memory. John Bright, one of the most famous orators that ever lived, took the Bible for his model, and became so familiar with its style that his speeches, reflecting that style, were remarkable for the purity, grace, and splendour of their diction. The example of Demosthenes, whose name will ever live as an orator, is a shining light to the struggling man. He had an impediment in his speech, of which he cured himself by putting pebbles in his mouth and declaiming on the seashore. If you have a talent, you can develop it even if you possess some physical or mental disqualification. How much less should you be discouraged if you have no such drawback ?

Start training your memory with poetry, and learn it by reading it aloud. If you read it merely, you have only the eye to help you recall it. If you speak it, the sound of the words helps you to remember them. Blank verse is more difficult to memorise, but by choosing good models you acquire a nobility of diction and thought at the time that you are further strengthening your mind. Moreover, you will learn how to express your

The Gift of Power 17

thoughts, both in words and writing, tersely and succinctly. Prose is harder still to learn, but when you can learn it easily, you will know that you have a cultivated memory which will serve you well by enabling you to remember what you read, what you hear, and what you see. Your mind will be active and receptive. You will observe keenly, and you will be better fitted for success in every way.

Do not try to do too much at the start. Give ten minutes a day at first. Master a small poem, even if it takes you several days. In that way you will not get tired of your exercises, and as you go on you will learn more in the time you allow yourself. I would recommend Addison's "Spectator" for your prose memorising, Shakespeare's sonnets for your poetry. Dr. Ginsburg, the eminent Hebrew scholar, once described the "Spectator," in my hearing, as the finest prose writing in the language. I will give you one passage from it to memorise. The subject is "Superstition":

"I know but one way of fortifying my soul against these gloomy presages and terrors of mind, and that is, by securing to myself the friendship and protection of that Being Who disposes of events, and governs futurity. He sees, at one view, the whole thread of my existence, not only that part of it which I have already passed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity.

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When I lay me down to sleep, I recommend myself to His care ; when I awake, I give myself up to His direction. Amidst all the evils that threaten me, I will look up to Him for help, and question not but He will either avert them, or turn them to my advantage. Though I know neither the time nor the manner of the death I am to die, I am not at all solicitous about it ; because I am sure that He knows them both, and that He will not fail to comfort and support me under them."

Reading the "Spectator" lately, I came across a quotation from "Paradise Lost," which gives an excellent example for memorising :

"Nor think, though men were none,
That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise :
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep ;
All these with ceaseless praise His works behold
Both day and night. How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator ? Oft in bands,
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heav'n."

Now, it is essential to mind-training that you do not learn without thinking. If you are content merely to memorise the finest passages of our litera-

ture you are making a lumber-room of your mind and nothing more. You must understand what you read. I would recommend you to read "Sesame and Lilies," by Ruskin, and you will understand what I mean.

So much for the theory of elementary mind culture. It is worth your while to practise it. The strengthening of your memory is the first step towards the cultivation of your mind, which will have far-reaching effects upon your will-power and upon your whole life. Your life is yours to make or mar. You have inherited a glorious gift. It is your duty to use it well, and in fulfilling that duty be sure you will gain your reward in increased capacity for getting the utmost out of all that life has to offer.

CHAPTER II

QUALITIES THAT MAKE FOR SUCCESS

"The words of the wise are as goads."

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

OF late years business men have taken more and more to adopting mottoes to keep always before their minds and stimulate them to efficient work. One of the most popular to be seen hanging in a prominent place in many an office is, "Do it now." An enterprising advertising firm adapted this as a kind of trade mark in the phrase, "Do it better." Years ago, before the practice became so general as at present, some great man, whose name is lost in obscurity, took for his motto the text, "Do the next thing"; and I know of another which was a favourite saying of a very prominent industrial magnate, now dead: "Do it at once and do it well." A business friend told me that he thought a good motto would be, "Do it yourself"; and within sensible limits the phrase is excellent, since many of us are too fond of leaving to others the things we should do ourselves.

Qualities that Make for Success 21

It is well to have some such guiding principle in life, some mental spur that will always make us produce our best. Take for your motto the words "Do your best," and you will never have cause to complain of failure in life. Whatever you have to do, do it as well as you know how. The habit of doing everything as perfectly as you can will influence your character and your whole future. It is so easy to get into slipshod methods. There is often a temptation to rush a thing in order to get it done quickly and out of the way. Why do that, when you know that one thing well done is worth a dozen half done? When you have once done a thing as well as you possibly can, it is finished with. Do it imperfectly, and if it is to be of any use at all it must be done again, and you waste your time and energies when you do it carelessly.

Have you ever realised how much success in life depends upon the choice of associates and friends? You can take it as a safe rule that the tendency is for your friends to draw you to their own level. If you mix with people who are idle you will tend to become idle. Remember the old warning about playing with fire. Do not risk being burnt. Ask yourself frankly about people: "What shall I gain by knowing them?" If you cannot gain something from intercourse with a man, it is not worth your while to know him. Life

is too short to waste time with people from whom you can gain nothing. Mix with your intellectual superiors, with the people who can call forth your knowledge and keep your mind active. Associate only with those whose minds are worth measuring your own against. Be sure that if you make friends with people who waste their time, who have no intellectual force, and no strength of character, you will dull your intellect and your powers will degenerate. If a man is noble in character, if he is industrious, if he is intellectual, if he is a thorough good sportsman, you will be all the better for knowing him. Examine yourself as to whether you will be better for knowing a man, and if you cannot answer in the affirmative, drop his acquaintance.

Personally, I have one great friend. My family tell me sometimes that I have spoken just like he does, and his family, on occasion, have said the same thing. We all get tricks of speech, thought, and action from each other. One might well say, "Show me a man's friends and I will tell you what sort of man he is." You can be sure that an intimate friend of Lord Rothschild or of Lord Kitchener would be a man of great intellectual and personal force. Such men would not associate with mediocrities.

It is a useful habit to acquire the capacity for judging oneself. No man is insensible to flattery,

Qualities that Make for Success 23

but every man ought to be able to distinguish between praise that is merited and flattery that means nothing. The man who lives for flattery is blinding himself to his own deficiencies. The clever man watches for his weaknesses and strives to overcome them. "A man is known only to himself and God," is a true saying. If we are praised for doing work which may be good enough in itself, but is not the best we could do, we ought to be ashamed rather than pleased.

Learn to blame yourself. A successful man once told me that when he was negotiating with a firm for an agreement for long employment, he said to the principal, "If I do not satisfy you, you will never need to ask me to go. I shall go myself before that is necessary." Such a man does not rely on others for praise or blame. He judges every action as he performs it. If it is done according to the best of what he is capable, he is satisfied; otherwise, he blames himself. Do not be content to judge yourself by what others do or by what others think. You *know* what you are capable of, and you should never be satisfied with anything short of your most perfect work.

We are for ever assuming that vices grow upon us, and we should do well to remember that our virtues do also. The habit of doing our best work will develop our powers of will and make our

work better and better. The men who succeed are those who always try to go one better than their competitors. Every man in your office is a competitor for the top place. The man below you wants your place, just as you should want the places that are above you. A man who employed hundreds of clerks and workmen all over the world, when asked to give some suggestions for success in life, remarked, in the course of his reply: "I have often heard it said that there are not so many chances for a young man to rise nowadays as formerly. I do not agree with this view. I believe that there are even greater chances for young men than ever before. But these greater opportunities demand greater qualities—qualities that can only be acquired by an increased devotion to study—to greater self-discipline, and to an unconquerable determination to master the principles that underlie the profession or business engaged in. Less opportunity for getting on! Why, one of the greatest difficulties of large employers is to find thoroughly capable men to manage the various departments of their concerns; there are many who think themselves capable, but few who can stand the test.

"It has been said that 'Knowledge is Power,' but a man may have a great deal of knowledge with very little wisdom. Wisdom—which is distilled

Qualities that Make for Success 25

knowledge—is, undoubtedly, a powerful factor in human affairs, and happy is the man who possesses it. Knowledge is no longer a steep which few may climb; the opportunities for acquiring it are now so many and so various that to be ignorant is quite unpardonable. It has been truly said that experience keeps a dear school, but it is the only one fools will attend. Happy is the man who is always prepared to avail himself of the experience of others.”

There is a man in London now making an income running into well over ten thousand pounds a year. Only a few years ago he was an obscure clerk. One day he said: “It is no use trying to do just the same work as other people; I must do more.” He started taking work home with him so that he could get through more than his competitors in his office. He was not content to conform to the usual office hours, and he developed such a capacity for work that he found all sorts of possibilities which the others never discovered, so he soon left them far below him on the ladder of success which all were starting to climb.

Be sure that you need not go looking for your opportunities if you do your daily work with all the powers of your mind. Carlyle says: “Our grand business, undoubtedly, is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what is clearly at hand.”

Do your work faithfully and do as much work every day as you can, and opportunity will come knocking at your door. Only the lazy complain of the fickleness of fortune, and their ill-luck, as they term it, is their just reward for idleness. Remember what Ruskin says in his Lectures on Art : " Life without industry is GUILT," and it is guilt that surely brings its own punishment. You have all the experience of the past to profit by. Believe that, as the days go on and your experience increases, knowledge will increase with it, and that with industry you will acquire wisdom, and with wisdom gain everything that you can desire.

CHAPTER III

EVERY MAN HIS OWN MIND-MAKER

"Whatsoever the mind has ordained for itself it has achieved."

SENECA.

MOST people are mentally lazy. They may be active and energetic enough as regards their bodily faculties, but they absolutely refuse to use their minds more than they can help. Those who complain of "brain-fag" are very often suffering from mental lassitude because they do not give their minds enough exercise. It ought to be known by everybody that the brain requires judicious exercise quite as much as the body does. People with active minds do not complain of brain-fag; it is the mentally indolent who do that.

Why is it that country dwellers are not so quick-witted as those who live in the great cities? It is simply due to the fact that business life in the big towns is a constant process of sharpening the intellect. Daily intercourse with large numbers of people, and the continual interchange of thought with them on diverse subjects, make the mind

active and keep it naturally so. This is no reflection upon the mental capacity of people who live in the country. It is a reason why they should counteract any dullness in their mental surroundings by active thought exercises. Many people living in towns and doing routine work are far less active, mentally, than others living in the country, who have nothing like the same opportunity of mental culture through social and business intercourse.

It is a fact that the mind stagnates and suffers harm if it is not exercised. The Hindu fakir holding his arm motionless above his head from year's end to year's end deliberately allows it to wither. The left hand of most people is useless for many purposes because it is not trained. Doctors tell us that each hand is controlled in its movements by a different side of the brain. We all know that the left hand is as capable of writing as the right hand is, yet when we try to use it for that purpose the results are ludicrous. Careful and constant practice would soon enable us to write with equal facility with either hand. We simply allow that part of the brain which controls the necessary movements of the left hand to lose its power. By careful cultivation we could restore the control, and it would be all the better for the brain if we did so. This is but one example of the manner in

Every Man his own Mind-maker 29

which many parts of the brain are neglected by most people, and it shows what can be done to develop latent abilities by strengthening different sections of the brain if we devote ourselves to such an aim.

One of the greatest recompenses for hard mental work is the discovery from time to time of unsuspected talents. A lot of people question their abilities to cope with new work, the scope of which lies rather outside their ordinary experience. They are afraid to undertake tasks which involve work of an entirely new nature—work which cannot be performed by reference to the actual experience of the past. These are the people who keep in one groove, who never advance beyond the stage of mediocrity in their life's work. The man who is continually reaching out after more experience, who is not afraid to tackle a big task because it requires imagination and resource, finds that his brain will respond to the call and help him nobly. He finds he is able to do things he never thought he could do, and very often such things are done so well that he is tempted to wonder if there is not a great deal in the theory of successive existences for the same personality. Most men who conduct their work on the principle of undertaking any task that comes their way feel, from time to time, so confident of the right manner in which the work ought

to be done that they almost believe that they have done similar work under like circumstances in some previous stage of their existence. Whatever the explanation may be, it is quite certain that when we are determined to make use of our minds in some particular direction the brain responds to the call; and though it may work slowly and with difficulty at first, it will inevitably grow more active if we persevere, until it will work almost automatically.

In training the mental faculties, we should keep before us the Greek ideal of all-round fitness, not the aim of so many athletes of excessive development of some particular muscles at the expense of the others. The old saying, "A wise man can learn more from a fool than a fool from a wise man," is worth taking special note of, inasmuch as a constant desire to learn results in a continual widening of knowledge, and the more we know the more we can use our brains as they ought to be used. Too many people are foolishly anxious about discovering some particular branch of knowledge which it will pay them to study. Knowledge should be pursued for its own sake. "Seek fortune and it flies from you," treat it casually and it follows you. This means that if you go upon the principle of getting the most out of your daily life and doing the most work you can every day you live, your life's work will open itself out. Only by acquiring all the

Every Man his own Mind-maker 31

knowledge you can, will you find what particular branch of knowledge is of most use to you. Be sure that all information worth acquiring will be of use to you some day or other, sooner or later.

You can learn something worth knowing from everyone you meet—something which will be useful to you in after-life, though the information may seem useless to you at the time. Napoleon was not merely a consummate general ; he was a diplomatist and a law-giver. Had he been content merely to master the technique of fighting he could never have reached the pinnacle of success to which he attained. The same applies to Washington, to Julius Cæsar, and to Cromwell. All these great men acquired knowledge wherever they could ; they extracted it from all the men they met, stored it in their minds, and used it when the proper time came.

Why is it that these intellectual giants tower so in the sight of the world ? Simply because of the power of their minds. They took all knowledge for their province, and they used it in pursuit of their purposes. Their intellectual progress was of slow growth, and most of it was due to their own sagacity. They simply used every atom of the force of their intellect by studying its possibilities and keeping their minds in perfect training.

Some of the greatest forces in the world are gentle

enough in their action at any given moment. The constant dripping of the water wears away the stone. Each drop is so gentle that its force is scarcely felt. It is the never-ceasing application of this force that brings about the mighty result. In Egypt you can see vast pillars of stone hewn from the solid rock. They are perfectly cut, the pillars are straight and regular, yet they were made so without the aid of any of the blasting and cutting accessories which we use to-day. How was the work done? If it was desired to split a piece of stone in a perfectly straight line, small holes were cut at regular intervals. These were filled with water and small wedges of wood were driven in. The wood swelled, and the pressure was sufficient to split the stone in a perfectly straight line, as if it were soft and had been cut with a sharp knife. It is the same with the acquisition of knowledge and the training of the mind to enable it to exert its enormous power. A knowledge of the fact that wood swelled when moistened enabled the Egyptian craftsman to split the rock. Some item of information which you acquire to-day may, in the light of the knowledge you add to it in the future, enable you to find a way of doing some particular piece of work which will revolutionise your life and perhaps make you a fortune. You will notice that many people knew that wood swelled when it was wet.

Every Man his own Mind-maker 33

It was some mind trained to observe and think that took advantage of this knowledge and turned it to account.

The habit of observation, of storing facts in the mind, and of adapting them to everyday needs by logical reasoning, is not a God-given gift to the few; it is a God-given gift to everyone. You and I have it, but its usefulness to us depends upon the assiduity with which we cultivate it. You will not notice the growth of your intellectual strength any more than you would notice the effect of any particular drip of water upon a stone; but only be sure that you are training your mind to observe in the right way, and are constantly practising observation, and you will certainly notice great increase of mental power from year to year.

The method of mind-training for everyday practice is as simple as it is infallible. It consists of the constant effort to avoid slipshod thinking, and to observe keenly. When you read a book, read it carefully. When you come across a word in that book that you do not know the meaning of, turn it up in the dictionary, and fix its meaning in your memory. Never use a word that you do not know the meaning of; and when you are not quite certain of the way to pronounce a word, look it up in the dictionary also.

A very good exercise to keep the mind fit is to

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make definitions of words. Take the word "house," for example. Just write down a definition of it as if you were making it for someone who did not know the meaning of the word. Make your definition clear and concise, and thoroughly descriptive of your idea, and then compare it with the one given in a standard dictionary, and see what faults you can find with your work. Definition-making on this plan will teach you how to think and how to express yourself clearly and accurately. Above all, it will keep your brain in trim, and will fit it for hard work.

The habit of turning up words you do not know the meaning of can be combined very advantageously with the definition-making exercise by keeping a list of words you turn up, and then making definitions of your own for them a day or two afterwards. This will fix the meanings in your mind. It will be well worth your while to make a daily practice of these two things for a few months. Do not think it is not worth doing, and that it will be "just as good" to make up the definitions in your mind without writing them down and comparing them with those given in the dictionary. Very often the simplest things are best worth doing, and the foregoing is a case in point. If it is worth doing at all it is worth doing well, worth doing as well as it can possibly be done. If you want to

Every Man his own Mind-maker 35

make yourself great, it is worth a little trouble, and the habit of doing things in the best possible manner will make you do everything you undertake in the same spirit of thorough perfection.

You are a budding Shakespeare if you are a writer, an embryo Wellington or Marlborough if you are a soldier. The same divine, creative spirit dwells in you that dwelt in Michelangelo, in Plato, in St. Paul. The only power that differentiated these men from their fellows and made them heroic figures shining brightly in the firmament of life was the power of mind. That same power will raise you above your fellows, above your competitors in business, above the disabilities of your environment—that power and no other. If you are to raise yourself intellectually the stimulus must come from yourself. You must make a point of training your mental faculties all day and every day, till you know what a vast power you have within you and how to use it. Mind created the world in the first place. Mind keeps the world a habitable place to-day. Everything that is made by men's hands is born first of all in their minds. According to the greatness of their brains is their work great or small. A mean mind never conceived a vast and sublime project. Say to yourself, "I hold within my mind, in an equal or less degree, similar powers to those that Shakespeare had. I

can raise myself above my fellows, out of the ruck of mediocrity, above worries and disappointments, by developing my mind. I can succeed in anything I plan, and I can plan noble deeds if my mind is big enough and broad enough. A little thought and care every day, a little trouble, a habit of thinking systematically and logically, will bit by bit strengthen my mental faculties and reveal undreamt-of possibilities to me. 'I am the master of my fate.' I will treasure this divine gift of mind. I will cultivate this divine soil, and I will make the deserts of my mind blossom like the rose."

It is well to remember that the best and noblest work is only the complete embodiment of thousands of petty details and a vast amount of trivial labour. Nothing worth doing can ever be performed without the habit of conscientious attention to the little things, which, taken together, make the whole structure of successful work. Not until the last detail has been attended to, can you see how noble are the results of your labours. In regard to the creative functions of the mind this is especially true. Progress is made so gradually that one is apt to lose heart and think the effort and care are not worth while. Whenever you get into such a frame of mind, remember that all great men have felt the same. The victories of Oliver Cromwell were

Every Man his own Mind-maker 37

achieved by painfully manufacturing troops out of raw citizens. Drill, discipline, and the inspiration of the cause transformed these clodhoppers into magnificent troops, as fine as any the world ever saw. When they routed the trained Royalist soldiers, snatching victory out of defeat, it was not superior but inferior training that gained the success, and it was not so much superior generalship as a greater inspiration of success that ensured victory. The truth is that Cromwell inspired his troops with the idea of victory. The Puritans firmly believed that they were fighting the battles of the Lord, that He was on their side, and it was this conviction that gave strength to their arms and power to their armies. They refused to think of defeat, never allowed it to enter their minds. All they thought of was their sure knowledge of victory, and in that strong faith they went out and conquered.

Keep before your mind the picture of what you intend to become. Tell yourself continually that mental training will enlarge your brain power and enable you to do great things. Remember always that not one moment is ever wasted in the pursuit of knowledge. The more people a business man knows, the more scope he has for doing business. The circle of his customers and his power of making money vary according to the extent and value of

his connection. It is the same with the acquisition of knowledge. The more information you have, the more power have you for evolving great ideas. The process of mental training enables you to make use of that information, to store it in your mind, and to bring it forth whenever and wherever you want it. Keep ever in your mind the thought of the mental progress you will make from year to year, and you will never think the trouble is not worth while. Make a determination to practise mental culture every day, and let nothing deter you from it. The very act of determination and perseverance will strengthen your character and make you a greater force in the world.

You will find, as time goes on, that you will begin to ask yourself questions about the things you put into your mind—the food you give it. You will want to know why you should read the best literature, and whether you like good books merely because they are best for your mind or because you really prefer them. At this stage of your mental progress you will find on experiment that you really do prefer the society of the immortals for their own sake. Good books inspire great thoughts. The masters of characterisation and plot teach you life as it really is in all its varying phases. An author like George Meredith, or Henry James, writes in a style that is beyond the

Every Man his own Mind-maker 39

understanding of the uncultured novel-reader. You cannot "skip" the works of such a writer. He makes you ponder over every sentence he writes, and exercises your brain to its full power. A course of George Meredith's books and Swinburne's poems may be recommended both for the mental exercise they provide and for the music of their language.

Read Macaulay's "Essays," and you will get a liberal education in literature and history, presented in a clear and beautiful style and filling the mind with a critical appreciation of human work and progress. Read the Lives of such men as Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon, and learn how often they were near failure and only achieved victory through the force of their mental powers. Such reading will furnish you with encouragement to persevere with your own mental development; it will inspire you with noble thoughts and lofty ideals; and it will convince you that you, too, can raise yourself above the mediocrity of everyday surroundings by giving yourself a noble life-aim and by learning for yourself how you can achieve it.

CHAPTER IV

SIMPLE IDEAS FOR MENTAL TRAINING

*"Thoughts shut up want air,
And spoil, like bales unopened to the sun."*

YOUNG.

FEW people trouble to think properly. This is a sweeping statement, but it is true. One of the first things to occur to a man who is a real thinker is, how he can train his mind to enable him to reason to the best advantage. Every other day almost we hear of some new fad designed to increase our mental and physical efficiency. We take early walks before breakfast; we give up alcoholic drinks and cut down our smoking; we indulge in fast and rest cures, and from one extreme of living we go to another. All the practices mentioned may be good enough in themselves, but where do they lead the people who put them into force? They generally lead nowhere, for the reason that, if any betterment of health is obtained, the individual does not know how to turn it to account by taking advantage of the increased mental activity which results from his bodily well-being.

Simple Ideas for Mental Training 41

The mistake people make is to take account only of their physical fitness, thinking that mental fitness will follow as a matter of course. A healthy mind is even more desirable than a healthy body. People can work under the severest physical disabilities; they can even enjoy life though subjected to constant suffering. It does not matter how healthy you are if your mind is weak in the sense that it is not trained. As soon as a man gets the habit of thinking properly he begins to search for the means to bring his mental capacity to its full development. Having done this, he wants to keep his mind fit, so that it will work smoothly, quickly and accurately, enabling him to sustain prolonged mental effort without fatigue.

The mind requires exercise as much as the body does. You may think you are exercising your mental faculties continually because you have to think all day long. You might as well argue that the continual movements of the body are sufficient in themselves to keep it in perfect condition. What is desirable in both mind and body is an all-round excellence, whereby all the faculties and muscles and so forth are developed to perfection, and no one of them developed at the expense of another. The thinking man will diet and exercise himself not merely for the purpose of attaining perfect physical health, but also because perfect health enables him to work better with his mind. According to the

Greeks, "Health and intellect are the two blessings of life," and a healthy mind in a healthy body is what the thoughtful man desires, because it is the ideal combination which enables him to secure all that he really needs in the world to make him prosperous and happy.

If bodily health and activity are important to enable a man to perform his work and follow his pursuits, how important must be a state of mental fitness in view of the fact that the mind governs the body in the smallest and greatest things that affect our progress in life ! The more mental power we possess, the greater will be the results of our work. However clever you may be, you need to keep your mind right up to "concert pitch," in order that your work may be thoroughly efficient, and that you may more easily absorb knowledge and create ideas out of your store of thoughts. Some men have a faculty for absorbing knowledge ; they are veritable walking encyclopædias, yet very often they are comparative failures in life. Other men, possessing not a tithe of their intellectual capacity, easily outstrip them in the race for success. The reason is, that no matter how much knowledge a man may possess, it is valueless to him unless he knows how to use it. To make your mind a storehouse of knowledge is to turn it into a lumber room unless you actively employ that knowledge from day to day.

Simple Ideas for Mental Training 43

So long as you keep your mind active by judicious mental exercises, you need not worry about ways of using the knowledge you acquire. The mind works automatically when once it is started. Remember that it needs food just as the body does, and the more food you give it the more mental strength you will have to draw upon. Remember also that the more food you give it in the shape of facts and general knowledge, the more exercise it will need to prevent mental indigestion, which manifests itself in an inability to know how to use the information that is collected.

When you come across a dull person you have a splendid opportunity for exercising your mind. Do not confuse dullness with stupidity. The chances are that the dullness is mental indigestion. Your exercise is to dissipate that dullness by finding the subject in which the person is most interested. It may be theatres, it may be gardening, it may be chemistry, or reading, or sport of some kind. Draw upon your knowledge of these subjects, and try them judiciously one after the other. We are all interested in some things more than in others. Seneca says, "When things have taken possession of the mind, words are plentiful." There can be no better exercise for the mind than to "draw out" a dull or shy person by suggesting new points of view to rouse his enthusiasm in his favourite subject,

and to keep his interest sustained so that he will forget his shyness in enthusiastic speech.

If the private discussion of politics has any value at all, it is not so much because two people can exchange views until one convinces the other, as because it exercises the mind and at the same time feeds it with new facts. It is, perhaps, a dangerous exercise for people who do not understand each other very well, but there is a variation of it which is almost as efficacious, and has the advantage that you argue with yourself alone. It is simply to make up your mind on political subjects, not by listening to other people's arguments, but by getting your facts from books, and, so far as you can, at first-hand from the people best able to supply you. Take the case of *Free Trade v. Tariff Reform* as an example. Doubtless you are prepared to say all sorts of things about the respective attitudes of the Free Traders or Tariff Reformers, according as you agree with or differ from them ; but could you put up a case for your own belief and support it with facts and arguments for five minutes against someone who had studied the question carefully ? Get a penny handbook stating the case for Free Trade, and another one on Tariff Reform, and analyse the arguments for yourself just as if the authors had each prepared a case to submit to your arbitration. When you have analysed the arguments, give

Simple Ideas for Mental Training 45

them all the most careful consideration, weigh them one against another, and give your verdict. This will enable you to write down a judgment on the problem as it has been presented to you, and whenever you read new facts in the daily papers, or hear them from friends, you will be able to argue intelligently, and adjust your opinions, not in the light of prejudices, but according to your deliberate reason.

Try this specific mental exercise for yourself. Determine to devote an hour a day to it until you have given your judgment. It will be well worth while. In addition to providing you with an hour's good mental exercise a day, it will get you into the habit of appraising facts and reasoning upon them, and it will lead you to the practice of deciding problems for yourself, instead of taking the opinions of the people you meet or of the newspaper you read.

Another mental exercise that is well worth cultivating is the habit of making speeches. You need not necessarily make them in public, or even to your friends. Make a five-minute speech to yourself as you walk home from the station at night. If there is no one near, say it aloud. Take any subject you like, and make your speech to yourself. The value of this practice is that it teaches you to think slowly, carefully and systematically. We are too apt to let our thoughts run haphazard through our minds. We think of nothing in particular when we might

be finding out how much or how little we know of any definite subject by the simple means of making a little speech about it. This plan also helps to promote ideas. You have to think out arguments and dig in your memory for facts, and you will find if you persevere with the practice that all your facts will keep fresh in your mind, and by and by will suggest themselves automatically when you require them.

Do not let your mind get slack. It is a great possession and a great trust. You can store it with riches that none can take from you, and by exercising it carefully you can use its wealth from day to day, and, using it, will acquire new treasure, new power, and an incomparably greater efficiency of mind and body.

CHAPTER V

THE POWER OF SYMPATHY

*“The secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.”* SCOTT.

WHEN the wireless message flashes across the ocean, it is recorded on an instrument so delicately adjusted that it is said to be “in sympathy” with the dispatching instrument at the other end. Unless the two instruments are tuned to be in the most perfect harmony with each other, the message cannot be received intelligibly. The human mind is much more delicately adjusted than the most fragile instrument that man ever created. It contains forces more potent than any force that man uses. The unique place occupied by man in the universe is due solely to his mental powers. Many beasts are stronger physically than man ; yet he rules them. He harnesses the torrent to produce electricity. In these days of aviation and ocean travel, it can truly be said of man that he “rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.”

Only a few years ago, men did not dream that they could transmit messages through space without wires. The forces of Nature were ready to be harnessed, but man had to gain knowledge of the way to use these powers before "wireless" became possible. It would be strange indeed if two machines can be so perfectly adjusted that they can receive and transmit messages across thousands of miles of space, and so delicate a thing as the human brain should be incapable of doing the same. As a matter of fact, we know that the brain can act in a similar manner. There are cases on record of people who were so perfectly in sympathy with each other that they knew if either was ill, no matter how far apart they may have been. At times, in the course of ordinary conversation, the same thought will flash across two people, and they will make the same remark at the same time. People who know each other very well can often detect what is passing in each other's minds. All these instances go to prove that the brain has this subtle power of transmitting thought if we only knew how to develop and use it.

There is no need for us, in our everyday lives, to attempt to project thought across space. That is a matter for scientists to investigate, and for us to do so would be as useful as for a man to attempt to construct a flying-machine without the most elementary knowledge of the science of aviation.

The Power of Sympathy 49

What we can do, and what we should do, is to find out what our powers are, and use them so that we may develop their usefulness.

We know that in the case of two wireless instruments the condition for sending and receiving intelligible messages is that they should be in perfect sympathy. In human affairs, sympathy is the quality which enables us first of all to understand what is passing in another person's brain, and then to make our own feelings felt so that they can be appreciated as well.

All the qualities of the mind depend upon one another to a large extent. For instance, knowledge of human nature, which is gained by social intercourse, is necessary to complete sympathy of feeling. We cannot sympathise deeply with a man's sorrows unless we can understand what his emotions are. If we sympathise in a general sort of way, we cannot know that our sympathy has any effect unless we can understand in some measure what the other person's thoughts are.

Sympathy is generally regarded as merely a benevolent sort of sentiment evoked by the sorrows of others. Its meaning, according to the dictionary, is "a fellow feeling, compassion." The second definition is the one usually accepted. In reality, the first has the wider meaning, and when we ask ourselves what sympathy really is and what it does,

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we recognise that this is the definition that has the most practical significance.

Our own mind is for our own use. We cannot exert any of its power without affecting ourselves. Feelings of anger affect us physically ; indeed, they hurt us and do not harm the object of our displeasure. There are what may be termed positive and negative forces of mind. Active sympathy is a positive quality ; placidity and indifference are negative. When we exercise a benevolent feeling of mind it has some practical use, and this is clearly understood in the case of sympathy.

Some people seem to pride themselves on their placidity of mind. The sorrows of others pass them by without affecting them. In a way, this is good, because grief has a physical effect on the body and causes actual loss of physical energy. Sympathy, however, is a good sentiment. We were meant to be compassionate ; and if a habit of mind is good, it must produce some good effect on our lives.

The value of sympathy lies in its power to harmonise minds so that one can become susceptible to the influence of another's thoughts. You will find that the cultivation of sympathy will draw people towards you. They instinctively open their hearts to a sympathetic listener. When two brains are " tuned up " to sympathy, they will as naturally convey and receive messages as the wireless instru-

The Power of Sympathy 51

ments can transmit and accept them. The action of the telegraphic transmitter is to set in motion certain waves which act upon the receiver, wherever that may be. The action of the brain is similar. We do, in fact, project thought waves which are capable of penetrating space and affecting a brain that is in sympathy with our own. If two minds are in perfect accord, there is a double force at work between them. Not only is there the actual power of the spoken word, but also the power of the projected thought which reaches the brain as surely as the sound waves reach it through the ear. For this reason, a mind that is in perfect harmony with another will gather meanings and thoughts that are not actually expressed in words. The spoken word is merely an indication of the complete thought that is in the mind, and only a sympathetic brain will gather the whole of the message.

It is easy to see that the gift of sympathy developed to perfection must exercise a very beneficial influence even upon the most practical affairs of life. If it will enable you to gain a man's completest thought, it must necessarily help you in any dealings you may have with him. Half knowledge cannot be so helpful as complete knowledge. A man may hold back part of his thought in conversation because he is shy, or because he is diffident, or for many other reasons. If you can gather the thought that is

withheld, you are so much the wiser; and you will surely gather it if your sympathy is perfect enough.

In another way, the power of sympathy is a practical help in life. People with whom you can sympathise fully are people whom it is good for you to know. If your own sympathies are blunted, you cannot give back what another may give you, and you may thereby lose a good friend. If you know your sympathies are acute and sensitive, and you feel no corresponding sympathy from any given person you may chance to meet, you can be sure that you have few thoughts in common, and have no good to gain from him. The truth of this fact is very well illustrated in married life. People who have lived together for many years have often been observed to grow like each other. This is perfectly natural to anyone who has studied the potent forces of the mind. We know that our thoughts affect us physically, and that our minds are consequently reflected in our bodies. It is perfectly natural, then, that a married couple, in perfect sympathy with each other, transmitting similar thoughts to each other, and thus developing the same habits of mind, should find the same physical changes taking place in their features. Where there is no sympathy between husband and wife there is unhappiness. Perfect love must include perfect sympathy; indeed,

The Power of Sympathy 53

when passion has died, love remains only because it *is* perfect sympathy.

What we call instinct is, in reality, the sensitiveness of the mind that enables it to receive the impression of another's thought. It is reasonable to suppose that an evil thought can cause a discord in a sensitive brain, and set up a state of antipathy. If it is true that good thoughts draw people together, it must be equally true that antagonistic thoughts will send them apart. The sympathetic person can safely trust his instincts. If a mind that is profoundly sympathetic cannot awaken an echoing sentiment in another brain, it is clear enough that there is antagonism and an absence of that harmony without which there cannot be true trust and friendship.

Sympathy is the key that unlocks the door of every heart. You cannot get at the best of friendship, or understand the meaning of life, without this gift. It solves many a riddle of human nature that otherwise would remain unanswered. Sympathy is not a virtue possessed by a few gifted individuals only. It is a part of the mental equipment of every one of us, but it is more highly developed in some than in others. Clearly, it is a gift that is well worth cultivating until it becomes as natural as breathing. The physical aids to the cultivation of sympathy are in the eyes and the voice. A clear,

understanding gaze and a soft tone of voice help the mind to transmit its sympathetic force. Get into the habit of looking at things from the point of view of the person you are talking to. Do not accept his facts or his thoughts if they do not agree with your own deductions, but reject his views only after you have understood their significance. This habit will act as a continual test of your own thoughts. It will broaden your own mind, and it will enable you to appreciate the outlook of every class of society. There can be no mutual action without mutual sympathy. The golden rule of life is to make allowances for everyone but yourself. If you do that, others will make allowances for you, and they will not find much difficulty in doing so. Your own life will never be happy without sympathy. Give it to others, and they will give it back to you. It will not be a case of

“Laugh, and the world laughs with you,
Weep, and you weep alone.”

If you do weep, others will share your sorrow; but the truth is, you will be so full of the happiness of others that you will have little room in your mind for anything but joy.

Contact with other people exercises the sense of sympathy. You exchange thoughts with your friends, and you learn things by doing so. You give them sympathy, and they respond to it. Albert

The Power of Sympathy 55

Chevalier once told me that the influence of an audience upon his acting was most remarkable. If they were appreciative and showed it, he acted his best. If they were lukewarm, he grew lukewarm in his efforts. "If they only knew," he said, "how their applause acts on me, they would be able to draw my best out of me, and they would gain the greater pleasure."

Sympathy broadens the mind. Some people would be bored if they found themselves in the company of the whole of the members of the Royal Society. Merely because the conversation was beyond them, they would refuse to be interested in it. Brains are not the monopoly of any section of society. You will find intelligence everywhere, and wherever you find it you will be the better for sharpening your own wits against it. Christ came from a humble rank of society. If we are to believe contemporary literature, the poet Keats was considered a bore by many people, when he was merely shy. Every person you meet has the same divine element in him that you have. If you will only sympathise with every individual you will be sure to find it, and in finding it you will lose self-consciousness, you will enlarge your mental outlook, and you will become a worthy member of society.

We can only get the full value out of life by possessing the widest sympathies. If we can share

the joys of others we increase our own joys. You can get something good out of every person you meet if your sympathies are large enough. Unless you can enter into the minds of other people of varying tastes and points of view, you can never understand what life is. You may read books, you may go to plays, you may travel, and you may theorise in your mind, but you can have no real practical knowledge of life until you understand human nature. All the books in the world cannot teach you so much as the book of life, and in understanding life you will understand books, plays, and places as you never understood them before.

There can be no doubt that it is the duty of each of us to take his part in society. This duty is a double one. We owe it to society and we owe it to ourselves. The key-note of life is duty to one's neighbour, and our neighbours are all about us. There are people we meet who need our sympathy; there are others who need our help; there are others who need encouragement. In every gathering of people we should be cheerful, bright and interesting, not only to please them, but because by being so we can draw them out and do good to ourselves.

It is our duty to shine in society in a quiet way, so that we may give pleasure to those with whom we are brought into contact. Life, to be complete,

The Power of Sympathy 57

must be many-sided. We can learn to look on the humorous side of things from one person; we can learn patience from another. One man can teach us optimism; another can teach us to love literature. The scientist can show us how to appreciate the marvels of Nature. The child, even, can teach us faith, trust, love, and the habit of looking on the bright side of things and forgetting our troubles and disappointments. Some people can get endless pleasure out of a garden. Other people can tell you things about music, or art, that will make a concert or a picture gallery a revelation to you. You yourself extract the best out of the books you read. Other people do the same, and by talking with them and drawing them out you can learn all about life and all about books. You can learn what the experience of others has been, and in times of crisis you will be able to profit by that experience. By studying others and pleasing them you will learn how to manage men, and you will know better how to rule yourself.

Remember, you will get from the world just what you give it. If you give sympathy, trust, hope, and brightness, you will get all these in return. You will find that life is not merely your life, but the Divine life that permeates the whole universe. You can forget your own disappointments in the triumphs of others. From others you will gain courage and

strengthen your self-reliance. You were not meant to stand alone in the world. There is help and encouragement for you to be drawn from others. What you need to strengthen your own individual weakness, you will find in those you meet. All you have to do is to give abundantly of your gift and of your sympathies, and you will always receive the same in return. You will know to whom to turn for strength, to whom for wisdom, and to whom for joy. All the people you meet are sent to you that you may learn from them. You are to learn all you can, so that you, in your turn, can serve those who wish to learn from you. Life is a great co-operative society. We depend upon each other and we should help and sympathise with each other. The aim of life may well be expressed in Kipling's words :

“ Help me to need no help from men,
That I may help such men as need.”

We can only help by being wise. We can only become wise by learning from others. We can only learn by sympathising. Without sympathy we are without all that life holds most dear.

CHAPTER VI

THE TYRANNY OF DOUBT

*"Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt."*

SHAKESPEARE.

“**T**O the timid and hesitating,” says Scott, “every-thing is impossible, because it seems so.” The converse is expressed in our English proverb, “Nothing is impossible to a willing mind.” Doubt in everyday life is as great a crime as fear in a soldier. If we could only get into the habit of regarding it with the same scorn that the fighting man shows to fear, we should immeasurably increase our achievements in every department of our physical and mental activity. The bravest soldiers are not insensible to fear. They are more afraid to yield to it than to shun death. It is recorded of numberless men that in war-time they seemed to bear charmed lives. Amid a hail of shot and shell they were unharmed. This merely goes to prove that we are prone to exaggerate our dangers. The soldier advances into what he considers certain

death. To his view, nothing can live in the range of fire that he has to traverse. Yet he not only lives, but is unscathed. It must have seemed to the Light Brigade, starting to charge the guns at Balaclava, that it was impossible for any of them to return alive. We know that, though the majority fell, many lived to tell the tale. In all the records of bright and glorious deeds and splendid achievement we read clearly the lesson that the apparently impossible yields submissively to vigorous effort.

The limit of our achievements is the power of our own thought. If you have a healthy ambition, or a burning desire to accomplish great deeds, be sure that your bodily faculties are capable of achieving it. The things you cannot think of, you cannot accomplish. None but a Napoleon could conceive in his mind the gigantic projects that he carried out successfully. Had Napoleon doubted his powers at any moment, that instant he must have failed. Big thoughts are inevitably accompanied by an adequate capacity for realising them in practical effort.

The strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link. Doubt is the weak link that paralyses many a strong brain. It is appalling at times to stand at the exits of a great railway station in the morning and watch the thousands of people surging out to compete with one another for their daily

The Tyranny of Doubt 61

bread. One would almost think that it was impossible to strive successfully against so many. Many of them are more talented than you or I. Many who are more talented than their fellows are either on the same low level of living or are even occupying subordinate positions to those who are mentally their inferiors. We all of us know people who, we feel, are less capable than we are, who are, nevertheless, more successful in life. The truth is, that those who rise are those who never doubt their own powers to succeed.

The mind grows on what it feeds upon. If you allow doubt to occupy any place at all in your mind, that doubt will grow there. A little hesitation will grow into a big doubt, and the habit of doubt will surely result in death to self-reliance and good-bye to success. Napoleon said that attack was the safest method of defence. Out with all your doubts and fears! They are unworthy of your mind, which should be in harmony with the Infinite. No task can ever come your way that you have not the power within you to fulfil. Doctors say that the human frame is never called upon to suffer more pain than it can bear. If the pain grows beyond the limit of human endurance, we lapse into unconsciousness. The same is true of the mind. Nothing is asked of us in this world that we are not capable of giving.

As the mind will feed upon doubt, so it will feed

upon hope. When doubt comes into the mind, throw it out. Do not parley with it, do not admit any other consideration than that it has no business there. Say, "I *can* do this—I *will* do it," and you will succeed. So long as you admit the slightest possibility of failure, so long there is an influence in your mind that is preventing you putting all your energies into your task.

The mental medicine for doubt is hope. The treatment for lack of self-confidence is perhaps easier than the application of antidotes for any other kind of mental deficiency. Doubt is a negative state of mind. The antidote is hope and determination. Be positive in all your thoughts. When a task lies before you, say, "I *will* do this," instead of "I will *try* to do this." Do not ask yourself any questions about your capacity, such as "Can I do this?" Affirm positively to yourself that it lies within your powers to do what you have to do. Negative thoughts are antagonistic to action, and without action there can be nothing accomplished. Positive thoughts, the will to do, are incentives to action, and the brain thrives upon them.

In our self-training we are to accustom ourselves to all those habits of mind which will be beneficial to us in life. The very habit of affirming our power to accomplish will strengthen our mental force. Just as the magnifying glass can be used to

The Tyranny of Doubt 63

concentrate the rays of the sun upon one burning point, so the mind can be strengthened by the habit of affirmation to concentrate its whole powers on the task in hand. If the sun's rays are weak, the magnifying glass produces only a faint heat. If your mind is weak, it cannot concentrate on your work with that enthusiasm and power which conquer all difficulty.

The habit of positiveness keeps the mind in a constant state of power and confidence. It enables you to attack problems that would daunt a doubting person, and to overcome them successfully. The more you undertake and accomplish the more your mind will grow. It is said of some people that they cannot see farther than their noses. When we say that of anyone, we mean that he or she has a narrow mental outlook that never expands and reveals the promised land of possibilities. Unless we know what we can achieve, we can have no success, because our efforts must be aimless. We must then be entirely at the mercy of the world, and under the direction of others with stronger minds than our own. Of what use, in that case, is all our talk of free-will? Free-will is useless to us if we are not prepared to use our wills and direct our destinies.

So soon as we realise that the only limit to our achievements lies within the compass of our own minds, we are on the high road to success. As our

ambitions increase, so our powers will increase correspondingly. We may not all reach the topmost pinnacles of fame, because some must serve while others command. Our creed ought to be that the lowest form of work must be done by the learners, and that as we progress in experience, so we shall advance in our work. In these enlightened days, most of us reject the doctrine of fatalism, believing that we are "the masters of our fate, the captains of our souls." Believing that, it is illogical of us to act as though we thought that some men were born to greatness and others to lowliness. We were all born to greatness. Many people look to be great only in the world to come, seeking in Eternity the reward for their labours on earth. That is a negative state of mind, which should be replaced by the positive antidote. Our success is not in the world to come alone, but is meant for our present state also. Only by believing that we cannot succeed shall we be held back from our just place in the "scheme of things entire."

No man has a right to be a failure. Each of us has sufficient power within him to enable him to satisfy his every want. If you are unsuccessful, it is only because of some negative quality of mind that prevents you putting forth all your energies. Doubt is like a man in a boat pulling the wrong way. The instant you turn it out of your mind your energies

The Tyranny of Doubt 65

are concentrated on your work, and you are running on the full tide of success. To doubt your own powers is to insult the Creator who gave them to you and ordained your work in life. Away with such an idea, and refuse it admittance to the company of your thoughts. "Doubts are traitors." Treat them as such, or they will destroy your mental citadel. They are the creatures of your own imagination, and you create them yourself. Man was given dominion over all the earth solely because of the powers of his mind. Range up your faculties in battle array. Turn out your weak units (the chief amongst them, doubt) and go forth to conquer.

In any time of crisis a man is thrown back upon his own individual resources. In cases of illness, not only does his recovery depend upon his reserve of strength, but upon his will-power. We all know cases in which the individual has been given up by the doctor; he has determined not to die, and by sheer force of will has hung on to the vital thread of life until the reaction has come and he has ultimately recovered. Life is a series of crises. If you will only take the trouble to study successful men, you will come to see that they are superior to their fellows not so much in ability or industry as in tenacity of purpose. They never doubt their power to succeed.

A big employer of labour recently said to me :

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“ We never have any vacancies in our business. As soon as one man drops out there is always another ready to take his place. But we are always willing to create posts for good men. The men we want are those with self-reliance, who can take responsibility on their own shoulders without referring every difficulty to us.”

At times one is tempted to lose faith in one's own abilities. Things may continually go wrong, business may get bad, things may look hopeless. Such times come to all men in business, and the man who fights on is the man who succeeds. At such a time the best help is a good friend. He is not the best friend who will pull you out of your difficulties. The best friend is he who can show you how to do it yourself. If you have no such friend, your reserve of strength and will must answer the same purpose. Determine to succeed. The Bishop of London once said : “ No man is a failure until he gives up.” The Navy has a tradition which is expressed in the words, “ Carry on.” You must “ carry on ” in your business career, through all doubts, through all difficulties, and through all despair. There never was a position so hopeless that it could defeat a brave man. The old saying, “ God helps those who help themselves,” is as true as any words ever were. In my own limited experience I have time and again found myself in situations of such difficulty that

The Tyranny of Doubt 67

it seemed impossible there could be a way out. But every time a way out has opened itself up, and my experience has taught me this: That however hopeless a task may seem, if you but "carry on," using your faculties to guide you to safe methods, the way out will appear to you.

Things sometimes seem to hang fire until you are ready for them. Perils that seem to be imminent wait until you are strong enough to overcome them. Over all your perils, some inscrutable Providence seems to hover to guard you and aid you so long as you "carry on." A man once said to me when I was downhearted: "Trouble is a big bully. Tackle it and it runs away. Run from it and it will overwhelm you." I think it is Emerson who says: "In the solitude to which every man is always returning, he has a sanity and revelations, which, in his passage into new worlds, he will carry with him. Never mind the ridicule, never mind the defeat; up again, old heart! it seems to say—there is victory yet for all justice." You cannot do better than take this for your motto: "Up again, old heart!" When you are in despair, it seems like the voice of a friend urging you on to new energies: "Up again, old heart!" Get the idea into your mind that you are made for success. It will then become easier for you to will yourself to succeed. Never admit the possibility of failure. Away with

doubt! Accept your set-backs only as incitements to put forth more thought, more energy.

You will always notice in successful men an element of power which is most impressive. For want of a better term, we call it personality. When you talk of a man's personality or individuality, or whatever other name you choose to apply, you refer to that definite mental force which all men possess, which some have more strongly developed than others, but which all men can cultivate. The other man's job always looks easier than our own. I have intimate friends in business whose incomes are thousands a year. I have others whose incomes run into hundreds. Remember this: The man who has a salary of a thousand a year has got to earn it. One of my friends once said to me: "It is easier to justify a salary of a hundred a year than to justify one running into thousands." That is an obvious fact when you come to think of it. You know that the Christian standard is "full measure pressed down and running over." Translated into business terms that means that for every pound you earn you must give back to your employer not merely one pound of labour, but at least one pound and something over; and if you can give him two pounds' value for the one pound he gives you, you are justifying your salary and your conscience, and are then on the high road to success.

The Tyranny of Doubt 69

Our business lives are divided into three distinct groups. In the first we prepare for business by education. In the second we find out what our particular bent is. In the third we work along the lines that are most suitable, and our success depends upon our industry, upon our determination, and upon our grit. You have some particular talent. You must find out what it is, and you must develop it. Do not put it in the ground, as it were, and leave it there. The field must be cultivated for the harvest, and the brain must be cultivated for the business harvest. There is nothing more satisfactory than to glance back over a year, and note an increase in experience and in mental power.

It may be that your talent is of the non-productive order. For instance, a book-keeper is a non-productive element in a business. He can never command the same salary as a salesman, whose record is clearly seen from the annual profit he makes. All the same, the book-keeper can lose his firm money by carelessness, just as he can save it by care; and a man who can show his employer how to cut costs, and how to run his business systematically to save him time and labour, is on the high road to management, with a comfortable salary and very possibly a partnership.

Never think that good work is unappreciated. The best schemes a business man can evolve depend

for their success upon the active co-operation of his staff, from the highest to the lowest. The very messenger-boy can cause failure by being late with the delivery of a letter. Work is largely its own reward. You may have read the lines :

“To set the cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize.”

That would make a good business creed for you and me. You must “play the game,” not for the money it brings but for its own sake.

When you find a successful man you find a worker. He works hard when he has no need to work. He works because he loves work, and the reason he has succeeded is because he has always loved it.

A traveller once told me that in certain parts of Spain, if you go into a shop and ask if an article is in stock, the shopkeeper will say, “I don’t know. Come back to-morrow and I will tell you.” No man ever made the best use of his talents by putting off his work. “Give us *this* day our daily bread,” says the Lord’s Prayer. If we ask for, and expect, this prompt supply from the Creator, we should yield back our prompt daily work in return. No matter how strong your will, nor how high your hope, your mind is unbalanced and incomplete unless you use your faculties vigorously and conscientiously. To-morrow brings its own duties.

The Tyranny of Doubt 71

To-day is the appointed time. Throw off sloth and doubt. The energy and the work of the world wait upon your effort. Shall they wait because you may wish to be idle, or because you fear to attempt? If so, you too must expect to wait for your "daily bread"; or, in other words, for your **SUCCESS**.

CHAPTER VII

STUDY

“Employ your time in improving yourself by other men’s writings ; so you shall come easily by what others have laboured hard for. Prefer knowledge to wealth, for one is transitory, the other perpetual.”

SOCRATES.

IT is a condition of the enjoyment of power that it should be increased by use. You cannot live upon your mental capital so well as upon the income which it brings you ; and just as in commerce the more you put by the bigger your income will be, so with your mental power, the more you can add to it the more force you can exert.

Nothing worth doing can be accomplished without study. The man who leaves his mental work behind him and devotes himself entirely to pleasure after office hours, must remain a routine worker all his life. You must know your business thoroughly before you can size up its possibilities. You cannot plan big projects and carry them through unless you are familiar with all the detail work which will be necessary. Some men, by performing routine well, rise to comfortable positions, but they remain routine workers. The captains of industry are

recruited from the thinkers, the men who dream dreams and then convert them into practical realities.

Consider the meanings of the word "study." Here are some of them : "To bestow pains upon" ; "to apply the mind to" ; "to examine closely, in order to learn thoroughly" ; "to form and arrange by thought" ; "to con over." There are others to the same point, but you will notice that all these varying meanings suggest the active and well-considered employment of the brain to achieve a definite purpose. Taking the meanings in their order, we find that the word demands care, an effort of the mind, close attention, system and reflection.

Now, the purpose of study is to acquire some knowledge which will be useful. If you are in business, study that business and learn all you can about it. You can study books on commercial correspondence, on law, on book-keeping, or you can study shorthand and typewriting. If you have a knowledge of law, what is there to prevent you reading for the Bar ? You can save money for your fees, and you can get coached, then you can take your examinations one by one, and finally get called. It will be much better to study definitely for the Bar than just to study law in a desultory fashion. You can be sure that if you get called your employers will be very glad to make use of your special qualifications.

If you are an accountant, study for the examinations of the Institute of Secretaries; or if your firm advertises largely, take a course of advertising lessons. Whatever branch of learning you take up, study it thoroughly in such a way that you will get expert guidance. If you want to study art or literature, there are plenty of lectures at the polytechnics which will give you what you want. If you live in a town where these facilities are not available, hunt round for subscribers and get a course of University Extension Lectures through the winter. Even if you are only keen on some hobby, study it. There are endless possibilities in photography which will well repay careful study. There are fretwork, carpentry, engineering, and a score of other things upon which you can use your mind. You have some particular talent that an experienced teacher can develop for you. Study with a teacher if you can, or, if that is not possible, take in the paper that deals with your hobby and ask the editor to advise you upon a choice of books that will teach you all you want to know about it.

If a thing is worth using your mental effort upon, it is worth the full force of your mind. I want to fire your ambition to excel in everything you undertake. Do not be content to know just as much as the average man. If you are you can never be anything above the average. Just a little more

trouble, a little more thought, and a little more effort are needed to raise you above the crowd, and the knowledge that you are better and stronger will be a joy to you that these others can never know.

You must study in a systematic fashion. Do not attack the work with abundant enthusiasm which grows less and less as time goes on, until you lose all interest in your study and then drop it altogether. Sit down in cold-blood and plan out a time-table for work. Set aside as much time a day as you can manage. Then halve that time and knock out every day of the week except, say, two. You will then start easily at your work, and will set yourself a task that will be well within your powers. If you try to do too much to start with, you will get tired and lose your interest in what you are doing; but if you start quietly, the chances are that you will grudge the evenings when you do not study and will want to use them too. It is not the rush work which makes you tired that counts, but the steady effort that means so much and accomplishes so much when totalled up at the end of a year.

A man has every encouragement to study. Every small addition to his knowledge is a jumping-off ground to further information, which again will lead to a greater increase of mental capacity. You cannot avoid the intermediate stages of the journey,

but, on the other hand, if you travel only a few paces each day, you will have gained a tremendous amount of ground by the end of the year, leaving your less prudent rivals far behind you.

So long as you neglect study you remain on a level with the average man, though all the time you can reach such sources of information as will enable you to start where some great man left off. Suppose Marconi had not studied electricity. He might have been inventing small batteries now, instead of producing the marvellous instruments which are making wireless telegraphy so perfect. By using the experience of the great inventors of the past he was able to start right away where they finished.

Why, then, should you be content to acquire a limited knowledge laboriously, by personal experience and experiment, when you can so easily take all knowledge to yourself, and learn in a few days far more than you could learn in a lifetime by your own unaided efforts ?

Everything depends upon the point of view. Most men regard study as an unnecessary evil that ceased with their school days. That is your chance. If everybody studied hard, worked hard, and thought hard it would be a task for a herculean mind and body to rise above the crowd and make a great success of life. As it is, people are generally so lazy that they will neither test the joys of know-

ledge nor make the small effort which will reveal to them the pleasure of achievement. Take this thought to yourself :

“Whatever branch of knowledge I desire to take up, all the best thought of the world is at my disposal ; in my home I can start with the elementary principles, and with a little daily effort can work my way upwards till I stand on the heights where the latest discoveries and thoughts are spread out for me to use. I can either remain one of the crowd with the nonentities, or I can join in the thoughts, triumphs and discoveries of the world’s greatest men. Contact with great men will make me great, because my mind must expand with the stimulus of their great thoughts. It will be no trouble to me to mix with this great company, to learn their secrets and profit by their experience. All I need to do is to decide what men can best teach me, and they will come to me through the medium of books.”

Is it worth your while to read trash and to grudge a little care and mental effort to educate yourself up to the standard of the best minds in the world ? Make up your mind that you will use all the privileges of the age you live in. Think what the great men of the past would not have given for your opportunities. Think what you can do with them to help you. An army is stronger

than a single man. You can get an army of the best intellects the world has ever known to help you fight your battles, and, in order that you may get the utmost benefit from their aid, you are so placed in regard to them that you must plan and think for yourself how to make use of their brains and experience. Think of it! You are alone and struggling. As soon as you will you can summon to your side a tireless army—battalions of picked men, every one of them a genius, and all of them willing and waiting to help you with the full force of their powers. However strong you may be, you will grow stronger still with every one of these that you call to your side, and the number that you summon depends only upon your own industry and capacity for using them. Is it not worth while to start in a small way, by securing the help of one of these, so that you may face the world fully equipped and perpetually strengthened?

That is the right point of view from which to regard the necessity for study. It is not a hardship, but a privilege, and the man who is not willing to spend a little time to buy so great a power when he knows it is available, deserves the losses, both mental and material, which will be his as a consequence of his own mental laziness.

CHAPTER VIII

CULTURE AND CHARM

*"To fireside happiness, and hours of ease
Blessed with that charm, the certainty to please."*

ROGERS.

IT is certainly our duty to give pleasure to others. We are to make the world a better and a brighter place by our presence in it, and we have the sure promise that in meting out our measure of good it will be meted out to us again. The kindly smile brings back the cheerful, glad wish, just as surely as the scowl begets black looks and evil sentiments. According to modern beliefs advanced by those who are well competent to judge, we should never allow our minds to create harmful thoughts and send them against people we dislike. Bad thoughts are said to have a corresponding physical effect upon ourselves, just as good thoughts exhilarate the body while they uplift the soul. We all like those people who like us, who seem to bring sunshine into a room with them, and make us feel happier by their very presence. Who so happy as the lover whose love is returned? For him the sun shines in the darkest places and

the air is filled with heavenly harmonies. We should get those same inspiring sensations if we felt only good-will towards all our fellows. Do you think the man who is consumed with hatred or malice can feel the gladness of the spring in his blood, or thank God for the glories of a perfect summer day ? The nearer we get to the real source of the joy of life, the more real will become the beauties of the earth. For those who see only the good in their fellow-creatures the bright and beautiful things of the world shine in their sublimest splendour. There are no dark or gloomy thoughts to dim the radiance of earth and heaven.

The first essential of that charm which attracts others is a belief in the innate goodness of humanity, and a strong desire to help it forward. Many a friendship has been broken by a loan of money, but friendship was never broken by understanding sympathy and practical help. Out of a constant recognition of the good in others, and a persistent blindness to the faults and shortcomings of other folk, grows sympathy and tact. Many an action that seems harsh is seen to be necessary when all the circumstances of the case are known. Learn to make allowances and to judge others not from the standpoint of mental or moral superiority but of equal weakness. That is the way sympathetic natures are made. Did not a London magistrate say that he

never saw a prisoner in the dock without feeling that but for the grace of God he himself might be standing there? "Opportunity is a fine thing," but it can also be a bad thing. The man who is born into a well-to-do family has no temptation to steal. The man who is busy from morning to night, and goes home tired out, has small temptation to vice. Remember your advantages, and be sure you turn them to account. Learn to appreciate the disabilities of others. The man with a perfect digestion does not realise how difficult it is to be good-tempered when one is suffering from dyspepsia. There is no virtue in being good when you are not tempted, or in being happy and cheerful when you have nothing to worry you. Virtue is a positive state of the mind, and consists of active resistance to the difficulties of daily life.

This is all by way of proving that sympathy is not an instinct which some are born with and others can never acquire. It is a gift easily to be cultivated and one which we should all cultivate. From sympathy we get tact, which is the oil that makes the wheels of life go smoothly. A tactless person is a selfish person. Forget yourself, and think of the likes and dislikes and of the comfort of others, and you will be tactful. Get sympathy first, then you will surely be tactful, and with these two qualities you will acquire hosts of friends, and learn the vital

secrets of success in everything that is really worth having in life.

Without these saving graces of the soul all the culture in the world is worth nothing, but as culture gives an added charm to good feeling and good manners, it should be sought on that account. The secret of happiness is the power to appreciate the beauties of the world and of the characters of its inhabitants, joined to the ability to share the joy of knowledge with others. The lonely man does not get the same pleasure out of his books as the man who is able to discuss their subjects and style with his friends. Hidden in all sorts of places are numberless points of interest the discovery of which adds infinitely to the zest of life. If we can find some of these for others, they, too, will discover some for us. Man is an imitative creature. The tendency is to save one's best thoughts and most diverting experiences for those who can appreciate them. You would not write of love to a woman-hater, or of humour to a person deficient in the sense of fun. But be humorous and bright in your correspondence and talk, and people will instinctively be amusing when they come into contact with you. If you write a good letter instead of a bad one, you are cultivating your gifts of observation and are enriching the treasures of your mind. Our habits react on each other. Let all your thoughts and

deeds be calculated to improve the powers of your mind, and you will reap your reward a hundredfold.

When you have got into the habit of being interesting in your writing and talking you will appreciate all the more the necessity and pleasure of cultivating your mind. You can converse with the greatest people in history by reading the best literature, but never forget that unless you turn your culture to practical advantage you might just as well have never read a line. The gospel of life is the gospel of action. Other people cannot make you clever or capable ; you must do it for yourself. You do not read books merely to pass the time in a pleasant manner ; you read them for what you get out of them, and you can get nothing out of them if you simply put their contents into the lumber-room of your mind. If the reading of good books is to give you a polished literary style, or a cultured habit of talk, what is the use of reading them unless you try constantly to improve your writing and your powers of conversation ?

There is a very simple and delightful method of acquiring culture in a practical manner which used to be practised more regularly than it is in these strenuous and hustling days. Buy a few good books, say Shakespeare's Sonnets, Hazlitt's "Table Talk," Emerson's Essays, Bacon's Essays, and Oliver Wendell Holmes's three masterpieces : "The

Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," "The Professor at the Breakfast Table," and "The Poet at the Breakfast Table." (There are hundreds of others which will do as well, but these are good examples.) Read these carefully and mark them in the margins (with pencil marks against passages you like particularly, and your own remarks) as you read them. You will not only enjoy the reading much more by adopting this plan, but you will fix the best passages in your mind. Afterwards, in odd moments, you can pick up the books and refresh your memory of the gems of thought which pleased you when you first discovered them. I have before me as I write a little volume of the "Table Talk," which I see I read in 1903 (it is a splendid plan, by the way, to write in a book the date you started to read it), and, dipping into it haphazard, I find the following among the passages I marked at that time:—

"I walked out in the afternoon and saw the evening star set over a poor man's cottage with other thoughts and feelings than I shall ever have again."

Or again :

"For not only a man's actions are effaced and vanish with him ; his virtues and generous qualities die with him also ; his intellect only is immortal and bequeathed unimpaired to posterity. Words are the only things that last for ever."

Bacon's Essays, like all great masterpieces, please

different people in different ways. A marked book shows the individual taste of the reader, and it would be a delightful thing for a circle of friends to map out a reading course, and pass the books round, each marking the passages he liked best, and making marginal notes on the context. Some would like Bacon for his range of knowledge, others for his style, others, again, for his deep insight. Here are some of the passages that appealed to me as I read the *Essays* for the first time :—

“ It was a high speech of Seneca (after the manner of the Stoics), that ‘ the good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired.’ ”

A few lines lower down, I marked the following :—

“ It is yet a higher speech of his than the other (much too high for a heathen) ”—

Mark how in that aside the widest intellect is seen to have its narrowness !

“—‘ It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a God.’ ”

Yet another marked passage reminds me that we should keep our independence of thought even in the presence of great thinkers. It is the oft-quoted phrase :—

“ He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief.”

Bacon, indeed, points out that there are advantages to be derived from marriage, but in reading his essay "Of Marriage and Single Life," I find myself wishful to argue the point with him, which I conceive is a good thing for a modest mind to feel in the presence of a Master. Quite recently a successful man said to me: "I had nothing when I married, but immediately afterwards I began to make money fast—I had to." Reading good literature will sharpen your brain if you read it in a slightly argumentative spirit, and do not take the thoughts as being the infallible sayings of oracles. Having made these reflections, I thought I would refresh my memory of Bacon's life, so I turned up my encyclopædia (an indispensable adjunct to the book-lover, by the way) and found, somewhat to my surprise, that Bacon was himself a married man. According to my authority, he was of a very servile disposition, so perhaps, if he carried that into his home-life, many of his views on the disabilities of marriage may be explained.

Reading Oliver Wendell Holmes, you will get some idea of what conversation may be. It is very brilliant conversation, of course, and much of it is very learned, but it shows what a wealth of interest life holds for the keen observer, and how that interest may be brought out in talk for the pleasure and information of others. You will love it for its

tender sentiments, and for its acute, homely wisdom. I picked up the "Breakfast Table" series for the purpose of finding some marked passages for this chapter, and, reading many of them, felt once more the thrills of pleasure which they gave me at the first perusal.

"Poets are never young in one sense. Their delicate ears hear the far-off whispers of eternity, which coarser souls must travel towards for scores of years before their dull sense is touched by them. A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience."

In another part of the same volume ("The Professor") he remarks :

"Life, as we call it, is nothing but the edge of the boundless ocean of existence where it comes on soundings."

If there is one thing more than another which creates personality and individuality, it is the original habit of thought which is acquired by sharpening the mind against the bright intellects of the world. It is a good mental exercise to take a subject treated by some competent essayist and write down a series of heads to denote arguments and facts which one would use in writing an essay on the same subject, and then to compare one's own ideas with those of the writer. As I dip into the "Poet at the Breakfast Table," I find a talk about fame which well illustrates originality of thought, and shows the charm of communion with versatile thinkers. Both

for its beauty and its thought the passage is well worth quoting :—

“ But is there not something of rest, of calm, in the thought of gently and gradually fading away out of human remembrance? What line have we written that was on a level with our conceptions? What page of ours that does not betray some weakness we would fain have left unrecorded? To become a classic and share the life of a language is to be ever open to criticisms, to comparisons, to the caprices of successive generations, to be called into court and stand a trial before a new jury, once or more than once in every century. To be forgotten is to sleep in peace with the undisturbed myriads, no longer subject to the chills and heats, the blasts, the sleet, the dust, which assail in endless succession that shadow of a man which we call his reputation. The line which dying we could wish to blot has been blotted out for us by a hand so tender, so patient, so used to its kindly task, that the page looks as if it had never borne the record of our infirmity or our transgression. And then so few would be content with their legacy of fame. The dignity of a silent memory is not to be undervalued. Fame is, after all, a kind of rude handling, and a name that is often on vulgar lips seems to borrow something not to be desired, as the paper-money that passes from hand to hand gains somewhat which is a loss thereby. O sweet, tranquil refuge of oblivion, so far as earth is concerned, for us poor blundering, stammering, misbehaving creatures, who cannot turn over a leaf of our life's diary without feeling thankful that its failure can no longer stare us in the face. Not unwelcome shall be the baptism of dust which hides for ever the name that was given in the baptism of water! We shall have good company whose names are left unspoken by posterity. Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether

there can be not more remarkable persons forgot than any that stand remembered in the known account of time ? The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been ; to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. There are moments when the aching need of repose comes over us and the *requiescat in pace*, heathen benediction as it is, sounds more sweetly in our ears than all the promises that Fame can hold out to us."

You can think things like that, and you can write them down and talk them. You may do these things poorly at first, but they are worth doing even then, and as you persevere and time goes on, you will attain to a degree of culture which you can use for the pleasure of yourself and of others. Do not be a mediocrity. Use the gifts of free thought and of intellect that the Creator has given you, and by so doing ennoble yourself and be helpful to those with whom you live your daily life.

CHAPTER IX

THE FEAR OF FAILURE

"That which you fear happens sooner than that which you hope."

PUBLILIUS SYRUS.

HOW many people fail in life only because they are obsessed with the fear of failure! They so fill their minds with the thought of failing that they approach every task as if it were an impossibility. They start with the idea that perfect success, for some reason, is denied to them; that they are unlucky, as compared with those fortunate beings who seem to turn to gold everything they touch. Someone said to me once: "I would rather start in a humble way and work up gradually, than start big and come down in the world." The people who are afraid to "start big" never achieve greatness. They are the very people who do come down in the world. They are so full of the idea of coming down that all thought of progress is crushed out of their minds. If they would only fix their thoughts on big things and success, and determine to move

forwards, instead of continually dreading to go backwards, they would lose their dread of failure, and they would get so used to the thought of success that achievement would become natural to them.

Life is a big thing, and the mind of man is a big thing. There ought to be nothing mean or small in our thoughts. The imagination of man turns giddy at the contemplation of eternity, but it is bounded only by the measureless spaces of the universe. We can comprehend the heavens stretching away to the uttermost bounds of the horizon, and we should, therefore, not confine our thoughts to the measures of small streets. Ultimately we hope to be able to grasp the meaning of eternity; meantime, our thoughts should naturally occupy themselves with the greatness and majesty of life rather than with the smallness of the things which are purely of human creation.

Look at the sea, rolling far beyond the range of your vision; see the mountains, so high that they are lost in the clouds. Think of the power of the sea and the strength of the mountains, and tell yourself that the mind is wider and more powerful than the sea, and that its strength is greater than the mountains. Mind created the sea and the mountains, and your own mind can project itself far away to the uttermost confines of the sea and beyond the limits of the world itself. Is

such a mind to be terrified by petty difficulties and unreasonable fears ?

The natural, healthy hope of all men is towards something that is grand and noble. In the far distance of eternity we see the final perfection of our powers, the ultimate complete success of all our endeavours. We picture the mansions in the sky which are the homes of the blessed. If that is to be our natural lot in a world that is matchlessly magnificent, cannot we expect to succeed as well in this small world if we strive after success ? Why should we expect failure here and success hereafter ? Is not success our natural heritage here and now ?

There is never any complete failure in Nature. When the crops fail one year they are plentiful the next. If the plant has nourishment it flourishes. Given the right environment and the right nutriment there is corresponding growth. Take away air and water from a flower and it withers and dies. Take away enthusiasm, activity, and determination from your mind, and wrap it up in pessimism and despair, and it will cramp your whole existence and kill all your powers of achievement. Get into your mind the thought that you are greater than your environment and you will become greater. Do not let your fears master you ; your success-thoughts will master your actions just as

The Fear of Failure 93

surely, and will crowd out your self-distrust and your morbid dread.

People who are given to worry would do well to make a point of repeating to themselves every day the utterance of a sage whose name ought to have been immortalised: "I am an old man and have seen many troubles, but most of them never happened." If we are constantly looking for danger and disappointment, we have so much the less time to look for success. Failure and fear are negative qualities of the mind, and they cause a negative attitude which expresses itself in inaction. Hope is a positive mental force that produces a corresponding physical action. It is well to remember always that every physical effect has a mental cause, and that our actions, which are often unconscious, are the direct outcome of our mental state. Exercise your mind with positive thoughts and exclude all others. It is not enough, for instance, to determine not to be indolent. Map out a course of action and plunge into it. Feed your mind on the contemplation of great deeds, and you will fit yourself for great things. Get into the company of people who are active.

Among some business men it is an axiom never to associate with life's failures. It is because man is an imitative being. We assimilate habits of thought as well as physical habits from our associates.

The man who has failed and is yet a failure imbues you with his failure-thoughts, and acts as a drag upon your enthusiasm. It is often difficult enough to shut worry and fear out of the mind at the best of times. It is impossible if you associate with those who never attempt to do so. To mix with successful people is not only a sure help to filling your mind with success-thoughts, but it is a very real help, inasmuch as such men regard difficulties as tests of their ability, and not, like the unsuccessful, as the cause of downfall.

It is not always possible at first to make friends with very busy, successful men. It is possible as we progress in life, provided we make up our minds to do so. There is a society of successful people, however, which is within the reach of us all. They stand, so to speak, in the ante-room of the chamber peopled by those who will be our actual friends in the days to come. These are the great people of the world whose company we can have in our own homes any time we desire it. They live in books and tell us of the work they did, the dangers and difficulties they overcame, and how, in spite of everything, the forces of their minds triumphed over all obstacles and brought them to the fulfilment of their ambitions.

Read the Lives of Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon. You will be struck most of all with the iron resolu-

The Fear of Failure 95

tion that would let nothing stand in the way of their plans. Nothing could daunt them, nothing could make them turn aside from the goal they had set before themselves in their thoughts. There was no fear of failure, there were no doubts that the object desired could be attained. They *knew* that they could succeed, and therein lay the secret of their success. All their achievements were due to the power of their minds—not to any fortuitous circumstances.

Napoleon created his victories in his mind before he won them. Had he allowed his mind to dwell on chances of defeat he would never have achieved his splendid victories. When he failed it was because others were incapable of measuring up to his standards and of carrying out the gigantic tasks which he set them. Whatever may have been his failure at the end, was it not more glorious than never to have attempted and achieved such greatness? The moral, surely, is that we should not let our ambitions overreach themselves; it can never be that great thoughts and great attempts are undesirable because they are perilous. Cromwell, be it noted, did not overreach himself like Napoleon. He refused the crown, putting a curb on his own ambition, and retaining the full measure of his success to the end of his days.

It is far better to fail grandly than to be

content to remain a mediocrity. The mental effort of attempting something great of itself is a help towards greatness. You may fail at your big work, but you will profit by what you do, and you will gain strength and knowledge which will pull you through next time. Do not admit that you have failed or can fail. The non-attainment of your goal at one particular onslaught does not shut you out from it for ever. What you call failures are halts on the road to success to enable you to take a breathing space and find out what your weaknesses and your difficulties are. The men who accept them as defeats are the men who are "unlucky." The wise man profits by his misfortunes and turns them to account ; and he marches straight on to success. Do not assume that you will be less efficient or less prosperous to-morrow than you are to-day. Make yourself more efficient still, and fit yourself for greater deeds.

CHAPTER X

KEYS TO HAPPINESS

"Learn only to grasp happiness, for happiness is always there."

GOETHE.

FREE will means the power to rule our minds. We cannot rule unless we understand. It is not necessary that we should indulge in morbid introspection concerning ourselves. We can learn by studying human nature, and by pondering over the lives of the great men and women of the ages. Self-control is the first lesson that life teaches us, because without it we cannot succeed in anything we may undertake.

Success is merely a relative term. To a number of people it stands for happiness ; to some, contentment ; to others, money. Money is not to be despised. After all, it is the visible and tangible sign of success in business. We must never forget, however, that success in business does not necessarily mean success in life. The philosopher said, "Success cannot buy happiness," to which the cynic replied : "No, but it can buy off a lot of unhappiness." If you

have money you want to know how to use it so that it will bring you actually what you need, and this demands a cultivated and well-balanced mind.

There is one quality of the mind that makes for power and progress above all others. Without it life must be a failure and a fraud, hopeless and despairing. With it, all the days are tinged with rose, all our troubles, defeats and disappointments are but the sign-posts marking the steps of the road to success and happiness. It is the philosopher's stone of life which turns all it touches to gold. This quality is optimism. It is a gift of God possessed by everybody, like free-will. It may become atrophied from lack of use, or remain stunted because it is used too little. Yet, like all our natural gifts, it will increase in value by cultivation and use. Man was never meant to be a pessimist. Pessimism is an entirely artificial habit of mind that has no existence. Take an example. The optimist says, "Every cloud has its silver lining." The pessimist replies, "Every silver lining betokens a cloud." "Yes," says the optimist, "but the cloud only hides the sun for a while. The sun is there all the time, more powerful than the cloud, and in time its strength will disperse the cloud altogether."

In business, optimism generally goes by the name of ambition. The ambitious man sees only the goal

towards which he is striving. He has his losses and his setbacks, but he knows the goal is still accessible. As soon as he begins to doubt that, his efforts slacken and his work deteriorates in quality. Success is a state of mind like everything else. Each day of achievement is a day of success, though the work may not look profitable. Each task well done is a help to success because it induces a sense of satisfaction, and makes work easier and pleasanter. You can see, if you follow this line of reasoning, that every material and moral success is bound up with the quality of optimism, and that the more we cultivate this quality the more successful and the happier we shall be.

It is the duty of each one of us to be an optimist. Do you suppose that the derelicts of London who throng the Embankment seats at night would be there if they were optimists? Some of them fell into the depths because they had no strong hand to drag them upwards. If they had had the self-reliance that optimism breeds, do you suppose they would have given up the struggle? Some got there through drink. Drink, as we know, produces an artificial feeling of pleasure. It dulls the pessimism of the brain. That artificial state of mind can be produced much more easily by an effort of will. If all the world were pessimists, what an awful place it would be to live in! We each know men and women

who come into a room like a ray of sunshine. They are optimists, and their influence makes other people optimists too. You must be one of those people—it is your duty to yourself and to those you meet. The effect of your optimism will spread itself in ever-widening circles, affecting people you never meet, and the world will be a better and a brighter place because of your life. You have that duty to perform to the world, and in performing it you will gain affection and happiness as well as material success.

You may think it is not easy to be an optimist. It is easy because it simply means being natural. All you have to do is to *be* an optimist. Stop reading this book a moment, and smile. Do you not feel happier by that very action? Now throw your chest out and look upwards at the ceiling. Does not that simple action help to turn your thoughts upwards away from the petty troubles and worries of life? If you do not feel better after that, go out into the open and look up at the sky. Up there your little troubles will soon be lost. Nature has no room for pessimism. It breeds only in the narrow street and among little people. Measure your mind by the infinite, and you will lose all your little troubles.

If you study life you will not fail to notice that for every pain there is some compensation and for

every trouble some recompense. A man I know in his youth wanted to be a journalist. He applied for a position on a newspaper, and was offered a job on the commercial side. He went home, he said, wishing almost that a tram would run over him and end his disappointment. To-day he is at the top of his profession, earning probably three or four times as much as he could have done if he had secured the work he asked for. What he regarded as a disaster was the beginning of his success. If your daily work is obnoxious to you, do it as well as you can. Be sure it is developing some side of your character that will make you more successful in life. Mr. Gladstone hated figures when at school, but he mastered them so successfully in after life that he became Chancellor of the Exchequer and, subsequently, Premier. Be sure that your humdrum, worrying work, well done, is producing valuable experience and is moulding your character. Be an optimist and you will get there.

Look back over your life for two things only. Once to note all the pleasures it has brought you, and once again to see how your troubles were only the beginnings of happier times which you could not have had without them. Browning has crystallised the sense of optimism in familiar lines which are immortal because they are true. Here they are. Learn them by heart, and when you are depressed

and pessimistic, say them over, and then look back over your life and "count your blessings" :—

"One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

The mind has this great advantage over matter, that it can create from itself its own atmosphere. The grass in the field scintillates and brightens in the sun, and becomes dull when the sun disappears behind a cloud. The mind can store up its sunshine and sparkle in dullness from its own reserve of brightness. Just as the engineer imprisons the flood waters of the Nile to let them loose on the arid plain during the drought, so the mind can absorb its sunshine and its pleasant thoughts, and imprison them till they are required to enliven dark hours of difficulty and danger.

The dominant reality of life is brightness and beauty. The body responds to beauty, whether it be beauty of form, of scent, or of sound. The physical counterpart of sunshine is a bright expression. It is instructive to note how beauty produces brightness. A beautiful melody exhilarates the mind and refreshes the body. The scent of flowers, even in a room, conjures up visions in the mind of sunlit

spaces. Visible things are seen because they reflect light.

Some people are naturally more cheerful than others. They have a greater capacity for absorbing brightness into their minds and retaining it there to be called out when needed. It is of such persons that we say "their presence is like sunshine." They correspond to those colours which readily reflect light, and they affect our spirits in a very similar manner.

In the normal condition of mind, the spirits rise in bright sunshine. When the spirit is darkened by sorrow or disappointment, the sunshine is unnoticed. It is there if we choose to see it; and when the sun sets or is hidden, the brightness it gives to the earth is still there if the mind will only let loose its hidden store of light. You have often seen a landscape under a cloudy sky, looking dark and forbidding. Suddenly the sun breaks out, and a thousand hidden splendours spring to view. The sun does not create them. They were there before, only you did not see them. All the beauty of the earth lies before your eyes whenever you care to see it, if you will only store up your sunshine and use it when need arises.

If you were to hang a room in black and let the sun pour into it, very little of its brightness would be reflected. The room would be dark and

depressing under all circumstances. A white room, on the other hand, would gleam in the sunshine and be bright, even with a cloudy sky. If you are to make your mind a storage place for mental sunshine, you must first of all clear out all the dark and forbidding thoughts, and replace them with bright and pleasant ones. A man stands sentinel at the portals of his mind. He can admit or refuse his thoughts at his will. One of the penalties of Satan after his fall from heaven, according to Milton, was the loss of his brightness :

“ Oh how fallen ! how changed,
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright ! ”

It is our privilege to be able to create for ourselves an earthly Paradise by the creation of bright thoughts that will shine out and illumine our lives. According to modern thought, Heaven and Hell are matters of the mind. Hell is a mind purged of everything but gloom, Heaven the glory of transcendent brightness. If we allow worry and despair to come into our mental houses and drive out hope and contentment, it is our own fault. To the lover the world is always a garden, bright with flowers and sweet with incense. On the darkest day his spirits are high and undaunted. The world lies before him at his feet. He would not change his state with

kings, for he has that within him which kings would envy. This is purely a state of mind created by himself, and it is a state of mind that he can create at any time.

The mind is dominated by its strongest interest. If you concentrate your thought upon your work, you are oblivious to the external influences that surround you. If you are absorbed in listening to music, or in the contemplation of a beautiful picture, the state of the weather outside has no influence on you whatever. The small boy going home in the dark whistles to keep his courage up, because he unconsciously wishes to replace the fear-thoughts in his mind by the courage-thoughts which the tune suggests. If we are depressed, we have only to substitute bright thoughts to drive away depression. If we are worried, the hope-thoughts, firmly held in the mind, will give us new courage.

The very act of throwing our minds into a condition of brightness will enliven our mental outlook. When you are feeling unaccountably sad or miserable, smile and laugh, and you will find that happy thoughts will easily flow into your mind. If you feel dull, sing a jolly song. The mere act will make you feel jolly, and will help you to replace the dullness by a feeling of cheerfulness. We are just what we want to be. If I frown, I am helping the dull thoughts, the miserable thoughts, to come into my mind. It

is a direct invitation to invade my mental house. When I smile, I hang out a sign, "House full of bright, clean thoughts; no room for dullness and despair."

We must not forget that our surroundings react upon our minds. It is easy to be happy in the sunshine and in the midst of beautiful scenery; it is helpful to harmonious, serene thinking, to be surrounded with good company and bright and beautiful things. A bedroom should have quiet wallpaper to induce restfulness. A sitting-room should be bright and cheerful to promote happiness. A red wall-paper is good for a dining-room because it is bright and stimulating, while green is a restful colour suitable for a work-room.

You can store up mental sunshine in many ways. Remember all the pleasant books you read, the amusing things you hear, the interesting sights you see, the beautiful places you have visited, and the happy hours you have spent. Forget all your troubles and disappointments as soon as you have learned their uses to you, so that the experience they give you can be utilised when you need it. Get the habit of cheerfulness, not only by being consistently cheerful and looking cheerful, whatever you may be inclined to feel, but also by mixing with cheerful people. Most people respond to each other's state of mind. If you refuse to be gloomy, your companions will

become cheerful, and you will all forget what it is not to be happy.

You can never get away from the fact that life was meant to be bright. The day is bright, even if the sun is not shining. The night is brightened by the moonlight. In our darkest hours there is always the brightness of hope, and in our moments of despair faith shows us the splendour of final compensation for all suffering in a state of bliss that is eternal day. "Look at the bright side," says the proverb. Habits, we know, grow on us, whether they be good or bad. Resolutely refuse to allow dark thoughts to enter your mind. They cannot come if you will not admit them, and you have only to fill your mind with beautiful thoughts to keep them out.

Sunshine is the great medicine. The sun is the power that gives warmth to the earth and brings forth the flower. Mental sunshine will drive away sickness and will keep it away. It reacts on the whole body. Physicians know that the greatest healer is the power of the mind. Dark thoughts depress the vitality, hopeful thoughts raise the tone of the entire system and help the body to resist the onslaught of disease. The body reacts on the mind in its own way, and for this reason personal cleanliness and neatness are physical helps to mental well-being. The prime force of our being, however, rests

in our minds. We are the governors of our minds. Nothing lives there but we put it there. It is ours to train and to control. Make your mind a bright and joyous place, and you will be vigorous and healthy. Control your passions and your appetites, and relentlessly crush all those desires which impair your mental strength. If we are gloomy or pessimistic it is our own fault, and we deserve no sympathy. The world is full of brightness and light. It is there for us to see, and to take for our own use when the dark days come. The mental sunshine of undaunted optimism is one of life's best gifts, and it is our duty to cultivate the habit of seeing and using it, remembering that

“ He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' th' centre, and enjoy bright day :
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun ;
Himself is his own dungeon.”

PART II
Power in Use

CHAPTER XI

THE KNOWLEDGE OF POWER

*“ Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much :
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.”*

COWPER.

A MAN ought to order his life by the same broad rules which govern business. The general principles of business success are knowledge, industry, and system. Knowledge creates business, industry enlarges it and retains it, while system ensures the smooth and automatic working of the organisation. Without any of these a business cannot succeed, and no man can get the full value out of life who fails to use them in his daily actions.

By industry a man acquires knowledge and develops his mental capacity. By system he adds to his knowledge and his brain power day by day, while he makes each day fruitful of result. System ensures efficiency by providing against waste of effort. Each day brings its allotted task, and many an hour that might be wasted is turned to profitable account.

Knowledge is the great asset in life : not merely

the knowledge of facts, or of men, or of affairs, but that knowledge which combines all three and adds to them the power of using the information stored in our minds. This is wisdom.

Success is possible for everybody. It is merely a question of a right mental attitude. Some people affect to sneer at writers who lay down laws for success, but it is worth while noting that really successful men never do this. They know that there are laws which govern success, because they have learned them by long experience. The sooner they discovered those laws the sooner they succeeded. The wise man profits by the experience of others, and succeeds because he can avoid their mistakes while he takes advantage of their knowledge.

If a man desires to succeed, the first thing for him to know is what he is aiming at. The difference between men who succeed and men who fail mainly lies in the fact that the former know what they want, and concentrate all the forces of their minds upon getting it. You cannot attend to business while you calculate how many more hours there are before you go home. You cannot even sharpen a lead-pencil properly unless you concentrate all your attention upon it. When you settle down to anything, shut out everything else from your mind. Bring all your guns to bear upon the one fort you wish to subdue. Don't scatter. Concentrate!

The Knowledge of Power 113

The more you fix your mind upon your work, the more readily your mind can solve your problems for you. Your attention is not wandering, and you are able to work quicker. This means that you have more time for other tasks, and herein lies another secret of success. The more work you do the more you will be able to do, apart altogether from being able to earn more money. The extra exercise you give your mind will enlarge your brain-power and your capacity. Another advantage you will gain is the ability to do better work. The more you do and the better you do it, the higher you can rise and the more you can earn.

Find out what you want, and plan to get it. Many men have wasted years of their lives searching for a career. They have launched out here and there, feeling for success. Do not look for success or for money. Look after your work, whatever it is; look out for more work in addition to it, and success will come to you. Fix your eye on the job above yours, and aim for that. Then go for the next highest, and so on. Remember that it is not by flashes of brilliance that success is achieved, but by steady, plodding work, plus ambition.

The more you do, the more opportunity will come to you. The better you do your work, the better will you be fitted for doing something more important. Everything well done makes the next task a

little easier, and, as time goes on, unsuspected resources and abilities discover themselves. The man who is always ready for new work, and can be relied upon to do it well, is the man who succeeds. There are plenty of openings for men of resource, who are full of confidence in themselves. Never fear responsibility, and you need never fear failure. These are some of the elementary rules for success.

Get your ambition properly defined, and then fit yourself to seize your opportunities as they arise. A man has got to find out two things before he can be successful. The first, and most important, is what he wants. The second, which is almost as vital, is what his limitations are. It is not the cleverest men who are most successful, but those who use the knowledge they possess in the right way. If you want a thing badly enough, and use all your brain and all your efforts in pursuing it, you will be bound to succeed. Ask yourself if your work calls forth your best abilities, or if you are wasting your talents by doing work which others can do as well or better. It does not actually matter what your work is, so long as you do it perfectly; but it is essential to success that it should lead you where you want to go.

As soon as you make up your mind to achieve some definite purpose, you begin to plan ways and means. You drift no more along the current of life,

The Knowledge of Power 115

meeting the rocks and shallows like the average man. You make a chart of your course, you steer by it, and so you go steadily on, avoiding the dangers that wreck so many.

Nothing is achieved without effort, and the things worth doing and having are only attained if that effort is well directed. Every thought and moment wasted on work that cannot help you forward is keeping you back just a little from your goal. The less you waste your time the sooner you will succeed.

This brings us to the importance of recognising our limitations. It is no use for a man incapable of understanding figures to occupy his time trying to become an insurance actuary. He is simply courting competition he cannot stand against. On the other hand, a man with a talent for figures, and a liking for them, starts with a great advantage in the battle for success, if his work demands a gift for mathematics. Find out what your special talent is, and develop that. Do not do one thing tolerably, when you can do something else perfectly.

Do not imagine that if you are weak at figures you should leave them alone. You should never let your weaknesses conquer you. A knowledge of figures is as necessary a part of a business man's equipment as the ability to write a good letter. Get a working knowledge of business essentials, and

develop the special ability which is going to raise you above the crowd in your career.

You must remember that the man who is at the top of any business or profession is as good at routine work as any of the men struggling below him. They cannot do his work, but he could do theirs if necessary. I knew a journalist who thought he was a born editor, but because he failed to learn shorthand all his special ability was of no use to him. He could not do routine work, and he was not wanted, so he never got his chance to rise.

You must do your routine work as well as any other man, and you must be able to do something or other of value which most men cannot do. Ask yourself which man in your office would be the last to be dismissed if work were slack, and find out the reason. Is there some knowledge you possess, of value to your firm, which makes you more indispensable than the others? If not, there ought to be, or your position is unsound.

Master your work, and fit yourself for something better. The men who rise are those who are so ambitious that they are never content. The measure of your ultimate success is the measure of your ambition. If you mean to succeed, and are determined enough, you will find opportunities.

You must remember, however, that your success depends upon those who can help you, and upon

The Knowledge of Power 117

the manner in which you impress those who can push you forward. That is the value of a strong personality. It is no use having ability unless you can make other people realise its value to them. In this respect all men are salesmen. They are selling their brain-power to the highest bidder in the best market.

If you were to get a very fine diamond in the rough and have it set uncut in a ring by a cheap jeweller, nobody would notice it upon your finger. Cut it and polish it, and have it set by a skilful craftsman, and nobody could fail to notice it. Your brains are a rough diamond, and you yourself are the rough setting. You must polish your brains and make their setting attractive, and then you will create a favourable impression. But be sure the diamond is worthy of the setting.

When you meet anybody for the first time, you show them a sample of what you really are. It is vital that you should impress them, because if you fail to do that you will lack the opportunity to sell your goods. On the other hand, it is waste of time to impress a man unless you can fulfil his expectations. Your goods must be up to sample.

The chief factors in creating a good impression are: (1) A good appearance; (2) a pleasing manner; (3) a suggestion of power. A successful man once said to me, "A man ought to be dressed

so that he could walk either in Rotten Row or in the New Cut without attracting notice." Dirty linen and unclean finger-nails have lost many a job.

Sense of power comes from self-confidence. If you know that you are worth employing you cannot fail to convey that knowledge when you speak. Let your voice be quiet, like your clothes. Do not irritate by harsh, nasal intonations. Speak forcibly, in a pleasing voice. Do not hesitate over your words, because that implies a hesitating mind. Your clothes and your speech are like a written character to the judge of men. He can read your mind and your ability from your appearance.

Now consider the goods you are selling. Avoid promising too much. Keep something up your sleeve for emergencies. A man controlling a turnover of £100,000 a year said to me recently: "If a man starts with me at a small salary, it is easy for him to justify it. The man I engage at a big wage is subject to a constant test. Where the small earner pleases me by giving more than I anticipated, I expect such a lot from the other that it is most difficult for him to satisfy me." Do not be greedy, but remember that merit will always find its true level.

Master your work. When you know you are competent you will be confident. Industry will make you competent and ambition will keep you

The Knowledge of Power 119

industrious. You will then begin to find out what your brains are worth, and you will cultivate them carefully and be jealous of your time, so that you shall not waste any of your mental effort unprofitably. Work hard all day and every day, and try to do your work a little better each day.

Do not make a lumber-room of your mind. Store it well with knowledge that you can use to help you in your day's work. Display your abilities in what you do, and see that everything you perform is worthy of your mind. Take care that your appearance and your speech convey a correct impression of your brain-power. Be content to advance slowly. Do not overreach yourself either by attempting too much or by asking too much. If you have the goods to sell you can always command the best prices.

While you are storing up knowledge that will be useful, and while you are using it to its full advantage, remember always what your mind is capable of. The more you realise what talents you possess and your capacity for employing them, the more confidence and encouragement you will derive from the knowledge. One thing that people are often prone to forget, especially when the outlook seems hopeless, is that good work well done is always noticed. An employer, for instance, who needs to look ahead and provide for all possible contingencies,

must watch for men who can take responsible positions in case the employees holding them leave him. If he can find them in his own office, he will prefer to do so, because he knows his own men. If he cannot, he will go outside, and he is always keeping his eyes open to find men of real ability whom he can use in the best-paid positions in his business. Let your knowledge be acquired for the purpose of making you a marked man. If you will steadily persevere in your quest for wisdom, which is the art of using knowledge as well as getting it, someone will want you for some post that you are fitted for, and probably the call to better things will come sooner than you expect. Opportunity knocks at every man's door, but it forces open the door of the man who possesses knowledge and is aware of his possession.

CHAPTER XII

MENTAL STOCKTAKING

"All our knowledge is ourselves to know."—POPE.

ONE of the greatest mental triumphs is to look back over a year and observe an advance in mental power and achievement. To know yourself a better man than you were twelve months ago, to have a finer record of good work done, and to have acquired greater ability for doing things, is a reward that is known only to the earnest worker. The idler, the prevaricator, and the shirker have no conception of this form of reward for labour. It is sweeter than praise, and better than money, inasmuch as power of the mind commands money, and is, therefore, superior to it.

Some people deliberately blind themselves to their own abilities. "Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust are forfeited," says Wordsworth. I know a man, with every advantage of brain and common-sense, whose self-mistrust stands like a lion in the path of his material progress. He assimilates knowledge with ease, he is essentially business-like, he

Personal Power

can get right to the heart of a question by stripping it of its side-issues, he is qualified for at least two professions, and he is the kind of person to whom the family immediately repair for help and advice when in difficulty. The only thing that keeps him back is a lack of knowledge of his own powers. Many a clerk in an office is a clerk still because he is afraid to attempt work a little out of his regular routine. The people who succeed in life are those who are not afraid of responsibility, and it must be confessed that too many people are crippled by this unreasonable and degrading bogey.

Man, made in the image of his Creator, was, from the first, given command over everything in the world. He is greater than his work if he will only realise it. Most people who profess to believe in the Bible, for instance, read and hear this truth over and over again, but it never dawns upon them that it applies to themselves. Comparatively few people realise that not only is man given command over all the earth, but that he is also given command over himself. If he only will he can crush his timidity, he can fit himself for responsibility, and clutch it with both hands; and he will be a better and a stronger man for doing so.

Responsibility is the very essence of life. It is the primary rule of existence. No man can be responsible for another's soul or for his misuse of

his talents and opportunities. We are all responsible for our own lives, and in material things we receive our rewards or our punishments, according to the manner in which we accept our responsibilities and act up to them. The punishment for shirking responsibility lies in a stultification of our powers of mind and body. The reward for accepting it lies in the glory of achievement and in the pleasure of discovering new and unsuspected powers. Every fresh task undertaken, every new piece of knowledge acquired, every new power for doing different and better work, marks an advance in mental force that is but another stepping-stone to still greater performances. To-morrow ought to find you a better man than you were yesterday. Next year you ought to be capable of work that was unknown to you twelve months before.

You can only discover what you are capable of by striking out on new lines of endeavour, and to do this successfully you must seize every opportunity for more important work that comes your way. Look carefully into the work of your office and observe what knowledge is necessary to enable you to carry out the work that the men above you are doing. It is your duty to fit yourself for these higher places, and only by doing so can you successfully accept responsibility. Knowledge is power, because it gives a man confidence in himself. If you fit

yourself for the work of the men above you in your office, you will not fear responsibility whenever your good fortune thrusts it upon you. What the world wants, and what the commercial house wants, is men who can do things, who know they can do them, and who, consequently, are not afraid to attempt things. Everything is forgiven to the man of honest action.

It is reported of Andrew Carnegie that he once dismissed a man from his employ after years of work, on the ground that he had never made a mistake. The magnate argued that the man who never made a mistake could never be good for anything. Certainly, the man who makes no mistakes cannot be advancing out of the common ruck of life. Employers do not blame a man for his mistakes if his general work is good, and if they are caused by the responsibility he has accepted. The thing to be sure of is that the same mistake shall not be made twice.

Beware of the policy of "drift." It is a maxim of business that if you are not advancing you are going backwards. You cannot be sure you are advancing if you are content to drift. It will be safe for you to assume that unless you take command of your life's work, and map out a plan for your mental and material progress, you will let yourself be outstripped by the more sagacious runners in life's race. The gospel of life is action. The man

of action shapes his own destiny, while the weak man leaves everything to chance and is forced to action only by the command of others or by the hazards of life. The strong man stands aside and views himself and his environment, as it were, and shapes his life accordingly.

Ask yourself at the end of each day what you have done that you did not do yesterday. Ask yourself what you are going to do to-morrow to fit yourself for work you cannot do to-day. Work, to be successful, must be organised. Haphazard effort is too often wasted effort. Conserve your energies by arranging your plan of campaign, so that while you do your work as well as you are capable of doing it, you shall not waste your time and energy simply through lack of thought and system.

The merchant who is most successful is he who anticipates a coming demand. If he waited for people to ask for new fashions, for instance, he would find his trade going to more enterprising rivals who had looked ahead and made plans to be ready when the public wanted to buy. It is the same in the office. The man who waits for a sudden emergency without preparing for it is likely to be found lacking in power to meet it when it arrives. Your employer makes his profit because he is constantly looking ahead, thinking and planning. It would be foolish of him to think out a new idea for making money

unless he also worked out the details of the work necessary to be done. The more carefully the details are attended to, the more will the work be worthy of the plan. If you are to succeed in life, you must model yourself on successful men. Model your work on your employer's business methods. If he is worth serving he is worth studying, and if you are to do good work for him you must be able to work according to his methods. Study day by day the work of each day and the needs of each day, and then take stock of yourself to see if you are mentally equipped to meet the demands that may be made upon you. You must not be content to get through the day merely doing the things that fall to your lot. Remember, every hour of to-day holds the key of your future. What you learn this moment may affect your life years hence.

When you have decided what knowledge will be most useful to you when you get the position in your office that you have determined to win, map out a course of work for each day. Suppose you want to know more about book-keeping. Make your plans for study, and fix a time each day when you will devote yourself to it for a given period. Even if it is only a quarter of an hour it will mount up as the weeks go on. There are many unconsidered moments in your life that you can turn to profitable account in this way.

Do not worry at first if you think you are not learning exactly the best thing to help you in the future. Learn something to make you better equipped with knowledge for the battle of life. The future will take care of itself, and you can be quite sure that whatever you learn you will find a way to make a valuable use of in the future. The very act of making up your mind to watch your work and train your faculties accordingly, the very determination to carry through that training, will make you a better and more efficient unit in human progress. The great necessity for progress is to make a start. Do something that will use your mind to your own advantage. Do not sit about and think what will be the pleasantest or most profitable study. Get to work on something to utilise your wasted evening hours. Very soon you will reap your reward in finding the revelation of your life's work and the powers you possess to carry it through. You will have confidence in yourself and in your future. You will soon get past the stage when you wonder if you are working along the right lines, and will find yourself in the company of those happy souls who know what their allotted task in the world really is :

“ To whom in vision clear
The aspiring heads of future things appear,
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled away.”

CHAPTER XIII

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

*" A noble aim,
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed."*

WORDSWORTH.

MOST men drift. It is easy, and it saves worry, until they strike some rock in the sea of life. If you wanted to go to America you would not dream of going down to the docks and getting aboard the first ship you saw in the hope that it would take you there, would you? Or if you wanted to walk to a friend's new house you would not wander aimlessly about the streets on the off-chance that you would reach your destination. You may say that these illustrations are absurd; but just think for a minute and inquire if your present habits are not just as silly. Here you are in business, hoping to get on and make money. Do you know what position you really want to obtain, and have you any plans for securing it? If you are just doing your day's work, even if you are striving to do it perfectly, you are drifting—on the off-chance that you will achieve your ambition by

some mysterious chance which will present itself some day.

Here you are, we will say, and there is some position you want. Are you aware of the road you must travel to reach your destination, and are you moving along that road? Most men have only a dim idea of what they want, and no idea how they are going to get it. They fancy that the tide in their affairs will come to the flood one day and bear them on to fortune. You must travel to the sea before you can see the tide, and you must be properly equipped with a ship if it is to carry you on to fortune.

The first thing to do to achieve success is to have a definite goal to aim at, and the next thing is to see how you can arrive at it. You cannot reach it at a bound. You must travel by easy stages, gathering strength and experience as you go on.

As a rule, the men who are most successful are those who work their way up from the bottom of their profession. As they progress they master all the details of their business and gain experience. The work of mastering details is the easiest. It is the gathering of the extra experience, and the cultivation of sound judgment, that is difficult.

Whenever you find a competent man grumbling that he cannot get on, you can safely put down the

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cause of his failure to a lack of knowledge of how to qualify himself for his promotion. Let us take a common case and see how this works out.

Here are the ledger clerks in an office employing a large number of these workers. All of them are good at keeping their accounts, all are industrious, and all are ambitious. They all work hard, and one day the cashier retires, and someone has to be promoted to take his place. Which of them shall have the better-paid post ?

Put yourself in the position of the employer. He wants the best man, and, if possible, he wants that man to be one who, in case of emergency, can do better work still. In a word, he wants a man who can seize all the opportunities of the better post. Mere industry and commonplace competence will not ensure promotion for any one of the clerks. One of these men is chosen, and from the employer's point of view the choice was inevitable. He was no better at keeping books than any of the others, because they all kept their books as perfectly as possible. He just happened to be qualified for the work, and I will tell you how.

There is an Institute of Secretaries which holds examinations and confers degrees. One of these clerks was an associate of the institute. The employer knew that he had passed certain examinations, that he had special knowledge, and that he

was therefore competent to do responsible work. He knew also that he was industrious and ambitious, or he never would have taken the trouble to work for the examinations. Everything showed that this man was determined to rise, and that he was planning for success. Was he not bound to be chosen ?

There is a case where promotion is not easy. Book-keepers are usually regarded as non-productive units in business. All the same, a book-keeper can become a manager and control salesmen if only he knows how to do it, and then his value is apparent. Find out what qualifications you need in order to fit yourself for promotion, and then qualify yourself. That is the surest way to rise. Do not waste your energy over other methods.

You can see now that the man who succeeds is the one who knows what he wants, and finds out how to get it. Such a man wastes no time upon anything that will not help him forward. More than that, he concentrates every ounce of his power and every thought of his mind, upon his work and upon his plan. Nothing worth while can happen to you if you sit still and dream. Anything you really want will come to you if you plan for it and work for it intelligently and energetically. Knowledge is power ; but the knowledge of how to use what you know is success.

How many men make plans for success who

fail miserably in achieving their ambitions! The world is full of disappointed people who have striven for certain positions, only to find at last that they are passed over in favour of someone else. Sometimes it is their own fault, sometimes it is hard luck. Generally it is their own fault. If it is hard luck which causes their failure, that is nothing more than a temporary set-back, and may be regarded as a disappointment. There are always plenty of high positions falling vacant, and not enough good men to fill them. No man who is properly qualified for exceptional work need fear that he will be overlooked for ever. Only those who are numbered with the crowd of mediocrities run the risk of being pushed aside permanently in the struggle for existence.

We now come to the general cause of failure, which is to be found in a man's self. Never lose sight of your faults. We do not like being criticised, and as soon as a man is found fault with he instinctively turns himself into a counsel for the defence, ignores the faults altogether, and insists upon the virtues of his case. This is rank dishonesty. If you want to find the weak points of a man in order that you may conquer his objections or work your will upon him, you need, just as much, to recognise your own weaknesses, so that you may strengthen them. Every hour of your life subjects your will and your brain and your character to a

constant succession of tests. The stronger you are the more easily you will sustain these shocks, and you can only gain strength by welcoming criticism and recognising when it is true instead of ignoring it. The strong man thrives on criticism and opposition. The more he gets of them the more they enable him to strengthen himself, and he becomes strong because he uses them for his own purposes, while the weak man ignores them.

The greatest hindrance to ability is idleness. There are degrees of idleness. Not only are the loafers idle, but the man who wastes his time and effort is an idler also. If you delay until to-morrow something which you can do to-day, you deprive to-morrow of some of its power. If you waste time over work which you need not do, you deprive yourself of the power of achievement, which can come from well-directed action alone. The director of a vast organisation once said to me: "It is the continual effort which tells." Spasmodic bursts of energy do not accomplish so much in the end as the steady work which utilises every moment to make it productive of the fullest advantage.

Do not be content to aim high and to map out the road you must travel to reach your goal. You must map out painfully every foot of the way. This means that you must plan out your work for each day so that it may play its due part in ministering

to your progress. It is a good plan at the end of each day to make a list of things which must be done on the morrow, and to be sure that when the morrow comes these things are done. By doing this you will make sure of progress instead of leaving it to chance. The fool trusts to luck, and leaves his work to take care of its own results. The wise man takes no chances. He plans ahead, and though things may not turn out just as he expects he makes his progress inevitable.

Days are made up of moments, and the day's work is made up of countless tasks. See that each moment is spent in profitable labour, and when you have finished one piece of work let your motto be, "What is the next thing?"

Business is not all of life, and these rules apply to life generally. Plan out your mental progress in the same way. If you want to be well read, make a list of books and see that you read them in a specified time, instead of reading haphazard. Read for a purpose, and have a definite end in view, and you will enjoy your reading all the more and obtain from it all that you want, which is education. Whatever study you take up, to develop the talents which give you pleasure, treat it in the same systematic fashion. It is better to give five minutes a day regularly to mind-improvement than to devote longer periods to it at intervals.

What is worth doing is worth doing well, and if a thing is not worth doing you ought not to waste time over it at all. Do everything as perfectly as you can, do everything for some purpose, and while you add to life's pleasures you will derive the unspeakable satisfaction of progress, which only comes from patient labour faithfully performed for the love of the working.

CHAPTER XIV

USING YOUR FOUR EYES

"To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, religion—all in one."

RUSKIN.

OF late years one of the most impressive features of the theatre has been the splendour of its scenic effects. A new era has been inaugurated which at its inception left the spectator amazed with delight. The effects of dawn and sunset are reproduced on the stage with such fidelity that they stir up emotions within us, aided by the art of the actor and the witchery of music, that often affect us more strongly than the real manifestations of the wonders of Nature which are going on around us every day. In the theatre these things are forced upon our attention, and we realise their beauty, while the infinitely greater beauty of the real thing is unnoticed. People talk of the ineffable splendour of a sunrise on the mountains. A man once told me that the most magnificent sight he ever saw was a sunrise on the Straits of Gibraltar, when the sun literally rose up out of the sea, and little by little tinged the heavens and the waters with a

Using your Four Eyes 137

myriad diverse colours, sparkling, scintillating and blending into the majesty and wonder of the dawn.

We see with delight poor images of these things at the theatre, and do not heed them as they are spread before us across the wide spaces of earth and sky and water day by day. "Eyes have we, and we see not," because we have not trained our eyes to see. Suppose, for one moment, that the sky had always been grey and overcast since you were born, and that one summer evening a wind sprang up and the clouds dispersed, revealing the majesty of the firmament of stars and all the wonders of the heavens. Should you not realise that a miracle had happened? Yet how often do you look up and see with discerning eyes this inspiring and uplifting spectacle?

All the gifts of Nature are to be had for the asking. They are your right, but, like all gifts worth having, they must be striven for. You must train your eye to look for them and your brain to hear and understand. Then you will see how the earth can take on the form of Paradise, and will hear in its sounds the harmonies of heaven.

People grumble at the rain. They put up their umbrellas and with eyes fixed on the ground before them plod steadily on, complaining of the inconvenience. Look up! See how the reflection of the lamps on the wet roads paints a fairy picture that

the harsher dryness never shows you. Is there not some compensation for a little inconvenience in such a sight as that ? The great French sculptor, Rodin, was tremendously impressed with the atmospheric effects of London at twilight. Have you really ever seen them ? The late Melton Prior, the famous war correspondent and traveller, used to walk in a small County Council park on the borders of Greater London and declare that at sunset he was transported to Japan. These people saw with understanding eyes, and the same things are there for you to see, wherever you live.

You have got two pairs of eyes. One pair is in your head, and the other in your mind. Most people use only the eyes that are in their heads. They deliberately blind the mental eyes, and for that reason they do not really see half the things that come into their range of vision. Suppose you are travelling out of London, westward. As you pass Exeter you know you are nearing the sea, and you eagerly look out for it. By and by you catch a glimpse of it in the distance, and as it spreads out before your view, you feast your gaze on it as a welcome relief from the streets of London. You notice its brilliant colouring, the ships sailing on it, the red cliffs and the sands, and you get a veritable banquet of pleasure. After a fortnight at the sea-side you probably notice nothing but the people on

Using your Four Eyes 139

the beach, the band, the promenade, and the hundred trivial things that you can see anywhere. All the pleasant things you watched for so eagerly in the train are still there, but you do not look for them. You are not using the eyes in your mind.

Take the case of a solitary flower. One man may look at it and see just a flower and nothing more. He may see its marvellous beauty of form and colouring without noticing them, because he does not see with the eye of understanding. Another man will see these things because he looks with the eyes of his mind, and he will see also valleys and hills carpeted with a thousand hues of flowers and herbs, because he has trained himself to see and look for these things, which are conjured up in his mental vision.

It is obvious that the eye has a most powerful effect on the mind. The dullest person is exhilarated by bright sunshine, not knowing that there is always brightness for those who look for it. The more we actually see by concentrating our attention on detail, the more we shall store up in our mind for the eye of the mind to see whenever it wills. Thus the habit of observation strengthens the imagination, and, as we know, it is the men who dream dreams that affect most potently the progress of the world. Train yourself to dream along practical lines. Look out for realities, and you will act in a practical

manner. The artist gets his colour schemes by observing Nature. Suppose an artist did not see with the eye of understanding? He would know that a set of railway lines are equidistant apart, and looking at a section they appear to be so. But he looks at the lines receding into the distance and notices that they appear to meet. The man who first observed this illusion laid the foundation for modern art, in the sense that he started the practice of observation with the eye of the mind, as well as the concentrated and restricted gaze of the physical optic. The artist must use his mental eye or his drawings will be hopelessly grotesque. We should laugh at the draughtsman who drew his railway lines without making them meet; but is it not true that by lack of observation we miss many details of knowledge that would prevent our actions and thoughts being imperfect?

Get into the habit of looking for things. When you pass a draper's shop, notice the colour schemes in the window. Sometimes when you are re-papering a room or re-covering your furniture, the observation will come in useful. If you get into the habit of observing closely with your eyes, you will find that it will make you intent with your other senses. You will notice people's voices and habits of speech, you will appreciate people's motives, you will look for cause when you see effect. These things are the

Using your Four Eyes 141

mental eyes, waking up and taking in the vision of intangible things.

We talk of the eye of faith. This is the mental eye trained to look in a special direction. Deeply religious people concentrate their minds on spiritual things, and who shall say what heavenly sights they see, or what heavenly sounds they hear? If you concentrate your attention on everything you see you will open up to your mental eye a vista that will astonish you. In days of gloom you will see the sunshine and the sea—a vision at your command absolutely—to cheer and enliven each day. People miss the glories of the world because they do not look for them. They are so in the habit of looking for perfection hereafter that they cannot see it here. They sing in church, “Oh, for the pearly gates of heaven!” not realising that, for those who see, the streets of the city are paved with gold.

There is beauty and gladness all around you if you will only see it. The mental eye will always show it to you. It will correct the errors of the physical eye. Where the casual glance sees only the man, the searching glance of the eye sees the God in the man. The mental eye is the eye of the spirit; the eye that is in touch with the Divine in us. It opens to our gaze all the splendours of earth and sky. It shows us the brightness when the physical eye sees only the cloud, and discovers for us the

treasures and gifts that the Creator has supplied for us. Look for beauty and gladness in everything. Resolutely refuse to see the black and sordid things of life. The world is a bright and lovely place, and only your own thought can darken it, just as your own thought can transform the blackest gloom into the radiance of the noonday. He that seeks shall find.

“Keep your face always towards the sunshine,
And the shadows will fall behind you.”

CHAPTER XV

THE USES OF ORATORY AND CONVERSATION

“The first duty of a man is to speak—that is his chief business in this world.”

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

THE spoken word is the most powerful weapon a man can command in his dealings with his fellow-men. In conjunction with the eye, it conveys all his personal magnetism to his hearer or to his audience. The eye has a double use. It conveys impressions *to* the brain and it conveys impressions *from* the brain. Both of these uses need cultivation.

You probably have never thought about the importance of your eyes in conversation, but if you are to make full use of your mental powers it is quite necessary for you to do so. You need to cultivate a concentration of gaze, but not quite in the sense that a hypnotist does. I have heard men complain of persons who gazed at them so fixedly that it made them feel uncomfortable. Do not be like that, or you will lose all the pleasing effect you want to create. Get the habit of looking straight at the person you are addressing, so that he can feel that

he has your whole interest and attention. That is the impression you wish him to receive. People do not like your eyes to wander round the room while they are talking to you, nor do they want you to read the private papers lying on their desks. They want to see your eyes, because they tell them what is going on in your mind.

Many business men sit with their backs to the light, while they place you facing the window. In this way they can read your face whilst hiding their own. One man I know told me once that whenever he finds himself in such a position he shades his eyes with his hands until the act is commented upon. Then he explains that he is at a disadvantage facing the light and prefers to sit elsewhere! If a man wants to read your eyes you have a right to read his as well; and this story shows the important part played by the eye in conversation.

Your eye expresses your emotions. When you laugh with your lips your eyes laugh with them if the emotion is genuine, not otherwise. When you are sorry your eyes show it, as they reveal truth or falsehood to the shrewd observer. Let your eyes speak and proclaim the interest you feel in what you are saying.

One of the best salesmen I ever knew called his mouth his "bread-and-butter machine." He knew the value of his conversation. The advocate or the

Uses of Oratory and Conversation 145

orator recognises the same truth just as forcibly ; but the average man, to whom it is equally important, gives it scant attention. If it is worth the while of an advocate, or an orator, or a salesman, to cultivate the gift of conversation, it is worth your while too, because you cannot exercise the charm of your intellect upon another person unless you have command of your speech.

Your speech in conversation creates its effect in two ways. Your voice and the manner of your enunciation tell the hearer what sort of man you are, while they charm or repel him : the way you use your voice may make your arguments forcible, and indicate your conviction of the truth of what you say. Your conversation should reveal the culture of your mind, and your knowledge of what you speak about. You can now see how important it is that you should know your subject thoroughly, and know how to talk about it.

It is no use having a well-stocked mind, full of facts, unless you can convey those facts in a pleasing manner to other persons. A harsh, raucous voice will take all the charm away from the most beautiful sentence. There is a habit among many business men of cultivating an American way of speaking. They say "Sure," and "Sure thing," and similar phrases, while they affect a drawl in what they conceive to be the most approved American manner.

The practice arises from the misconceived notion that Americanisms of this kind suggest smartness. Apart from the fact that the best type of American does not use such barbarities, any affectation of this nature is repugnant to the cultured Englishman, not merely because it is unnatural, but also because it does not flatter him to suggest that American competitors are smarter than he is.

Affectation is the deadly sin of conversation. Be natural and be cultured in your manner of talk. You can be just as forcible when you speak in a quiet voice as by shouting, and you will be much more convincing, and much more agreeable to listen to.

The fundamental rules of elocution are the same for conversation as for oratory. They are based upon control of the breath and proper articulation. They are varied slightly for the singer, as will be shown.

The first thing is to breathe properly, and the right method is worth knowing because deep breathing is very helpful to good health. Most people, when they take a deep breath, do so from the chest, with the result that their lungs are not properly filled. The right way, which fills the lungs to their full capacity, is as follows: Place the hands just above the waist so that they touch the lowest extremities of the ribs. You will then be able to feel the action of the muscles. Now expel the air from the lungs by breathing out. This is the first step in deep

Uses of Oratory and Conversation 147

breathing and in preparing for oratory. Your lungs are now empty, and to fill them you begin by thrusting out the muscles of the stomach where your hands are. As you do this you breathe in slowly until your lungs are completely filled, instead of only partly so. If you practise this you will soon do it unconsciously, and you will gain added health if you do it in the open air, because you will get so much oxygen into your system.

Now, the singer aims at controlling the outlet of his breath so that he can sing long phrases without breathing again. Nothing so much stamps the amateur as the practice of taking breath in the middle of a sentence. When you sing, your sentences are prescribed for you, and they are further defined by the musical phrases. The orator has no such restrictions, and the practised speaker makes a point of replenishing his lungs with air at every pause he makes. If this is judiciously done it is possible to speak for hours without fatigue and without loss of quality and tone in the voice.

Compare the phrasing of the following, and you will appreciate the difference :—

The Singer : “ It is not mine to sing the stately grace (breath), The great soul beaming in my lady’s face ” (breath).

The Speaker : “ It is not mine (breath) to sing the stately grace (breath), The great soul (breath) beaming in my lady’s face ” (breath).

Singing and speaking are closely connected, and each helps the other, so that in cultivating an agreeable speaking voice you will find it very beneficial to practise singing also. If you have no time to take singing lessons, remember this: *Singing is speaking to a tune*, and the fact that the voice is called upon to rise and fall as the composer dictates does not justify you in putting your accents on the wrong words. The tendency is to accentuate every word coming on a high note. If you do this when you should not, the effect is ludicrous. When you are learning a song, say each phrase separately, one after the other, so that you can find out exactly how to accentuate it, and then sing each phrase (just after you have spoken it), keeping to the same accentuation. With a little practice you will soon be able to take high notes without accentuating the word if it should be subordinated to some other. In this way your songs will make sense, and even if you have a weak voice you will strengthen it, while you will give pleasure by singing artistically.

Singing will teach you to control your breath, and will give fullness and quality to your voice. You will find that you can speak loudly without forcing your breath, and you will help the habit of pronouncing your words clearly.

It is said with truth that if you take care of the consonants the vowels will take care of themselves.

Uses of Oratory and Conversation 149

If you listen to a practised speaker you will notice that he pronounces his "m" (at the end of a word) almost as if it were "emmer," his "n" as if it were "enner," his "d" as if it were "der," and so on. Make a list of words in which these consonants come at the end, and practise speaking them in the way I have indicated. It will sound strange at first, but you will modify the exaggeration in actual talking, while the tendency to exaggeration in public speaking will not matter, because it is imperative that your consonants should be heard clearly. In singing you will find that the consonants "m" and "n" can be sung almost like vowels, while even "d" and "t" can be sung on a note almost like vowels. Practise them alone on scales, and it will show you how you can sound them, while it will help you to do so instinctively.

When speaking in public it is important that you should speak slowly, or the "ring" of a hall, especially if it be a large one, will drown your words, which will run into one another. The larger the hall the slower you should speak; and if you observe this rule you can talk in the largest hall with confidence that all you say will be understood.

The tricks of oratory, such as declamation and gesture, cannot be taught in the scope of such a chapter as this. If you want to be a first-class speaker you will gain great benefit by taking elocution

lessons at some polytechnic and joining its debating society. Every young man ought to join such a society and make a point of speaking regularly : only by such practice will he learn the habit of " thinking on his feet," which is an invaluable asset to any man. You never know when you will be called upon to speak at a dinner or a meeting, or some social function, and it will be helpful to you if you are able to do so effectively. Many a man has first attracted the notice of people, who have greatly assisted him in after life, by public speaking of some kind or other ; and in these days, when glib speech so often serves in the place of real ability, the power of oratory is a very desirable gift to possess.

In public speaking of any kind you have two courses open to you—or a combination of both, which is better still. You can be informative or you can be amusing : audiences generally prefer the latter. If you have very little to say, or are nervous, you can build up quite a reputation by cutting your speech short. The dullest speaker who sits down at the end of three minutes can be as effective, and as pleasing to his hearers, as the accomplished man who can entertain them for twenty, or the fluent speaker who can bore them for half an hour.

Many a famous orator has made a practice of writing out his speeches and learning them by heart. It is a good plan for the budding orator to adopt, and

Uses of Oratory and Conversation 151

he will gain confidence at his first attempts if he knows that his complete speech reposes ready to his hand in his trousers pocket. Nothing, however, can replace the ability to speak at a moment's notice, and such aids as have been described are but helps to the consummation of being able to deliver yourself of your thoughts without the preliminary of long preparation.

Do not think that public speaking is not necessary for you. Even if you never need to address audiences, you will gain mental power by the habit of logical reasoning which comes naturally at a given moment. Moreover, the practice of speaking at debating clubs, besides exercising your faculties, rubbing your wits against those of other people, and providing you with much useful knowledge, will strengthen your will and add immeasurably to your self-confidence. For this reason alone it is necessary to you. If you are used to standing by your opinions in the face of opposition, you will gain force for your everyday conversation, while you acquire a polish of manner which will make you a most agreeable companion.

Conversation is not a business asset only, it is also a social asset. It is the duty of every man to be entertaining to his family and to his friends. It is a crime against the coming generation when parents insist upon their children remaining silent during meals. Parents owe it to their children to encourage

them to air their views, so that they may gain knowledge and the habit of being able to take their part in conversation.

Nothing stamps the cultivated mind so much as the power to interest a total stranger. The ability to do so without discussing the weather, theatres, dances, or politics, or, above all, religion, is a hallmark of real conversational ability. Every person has some pet subject upon which he is specially well informed. A few tactful questions will find out what it is, and then, if you are content to do your full share of the listening as well as of the talking, the conversation will proceed smoothly enough. It is your duty to use conversation as a means of learning from other people what they can teach you. The intelligent use of conversation is a great educator.

Never say anything about anybody which you would not wish them to hear. Never say anything that will hurt the susceptibilities of the person you are talking to. Never be afraid to utter your opinions and to stand by them. Never miss the chance of saying a kind word either of absent friends or about your listener. If you will bear these points in mind and try always to be interesting, even at the family table, you will soon become a proficient conversationalist. When you have acquired the art of talking well, practise diligently the harder task of listening well, and you will become a perfect talker.

CHAPTER XVI

GENEROSITY AS A MENTAL FORCE

“They who give have all things ; they who withhold have nothing.”
HINDOO PROVERB.

BE generous. “Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” We cannot take the Divine injunction to the rich man literally, but we can give generously to those around us, and find our treasure thereby.

You can give without giving money. Financial aid may often prove a curse to the recipient, when the helping hand and the kindly word would prove a real blessing. Do not keep your kind thoughts to yourself ; give them freely in your speech. Give smiles instead of frowns, and you will receive smiles back again ; give love, and you will receive love. Like attracts like, and whatever you give in full measure you will receive back with interest from the world.

One of my friends said to me once : “I owe my success to the fact that I never kept back an

idea from my manager. I wondered sometimes when I got a more than usually good notion if I should not keep it in reserve until I became a manager myself. I never did so, and I am sure that if I had followed that policy I should never have been in management to-day. I owe my success largely to the fact that I always gave the best of my ideas to my employers."

Many and many a time people have said to me, "Keep something up your sleeve. Don't give your best ideas away until you are sure of your position." The man who keeps his best ideas till he is sure of his position is the man who fails to "make good," and is insecure every moment of his business life. The habit of keeping ideas back stultifies them. It is only by giving away ideas generously that others come to take their place. The more ideas you think of and the more you work them out for the benefit of your employers, the more will ideas flow into your mind.

I had the advice to "hoard" given to me so often that I mentioned it to several people. I determined to find out if successful men could be found to give weight to such an astounding doctrine. One very successful author seemed to think at first that there was something in it until I put it to him this way: "My experience is that my ideas do not dry up by giving them away freely.

Generosity as a Mental Force 155

I always find that the more ideas I get and use the more come to me to replace them." "You are quite right," he said, and he proceeded to give me an example from his own experience. "I lately have had some friends stopping with me," he told me, "and for a day and a half I did not work. When I started again, thinking was an effort, and the ideas came only with the greatest difficulty. After a day or two, when I had got into mental trim again, my brain was working actively, and only to-day, coming down here in the train, two plots for stories occurred to me."

Rich people may be divided into two classes : those who hoard money and are stingy, and those who make money by spending liberally but not extravagantly. The former generally have a big capital to start with. It is the exception to find a mean man become rich by the simple practice of hoarding. A financial magnate once laid down the broad principle in regard to money : "You must put it down before you can pick it up again." Use your common sense in regard to spending. I know a man who earns no more money than he could earn by industry if he had not a tithe of his intellectual abilities. This is his story : He had a university education, and his college chum was a man who is now a millionaire. When he left college he found he had to earn his own living, not in the

manner he had expected, but in a more laborious way. He came to the conclusion that he must save all he could, so he shunned society, denied himself all sorts of luxuries, and put by all he could. He deliberately cut himself off from those associates who were advancing rapidly in the world—men who liked him and would have been only too glad to help him—because he was afraid to spend the money that was necessary to keep him in their company—money for little dinners, entertainments, and excursions. His friends who could have helped him forgot all about him; he lost touch with them, got into narrow grooves out of the wide spheres of life, and so lost his ambition and allowed men of less ability, with less advantages, but with more “push,” to get ahead of him. It was a mistaken self-sacrifice. You cannot make money unless you know how to spend it. In the unthinkable event, of your doing so, while narrowing your mind with thoughts of petty economy, your money would be of no use to you because you would lose all capacity for enjoyment.

“Money,” said a rich, self-made man, “is not the root of all evil, but the love of it for itself undoubtedly is.” The pursuit of riches, therefore, if undertaken with the firm resolve to use them well, and if it is not suffered to engross unduly the faculties and the time, may well be commended.

Generosity as a Mental Force 157

It needs strong common sense to exercise the faculty of generosity, and perhaps this is the reason why judicious generosity is so often an aid to success. People like the generous man, just as they distrust the mean man. Paltriness of habit begets a paltry and mean mind. You cannot expand your thoughts when you are keeping your mind upon the saving of farthings. Live within your income, and, as the cute American said, "Never get into debt unless you can see your way out of it." But do not refuse to dip your hand into your pocket to satisfy a generous impulse, or to help in the mutual enjoyment of yourself and your friends, because you think you will be the richer for keeping your money. Edison, at the age of fifty, spent practically his whole fortune in connection with his experiments, saying, I can at any time get a job at 75 dollars a month as a telegrapher, and that will amply take care of all my personal requirements." That is the proper spirit in which to regard the spending of money. If it is worth spending, spend it within the limits of your resources, but do not spend grudgingly when you can spend with profit either to your well-being or to your business.

Of your natural gifts you can never give enough. Hundreds of men are still sitting on clerk's stools because they gave grudgingly of their time and their labour to their employers. Your employer is

entitled to make a profit out of your services, and it is your duty to give him as big a profit as you can. If you can crowd into your day's work as much labour as the average clerk in the same office gets through in a day and a half, you will not be the one to be shunted when the lean days come. I knew a man who, starting from the very bottom of the ladder, amassed a fortune of £60,000. He attributed his success to his desire to get through all the work he could for his employer. He was so eager to do all the extra work possible, that one day his master said to him half chaffingly, "Sit down and let someone else have a turn." That is the only spirit that makes for success. It is the generous instinct that gives labour willingly. The more profit you can make for your employer the more you will be worth to him, and the more you will get ; but the getting must be a secondary thing. First and foremost must come the giving.

Develop the generous instincts of your mind. Do not be mean and petty in your thoughts, but cultivate wide and generous instincts and sympathies. If you are not generous to your employers and to your friends and family, they will not be generous to you. They will reward you, too, in a grudging spirit. We ask much of the Great Giver. The meanest Christian (or, to be more accurate, "professed" Christian) asks for "showers of bless-

Generosity as a Mental Force 159

ings." Man, who is made in the likeness of his Creator, should give greatly of his own gifts, rendering back to the Great Bestower the munificence that is given in trust. Nothing can compensate for the loss of mind-greatness that is developed only by generous instincts. No money can buy gratitude and love and true friendship. These are the things that inevitably come from real generosity, and each one of us, within the limits of our own minds and purses, can be generous, and find the double reward for "him that gives and him that takes."

CHAPTER XVII

THE GREATNESS OF LITTLE THINGS

“The labourer will be called to account for his careful cultivation, not for the abundance of his crop.”

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

THE late Sir Richard Tangye, whose business sagacity built up the great “Cornish” Engineering Works at Birmingham, and extended the activities of Tangye, Limited throughout the world, was so tremendously impressed with the significance of little things that he wrote and published a small book to which he gave the title selected for the head of this chapter.

It is the modern habit to worship bigness. The people we are told to admire are those who conceive vast undertakings and carry them through successfully. There seems a romance about “thinking in millions,” which is apparently lacking in smaller conceptions. Sir Richard Tangye was a man with big thoughts, who did big things. He controlled hundreds of workmen, he travelled in all parts of the world, and he was ever searching for ideas, and always seeking the expansion of his big undertakings. Yet with

The Greatness of Little Things 161

it all he was most profoundly impressed with the vital importance of the little things of life, and we, who are satiated almost with talk of bigness, may well consider the significance of the mature conclusion of a great captain of industry that the small things may well be the great things after all.

We cannot all think in millions, and we cannot all aspire to vast achievements. That is no reason why we should despise ourselves or look down upon others because our daily work and our general life may be concerned with detail and with what seem to be petty happenings. The most colossal undertaking in history was the tower of Babel, and it ended in confusion. The greatest conception that the human mind is capable of is the creation of the world, and we know that that took place little by little. In all the vast progress of the universe towards the final great perfection, the movement is a gradual one—little by little—and every human being takes part in it and is essential to it.

The measure of our performance is bounded only by our minds. If we “think in millions” our achievements will be correspondingly big, but our thoughts must take count of thousands of details, and we can only learn to think on the grand scale by acquiring a knowledge of details, and to do that we must recognise the sublimity of little things.

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Tennyson expressed the sensible ideal when he wrote :

“And I must work through months of toil,
And years of cultivation,
Upon my proper patch of soil,
To grow my own plantation.
I'll take the showers as they fall,
I will not vex my bosom ;
Enough, if at the end of all,
A little garden blossom.”

Whatever your hand finds to do is noble work, because it is necessary to the great scheme of the universe. If you have a little garden, it is not unworthy of your care and attention to make it bright with flowers for the joy of your family and your friends. If you live in a small house, you can be proud of that house if it is a perfect home in miniature. The millionaire can only occupy one room at a time and eat one meal at a time. But for the labour of many a “small” man he could not own his mansions, and certainly he cannot enjoy the bountiful gifts of life more than the man whose work brings him a sufficiency and pleases the doer because it is well done. Except for a few extra luxuries that soon pall, he is no better off than the man with a small income who possesses the capacity for contentment and enjoyment. The truth is that things really worth having are cheap, and the greatest gift of all is the capacity for

The Greatness of Little Things 163

enjoyment. If you can glory in the morning sunshine and know the peace of a summer night, you are luckier far than the millionaire, worried and anxious with colossal undertakings. If you can sit down of an evening and enjoy a book until bedtime, you may know that you are among the fortunate ones of the earth. Money cannot buy the moral uplifting of the man in harmony with Nature, who sees in the starry heavens the fields of Paradise, and knows that "God is seen God, in the Star, in the Stone, in the Flesh, in the Soul, in the Sod."

Unless we can do little things well we can never do big things. We must ennoble our little duties, and we shall find them grow into big achievements. Little acts of thoughtfulness, little kindnesses, little tenderesses, little charities, make up the sum total of a large, generous and lovable mind. Little tasks well done may make up a lifetime of fruitful labour far more useful to the world than the spasmodic effort to do herculean work which, in any case, could only be accomplished by a continual application to a thousand trifling details. It is far better to perform a small undertaking than to dream a big one and fail through lack of application.

There is a very thin dividing line between success and failure. The man who succeeds owes his success to the possession of a little more ability or industry than the man who most likely envies him his "good

fortune." He seizes the little opportunities that other men miss, and finds that they open the way to big advantages that he never suspected were within his reach. Men in lonely farms have educated themselves by seizing odd moments for reading. The habit of using time that other people waste enables men to outstrip their competitors in the race of life. A small nut becoming loose can stop a great machine, and a small mistake from carelessness or lack of observation or of knowledge can ruin a great enterprise.

Use the little gifts that life gives you. Do every little kindness you can. Use every little moment you can. Learn a little poem every day, and memorise a few lines of good prose. Make a point of doing a little more than you are paid to do, and try and do a little more to-day than you did yesterday. You will be astonished at the growth of your knowledge, the increase of your capacity, and the enlargement of your opportunities. "To him that hath shall be given." All that you learn will stand you in good stead some day. Neither your time nor your labour will be wasted. You will gradually gain those added accomplishments and those extra capabilities that distinguish the successful man from his fellows. Above all, watch your little failings and faults, and weed them out. Never despise them, for they grow big, just as little virtues do.

The Greatness of Little Things 165

All your talents are small compared with what they will become if you cultivate them carefully. Be content to make gradual progress so long as it really is progress, and then, when you look at the end of all to find "a little garden blossom," you will discover with surprise that what you really have cultivated is no mere garden plot, but a veritable and worthy portion of the Paradise of achievement.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ACTIVE MIND

"An action will not be right unless the will be right, for from thence is the action derived."

SENECA.

THE more we develop our mental powers the more we recognise the necessity of arraigning all popular fetishes before the bar of our reason. The hustle habit ought to be summarily tried and quickly condemned. People generally hustle when they should not, and do not hustle when they should. The only time when it is permissible to hustle is when you get out of your morning train (after you have given your breakfast a chance to digest) and want to hurry to the office to get on with your work. Tearing about, shouting, and making yourself a nuisance by knocking things over and racking other people's nerves, does not make for efficiency. When a man does that for a while he tires himself physically, and cannot keep up the pressure. Working under forced draught is all very well when it is absolutely necessary. Travelling under full steam is quite

good enough for the whole of the working day, and the physical and mental engines will work much more efficiently under steady pressure than under intermittent strains of forced draught.

Did you ever try to operate an adding machine? In many banks these machines perform the work of several clerks. You simply press the adding keys one after another as necessary, and then, by a pull of a lever, the printed total is before your eyes. So long as you do your work accurately your totals will be correct, because the machine is infallible. Immediately you get in a hurry you are liable to errors.

In dealing with intricate and delicate work, it is always more satisfactory to go steadily at it, as you will save time and labour in the end. Immediately you start rushing about, you excite your brain and prevent it thinking clearly and logically. You can train your mind to work quickly and accurately, but that is quite different from hustling it.

Like many another proverb, the saying, "Time is money," is so hackneyed that it conveys little meaning. It is like the pocket-handkerchief that you cannot find because it is in your pocket where it ought to be. If you spend your morning playing billiards with a man who might possibly give you orders later on, instead of calling on three or four

others at their offices where they are actually transacting business, you are not making a very profitable expenditure of time. There are more men sitting on clerks' stools instead of in managers' chairs because they do not know how to apportion their expenditure of time than from any other reason. The man who, with the ability to get orders, wastes half his time in compiling lists of possible customers when he might be cultivating actual buyers is wasting his golden chances.

The tabloid is a very convenient thing in business as well as in the food and medicine line. Short letters get home when long ones do not, and they economise your typist's time as well as your own, and enlarge the extent of her activities. Short interviews are often not possible, but do not wait long after your man takes his watch out of his pocket. Short delays—by which I mean the utmost possible dispatch in carrying out instructions—are always profitable and create an impression of smartness and enterprise; and, finally, when it comes down to the question of cash, short reckonings make long friendships.

Make your contracts clear, and do not leave the way open for dissatisfaction. The things you cannot be short about are your temper and your business hours. There is, however, a danger in working late. The man who is careful of his time manages

to crowd more work into one day than the careless man can into three.

The mistake we make is to confuse "hustle" with energy. There is no hustle in Nature, though there is abundant energy. The seed, as it sprouts, forces its way through the covering earth with an almost irresistible force. Yet it does it so calmly and quietly that there is apparently no motion at all. The closer we get down to Nature for our models the safer will be the guidance of our facts. Everything in Nature is orderly and systematic. The seasons revolve in regular sequence, and each has its duty to perform to the year. We should apportion our time carefully, and see to it that each day we accomplish something. Continual concentrated effort is Nature's recipe for a fruitful earth. Do a little every day, and you will accomplish much by the end of the year.

Suppose you resolve to indulge yourself in a course of reading of standard literature for the purpose of enlarging your mind. Perhaps you are so busy that you find but little time for study. Take advantage of this suggestion, and prove to yourself the value of doing a little each day. Choose any book you like to start with. Resolve to devote ten minutes each morning to reading a portion of it carefully. As you walk to your office, turn over in your mind what you have read. You will be

surprised how quickly you read the book and how familiar you become with its contents.

Many men have educated themselves in their spare time by adopting such methods as these. You should do it also. Ask yourself what course of study will make you more efficient in your business, and then resolve to spend a few minutes each day upon it. The men who profit by what other people throw away make fortunes. The men who turn to profitable use the time that other men waste will outstrip their less provident competitors. The difference between failure and success is marked by a very thin dividing line. It needs so little to cross that line either way. Resolve that a few minutes of each day—which otherwise would be wasted—at any rate, shall be profitably used. In that way you will learn to use your time profitably, and you will direct your energies so wisely that you will have no need to hustle. When you begin to study the value of time you will ask yourself how you can best use your hours of recreation.

There is a story told of one of our British consuls, who held office in the reign of Queen Victoria. He was originally a foreigner of Jewish descent, but he shed all the alien part of his equipment that he could and became a naturalised Englishman. Ever after, his favourite saying was : “ Ah ! Vee English is a great nation.” Ludicrous as this may seem, it

is, unfortunately, the fact that the larger proportion of Englishmen are in like case. They have all the arrogance of race without the redeeming feature of achievement. It is a common sight enough, on a Saturday afternoon, to see twenty or thirty thousand people watching a football match with the keenest excitement. Not an individual there but will criticise the play of any of the twenty-two or thirty players, and pass judgment upon him. Not an individual there but ought to blush with shame to be content watching other men strive for athletic distinction instead of being out doing something himself. The Battle of Waterloo may have been won on the playing fields at Eton; it could certainly never have been won on a grand stand at Stamford Bridge or the Rectory Field.

The great curse of the age is the habit people have of watching others instead of doing things themselves. It is better to do a thing enthusiastically and do it badly than to do nothing at all. The only excuse for watching another person doing anything is that we may learn how to do better ourselves. England is great because of great deeds. The looker-on is a feeble creature who is no good to anybody. He is the man who takes his very thoughts from other people, though he is prepared to criticise anybody from the highest to the lowest—always provided that he is put to no trouble in

doing so. He will tell you how to run the Empire—from the depths of his arm-chair; but confront him with the simplest task, and he becomes like the sailor who said: “I eats well, I drinks well, and I sleeps well; but as soon as I sees a bit of work, I goes all of a tremble.”

No man can work well unless he can play well. “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” Better dig in a garden than watch a football match. You will be exercising your muscles while you drink in the good fresh air, and your daily work will be all the better for it. Clever business men recognise the value of healthy play. The biggest employers of labour foster the spirit of sport among their employees, not by encouraging them to go to see football and cricket matches, but by subsidising sports clubs by which the workpeople are encouraged to get exercise.

A vigorous mind detests inaction. It drives its possessor to do things. A Colonial friend said to me recently: “You people in England do not know what the Empire is. You ought to go into the Colonies and see the pioneers. Go up-country in Africa and see the bridge-builders. Go and see the men who do things doing them.” Few of us can travel, but we can all do things. The Empire depends upon its trade, and the man who keeps a ledger well is a factor in the destiny of Empire. The man who

The Active Mind 173

begets strong, healthy children, and trains them to love vigorous work and exercise, is a pioneer of tomorrow's greatness for his country. The man who does work grudgingly, who loafs about during his leisure and finds his pleasure in watching others engage in strenuous exercise, is neglecting his duty to himself and to his country.

We cannot be mentally efficient unless we are sound in body. The Greek ideal of "A sound mind in a healthy body" ought to be the motto of every Englishman. Preventable ill-health is a social crime, and many a man who continually feels out of sorts and finds his work suffer in consequence has only himself to blame.

You must get into the habit of doing things. Get out of bed in the morning and have your bath. It is easier to slip into your clothes without it on cold mornings, but the bath has a good moral effect, because you have performed an action that was unpleasant at first, and you have the double reward of having done something you did not want to do and the vigorous, clean, warm feeling that is worth the temporary shiver.

Our fault is that we want to eat our cake and have it also. We want England to be great, but we do not want to help that greatness by doing unpleasant work. We want to make money in business but we do not want to work ten or twelve hours

a day for a few years to establish ourselves. We want to bring off big undertakings, but we do not want to bother with drudging details nor to slave over uncongenial work so that we can gain the experience without which we can do nothing really satisfying.

The habit of preferring to watch other people rather than go and do things ourselves is a canker that will eat the heart out of our efficiency. Whenever you see three men hammering in turn at a great nail on a roadway, you will notice a crowd of people watching them out of sheer idleness. If you can learn anything by stopping to look, then by all means stay.

“Go to the ant, thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise : which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard ? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep ? ”

Among the bees, the drones or unemployables are killed. The human drone kills himself, he stultifies the healthy ambition that thrives on action, and remains in the mire when his destiny intended him for the height. Our minds should be trained to be our overseers and rulers, to stimulate us to constant effort, to praise our successes and chide us for our failures. Most of us love flattery. We like

to be told we are clever or successful. It is better to watch and judge our actions so constantly that we shall praise ourselves wisely for work well done, and blame ourselves for all waste of time and of talent.

“He that gathereth in summer,” says the proverb, “is a wise son ; but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.”

All through Nature there is ceaseless action. As soon as your heart gets tired enough to stop beating you die. Why should you expect your organs to work and be unwilling to work yourself ?

Consider how the earth was made in seven days. One might think that the Creation was a sublime enough accomplishment to confer rest, and we are told that “God rested on the seventh day.” But in order that the world may keep its place in the universe without colliding with other heavenly bodies and thereby being annihilated, in order that there may be light, and food and air and water, the Supreme Intelligence never rests. We take this as a matter of course, never thinking that every breath we draw should indeed be an inspiration to impel us by this sublime example to the utmost action of which we are capable.

We are made in the image of our Creator, and are intended to deify that image. We cannot keep our bodies pure and vigorous by watching other

people work and play. In the primitive state, man had to work before he could eat. The penalty of inaction to-day, even if it is not hunger, is a loss of physical and mental power. We must either advance or degenerate. If we are not advancing intellectually by using our mental powers and training them to higher efficiency, we are debasing the gift that the Creator gave us. If we are not keeping our bodies fit, by physical exercise, we must suffer loss of physique and be weaklings, and a blot upon the greatness of our Imperial heritage.

The habit of watching other people play produces a spirit of criticism. It is easier to criticise than to act. Any fool can pull down and destroy, but it takes a clever man to create and build up. Destruction may be the work of a moment, while construction may be the labour of a lifetime. The only people who have a right to criticise are those who have done things and therefore have knowledge, and they should only criticise work that they can do better themselves. Criticism ought to take the form of finding out weaknesses in order to remedy defects. If anyone finds fault, he ought to be able to rectify that fault himself. If you are merely criticising other people, you are not helping yourself; and, after all, your first duty is to yourself.

The habit of play, for instance, is valuable to a

man's daily life. To master a game calls for patience and perseverance, and demands all those qualities which make for success. Sport, in its best forms, calls forth the finest spirit of a man. It teaches him to accept life's ups and downs with equal serenity. You cannot learn patience and perseverance by watching football matches. You can learn them by playing yourself. When you can take a physical blow with a smile you will know how to take a setback in business with undaunted courage. Your country, your friends, your relations, have need of men—sportsmen—who can do things, who can do them when fate seems against them as well as when fortune smiles. You are one of those men. Are you keeping yourself in perfect condition for your high endeavours, by action, or are you degenerating into a drone because you prefer to watch other people? You must make your choice, and if you choose to be active you must cast off sloth *now*.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW TO GET GOOD LUCK

"Fortune alters with change of conduct."—SALLUST.

THERE undoubtedly is an element in business which we call luck. Shakespeare says, "There is a divinity that shapes our ends," and it is certain that so long as we strive with all our might and with all our intellect, the course of our life will map itself out to a successful purpose.

A lazy man once said to me: "The men who make a lot of money make it easily. They hit on some idea or some scheme which catches on, and they make fortunes." I will tell you a story which bears on that specious doctrine. A big machine once went wrong. The owners could not make it go again, try how they might. Eventually they called in an expert, who examined it for a few minutes, made a trifling adjustment, and immediately started it again. He asked for a big fee, and was told that it was out of all proportion to the work he had done.

"You only took a minute doing it," he was told.

How to get Good Luck 179

“Yes,” he replied, “but I took years learning how to do it.”

The men who make money so easily only do so after years of work and preparation. One often hears that the inventor makes but little out of his invention. The big money is made by the man who exploits his work. But that man knows by experience where and how he can place the invention, and he either runs a risk himself or his character is so much believed in that others will take the risk for him. You cannot call the inventor unlucky because he is unable to place his invention himself. If he wanted to be lucky in that particular way, he would need to go through similar experiences to those of the man who exploited him.

“Good courage breaks ill luck,” says the proverb. Mental power, rightly directed, is the only force that creates good luck, using that term in its real sense. People talk about a “lucky dramatist” because he has a successful run. The truth is that any man who works hard is in the way of good luck. Hard work alone will not make you lucky. You must be ready to seize your good luck when it comes, and you must search for it until you find it.

If you were in an unknown country where no man had ever been before, and the ground under your feet were full of gold, you would not know it was gold even if you happened to find it unless you

possessed a knowledge of metals. You could not call yourself unlucky because you were ignorant. If you possessed the right knowledge, you would be lucky because you were turning your knowledge to account.

Ask yourself now, "Am I lucky? Am I trying to be lucky? Am I *determined* to be lucky?" You are the only person who can decide; and if you want to be lucky you must train your mind to obey your will, and you must rule it with wisdom, courage and foresight.

Suppose you have trained your mind in an elementary way by memorising prose and poetry. In what manner are you exercising it and keeping it fit? You must know that the mind will do a lot of work for you without any effort on your part if you train it carefully. For instance, the mind works while you sleep. Not only is this shown by our dreams, but there are countless instances where men have gone to bed worried and perplexed over some problem, and on waking in the morning have found the solution in their minds.

Note the gradual growth of the reasoning powers. The child first of all absorbs into its mind the statements of its mother. By and by it notices things and asks questions. That marks the first development of the reasoning powers. As we grow older we must continue to ask ourselves these questions, and we must seek until we find the right

How to get Good Luck 181

answers. It is true of business life that the more people a man knows in his particular sphere of activity the more successful he is likely to be. In our mental lives the more information we have at command the more use we can make of our faculties. When we reason we must reason upon proved facts. Obviously, if we argue from incorrect facts our conclusions will be incorrect. If we read carefully and choose our books well, we shall store our minds with valuable information which will never be wasted and will serve us faithfully some time or other.

Our intellects touch life at more than one point. There is an aristocracy of brains. Clever people in society or in business will not tolerate mediocrity. If you would succeed in life you must develop your talents.

The intellect serves us in ordinary affairs more through conversation and writing than in any other way. With the development of the social grace of conversation we need not concern ourselves here. The ability to write well, however, is a matter that vitally concerns each one of us. How often one hears such a saying as: "When I wrote that I meant you to understand——" Clear writing is not so easy as it looks. You must bear in mind always the impression your words will convey to the person reading them, not the impression you

think they may convey. In the course of reading good literature the writer's meaning seems so clear that one feels no other words could be used.

The way to train yourself to write clearly and to acquire a good literary style is to study good authors. A good system of study is as follows: Select any passage you like, read it carefully, and then write down what the passage was about, as nearly as possible in the author's own words. When you compare the two you will notice how crude your own expressions are, and you will be able to understand the beauties of the author's style. As time goes on, and you repeat this exercise, you will find that not only does your memory improve, but your style will improve also. It is a mental exercise of the highest possible value for teaching clear writing and the proper study of style.

You want ideas in order to be able to write well. You must be able to dig out from the recesses of your mind all the information that will illuminate the subject you are writing about. Here, again, some mental exercises will be useful. Take any good book of essays (you cannot do better than choose Emerson) and select one of the subjects that appeals to you. Suppose it is "Self-Reliance." Write down all the qualities and advantages of this virtue that occur to you, and then read the essay and note carefully how the author expands the

subject. You will be able to appreciate all the things he notices about self-reliance, and you will learn how to reason about such a subject yourself.

A systematic series of mental exercises like these will strengthen your mind wonderfully, and will probably astonish you. If you persevere, you will observe one remarkable fact. As soon as you start theorising about any subject all sorts of ideas and thoughts about it will crowd into your mind, and as you write your letters or essays your thoughts will flow of their own accord and come into your mind in their proper order. You will then understand how wonderfully your mind works on your behalf and helps you, and you will reap one of the rewards of carrying out the duty of developing the talents with which your Creator blessed you.

These exercises alone will teach you to think and reason clearly and to express yourself well in conversation or in writing. You will put yourself in the way of opportunities, and you will recognise them when they come. More than that, you will know how to use them, and in using them you will be successful. In other words, you will be lucky.

Napoleon said that every soldier carried a field-marshal's baton in his knapsack. He instilled into the minds of his troops the fact that the highest commands were open to them; indeed, many of his marshals did rise from the ranks. By in-

spiring this confident ambition, Napoleon increased the efficiency of his army. Good luck, then, is merely a question of a right mental attitude. Metaphorically speaking, we all have field-marshal's batons in our knapsacks. We are embryo Nelsons, Pitts, Marlboroughs, or whatever character stands as the perfect type of our legitimate ambitions. The office boy is an embryo employer; the curate is an embryo archbishop. In our home life each one of us is capable of becoming the one to whom the other members of the family turn for help and encouragement.

Blessed is the man who knows what his special genius is. He has but to work faithfully to develop that genius, and he will get such "good luck" that nothing can hold him back from the success he is striving after. The boy with a passion for drawing, who draws really well and has the genius for art, will become a great artist because he *must* draw, and nothing can hold him back from it. Put him in a bank, and he will draw in his spare time until his work gets known and he can afford to devote all his energies to art.

The average man or woman has no such outstanding genius, and often enough it is very difficult for a person to know how to cultivate the mental powers so as to produce the most practical benefits in everyday life. It is a well-ascertained fact that

How to get Good Luck 185

we do best those things which we like the best. An artist loves his art above all things, and he can draw better than he can write. A musician plays or sings better than he talks. These gifts are obvious; but what is to guide a ledger clerk or a wife? How are people whose work is of a general nature to know what talents they have which they can develop to advantage, even in their prosaic labours? Some ledger clerks are far superior to others. Their work is neater, they do more work in perhaps half the time than their fellow-clerks. They are prompt and business-like, and perhaps when their work is done they have still time to ask for more. Such men are "lucky." They rise to managerial positions. They get wider opportunities for learning business, and as they learn so they discover that they possess aptitude for special tasks of which they were quite ignorant. The wife who takes a pride in her home organises her work systematically. She keeps down her household expenses. She devises schemes for entertaining her family, and she finds she can afford to entertain. As her social life increases she discovers that she has talents for entertaining people, and she learns how to communicate her experience and aptitude to her family.

Life progresses in circles. We are bound, first of all, by the family circle, and we learn from the members of our household. Then we enlarge our

circles by going out into the world. We meet more people, and we learn from them. Every new task we take up is the centre of a new circle of knowledge. Every fresh friend we make is a centre of yet another circle of experience. If we like people, we assimilate their habits of thought, and we readily learn from them. If we like a special kind of work we study it, and we make rapid progress in it. The elementary rule for discovering hidden talent is to cultivate the habit of liking everything that we have to do. The flavour of olives is quite an acquired taste with some people, so is the flavour of tomatoes with others. When the taste for such things is once acquired one finds it difficult to believe that there was a time when the flavour was not appreciated. Clearly, the cultivation of likes and dislikes is a matter of mental effort. We are told that if we persevere with eating olives we shall soon like them. We get the idea so firmly in our minds that we have only to keep on eating them to appreciate the flavour, that we persevere, and quickly discover that we do really like them. Are you a clerk, sir, engaged upon some uncongenial work? I tell you emphatically, positively, that you like it. Other people like book-keeping, and so do you. Let me tell you how to get to like your work within a month. When you get up to-morrow morning pretend to yourself that you are looking forward to your day's

How to get Good Luck 187

work. Determine to do it quickly and better than you have ever done it before. Say to yourself that you are going to show yourself how well that work can be done, how you can file away your invoices and receipts so that you can put your hand on any one of them when the manager asks for it, quicker than anyone else in the office. If you find yourself confronted with any task that appears distasteful, just tell your brain decisively that you like it, that it is just the work that gives you pleasure, and you will be surprised to find that you are getting to delight in your work which you thought so unpleasant.

Make yourself look forward to your work. Tell yourself (whenever you are alone with your thoughts) that you like your occupation, and your brain will quickly take your cue. It will act automatically, and you will find that your work really is a delight to you.

Do you know why this is so? It is not a quack cure for your dislikes, but a scientific one. The name for it is "auto-suggestion," and what you do is to hypnotise yourself. The hypnotist puts his "subject" under control. He gives him a glass of water and tells him it is coffee. The "subject" drinks it with every sign of relish. He gives him another glass of water, and says it is mustard and water. The "subject" drinks it with disgust and

very likely it makes him sick. You are your own hypnotist. Tell your brain you do not like any particular task, and it will appear disagreeable to you. Affirm emphatically that you do like it, and your brain will receive your suggestion with pleasure.

It is astonishing how very easy it is to acquire such a habit of mind. It comes readily from the very outset, and grows in strength until you exercise it unconsciously. Walking along the Thames Embankment one morning, I saw two small boys standing at a drinking trough. The water was frozen over, but the ice was broken. The two boys were dipping their hands in and were engaged in breaking off lumps of ice, which they were throwing on the roadway. I could not help thinking that if I, myself, had found it necessary to break off the ice and throw it away, I should have regarded the task as a hardship; so would those boys if they had been in like case. The difference was that they had persuaded themselves that they liked doing it, and they were enjoying themselves. It is so with everything we do. We can persuade ourselves that we enjoy it or not, as we please. Too often we choose to think our work uncongenial, and it irks us. By just changing over our mental attitude we shall find that we really like the work that used to be distasteful.

We find that by getting all the interest we can

How to get Good Luck 189

out of our work we enjoy it, and we do it better. As we progress we learn that we have unsuspected aptitudes for tasks that used to seem beyond us. We discover new talents through a gradual system of enlarging the field of our labours. If you will but take a pleasure in your work, and do every task as perfectly as your ability will allow, your way of life will open out to you. So long as you do your work grudgingly, so long you will keep your mind within narrow limits. You have only to adjust your mental taste, and you will discover all sorts of interests and opportunities in the dullest routine work.

Ennoble your work in your thought, and you will make it noble. The man who does his work grandly finds that the path of progress opens before him, and realises in his career that for him who performs his allotted task with all his might, life is full of unsuspected possibilities, and that good fortune waits on every step.

CHAPTER XX

THE POWER OF THE WRITTEN WORD

“Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.”

BACON.

LETTER writing used to be one of the polite arts. Statesmen wrote letters, travellers wrote them, lovers wrote them, and friends wrote them. To-day the two broad classifications of letters which are brought prominently before the public are those one reads in the newspapers on such subjects as “Does Love Last?” and those read in breach of promise actions, which cause infinite amusement. Interest is essential in letters, and wit and humour of the right sort are to be desired, but the kinds of letters referred to above prove that the art of correspondence as a graceful accomplishment is wellnigh dead, and cries aloud for resuscitation. The letters that pass to and fro in private life are generally no better than those which flaunt their worthlessness in the public press. The idea seems to be that writing a letter is a task that is a disagreeable necessity to be got over as soon as possible. People seem to think that the baldest statements are good enough when writing to

The Power of the Written Word 191

relations or friends. If they do not think so, they act as if they do, and the result is that it is the exception rather than the rule to come across a really well-written letter.

Have you ever thought that whenever you write a sentence or a thought of your own you impress it vividly on your own mind and on the mind of the recipient? People who know, always write down a thing they particularly want to think out. For instance, if I ask you : " What are the chief essentials in a good letter ? " you will not be able to make an adequate reply, even to yourself, unless you write down your various ideas, and, by so doing, enable yourself to give a complete answer and fix these essentials in your mind.

It is a social crime to be uninteresting in a letter. It suggests that anything will do for the person to whom you are writing. If you simply write a bald, uninteresting letter, you are allowing your mind to become lazy. As soon as you start thinking of the interesting, bright and amusing things you can say, you exercise your mind and keep it active, and develop your powers of observation, of optimism, and, above all, of humour, which is the saving-grace of life, the sunshine that dispels the gloom of many a trying hour.

Just think for a moment of some of the letters you have received lately. Have any of them left

an impression on your mind because of their interest or because they were really well written ? You will find that you get your best letters from your best friends. They do their utmost to tell you interesting things, because they know you will appreciate them, and because they want to be interesting to you. You see from this that when you write interestingly to anybody you pay them a compliment, while you slight them if you write only indifferently well. Every time you write a good letter to a person, you create in his or her mind an unconscious impression that you think sufficiently of their opinion and culture to send them something worth reading, that you think they are worth taking trouble about. It is a form of flattery that is very sweet and laudable.

A word here about corresponding with your own family. It is common for brothers and sisters when writing to each other to adopt a very brief and cursory style. Do you not think the people you pass your life with are those you ought to cultivate the most ? It is far more important that they should like you, and wish to make you happy, than that you should be highly popular with people you meet socially at brief intervals. Moreover, the act of writing a slovenly letter to anybody is an insult to your own mind. It is as if you said to your brain : "The easiest thing for you to create is a commonplace letter. A really good letter is rather a strain for you." Do not treat

The Power of the Written Word 193

your mind like that, or it will revenge itself by creating only commonplace thoughts, whereas if you give it every opportunity of being original, it will create original ideas just as easily as mediocre ones, and will endow you with a decided and gifted personality.

Here is an example, taken from the excellent volumes of his published letters, showing how Robert Louis Stevenson wrote to his father at the age of sixteen :—

“RESPECTED PATERNAL RELATIVE,—

“I write to make a request of the most moderate nature. Every year I have cost you an enormous—nay, elephantine—sum of money for drugs and physicians’ fees, and the most expensive time of the twelve months was March.

“But this year the biting Oriental blasts, the howling tempests, and the general ailments of the human race have been successfully braved by yours truly.

“Does not this deserve remuneration? I appeal to your charity, I appeal to your generosity, I appeal to your justice, I appeal to your accounts, I appeal, in fine, to your purse.

“My sense of generosity forbids the receipt of more—my sense of justice forbids the receipt of less—than half-a-crown. Greeting from, Sir,

“Your most affectionate and needy Son,

“R. STEVENSON.”

Do not say to yourself : “I am quite an ordinary person and cannot be expected to write like that.” You can write letters which will give the greatest

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pleasure to your friends, and you need not be astonished if you find you can write a much finer letter than you thought possible. What should cause you astonishment (if such a thing were possible) would be to find that you were not writing well after you had made up your mind to compose letters worth reading.

Some people live in history because of the letters they wrote and for no other reason. Such a person was Dorothy Osborne, whose letters to her future husband, Sir William Temple, were purchased by the trustees of the British Museum. These letters, written in the seventeenth century, are a standing reproach to the wishy-washy love letters of the present day, and are a good example of what can be done by the non-literary person who possesses a keen, observant mind and a cultured wit. The following is taken quite at random, to serve as a general example of a good letter :—

“ SIR,—

“ If there were anything in my letter that pleased you I am extremely glad on't, 'twas all due to you, and made it but an equal return for the satisfaction yours gave me. And whatsoever you may believe, I shall never repent the good opinion I have with so much reason taken up. But I forget myself ; I meant to chide, and I think this is nothing towards it. Is it possible you came so near me as Bedford and would not see me ? Seriously, I should not have believed it from another ; would your horse had lost all his legs instead of a hoof, that he might not have

The Power of the Written Word 195

been able to carry you further, and you, something that you valued extremely, and could not hope to find anywhere but at Chicksands. I could wish you a thousand little mischances, I am so angry with you ; for my life I could not imagine how I had lost you, or why you should call that a silence of six or eight weeks which you intended so much longer. And when I had wearied myself with thinking of all the displeasing accidents that might cause it, I at length sat down with a resolution to choose the best to believe, which was, that at the end of one journey, you had begun another (which I had heard you say you intended), and that your haste, or something else, had hindered you from letting me know it.

“ In this ignorance your letter from Breda found me, which (by the way) Sir Thomas never saw. 'Tis true I told him I had a letter from you, one day that he extremely lamented he knew not what was become of you, and fell into so earnest commendations of you that I cannot expect less from him, who have the honour to be his kinswoman.

“ But to leave him to his Mistress (who perhaps has spoiled his memory), let me assure you that I was never so in love with an old man in my life, as I was with Mr. Metcalf for sending me that letter (though there is one not far off that says he will have me when his wife dies !). I writ so kindly to him the next post, and he that would not be in my debt, sends me word again that you were coming over, but yours kept me from believing that, and made me think you in Italy when you were in England, though I was not displeas'd to find myself deceived.

“ But for God's sake let me ask you what you have done all this while you have been away ; what you met with in Holland that could keep you there so long ; why you went no further ; and why I was not to know you went so far ? You may do well to satisfy me in all these. I shall so persecute you with questions else, when I see you,

that you will be glad to go thither again to avoid me ; though when that will be I cannot certainly say, for my Father has so small a proportion of health left him since my Mother's death, that I am in continual fear of him, and dare not often make use of the leave he gives me to be from home, lest he should at some time want such little services as I am able to render him. Yet I think to be at London at the next term, and am sure I shall desire it because you are there. Sir,

“Your Humble Servant.”

You will notice the strong features of this letter, particularly the clever way in which the writer gives a connected interest to the correspondence by suggesting things she will like to hear. Other good features you can discover for yourself. You need not bother to read published letters for the sake of improving your own correspondence, though most volumes of this kind are very interesting. Simply keep in mind the rules of good letter-writing, and determine that you will write nothing slipshod or uninteresting. In a way, every letter you write is for publication, because the person you write to is a sort of public. Be careful not to be artificial. Just be natural and as bright and interesting as you can. Take care of the interest and the phraseology, and the literary value of the letters will take care of itself.

Volumes have been written about the art of writing business letters, but in general the broad principles can be set down in a short space. Busi-

The Power of the Written Word 197

ness letters are meant to help business, and every such communication should be written with this end in view.

The essential requirements of a business letter are brevity, clarity, and force. Sometimes you must sacrifice brevity. It is not always possible to write a short note (though it is always desirable), but it is generally possible to write a much shorter letter than is actually sent. Business men go to business for one thing and for one thing only, and that is to make money. Any letter you write to a business man affects his pocket. If you are helping him to make money, well and good: you are his friend. If, however, your letter is long and the reading of it takes up time that could be turned to profitable account, you are annoying him. Business men like short letters, and they usually bring back short replies, which enable you to save your time also.

It stands to reason that if you dictate short letters you save your typist's time as well as your own, so that she can write more letters and enable you to cover a wider ground, while she saves you the necessity of employing another stenographer. Look at it as you may, all the arguments are in favour of short letters and are against long ones.

Whatever you do, however, you must never sacrifice clearness for the purpose of making your

letters short. A letter writer has always to be careful that his meaning is obvious to his reader. Sometimes a letter conveys quite a different suggestion from the one intended by the writer, and it is important to see that there are no ambiguous phrases which will confuse the issue and make the letter unintelligible.

The third requirement in a letter is force. Never send out a colourless letter. Your correspondence should express your individuality, and if you have a strong personality it should be reflected in your letters. Moreover, the habit of writing good letters will have its effect upon your mind, strengthening it by the very resolution to do nothing which shall not worthily represent your character.

A letter is the next best thing to a personal talk. Many businesses have been built up to vast proportions by the use of letters alone. Thousands of pounds' worth of goods are sold every year by certain firms who never see their customers, purely by the force of the written word. This shows how perfect the art of letter writing has become, and will suggest to you that if you can thus influence people whom you never see, your influence can be made to act much stronger upon those whom you know.

A business letter is sent out for one of two purposes: either to get something you want, or to

The Power of the Written Word 199

give your correspondent some information which he is in need of. You can even make the latter kind of letter forceful, by conveying a suggestion that the reader should do something you want him to do. If you are selling goods, for instance, and send a man a list of new prices, you can give a saleable quality to your letter by suggesting at the end that he will find it advisable to order at once and turn the bargain to advantage. Such a suggestion conveys the idea that the prices are low and that the goods will sell readily, and the letter is thus made more valuable than it would be if it contained merely a bald statement of prices.

You want to put positive force into your letters by creating a suggestion in your reader's mind. A letter which only conveys a bald statement, such as a list of prices, is a negative letter, because of itself it does not impel the reader to act upon any idea which you put into his head. As soon as you say, "Write to us and let us know your requirements, so that we can deliver at once," you start the reader's brain working along the lines you wish it to take. Do not say, "We think you will wish to order at once." That is weak. Say, "Write to us," and put the notion into his head as forcibly as you can. Always look for the opportunity of helping your reader to make up his mind like this, and you will reap the fullest value from your correspondence.

Apart from forcefulness, which reveals a strong individuality, and accuracy, which shows character, you want your letters to oil the wheels of business. A kind letter will turn away wrath just as surely as will a soft answer by word of mouth; but, in addition to this, the continual revelation of a kindly interest will promote good relations by making your correspondents feel that you are studying them and wish them well. Many a subtle touch can be introduced into letters, which will create such a cordial impression that the readers will find pleasure in doing business with you.

Suppose a man writes and orders goods from a particular sample. It is quite easy to write back, "Many thanks for your order, etc.," but it is much better to say, "I am *glad* to get your *kind* letter ordering, etc." In the one case you send a bald acknowledgment; in the other you let him know that you are *glad* because you appreciate his *kindness*. Such pleasant words create a pleasant feeling, which transforms business from dryas dust commerce into kindly human intercourse, which is beneficial and pleasant to both parties. Never miss a chance of adding these brief but courteous personal touches to your letter. They promote business by showing your interest in your correspondent.

One word more on the art of writing business letters. Never write an angry letter. When you

The Power of the Written Word 201

get a letter that impels you to sit down and write a sarcastic or bitter reply, by all means do so if it will relieve your feelings, but don't send it. Wait until the next morning, and then write such a letter as you yourself would appreciate. Place yourself always in the mind of your reader. Appreciate his motives in writing to you, and act accordingly. If he is angry you must remove the cause of his anger, whether it is just or unjust; but you must do it frankly and with cordiality. Own up if you are wrong, and rectify your mistakes, but always be friendly and give your angry correspondent the opportunity of establishing cordial relations once more by going the whole way to meet him.

Courtesy is cheap, and it always pays. More flies are caught with honey than with vinegar. You are in business to get business, and the more you can make people like you and trust you, the more business you can get. For the cultivation of cordial relations which create profitable transactions, the ability to write good letters is an indispensable part of a business man's equipment. You cannot climb high in commerce until you become a proficient letter writer. If you go a little farther and make yourself more than usually skilful, which is quite easy and only calls for a little extra thought, you will be invaluable to your employers, who will not fail to recognise the value of your efforts.

CHAPTER XXI

THE HABIT OF POWER

"In the smallest and greatest things a man should know and bear in mind his own measure."

JUVENAL.

A JUST appreciation of your gifts is necessary to their fullest development. It is a conspicuous attribute of clever people that they can recognise their own deficiencies. You never met a dunderhead who did not think he had his full share of brain. Most mediocrities are mediocrities because they are thoroughly well satisfied with themselves. If they would only shake themselves out of their self-complacency, and find out how little use they are making of the abilities they do possess, they would soon take a place in the world that would be more in keeping with the fictitious value they set upon themselves.

You cannot improve yourself until you have found out what needs improving. Let me just put down the common attributes of personal power, so that you can ask yourself which you are deficient

in and which you possess in good measure. You will then be in a position to make plans for using the gifts which will help you, as well as for developing those which you will need if you are to force yourself forward. Here they are, not necessarily in their order of importance to you, but just a list of those qualities which you must develop to be sure you realise your possession of the gift of power :—

- (1) A special talent, the use of which gives you pleasure.
- (2) A knowledge of such business subjects as will fit you for advancement.
- (3) The ability to talk well.
- (4) The ability to write a good letter.
- (5) A good memory.

These are purely mental qualities which make for success. Now let us take the physical qualities which are essential.

- (1) Good health, which is a matter of right living, avoidance of self-indulgence, and a proper amount of exercise.
- (2) Orderliness of habits and punctuality.
- (3) Good taste in dress.
- (4) A quiet, sympathetic voice, and distinctness of speech.

Finally, we come to moral qualities which form the character and are equally important :—

- (1) Ambition to succeed in something, by which I mean an aim in life to do something to perfection.
- (2) Determination to achieve that ambition and to do something towards attaining it every day, which is summed up in the word “perseverance.”
- (3) Culture, which enables you to appreciate perfection in all that you do, say, or think.
- (4) An appreciation of the difficulties of others, which will make you tactful.

There are additional moral qualities, such as sympathy and generosity, which are dealt with elsewhere, but in general these are all you need to ask yourself about at the moment.

Start out on an investigation like this for the sole purpose of developing your strength. You want to know what your weaknesses are, so that you can strengthen them. Most men who are conscious of weaknesses of some kind or other use the knowledge to avoid work which would call their deficiencies into play. They lack self-confidence because they keep their weaknesses ever before their eyes. The wise man relies on his strength. He

takes his stand upon what he *can* do, and when he is called upon to do something which will make him use one of his weak faculties, he makes up his mind to do the best he can, while he draws upon his strong qualities as much as possible. The golden rule, therefore, is to keep your strong qualities in front of your eyes, so to speak, and ignore your weak ones. Do not pander to these latter. Treat them as if they were sources of strength, too. That is what Shakespeare means when he says, "Assume a virtue if you have it not." Every now and then you will ask yourself how your weak faculties are improving, and if you have done your best to develop your mind and character; and you will have the satisfaction of noting an extraordinary development of strength which you never dreamed of.

The men who fail are those who fear to undertake responsibility because they are afraid of their weaknesses. When you are asked to do something which seems hard, it is the greatest compliment anybody can possibly pay you. It is as if they should say, "I know you are the best man I can come to for this." Would not someone else be asked to do it if it were thought he could do it better? Of course he would. And that is the way to look at the matter.

The continual belief that your mind is capable of solving all the difficulties which may confront it

becomes a sort of instinct which prompts a man to face cheerfully all the problems of life. After all, the troubles and anxieties which we encounter are of the greatest benefit. They increase our power because they call forth all the finest faculties of the mind, and when we have surmounted them we find ourselves in the clear atmosphere beyond the struggling mass of incompetents who fear to undertake responsibility. There comes a time when the strong man welcomes difficulties because of the joy of conquest. You have only to apply your common sense to your daily problems, and you will solve them. The more you have to solve, the stronger your mind will become, and the easier your work will appear to you.

You are entitled to believe that when some task confronts you to which your experience offers no guide, the faculties of your mind will automatically rally to your assistance. If you will only have the courage to act on this assumption, you will soon discover the truth of the assertion. Your brain is like a horse in one respect. The horse instinctively knows the feelings of its rider. When the rider is timid the horse becomes timid also, while a courageous rider gives courage to his steed. Similarly, a hesitating man, by a process of self-suggestion, so impresses his mind with timidity that his brain cannot give him encouragement and help. Only

assume the habit of power, and your mind will respond readily to second you in carrying your work to a triumphant conclusion.

The habit of power, which assumes that you are capable of performing any work entrusted to you, has many advantages which operate together to make a man successful. As time goes on, the mind becomes so strengthened, so used to this idea of power, that difficulties shrink before it. How often the impossible task loses most of its difficulties when it is attacked with determination. The weak man sees only difficulties in the problems of his daily life. Everything looks so hard and unassailable that he fears to undertake anything which is outside the usual simple routine. Very different is the attitude of the strong mind. It ignores the difficulties and seizes on the weaknesses of a problem, and from that point of view makes the attack.

A safe rule to adopt is, "Take the line of least resistance," and another is, "Never under-rate the strength of your opponent." These two laws (for they *are* laws) should be taken together because they go together in the guide-book of life. Most men separate them and give them a false meaning. To such individuals, taking the line of least resistance means ignoring unpleasant obstacles to an easy mind and body. Anything that promises worry or mental strain or undue physical effort is avoided,

while the difficulties of a task or the capacity of a competitor are so magnified that opposition appears to be futile.

The right mental attitude to adopt is this: However strong my competitor may be, he has some weakness somewhere which I can find, and when I find it I shall overcome his opposition. That is the application of the first law, and when it is so applied, the opposition confronting you loses its appearance of bristling strength and presents a series of vulnerable parts to your keen and practised eye. Many a fortress used to be considered impregnable, but modern science and knowledge has shown that human skill cannot build a fort that is absolutely secure from attack. Somewhere, very likely, there is a position from which it can be bombarded, and this is its source of weakness. The position is strongly fortified, but the clever general attacks its weakest part, and concentrates all his force upon that, because when once he has subdued it the rest is comparatively easy.

Another illustration from warfare has a distinct bearing upon this reasoning. The idea of a fortress is not that it shall be absolutely impregnable, for that is impossible, but that it shall delay the enemy as long as may be. Opposition in everything is like that. It delays your conquest, but it does not make it impossible. There is a weakness somewhere

which will give you the opening you want. Do not waste your time and strength in attacking the strong part of your opposition, but take the line of least resistance, and attack that vigorously, until you can make it the stepping-off ground to the next weakest part.

Of all the problems that can confront you, however unfamiliar they may seem at first glance, and however much they seem to baffle your experience, if you will only look you will find about them some familiar features which do respond to your experience. The habit of power assumes that, once you have discovered such points, your experience, aided by your common sense, will enable you to use them as landmarks to guide you over the ground with which you are not familiar.

I can give you a broad example which is the result of my own experience. When I was writing advertisements for a living, it fell to my lot to devise a publicity scheme for a new infant food. I knew nothing about infant foods or the special trade conditions which governed their marketing. But I did know the trade conditions operating in the cases of other commodities. I knew the way to write advertisements to interest the public, and I knew how to create a market for such goods. Here were the broad principles of publicity with which I was conversant, and there was a new commodity which I knew

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nothing about. First of all, I evolved a plan of campaign which would interest the public, because that I knew I could do. Then I interviewed the manufacturer, and told him how I had secured the help of the retail trade in other cases, and he gave me the information I wanted to complete my knowledge in regard to his own proposition. I was able then to reconstruct my whole campaign, because I had all the necessary facts before me. I was able to provide the incomplete groundwork from my past experience, and my common sense told me that the manufacturer could complete the foundations. It all became simple when I adopted the safe practice of arguing from the known to the unknown. Start from the safe ground of your experience, guide yourself by the landmarks which that experience provides, and by using your common sense you will find that the road which looked so difficult to travel is not so hard when you progress along it by careful stages.

The habit of mind which cheerfully embarks upon new problems and tasks because of a sure belief that they can be successfully solved and accomplished by the simple process of arguing from what you do know to what is unfamiliar, soon produces the outward impression of power. The man who is willing to undertake responsibility bears the impress of his self-confidence unmistakably upon him.

He shows by a score of the clearest signs that he is ready to be trusted, and what is more, his brain informs him by a sort of instinct that his mental powers can be trusted also. People like men who know their own power. They will forgive the mistakes which must occur, provided, as a big employer once said to me, they do not occur a second time.

If you have been timid in the past, for goodness' sake take your courage in both hands and go out to make full use of your brain power. Every man who has risen has had his despairing moments, and every man as he rises must have his worries. Worries are the barometer of success. When you have none, you are shown to be in a state of drift. When you have a lot, you are moving in the uncharted waters which will carry you to success if you guide yourself by your common sense. Worries must come to you if you are doing work that is worth while, but they are not sent to overwhelm you. They are not irritants to make life unbearable, but spurs to drive you onward. Treat them as such. Make up your mind to accept them as troubles which you yourself can dissipate, instead of as troubles that will hold you back and make you fail. They will soon leave you, and they will enable you to enjoy to the full the sense of achievement which reveals to you, with the conquering of every

anxiety, the sense of power which you have called forth from the depths of your being to be a mighty force under your own control. Power dwells within you. Call it into life, and use it to make yourself strong. You have all your talents and abilities ready and waiting. However much you develop them, they might just as well be non-existent if you do not use them. They are meant for use, but only you can utilise them. By assuming the habit of power you put yourself in the way of such tasks as will call them all into action, and the more you can call upon them the stronger they will grow and the greater will be your success in whatever undertakings you may embark upon. Remember, you have the power, but you must use it as a habit, and not as an occasional calling forth of effort. So you will go triumphantly from strength to strength, and the impossibilities of to-day will become the easy tasks of to-morrow.

PART III
Pleasures of Power

CHAPTER XXII

THE JOY OF LABOUR

"The gods sell us all good things for hard work."—EPICHRMUS.

WHEN a man becomes conscious of his talents, and has begun to develop them, he begins to discover the pleasure of using them. To the man who is mentally active everything in life is interesting. He derives pleasure from the sight of the country-side, because he can see its wonders as well as its beauties. All the world is full of marvels to him, and when he walks abroad it is as if he walked with God and shared in the joys of all creation. Suppose for one moment that the Omnipotent Intelligence had been mentally lazy: this world of ours would still be a chaotic mass, devoid of life and matter. Do you not suppose that the Creator rejoiced when He saw the many wonders which His effort called into being? Suppose, again, that He grew tired. At once the world would lose its life and return to that condition of confusion which characterised it before the Creation.

We ought to take nothing for granted. Every breath we draw, every child that is born, every flower that blows, should remind us that the Supreme Force which governs our lives is ceaselessly caring for the work of His Mind. The sun that rises and sets, the restless sea, the cool breezes that bring us rain as well as fragrance and health, the marching of the stars at night, should all remind us that there is no obligation upon God to work for our benefit. All life and all beauty is a gift due to the unceasing work of the Great Mind, and the least man can do is to work also, and create in his turn.

It is only when we work that we get more into harmony with the Infinite. It is only by labour that we can live and eat in the sense that unless we create we are not reaping the fullness of life, and are getting no real satisfaction out of it.

In this way the work that we do is an indication of our state of mind. The man whose work is irksome is a mental drone. A mind that is strong and active finds all labour pleasant, even if it is of the kind which is generally thought to be drudgery. I was much impressed on one occasion with the saying of a man whose work was most monotonous. He remarked that, although he had to do the same thing over and over again, he prevented the labour becoming irksome by simply

forcing himself to become interested in it : and he accomplished this by striving to do the work more perfectly every time he was called upon to perform it again. Just as the man who uses his eyes can see beauty where another will only see ugliness, so the man with mental alertness will discover interest in uncongenial work. Unless you really are engrossed by what you do, you cannot concentrate your mind upon it, and consequently you cannot do it perfectly. By sitting down and complaining that your labours are drudgery, you cannot do good work, and instead of qualifying for a variation in the form of something better, you actually run the risk of keeping yourself in the state which you complain of.

Put the joy of creation into everything you do. Let it be worthy of your mind, and let it be done as perfectly as you can do it. If your employers cannot use you to better advantage, fit yourself for more congenial work elsewhere. It is your own fault if you complain : the remedy is always in your own hand. Complaints are signs of weakness, and if you are in a chronic state of dissatisfaction words will avail nothing. Only by your own actions can you alter your own condition of life. If you are busy complaining when you ought to be busily acting, you are likely to complain until the end of the chapter. How can you enjoy your

leisure if your mind is brooding over your grievances? Instead of railing against circumstances, you should take yourself to task because you allow your environment to worry you, and because you are not forming some plan which will eventually improve your state of mind as well as your state of work.

When I first went to work, a long-headed business man said to me, "You will find that you will have a lot of uncongenial work to do, but you must do it as cheerfully as the work you like doing." Every day's work brings to every man an amount of labour which is drudgery, if it is not worry. You can increase the drudgery or decrease it according to the frame of mind you adopt. Worry will drive you distracted if you will let it, but it will fly away if you face it with serenity. When you are tempted to sharp words, or feel worried, just pause a moment and pull yourself together. It will only take you a minute to force yourself to breathe quietly and to put your mind into a restful state; but it will make a wonderful difference to your mental outlook. The windows of the mind get blurred by worry and discontent. Spare a moment to drive these away and the windows will clear so that you can see the sun shining through the mists of doubt and disappointment.

We hear a lot at times about the dignity of

labour. The phrase is largely a contradiction in terms. There is no particular dignity about work. It is too strenuous, too exacting. What dignity it holds is in its result. When the mass of detail culminates in the achievement of the perfect plan, then you have the restfulness which is dignity, but not before. But always there should be the joy of labour. Every detail of the work should be performed joyfully and with enthusiasm, and then the completed task will give lasting pleasure, because it is made up of satisfaction and is built upon the sure foundation of perfection in all its parts.

Where one man complains of competition, another man welcomes it because it gives a zest to business. If there is no struggle, there is little satisfaction. Only those who have conquered in the face of heavy odds know the real joy of work. When the outlook is dreary, then it is that the strong mind rejoices and moves cheerfully to the attack that the weaker man fears. Have you ever thought that when you get difficulties to solve, you are, to a large extent, meeting with less opposition in other directions? The number of men who can shoulder responsibility is limited. As soon, therefore, as you attain to a responsible post which tries your nerve and resource and brings you worry, you have less to fear from opposition, because

the mass of men do not compete with you. The higher you climb the fewer your competitors are and the more your real worth is seen. Only keep your mind exercised, trust your judgment, and use your experience, and you will have little to fear so long as you meet your daily difficulties in the glad spirit of the born conqueror.

A successful writer remarked recently that he was able to produce a much greater amount of work by planning at the beginning of the day the developments he should make in his plot. He knew exactly what he wanted to do, and consequently he did it quicker. That was his system, and it suited him. Another writer once said to me, "When I want to make some money, I write down on a piece of paper something like this: 'Jack Jones was in a difficulty.' Then I ask myself what difficulty Jack Jones was in, and proceed to build up a story." That was his system for doing remunerative work.

You will notice in each case that the man made up his mind to do something profitable, and then set to work at once to carry it out. In some offices you will see a sign hung up: "What is the next thing?" This is a constant reminder to be doing something, and it is a great success-secret, because the more you do the more you become capable of doing. Some men are slow and sure, others are

fast and uncertain. Both of these are comparative failures. Start with slow and sure, then struggle to become fast and sure, and you will out-distance your competitors.

Do your daily work, and make some other form of work your hobby. The manager of one of our largest multiple-shop firms has this motto hanging up over his desk : "There's no fun like work"; and he acts up to it. You may keep a ledger all day and write stories in the evening, or, if you cannot write, you can study art or literature or music. The change of work will rest you, and, after all, it is no greater hardship to read with an object than to read trashy novels; and you can buy the works of the greatest writers on every subject for a few pence.

Be a worker. It is as easy to acquire the taste for work as the taste for olives! Do not let your mind become slovenly. It will be lazy if you will let it, but it will be a profitable factor in your life if you make it industrious. You will need to exercise self-control and will-power to train your mind to enthusiasm, but the task will grow easy, until all work becomes a pleasure. The river that runs swiftly is clearer than the stagnant waters of a pool. Do not let your brain get muddy. Use it to its utmost capacity, and, while the days come on swift wings, they will bring hours of pleasure that the human drone can never know.

Personal Power

Work well done spurs you on to better work and larger spheres of achievement. It opens up new fields of knowledge and reveals unsuspected sources of power. While you sit down and do nothing all the wonders of the world are a sealed book to you. There are unexplored regions of your brain that only work can reveal to you. You have not the faintest idea what you can do, or what you can learn, until your work enables you to find it out. The world, with all its mysteries, all its resources and prizes, all its promises and achievements, lies before you. Others are finding them out and are rejoicing while they toil. The road lies open before you: will you seize the opportunity, or leave the work and its reward to others?

If you take the trouble to think about it, you will always notice one outstanding attribute of successful people. They work harder than those who achieve a moderate success. Into their day they crowd the labour of more than the day's work of an ordinary man, and when you and I go home to our rest and our pleasures they continue toiling. The soldier commanding an army in the field works day and night; so does the statesman, the busy barrister, the head of a great business. Their sole concern is to use the limited hours of a day for as much work as they can possibly crowd into it.

Many a man who envies his more fortunate rivals grudges the work which success involves. If the great men of the world find it necessary to toil early and late to secure their positions, how vital must it be for the man who is struggling towards the achievement of his ambitions to work just as hard! These men do not work for money or for fame, for they have won both. They work for the love of the working, for the joy of the struggle, and the ecstasy of the final triumph; and when they have conquered one thing the lust of power which possesses them urges them on anew to fresh fields which are ready for conquest.

Think of the men possessed of all they need in life, going forth to the outer parts of the Empire to work hard for their country. Think of the scientists pursuing their laborious investigations, or, of the commercial magnates continuing to work harder than any clerk when they have earned fortunes and the right to enjoy luxurious leisure. These men are not called upon to undertake the daily drudgery and the thousand worries, perils, and anxieties which every day brings to them. Why, then, do they work? The only answer is that there must be something in the very nature of labour which gives the worker such joy as he can obtain in no other way. It is the use of their mental powers, the act of creation, that enthral them.

Some men work for money and some for work's sake. Generally the former, when they have made their money, continue to work because they love it. The man whose sole aim is to earn enough to satisfy his wants does very little more, and often, owing to his lack of foresight and an entire absence of ambition, he ends his days in poverty. Making money is laudable, but it is not the chief end of work. The man who toils in the fields and loves it is more successful than he who works in an office for money alone and loathes his routine. The more one thinks about the matter the plainer it is that the habit of loving work so much that even drudgery loses its burden is to be easily acquired by adopting the right mental attitude. Totting up figures and ruling up a ledger are, in themselves, dreary work. Any interest they may possess must be given to them by the worker. If he can do the work quickly and accurately and get quicker and more accurate, he derives a satisfaction from it that makes it even pleasant; and when his reward comes and he is given better-paid work, he begins to feel the benefit of that power which impelled him forward, though he never knew it.

The most miserable people in the world are those who have nothing to do. Only a little better off are persons who are forced to work for their livelihood, and do it so grudgingly that life is merely

The Joy of Labour 225

a matter of dull routine. Happy is the man who loves his work, who rejoices in all the details of his calling because he can carry them out perfectly; who rises slowly and surely towards the height of his ambition, and sees the labour of his mind and of his hands growing out of the weary days into the beauty and strength that he gave them.

CHAPTER XXIII

ACHIEVEMENT

*"And now the matchless deed's achieved,
Determined, dared, and done."*

CHRISTOPHER SMART.

IN work well done there is a satisfaction which is the greatest reward of labour. The sense of achievement is at once a payment and a promise. It compensates a man for toil and drudgery, and it stimulates him with such a sense of power that his ambition seems nearer to realisation. Those who plod on day by day, following well-defined roads and making no excursions away from the herded crowds into the byways of life where perils and adventures wait, never know the joys of triumph that come to a man who has been battered and wounded in fierce fights, who has been hurled down into the depths of despair, and yet from those depths has started to climb again with undiminished cheerfulness and courage until he has painfully gained the heights. Only the man who has been down, who, in the words of the world, has "failed," can know the exquisite pleasure of rising to the

summits of life. He knows that he is more than equal to whatever troubles may await him. He knows that in the hour of danger his mental powers will take unto themselves such an access of strength that the perils will be overcome, that the struggle will be joyous, and that the triumph will be sweet.

If it were not true that every completed task brings a sense of power that is more than a compensation for the weariness of the work, life would be unbearable. The ambition that lures us on over the stony and terrible ways of life is never completely satisfied. Always a man hungers, like Alexander of old, for fresh worlds to conquer. He does not gain his reward from his gratified wishes, but from the sense of personal power that his conquests bring him.

It is a fine thing to attempt what other men fear, and to succeed in the endeavour. It is finer still to go forth into the dark, fearing yourself, yet determined to conquer and prevail. Do you suppose that a man who has once tasted the sweet fruit of achievement in the face of odds that looked overwhelming, would exchange his stony path for the well-trodden highways that the crowd travels over? To live by routine, to answer to the beck and call of others, to subject your will always to the wills of others, and never to assert yourself, to

let others bear the burden and heat of the day, even if you share the spoils—this is slavery. No man is free unless he is mentally free. Unless you think for yourself and have the courage to act according to your own judgment, whatever the world may say (so long as you believe yourself to be right), you are a slave to convention, and you live in the depths beneath the feet of the heroes who dare and do.

Those who are content to do always what others tell them, and are afraid to accept responsibility, are subject to more dangers than those who invite the difficulties that accompany original endeavour. You are engaged in business, we will say. You are one of a host of clerks engaged upon routine work. The man who thinks for you and plans your day's work leaves, or dies, and another takes his place. If he does not care to think for you, you are in peril of being thrust out into the cold world with no one to guide you, when you will be helpless. If you are accustomed to think and act for yourself, you are never in such danger. You are mentally independent; and if all the people you know suddenly withdrew their help and advice, you would be no worse off: indeed, you would at once console yourself with the reflection that all sources of weakness which are associated with the tendency to rely upon others had been taken from you, and

you would brace up your mental faculties to meet the new situation, thereby gaining an added power which is always available in those hidden wells of strength upon which the man who is mentally free knows how to draw.

It is the pleasure of achievement that makes life really worth living. Everything that you set yourself to do and ultimately accomplish is an achievement that brings you satisfaction. If you have weeds in your garden, and you set yourself to dig them out before you go to bed, you get a sense of pleasure from the performance of the task. You do not mind the backache and the drudgery, because you know how pleased you will be when the work is properly done. If you leave a task undone in order that you may engage in recreation, that task still awaits you, and the recollection of it spoils your pleasure. The mere knowledge that the hours you spend over it now will give you hours of leisure for play or more useful work later on, will make the task seem more pleasant to you than the idling which would be overshadowed by the sense of duties left undone. The sweetness of rest is entirely dependent upon labour. You enjoy sitting down by your fireside reading a book after a hard day's work, when you would be bored to distraction if you had been able to read all day long. If life were a perpetual holiday, we should not revel in the

sense of leisure as we do when we leave our work behind us for a few days, conscious that it is well done and that we have earned our recreation.

The joys of achievement are associated with every act of life. If you have read a good book, it is good for you if you have learned something from it, because you have achieved something mentally. It is better still to make a plan for reading a series of books to develop some special talent, to steal odd moments so that you can gain more power still, and to use time, which you would otherwise waste, for a useful purpose. The greater the struggle and the more complete your plan, the bigger will be your achievement and the joy of it.

Make every day a period of achievement. Set yourself something useful to do and do it. It is not so satisfactory to take things as they come and perform the duties which they involve. That is only a partial achievement. Once you taste fully the sense of elation which achievement brings, you will plan for fuller measures of success, and the more you are able to accomplish by wise thought and a skilful use of your talents, the greater will be the joy you will get out of your life.

Life's greatest pleasures come from the general sense of satisfaction which is derived from work well done. The real joy of achievement comes from a successful issue to a difficult undertaking.

When you are faced with some problem which is quite new to you, and calls for the use of all your mental reserves, and the full powers of your intellect, you are a candidate for the reward of real achievement. The knowledge that you have proved equal to the unknown, that your mind did not fail you, is a revelation that brings such satisfaction as no money can procure. You gain confidence and strength, and so far from dreading responsibility and difficulties, you actually seek them as bearers of a gift of real pleasure that the pleasant things of the world can never bring. The consciousness that you can attempt successfully what other men fear will recompense you for your anxieties and drudgery, and will make you impervious to the sneers and timid counsels of the weak.

Every man ought to be a pioneer. We cannot all go forth into the waste lands to be explorers or Empire-builders, but we can all blaze our little trails in the world of work and knowledge, and so help mankind to advance towards the final great perfection. He who fears to attempt cannot hope to succeed ; but the adventurer must never be fool-hardy. He must be equipped with full knowledge and strength to enable him to withstand the burden and heat of the day. He must plan wisely, walk warily and work carefully. He must be ready for every emergency, and trained to carry out every

detail. Any weakness will betray him into failure, and though he may rise again he loses time which is priceless to the man striving for greatness.

Achievement is bound up with power. The greater the achievement the greater the power which made it possible. The harder the task the more qualifications are needed to perform it successfully. Thus the real joy of achievement lies in the fact that it is proof of the power you have developed within you, and every new task you undertake that calls for a fresh addition to your personal power is urging you on to acquire more knowledge and wisdom. If you want to be mentally fit, you must dare everything. You must leave the main channels and plunge into the uncharted seas where you have to make your own course. It calls for courage, but the man who dares and is confident need never fear. He will soon taste the first joy of achievement, and, once his appetite for this form of pleasure has been whetted, he will never be satisfied with anything less than the constant use of his highest powers and a regular progress towards greater and greater things.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE USE OF BOOKS

"The words of the good are like a staff in a slippery place."

HINDU SAYING.

THE trained mind continually asks itself what good is being obtained from the work it is doing. It is worth noting that every part of our bodies is so planned that it must be always working. The only part of you that is indolent is your will power. Even when you lie inert in bed your muscles are at work, fighting the tendency for the body to shrivel up. It is only by their constant labour that your legs and arms retain their normal positions. You have probably noticed, too, that you often turn right round in your bed while you are asleep, so that even your bones, because of their control by your muscles, cannot rest, but must work. If the great muscle, which is your heart, stops working, you die. It labours ceaselessly, pumping the blood through your veins, while the lungs supply your body with the oxygen which you breathe in from the atmosphere.

Your mind, too, must work. If you are sitting still doing nothing, the thoughts will still crowd into your brain, and their character will affect your whole life and even shape your features. The only idle part of you is your own free will, and if you will heed the lesson of your body, you will feel ashamed if you do not use that will to control your mind and body so that you may create such things as you were made capable of creating.

You have been provided with a perfect machine. In that respect you are no better than the lower animals, or the plants. By self-indulgence you can so ruin the machine that it will be useless to you. By careful development and self-training you can so master its uses that it will perform miracles you do not dream of. Every moment you waste, your working body calls out shame at you. It must work, and your brain must work. Why not, then, plan their work for them so that you can improve your knowledge and grow in wisdom and power ?

You are born with certain instincts which guide you in your everyday conduct. The experience you gain under present conditions added to those instincts will enable you to carry out the work your brain devises. The more knowledge and experience you possess the better you will be able to plan. You will then have a larger scope for your activities, and will be able to get more out of your life.

Experience is gained in two ways : by contact with other people in the actual affairs of life, and by absorbing the experiences of others through books. The wise man profits by the experiences of others, because it necessarily follows that, if we can avoid the mistakes other people have made, we shall avoid waste of effort. The right use of books not only gives us the experience of others to add to our own, but it gives us knowledge of life which stimulates our unconscious instincts. An inventor, for instance, does not need to start at the beginning. By study he is able to begin where the last man left off, and the clever man is quick to take advantage of this facility. If you are in business, you can collect the experiences of clever business men and save years of drudgery. While your competitors are idling you can consult the master minds of commerce and learn their secrets for success.

Though you do not want to be always studying, it is not necessary to waste time in reading books that cannot help you at all. The masterpieces of literature are as interesting as trash, and they are good all through. Trashy fiction, for instance, is the imaginative effort of second-rate writers, who seek only to amuse. The great masters describe life and its problems, and so enlarge your experience while they stimulate your thought.

There are millions of books available for you to

read, but you have only time to read an infinitesimal part of them. How careful, then, should you be in making your selection!

It is not so difficult as it may seem to choose your reading. Bearing in mind that you read for pleasure as well as instruction, the books you will need most are those which will please your own particular tastes, and those which will suit your own individual needs. Let us ask ourselves a few questions about books, remembering that it is only by ordering our lives on the principles of reasoning in this manner upon everything, that we can do all that we are capable of doing.

Some people like certain kinds of books out of which other people get no enjoyment. You must remember, however, that the best books are not so pleasing to the uncultured mind as the trashy ones. You have to read them carefully to appreciate their beauties of style, thought, and construction, and you have to read them slowly so that you can ponder over their messages, and thus stimulate your brain into activity.

The right way to begin reading a book is to ask yourself, "What am I going to get out of this?" Not the idle passing of an hour so much as real pleasure and a real insight into some phase of life or of knowledge. When you put a book down ask yourself what are its merits. If it possesses a lucid

and beautiful style, study that style by learning certain passages by heart, and also by reading other extracts, and then writing them down in your own words for purposes of comparison with the master's work. If it has a good plot, with characters who seem to live, ask yourself what problems of life it explains. Fiction, when it is good, has the supreme merit of taking you out of the workaday world and transplanting you to a region where you can forget the troubles and worries of your own life. Many a man with a love for reading has refreshed his tired brain and gained new courage by the change of mental air which he can obtain from literature. The man who loves reading can always have pleasure. He does not envy the millionaire in his yacht or motor. He sits in his armchair and is happier than the rich man, for he knows that, so long as he has a small library of good books, he can talk with the great thinkers of the world, who will put the richest treasures of their minds before him. Resting before his fire, he may roam through all the countries of the earth, viewing their beauties and their industries, studying their histories and meeting their great statesmen, writers, scientists, and thinkers. When he is tired of travel, the wits of the world will amuse him. When he is despondent, the great men of the world will tell him of their own struggles, and how they conquered by sheer force of will. When he is

in difficulty, the cleverest and wisest men who have ever lived will come to him with advice and help. A well-chosen library is a constant pleasure, a continual help and inspiration, and the best investment a man can make. Living always in the best company, he is strengthened and enlivened, and becomes independent of outside pleasures, oblivious to the depressing influences of the weather, and imperturbable in the face of the troubles and perils of life.

“To divest myself of a troublesome fancy,” says Montaigne, “’tis but a run to my books”; and Emerson writes: “In the highest civilisation the book is still the highest delight. He who has once known its satisfactions is provided with a resource against calamity. Angels they are to us of entertainment, sympathy, and provocation—silent guides, tractable prophets, historians, and singers, whose embalmed life is the highest feat of art; who now cast their moonlight illumination over solitude, weariness, and fallen fortunes.”

We come, then, to the question of what to read, and here the man of independent thought will ask himself what sort of books will help him most. There is plenty of advice on reading to be had from all kinds of thinkers. Emerson’s advice is as sound as any. “The three practical rules which I have to offer,” he says, “are: 1. Never read any book that

is not a year old. 2. Never read any but famed books. 3. Never read any but what you like ; or in Shakespeare's phrase,

“ ‘ No profit goes where is no pleasure ta'en :
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.’ ”

Start with the classics and get a good insight into the various branches of literature. Books that are widely read, especially when written by great authors, must be worth your while to read also. Let me put down a few names of books which you can obtain in good cloth bindings for not more than eightpence each, and you will get some idea of the rich treasure at your hand for the expenditure of a few pence.

In fiction there are “ Oliver Twist ” by Charles Dickens, Thackeray's “ Vanity Fair ” and “ Esmond,” Scott's “ Talisman,” Dumas' “ Three Musketeers ” ; in poetry, Shakespeare's plays, Tennyson's poems, and Milton's “ Paradise Lost ” ; and in essays and belles-lettres, Lamb's “ Essays of Elia,” Ruskin's “ Sesame and Lilies, etc.” (which will teach you how to read), Bacon's Essays, Holmes' “ Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,” Emerson's Essays, Carlyle's Essays, and Macaulay's Essays. These are but a few suggestions for an excursion into the delights of literature which will serve to cultivate your tastes and whet your appetite for the best, which is so easily obtainable. Any library of

“classics” issued by a good publishing house will afford a reliable guide in the choice of books. Read such biographies as Boswell’s “Life of Johnson,” such art books as Ruskin’s “Modern Painters,” autobiographies like Evelyn’s Diary or Pepys’s Diary, and the rest. Any and all of these will broaden your outlook on life while adding to your knowledge.

There are, besides, world-famous books which are so familiar that they are neglected by most people. Of these the most conspicuous example is the Bible. Every man should read the Bible, if not for its religious teaching, then for its wisdom and truth. Here we have biographies of remarkable men and women, the wisdom of sages, drama, poetry, tragedy, and perhaps even fiction. No book will make you think more, will inspire you so much, will comfort you more with hopeful philosophy or provide you with better counsel to guide you in all your perplexities. As if this were not enough, the Book is written in faultless English, which will cultivate your style. John Bright, the famous orator, owed his great reputation solely to his familiarity with the Bible, and no author has ever surpassed its perfect writing. It will pay you to read the Bible through for its surpassing literary excellence alone, and you cannot fail to derive mental power from the lofty idealism which is so

wonderfully expressed in the inspired writing that it contains.

Much has been written about the joys of reference books, and the subject is an interesting one, which shows in a remarkable manner how subjects which seem dull enough, are, in reality, full of interest to the man with a discerning mind.

Two such works are a necessity in every library, however small it may be: a dictionary and an encyclopædia. You can buy a dictionary very cheaply, and you can acquire an encyclopædia on the instalment plan, which will place no strain on your purse, and will in any case be an investment. I would add to these, as soon as the funds available will permit of its purchase, a self-educator, and I would also make the suggestion that these books of reference should be acquired as soon as possible, even before the general works of literature which have already been referred to.

It is absolutely necessary when you hear a word or read one or think of one of which you do not know the exact meaning that you should turn it up in a dictionary. Never use words which you are not sure of, and never miss the opportunity of getting acquainted with new words. Of course, you do not want to use words which people generally do not understand, but you do want a good command of language, and you need to look at the meaning of

words closely if you are to understand fully what you read, especially in the cases of the great writers.

With an encyclopædia you have a concise guide to knowledge that will supplement your newspaper and your studies. If you do not want it for reference purposes you can sit down and read it just as you would a novel, and every sentence will instruct as much as it will interest you. Go into a free library and dip into an encyclopædia, and you will get some idea how useful it will be. It is more than a work of reference or a readable book, it is a veritable guide to knowledge. You will come across all sorts of interesting subjects which were unfamiliar to you, but which you will want to know more about. Think what this means. It is as if you arrive at the cross-roads of learning, and see a sign-post with directions pointing the way down all sorts of fascinating avenues: politics, biography, history, science, art, and so on. You can see at a glance which roads you will like to travel, then you can journey a little way down any one of them, and, if it pleases you, you can travel on until you come to the point where that particular road ceases, with another sign-post telling you what other roads you must travel to reach the end of that particular subject. Get an encyclopædia, and all the by-ways to knowledge are ready at hand for you to make your choice.

There are other encyclopædias, which give detailed information about definite branches of knowledge—such as business and literature—which are equally fascinating; but, to start with, get a standard work dealing with general information, and later on you can provide yourself with those books which cover any special subject in which you are interested.

It is a good thing to know some particular subject well, and make it your hobby. Some men get their greatest pleasure in digging among the second-hand book shops in search of bargains. If you do this, confine yourself to one class of book, say art, or furniture, or china, or poetry, and form a complete little library restricted to that subject. You will then have a definite aim in view and will save yourself a good deal of expenditure which would otherwise be profitless. If you get interested in any branch of learning you will always derive pleasure from adding to your knowledge of it, and you will always find in your little library such restfulness and pleasure as would come to you if you could transport yourself into another world, away from all the doubts and perplexities which beset you in this one.

What I want you to gather from all the foregoing is this: Do not read aimlessly any more than you would work aimlessly; but, in precisely the

same manner in which you work for a definite purpose, so must you put positive force into your reading. Aimless reading is a negative occupation. It leaves the acquisition of real interest, pleasure, and knowledge entirely to chance. Everything that your mind devises for you to do is to be for your good and for the development of your powers. Apply this principle to your reading, and while you will enjoy it even more than if you read for pleasure and relaxation only, you will add immeasurably to your brain power by assimilating, on a systematic plan, the best thoughts of the wisest men who have ever lived, and the records of the most inspiring deeds that the world has known.

CHAPTER XXV

THE RIDDLE OF LIFE

*“ Into this Universe, and why, not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing :
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.*

*“ The Worldly Hope men set their hearts upon
Turns ashes—or it prospers, and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty face
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.”*

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM.

SO soon as people commence to think for themselves they begin to doubt. They have misgivings about everything. Robert Louis Stevenson said, “ We are none of us infallible, not even the very young.” (A charming and accomplished lady once quoted that to me in my salad days, and I have never forgotten it.) There are two sides to every question, and sometimes one cannot tell which is the right side. People who have engaged actively in politics know that a vast majority of voters hold their political convictions by a sort of instinct. They absorb their opinions from the mental atmosphere in which they live. In the City of London there is a large wholesale dry goods warehouse. Certain

departments would benefit greatly by Protection, and others which flourish under Free Trade would be seriously crippled. One would think that the two men at the head of the business would be competent to form an accurate opinion on the merits of this involved subject, yet one is an ardent Free Trader and the other is an enthusiastic Protectionist. If it is difficult to form convictions about the practical realities of life, is it any wonder that certain problems which baffle us cannot be judged on any known principles of scientific knowledge ?

All through the ages, what is termed "The Riddle of Life" has baffled men. Those who take their thoughts ready-made from others either accept the conditions of living in a spirit of fatalism or of religious hope. Others, and particularly those who live hard lives, ask themselves, "Why am I here, and for what am I working?" Tennyson said, "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds." None can answer the riddle of life for you. Only your own experience can lift the veil of the mystery of existence, and show you the shining promise of the Beyond.

Modern life, with its rush and its stress of competition, tends to breed selfishness. "The weak must go to the wall" is a doctrine of self. The mother who glories in her first-born and showers her self-sacrificing love upon it, has no such doctrine.

In protecting her little one she develops her finest instincts, and the best mothers find part, at any rate, of the solution of the riddle of life in the happiness of their everyday existence.

Logic teaches us that, if certain causes produce certain effects, similar causes will produce similar effects. We argue from the known to the unknown, and whatever there is in life that is baffling and inscrutable can be solved by the spirit of faith and hope arguing from the knowable facts of our everyday existence. Every piece of good work is an achievement. The man who dreams and does nothing may well ask what is the good of living. The man who paints a picture, finds in the achievement a joy which teaches him that every work of his hand and brain will bring him some reward either of success or of power. The man who despairs and says he never has a chance, will never get his chance because he will not go out and seize it. The millionaire creating vast organisations and carrying through big achievements by their aid, does so because he creates his chances. If he sat still and moped he would be so much the poorer. If the head of any big business decided to rest on his oars, his connection would soon be wrested from him by his energetic competitors and his income would go. Rewards in life go by merit alone. They must be striven for, and the reward comes with the first

effort of striving in the consciousness of work well done.

The prime object of existence is happiness. If we work merely for money, we may get some sort of pleasure out of it, but we know that when the Dark Angel rings down the curtain of Death our money will be parted from us; and in that thought lies the doubt that sours the whole of life. The pursuit of worldly advantage is a noble aim, but it is not the chief end of existence. The best things of life, the things which tell us surely and convincingly that the pleasures of prosperity are not everything, dwell in states of the mind. The only real happiness is in the mind; the grasp of a friend's hand, the sound of a voice that thrills the heart, the uplifting melody of some strain of music, the joy of feeling the spring stirring in the blood—these are the things that really matter, that link us to Nature, and that hold the promise of life here and through all the ages.

A successful man once said to me, "I would not give a fig for a man who has not had some great set-back in his life. The man who has never tasted the bitterness of defeat and found it a spur to increased effort has never tasted the real joy of victory." I never think of this without recalling the experience of two men with whom I was very closely connected. Both of them experienced a

sudden, sharp reversal of fortune. One was left with a bare means of living, the other lost everything. The former turned tail on his troubles, and went away into the country, where he determined to live on what he had saved out of the wreck. He brooded on his misfortunes, told people they had ruined his health, and, though a perfectly strong man, became a hypochondriac. The other could not have run away even if he had wanted to. He summoned all his fortitude to his aid, all his optimism, all his faith, and fortune came tumbling at him on the heels of his troubles. What had seemed a disaster turned out the best thing that could possibly have happened. If he, too, had run away he would never have had that fortune and would never have tasted the sweets of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. Be sure that whatever troubles come to you, if you face them with courage they will pass by as the idle wind, and leave behind the prosperity of which they are only the harbingers.

Every one who has faced sorrow and disaster, who has come through the fires of adversity, knows well from his own experience that for every trouble life can bring there is some greater compensating advantage. "All things work together for good." The snows of winter serve to warm the earth and protect the seeds that bring forth the glorious blooms of summer.

All through Nature and all through life we see that the things which are gloomy and unpleasant inevitably develop into brightness and happiness. Who does not know the beautiful lines :

“ Hark, hark, my soul, angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore.”

But, in days of doubt and difficulty, how many go out into the fields to hear the immortal strains of the angelic songs which are wafted in every breeze from the four corners of the world to bear a message of hope to those who will listen ?

[One knows, of course, that there have been great minds who, out of their innermost convictions, have asserted that everything ends with this life. One must respect honest thought, but the fact remains that the majority of thinkers through all the ages have held that the ultimate end of all things is Paradise, the land of Promise, where all tears will be wiped from our eyes, “and those that are good shall be happy.” Quite apart from any religious belief in the life to come—and the earnest worker will always be content to be judged by his life's work—it is clearly demonstrable that there is a reward for every earnest endeavour, every loving thought and every kindly act. Why should there be a need for rewards in a life hereafter ? Paradise is not merely a state of the hereafter, it is here and now. It is in the mind, and is revealed in the

thoughts of those we love and those who love us. Who that has seen his mother praying by her bedside has not felt the angels hovering near? Who that has loved his friend has not tasted the sweets of life and found that the world was good? Are these things visions to torment us with an unrealisable hope? Or are they glimmerings of a perfect realisation of all those things which we hold dearest? If there is any virtue in thinking for oneself in the solitudes that come to all of us, surely it lies in the hope and faith that must be born when we turn our thoughts to the riddle of life and find a satisfying answer in the depths of our own souls.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE LESSONS OF ART

“ Art should exhilarate, and throw down the walls of circumstance on every side, awakening in the beholder the same sense of universal relation and power which the work evinced in the artist, and its highest effect is to make new artists.”

EMERSON.

HAZLITT opens his essay “ On the Pleasure of Painting ” with the following words :—

“ ‘ There is a pleasure in painting which none but painters know.’ In writing, you have to contend with the world : in painting, you have only to carry on a friendly strife with Nature. From the moment that you take up the pencil and look Nature in the face you are at peace with your own heart. No angry passions rise to disturb the silent progress of the work, to shake the hand, or dim the brow ; no irritable humours are set afloat. You have no absurd opinions to combat, no point to strain, no adversary to crush, no fool to annoy. You are actuated by fear or favour to no man. There is ‘ no juggling here,’ no sophistry, no intrigue, no tampering with the evidence, no attempt to make black white or white black ; but you resign yourself into the hands of a greater power, that of Nature, with the simplicity of a child and the devotion of an enthusiast. ‘ Study with joy her manner, and with rapture taste her style.’ The mind is calm and full at the same time. The hand and eye are equally employed. In tracing the commonest

object, a plant or the stump of a tree, you learn something every moment. You perceive unexpected differences where you looked for no such thing. You try to set down what you see—find out your error, and correct it. You need not play tricks, or purposely mistake: with all your pains you are still far short of the mark. Patience grows out of the endless pursuit and turns it into a luxury.”

I commend the whole essay to the reader who wishes to find some indications of the beauties of the world of Art. But what thoughts even this short passage stimulates! Art is not merely the revelation of beauty and truth. It shows us how perfect Nature is, and how imperfect man is, while it stimulates us to struggle patiently after perfection, in the sure hope that we shall approach nearer to it with each industrious day. While we learn to appreciate the beauty of common things, the tranquillity of Nature encourages us to calm philosophy. We see that all the little tasks have their own part in the sublime whole, and this reflection invests the meanest of our labours with a sublimity of which our minds were ignorant.

Art is a great educator. It is the expression of the earliest form of writing, when men conveyed their meanings to one another through the medium of rude pictures. In a square of canvas an artist can convey with one flash of illumination a story, or a thought, that the writer could only impart through the medium of hundreds of words. In this sense

Art is the easiest form of education which a man can take up, and while he is learning history, or beauty, or mythology, his feelings are stirred by the glowing colours which heighten the effect of the painter's message.

Art is the revealer of Nature. When Turner was painting his marvellous pictures, there was a huge controversy about his work. People said that his lurid colours were untrue to Nature, and, at a casual glance, they appear to be so. Yet when on occasion the lighting in the sea or sky recalls one of his pictures we find that his work was true, after all. The only failing was due to the limitations of the human mind, which is too imperfect to reproduce the gorgeous manifestations of Nature. Yet a study of Turner's pictures enables us to appreciate the wonders of the Mind that paints the heavens with such hues that we cannot copy them, or spreads across a patch of country such harmonies of mass and colour that the merest reproduction of them upon canvas is a sight that rouses beautiful thoughts for years afterwards.

The man who studies the work of the great artists learns to appreciate the beauties of the world around him, through the eyes of men who have an instinct for finding beauty. He sees the loveliness of the world, and sees it ever afterwards : when the thunder clouds roll up he does not complain because

the day is wet, but finds in their menacing shapes and terrifying colours an inspiration that he never found before.

The true artist is not a critic, but a worshipper. He does not say, "I can paint a sunset better than God paints it," but "God has painted a sunset : let me strive to copy it." He is so near to Nature that he feels his own littleness, and yet, with the consciousness of how small a thing he is, he feels that he is greater than the inanimate beauties spread before him, because they are provided for him, and because, in an imperfect degree, he can create similar beauties.

It is a good thing for a man to hold such views. Instead of criticising others, and even his Creator, he measures himself by the handiwork of God and asks himself how far he falls short of the stature that God intended for him.

It is easy to study Art, and perhaps that is the reason why so many men neglect this part of their mental education. We must have a standard to measure ourselves by, and that standard must be perfection. Without it we cannot tell whether we are progressing or retrograding. Art is one of the helps we may use in forming our standard of beauty, and it is also a means of learning many things we should not have time for otherwise. We can study a dozen pictures in an afternoon, and each one of

them will provide some special knowledge which we shall remember easily, because we have only to conjure up a mental picture of the canvas to have all the facts before us.

As I write, I have just opened, haphazard, the ordinary sixpenny catalogue of the Tate Gallery. Five pictures are mentioned in the two pages before me, all of them by Sir John Millais. The first is "Ophelia," describing a scene from *Hamlet*, and the extract given from the play enables me to get an insight into the poet's mind which perhaps I never could get otherwise. When I want to read something in the future, the memory of this picture inspired by Shakespeare's genius will remind me what a vast literary treasure is ready to hand for my use.

Next I come to "The Vale of Rest," showing a convent garden at sunset. Two women are in the garden. One of them is digging a grave, while the other sits upon a fallen headstone with her rosary in her hands. Here a different set of emotions is touched upon. One thinks first of all of these women shut out from the world, but not from its sorrow, and the artist subtly suggests by his lighting and the arrangement of his figures the coming of the night of gloom, and the promise of the stars and the dawn that will shortly follow.

Next, I reach "The Knight Errant," showing

a knight in full armour, cutting with his sword the thongs that bind a naked girl to a silver birch tree. All the glamour of the days of chivalry comes over one, and the thoughts wing their way back through the years to the days when England's history was beginning, so that one realises that the perplexities and troubles of to-day, which look so formidable, had their counterpart in the past and shall culminate in glory in the future. Again, one sees that the worries of to-day are the triumphs of tomorrow, and the gloomy hours are cheered by the sight of a picture that makes us contrast the days of old with the days that are.

“The North-West Passage” is the next, and the sight of the weather-worn seaman, listening to the story of the search for the North-West passage, stirs the heart with the pride of race, and inspires the mind to loftier purpose.

Finally, we come to “Mercy—Saint Bartholomew's Day, 1572,” which shows the Catholic warrior, sword in hand, held back by the nun who kneels before him. Here we read a page of vivid history, and perhaps are tempted to study the period by the interest which the picture arouses in us.

As one walks through a gallery like this, the mind is broadened. New paths of knowledge are revealed to us, while the brain is stored with a succession of pictures which can be remembered easily.

Such an education as pictures give cannot be neglected by the man who seeks mental power. To wander through the rooms and gaze idly at the pictures is not enough. Take the catalogue with you. It will tell you about the artist, his struggles and his methods, as well as about his pictures.

You will find, for instance, that the famous Sir Joshua Reynolds, the first President of the Royal Academy, worked so hard that for years he completed three or four of his well-known portraits every week, and found time also to paint other pictures. You will find that Meissonier was so careful over the details of his pictures that he would hire armies and make roadways to get the exact effects he wanted. You will no longer be tempted to think that these great painters simply sat down, brush in hand, and painted away carelessly and easily. All the hard work they did, all the care they took, will be revealed to you as you look at their pictures with discerning eyes and see their real meaning as you draw their lessons from them.

Why, do you suppose, do the great nations and cities build vast art galleries and buy pictures? Not because the pictures are merely beautiful, but because they have such a rich educational value.

Even if you live in a place where there is no Art gallery you can have the great pictures of the world brought into your home by means of the

admirable coloured reproductions, with explanatory notes, which are available in cheap forms nowadays. If you do not love pictures, study them, and understand them, your intellectual power is not complete.

Art does something more than educate ; something more, even, than form your tastes. It helps to create character. Lord Leighton, who stands as the ideal type of artist, explained what this means.

“ Art is,” he said, “ in its own nature wholly independent of morality, and whilst the loftiest moral purpose can add no jot or tittle to the merits of a work of art as such, yet there is, nevertheless, no error deeper or more deadly—and I use the words in no rhetorical sense, but in their plain and sober meaning—than to deny that the moral complexion, the *ethos* of the artist, does in truth tinge every work of his hand, and fashion, in silence, but with the certainty of fate, the course and current of his whole career. Believe me, whatever of dignity, whatever of strength, we have within us, will dignify and will make strong the labour of our hands ; whatever littleness degrades our spirit will lessen them and drag them down. Whatever noble fire is in our hearts will burn also in our work ; whatever purity is ours will chasten it and exalt it.”

The closing words of his first Presidential Address ran :—

“ Study with deep and reverent admiration—and that admiration cannot be too deep or too reverent—the works of the great men who have gone before you ; brace and fortify yourselves in the contemplation of their strength ;

catch what you may of the fire that was in them ; walk in their light, enrich and enlarge your powers by the knowledge and understanding of the means by which they move us ; but never forget that the common greatness of them all is their sincerity, and that it is only through sincerity that you can hope to emulate them, even from afar ; be assured that your work, in order that it may live, must be the direct and truthful representation of your own individual emotions, not the echo of the emotions of others. Without sincerity of emotions, no gift, however facile and specious, will avail you to win the lasting sympathies of men, for, as Goethe has truly said :

“ ‘ The chord that wakes in kindred hearts a tone,
Must first be tuned and vibrate in your own.’ ”

Such are the lessons that Art can teach you—to be industrious, to be humble, to be true. The contemplation of beauty will beautify your mind. You will gain knowledge in an easy and pleasant way by studying pictures. Insensibly your mind will set up standards which will ennoble and inspire you ; and, above all, you will learn, through the medium of the painters' brushes, how wonderful are the works of the Creator whose most marvellous creation is the mind of man—YOUR MIND.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SECRET CHAMBER

"The shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—ISAIAH.

WALKING up a suburban road one summer evening, I turned a corner where another road rises and stretches away some three hundred yards. Right at the end of that vista a glorious harvest moon hung low over the house-tops like a great golden jewel, mysterious and luminous, and near by, in attendance on it, a brilliant star flashed and sparkled like a heavenly gem set in the infinite. The twilight covered the harsh-looking houses with soft shadows. Everything was arranged by the Master Hand to intensify the mystic loveliness of the lantern of heaven. The brain said it was a suburban street ; the mind saw the majesty of one of Nature's most wonderful miracles.

Some people never see such scenes. Put them in a garden full of flowers and they see nothing, and do nothing but chatter small talk. Others see beauty in stones, in stagnant pools, and in rocky solitudes. The truth is, that the world is full of beauty, of

joy, light and happiness. They are for us to see and know and feel, just as we look for them and conjure them up within our souls. The sensitive wax of the phonograph records sounds and reproduces them at our will. Our minds are infinitely more sensitive than any instrument man can make. They record faithfully every pleasant and harmful impression, and they reproduce them just as faithfully, all and any of them according to the dictates of our own wills.

Under the influence of a splendid book, a noble work of art, or an uplifting harmony of music, the splendid, noble and elevating records of the mind respond most surely, giving a sensation of pleasure which is but a reflex of their action on the mental faculties. The more we can store our minds with beautiful thoughts the more shall we be able to attract the beauties that surround us on every side. The more we can use these treasures of the soul the happier will our lives be. Our minds are like grand musical instruments. Played upon by the sensitive, trained will, they are capable of wonderfully beautiful harmonies, far nobler than the most inspired conceptions of a Beethoven, a Shakespeare, or a Michael Angelo. A sage once remarked that the finest conceptions of a poet's mind were those he never wrote. The mind that is in harmony with Nature, that can respond to the beauties of a summer

The Secret Chamber 263

night, as the musical instrument gives out its melody under the touch of a master hand, can feel the music of the spheres and know that the ecstasies of the songs of Paradise are being reproduced in the soul by the touch of the Master Musician.

Some musical instruments get out of tune and produce only discord whoever plays them. They correspond to the mind that has fed itself upon noxious thoughts and pessimistic reflections. Even the Master Hand can produce nothing but discord from such an instrument. Yet, just as the instrument which is out of tune gives from time to time a pure sweet note, so within the rankest mind a noble sentiment responds every now and then to the majesty of some manifestation of Nature. There is, in every mind, a recess which imprisons our ideals. We may hedge it round with thoughts of every description, bolt and bar it so that it is most difficult to penetrate, yet every now and then some touch of memory or of conscience releases the spring and gives a glimpse of the angel in the man.

In such a place we keep our holiest thoughts and memories—the mental pictures of our mothers are there, the records of our baby prayers and our childish hopes. In that secret chamber—the holy of holies of the mind—the pure aspirations of life flourish or lie dormant, waiting for the sunshine to make them bloom and transform every action into

perfection. It is a place to enter reverently, to keep sweet, to fill with precious fragrance from a thousand noble dreams. All that will make us better, that will make love in us and call love to us, dwells in that hallowed spot. It is the ark of the soul, a veritable flame and pillar of cloud to guide us through the perils of the world, and keep us serene and unafraid amid all the terrors of life and death.

None may enter this secret chamber save the owner himself. It is beyond the door to which none else may hold a key. All of us have our secrets and our memories which we cannot share with our nearest and dearest. These may peep from time to time into the precincts of the chamber, they may get some dim far-off glimpse of its treasures, of its faded and cherished blossoms, but more than that they can never know. Perchance, when we die, the treasures that we keep there we may take with us, and to us they will be as dear as any of the joys that await us in the Elysian Fields.

It is the pleasure and duty of every well-trained and well-balanced mind to reflect upon these things from time to time. If the practice of going to church has any special value, its usefulness must lie as much as anything in the fact that it makes a halting-time between the cares and duties of everyday life, when we can take stock of ourselves and make note of our weaknesses and our strength. We should

note our weaknesses to remedy them, but we should not dwell upon them to the exclusion of thoughts upon our strength, which we must also take note of and make yet more strong. There is a type of religionist of the "I am a miserable sinner" order who lashes himself with his own scorn and makes a god of his weakness, when he should ask forgiveness for his sins, and, having put them away, pray for strength to make life worthier. We may all be sinners, but we have no right to be miserable sinners, seeing that we have been given the birthright of the inspiring hope of an immortal life where all is lovely and perfect.

Some people who never go to church get the same effect by retiring into the secret chamber of the soul in their own homes. In our moments of solitude we should do this for the purpose of refreshing the mind with the tender and gracious thoughts that dwell in this holy of holies. So shall we gain grace for our souls and strength to conquer and endure. At such a time we should judge ourselves, and blame or praise according as we find ourselves worthy or unworthy. Some people are over-sensitive to the criticism of the world. The greatest figures in history have gone their way in the performance of their allotted tasks serenely unconscious of the opinions of others. Vituperation and flattery have affected them not at all. All they asked for was

the approval of their own conscience, the knowledge that they were doing right. Other people cannot judge you, they do not know the limitations of your temperament or of your mind. You, yourself, alone know these things, and you can praise yourself if you have done well and should blame yourself if you have fallen short of your powers, no matter how much others may praise you.

Those people who are depressed, who find the world hard and cruel and unlovely, are the folk who keep the chambers of their souls locked too often from themselves. They are afraid of its sadness and of its peace. They know it is washed with tears, but they forget that out of its pity is born love, out of love hope, and from hope life. "Our sweetest songs are those which tell of saddest thought." Out of the sadness rise memories of happy days that are gone, giving promise of the happy days to come. The gentle melancholy of the days that are no more teaches us to find the beauty of the day that is here and of the days that are before us. Are these things sadder than the vicious and pessimistic thoughts that we admit in their stead? Should we welcome the glorious promise of spring if there were no winter to hold the hidden wonders of the summer? Can there be perfect happiness without the experience of sorrow? The rain and the snow and the storms come in their appointed seasons, but the memory of

The Secret Chamber 267

them fills the summer wind with a sweeter fragrance. Open the doorway of the soul every day. Let your thoughts wander in the solitudes of its chamber, to gather there strength and encouragement to cleanse them from the stains of worldly toil and temptation, and to find in its calm and tender peace a sure hope for the future that shall comfort and uphold you in all your doings.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MUSIC AND THE MIND

“There is music even in Beauty. . . . There is a music wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain the music of the spheres; for those well-ordered motions and regular paces, though they give no sound to the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony.”

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

ALTHOUGH music is primarily concerned with the emotions, it has a decided mental value also. I remember once listening to a sermon by the late Dr. Dallinger, in which he opened up a line of thought that impressed me very forcibly. “The composer,” he said in effect, “is a discoverer. He does not make the melody, for it is already made. All that he does is to find out the combinations of sounds and write down the symbols which represent them.” The world is full of music. All the loveliest melodies you ever heard, and subtle harmonies you never dreamed of, are around you, though you cannot hear them. Sometimes you or some other person, by speaking or singing, or playing upon an instrument, cause the sound waves to vibrate, and then they are made audible.

Music and the Mind 269

The man who is in tune with Nature hears all sorts of melodies that others are deaf to. Every part of his being throbs in unison with the deep harmonies of the universe. The dawn sings to him of hope, the noon of endeavour, and the night of rest. When he sings for joy, he is responding to the chords touched in his being by the melodies he feels around him; and when he whistles to encourage himself, he summons from the forces of Nature the cheerful sounds that will react upon him and drive away fear and despair.

All around us are hidden forces we cannot understand. Some people are frightened by them, while others are encouraged. I have known many people with deep religious convictions to be terrified by the sound of thunder. Equally I have known persons who rarely go to church, who hear in the thunder the voice of the Creator. They are not terrified, because they reflect that the Being who speaks in such awe-inspiring accents made them and gave them dominion over the earth through the gift of mind, and they regard the fearful sounds merely as a manifestation of that Great Power upon which they can draw fully in their hour of need. Of course, the state of terror which many people experience during a thunderstorm is largely a physical condition due to the state of the atmosphere, but the mind can counteract the limita-

tions of the body and fortify it to resist the tendency to succumb to its own weakness. The child is frightened when it sees a white-shrouded figure, which the adult laughs at because he knows it is only another human being making himself ridiculous in a sheet. We are terrified by the unknown, while we are courageous in the face of dangers the nature of which we can understand.

Few people understand the effect of sound. It is a study in itself. The playwright makes full use of it to gain his weird effects. You will find that Shakespeare often does so, and many a modern dramatist has caused a cold shiver to run down the spectators' backs by a skilful suggestion of horror conveyed by a sound. In one modern play the father of a dead son summoned him back to earth, and as he ceased his invocation there was the sound of knocking on the door. The effect was electrical, although the nocturnal visitor turned out to be harmless flesh and blood.

If one were to divest religion of its music, it would lose a great part of its appeal in one way, though it might gain in another. Music intoxicates the soul like wine. It stirs the senses, and uplifts or depresses the mind according to its character. The effect soon wears off, however, and that is why the man who feels inspired with such noble sentiments in church will go to business the next day

and cheat his fellow-man with the cheerfulness of the most hardened sinner.

The man who secures the lasting effect of music is he who carries it about with him, stored up in his mind. When he is despondent, he sings, and summons the cheerful sounds of the universe to make sweet melodies for him. Unless you can respond to the music you hear, it cannot affect you. If a violin is not properly tuned up, it can only produce discord. You are like that. You must tune yourself up to be responsive to the enlivening music of the world. Even the roar of cities may be an inspiration as it speaks to you of activity and power. Some people have the effect upon us as of music, like *Evangeline* :

“ When she had passed
It seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.”

It is possible for people to gather into themselves the music of the spheres, as the diamond gathers light, and diffuse it around them to stir the emotions of others with gladness. The music may be mute and inaudible, but it stirs the soul instead of the mind with wonderful melodies such as the ear can never know.

The sensitive chords within us vibrate to emotions caused by many varied things. The same thrill that comes to one man from a picture will come to another from a poem, and the effect of a

rose will be the same upon one man as that of a song upon another. Sometimes, too, the same "note" will sound in a man from different causes. A certain circumstance will induce a corresponding frame of mind. Years after, perhaps, a musical phrase will arouse the same feelings and send the thoughts flying back through the years to the past.

It is as well to remember these things, because they have their lessons for the man who thinks for himself, and he can often turn them to practical account. For instance, the case mentioned above, of music suggesting something which happened long ago, teaches us that sound may be brought into account to help our memories. I remember, at school, a master advising us when we wanted to learn a difficult passage, to make up a tune and learn to sing the passage to that tune. Afterwards, when we wanted to remember the passage, the melody would suggest the words, and as it is easier to remember a tune than a sentence, we were able to make a difficult work easy by attacking it through some helpful channel which was by its nature easy. There are helps all round us if we only take the trouble to find them out. There is an easy way to carry out the most difficult task. Let us then find out that way and do the work, rather than complain how hard it is, and thus make it more difficult still.

The study of music is an uplifting force for the mind. You cannot, perhaps, learn to play an instrument or to sing, but you can learn to appreciate the music of the world. You can learn to use it, and you can enjoy the music that is made for you by others. Music is intended to help you and to cheer you. It can help you by calling forth the deepest and sweetest emotions of your soul, and it can cheer you by the enjoyment which it brings.

You can appreciate music better if you can understand something about it. You do not need to bother about its technicalities so long as you understand that the composer is trying to convey some idea to you, not by the written or spoken word which reaches your mind, but through the emotions which make you feel.

A composer told me on one occasion that any written phrase at once suggested a musical one to him. He thought in terms of music, not of words. If he wrote "I love you," we will say, in music, he wrote it in passionate melody which would strike just the same chord in the hearer's breast that would be affected if the words were said to him by someone he loved. In another way, the composer wishing to describe a storm in music will skilfully represent the sound of the rain and the wind, or the sea lashing the rocks. He will make you hear armies marching and horses galloping. He will show

you children at play, the sun shining on the hills, and the flowers blooming in the sun, till you can sense their very fragrance. Only if you understand can you hear, see, and feel these things. The man who does not understand hears only a medley of sound which conveys nothing to his mind.

In everyday life music has the same application. One man will read a passage of poetry and it will sound dull. Another will read it, giving every word its proper sound, every inflection of the voice its proper value, and every phrase its due measure. You will then hear the music of the poet's mind, and his verses will take on a new and fuller meaning.

The human voice is the most wonderful instrument in the world. It can invest a sentence with different meanings according to the manner in which you use it. I remember my father talking about two different Shakespearean actors. Both of them in playing their parts had to repeat the line—

“ Silence that dreadful bell ! ”

One of them said the words in a peevish, fretful voice that made them sound ridiculous as well as petulant. The other uttered them in such tones of horror that the audience was moved to applause. Just say it over to yourself, and see the different expressions which you can put into such a simple sentence.

Suppose you are walking along a street, and as you pass a certain house you hear someone playing an ill-tuned violin. It grates upon your ears and jars all your senses. Altogether the effect is displeasing and repellent. Farther down you hear another instrument with a deep, rich tone, making the same melody, and the effect is altogether different. You are soothed and inspired. The tune was the same, but the tone and method were different. So it is with the human voice. You can make the most gracious sentences sound unpleasant if they are spoken without sincerity and heartiness, and in an uncultured tone. Speak from the heart and let your hearer feel the music of your good-will. Speak musically, so that the melody of your voice may stir him to appreciation. It is not hard to do this; it only calls for thought and care, which will be well repaid.

The supreme lesson which music teaches is that of truth and sincerity. You strike a note upon the piano lightly and carelessly, and you get an incomplete volume of sound that affects the ear and emotions only to a slight degree. Then you strike the same note carefully and "hang on to it," with the result that you obtain a clear, rich, sweet note. Unless the player of an instrument enters into the spirit of the composition he cannot reproduce the effect which was in the composer's mind. What the

musician really does is not to play upon his instrument so much as to play upon the responsive chords in his hearer. Music gains its force from this alone, and unless the notes are reproduced faultlessly upon a perfect instrument, the composer's message is marred and can never be fully realised.

You can moralise upon these facts, and you will gather from them some idea of what music has to teach you. If you will study it, therefore, you will gain mental power as well as intellectual pleasure, and you will be the better for having some closer acquaintance with the art of composition, on the principle that a general all-round knowledge must be allied to specialisation in one or two subjects if our mental equipment is to be completely adequate to our everyday needs.

Unless you wish to take up music as your chief study, you will have little time for research into its various branches, but the amount of culture which is necessary can be acquired by making a point of hearing the works of the world's greatest composers, and by endeavouring to understand their aims and the methods by which they sought to attain their objects.

The oldest form of musical instrument which we read about is associated with religion, the earliest mention in the Bible being in Genesis, where we read that Jubal, the son of Lamech and Adah, was the

“father of all such as handle the harp and organ.” These were very primitive instruments, the former doubtless consisting of a few strings stretched across a frame, while the latter was probably made up of reeds of graded lengths bound together and played by passing them backwards and forwards across the lower lip. From these our present intricate and perfect instruments have been evolved by gradual processes, culminating in the great organs, the diverse parts of an orchestra, and the marvellous inventions which produce music by mechanical means.

The form of music grew out of similar simple beginnings. Music was first of all the primitive expression of emotion, and we read of it in connection with religious fervour, as in the instance when, after the crossing of the Red Sea, the children of Israel joined in a song of thanksgiving. It is worth noting that the old poetry of the Bible, with its vivid realism and beauty, has inspired modern composers to some of their best work: witness the music to which we sing the Psalms to-day, and the famous oratorios of Handel, with all their colour and majesty. It is also instructive to observe that even in those far-off days the crude instruments were capable, in masterly hands, of affecting the emotions of the hearer very powerfully. Did not David, the poet-musician, make his first steps towards the

throne by means of his music ? “ And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. . . . And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp and played with his hand : so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.”

Much of our knowledge has come down to us by means of music, as in olden days the deeds of the heroes and the victories of the nations, as well as their ideals and aspirations, were sung by the bards and were handed on from generation to generation until they came to be written for our learning. If music has proved such a force as this in the progress of the world, it will play an important one in the years to come, though perhaps in a different way, and for this reason the man who is acquiring culture will wish to know something of its history, of its capabilities, and of its aims.

Music is affected by climate and the conditions under which it was written. The barbaric music of the East differs from the more civilised harmonies of the West, and thus by becoming acquainted with the work of different great composers we can enlarge our mind by the same process which it undergoes from wide reading or by travel in foreign lands. From Italy or Spain we shall get more emotion than from the colder northern climates, as you can judge

by a comparison of the works of Bizet (who wrote "Carmen") and Grieg (who composed the "Peer Gynt" Suite). Their works will affect you in quite different ways, and this illustrates the mind-developing power of a musical education, even of the cursory character suggested in this chapter. Let us now consider some of the great composers, and the different effects which they aim at in their work.

Johann Sebastian Bach was an eighteenth-century composer who wrote for the organ, harpsichord, violin, for voices without instrumental accompaniment, and for voices accompanied by organ or orchestra. In all these branches of his art he excelled, his work being characterised by a wonderful dignity, allied with simplicity, pathos, and melody. Bach's works have been called "the bread-and-butter of music—a necessity of everyday life."

Handel, whose great work is a degree below that of Bach, combined the grace of the Italian composers with the force of the German School. He specialised in vocal and organ music, and his best work is the oratorio "Israel in Egypt."

Beethoven's music is remarkable for its noble and lofty inspiration. His work may be classified under two headings: (1) his symphonies, and (2) his sonatas. The former are his greatest compositions.

Schubert was one of the foremost musical geniuses

the world has known. Unfortunately, he died at the age of 31, so that his talent never reached final completeness, but even so he left behind him a series of immortal works which will delight musicians for all time. He was the "father" of modern song-writing, and he composed more than five hundred songs, including "Hark, hark, the Lark!" and "Who is Sylvia?" His work is fresh and spontaneous, and extraordinarily delicate as well as tuneful, and a comparison of his songs with those of modern popular writers shows that while the latter may learn much from him they may never excel his work or surpass his high level of general excellence.

Mendelssohn was an elegant writer, with the gift of rich colour. His best work is that which is not too emotional, as in the case of his famous "Songs without Words," rather than in his more ambitious compositions like the "Elijah."

Passion and emotion are the dominant characteristics of Schumann's writings, with an occasional touch of romance. His greatest claim to enduring fame is based upon his songs and his pianoforte pieces. His piano concerto in A *minor* is a work of surpassing excellence, while among his songs the "Frauen Liebe und Leben" cycle, either considered as single numbers or in their relation to one another as a conception of femininity, are noteworthy.

Wagner is, perhaps, the most persistently discussed musical genius of the world. He was an originator, and, because he was gifted with a double genius, which enabled him to write words as well as music, he was able to set about his task of revising the whole method of writing operas. It was not sufficient for him that the music should express the emotions: the words and emotions must both find perfect expression in the music. For this reason, before Wagner's music can be fully understood one must be conversant with his words. When his "Nibelungen" words were published, they aroused the derision of his critics, but even these were silenced some years later when the words were given with their musical setting.

We find that Wagner took an infinity of trouble over his gigantic tasks. When the words satisfied him he made three manuscripts of the music, one of which was a mere sketch in outline, the second a development of the same, and the third the final, well-considered, finished score.

It is characteristic of Wagnerian opera that the orchestral accompaniment suggests the moods and emotions of the text as fully as the singer's melody, and in listening to one of his operas it is instructive to know that their adequate rendering demands a faultless vocal method.

Mozart composed 624 works, and enriched the

whole field of musical art with his genius. To a gift of rich, pure melody he adds wonderful resources of harmony and instrumentation. Among his works which may be studied with advantage are his celebrated symphonies in *c major*, *G minor*, and *E flat*, his noble "Requiem Mass," and his charming operas.

These brief sketches of famous composers are but cursory glances at their methods, which show that there is a variation of musical genius and method to be studied in their individual styles. They are examples of the master music-makers of the world, and will give you a knowledge of music which will make you desire a fuller acquaintance with ancient and modern masterpieces, while enabling you to understand the evolution of music from its crude beginnings to its present varied forms. When you hear the work of a composer performed, and know something about his life and his aims, or the peculiar virtue of his music, you are able to enjoy his compositions better, and to gain more knowledge, because you know what you have to watch for and wherein the merit of the work lies.

You can be a student of music without performing, or you can be a musician and give pleasure to others by your interpretations of works of genius or of talent. In either of these capacities you will be the gainer of physical and mental power. Playing the piano or any other musical instrument with

the hands develops muscular power and exercises the mind and the emotions. Singing strengthens the voice, throat, and lungs, and helps you to speak musically and correctly. If you are a practical musician yourself you can better appreciate the work of composers, writers, singers, and musicians, but even if you are not, and you understand something about music, you will gain in mental efficiency very considerably.

Listening to music inspires us with noble thoughts and aspirations, and helps us to appreciate the music of Nature. As our ears and souls become sensitive to melody, we can catch the subtler harmonies that are around us, and so develop the more delicate senses within us. All education is good, but the learning that will make us morally stronger, that will make us responsive to beauty and enable us by the force of our own minds to catch the happiness, laughter, hope, and encouragement from the unseen forces which surround us, is the best learning of all.

CHAPTER XXIX

SERENITY

*“Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good, great man?—three treasures, love and light,
And calm thoughts. . . .”* COLERIDGE.

SOME men are like the chaff which is blown hither and thither according to which way the wind blows. All the enduring things stand firm in the face of every shock that assails them. The storms pass by, and they are just the same as before, beyond those subtle changes which the eye cannot detect.

Here is a thought which may not have occurred to you. Material things are weakened by shocks, but mental and spiritual things are weakened by the absence of them. The rock that is beaten by the sea year after year wears away, firm as it may be. Let a man, however, be continually tested and worried, if he is mentally powerful he will not only throw off his troubles, but he will emerge from them strengthened and even encouraged. It was no mere accident that made man master of the world and of his fate. He became master

because he was stronger than all things in the world—not physically, but mentally.

It needs only one shock, successfully opposed, to prove to a man that he is the greatest thing in the world. By means of electricity man has annihilated space. He has gathered force from the waterfalls and harnessed them for his own use. He has sent his mind into space to study the heavenly bodies, and he has always succeeded except in such cases when he has attempted to measure his mind against the Supreme Intelligence from which he draws his own power.

If your mind were so great that you could control all the forces which dominate the world, nothing would shake your serenity, and the broader and stronger you make it, the less will the petty troubles of life disturb you. You may lose your money, and even your friends, and yet remain serene and undaunted. There are compensations for everything. Those who have never sorrowed cannot experience the full delight of happiness. A life of continual pleasure would be hideously monotonous. We should not appreciate our friends if we had not tried them and found them sympathetic and helpful when our dark days came. The very essence of love and friendship is the sharing of sorrows as well as joys. We should never realise the worth of money or the value of success if money and success

were easy to come by. It is always by means of shadows that we realise the beauty of light, and the man that has never been tried in the fiery furnace of disappointment, loss, and grief is spiritually and mentally incomplete. He who can come forth from these flames purified and strengthened will never fear the "bludgeonings of Fate." As Omar Khayyám puts it :

" And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes ;
Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
You were—To-morrow you shall not be less."

Retain your knowledge and your courage, and you will always be rich, and if you do not grow richer you will not grow poorer. Though friends may pass from you, the love of those that remain will be dearer still. When you lose the capacity for friendship and for affection, when you no more can enjoy the beauties of Nature, which are free, then you are poor indeed, but not till then.

You should be discontented only with your lack of mental riches, but you should otherwise thank God for the blessings of life.

" How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears ; soft stillness, and the night.
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold ;

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims ;
Such harmony is in immortal souls ;
But whilst the muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

When you have sufficient for your wants and the unparalleled riches of the earth and sky for your own, you are far better off than the millionaire who sees no beauty in the landscape, and catches no music from the air of heaven. You carry your riches and wealth about with you in your mind. Money is useful only for what it can bring you, and if you are not contented with the simple joys of life, such as conversation, reading, and healthy work and recreation, then you are a beggar, though all the fabled treasures of the East were in your coffers.

"In my garden," said Alexander Smith, "I spend my days ; in my library I spend my nights. My interests are divided between my geraniums and my books. With the flower I am in the present : with the book I am in the past. I go into my library, and all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world, while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it, while it vibrated only to the world's first brood of nightingales, and to the laugh of Eve. I see the pyramids building ; I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander ; I feel the ground shake beneath the march of Cambyses. I sit as in a theatre—the stage is time, the play is the play of the world. What a spectacle it is ! What kingly pomp, what processions file past, what cities burn to heaven, what crowds of captives are dragged at the chariot-wheels of conquerors ! I hiss or cry ' Bravo ' when the great actors

come on, shaking the stage. I am a Roman emperor when I look at a Roman coin. I lift Homer, and I shout with Achilles in the trenches. The silence of the unpeopled Syrian plains, the out-comings and in-goings of the patriarchs, Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac in the fields at eventide, Rebekah at the well, Jacob's guile, Esau's face reddened by desert sun-heat, Joseph's splendid funeral procession—all these things I find within the boards of my Old Testament. What a silence in those old books as of a half-peopled world—what bleating of flocks—what green pastoral rest—what indubitable human existence! . . . What king's court can boast such company? What school of philosophy such wisdom?"

You cannot make such a man as that poor. He has his own peculiar riches with which he is well content, knowing that none may deprive him of them. Such riches are for everyone if they know how to find them, and the quiet soul who meets the tempests of life with fortitude will know how to enjoy the calms that must succeed all the storms.

Be content with what you can earn, either of money or of knowledge, but strive always for the capacity for fuller enjoyment of the good things of this world which your own mind will reveal to you if you only encourage it to do so. The grumblers and the cowards are the destitute people of the world. Be brave, cultivate strength, and be thankful for the joys of life, and none may deprive you of your heritage, nor can any trouble or grief shake your calm or dim your faith.

CHAPTER XXX

SUCCESS

"What I must do is all that concerns me—not what the people think."

EMERSON.

IF you were to ask half a dozen men to define success, you would gain from them an indication of their mental calibre and outlook. There is something lacking in the man who measures success by the money standard. Success is an ideal state: it is nothing more nor less than perfection, and therefore we can never be entirely successful. All that we can hope to obtain is a partial success; and for that reason, so long as a man strives with all his strength after perfection he can never be a failure, however far he may fall short of his ideal.

Success, as we understand the term, is the measure of our personal power. Money is the standard by which the world judges your success. You yourself should gauge it by your own sense of accomplishment. You make a success of whatever you do with all your might and to the best of

your ability. Judged by ordinary standards, it may be a failure, but if you know it is the best work of your brain it is a success. Equally, what will satisfy the world may really be a failure. If a man writes a book carelessly or for the mere sake of making money, and not because he wants to do it well and takes pleasure in the labour, it is a failure if it is not the best work he is capable of producing, even though everybody talks about it and it brings a fortune.

If you earn a lot of money and gain no friends, your life is a failure. Unless you make of your life all that you are capable of making it, you are a failure. It does not matter what people say of you: you yourself know the truth. You must ignore the artificial standard by which these things are judged. When all is said and done, you are a world unto yourself. All the earth, so far as you are concerned, is bound by the limits of your own vision and of your own knowledge. You came into the world mentally alone. You live an individual existence for which you alone can render account, and you pass into the vast Beyond—alone. Nothing that other people can say, think or do, really makes you dependent upon them. Nobody can help you unless you also can help yourself, and unless you are worthy of help. Other people can earn money for you, but only you yourself can learn how to

use it to advantage. You alone can make yourself happy: you alone can keep yourself back. Why, then, should you allow yourself to be bound by mental conventions when your will is free, and your mind is your own to think your own thoughts?

There can be no power without mental independence. The great tendency of the age is for people to take their thoughts ready-made from others. Until you can think for yourself and create for yourself, you can never succeed. One man does a task one way, another man wants to employ a different method, or the labour becomes difficult and joyless. For instance, when I have a difficult business letter to send, the best way for me to set about it is to write it down in long-hand first before having it typed. I find that my thoughts run more easily, and I am able to compose an intricate letter better by this method. Most people would find this plan laborious: they find it easiest to dictate right away to a stenographer, and it would be foolish for them to adopt my method just because I find it successful. The tasks that are performed by routine and admit of no deviations from a general rule are ill-paid tasks. Only the work that calls for original, creative thought brings a man into the limelight, and endows him with the responsibilities that lead him to the heights of his profession.

Think for yourself. Decide for yourself the

method of life and work which will best accord with your own tastes, temperament, and abilities. All the great men of the world have been mentally free. They were not bound by standards: they made standards by which other men judged themselves. If Columbus or Isaac Newton had bound themselves by the standards of their contemporaries, would the world have been the better for their having lived? Because they were mentally free, and because they acted and spoke and worked according to their own thoughts, they succeeded in their missions, and we feel their influence to-day.

You may not be capable of influencing thousands, or even hundreds; but you can certainly influence a few. What the extent of your power is you do not know, but you may be certain that you can influence nobody until you have confidence in your own powers. Unless you develop those powers by doing everything as perfectly as you can, unless you ever aim at greater perfection and a better and larger field of work, you can never attain to any degree of mental power, and never be anything but a failure.

John Couch Adams, the co-discoverer with Leverrier of the planet Neptune, was once walking on his native Cornish moors, when he got lost in the mist. He met an old man whom he knew, and told him that he had missed his way and could not find it.

“Didn’t you find this new star?” inquired the old man.

“Yes,” replied Adams.

“And isn’t it true that sailors guide themselves across the trackless deep by the stars?” the old man went on.

“Yes, they do.”

“Then what’s the good of you finding out this new star if you can’t even find your way across these downs?” asked the sage, and the question satisfied him as admitting of no reply.

The point of this story is that if we are to let ourselves be bound by the thoughts of others we must remain in a narrow groove of ignorance. Had Adams remained in his Cornish village and thought that the ideas of the yokels were the confines of truth he would never have achieved fame.

Never mind if people think you are wrong or foolish. They cannot judge. Let them think you are a failure if they like. So long as you know that you are doing your best, and are advancing in knowledge and power, that is the only thing that matters. Suppose, for a moment, that Napoleon as a boy in his Corsican home had been able to unfold the scheme of his life and the dazzling conquests which he made; suppose he had announced that he would win a throne by his own powers. Everyone would have laughed at him, told him that he was mad,

and urged him to settle down to the life of the island as the extent of his ambition. If that had happened, and he had accepted their standard of thought, he would have done nothing, and the whole history of the world would have been different.

You remember that when Noah was building his ark the people laughed at him for a fool; but he was saved when they were drowned. The work of the poet Keats was savagely attacked by the critics: if he had accepted their standard, how much poorer our literature would have been by the loss of his work! Yet he was adjudged a failure.

If you will listen to other people and let yourself be guided by them, you bind yourself by the limits of their minds, and unless, by some happy chance, those you associate with are large-minded, you must cramp your intellect and remain one of the crowd for the rest of your days.

The world is yours. The limit of your powers is the limit of your own mind, which will expand just proportionately to the manner in which you use it. Set up your own standard for everything. Trust your own judgment. If a certain thought is true, it does not matter if all the world proclaims it false: it is true just the same. If you are assured that a plan of action which you devise is the right one, the opinion of a thousand people to the contrary will not necessarily prove it to be wrong. It

is success to take your own course, even if it be wrong, so long as you believe it to be right. Do not be afraid of failure. Nobody is infallible, and it is not conceivable that the first man who offers you advice, with incomplete knowledge of your thoughts and of your capacity, should necessarily be a better judge than you yourself of what you ought to do. You know your own thoughts completely, and have full acquaintance with your capacity for your task.

If you believe your own judgment, if you are satisfied that you are making progress, and if you have confidence in your own powers, you are successful, whatever people may think, and despite the fact that you may not be making much money. Most people, considered as a mass, are like sheep. They run about hither and thither, bleating advice, uncertain what to do, and distrustful of anyone who wants to do anything out of the ordinary. They will criticise you to-day, copy you to-morrow, and follow you blindly the next day. Are such people to be your guides, to set up your standards for you? When you are criticised there is the probability that you are on the right road. Weigh criticism and listen to advice. Gather wisdom, even from the brains of fools, but decide for yourself. Go your own way after you have made sure that it is the right way and the best way

—the way that will lead you where you wish to travel.

You are succeeding all the time you are striving after something better, and you are a failure from the moment that you weaken. You must meet disaster bravely and cheerfully, and go on. You must encounter success without losing your head or your sense of your own limitations; and go on. You must work at congenial tasks and take the unpleasant ones with them; and go on to your next duty. You must snatch your brief joys, and look for more; help one man, and then assist another. Always you must advance, looking forward and fighting onward, for progress is success.

Are you succeeding, or are you hesitating because you are listening to the craven whispers of those who lack courage as well as brains? One day you will have no option of choice: you will be called into the Unknown, and if you are cowardly in this world, you will go into the next with terror. The future cannot frighten the man with courage in his heart, and he who goes out of this life with the consciousness of work well and faithfully done will go armed at all points, a man mentally free, passing into the land where the final success awaits him.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE REWARD OF POWER

*“ But what is Life ?
’Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun ;
’Tis to be Free. When Liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.”*

JOSEPH ADDISON.

BECAUSE life is what we ourselves make it, we ought to develop our capacity for using its gifts. The world is so ordered that while each one of us must shape his life by his own efforts, we are still dependent upon each other for success. The labourer provides us with the raw materials. Commerce and individual businesses are carried on by many hands controlled by a few brains. The man who can get people to give him all he wants, and all they can yield to him, is the most successful ; and it is equally true that the higher a man climbs the more is he dependent upon other people for the maintenance of his prosperity.

We learn from others, and we teach ourselves to apply our knowledge. We work with others, and

we set ourselves to discover how we can get the most assistance from our fellows. If we want recreation, it is the more pleasant because we share it with our friends, and our task is to find out how to make our leisure moments delightful to ourselves and to others. For the full enjoyment of life we must always share our work and our pleasure with others, and as they prosper and are happy, so do we succeed and find our own happiness also.

Knowledge is of no value unless you can use it. Power is not worth having if it isolates you from your fellows. So long as you keep yourself to yourself you limit the horizon of your mind to your own experience and the information you gain from books. To shut oneself up in a library is not living, it is existing. If, however, you can learn from books and then go out and use your knowledge among your fellows in a practical manner, you are getting something worth having out of books. Do not limit your mental outlook to the confines of your own brain or of the four walls of a room, but go out into the broad world and see how old knowledge is being used as the basis for fresh knowledge, and keep your mind active and keen by contact with the minds of others.

The Niagara Falls were an awe-inspiring sight always, and the rush of water was always impres-

The Reward of Power 299

sive in its power ; but, after all, it was wasted power until man harnessed the waters and turned them into electricity. You might gather unto yourself all the knowledge of the world, but it would be quite wasted unless you made constant use of it. You might just as well be idle all day long as store up knowledge and power which you never turn to practical account.

Life was meant to be full of action. When you cease to progress you begin to deteriorate. It is not necessary to work at high pressure all the time, or to get stale and so do unprofitable work. All you want to do is to see that you do not get mentally lazy. When you are tired you are entitled to rest, and you are meant to rest ; but when you are working you must not be slipshod, and you must aim at nothing less than perfection. Add a little to your knowledge every day, progress a little every day, get some happiness out of every day, and you will lead a useful, ample existence.

Ask yourself constantly what you are getting out of your life. The thoughtful man, who questions all things, often inquires of his soul what all his work really amounts to. Some support their drab existences because they believe in a Heaven after this life ; others do so because they must, and ask nothing of the future, because they do not believe in an after-life. I would rather honestly

believe in annihilation after this world than accept the doctrine of eternal damnation for people who did not subscribe to the religious views which I have heard expounded from my youth up. The strong mind formulates its own creed, and orders life accordingly. If mean actions and harsh thoughts are deteriorating to my mind, I will not harbour them if I can help it ; but I will not become a plaster saint for fear of punishment in some other world. I think that the man who uses all his gifts in this world, who enjoys the beauties of Nature, and who loves his fellow-man, will become so strong in mind that he will pass to his final account quite unafraid, ready and willing to answer for all his thoughts and actions upon this earth.

It should be enough that the world is a pleasant place, that we can enjoy our work, of whatever character it may be, and that, however poor or humble our circumstances, we can find our simple joys in the happiness of our friends. Am I to be gloomy because I fear death and what may or may not await me beyond the grave ? Am I to order all my thoughts and actions upon some idea of what will be their effect upon me in a world of which I know nothing ? Assuredly not. Can I suppose that the Being who placed me here, Who gave me the right to think and act for myself, Who filled the world with loveliness, music, and plenty, will blame me

The Reward of Power 301

for assuming my rights, or will give me anything less bountiful in the world to come? It is against all logic and common sense, and I will not believe it.

I claim the right to think for myself and act for myself in accordance with those laws which I feel to be true. If I misuse my gifts, if I fail in my duty, if I make mistakes, I will accept the consequences; but being here and alive, I will be thankful that I am alive, and I will enjoy my life within the limits which my mind prescribes.

That is my creed, and it must be the creed of every man who thinks for himself. Let your actions and thoughts be dictated by the needs of this world, and you need fear nothing if your conscience is clear. You need not wait for the next world for your success or for your Heaven. Both are here if you do but know it, but they exist in your mind and not outside it.

When you are struggling and working for mind-greatness, your encouragement must always be the reward which awaits your labours, and that reward is the supreme gift of the joy of living. All the time you work you will have the sense of increasing power. You will find fresher beauties in the world around you. Everything that lives will minister to your happiness and prosperity; everything that

exists will add to your enjoyment. The dawn will be a daily miracle to inspire and delight you. Every wind that blows will bear sweet tidings to your ear and perfumed incense from all the corners of the world. The marching of the sun across the skies will warm your heart ; the night will refresh you ; the coming and going of the seasons, with their lessons of birth and life succeeding one another in regular order, will have their special meanings for you. Each day that you live you will turn a fresh leaf of the Book of Knowledge, and with every leaf fresh wonders and beauties and possibilities will be revealed to you.

You can have no greater pleasure than the knowledge that your mind can invest every task with interest, every difficulty with the promise of victory, and every sorrow with peace. It is worth while to work for the power that will fill every moment with delight, so that you need never be dull or despairing. You are capable of making yourself perfect enough for this: that people will always be glad to help you, and you can learn to influence them so that they will wish to help you. You cannot avoid grief or anxiety, but you can always support them if your mind is under control and if your thoughts are helpful.

What you are capable of you can never know until you try, but do not try to attempt too much

The Reward of Power 303

at first. Go slowly with your learning, but go sure. Increased mind-power and increased knowledge of how to use it will soon teach you your limitations as well as your capabilities. What you always have to remember is this: you are the master creature of the universe, but you must be confident that you have the power within you to exercise your mastery, and you must make a point of using it.

Start at once to develop the great resources within you. Map out your plan of action and follow it. You cannot order the course of your life, because you cannot control the conditions which govern it; but if you are mentally strong and have an all-round development of mind and heart, you need never fear but that all things will work together for good, and that at the close of life's day the reckoning will be paid generously according to the measure of your striving, and not according to the measure of your achievement.

If the reasoning in this book does not appeal to you as being sound, and if it fails to inspire you with belief in your own power to make yourself mentally great, you can acquire the belief very easily by cultivating your gifts for a few months as a test. In a short while you will be ashamed of your doubts of yourself; in a little longer time you will discover yourself, and at

length you will come into your full heritage of personal power.

“Only believe” is the orthodox doctrine that is sound sense, apart altogether from its religion. Let your motto be “I believe in myself,” and if you strive to justify that belief you will never lack the supreme gifts which life has to offer you.